BEYOND PLURALISM: PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE WORKINGS OF MIND

BY FRED PINE

Subjects that Freud excluded or incompletely explored have been sites of theoretical expansion in over a century of observation: the role of the other, the self, the preoedipal period, action, the countertransference, limits to neutrality/anonymity/abstinence, the loci of the analytic drama, effects beyond interpretation, agency, and basic needs (versus wishes). These developments have led to conflicting theories and sect-like groupings within the field. Group psychological processes underlying this are discussed; and a broad and inclusive view of psychoanalysis is proposed under the heading of the study of the workings of mind. Additionally, substantial integrative proposals are offered with respect to the central tasks of individual development, theories of mind, the relational turn, and aspects of technique.

Keywords: Pluralism, psychoanalytic theory, integration of theory, multiple models, group psychology among analysts, observational science.

In this paper, I attempt to reconceptualize where psychoanalysis is today by replacing the term *pluralism* with a view of the field in terms of increased knowledge—knowledge, broadly, of the *workings of mind.* Both substantively and for purposes of exposition, I shall suggest that contributions summarized as pluralism can and should be seen as filling in gaps in areas that Freud specifically excluded or failed to develop fully

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enough. Among the examples I shall discuss are: object relations, the self, preoedipal development, action, agency, the impact of the analyst in the office, the "stages" on which the analytic drama takes place, and analytic impacts beyond interpretation. From an increased-knowledge standpoint, these contributions are all expansions of a single, broadening understanding of the workings of mind. From an observational-science standpoint, they are the fruits of over a century of observation through the psychoanalytic lens.

My aims are pragmatic as well as conceptual. In reviewing the history of psychoanalysis (and psychoanalytic publishing), Stepansky (2009) writes: "My argument is that in America the internal fractionation of psychoanalysis into rivalrous and even sect-like groupings and the marginalization of the field have proceeded in tandem over the past three decades; historically, the two trends are intertwined" (p. xvii).

Psychoanalysis does itself a disservice, in the public eye and in the eyes of those in neighboring academic and scientific fields, when it allows itself to be seen either as locked into the theories that Freud formulated from seventy to one hundred and ten years ago, or as a splintered field with varying sets of contradictory ideas, each with adherents that reject one another's views. This is not only a mistake conceptually, a mistake based on historical and group processes that shall be described, but it is also an unnecessary and grave error in terms of our professional identity and public image.

THE WORKINGS OF MIND

How to define psychoanalysis today? It can no longer readily be defined by the concepts of transference and resistance (Freud 1914a) because these terms have evolved enormously in themselves and are today only parts of a much larger whole; indeed, and by way of contrast only, at one point, Gabbard (1995) suggested that it is countertransference, rather, that is the new "common ground" of psychoanalysis.

Nor can psychoanalysis be defined by the oedipal "shibboleth" (Freud 1905), because so much work has been done regarding the pre-oedipal period, including even the earliest months of life. Nor can it be defined in terms of Freud's (1937) "bedrock" concepts of castration

anxiety and penis envy, again because so much has changed—with regard to even earlier central disturbances and crises in the case of the former, and because of our rethinking of the entire psychoanalytic *oeuvre* on women's psychology in the case of the latter.

Instead, I propose that psychoanalysis today may be defined as the study of the workings of mind. And, in light of that study for over a century, we can be much more articulate in defining that mind. It is the mind that is reality anchored yet idiosyncratically directed—the mind that is both internally driven and relationally responsive. And more broadly, psychoanalysis is the study of mind in all its aspects, but with a distinctive focus on its affectively suffused, unconsciously driven, characterologically shaped, historically distorted and burdened, relationally formed and contextualized, personally idiosyncratic, and self-conscious (or perhaps, better, self-state conscious) aspects—the mind that carries the history of object relational experiences, with all their strain trauma, idealizations, fears, and denials, and that is subject to shaping by unconscious fantasy, infantile wish, the painful sequelae of failed self states, and conflict and compromise among all of these.

While such a broad definition of psychoanalysis may seem too non-specific for some—as failing to represent sufficiently the privileged theories of many an analytic subgroup—it is in no way meant to exclude the centrality of a dynamic unconscious, of sexuality, aggression, repetition, and developmental pathology (deficits and defects), nor of the relational turn. In fact, it assumes the centrality of conflict, compromise, overdetermination, multiple function, and meanings hidden behind meanings in the thought process. But it does locate the unifying center of psychoanalytic ideas not at a metatheoretical level (where many incompatible ideas are to be found [see Killingmo 1985]), but in our observational base: that is, the clinical concepts found by psychoanalysts to be useful and necessary in understanding the psychic pain and personal dysfunction of analysands.

These concepts have grown through our specific form of psychoanalytic listening, involving a freely associating patient, "evenly hovering" analytic attention, and a setting of frequency, longevity, intimacy, privacy, and confidentiality of contact. Such communication and such listening are together inherently radical in their potential to lead us into new un-

derstandings of the functioning of mind. Our "unity," such as it is, lies in this *source* of our ideas.

Further, while such a broad definition of psychoanalysis may seem too promiscuously receptive to any and all new ideas, it is offered in full recognition and trust that in the marketplace of ideas, the useful ones survive and the idiosyncratic, tangential, and wrongheaded ones fade.

This expansion in our thinking about the mind's functioning reflects a growth in psychoanalytic understanding that follows from its position as a naturalistic, observation-based science. One can take all this, apply the term *pluralism,* and see it in terms of incompatible theories or a confused eclecticism. But we can also see this in terms of our steadily increasing understanding of the endlessly varied and subtle workings of the human mind. Though it is my impression that we have taken giant steps in the direction of breadth (as reflected in our journals and in reported clinical work), I shall explore how and why we have gotten to the place wherein psychoanalytic subgroups operate in different conceptual worlds, and how psychoanalytic understanding might otherwise have developed.

SOME HISTORICAL TRENDS AND GROUP PSYCHOLOGY

To start with, I believe that the power, beauty, range, and utility of Freud's overall conception gave it such an immense appeal that it became very natural to close the door on any "intruding" theories. Here was a conception that addressed infant and child development, adult character, psychoneuroses and other forms of psychopathology, and, via the concept of sublimation, also addressed creativity and humankind's highest achievements. And, even more basically, Freud gave us both the conviction that mind in its depths could be understood, and the psychoanalytic situation itself (couch, frequency of contact, free association, evenly hovering attention) through which that in-depth understanding could be pursued.

Massive contributions within the Freudian *oeuvre* were made over the years without ruffling any feathers. Even quiet though major theory changers like Loewald (1980) and Winnicott (1958a, 1965), who did

not emphasize how radical their writings were, have been accepted. But those who have challenged the basic assumptions—people like Bowlby (1969), then Kohut (1977), and later Mitchell (1988)—sent people to the barricades to defend the received Freudian position.

This has changed. Wallerstein (1994) has said that, historically,

> Freud's effort was to keep psychoanalysis safe from attacks from without and divisiveness within—and to see it not only as a science but a "movement," with all the calls to a dedicated and disciplined allegiance that that word connotes.

And more than a half century ago, Knight (1953) wrote: "Perhaps we are still standing too much in the shadow of that giant, Sigmund Freud, to permit ourselves to view psychoanalysis as a science of the mind rather than the doctrine of a founder" (p. 211). We are, I believe, largely out of that shadow today, yet some new ideas still arrive upon the scene and cast their own shadow through totalistic explanatory systems, similar doctrinaire qualities, and committed followers. Such views are inherently opposed to both/and, additive/discovery views of psychoanalysis; and they are contrary to an observational-science view in which it is assumed that new phenomena will be observed and described, enriching our understanding. New theories that make too complete a claim on understanding—like any claim that Freud's initial ideas were a sufficient basis for our understandings of mind—are not only premature but presumptuous in that claim.

But why do we, as a field, produce doctrines and followers? First, and beyond the specific substance of Freud's contribution, is the model set by Freud himself—his reach for a grand theory of mind. Corollary to this is Freud's (and subsequently the field's) antagonism toward certain new ideas (e.g., those of Jung, Adler, and later Ferenczi)—leading, I believe, to a tendency for some followers of the new ideas to set them up as oppositional to the dominant theory rather than as additions to it.

While this has probably had lasting influence on the creation of totalistic views that invite loyal adherence and vehement opposition, it is by no means the only factor. Other factors include, second, the essential vagueness of the phenomena with which we work in the psychoanalytic session, and the reassurance given to us by a theory that tells us what

to expect and how to work. Third is the isolation of the work, for a theory can serve as an intellectual transitional object (Winnicott 1953), as a companion—bringing along with it a group of co-adherents to the theory, present in the background, the others "who work like me, who share my views, who agree with the way I see things." And fourth is the pragmatics of belief systems. Within training institutes, marks of status—appointments to teach, to the role of training analyst, and referrals—are in part dependent upon shared beliefs (theories) and upon being seen to be one of the group, one of the "reliable" ones.

There are other considerations as well. Fifth among the sources of commitment to specific psychoanalytic belief systems is the appeal of specific theories that match one's own experience. I well recall how, in the more sexually repressive 1950s, those in my generation who read of Freud's emphasis on the centrality of sexuality would find a voice that spoke to us directly. Similarly, this occurs to a degree with a focus (in one theorist or another) on aggression, on mother–infant versus oedipal tri-angular conflicts, on internal life versus interpersonal life, on narcissism, or on greater or lesser degrees of activity by the analyst in the session—to give a few examples. We come to analytic work primed (though not fully governed) by our own tastes and preferences.

A sixth factor in the commitment to a specific analytic belief is the intellectual power and charisma of some new theorists, of those who can grab an idea, run with it, and carry many along in their wake. And last but not least is the fact that, by and large, we have no way to test our metatheories, to decide empirically in favor of this one or that one.

All this may lead to premature closure on our ideas rather than, as I propose, a view of ourselves as accumulating knowledge about the func-tioning of mind—the natural product of the observational-science aspect of psychoanalysis, and also of its narrative (Schafer 1992), "storytelling" aspect within which we describe and formulate our observations.

Above and beyond these specifics of psychoanalysis as a discipline and as an organization, our rational psychoanalytic egos are usually im-paired to some degree by our early psychoanalytic "fixations" (what we learned as we first started out), by our psychoanalytic idealizations (of theories or persons), and by our psychoanalytic "symptoms" (our unques-tioned technical automatisms) that may reflect something about each of

us personally—all phenomena that our work reveals to be present in life more generally as well.

Much of psychoanalytic theorizing follows a path that is distinctly at odds with the everyday work of psychoanalysts with their patients. The former, particularly in its metatheories, tends to offer models of mind, conceptions of how the mental apparatus works, the central issues that we play out and struggle with in mind and in living in the world, the crucial inner inputs and learnings that shape the developmental process, and, often following from these theories, specific foci and/or methods in the clinical work itself. Historically, however, these models have tended to be totalistic, forming a joining point for the like-minded. It is nevertheless my impression that most psychoanalytic clinicians, in contrast, in the privacy of their offices, while usually oriented by a particular psychoanalytic belief system, make use of whatever seems to fit the moment, drawing broadly from everywhere in psychoanalytic writings and in the individual clinician's personal experience. It has now been some time since Sandler (1983) pointed out that clinicians are often working in ways that do not fit their officially espoused theory, and without awareness of this, whatever that espoused theory is.

This gap between theoretical models and actual practice is reflected in lay perceptions of psychoanalysis in ways that are destructive for us. How many potential patients (at least in the United States) come for an initial consultation skeptical about having a "Freudian analysis," expecting the caricature of a silent analyst interested in sex primarily, and expecting the patient, through "transference," to fall in love with him or her—as though the field has not progressed beyond that and is stuck somewhere in the early 1900s? And even reasonably intelligent lay authors often turn to sex, the Oedipus complex, and transference (again, in this meaning, "falling in love with your analyst") in portraying psychoanalysis. This view, while containing a grain of truth, is nonetheless extremely limited, viewing the field as though it had not evolved and grown vastly more complex.

Previously, I have tried to show that our several models of mind (drive theory, ego psychology, object relations theory, and theories of the self) are not mutually exclusive and together represent a fuller view of mind than any model standing alone (see Pine 1985, 1990, 2003).

We have developed multiple views because the data of our work—that is, the phenomena of minds as we encounter them—require multiple views. The same can be said regarding our understanding of technique (Pine 2006). The vastly expanded meaning of the term *transference* and the radically changed view of the status of many countertransference phenomena are cases in point.

ACCUMULATING KNOWLEDGE AND THE GAPS IN FREUD'S LEGACY

I shall present a view of psychoanalysis as developing through the accumulation of knowledge, represented by the multiple aspects of mind, the omnipresence of the other, and our expanded understandings of the psychoanalytic situation and, consequently, of views of technique. Advance through the accumulation of knowledge puts us in the category of medicine or science, fields that can be similarly described. And though we are not by any means a hard science with clear-cut experimental evidence, we do in fact base our theoretical formulations, large and small, on empirical observation, accumulation of instances, and trial usage (by ourselves and by others) of these formulations in work with patients. While psychoanalytic technique, with all its requirements of tact, talent, character, and broad knowledge, may be more art-like than science-like, our theorizing, based upon up-close observation of the functioning of minds, can make the claim to be science-like.

I shall illustrate the idea of the accumulation of knowledge by noting how new developments in psychoanalysis have filled in the places that Freud explicitly tried to sideline or that he left undeveloped or incompletely developed. Although much post-Freud psychoanalytic writing can be shown to be "already in Freud," here I shift the emphasis—showing how things have developed sufficiently to be recognized and welcomed as significant additions to our knowledge.

The Role of the Other

Freud began with the seduction theory. The child is subjected to sexual intrusions that are too much to deal with, hence traumatic, and provide the seeds of later pathology. As he became dissatisfied with this

as a universal explanation for the development of neurosis, and as he developed his view of infantile sexuality (Freud 1905)—the infant's and child's sensual pleasures and frustrations, the fantasies that arose from around them, and the inner conflicts all this engendered—took center stage instead.

In parallel, in a psychoanalysis, the focus turned heavily toward the internal life of the analysand. Now the external world and the persons in it (the patient's "objects") came to have reduced importance, replaced by attention to the patient's fantasies and the uses and distortions that he or she brought to relationships and memories; the "object" was now the thing through which the drives were gratified (Freud 1915), rather than a whole person in interaction. Though the role of the other-as-person could never disappear in actual clinical work, theory regarding that role was minimal, reduced to such issues as overgratification, undergratification, or distorted gratification of the drives. But knowing as we do about people's lives and their associational processes when on the couch, we can be sure that the other-as-person has always played a significant role in day-to-day sessions.

I would speculate that an underlying factor in the sparse theorizing regarding the role of the other was that Freud was reaching for a universal theory. The concept of sexual drives—their inborn status and their epigenetic unfolding—provided the basis for such a theory. Though the drives became individualized as they were psychically represented and shaped by personal history, they were grounded in the universals of biology. Object relations, in their seemingly infinite variability, did not hold out an analogous promise for a universal theory.

But then ways were developed to *theorize* these object relations: specifically, the idea that painful object relations during an individual's development and the strain trauma (Kris 1956) associated with them were internalized and endlessly repeated in efforts (often failed ones) at mastery. This idea provided a universalist concept (not about content, but about internalization of the formerly external) beyond the vagaries of individual object relational experience.

In any event, Freud's (theoretical) diminution of the role of the other, after he had turned from the seduction theory to the theory of infantile sexuality, could not make the role of the other disappear. And it

has come back with great force. Object relations theory—specifically, the internalization and repetition (or reversal) of early object relations—now has a place in clinical practice fully equal to that of the drives and defenses against them. Of course, the two formulations are not unrelated, given that the growing child's sensual and sexual experiences are intimately involved in relations with primary objects, and are often the affectively intense part of those relationships. So, filling in what Freud undertheorized, the object, long relatively sidelined in favor of the intrapsychic, refound its place in the psychoanalytic understanding of the mind and of development.

The role of the other—in this case, the analyst—has also come powerfully into our understanding of the psychoanalytic situation. But more on that shortly.

The Self

The Strachey translation of the *Standard Edition of the Work of Sigmund Freud* is generally credited with having fairly consistently replaced the word *I* with the word *ego* (though in Freud's German text, both were used), supposedly in order to portray a more definable science-like concept, instead of the rather soft, vague, and subjective concept of *I*—or, in today's literature, the *self.* The term *ego* can be defined as that part of the mind that attends to defense, adaptation, and reality testing, and as such it fits in indispensably with the view of mind as a set of forces in conflict with one another.

But, like the *other* as discussed above, the *self* is not that easily dismissed. It is too much a part of our ongoing inner experience. It is both a concept we carry about ourselves (Hartmann 1950)—such as "I'm a kind person" or "I wasn't myself when I did that"—and a central subjective experience; and that subjectivity that belongs to us is one that we have to assume belongs to our patients as well.

The concept of self, and particularly its subjective aspect, came back powerfully in the hands of Kohut (1971, 1977, 1984), who, over time, placed it at the very center of his view of normal and pathological development and as the central focus in his view of the psychoanalytic process. While there was intense opposition to his formulations when

they were first offered, they have clearly entered into our mainstream literature—I believe, in fact, with our collective sigh of relief that the language of human experience (not necessarily Kohut's specific theory) has found its place. This place comfortably coexists with the concept of *ego;* the latter gives recognition to those aspects of mind that function for defense, adaptation, and reality testing—something quite different from a subjective experience or a concept of self.

The field has thus been enriched. We have accumulated further understanding. We cannot get by solely with the idea that the self is a concept within the ego (Hartmann 1950) because it is also, and prominently, a subjective state, organized around boundaries (Mahler, Pine, and Bergman 1975), genuineness (Winnicott 1960a), wholeness, continuity, and esteem (Kohut 1977, 1984), and a sense of agency—or weaknesses and distortions in any of these.

But prior to Kohut, the early psychoanalytic baby watchers—Spitz (1957), Winnicott (1960a), and Mahler (1963)—had also found the concept of *self* to be indispensable for the description of the emergence of mind in the infant. There was more to the infant than drives, and there was also no way that the self—as vague and subjective as that word is—was going to go unnoticed. Again, we filled in what had been sparse and undeveloped in Freud's work and that of the early analysts; we added to our understanding as we accumulated knowledge.

The Preoedipal Period

It was Balint (1968) who pointed out that we needed to describe what the preoedipal period *is,* and not only what it is *pre*—i.e., what it comes before. Although Freud had declared the acceptance of the centrality of the Oedipus complex as the shibboleth (1905)—the marker—of the psychoanalyst, he had also written quite extensively on preoedipal developments. He did so most articulately with his understandings of the psychosexual stages, including the preoedipal stages of orality, anality, and the partial drive states of voyeurism, exhibitionism, sadism, and masochism.

Here again, later writers have brought important new ideas to the understanding of this early period. I include Spitz (1957), once more,

on the emergence of the concepts of other and self; Mahler (1972) on the separation-individuation process; Bowlby (1969) on attachment; Winnicott (1960a) on the false self, on the intimate dependencies of mother and infant (1960b), and on the mother's role—"survival" (1963)—in facilitating the infant's ownership of impulses (1958b); and others who have recently written on early procedural learning (e.g., Wolf et al. 2000), to name just some of the major contributors in this area. Freud (1930) reached for some of these ideas with his brief discussion of the *oceanic feeling* (in response to Romain Rolland) and primary narcissism (Freud 1914b), though his most developed formulations were with respect to the preoedipal aspects of the psychosexual line of development. Later writers have enormously expanded our understanding of the beginnings of psychic life.

It should be noted that each of these later additional understandings conceptualizes a more significant role of the other, the *object*—through attachment, development of the concept of self and other and the boundaries between them, and Balint's (1968) "harmonious interpenetrating mix-up" of the earliest period of development. We have a vastly more differentiated view of this early developmental period today, and it is steadily broadened and deepened by current researchers.

Action as a Mode of Expression

Freud recognized multiple modalities through which inner life (both conscious and unconscious) found its way to expression. Prime among these were thought, affect, and image. The whole free-association process was built upon thought and language, including both the attempt to put volitional thought aside in free association and the analysand's more directed thought in exercising his or her observer function. Affects were thought of as derivatives of the drives, as well as (and especially after the second anxiety theory) signals of danger or comfort of one sort or another in inner life or in the relation to the world. Affects, either as drive derivative or as signal, tell us about the internal goings-on of the moment, and are represented heavily in the communicative process. Images as a form of expression had their principal place in the dream, a site of immense importance in the development of Freud's thinking.

So thought, affect, and image were what the analyst attended to in decoding the inner life of the analysand.

But what of action? For Freud, by and large action was to be contained. That was one function served by the couch; because of its constraint upon action, free association could be freer. And, conceptually, dreams were similarly understood as freer, with the censor relaxing at night when the person was sleeping and action was not possible—hence dreams as the royal road to the understanding of the unconscious (Freud 1900).

There was, however, one exception, an exception of immense clinical significance, to this attempt to put action to the side. Freud's principal view of therapeutic action was that the uncovering and reconstruction of the past, through the process of remembering, would free the analysand of neurosis. Yet, as he reports in "Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through" (1914c), he had become aware that patients generally *act out* or *repeat* rather than remember. This takes the form of acting as though the analyst were in fact a significant figure from the past; what was repressed as a memory appears as a reenactment in the transference. For Freud, transference still took the form of "you think you are speaking about me, but it is really about someone back then."

Today this exception regarding action has become, for some analysts, the rule; for almost all analysts, it is at least given a much broader role in the understanding of the psychoanalytic situation. The action part of the "repeating rather than remembering" is now fully seen as a major clue to mental life and is, in fact, central to the whole focus on the "here-and-now" transference—the patient's behavior, expressive style, and pressures upon the analyst while in the analytic office. These forms of *action* include physical presence, emotional impact, and voice tone and pace, in addition to the more usual actions of large motor behaviors; and language is seen in its action aspect as having impact, aside from its particular content and meanings.

Further, the whole idea of the repetition compulsion (Freud 1920), which Freud ultimately attributed to the tendency for life to return to the inanimate by processes of entropy (hence also the death instinct), is in fact illustrated by him in terms of trauma that cannot be mastered (the *fort-da* sequence [Freud 1920, p. 15] and repetition in the war neuroses)

and is therefore repeated in action. In this way repetition in action also underlies the whole concept of internalized object relations—that is, the repetition in action of early relations to significant others that acted as strain trauma (Kris 1956). (For a more extended discussion of this, see Pine 1985, p. 65.)[1]

So, once again, there has been an accumulation of knowledge in psychoanalysis, filling in where Freud was only sketchy, or—as here, with regard to action—where he gave mixed messages, with a central aspect focused on the gains of keeping action under control, not under the analytic microscope.

Use of the Countertransference

Freud's early recommendation was that an analyst return to treatment every five years or so; this was largely to maintain sufficient self-awareness to keep countertransferences under control. His recognition of the danger of the analyst's unconsciously (or consciously) subtly influencing or grossly invading the process out of personal need led to this recommendation. This was set against the background of Freud's long personal struggle against charges of "suggestion" as the operative force in a psychoanalysis.

But today countertransference has come back centrally into our theory of technique—another phenomenon that has moved from the banished to center stage. Via concepts like *induced states* or *projective identification* (in its two-person form), and like unconscious communication, the finding of the patient by looking into ourselves has become a recognized mode of discovery (Bollas 1983; Heimann 1950; Racker 1953). This increases the need for the analyst's self-observation, whether or not this entails a return to analysis, because of the danger of attribution to the patient of what in fact reflects only ourselves.

Thus, everywhere we turn we can see expanding knowledge through filling in the gaps. None of this need be described as *pluralism.* It is

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[1] In my reading of it, "repeating rather than remembering" carried a somewhat pejorative tone, the true aim being to move toward remembering; repeating in action was a detour, though apparently a necessary one in human functioning. I believe that this pejorative tone is what provided the slippage into the use of the term *acting out* to describe those who behave antisocially, without regard to any such idea as repeating rather than remembering, but simply pejoratively.

better described as the accumulation of knowledge of the functioning of minds.

Neutrality, Anonymity, and Abstinence

As in the case of control of countertransference, focus on this triad of controls upon the analyst's expressiveness was intended to allow the patient to lead the way in the session and in the whole process. Wisely so, I believe. The analyst's neutrality (not taking a position with regard to conflict, but focusing on analyzing), anonymity (keeping one's self out of the picture as much as possible), and abstinence (in particular, not gratifying sexual wishes or participating in angry interactions) are all meant to protect the patient from incursions by the analyst.

But, as has now been pointed out by many, total neutrality, anonymity, and abstinence are not possible. Analysts are persons, and they bring their personness into their work, both with and without awareness and inner regulation. As Gill (1994) highlighted, since the analyst's presence as an influence is bound to be in the room, it is best to be aware of it and to analyze it as it affects the process (rather than deny it or pretend it does not exist). And as he also pointed out, neutrality, anonymity, and abstinence, in whatever form they appear for a particular analyst, are themselves presentations of a person, and as such have an influence. Since we cannot make this element disappear completely, we should be alert to it and be prepared to analyze its impact as necessary.

The Stages on Which the Analytic Drama Unfolds

For Freud, the analysis unfolded on several stages (in the sense of sites of action, as in a theater). Principally, these were the present life, the remembered and reconstructed past, and, perhaps most centrally, the transference and the dream. But following from the points described above under "Action as a Mode of Expression," "Use of the Countertransference" (in particular, the so-called positive countertransference), and "Neutrality, Anonymity, and Abstinence" (particularly breaks in this triad), we now understand that there is another major stage for the unfolding of the analysis: that is, the here and now of the office. Things are taking place between analyst and patient; the patient is inducing some-

thing in the analyst through behavior, mood, tempo, or whatever; the patient is bringing in aspects of character and of history through movements, moods, voice. The two persons each bring their subjectivity to the process, and they influence and relate to one another in innumerable subtle ways.

My impression is that these qualities characterize some individuals, and therefore some analyses, vastly more than they do others, but I shall discuss this more fully shortly. In any event, none of this need lead to an "anything goes" view of the process, but alerts us to a reality that requires attention—sometimes interpretation, sometimes silent learning, and sometimes self-control. But, less plagued by Freud's concern with the impact of suggestion, we have opened our eyes to the subtleties of human interaction in the office.

Interpretation and Beyond

Gedo (1979) used the term *beyond interpretation*—the title of his book—to cover some of the many ways in which analytic impact occurs other than through interpretation. In its most sparse, severe, or most unique form, psychoanalysis is seen as a process through which interpretation alone produces change (*structural change,* originally seen as occurring in the relations among drives, ego, and superego). Eissler's (1953) classic paper, now much criticized (Panel 1994), states this most baldly. But the idea fits with Freud's aim for psychoanalysis to be a science in which knowledge plays a central role: "Where id was, there shall ego be" (Freud 1933, p. 80).

But with the perspective of time and with greater understanding of child development, we can see that the ego grows not only through knowledge, but also through supportive relationships and powerful identifications. So, too, does growth occur in the analytic process. Whenever an analysis is going well, the patient makes identifications with the analyst's analytic function—that is, with the analyst presented as consistently thoughtful, reliable, using mind to understand mind, and the like. And all analyses contain supportive interventions (Wallerstein 1986) that seem to contribute their share to so-called structural change.

While Alexander's (1956) concept of the *corrective emotional experience* (p. 100) was rejected because of its playacting aspect, in its more

straightforward aspect it is everywhere in our work. Rare is the analyst today who does not recognize that the analyst is a "new object" for the adult (just as has always been recognized for the child), or comes to be experienced that way over time, and that this is a basic fact of the process. This does not mean that aspects even of positive identifications or support found in the analyst's reliability and hope may not be subject to analysis—at times and for some analysands. But it is a myth to pretend that this is, or should be, pursued in every instance. There is too much else to do (or not do) in the sessions.

Agency and Other Expansions in Theories of Motivation

It was central to Freud's massive contribution to give center stage to the unconscious mind in human life. Motives of which we are not conscious drive much of our behavior, underlie our fears, and find compromise expression in our symptoms and character traits. Lichtenberg (1989) and others have expanded our views on the sources of motivation.

Elsewhere (Pine 2005) I have discussed how, in addition to the proactive motives of drive expression and control, there are proactive tendencies (acting as motivations) to repeat the strain-trauma-producing experiences of childhood, the internalized object relationships. And beyond these are the tendencies to maintain sameness (also acting as motivations)—sameness in the achieved organizations of mind (seen in resistances to change) and in maintaining a stable sense of self.

But something about conscious intent, perhaps because it was thoroughly taken for granted, had not been sufficiently theorized. Into this gap, in a language current in today's literature, came the recognition of *agency*. In briefest form, the concept of agency can be thought of as an individual's capacity to live by the terms "I want" or "I will do" or "I shall not"—i.e., *awareness* of and behavioral implementation of personal aims. The person lives his or her aims rather than "being lived by" them. Rapaport (1953) in his concept of ego activity, Schafer (1976) in his *action language,* G. S. Klein (1976) in his focus on the person in motivation, and Person (2002) in the centrality she gives to personal power and, explicitly, agency, are all thinking in ways related to this domain.

The concept of agency gives recognition to an inner sense of being an active agent, a *source* of activity rather than a passive actor driven by inner states. It thus refers to awareness, choice, and capacity to govern personal action. Winnicott (1960a) described how early urges (the prototype being hunger) can be experienced as impingements, as not part of the self, but how—in time and if development goes well—the child can develop recognition of these urges, a sense of ownership of them, familiarity with how they work, a trust that they will be satisfied (and therefore need not be disruptive), and a sense of choice about their gratification. In this sense, they become parts of and enrichments of the self rather than impingements. Much about the infant's need satisfaction is passive; its needs are met from the outside. *Agency* refers to the growing capacity to be active in relation to need satisfaction and elsewhere.

A person's conscious "I want" or "I shall" or "I will not" is often reflective of a strong ego (adaptive and reality oriented) and is a central constituent as well of a firm subjective sense of self. Like all the other additions to our understanding, this one, too—agency—is additive, not substitutive, with regard to prior understandings. Again, we have enriched our understanding.

Needs and Wishes

The distinctive and superordinate feature of psychoanalytic motivation theory has not only been the idea of unconscious motivation, but also the more specific idea that such motivation is organized around unconscious wishes for particular forms of gratification, unconscious guilt in relation to those wishes, and equally unconscious defenses against the wishes. But with the introduction of deficit views of human psychopathology, wishes have (for some theorists) lost their place as *the* organizing forces in the mind; and needs, specifically unmet needs, have taken a place alongside them. This view is associated with Kohut's (1977, 1984) writings and with Winnicott's (1965) before that. Lichtenberg (1989) has included ideas like these centrally in his theoretical writings, and Akhtar (1999) has thoroughly reviewed the whole area and the conceptual issues inherent in it.

Unmet needs have variant status with regard to consciousness. The basic needs for feeding and care, for personal recognition, for safety

(Sandler 1960), for activity, exploration, and play (White 1963), *when unmet,* often become more "noisy"—i.e., noticeable in inner experience. Ungratified *wishes* seem more repressible or displaceable than unmet *needs.* However, it is not always the case that unmet needs are noticeable to the patient; they, too, can be warded off, and sometimes reemerge only during a psychoanalytic treatment when something about the work revives the sense of an unmet need (Pine 1994). But their status is different from wishes; they are *felt* as developmental necessities, and for the optimal development of the young child they probably are.

For expository purposes only, I shall try to link some of the basic needs to developments in the core regions of mental function that are central to psychoanalytic thinking. Thus, the developmental need to be "held"—Winnicott's (1960b) concept that refers, broadly, to the total environmental provision that supplements and protects the infant's functioning until it can function for itself and see the other in more differentiated ways—is central to the development of stable, trusting, and reliable object relations. And the developmental need to be seen, recognized, valued, appreciated—as described in Kohut's (1977, 1984) various writings—is central to the development of a stable sense of self, to the feeling of worth, but, even more basically, to the feeling of existing.

The developmental need for timely and adequate gratification of hunger can be seen as providing the first step in drive regulation and the "ownership" of urges, as described, once again, by Winnicott (1960a). And there is a developmental need for what Sandler (1960) refers to as *safety*—a form of safety requiring explication. In his paper, Sandler focuses on the infant's inborn press for *perceptual* stability in a predictable world, a stability that creates a positive ego tone and is the background for the development of a strong ego, including the reality principle.[2] But this can be seen as a basic need—the need for the provision of a predictable perceptual world, a world in which things make sense, reoccur, and can be anticipated and recognized; in such a setting, effective ego functioning can emerge.

Thus, we can schematically think of fulfillment of some of the basic human needs as groundwork for the optimal development of trusting

[2] I wish to thank Deborah Browning, Ph.D., for calling this particular understanding to my attention.

object relations, a core sense of self, the regulation and ownership of drives, and a well-functioning ego. Conversely, the recognition and management of unmet or faultily met developmental needs have come to be a central aspect of the clinical work with some or many patients, and the technical challenges these present are indeed formidable (Pine 1992). Speaking spatially, needs can be seen as occupying a space "underneath"—more basic than—unconscious motivation organized around wishes. To varying degrees and in different individuals, we see varying combinations of the residue of unmet needs and ongoing conflicts and the mix of both (Pine 1994).

As I have attempted to demonstrate with this list, psychoanalysts have been engaged in the study of the workings of mind in all its aspects, and through this we have expanded our knowledge base enormously. There *are* different models of mind in our field, and strong differences in preferred technique in the psychoanalytic process. But they are differences that describe the functioning of, varyingly, *aspects* of mind, or of *one person's* mind (but less so another's), or of this mind *at this time* though not at other times. Our learnings are all additive. We have steadily accumulated understandings of the workings of mind.

SOME ISSUES IN PSYCHOANALYSIS TODAY

The understandings we have collectively achieved through our attempts to make sense of the minds, the development, the current lives, and the analytic processes of our patients transcend any specific theory of mind now extant. All our descriptions and theories are part of a much larger whole. That whole is not simple and not integrated, but it is where we are. Everything that I include in this paper, the great breadth of psychoanalytic understandings, has been relevant for me during one or another or many an analytic treatment.

Generally, the expansions in my own thinking have come because a particular patient was insistent (in one way or another) that I hear him or her as intended, and not as I was hearing at that particular moment. Often, also, these new ways of understanding have been possible because I was aware of something in our literature that described related thinking, a literature that had not become part of my sphere of clinical

thinking but permitted a readiness when a particular patient forced an education upon me.

This growth is why, at the outset, I defined the field in terms of the study of the workings of mind, the mind that we have come to know through psychoanalyses, the mind that is reality anchored yet idiosyncratically directed—the mind that is both internally driven and relationally shaped. I have tried to demonstrate what I said at the outset: that we study mind in *all* its aspects, but with a distinctive focus on its affectively suffused, unconsciously driven, characterologically shaped, historically distorted and burdened, relationally formed and contextualized, personally idiosyncratic, and self-conscious or self-state conscious aspects. This is the mind that carries the history of object relational experiences, with all their strain trauma, idealizations, fears, and denials, and that is subject to shaping by unconscious fantasy, infantile wish, the painful sequelae of failed self states, and conflict and compromise among them all.

We are, however, as a field, far more than just a collection of understandings. We have various organizing themes around which our understandings cohere. I shall discuss four of these as I conclude: the central tasks of individual development, the central psychological issues of adult mental functioning, the intrapsychic/interpersonal dimension in the functioning of mind, and the loci of work in a clinical psychoanalysis.

The Tasks of Development

While Freud's theories touched on much of what later became central, they nonetheless gave central developmental place to the oedipal triangle—the forms of its conflicts and resolutions seen to be reverberating through an individual's life. As previously noted, for Freud (1905), this became the shibboleth defining the psychoanalyst. Following him, other analysts proposed quite different central organizing developmental issues and crises, whether as additions or replacements to oedipal issues.

Klein's (1946) writings on the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions offer another take on drive development from the standpoint of internal objects, though not yet real object relations. Symbiosis and separation-individuation, the infant's need for mirroring and then for idealizing in the process of self formation, and the formation of gender

identity and of basic attachment style have each been described as a major defining point in individual development.

Which ones of these will present as central in the life of any particular patient? In the light of these expansions in our understanding, I view the issue of centrality as a clinical/empirical question to be answered with each new analysand, and not a theoretical one; and if the analyst's theory determines the answer, the patient may not be heard. I oppose the idea that priority should be given, or even expected, to any specific developmental issue—be it oedipal, self-formation, paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions, separation-individuation, gender identity formation, attachment, or any other.

Clinical experience (as I read my own) teaches that every patient confronts each of these issues during the course of development and deals with each in some way—subject to family dynamics, unknown biological givens, and adventitious events. Those issues that have not been dealt with well become the center of that particular individual's analysis; they creep in every side door, repetitiously and varyingly. Those that have been dealt with relatively smoothly earlier on in development do not take center stage in that particular analysis.

Of course, these are not either-or outcomes, and every degree of variation between disturbance and smooth functioning may be seen. Furthermore, the residues of all the developmental steps affect an individual's character, capacities, and preferences, whether or not they call for analytic attention.

Thus, our broadening understandings of aspects of the developmental process are readily organized under the idea that any one or more of them may be central in any particular analysis, with those that have not been resolved or more problematically resolved taking center stage. There is no room clinically for a theory-based assumption regarding which developmental issue will be central.

The Psychological Issues of Adult Mental Functioning

While we have accumulated uncountable understandings of the development and functioning of mind, these understandings are largely organized around the central themes of drive and defense, object relations, ego function, and the development of a sense of self. And, as just

described, any of these can develop and function poorly or well. Roughly in the sequence in which they have been formulated by analysts, we now have conceptualizations of:

(1) inborn "drives" and their later expression in symptoms, character traits, sublimations, and such momentary phenomena as dreams, errors, and humor;

(2) ego functioning in relation to defense against these drives, adaptation to the external world, and reality testing (which enables differentiation between that internal drive-organized world and the world outside our own selves)—and these functions can be riddled with defects of, say, impulse control, affect regulation, or object constancy, as a product of faulty development;

(3) relations to internal objects (personifications of early affective/bodily/interpersonal states) that are carried lifelong as intrapsychic persecutory, threatening, or consoling and supportive presences;

(4) internalized object relationships endlessly played out upon others in active and passive forms, and based on fantasy and on early relationships *as experienced* (not necessarily matching "actuality"); and

(5) phenomena of self experience, which today can be broadly defined to include boundaries, self-esteem, integration, and continuity in the sense of self, as well as genuineness or falsity of the self, and *agency*.

Furthermore, similar to the factors that affect which developmental tasks are poorly or well managed, the place of each in the hierarchy of individual motives is determined by unknown biological contributions, adventitious developmental circumstances, and, most frequently, by familial response, familial models, and familial pathologies.

While historically in the development of psychoanalysis, these have often been viewed as incompatible theories, they are not incompatible in terms of the observations out of which they grow. The multiple observations of mind simply exist and cannot be ignored. That theories with incompatible basic assumptions (cf. Killingmo 1985) have been developed out of these observations is a function of the choice that par-

ticular individuals or groups have made in an effort to make sense of the intrapsychic world. These theoretical choices, however, are not data-driven and we need not be bound by any one of them. Together, the several descriptions of the functioning of mind capture a very significant proportion of what we encounter and understand through adult clinical psychoanalyses.

Previously (Pine 1990, 2006), I have attempted to use an extension of Waelder's (1936) writings on multiple function as a practical mode of conceptually tying them together. I have noted Waelder's view that every psychic act can be seen as having functions with respect to the drives, the superego, external reality, and the compulsion to repeat. The *degree* to which any of these functions is being served varies significantly, however, leaving room for the clinician's task of judging what is most central.

I suggested a modification and an addition to Waelder's list. The modification is to see repetition specifically in terms of the repetition of internalized object relationships (rather than Freud's more abstract proposition regarding entropy and the death instinct, but linked to his actual examples, such as the *fort-da* example). The addition is to suggest that every psychic act also has functions with regard to regulation of the current self state. This is an in-principle mode of reconciliation of the several issues of mind; it says that it is useful to keep these multiple functions in mind so as to be alert to the potential presence of any or all of them. It does not require proof that all functions are served by every psychic act. But this reconciliation can be our implicit assumption as we listen to the clinical material that comes our way; and, in any event, it offers a way of making room for the several issues of mental function in our understanding of the workings of mind and a way of keeping our minds open to the multiple possibilities carried by every psychic act.

The Intrapsychic/Interpersonal Dimension

In the last few decades, the insistent intrapsychic focus of psychoanalytic theory and clinical work has been challenged by a variety of overlapping views highlighting the role of the other. The two-person psychology of Gill (1994) and others; the relational theory of Mitchell (1988), Aron (1996), and others; the intersubjectivity of Stolorow (1988), Ogden (1994), and others—all these are built upon the interpersonal theory

of Sullivan (1953), which long precedes the current flood of ideas. Furthermore, they all shift the focus, relatively, from the *intrapsychic* life of the single person to the *interpsychic* lives of two persons. This involves mutual impact and responsiveness between the two, the subtle shaping of each by the other, and the unique way each experiences the other as a product of not just one mind, but of the way each mind takes in the other mind in unique terms.

This is something Ogden (1994) tries to capture with the *analytic third,* the unique "third" presence in the office where it seems that only two people sit. Taking into account Bowlby's (1969) work on attachment, Winnicott's (1975) "there is no such thing as a baby" (i.e., there is only a baby and mother interactively), and a large body of recent infant work on early interaction (Beebe and Lachmann 1988; Stern 1985; Tronick 2003), the two-personness of each individual is seen as having strong roots in the development of every human being.

What follows from this? Should we erase the intrapsychic? Yet we do have the experience of a *self.* We know we interact with and are responsive to others, but that does not stop us from feeling we exist as individuals within our own skins, in our own minds. And we grant that experience to others as well. Yet we cannot write off interactive responsiveness.

We cannot resolve this dilemma conceptually—a dilemma that has been described with respect to the development of the child; the analytic triad of neutrality, anonymity, and abstinence (can the analyst really eliminate him- or herself as a presence?); and to the entire psychoanalytic enterprise.

All this is like a story I have frequently recalled hearing as a child. It goes like this: scientists have shown that, because of the small size of its wings compared to the bulk of its body, the bumblebee cannot fly. The bumblebee, not knowing this, flies anyway. I would ask, are we bumblebees? Do we often feel and act as though we live in a one-person-psychology world despite the dilemma I have described?

One of the problems endemic to psychoanalytic argument is the fact that it is always possible to find (or imagine, or postulate the unconscious presence of) some shard, hint, or "derivative" of whatever our favorite concept is. Thus, drive derivatives are always present—or, for Brenner (2002), drive derivative, superego derivative, defense, and anx-

iety or other unpleasant affect are always present. Or we might claim that the reenactment of internalized object relations is always present, or self derivatives are always present, or—as in our present instance—the presence of the other is always present, in some form, within our own behavior. We cannot rule this out and we cannot prove the negative, the nonexistence of a particular phenomenon in any of its derivative forms.

But what do we do in practice—i.e., with our patients? Two things, I believe. We carry within our analytic working minds the recognition of one-personness and two-personness, just as we carry the ideas of oedipal and preoedipal, of expressive force and defensive activity, of conflict centrality and deficit centrality. That is, we bring to bear all of what psychoanalysis has taught us as we sit with our patients.

And second, we try to connect to whatever domain our clinical listening tells us is affectively central for this particular patient right now. This analytic maxim, to go to what is central and present, should apply to the transference or the extratransference, the self or the drive, the preoedipal or the oedipal, as well as to the two-person or the one-person viewpoint.

And yet the question can be raised of who decides, and how does the analyst—who is subject to interpersonal influence and to his or her own subjectivity—decide? *As best as he or she can,* I might reply—with awareness that there are always second chances to get it more right in analysis if our interventions seem to be landing in the wrong place. Behavior is overdetermined and multiply functional. We cannot deal with all its aspects at every moment. So we focus on what seems—to us, and how could it be otherwise?—to be central.

Let me detour for a moment through the large body of work on *field dependence* and *field independence* by Herman Witkin (Witkin et al. 1974) and many others who followed him. These were studies of an individual difference variable that bears on the present subject. One of Witkin's prototypic measures was the tilting-chair/tilting-room experiment. The experimental subject enters a large enclosed, windowless cube (perhaps six feet in each dimension) and is seated on a chair inside. The large cube (the "room") can be tilted to any angle, and the chair can be tilted at any angle inside it, independently. The subject enters, sits, and the

room and the chair are then tilted. The subject's task is to set the chair to the true vertical (with reference to the *outside* room, not to the cube—in effect, to the earth itself).

Some persons are highly dependent upon the field of vision—the cube—and set the "vertical" more or less in relation to that. Others are quite independent of the field of vision and seem to use bodily cues to determine the true vertical with respect to the outside-the-cube world. Field dependence and field independence turn out to be very stable characteristics that can be assessed across a large range of experimental procedures. For example, field-dependent individuals remember faces much more than do field-independent individuals, and are more prone to shame (other-directed) than to guilt.

The relevance for us should be obvious. Dependence on the field, i.e., the other, varies among individuals; no one is always one way, but some are more in their own heads and bodies than others. And some are more alert to the interpersonal and physical field around them than others. The body of research is impressive. But we also come to know this as we listen to our particular patients. And we can be aware of this phenomenon more readily today, now that two-person, relational, intersubjective theories have forced us to reconsider any exclusively intrapsychic focus. If the patient's focus on the within-self or the between-selves seems to be defensive or denying, then we may have to enter in to locate the defended-against part. If that is where that patient "lives" emotional life, then that is the place the analyst should be—either in the one-person world or the two-person world. Whatever the analyst's preferred theory, the patient's functioning at the moment takes center stage. We do not want to subject patients to our theoretical "always"—whether that *always* is intrapsychic or interpsychic.

Of course, many things are both/and (not either/or), and everyone is probably both/and (rather than either/or) at varying times during the analysis. But in all regions of disputed preferences—drive-defense, oedipal-preoedipal, conflict-deficit, drive-self, drive-object, and intrapsychic-interpsychic—we seek to find the patient's present whereabouts.

This discussion leads directly to my fourth and last subject.

The Loci of Work in a Clinical Psychoanalysis: Stages[3]

Freud carried out his self-analysis largely on the stage of dreams and associations; though he worked with transference with his patients from early on, he did not have this available in a self-analysis. Since then we have become aware of many more stages of the analytic drama. Freud might well not recognize *transference* as we understand it today. Starting from his "you think you are talking about me, but it is really someone else back then," transference has moved on to "you think you are talking about someone else, out there or back then, but it is really about me" (e.g., Gill 1982). Couch (1995), writing of his analysis with Anna Freud, said she never took this conceptual step, a point that highlights that it is indeed a change. And change did not stop there. It moved, for many, to "it does not matter what you are talking about, for things are happening between us right here in the room, and that is the site of the analytic drama" (e.g., Joseph 1985).

That *between us* and *here and now* reflects a whole set of additional stages of the analytic drama that have been formulated in recent decades. So now we work with countertransference responses as empathic "readings" of the patient, affective states in the analyst induced by the patient, transference-countertransference enactments and role responsiveness, and analyst–analysand interactions of innumerable sorts. Still, the other stages cannot be put aside. Work on the stage of the dream, which sometimes provides access to early memories (Brakel 1993; Bucci 1985; Pulver 1987), additionally holds special possibilities for emotional conviction when an entirely unexpected association transforms the obscure and nonsensical dream to a meaningful personal revelation.

The conceptually neglected stage of the patient's current outside life deserves our full attention as well, because it is frequently the place where the patient's main affective involvement lies. We bring things into the transference to go where the emotional heat is, but we should not forget that life has that heat, too. Each new life situation can get "grabbed" by the patient's old urges and conflicts and become the site of one more repetition of something from inside or from the past.

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[3] I use the term *stages* here as earlier: to refer to sites on which the analytic action is expressed, not with reference to temporal stages of analysis or of development.

In addition, work on the stage of the remembered and reconstructed life history, so central in Freud's "archaeological" view, can provide a frame for the patient's overall understanding of his or her life—a frame that can be immensely useful in eventual self-analysis, that holds the possibility for self-acceptance of one's only historical reality (life cannot be lived over), and, in instances of defect (in ego functions) or deficit (in caretaker input), sometimes provides the psychic distance necessary for the patient to approach these issues without severe humiliation and narcissistic wounding. Today, an analyst who does not include the potential for working with any and all these stages on which the analytic action may be expressed may not hear the language in which one or another patient tells his or her story.

Putting together all that I have been discussing in this section of the paper, I suggest that any of the issues of mind, representing residue of any of the crises and choice points in development, can find expression on any of the stages of the analytic drama in the sessions. Further, and in reverse, on whichever of the many stages the current analytic action is being expressed, the substantive meanings thus expressed, when understood in depth, will still have to do with the same basic issues of mind and development.

Those are the issues of human functioning that we have come to understand through a century of psychoanalytic observation; and all of those mentioned are the sites of the analytic action that we have learned to be attuned to.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this paper, I have tried to replace the concept of pluralism with a view of psychoanalysis as having accumulated extensive knowledge about the workings of mind. This view represents a commitment, in Kernberg's (1986) terms, to the scientific aspects of psychoanalysis rather than its religious aspects. The former is open and exploratory; the latter, more ritualistic and loyal to doctrine. Unfortunately, as I see it, the religious aspect comes to apply, for some, to new theories that replace the old. An accumulation-of-knowledge view, an open observational-science view, will serve us well regarding our own professional identities and the image we present to the world. It is also, I believe, more accurate.

In arguing for this point of view, I have used an approach that takes the omissions and exclusions in Freud's writings as starting points for describing the way subsequent developments have filled in the gaps, giving us a vastly more differentiated understanding of the workings of mind: the issues and tasks of development and the issues and tasks of the adult mind as it appears through psychoanalytic listening, and the psychoanalytic situation itself.

We can imagine, ironically, that if Freud, with his creative mind, had lived fifty years longer, he might have developed many of these ideas himself, in which case they would have been part of the "received wisdom" rather than seen as oppositional. In any event, we have vastly expanded our knowledge of the workings of mind since his death.

To take such a stand requires each of us to adopt a position of *equidistance* (A. Freud 1936), parallel to the clinical situation, but here with regard to the extant theories of psychoanalysis. This requires clinical listening with all (or many) of our theories in the back of our minds, such that any can surface as it fits the clinical moment. From another perspective, the aim is to achieve a relative autonomy (Rapaport 1957) from particular theories so that we can move freely among them. In achieving a stance of equidistance or autonomy, as just described, it will help to keep a focus on the observations underpinning the several theories. They are, as Freud (1915) said, our core of knowledge. Theories are created by individuals and subscribed to by groups. But they can come and go, be amended and altered, or of course stand the test of time. And observations, though subject to shifts in understanding, are what remain.

Psychoanalysis has grown in the course of its now more than one century. We should take such growth for granted, and we can also celebrate it. Growth has given us a much expanded and differentiated vocabulary for making sense of individual sessions, of individual personalities, and of individual life histories.

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FROM CRUMPLED-UP PAPER TO ORIGAMI: AN ANALYST LEARNS TO PLAY

BY ELENA MOLINARI

In the course of an analysis, the analytic relationship can go through moments of difficulty generated by patient and analyst while they learn to "play" together. In this paper, different kinds of difficult relational moments are illustrated through fragments of a child analysis, and some components are explored that can catalyze the creative transformation of turbulence and the resumption of analytic "play." In particular, the author hypothesizes that some conscious feelings described by Winnicott as characterizing play, understood as the optimal functioning of the analytic process, can be indicators of the efficiency of—or, conversely, of difficulties in—the unconscious oneiric work carried out by the couple. These indicators may be useful in monitoring the process not so much in the immediate moment, but rather over a medium to long period. Considering these indicators can initiate the revival of a playful equilibrium in the bi-personal system on which play and the analytic field are based.

Keywords: Play, Winnicott, child analysis, analytic field, origami, emotions, role playing, analytic setting, parents, Bion, Koryo Miura, Ogden.

The playing field can be made up of any material and foundation apart from soft grass. It should have at least one part on gravel, at least one obstacle such as a tree

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or a boulder, a slope with a gradation as steep as twenty
per-cent, at least one muddy puddle and it should not
be fenced off, but should possibly be situated some-
where where the ball could roll away for a few miles if it
were kicked out of the field.

—Stefano Benni (1992, p. 35)

IMAGES FOR THE ANALYTIC FIELD

In my mind, the idea of the bi-personal field (Baranger and Baranger
1961–1962; Bezoari and Ferro 1996; Nissim Momigliano 1984; Ogden
1994a) is always associated, more or less consciously, with the image of
the lines of force between the positive and negative poles of an electro-
magnetic field, rendered visible by iron filings. This image is useful to
visually represent the interaction that creates the psychoanalytic field,
but at the same time it does not do justice to the complex and unpre-
dictable dynamic through which the interpersonal field is produced and
developed in a fluctuating way over time.

The imaginative form with which the idea of the analytic field was
associated in my mind had a chance to grow when I learned of Dr. Koryo
Miura's story.[1] Miura was an aerospace engineer who, while working on a
NASA shuttle project in the 1980s, had studied the distortion of shuttles
and the system of folding to the antennae of space probes; the perpen-
dicular folding of these instruments caused a series of problems related
to instability and excessive wear and tear along the lines of closure. Thus,
the structural support often ended up compromising the use of the in-
strument itself. In studying this problem, he became interested in the
phenomenon of crumpling (starting with the apparently simple act of
crumpling paper) and asked himself what determined the irregularity of
the folds, what the particular resistance of some of them was, and what
might be the dependent relationship between the extent of the surface
and the above-mentioned folds.

He found a brilliant solution to this type of structural problem by
drawing inspiration from the ancient art of origami and realizing that,
for the support of the antennae, a slanted fold was much less wearing

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[1] See *Sole 24 Ore,* No. 98, October 4, 2005, cultural insert; see also http://
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miura_fold.

than perpendicular ones. Seeking further information, I discovered that, despite his colleagues' perplexity about the utility of this research, Professor Miura initially succeeded in furthering his studies thanks to an Italian company that asked him to apply these preliminary observations of his to the improved folding of a topographical map, putting into effect a way of folding that was very similar to that of origami. A map made in this way was not only very easy to open and close, but also the slanted folds ended up also much less worn than the perpendicular ones. This idea of a map, which in and of itself describes places and borders, and to which a further fold is applied that in turn traces and defines new borders, became a visual suggestion that helped me better imagine the analytic field.

I felt myself in the throes of a similar problem in the analysis of Giuseppe, a child in treatment for psychological difficulties that arose following numerous operations he had undergone for a congenital rectal atresia. Considering Miura's proposal for the refolding of antennae in the light of feelings that I experienced in this child's analysis led me to an initial way of conceiving the nature of our difficulties, permitting me to identify a dangerous friction precisely at the point of contact between "something of mine" and "something of his." This feeling of danger appeared to me in some moments of the analysis like a sudden crumpling up, and at other times like an insidious deterioration. Following the creative idea of the origami with which Miura had resolved his problem, it seemed to me that what had been occurring less frequently was in fact the creative capacity to "fold" or "bend" ourselves to play. I asked myself whether, in reflecting on some situations that I had perceived as critical, I might better understand which elements generated our play and which could make me aware of its deterioration.

HYPOTHESES ON ANALYTIC PLAY

Ogden (2004) demonstrated that Winnicott and Bion, though elaborating two very different theoretical perspectives, shared a particular interest in the way in which the mind develops from the body within the primary relationship. Winnicott described how the integrity of psychic development can be guaranteed by the maternal capacity to protect the child from a traumatic discontinuity, until the child can develop a sense

of himself as separate and can creatively participate in the relationship. An early form of this creative participation was described by Winnicott as an index of the capacity to play, and the space where this occurs as transitional space (Winnicott 1953, 1965).

Bion saw the same phenomenon from the viewpoint of the working through of unconscious emotions, describing how the mother helps the child develop a container that can dream unconscious emotions. A contact barrier is constructed that can regulate the emotional, conscious-unconscious flow in an optimal way, both intrasubjectively and in the intersubjective field (Bion 1962a, 1962b).

Ogden (1994a, 1994b, 2001), uniting Winnicott's concept of transitional space and the subjective use of the object with that of Bion's container–contained, hypothesized that in the analytic relationship, a third space can be constructed: the intersubjective third of analysis, co-constructed by both subjects of the analysis, in which analyst and analysand project their own subjective, unconscious vision of self and other. The two subjectivities relate to each other in this area within a dynamic tension.

Elaborating on Ogden's idea that play can be considered a conscious-unconscious "joint construction" (1997, p. 142) of the analytic couple, I hypothesize that some of its characteristics can be seen as a sort of *conscious emotional derivative* of the intersubjective contact barrier's functioning inside the area of the analytic third.

Although I am borrowing the term *emotional derivative* from Ferro, I am using it here with a slightly different meaning. Ferro (2006) hypothesized that the narrations, the play, the auditory or visual sensations that the patient introduces into the analytic field may be a conscious manifestation of the unconscious work carried out by the couple to metabolize the emotions that are continually generated in the analytic interaction.

I hypothesize that some of the conscious emotional feelings described by Winnicott as characteristic of play can be utilized as indicators of the good functioning of the analytic process, and in particular of the good functioning of the intersubjective contact barrier in the space of the analytic third. Contrary to the appearance of a character, which can be considered a rather precise response to the dialogue between analyst

and patient (Ferro and Foresti 2008), some of the feelings connected to play may reflect the functioning of the intersubjective contact barrier, a function that is structured and restructured in a variable climate, not as an exact or immediate reaction.

In my first clinical synopsis, I intend to describe how the pleasure of playing together gradually disappeared from the analytic relationship due to the gathering of emotions that were difficult to work through. That difficulty culminated in my attribution of it to the patient through the mental formulation of a psychopathological hypothesis. The nosological framing of a psychic disturbance can be an element of knowledge for the analyst beyond the session. Within the session, in contrast, this type of thought almost always constitutes, in my opinion, the analyst's extreme defense against intolerable emotions.

A CHALLENGE IN THE FIELD: THE PROCESS OF CRUMPLING UP

When Giuseppe first came to me for an analytic treatment three times a week, he had just turned six. During his first three years of life, he had suffered through many surgical interventions due to the rectal agenesis with which he was born. From that time onward, his face had been deformed by a series of tics accompanied by the emission of guttural sounds that were signs of his difficulty in being able to express in words or other more symbolic forms the anxiety and rage produced by the surgical events.

As soon as he entered the playroom, Giuseppe took a piece of paper from the table, crumpled it up, and began to kick it from one foot to the other, and then to make it fly up high and hit the wall, continually calling my attention to his prowess. I thought that it might be important for him to show me an extraordinary skill of his in order to deal with his humiliating sense of bodily impotence, since he was still unable to hold back his feces. This situation exposed him to serious social humiliation made even more acute by the fact that, at his elementary school—in contrast to his preschool—none of the other children needed assistance in going to the bathroom.

Once it seemed to me that an emotionally appropriate situation was being created, I tried to speak with him about the difficulty that we

were experiencing: the feeling of being rejected and of having to make a great effort to be favorably regarded. I spoke to him of my favorite sports team, of the feelings I had when they lost and when a player got expelled from the field. I tried to speak with him in that way, remaining close to his way of playing, about the experience of being overwhelmed by the cause of his difficulties and the consequent loss of his feeling healthy and capable of relating. There was an acknowledgment in my words that to some extent this experience seemed to be reproduced in me; I had thus recognized that it had somehow been activated in his rapport with me.

At times Giuseppe stopped for a moment and seemed to listen, but then he started up again, saying only, "Come on, let's play!"

In this early period of the analysis, Giuseppe's play was a kind of excited and compulsive game, a format that could signal his difficulties in entering into real play.

Inside me, too, it happened that Giuseppe's invitation to play obscured his ambiguity about a sincere invitation, and at the same time hid the difficulty in the relationship. Instead of "Come on, let's play!" I ended up feeling I had heard something like "Shut up!" This first bending or folding in the relationship, of which I was unaware, set things up such that, with increasing frequency, I attributed difficulties in listening and in using words only to the child.

Giuseppe played in silence and primarily engaged in a continuous contest with himself. His challenges were to keep the little ball level for a greater number of kicks, to kick it five times without moving, and so on. When he grew tired of this game, he began to run—"as part of my training," he told me.

In reality it seemed to me that he was losing himself in total isolation, and the situation appeared much more serious than I had at first hypothesized. In the session, I had thought that Giuseppe could be expressing some autistic traits through these relational withdrawals.

After some months, during a session in which I had felt particularly exhausted, the idea came to me to run together with Giuseppe, without saying anything, as though my capacity to establish proximity could not be expressed in words in that moment but only in an imitative way. After a fit of rushing around, I stopped myself suddenly and sat down on the

floor, gripped by a feeling of malaise. Giuseppe joined me, stepping over me. He did this several times.

Looking up I saw him pass in front of me, his face contorted by tics. It was a crumpled-up face—like the ball of paper that he had constructed by scrunching up a sheet of paper and then kicking it around, I thought.

"If you want to run away, then you'll need a horse," I told him after some minutes of intense malaise, and I got onto all fours, inviting him with this gesture to climb onto my back.

He was a bit perplexed but then settled himself on my back. I got up and, keeping him against my back, I began to run around the table. Fortunately, Giuseppe was a small and delicate child so I could run for the remainder of the session, resting every now and then and letting him know in advance of the stops.

In the next session, he asked me to again "play horsie." The only thing I succeeded in feeling in the session was that this game restored a sense of pleasurable psycho-bodily contact. Only after the session did I succeed in tracing the personal, painful meaning that had probably accompanied the game's inception. In offering myself to Giuseppe as a horse, I had arranged things so that my body assumed a "subordinated" position. At the same time, in the phrase "if you want to run away" with which I had introduced the offer, I was aware of having also spoken of my wish to rid myself of the sense of impotence that Giuseppe—and particularly the persistence of his facial contractions—caused me to experience. I remembered how my mother often used to express her dissent about some of my choices through similar expressions, while with words she asserted my freedom to choose according to my own judgment. This way of contradicting what was being declared in words with a nonverbal message engendered a sense of painful uncertainty in me, and it made me experience an anger that would have had greater legitimacy in the face of an open prohibition. My giving up what I had wanted often became an affective necessity, but it also cut off my capacity to express either my thoughts or my feelings.

I developed the theory that the overlapping of some unconscious aspects of our particular histories had produced a deterioration of our capacity to remain engaged in play.

AN EARLY FOLDING TOWARD PLAY

Giuseppe had tried to use me as a "subjective object," that is, as an object subjectively invested with his emotions and thus as one not completely separate. However, having failed to find in me an environment that could respond adequately to his requests, due to my unconscious difficulties, he had mobilized a reaction that had also blocked a portion of his creative potential. The "living" image of the horse that suddenly arose in the field was what immediately appeared to me as the invention that seemed to have launched a transformation (Ogden 1994b). This image had been given substance in my mind, utilizing a feeling belonging to my personal history; it had the characteristic of having arisen from the body and of having achieved a "place" of bodily and psychic encounter between analyst and patient, as happens between mother and child at the beginning of emotional development. It could emerge only when my "childishness" had succeeded in locating an initially imitative form (our running together) and then a form of working through of the unconscious pain that Giuseppe's face aroused in me. Giuseppe had contributed to this transformation because, with his body, he had provided me with an early pre-representation of how it was possible to run away from an aggressive doctor and from a mother who wasn't protective, which I represented for him in that moment. His running away had unconsciously introduced into the field the possibility of a very early transformation of the sense of paralysis in which we had been immersed. Through imitating his gesture, I had authorized and listened to my own desire to run away as well, leaving space for an early iconic form of unconscious working through that made its entrance into the field as the "image" of a horse. This was revealed as not only an early transformation of my pain, but also a fantasy that correlated with a bodily sensation that could be used to explore the analytic third (Ogden 1994a). Indeed, sensations and body-related fantasies are the principal medium through which the analytic third is plumbed.

Subsequent to that day, Giuseppe continued to suggest the "horsie" game for some weeks, but after having become more aware of some of my emotions, I found myself experiencing a different feeling with respect to this repetition. While at first when Giuseppe played ball in a

repetitive way, I had seen this as a relational withdrawal, repeating the horsie game now seemed to me to be a necessary form of taking in and processing the traumatic unpredictability that Giuseppe had experienced in relation to his body. Being able to predict my response allowed him, as it would the very young child, to build a form of security and trust in his own capacities to remain connected, a pre-reflective way of resonating with what cannot yet be known and therefore of containing it (Stern et al. 1998). From my point of view, the horsie game was also an expression of a creative capacity of mine, and Giuseppe's request to continue playing it was a confirmation of our having met up with each other in the space of the analytic third.

Thinking of the spatial probe as a metaphor for the analytic probe, I focused on the fact that both Miura and I had had to come to grips with an analogous problem: how to avoid repetitive actions wearing out the setting precisely at the point of articulation. After an actual crumpling up in the analytic field, the solution of perpendicular folding made it visually apparent that functioning became easier when the surfaces did not perfectly overlap—or rather, that after being overlapped, they could optimally interact in a slanted spatial or analytically "transitional" configuration. This latter possibility was actualized when Giuseppe and I succeeded in experiencing through the body an initial sense of being in step together, and this had been evident through the restoration in play of a feeling of nourishment and mutual pleasure. Furthermore, an early hint of trust was born in me that Giuseppe was capable of creatively using repetition.

THE MAIL GAME AND THE EXPANSION OF THE FIELD

About two years later, Giuseppe had become more capable of doing things in the relationship with me, and I with him; the tics and the guttural sounds that distorted his communications were nearly gone. Going back to playing with a ball, he had assigned me the role of goalkeeper, such that I alone had the experience of suffering the consequences of a goal. The challenge to himself had been transferred onto a playing field, and gradually Giuseppe permitted me to return the ball to him, giving

me the more lively role of a player. Coming close to losing was still a very difficult experience precisely because of the accompanying sense of being overwhelmed or crushed. When it happened that he could not protect himself, a series of violent shots were initiated. It seemed to me that through this play, Giuseppe was working through the serious aggression that he had experienced, permitting him to express in play the anger that had been aroused.

One day, during the second session of the week, he took the little tennis ball that he had substituted for the paper one and wrapped it inside a sheet of paper. I thought that he had put the two of us together, and I felt that this gesture, which broadened the play and varied it, was like a fuller restitution of that first intense contact that happened in "playing horsie." His lump of paper, too, had opened up and had a playful heart inside. He shot the "double-layered" ball to me with his hands, quite hard.

This gesture made me think of the delivery of a letter wrapped around a stone.

I opened the paper and, pretending to write to him (he had recently learned to write, and I didn't want an overly scholastic effort to interrupt the play), I said, "I received a letter, but I can't read it," and I threw the ball with the paper over it back to him.

He hid under the table and, scribbling on the paper, he answered: "I wrote to you in a secret alphabet."

Again through the mail system that we had invented, I answered: "I need your help."

Giuseppe: "I wrote that if you don't learn to save goals, I'll kill you."

Giuseppe was placing his impotence in me and thereby expressing the rage that it aroused in him.

Putting myself in his shoes, I wrote, "I've learned to save a few goals, but not all of them."

He answered: "Come find me in my lair. Come—if you don't, I'll kill you."

I threw the paper back to him, having (actually) written: "Dear Raging Tiger, I'll come at 5:00" (that was the time of our meetings).

Angrily, he threw back my paper on which he had made a correction—"infuriata" was changed to "infuriato"—and he added the word "idiot."[2]

Immediately, I thought that my words must have caused an increase in his anxiety about suffering a mutilation, but besides this unconscious fantasy, I knew that his parents had greatly emphasized his behaving well in the hospital as the result of his being a boy, and they had frequently spoken to me of his exemplary behavior during his recovery periods, attributing this capacity to his gender. My involuntary creation of a connection between his anger and being feminine had produced an unacceptable emotional result, because at the same time, it had increased his anxiety and damaged the sense of self-worth that his parents had in their own way provided him with.

I tried to remedy the situation by writing to him: "Dear Tiger [here I used the masculine form of the adjective, accepting his correction even though it was linguistically incorrect], I know you are a boy. Boys are generally better at playing ball games"—but this correction did not alleviate his anger. We reached the end of the hour with difficulty because a sense of heaviness hung over us; I was very unhappy about having wounded him, and my direct apologies did not have the effect of a real reparation.

The next time Giuseppe did not come to his session.

I was forced to rethink the episode. How had the idea come to me to write to him "Dear Raging Tiger"?

Though linguistically irreproachable, it now seemed more natural to me to have written to him something like "Dear Giuseppe, at times I make you enraged like a tiger." The word *tiger* did not in fact have much relationship to the play we were engaged in, except to the word *lair;* I had to admit to myself that, in any case, *tiger-lair* is certainly not one of the word pairings that sometimes result from cultural automatisms.

Certainly, it is also difficult to abandon one's own gender identity in play, so I hypothesized that the raging tiger could be me. Underneath the apparent feeling of controlling the process, one of my problematic experiences, though not openly acted out in our play, had found a way

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[2] In Italian, *tiger* is a feminine noun, and thus the adjectives I used, *cara* (dear) and *infuriata* (raging), had the correct linguistic declination.

to exist within a word. I did not really feel angry, in fact, but certainly Giuseppe's play—at intervals unpredictable and violent—made me, too, experience a vague sense of aggression. And thus, with a leap, a tiger that embodied a manifestation of shared sentiments charged into the room through a linguistic referent.

His missing the next session—which occurred not because the boy was oppositional, but rather because of a real illness—caused me to question myself about how much my not being fully capable of optimal acceptance and transformation of anxiety and rage might have added to the weakening of his body, contributing to his illness.

When Giuseppe returned, he appeared to me to be a little worried. He had had a fever.

I, too, had felt unwell in falling prey to feverish thoughts, I could understand.

He showed me how he had lain in bed for the entire day and where his head had really hurt. He was lying down as he explained.

"Why didn't you come see me?" he asked.

I didn't really know what to say. "I was a little under the weather myself. Last time I didn't know how to play well with you."

"Will you come see me the next time I get sick?" he asked in a calm voice, as though he had already come to terms with his rage at my being there and knowing how to help him.

"Can I come into your lair?" I asked enthusiastically; this was a welcome I had not hoped for.

"If you bring me a present, yes . . . . Then I'll explain to you where I live."

I brought a little tiger, wrapped it in a sheet of paper, and gave it to him.

He smiled at me and sat upright. The play had begun again.

ELEMENTS THAT CAN CONSOLIDATE THE CAPACITY TO PLAY

This second clinical sequence, which occurred two years after the first one and that thus belongs to a more evolved phase of the analysis with Giuseppe, encouraged my reflective return to an analysis of the process

in order to explore the ingredients that can indicate a more consolidated capacity to play. At the same time, a perception of their less frequent occurrence can make one aware of a way of functioning that is wearing down slightly. As I mentioned, Miura's discovery that slanted folds were less wearing than perpendicular ones found a practical application in the folding of a topographical map. How much did my play space and Giuseppe's overlap with each other in a way that created the minimal friction possible, and analogously that generated new and creative folds? At this point in the analysis, the playing field between Giuseppe and me seemed to be defending against the episodes of serious crumpling up that had marked the first year; the climate of the relationship had changed, and the analytic field had expanded to the degree that we had succeeded in exploring it.

Let me clarify by saying that the expansion of the field and the ability to remain engaged in play do not in themselves avoid the creation of misunderstandings and enactments, but they do set things up so that these can be repaired much more easily. It is the experience of having creatively produced and maintained the relationship for a long time that metabolizes a large part of the emotional tension inevitably produced in the relationship, and that avoids the unconscious acting out of serious fractures (Ferro 2006; Greenberg 1996; Lachmann and Beebe 1996; Ogden 1988; Stern et al. 1998; Winnicott 1971).

In the clinical passage under examination, a more consolidated capacity to play permitted Giuseppe and me to better master the unpredictability of unconscious emotions and to more easily develop thoughts that could think these emotions. This better functioning, both conscious and unconscious, made itself tangibly felt in the relationship in the sense of greater mutual trust. "Confidence in the mother," writes Winnicott, "*makes* an intermediate playground . . . . I call this a playground because play starts here" (1971, p. 47, italics added).

Trust can thus be thought of as a specific affective form capable of imprinting onto the analytic situation an efficacious functioning that for Winnicott coincides with the beginning of the capacity to play. Besides being a basic emotion, it is, in my opinion, an emotion that is consolidated when a couple has experienced the joint capacity of being able

to creatively repair the most turbulent emotional situations—or, to use Bion's words, to dream them.

In the second clinical passage, I felt a sensation of trust inside myself, a feeling that had a determining weight in allowing me to more rapidly consider my responsibility in what had happened, and that had also in part influenced the refinding of an emotional attunement after the missed session. From the perspective of the bi-personal field, then, trust seems to be an emotional derivative of the couple's functioning once it has become capable of increasing its tolerance for problematic emotions.

The greater capacity to remain in play was revealed in Giuseppe, too, when he crumpled the paper over the tennis ball, inventing a composite object that could contain a turbulent emotion born of the relationship with me.

The aspect that struck me intensely and that I want to underscore here was that, on his return, Giuseppe knew how to demonstrate to me that he had internalized—in addition to a capacity to work through his emotions autonomously—a new relational competence as well. He knew how to use me in the session for further working through, and at the same time he knew how to nourish me, in turn, through the gift of an unhoped-for capacity for acceptance. The invitation to go to his home in fact bore witness to Giuseppe's new capacity to face his own rage and to work through a feeling that, although to different degrees, we had introduced into the field (Ferro and Basile 2004). His capacity to nourish me restored a sense of reciprocity and consolidated trust about our knowing how to construct and reconstruct the playing field together.

The little package with the tiger inside, as I have described, then became the concrete gesture that expressed our joint capacity to contain and work through the hate and other aggressive aspects present in the field.

THE FOLDS OF AND IN THE SETTING

I would like to briefly point out how the setting can also be bent or folded or, vice versa, can be expanded, thanks to the removal of obstruc-

tive aspects, within relational play that has been expanded to encompass the child's parents.

After two years of therapy, Giuseppe's parents had invested in the construction of a new home, and this had given them leave to ask me for a reduction in the frequency of sessions. In a meeting with them, I managed to convince them not to reduce the frequency right away, without excluding the possibility of our doing so after the summer break, hoping that after the summer, it would be possible to maintain the same frequency. I had supported the opportunity to maintain the same frequency of sessions, and I had tried to explore together with the parents the emotional difficulties that for now, however, they could tell me about only through the economic aspect of Giuseppe's treatment. When they left the studio, accepting my proposal, I felt satisfied, at any rate. It was in this manner that they began not paying me.

I went back to meeting with them and I tried to listen more closely to their feeling of being exploited somehow—a feeling that I now concretely shared. In a certain sense, my rigid assumption of the hypothesis that a high frequency of sessions permitted better analytic work had implied an analogously rigid exclusion of their request, creating a situation in which the process apparently continued to function, but with a high risk of fracture.

I felt alarmed at the concrete possibility of losing Giuseppe, and the turbulence of emotions crumpled up my thoughts.

How could we produce a playful setting—that is, make it a creative invention that could re-present the capacity to take care of and to feel cared for—for all the subjects of this analysis?

The explicit dialogue about the emotional difficulties that I had sought in my earlier meeting with the parents had not produced anything other than the risk of making them experience an unfathomable distance from the way in which, in that moment, they were able to communicate their ambivalence to me. So I requested an additional meeting in which I decided to ask them in what way I could contribute to the construction of their new home. Knowing that my proposal could not have too concrete a meaning, I imagined it could be located by all of us in that transitional area in which gestures have a mandate of both truth and fiction at the same time.

They appeared to reach a solution without being at all disconcerted by my proposal. They suggested a break of one month in which they would not pay me. This savings of time and money, they explained to me, would permit them to choose the finishing touches for their new home. I asked whether they could in exchange be responsible for writing a weekly e-mail to me in which they would describe their play with Giuseppe, given that they would be the ones playing with him in my place. I think that this possibility of choosing the finishing touches of their home, temporarily excluding me, had to do with their desire to feel they were capable of successfully concluding the reconstruction of their real child and of the one contained in their minds. I thought that perhaps they had felt robbed of their capacity in this sense.

I decided to communicate the decision to Giuseppe. I felt some apprehension, however, about the effects that this brusque interruption would have on Giuseppe, and I also feared that it could be an encouragement of the interruption on my part. But Giuseppe's parents kept their word. In fact, the mother wrote to me more often than we had agreed upon. She gave me news of Giuseppe in e-mails, emphasizing that the boy did not ask about me and that this could mean he no longer needed the analysis. Through the way this was pointed out, I was able to understand how much fear the mother must have experienced, of being less capable than I was. At the same time, it seemed to me that, through writing, she could legitimize and explicate the rivalry between us that had tended to be negated in our face-to-face meetings.

In her letters, the mother told me how she had had occasion to observe Giuseppe while he was playing alone in his room. She told me nothing about the play itself, but she assured me of his ability to play alone. I imagined that in this way, the mother was turning upside down the paradigm she had experienced when she had remained in the waiting room during Giuseppe's sessions. I replied to all these letters, trying to accept both the communications about Giuseppe and the mother's suffering. In the next to the last letter, in contrast, she described a game that she and Giuseppe had played together the previous Sunday. They had constructed a large box in which to store toys in the new house, and then they had transformed the box into a little fort and together they had played "war."

I thought that this game had a double function: that of giving testimony to the mother's capacity to construct a container for Giuseppe, the "defective" child whom she had—perhaps for the first time—succeeded in accepting into her heart, and also the possibility of the long internal "war" that both of them had had to go through.

In this same letter, the mother announced the possibility of resuming the treatment; she added, however, in a peremptory way, that Giuseppe could come only twice a week. I accepted, and Giuseppe resumed analysis, terminating after a further year and a half of treatment.

Despite the difficulty that I think every analyst may have in accepting a reduction in the frequency of sessions, it seemed more acceptable to me to think of this as perhaps the expression of the parents' improved capacity to take care of their child's emotions. My acceptance was also a recognition of that psychic "new home" that they had been able to construct. As Petrella (1993) suggests, the variation in the setting that I put into practice shifted the question from what I should do or should have done to "what I was doing."

This question allowed me to grasp that I had folded the setting in a way that wasn't rigid, to a type of play that could re-create the shared experience of being cared for—for the parents as well, who were indispensable actors in the child's therapy. The invented way of folding in fact allowed the parents to face the painful feeling of being dispossessed of their competence in caring for their own child. If play is the first creative format that the child invents to cope with the absence of the maternal body and to re-create the pleasure of early play experienced with the mother (Phillips 1988), why not think of the setting as a form of play to be created together with the parents?

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Winnicott describes play as the reflection of a complex process of the child's psychic maturation in its relationship with the mother. When he writes that psychotherapy consists of the overlap of two areas of play, that of the patient and that of the analyst, he is speaking of the phenomenon of the couple's psychic development while its members work together—a development that Winnicott maintains is so central that it determines the qualitative measure of the very development of the analytic process.

Studying, then, the capacity to play—what it consists of and how it develops—Winnicott made some observations that seem useful to me in order to gain an indirect measurement of the unconscious work that the analyst–patient couple is capable of carrying out, and thus to have an indirect measurement of the functioning of the intersubjective contact barrier. I have considered three "emotional derivatives" in particular: the sensation of pleasure, that of reciprocity, and the development of trust.

Winnicott (1969) describes the birth of pleasure as the conscious emotional consequence of play based on his observation of nursing. He writes: "Settled in for a (breast) feed, the baby looks at the mother's face and his or her hand reaches up so that *in play* the baby is feeding the mother by means of a finger in her mouth" (p. 255, italics added).

Winnicott highlights that play has its roots in a bodily experience accompanied by a feeling of contentment and pleasure tied to the subsiding of hunger.

The body, in turn, is the place where an attitude is born that represents the first iteration of the creative experience. It begins in the child through perceptive experiences, tactile and kinesthetic ones, that permit the birth of fantasies expressed through bodily functioning. These early imaginative iterations, which Gaddini defines as "fantasies in the body" (1982, p. 379), evolve into "fantasies about the body"; not only visual experience is capable of functioning as a psychic catalyst. Winnicott, in the comment quoted, describes the moment in which the child, through a particular visual experience, becomes capable of an attitude through which it uses the fantasy of the breast to establish a new way of being in a relationship. Here the fantasy seems to involve bodies in a way in which they are both distinct and confused at the same time. In Winnicott's description of the moment in which play is born, the child's gesture is not only an imitative one. The imitative experience is a method of familiarization with "selfness," but is beyond intentionality (Stensson 2006). In Winnicott's description, the creative use of the finger is a gesture that, beginning with imitation, expresses a capacity to transform an emotional experience into an effective attitude within the relationship, permitting the child to experience an early form of conscious participation; that is, the child moves from a position of its "ownness" to one of participation.

The aspect I would like to emphasize is that Winnicott locates the birth of play at the crossroads of an aesthetic experience with a profound relational resonance, an experience that will be laid down in unconscious memory. The goodness experienced through the consumption of milk merges with the goodness of contemplating the maternal face, and both these elements contribute to generating an intense sensation of pleasure. Winnicott himself uses the word *mutual* to describe this complex feeling of fullness and shared pleasure: "[There] does not exist a communication between the baby and the mother except insofar as there develops a mutual feeding situation" (1969, p. 255).

Obviously, Winnicott is not misunderstanding the directionality of responsibility for physical and psychic nurturing, but he emphasizes that, when a feeling of reciprocity is achieved, the emotional tonality of the communicative exchange assumes the pleasant quality and effect that are typical of play.

Even though Winnicott did not fully develop this idea, when he alludes to reciprocal nourishment, he seems to mean that when a relationship—including the analytic one—is used as a transitional space, both subjects have the opportunity to be nourished, discovering through the other something of the self (Ogden 2001; Winnicott 1971). In fact, he goes so far as to define the psychoanalytic process as "a highly specialized form of playing in the service of communication with oneself and others" (Winnicott 1971, p. 41).

To summarize, it seems to me that Winnicott is describing the birth of a conscious and unconscious communicative capacity and emphasizing that this capacity grows through an experience of pleasure and mutuality.

Bion describes something similar, even though from a different theoretical perspective, in regard to the unconscious exchange between mother and child. He writes: "Leaving aside the physical channels of communication, my impression is that her love [the mother's] is expressed by reverie" (1962a, p. 35).

The capacity to stabilize a link, L, which is a constructive link and the generator of meaning, is transmitted and "taught" by the mother to the child through two functions: the capacity to dream the raw emotions that exceed the child's transformative capacity, and a sort of interpreta-

tion in action, which are the care-taking actions in response to emotional, unconscious entreaties. These actions create an unconscious communicative channel which, together with maternal reverie, cooperates in the construction of the child's mental container. The intersubjective link L and the good functioning of the intrasubjective contact barrier, then, exist in relation to the quantity of α work that two minds in a relationship can carry out. Even though Bion does not specifically cite the conscious emotional consequence of this unconscious functioning, it is possible to imagine that the link L makes itself felt through a pleasurable harmony or the feeling of being in unison.

Both Bion and Winnicott underline the aspect of conscious and unconscious co-construction in the relationship, which is accompanied by and at the same time nourished by the sensation of pleasure. If patient and analyst learn to use themselves reciprocally, unconsciously—becoming, as Bion suggests, in one moment the container with the other the contained, and in the next moment trading roles—they will be able to experience a feeling of truly playing together. In fact, play is perceived as such when each of the participants feels enriched and nourished by the other.

When one of the two subjects feels too great of an advantage over the other, a sort of crumpling can be produced, in contrast. An example of this imbalance in my illustrative case was the formulation in the session of psychopathological hypotheses that implicitly tended to attribute the responsibility for what was happening in the field to the patient's difficulty in working through.

An indicator of the analytic field's good functioning over a longer-term period is the feeling of trust. Trust not only initiates play, as Winnicott indicates, but also grows in a way that is directly proportionate to the couple's capacity to remain engaged in play, repairing the inevitable difficulties. When a sense of trust is missing, the playing field's functioning takes on a rigid aspect, because it is only trust in the capacity of the relationship that permits the making of new hypotheses, new folds in one's own and the other's psychic map, and thus of being creative.

The sense of trust was consolidated in my relationship with the child Giuseppe permitted a variation of the setting, perhaps a partial acting

out of a certain amount of ambivalence that is always present in the relationship between the child therapist and the child's parents. Trust in the capacity of the relationship's resilience contributed in large part to my being used subjectively by them, permitting me to imagine the construction of their new home as the dream of a costly and compelling expansion of the psychic container.

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

BY JAY GREENBERG

> **Keywords:** Self-analysis, creativity, applied psychoanalysis, Freud, literature.

From its beginnings, psychoanalysis has had a tense and ambivalent relationship to the riddle of artistic creativity. On the one hand the striking and uniquely human ability to imagine and to create—both capacities that are sometimes facilitated and sometimes inhibited by personal history, memory, conflict, and trauma—attract and even demand the attention of anybody interested in the study of mind. But despite the volumes that have been written, we are still haunted by Freud's pessimism about our ability to come up with satisfying approaches to the problem. Opening his paper in this special section on "Psychoanalysis and Literary Creativity," Dennis Haseley quotes Freud's comment that "before the problem of the creative artist analysis must, alas, lay down its arms" (1928, p. 177). It is a sentiment that Freud expressed virtually from the beginning to the end of his career.

The caution is warranted, of course. All understanding, perhaps psychological understanding in particular, is always incomplete, and the puzzle of how some people achieve and express creativity that transcends, surprises, and informs is especially complex. But our vision of creativity has also been shaped by Freud's way of thinking about the discipline he invented; recall (as Adele Tutter notes in her contribution to this section) that, early on, Freud was concerned that his psychoanalytic narratives were *too* creative. As he put it, "It still strikes me myself as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science" (Breuer and Freud 1895, p. 160). Freud lacked the epistemological tools that

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would have helped him see the role of creativity in all scientific investigation; as a result he feared that, however much we might learn from artists, to include himself among them would undermine his claim that he was simply an objective observer, *discovering what was already there.*

Today, as the dichotomy between creation and discovery is increasingly challenged within the discourse of many different disciplines, psychoanalysts can explore creativity from a fresh perspective. Theodore Jacobs, wisely warning that "The analyst eschews the creation of stories" (p. 984), reminds us throughout his paper that our interpretations are nevertheless "acts of creation" (p. 963). The widespread—although still far from universal—acceptance of the idea that to analyze is to create is likely to facilitate our engagement with the creativity of others.

The first three papers in this section were submitted to the *Quarterly* independently; each in its own way addresses the relationship between creativity and the psychoanalytic process. Two themes emerge, both of which can be innovatively addressed in light of our recognition of the role of creativity in the work not only of the analyst, but of the analysand as well. First, the authors discuss the similarities and differences in the expression of creativity in clinical work and writing; second, they address ways in which an author's creative efforts may (or may not) contribute to his or her emotional growth, through self-analysis or otherwise.

These three papers are written from complementary but different perspectives. Haseley, an analyst and writer of stories for children, focuses on his own creative process and its relationship to his personal history and his analysis (self- as well as formal analysis). Tutter writes as an "other," examining the work of Raymond Carver from outside; she includes biographical data, known details of Carver's writing process, and textual analysis to draw conclusions about the self-analytic effects of his creativity. Finally, Jacobs draws on his experience as a fiction writer and as an analyst; he discusses his creativity in both roles and describes work with a creative patient as well as a reading of James Joyce's short story "The Dead."

Because the sensibilities of the three papers converge at many points and diverge at others, they offer the possibility of viewing creative process from "inside" and "outside" in ways that illuminate not only the process itself, but also the role of the commentator's perspective. Accordingly,

I invited Warren Poland to contribute a discussion of the papers that would highlight what the different points of view can contribute to our understanding. Starting with the premise that "the way one can know oneself and the way one can know another are not the same" (p. 987), Poland writes a meditation on self and other, emphasizing the centrality of self-analysis in the clinical encounter and the centrality of the other in both literary creativity and self-analysis.

Taken together, these papers explore creativity in ways that are both deeply psychoanalytic and truly contemporary; they exemplify the vitality of both clinical and applied psychoanalytic thinking today.

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CATCHING GHOSTS

BY DENNIS HASELEY

There are few psychoanalytically informed, first-person commentaries on the creative process of writing fiction. In this paper, the author, a psychoanalyst with a parallel career as a children's book writer, explores his associations, autobiographical details, and related theoretical constructs as they relate to the writing of one of his published picture book texts. Lastly, he questions whether a piece of fiction not only illustrates the writer's current and past history, but also points to the writer's future psychological potentialities.

Keywords: Writing, creative process, *Ghost Catcher,* self-reflection, inspiration, literature, visual imagery, narrative, preconscious, ghosts, primary process, regression, loneliness.

INTRODUCTION

Freud (1928) famously remarked that "before the problem of the creative artist analysis must, alas, lay down its arms" (p. 177). Although there have been substantial psychoanalytic contributions to understanding creative processes and productions from Freud onward, applied analysis continues to have both a valuable and controversial place in our discipline. In this paper, I will reference analytic theorizing about creative persons in general, but I will focus my discussion in the area of creative fiction writing.[1]

[1] I am using *creative* in the sense that Greenacre (1959) offers: having "the capacity or activity of making something new, original or inventive . . . which has the characteristic of originality" (p. 61).

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Attempts to describe the process of creating literary works, as well as the relationship of the personal characteristics and history of the artist to his or her works, have followed shifts in psychoanalytic theorizing. Analytic models that have been applied to literary creativity have ranged from Freud's (1908) theories of unconscious motivations and sublimations, to those that privilege developmental considerations (Greenacre 1964), object relations (Klein 1929; Winnicott 1953), narcissism (Kohut 1966), the sequelae of trauma (Shengold 1989), and ego mastery and pleasure (Gedo 1996). Arieti (1976) surveyed a broad range of perspectives from psychology, biology, physics, and culture, and applied them to the creative process. Levin (2000) has posited *optimal chaos* in the mind–brain system as a factor in creative thinking, and Coltrera (1998, 2000) has also suggested chaos theory as a way to capture the "accruing and fractal complexities of creative style" (1998, p. 1298).

While numerous psychoanalytic books and articles seek to shed light on this subject through third-person accounts of writers and their creative processes, there are only a handful of analytically informed, *first-person* accounts by fiction writers or, for that matter, by creative persons in other artistic fields (Milner 1957; Reiser 2001; Roland 1981).

In this paper, I will attempt to make a contribution to this area of study from the position of having parallel careers in the fields in question—that is, of being both an experienced working psychoanalyst who has undergone a training analysis, and a working writer who has published (and continues to have published) children's books and novels. My ego ideal of having two parallel careers was based in part on my exposure in adolescence to the identificatory models of the poet-physician William Carlos Williams and the poet–business executive Wallace Stevens, among others.

Here I intend to do an application of psychoanalysis to a piece I have written and had commercially published—that is, a self-reflective exploration of the manuscript of one of my picture book texts that will detail my understanding of how it pertains to my psychology, including my associations, autobiographical details, creative processes, and other aspects of my sensibilities as they relate to the work. I will not seek to expand on every aspect of the book. Instead, this investigation will present some central ideas and understandings of my self and my own

psychology at the time I composed the piece, as well as aspects of myself of which I was unaware at that point but which became clearer in retrospect during (and following) my analysis, which I began some seven years after I wrote the manuscript. I will reference applicable theoretical writings throughout. And finally, I will touch on the concept of whether a piece of writing not only illustrates aspects of the writer's current and past history, but may also point to the writer's future psychological potentialities.

GHOST CATCHER

My picture book, *Ghost Catcher*, was published by HarperCollins in 1991 and marketed for a readership of children six to ten years old. The illustrations for the book were by Lloyd Bloom, an artist chosen by my editor at HarperCollins, who based his artwork on my completed manuscript. The complete text of the story can be found in the appendix, p. 903. (I urge the reader to refer to the text of the manuscript at this point, as it will enhance significantly the following discussion.) Rona Berg wrote in *The New York Times Book Review* (1992), "*Ghost Catcher* can set the imagination soaring and is full of magic, as the best children's books are" (p. 25). The Child Study Children's Book Committee named it one of its 1992 *Children's Books of the Year.*

The external story of the book—its fate in the world—was personally gratifying. The internal story of the book is as follows.

In 1983, an editor with whom I had published several picture book texts told me she was interested in publishing an illustrated ghost story for children, and asked me to try my hand at it. At that point in my writing career, I had had several picture books (illustrated by various artists) published to critical praise, and I had several more accepted for publication; these were all in the form of poetic narratives. I was not aware at the time of any underlying personal reasons for wanting to write a ghost story. My conscious motivations were twofold: I wanted to succeed in what was an unexplored genre for me, that of the ghost story, and I wanted to please my editor, an attractive woman slightly older than I whom I admired for her erudition and artistic sensibility.

Over several weeks, I began to experiment with story ideas in which there was a lonely, partially visible creature, outside of everyday reality,

who made contact with a boy in a family in some haunted place—I came up with some clichéd locations where ghosts might live, such as a ship or castle—and then in the story something enthralling would happen and things would go on from there, although I could not figure out exactly what these developments would be. Some of what I was attempting, I suspect, was under too much conscious control. But an interesting aspect developed: in working on various narrative threads, I soon realized I was not only relating to the boy in the family who was somehow specially singled out to make contact with a realm beyond, but more, that I was relating to the ghost.

Early in the period of time when I was working on the story, I experienced two losses that in retrospect seem not catastrophic but that felt so at the time. I was in my early thirties and had had a relationship of relatively short duration with a woman only several years out of college; I found her charming, but what was noteworthy about the relationship was the lack of extended time we spent together, as well as her idealization of me. The unreality of the relationship soon hit actuality, and over Memorial Day weekend of that year we broke up. Over the same several days, a cat I had rescued from the street several years prior and kept as a pet unexpectedly took sick and died.

And here one of the first visual elements of what was to become *Ghost Catcher* became manifest to me. I was in psychotherapy at the time, and I left my therapist's office having talked about these losses. I was walking down the sidewalk on West 72nd Street in Manhattan, late afternoon on a sunny day, and I remember looking down at the pavement and being struck by something I felt I had never properly noticed before: the blackness, intensity, darkness, and depthlessness of the shadows that were cast by me and others upon the cement. My visual, gestalt-free perception (Ehrenzweig 1975) had been affected by my mood and affect: what I seemed to see, with a momentary shock, was that there was a whole world of darkness that had always been there that I had never properly taken notice of, that I had been naively stepping past with oblivion.

A writer may function as a kind of magpie, taking things that catch his eye and using them to decorate his own nest. During this same period of time, working on and off on what felt to be a failing manuscript (while in my mind the darkness of shadows was sometimes conscious and

sometimes suppressed), I saw a trailer for the film *Ghostbusters* (1984). I was not clear from the preview what happened in the film—something about comedians chasing after vividly portrayed spirits—but I remember wondering if the protagonists ever actually went over into the ghostly realm itself, or if they stayed on this side. But I thought, if they did go over, wouldn't that be a neat idea?

That thought, and my visual experience with shadows, reminded me of a piece I had read a few years prior: a beautiful and chilling Nez Percé tale retold by Barry Lopez, entitled *Coyote Visits the Land of the Dead* (1981). In the story, the trickster Coyote's wife has died from an illness; he crosses five mountains and enters the land of the dead to retrieve her. That land is an invisible realm in the middle of the prairie that takes the form of shadows at night. The conditions set up for Coyote are that he can bring his wife back to the world of the living if he returns over the five mountains with her but does not touch her. As her form becomes flesh, he cannot resist: like Orpheus turning toward Eurydice, he reaches for her and she vanishes back into the shadows, and even though he returns to the site where he first found her, it is only prairie, nothing more, and he never sees her again.

I would sit down at my desk, once more determined to write this elusive ghost story—after all, my editor wanted to see it! But now as I began to write, a shift occurred: I began to become much more taken not with the idea of someone who was a ghost, but someone who *caught ghosts.* In a more deliberate way, I went back to the Nez Percé tale, to the myths of Orpheus and Eurydice, and Demeter and Persephone, to remind myself how other works dealt with the idea of retrieving someone who had passed into the world of death. And I can say this with conviction: I was not thinking consciously at this time that this interest of mine had anything to do with my wish to undo the losses I had recently suffered; nor did I consciously think they related to other forms of losses I had experienced in my past.

In my analysis, I learned how much can be condensed into a visual symbol that comes to my mind, and can then be translated into meaningful personal affective terms. A constellation of picture and feeling—seemingly from nowhere—can not only clue me into aspects of myself of which I am unaware, but, in terms of my writing, it can launch me

into a piece of work. Or, when I am intently working on a manuscript, I can purposefully tune into this way of thinking and use an image to carry me further into an emotionally evocative narrative. Often when I am working on a piece, my mind is not only attuned to internally generated pictures, but also to resonating external images and fragments—the shadows on the sidewalk, a film trailer, bits of works I have read that speak to similar themes.

As I sat down to write this ghost story, which now was going to be in some vague way about someone catching ghosts, its first two short tales—about the boy and the dog, and about the old woman and the old man—came to my mind. The first paragraph of the story—describing Ghost Catcher, his characteristics, the fact that he had no shadow—came much later. But the first two incidents seemed to appear, to use a line from the story, "in whole pieces." As I wrote these first two narratives on a yellow legal pad, other elements of the story emerged as well: the setting—a pre-industrial world; and the language—spare, rhythmic, a kind of fictional dialect. I hardly changed these first two incidents at all in subsequent drafts.

CREATIVE PROCESS

Analytic writers have offered ways of understanding creative experiences like those I have just described. A number of analysts (e.g., Greenacre 1959; Kris 1939) have written about creative persons' relatively free access to their unconscious. Marcus (1999) describes primary process thinking as that which "synthesizes complexity by means of condensation, thereby producing symbolic representations . . . called *thing presentations* . . . . They are symbolic affect representations in perceptual form" (pp. 857-858).

Kris (1939) uses one of the metaphorical meanings of inspiration to designate "the sudden arising of visions or thoughts" from deeper parts of the mind in creative processes. He states: "A part of the work is done in preconscious elaboration, the result of which comes into consciousness in sudden advances. It is almost always possible to find traces of an interrelation between some external stimuli and this preconscious process" (p. 381). In the instance I am describing, I saw the shadows on the

sidewalk with striking intensity as they called up my preoccupations with and elaborations around loss.

It has been said about writing that in doing the first draft of a story or novel, one learns what the thing is really about. In putting down these early scenes, I was learning valuable particulars about this tale I was constructing. I was getting not only the setting and language, but I was learning what a ghost catcher might do: he would save someone from turning into a ghost—meaning into a lonely, forgotten object—and this would be represented by their diminution into a shadow. The first two scenes also gave me an idea where a ghost might live—in a darkened realm, a sorrowful and despairing emotional place. In writing these scenes, I was feeling affectively caught up in the narrative, the writing of which moved into the foreground of my life: I was feeling sad, near tears at times, writing about those who had lost ones they loved and were filled with remorse—these people who spoke in such a strange language and lived so far away.

This last paragraph, as you may note, uses the passive voice: "I was getting," "I was learning," "The first two scenes . . . gave me an idea." My depictions of this part of my writing process again suggest Kris's (1939) descriptions of *inspiration,* that is, the sense of the writer being dictated to by an exterior being—a muse, for instance. This is a process, he states, in which "impulses, wishes, and phantasies derived from the unconscious are attributed to a supernatural being, and the process of their becoming conscious is experienced as an action of this being upon the subject, and thus *activity* is turned into *passivity*" (p. 379, italics in original). Kris notes that "the special mechanisms" of introjection and projection are utilized: "what comes from inside is *believed* [I would suggest *experienced*] to come from without" (p. 379, italics added).

But why did I preconsciously choose this distant land in which the story is set, the slightly odd language, the allegorical characters? Aesthetically, these elements appealed to me, but more than that, these aspects of the story were part of my defensive attempt to make the world I was writing about something that was *not-me,* a way to allow myself to write freely about something that was, unknown to me at the time, intensely personal, and to be able to write it without inhibition, shame, or guilt. Because in setting down the first two scenes that seemed to come so au-

tomatically, I had added an aspect fraught with emotion to the stories of
people leaving for the land of the dead: those who left did not disappear
in the manner of Coyote's wife, who died from an illness, or of Eurydice,
who was fatally stung by a viper. Although there may be destructive emo-
tional elements encoded in those classical stories, in the first two scenes
I had written, people lost their loved ones out of their own cruelty, indif-
ference, and inability to love.

PSYCHODYNAMIC UNDERPINNINGS

In addition to my employment of defenses of denial and displacement
and my experiences of sense phenomena, there were other psycholog-
ical elements in my writing process that I would like to underscore. Kris
(1952) speaks of regression in the service of the ego to denote a partial
and transient regression in which the ego draws inspiration from pri-
mary process material while retaining the capacity to shape it, mainly
for communicative purposes. Yet such regressive phenomena in creative
states, characterized by inward focusing and primary process character-
istics—such as condensation, coexistence of contradictions, and gestalt-
free sense phenomena—may also be under less conscious control and
occur unbidden (Rosengrant 1987).

    In the process of writing this piece, I experienced various regressive
phenomena that varied from being under conscious to less conscious
control, including experiences of dissociation.[2] My deliberately trying to
put myself and my conscious concerns aside and imagine my way into
the protagonist I was creating—by envisaging the gray, silent desert,
inwardly seeing the tree "with green leaves on one side and branches
bleached and white as bones on the other"—were examples of dissocia-
tion under conscious control.

    Examples of something less controlled were my experiences of re-
turning home to my apartment as the sun was setting, and having my
own sinking feeling, feeling intensely lonely—wishing, for instance, that
I could meet someone and begin a satisfying relationship. And no cat to

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[2] I am using *dissociation* in a descriptive, not diagnostic sense: first, to denote a state
in which a person is to a greater or lesser extent separated mentally from reality, and
second, as an intrapsychic delinking of mental contents.

pad out to greet me. However, at the same time, I would sit down at my typewriter to work on a second or third draft, and all of what I had just experienced in terms of my reality would seem to recede in my focus on the work at hand, and I would say to myself, as I tried to think through the character: "Why, wait a moment. Maybe *this fellow's* lonely."

And I would have that insight into the character I was creating and yet not make a conscious link that this, indeed, was what *I* was feeling, that this was an aspect of myself that I was writing about, and that I needed only to look up from the page I was focused on to experience it in my real environment. Instead, in that state of realization about the character I was creating, I would start to feel less alone. And I would feel enlivened in having worked something out (or through) in my story.

Perhaps my story at that point functioned as the twinned shadow figure appears in the book—as a way for me to go into a place of sorrow, but with the illusion of being accompanied. And behind the companionship of my own creation—my own dissociated aspect of myself—there were imagined inner and outer objects keeping me company: aspects of my ego ideal, fragments of other writers I have valued, my editor, my mother, other known and unknown women (Freud 1908) who would love me. My loneliness abated; my self-esteem was repaired; my sorrow turned into something like triumph.

Kris (1950) suggests a two-phase state of creation: inspiration and elaboration. My more logical and planful, elaborative thoughts—my secondary process thinking—at this point went something like this: I had had the idea of someone going to the realm of the dead to fetch someone back, and I had had my protagonist accomplish that twice. But now there needed to be something more: there needed to be a second act.

TERTIARY PROCESS

Here I called on my undergraduate English degree and my ongoing enjoyment and analysis of narrative to help me with form. Many tales of all sorts—be they hero myths, the coyote tale I referenced above, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (of which I had seen an indelible Peter Brook production some years before)—have a middle section in which charac-

ters leave their ordinary surroundings and enter another realm, where things are turned on their heads. (A recent film example of this is *Avatar* [2009].) On the level of craft, and of reader expectations—including those of my editor—I knew I was on firm ground in incorporating such a development. The earlier vague thoughts I had had in watching the movie trailer of *Ghostbusters*, which I had expanded upon in other reading, now fell into place in the structure of the piece.

My thinking here suggests *tertiary process* (Arieti 1976; Marcus 1999), a mental function that coordinates primary and secondary process, shaping each, which here resulted in a synthesis aimed at being both affectively moving and structurally sound. The protagonist will not just save those who are about to become ghosts; out of curiosity he will go into that realm himself. In other words, while using sound narrative technique, I was sending this strange figure I had created into my own despair.

It had taken me several drafts to fully understand Ghost Catcher's relationship to the others in his village. His role as a sort of shaman, the wary way he was approached by others, his setting out alone and returning lost love ones to relationships in which he had no part—all shaped the story to be about a character who was not only lonely, but who was in some profound sense isolated. This became part of the central theme of the story. (My first attempts at the story had been about a lonesome, isolated, only partly alive ghost.) There is an intricate feedback loop in such shaping: my preconscious ideas about the character influenced details and incidents in the narrative, which deepened and elaborated my understanding of the character and the story itself.

However, on the level of craft, I knew that there needed to be a further elaboration: an additional, vivid way to establish what I understood about the character. But how? How to reinforce Ghost Catcher's difference from others in the village—besides his eponymous occupation—and how to do this simply but graphically?

I had been working with ghosts and shadows for many drafts, and finally, on the fourth draft or so—thinking about *his* isolation—I made a note, and I put all kinds of arrows and stars around it so I would not lose it in the rapidly escalating number of pages I was generating. The note said, "Maybe he has no shadow": an affectively resonant visual image. And

then I did a lot of planful rewriting to bring that image into the text and integrate it with the rest of the story. This construct—of Ghost Catcher's having no shadow—functioned as another feedback loop that partook of inspirational/elaborative phases, primary/secondary thinking, and planful/regressive states to shape and influence the rest of the story, including, most notably, the climax in which Ghost Catcher's newly found mortality and humanity are indicated by his acquisition of a shadow.

In my description of these later phases of my writing, I am indicating the oscillating nature of my writing process, between deliberative and nondeliberative. Flexibility and freedom in artistic creation—the partaking of various levels of thought and of inner and outer experience in a relatively unrestricted manner—are additionally discussed by writers such as Noy (1972), Ehrenzweig (1957, 1967, 1975), and Gedo (1996). As Ehrenzweig (1957) states: "Images will be constantly immersed into oceanic undifferentiation and brought up again to the surface in a newly articulated shape, a new symbol for a cluster of unconscious images with which it was brought into contact" (p. 201).

Noy (1969) maintains that such alteration between primary and secondary thought processes need not involve regression from one developmental mode to another. Gedo (1996), integrating Ehrenzweig's ideas of gestalt-free and gestalt-bound perceptions with his own research, suggests that the artist has a unique capacity to process "percepts (or abstractions concretized in terms of perceptual metaphors) in an extraordinarily flexible and sophisticated manner," motivated by "the joy of effectance and on a preference for novelty" (p. 11).

These writers give us valuable, thought-provoking descriptions of the variegated nature of artistic process. However, in terms of my writing process, there is another dichotomy suggested: inspirational/elaborative phases of creation, and primary/secondary/tertiary modes of thinking suggest linear models; feedback loops suggest nonlinearity.

BROADER THEORETICAL MODELS

In the last several decades, theoretical models—called variously chaos theory, complex systems theory, dynamic systems theory—have emerged from the fields of biology, physics, and mathematics. Some of the char-

acteristics of dynamic systems have been described as follows: They are *unpredictable.* They have the quality of *continuous feedback* and *nonlinearity.* They are *self-organizing* and produce surprising *structure.* They are *open systems,* not determined by environmental or genetic programming, and are *epigenetic.* They are *dynamically stable* and therefore adaptable and flexible, and not fixed and rigid (Levenson 1994; Lorenz 1993; Moran 1991; Procci 2002; Thelen 2005; von Bertalanffy 1969).

The dynamic systems model has been applied to a wide range of other disciplines, including psychoanalysis and the arts. Thelen (2005) convincingly uses the principles of such systems to shed light on processes of child development; in passing, she also suggests their applicability to other aspects of human functioning. For instance, her comments about c*omplexity* include the following: "Human behavior, whether mental activity or overt movement, is the product of many interacting parts that work together to produce a coherent pattern under particular task, social and environmental constraints" (p. 260).

If one were to apply dynamic systems theory to the creative process I am detailing, how might it look?

Some of what I have detailed, and described from various theoretical perspectives, could be seen as making up the "many interacting parts" involved in my process of writing this particular story. That is, my alternating between access to freer-flowing, imagistic material and more planful thought, or being immersed in the world of the story at the same time I was going about my day-to-day life, preconsciously working out various story elements, suggest various levels of mind operating "to produce a coherent pattern"—in this case, ideas for the story, the story itself. There are also complex levels of unconscious motivation and expression operating; for instance, the way that various elements of the story and my writing process function as substitutive object relationships.

Other "interacting parts" would include constitutional and genetic variables (my facility with language, ease of access to unconscious material, capacities for mimicry, perseverance, a capacity for visualization), as well as various identifications (with writers, as the son of a mother who valued writing), cultural, educational, and experiential aspects (a liberal arts degree in English, years of training and practice as a writer, prior success in the field, familiarity with narratives and story forms), and

random occurrences (the editor's contacting me, the personal losses, the vision of the shadows).

Systems theory also posits constraints within which the system operates. In this case, these would be the medium of words, genre considerations, the age of the intended readership, and the contemporary publishing climate, as well as some of the constitutional and environmental factors I have noted above. All these components interact in complex, unpredictable ways and form a system (my process of writing *Ghost Catcher*) that is more than the sum of its parts. It is a system that is both stable and unstable (like a wandering stream, the writing is both dynamic and stalled; there are breakthroughs and dead-ends), one that uses small events to create larger outcomes.

And, to add notions of *fractals* and *attractors* to the mix, it is a system that has self-similarity on different levels (perceptions of shadows, images of shadows, movements between light and dark in the piece as a whole), one that shifts through instability from one stable pattern to another (a period of chaotic thoughts and feelings results in ordered affectively resonant words, which give way to further periods of chaotic thoughts and feelings that result in ordered affectively resonant words, and so on). The system that is created by these interactions—my process of writing this particular story—is not only more than the sum of its parts; it also produces an outcome that cannot be foreseen either from any of the subsystems taken on their own, or from inputs into the system as a whole. It—I in my writing mode—creates a new emergent that could not be predicted.

In this paper, I am referencing various descriptions in the psychoanalytic literature of the writing process. I am using those that seem to me most experience-near or that have significant metaphorical value. Dynamic systems theory, as applied to my writing process, has power as a metaphor, providing an interesting additional way to think about the subject. It has value as a way to open up for consideration or to underscore aspects of the writing process that may be elusive or undervalued. Other theories on creative writing have functioned and continue to function the same way.

However, as Verhulst (1999, p. 623) suggests, it is important not to mistake metaphors for analogic models. Analogic theoretical models at-

tempt to describe the thing as it really is, on qualitative *and* quantitative levels. Metaphorical models qualitatively attempt to capture certain phenomena in terms of what something is *like*. In describing the writing of my book, I am employing metaphorical models from various theoretical vantage points to attempt to describe my writing process, applying various ideas to try to *catch* it—while knowing it can never fully be caught.

FROM PRECONSCIOUS TO CONSCIOUS

Psychoanalysts also use specific, idiosyncratic details to try to understand patients, and in applied analysis, to understand writers and their works. As I continued to work on *Ghost Catcher*, I began to consciously link the image of the shadows on the sidewalk with my feelings following the losses I have mentioned. In retrospect, however, it became clear that certain of the images in the story, the characters, even central themes did not arise from recent impressions: they came from somewhere else, somewhere much deeper. Nor did these deeper places become something I was aware of in the writing of the book; they did not become linked by me consciously with the text during that period of time.

Here I am making a distinction much like that in dream theory between the day residue and the unconscious forces that use a recent event to express themselves. My perceptual distortion of the shadows on the sidewalk was about recent events, and was also informed by a much more painful and fixed place in my own psychology. These were dynamics related to my own history of which I had no conscious awareness or that I only dimly recognized at the time, dynamics that became clearer years later in my psychoanalysis.

I was, for instance, able to link relatively painlessly some of the feelings of isolation in the character to general feelings—that I was surely aware of in my psychotherapy at the time—of feeling different. Feeling, for instance, in my own family, not empathized with, not understood, different in temperament from my three-years-older brother as well as my father, not fitting in at my suburban Cleveland high school, and so on. It was far more palatable to think of *those* aspects of myself being represented by the character than, for instance, to think about the character's grandiosity. The image of Ghost Catcher having no shadow is not only

about his differentness and isolation from others, it is also about his specialness. Others are stuck with shadows, mortal limitations, but not he: he is an exception. He helps these struggling souls, but for himself he feels the ordinary rules do not apply.

My own feeling of grandiosity was something I attached to the act of writing. During periods of writing this piece, in states of creative fervor I would feel grand, as though I were writing something that was the best I had ever done, or maybe simply *the best*. In a thought-provoking paper, Wolfson (1995) presents the idea of *adaptive grandiosity* as a component in successful artistic endeavors. Differentiated from maladaptive grandiosity, adaptive grandiosity is described as "the artist's exhilarating conviction of potential for greatness . . . the artist's total confidence and powerful belief in personal capacity to perform creative work" (pp. 577-578). It is suggested that this affect state functions as a version of a manic defense, resisting depressive feelings and reactions.

HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS

My reconstructions of some of the roots of my feelings of grandiosity inevitably concern my early history. Some of this is as follows: My father was a skilled carpenter and baseball player, a veteran of World War II who received not one but two Bronze Stars for heroism in combat. He was proficient in the admired male traits of the Ohio town where I grew up—good with tools, skilled in sports. He was also somewhat withdrawn, partly in response to the effects of being in combat years before. I was more similar in temperament and interests to my mother, who valued things literary, who read aloud her expurgated versions of *Franny and Zooey* and *Look Homeward Angel* to my brother and me when I was still too young to grasp a full sense of what was occurring in the narrative, even as I was enthralled by her voice.

I found refuge with my mother from my father's withdrawal, and from my withdrawal, in turn, from him. I was playing with toy guns and he had used real ones. He was refinishing the interior of our house, constructing a recreation room, putting in plumbing and electrics, and I had trouble holding the hammer. He showed me some things about tools but he made me uneasy, and my own relative incompetence embar-

rassed me. While he was hammering downstairs, unwinding wire, testing the current—my brother working alongside him—upstairs, as a little boy, I made inventions: I constructed elaborate boxes with propellers and electric engines that would do this or that wonderful thing; I made little cars with wheels powered by rubber bands that I could make scoot wonderfully across the floor. How fast they went, how great they were! Through a skein of inhibition, I attached my ambition and the grandness of my fantasies—hidden from and unchecked by my father—to my writing.

I have described how the first two incidents in *Ghost Catcher*—the boy who has lost his dog, the old woman who has lost her man—seemed to come to me out of the blue, to be, as it were, "inspired." I only later understood some of their historical antecedents. My childhood pet— from when I was six until when I was nineteen, when she died—was my dog. My cat had died during the time I was composing the story, but the first loss in the story points back to my dog who had died thirteen years before the composition of the story. As dogs usually do, she served as an affirming and loyal companion to me in my childhood, but she was also a skittish dog.

One of the ironies of my youth was that my parents, with ideas of the companionship that could be provided by a pet, bought us a Dalmatian puppy who had been traumatized; the metaphorical term that was applied to her was "kennel shy," which refers to dogs not adequately socialized to humans. I did not realize until long after the composition of the piece that one characteristic of my dog that appeared in the story was her response to fear: when something scared her, she would run around and around in large circles, taking her time to slow down, to come near, to be petted. She would run away as if something cruel had just been done to her.

All was not smooth in my relationship with my mother. Growing up, I experienced with dismay her frequent focus on keeping ordered what seemed to me the trivial externals of our house, the superficial details of our family life, as opposed to what I sensed were the more important things. She often played the role of critic and, it seemed, picked on this or that aspect of my father, my brother, and me. There was so much more I wanted our relationship to be about, both consciously and un-

consciously. In the second incident of the story, I express a childhood wish for my mother to get past what seemed like her picayune critiques (often spurred by my own provocations) and come forth with the love and caring of which I felt she was capable, which I had at times experienced, to embrace me in a gesture of forgiving and unqualified love.

IDENTIFICATIONS

As the protagonist, Ghost Catcher is the one to whom the reader most strongly relates. He is also the character with whom I am consciously most closely identified. His role in these first two incidents not only hints at his specialness as witness and helper; he also does not evidence the human foibles of the boy who has lost his dog or the woman who has lost her husband. That is a less anxiety-provoking identification from which to write than from a stance in which I recognize how each of these characters not only suggests figures from my past, but also represents characteristics of myself.

In the story, the boy and the woman lose those whom they have treated badly, and they want them back. Over years of analytic treatment, I reluctantly came to understand in my own psychology my own aggressive feelings toward those I loved and depended upon, and my fears of losing them as a consequence, with no hope of return.

From the beginning, Ghost Catcher has another aspect that is not admirable. He has no feelings—"never scared and never mad and never sad"—and this was a state to which I aspired when I was younger, in which there would be a protective isolation of, and from, affect. But what range of affects did I want to protect myself from? Further: what does this character's entrance into the realm of the dead signify for me psychologically?

The shadows I saw that day on the sidewalk seemed to give me a sobering and ominous feeling: things can get really bad, they seemed to tell me, and you have been blithely pretending they cannot. Only after several years in my own analysis was I able to recognize that the shadowland I had written about almost a decade before had emerged from other painful experiences in my past.

In the relative deprivations of the analytic setting, I became affectively aware of feelings and situations I had cognitively recalled from my

childhood, but from which I had isolated myself emotionally. My mother expressed her inner turmoil in ways mentioned above, but also in another way: she receded. At times when she was emotionally unavailable and would give me only cursory responses, I felt like the boy who has hit his dog, or the old woman who has driven her loved one away: I had somehow made her go away.

This is a central underpinning for the village of shadows: the experience of Ghost Catcher in the gray twilight land—when he addresses the shadow boys playing, when he speaks to the woman weaving her rug that is now all gray, and they do not respond and they cannot see or hear him for he has become a ghost. This is a translation of my experience in that childhood quiet in which I felt quite alone, and the world I had once been in had never seemed more beautiful or never more out of reach. When those periods ended, and my mother was once again responsive, it might seem as if the world returned, an experience I represent in the text with the trumpet notes, the laughter, and the flowers sweeping away the shadows as they fill the air.

I might, of course, have said at the time of writing the book—it was something of which I was cognitively aware, I remembered it, I could talk about it in therapy, and so on—that I had felt shut out by my mother at times, and that this was painful and difficult. Only some ten years later during my analytic treatment did I become fully emotionally aware of my experience, and only then could I see that I had years before written a rendering in metaphorical terms of my psychic reality at the time: my felt experience of wandering bereft through my childhood living room, translated into a far-off realm in the middle of a desert where people spoke in a strange dialect.

TRACING AFFECTS

It was this affective level of my early experiences, outside of my awareness at the time, that I was able to access in my writing, and that I believe gives *Ghost Catcher* its emotional resonance. And I was able to re-encounter these painful experiences because in my own analysis, I was entering into these dark memories while accompanied by a caring and intelligent companion and witness in the person of my analyst.

Through the active intervention of his friends and through his own inner change, Ghost Catcher ultimately accepts his shadow and takes his rightful place in the community. The shadow village has fallen around him like cards. This image of something looming that is flattened and defeated references a Disney cartoon version of *Alice in Wonderland* that I saw when I was young, which for obvious reasons has stayed with me: the Queen of Hearts at the end is not, after all, the fearsomely powerful figure Alice feared, but is revealed as just a playing card.

When I work on a piece, I usually rewrite the ending numerous times, relying on intuition, on preconscious resonances, until it feels right. This book was no exception. Long before I knew of Klein's depressive position, or the difficult shift in development and character in moving from narcissism to object-relatedness, I struggled to find a satisfying resolution.

In the final scene, a new person—again someone who has been unkind to a loved one—comes to Ghost Catcher for help. And again, Ghost Catcher offers his assistance, but now with a difference: "You with a shadow and me with a shadow," he greets the man. He then offers to help him in a way he has not done before. "You and I, we better go get her," he says.

The ending I arrived at—the two of them going off to find her—always worked for me emotionally, but I never fully understood why. On one level, as a number of reviewers pointed out, the companionship at the end concludes a tale that is about the redeeming power of friendship. But in addition, it can suggest something more inward.

One reading of it is that, by the end, Ghost Catcher is acknowledging his commonality with the boy who lost his dog and the old woman who lost her man; he is indicating his (and my nascent) understanding that each of us has difficulties with loving relationships and in accepting our need for those we love and our fears of losing them. And he is not just identifying this dilemma; he is also demonstrating the redeeming power of understanding and of changing one's self, of shifting from self-involvement to encompass loving relationships, with all their risks.

My completion of the work also served multiple functions. As Greenacre (1958) suggests, family romance fantasies loom large for artists; and so for me, the villagers I created in the book referenced emotionally an

imaginary group of alternates where I could feel, through identifying with the journey of my character, that I finally belonged. (I hoped I might belong, as well, to the publishing list of my admired female editor.) Less consciously, I had tried to produce a gift in an artistic area my mother valued, while at the same time I hoped it would secure me her love and admiration.

CONCLUSIONS AND POSSIBILITIES

It is evident that in this particular book, I rendered a set of affects, a view of myself, a presentation of aspects of my own obscured history and psychology—spurred by contemporary experiences—in displaced and symbolic form, features of which I only later became fully aware. In other words, my writing pre-dated and anticipated, in poetic form, later and more structured understandings of myself, which I came to in my analysis and post-termination. But there is an important additional part I would like to suggest: what I point toward by the end of the book is the hope that if one is able fully to "go there," to really see and view one's shadow and make it back, then there is the possibility of positive change, of something personally new.

And so, I wonder. As I have indicated, it was a number of years after I wrote this piece that I became motivated enough to seek out an analyst and begin my own analysis—first for therapeutic reasons, and later for training purposes—which led to significant personal and professional changes. The question presents itself: was there in the writing of this piece also a predictive quality, a way that all of what went into it not only expressed my past experiences and current psychology, but also suggested emerging potentialities for integration and resolution, along with my own wishes for mastery and change? A way in which the created fantasy of a figure who was a witness and healer—who accompanies another into an unknown land—foreshadowed my wish for an analyst, as well as my choice to pursue an analytic career? So that, in writing it, I not only visited the shadows of the past and present, but also started to smudge an outline of what in reality could lie ahead?

Past *and* future ghosts—might these be what both psychoanalysts and writers try to catch?

APPENDIX

GHOST CATCHER [3]
By Dennis Haseley

Ghost Catcher could get close to ghosts without turning into one. He looked like anyone, except he didn't have a shadow. Not in the sun, not by a candle, not even standing by a fire. No shadow. He said that was because he was never scared and never mad and never sad.

Ghost Catcher was sitting out, listening to his friend the man who played the trumpet. A boy walked up, said, "I've got to talk to you."

"Looks like business," said the man with the trumpet, and walked away.

The boy looked this way and that, said, "My dog's gone."

Ghost Catcher asked, "You love your dog?"

The boy said, "Yeah, but I treated him bad."

Ghost Catcher asked how.

The boy said, "He made me so mad I hit him with a stick. So I guess he got sad and died."

Ghost Catcher asked, "What do you love most in this world, next to your dog?"

The boy said, "Sugarcane candy."

Ghost Catcher said, "Okay, bring me all you have, and the stick you hit your dog with."

The boy went away, brought back the stick and a big sack of sugarcane candy.

"That all?" asked Ghost Catcher.

The boy took out three more pieces.

Ghost Catcher walked away, out over the hills, past the cactus standing with spikes, walked far away from where the village was. He started feeling tired, and he put a piece of sugarcane candy in his mouth. He kept walking.

Ghost Catcher started to hear panting, like it was coming from the air. He sat down. Now he saw, sweeping over the hills like the shadow of

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a cloud, the shadow of a dog. Ghost Catcher watched that shadow run around and around him, listened to that panting.

Ghost Catcher reached into the sack, took out a piece of candy, ate it. "I sure do love that sugarcane candy," said Ghost Catcher. That dog shadow was running around and around.

"Yeah, I sure do love that sugarcane candy," said Ghost Catcher, and he ate another piece.

Then he picked up the stick and WHAP, he hit the sack a good one. "Yeah, I love that sugarcane candy," he said. WHAP, he hit the sack with the stick again. The ghost dog was running around faster now, panting harder. Ghost Catcher looked in the sack. "Oh no," said Ghost Catcher. "My sugarcane candy's all crumbled up and sad looking."

Now that shadow dog stopped running, his shadow head cocked. Ghost Catcher said, "Boy told me he lost his best old dog. Said if he had that dog back he'd never hit it with a stick again. Too bad that dog'll never know."

That shadow came closer. Out of the corner of his eye, Ghost Catcher could see a spot of sun in its two black eyes, he could see parts of that black shadow becoming black hair. Ghost Catcher knew he'd stopped that dog from going wherever it was going.

Ghost Catcher stood up, threw away the stick. He picked up that sack of sugarcane candy, started walking back to the village, back through the hills, past the cactus standing with spikes.

Ghost Catcher heard that dog panting behind him. He knew that for every step that dog looked less like a shadow, was more full of meat, bones, hair. He knew that the love of the boy was going back into that poor dog's heart. But he didn't turn around and look. He just went home.

Ghost Catcher sat out on his porch all that morning. He saw the boy run by, saw the dog following.

"Howdy," said the boy, stopping.

"Hello," said Ghost Catcher.

"Thanks," said the boy.

"Okay," said Ghost Catcher. "You know that sugarcane candy sure is good," he said. The boy laughed and ran off. That dog looked up at

Ghost Catcher with its bright eyes, then he ran off, after his boy. "It's good in whole pieces," said Ghost Catcher, and he popped some into his mouth.

Ghost Catcher walked through the village. He wanted to be with his friends. He visited the pretty woman who was weaving a rug of many colors. They sat in her garden, drinking tea.

"Tell me," said the woman, "where was the ghost dog going?"

"I caught him before he got there," said Ghost Catcher. "So it's nothing I need to worry."

"It's something for *me* to worry," said the woman, "me with a shadow and you without."

Ghost Catcher laughed and got up. He started walking back to his house.

He passed two boys, telling jokes to each other. "Hey," they said, "come play with us like you do." But Ghost Catcher's thoughts were far away. Maybe he would find out where the ghost dog had been going. He went to his porch and smoked his pipe. And on the ground beneath him, there was no shadow.

An old woman walked up to Ghost Catcher. "My old man's gone," she said.

Ghost Catcher asked, "You love your old man?"

The old woman said, "Yeah, but I treated him mean."

Ghost Catcher asked how.

The old woman said, "I'm always sweeping and tidying, tidying and sweeping, don't let him get any peace. Always make him move the one chair he's sitting in so I can sweep, always make him clean up the clean walls. Oh, I don't get any peace either," she said.

Ghost Catcher said, "Okay, next to your old man, what do you love most in the world?"

The old woman said, "Coffee beans."

Ghost Catcher said, "Bring me all you have. And bring me a pail of mud you cleaned from your house."

The old woman went away and came back with these things.

Ghost Catcher walked away, out over the hills, past the cactus standing with spikes, walked far away from the village. He started feeling

tired, he put a coffee bean in his mouth. He kept walking. He walked until he came to that old man, in the middle of the hot heat, sitting by a fire, resting. The old man looked like a shadow, in the middle of the day.

"Hello," said Ghost Catcher.

"Oh my," said the old man.

"So where are you going?" asked Ghost Catcher.

The man pointed ahead. "I'm going there," said he.

Ghost Catcher looked and looked. He couldn't see a thing. Then the old man like a shadow shivered and said, "Feeling so thin. So cold." The old man started to cry and looked ahead, to where he was going, to where Ghost Catcher couldn't see.

That's when Ghost Catcher said, "Your woman sent me with this," and he reached in the bucket, smeared mud all over him. Made him solid.

Ghost Catcher carried that old man back through the hills, past the cactus standing with spikes.

He brought the old man back to his woman.

She said, "Oh! But he's all covered with mud."

Ghost Catcher said, "That's how he is now."

The old woman ran up to kiss her old man, and she got mud all over her dress.

Ghost Catcher walked through the village. He wanted to be with his friends again. He went to the girl who danced with bells on her arms and legs. He watched her dance, with her shadow dancing behind her. "It was good what you did for the old man," she whispered. "But tell me, where was the old man going?"

"I caught him before he got there," said Ghost Catcher, "so it's nothing I need to worry."

"It's something for *me* to worry," said the girl, "me with a shadow and you without.

This time Ghost Catcher did not laugh. Slowly, he walked back to his house, wondering where the old man had been going. He went to his porch, smoked his pipe. There was darkness in his head, and on the ground beneath him, there was no shadow.

The next day, he went to visit the woman weaving her rug of many colors. Ghost Catcher said, "I'm going to the place where ghosts go."

She said, "Don't do that, you won't come back. For who will catch you?"

"I don't need anyone to catch me," he said, "you with a shadow and me without. I'll just go there and have a look, and be home in time for tea."

"Well, then take this," she said, and she picked up the flowers she used to dye her wool.

But he shook his head. "I'm Ghost Catcher," he reminded her, and walked off.

He went to the girl who danced. Ghost Catcher said, "I'm going to the place where ghosts go."

She said, "Don't do that, you won't come back. For who will catch you?"

"I don't need anyone to catch me," he said with a smile.

"Well, then take this," she said, and she took the bells from her arms and legs.

But he said, "I'm Ghost Catcher," and walked off.

He went to the man who played the trumpet. "I'm going to the place where ghosts go," he said.

The man was going to say, "Don't do that you won't come back," but he saw that Ghost Catcher had made up his mind. So he said, "Well, if you must go, then take this," and he handed him his trumpet.

But Ghost Catcher just said, "No thank you," and walked off.

And as he was walking to his house, he passed the boys playing in the street.

"We hear you're going away," they said.

Ghost Catcher nodded.

"We'll give you a joke to take," they said.

Ghost Catcher shook his head. "I'll bring a joke back for you," he said, and walked off.

Ghost Catcher sat in his house as the sun went down. "I want to go, I want to go, I want to go to the place where ghosts go," he whispered into the darkness. Then he made a cup of tea and waited. And for the first time he could remember, he felt scared.

One long night went by, and when morning came it was gray, and no birds were singing. Ghost Catcher heard a knock on his door and he

jumped. He opened it, and there was a man wearing gray clothes, with a white cloth over his face.

"Hello," said the man, and his voice sounded like it was coming out of a long reed.

Ghost Catcher looked at the man, up and down. "You look like someone I know," he said, "but you're all covered up."

The man told Ghost Catcher to leave his house and walk out of the village. So Ghost Catcher did. He and the man kept on walking. And everything seemed gray, and no birds were singing.

They walked out over the hills, past the cactus standing with spikes. "You do not need to turn around," said the man. "I will tell you where to walk."

Ghost Catcher thought, I will do what he says. They walked past a tree with green leaves on the near side and branches bleached and white as bones on the far side.

They walked farther into the desert. Up ahead, hanging from a cactus, was a suit of clothes, all in gray with a white cloth.

"Put on these clothes," said the man, "because of the sun. And put this cloth over your face, because of the wind."

And Ghost Catcher did.

When the sun was high in the sky, Ghost Catcher saw a dark shape ahead of him. He saw it grow darker and darker until he saw that he was entering a village made of shadows.

The man touched Ghost Catcher on the shoulder. "Ghost Catcher," he said. "Come, and look how it is here."

So the two, in their gray clothes, with white cloths over the faces, walked through the streets of that shadow village. Ghost Catcher saw the shadow of the old man, and the boy with his dog. "But I caught them before they became ghosts," he said to the man.

"You stopped them from joining their shadows," said the man. "But their shadows are still here, waiting."

"Hey, hello," Ghost Catcher said. They did not answer, but stared straight ahead. And for the first time he could remember, Ghost Catcher felt mad.

He walked farther through the shadow of the village, toward the shadow of the pretty woman weaving a rug that was all gray. He climbed her steps, sat on her porch, and said, "Let's have some tea." But she just sat before her gray rug and did not pay him any mind.

"I'm glad I do not have to stay here," Ghost Catcher thought angrily.

He walked toward the shadow of his own house, and there he saw the two boys in the street, not playing, just floating like two boys made of fog. He started to run toward them, but the man put his hand on his shoulder.

"They cannot hear or see you," he said. "To them, you are a ghost."

Suddenly Ghost Catcher did not feel angry any more. He felt sad. He turned to the man. "I want to go back now," he said. "I have seen enough of this village."

"This is your home now, Ghost Catcher," said the man, in his thin voice. "For who will catch you?"

Ghost Catcher hung his head. Now he knew where ghosts lived. And he knew how they lived. They lived always alone.

He sat down in the dirt, and as he did, the clothes of the man collapsed in a heap. Ghost Catcher saw his own shadow standing before him.

"Now you see that you have a shadow, too," said his shadow. "You will get to know me very well."

Ghost Catcher knew he was becoming a shadow, and there was no one who could save him. He could see the shadows around him growing larger and darker. He thought of the village he had left; it had never seemed more beautiful. He thought of the friends he had turned away; he had never loved them more.

Tears came to his eyes and ran down his cheeks. He cried, but he knew there was no one who could hear him.

Then, from behind him, a trumpet began to blow soft, deep notes.

And in the air around him, flowers were blowing and scattering.

And next to him, almost in his ear, a boy's voice said, "What happens when a ghost sits in the sun too long?"

And another boy's voice answered, "You get *roast ghost.*"

Ghost Catcher looked around him. Trumpet notes were sweeping through the village of shadow. Wild ginger and daffodils, irises, and columbines the color of blood filled the air.

The boys' laughing voices tore through that gray village like a gale. And the shadows and the dark buildings fell before them like cards.

Now Ghost Catcher saw his own shadow sweeping toward him. But he heard the bells of the girl who danced. So he jumped to his feet. He saw his shadow stop, and tremble.

Ghost Catcher danced, waving his arms, kicking his legs, and that shadow began to cry, such a lonely sound, from so far away. Still Ghost Catcher danced, his gray clothes falling in tatters around him. His shadow grew flatter and flatter and fell to the earth.

And still Ghost Catcher danced.

He danced until he felt his friends around him, dancing with him, and looked around now and saw he was back in his own village, and the shadow village was just shadows on the ground.

"You brought me back!" he shouted to his friends.

"You gave us some fright," said the woman with the rug of many colors, "wearing those funny clothes."

"You looked like you didn't know any of us," said the girl who danced. "You just kept looking at the shadows like you were in some kind of spell."

"So when you started to cry," said the man with the trumpet, "I blew a few notes at you."

"And I showed you my flowers."

"And we told you a good joke."

"And I danced for you."

Ghost Catcher looked them in the eye, one by one. "I was in the place where ghosts go," he said.

"Oh no," said the man with the trumpet. "That place is far away."

"Far away," said the women.

"Far away," said the boys.

"We're just glad you're all right now," said his friends.

After a little while, they said good-bye. Ghost Catcher watched them go their ways, one by one. He saw the pretty woman walk onto her porch,

wave at him, and then sit down at her rug of many colors. He heard the birds singing.

He walked slowly back to his house, and then he saw that on the ground beside was his shadow. Ghost Catcher nodded.

He climbed his steps and stood on his porch. He looked this way and that, saw his friends talking and joking.

"Come, and look at how it is here," he said to his shadow. "This is your home now."

Then he raised his arms wide until his arms circled his whole village.

Pretty soon a man walked up to him.

"You Ghost Catcher?" he asked.

Ghost Catcher nodded. "You with a shadow and me with a shadow," he said.

"My woman's gone," said the man.

Ghost Catcher looked at the man. "You love your woman?" he asked.

"Yeah, but I treat her bad," said the man.

Ghost Catcher smiled. "You and I, we better go get her," he said.

And they did.

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SET THIS HOUSE ON FIRE: THE SELF-ANALYSIS OF RAYMOND CARVER

BY ADELE TUTTER

The convergence of features of Raymond Carver's short-story oeuvre and of psychoanalytic methodology suggests that Carver's writing served as the fulcrum and focus of a self-analytic experience. Within this model, his stories function as container and mirror of myriad aspects of the writer's self. Tracing the developmental arc of the contextual meanings of one motif— fire—through six stories and their ur-texts demonstrates gains comparable to certain analytic goals, including enhanced integration, accountability, and self-awareness. Over time, Carver's narratives of rage, impotence, and despair give way to a new story: of mourning, forgiveness, and the rekindling of hope.

Keywords: Self-analysis, Raymond Carver, applied psychoanalysis, short stories, literature, fiction, analytic process, creativity, convergent evolution.

> What I'm concerned about & thrilled about is having a book of stories, & from there on I intend, brother, to set the globe afire.
> —Raymond Carver, letter to Gordon Lish[1]

> I am collecting material for the sexual theory and am waiting for a spark to set the accumulated material on fire.
> —Sigmund Freud, letter to Wilhelm Fliess[2]

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[1] Letter of November 11, 1974; see *The New Yorker* (2007), p. 95.
[2] Letter of January 26, 1900; see Masson (1986), p. 397.

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INTRODUCTION:
A REMARKABLE CONVERGENCE

Both bats and birds use similar wings to fly, but their most recent common ancestor had no wings. Rather, the forelimbs of bats and birds evolved entirely separately into the homologous wings that gave them a selective advantage: the capacity for flight. This classic paradigm of convergent evolution illustrates how highly similar, even seemingly identical physical structures or qualities can evolve independently in species separated by considerable taxonomic distance. The achievement of rather spectacular structural concordances results from the imposition of shared requirements and constraints operating on the anatomical solutions to functional challenges such as flight. Thus, the evolution of wings in different species was tightly bound by limitations imposed both by the particular environmental situation (i.e., the laws of aerodynamics) and by the potential substrates (i.e., the precursor structures from which wings could conceivably develop).

Psychoanalysis and literature share the same medium: language. Only a little less obviously, they also share a narrative structure. Since the time Freud worried that his case history of Dora read more like a *roman à clef* (S. Marcus 1976), the intuitive, inevitable parallels between literary and psychoanalytic narratives—their structure, development, experience, and dialectics—have been explicated (e.g., Meisel 2007; Schwaber 2007). Indeed, both Schafer (1994) and Ferro (2006) frame psychoanalysis as a special form of storytelling, a narrative co-constructed and jointly explored by the analytic dyad.

This comparison can be extended to a kind of analytic endeavor that we call *self-analysis*. The psychoanalytic literature has long recognized the self-analytic function of writing, across literary genres as diverse as biography (Trosman 2008), autobiography (Orgel 1983), diary (Katz 2010), and psychoanalytic writing (Griffin 2004). To these are added numerous psychoanalytic studies of fiction that implicate a significant degree of authorial self-exposition, if not necessarily formulating this as "self-analytic"

per se.[3] By virtue of its birth in fantasy, *fiction* expands further still the shared terrain of literary and psychoanalytic narratives.

The very process of writing supports exploratory inquiry (Lister et al. 2008). The notion that fiction writing has, at least for some individuals, an intrinsic self-analytic aspect is underscored by the importance modern fiction has placed on psychological self-awareness and self-referentiality. On the other hand, Anzieu (1993) emphasizes the literary aspects of self-analytic endeavors, observing that "self-analysis requires writing . . . [and is] therefore a narrative activity . . . . The function of remembering and conserving . . . returns to the very leaf of paper" (p. 274).

Accordingly, Margulies (1993) holds that Freud's self-analysis was "conducted not only through the examination of dreams, but, more importantly, through the self-recursive act of writing about the process itself" (p. 60). Meisel (2007) emphasizes how the heroic, journeylike narrative of this self-analysis in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Freud 1900) shares "the typology of the Romantic quest-poem" (Meisel, p. 9), while Thomas (1990) observes that this "perilous journey" is thematized by the very novels of H. Rider Haggard that Freud cites in his text (p. 40).

The highly influential American writer Raymond Carver (1938–1988) is considered one of the driving forces behind the contemporary renaissance of the short story. Using convergent evolution as a model, I shall demonstrate that—akin to the wings of birds and the wings of bats—certain distinguishing features of his fiction *oeuvre* bear robust concordances with analytic processes. This encourages the hypothesis that correspondences between Carver's short-story *oeuvre* and Freud's psychoanalytic methodology reflect the independent, convergent formulation of *similar structures that serve similar functions*. I will further propose that such analogous functions include supporting a process of personal growth *via the means of language*.

For heuristic purposes, this study is divided into two parts that will address parallels in Carver's fiction with analytic *structure* and analytic *process*, respectively. In Part I, the temporal frame and free-associative pro-

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[3] Recent representative contributions include Allen (2009), Baudry (2002), Bergmann (2009), Foxe (2008), LaFarge (2009), Mahon (2009), and Sabine (2006).

cess of Carver's writing practice will be compared to an analytic session. The highly personal subject material of his stories will be shown to reveal a tension between self-exploration and its resistance, not unlike analytic experience. Finally, the significance of intensely cathected transference objects during his writing will be discussed.

In Part II, the developmental contour of an important symbolic motif in Carver's fiction, *fire,* will be traced through six short stories and their ur-texts.[4] Viewed in context of his life circumstances,[5] the evolution of this theme reflects material gains comparable to certain of the goals expected from a productive analytic process, including a deepened self-awareness, a decreased reliance on projective and externalizing mechanisms, a new sense of agency and accountability, and enhanced capacities to forgive and mourn. This in turn is consistent with an experience of personal growth of material depth and impact, and with a process of working through.

At best, approaching the work of a gifted writer as a self-analytic effort illuminates other aspects of the work. Thus, I will contend that the *content* of Carver's fiction encompasses symbolized, projected aspects of its author's self, and that his highly conflictual need to express and expose himself is manifest in his compulsion to organize and transform his inner world into fiction that is nonetheless inherently self-revelatory, even exhibitionistic. Furthermore, I will suggest that the *structure* of Carver's short-story *oeuvre* is both reflective and representative of the fragmented self that may have necessitated such a titrated, compartmentalized self-exegesis.

Finally, observed shifts in the contextual meanings of an emblematic theme, *fire,* and such characteristic dialectics as *impulse* and *inhibition* that pervade Carver's stories, may be newly interpreted as demonstrating psychological gains. These also include those achieved outside his writing practice, in addition to and in interaction with those supported by and drawn from the containing, neutralizing, and self-analytic properties of

[4] Here I am using the term ur-text in the looser, literary sense, i.e., as a progenitor text that informs or serves as model for another.

[5] Biographical data described in this essay is drawn from Carol Sklenicka's (2009) magisterial biography of Carver; compilations of Carver's interviews (Gentry and Stull 1990) and letters (*The New Yorker* 2007); his friends' reminiscences (Halpert 1995; Stull and Carroll 1993); and the memoir written by his first wife, Maryann Burk Carver (2006).

the writing itself. From a different perspective, the observed convergence of the disparate, yet uncannily similar approaches to the exploration of the self developed by Carver and by Freud is at the very least consistent with the inherent functional usefulness of the analytic frame.

PART I: SHORT STORIES AND ANALYTIC STRUCTURE

Form, Frame, and Free Association

The structure of Carver's writing process is in certain ways reminiscent of the analytic frame. Carver generated the first draft of a short story quickly, generally completing it in one day if not one sitting. While he frequently rationalized the pressure under which he sketched out his stories as mandated by the time limitations of a working-class man with a family to tend, in later years, when he had ample time to write, the practice remained in place:

> I write the first draft of a poem or of a story very quickly . . . . It goes back to the old days of having to write in such a hurry and in such peculiar circumstances. This is not true these days, of course, but I still tend to work that way. [Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 127]

Carver's urgency is more persuasively explained by his later admission that he was "afraid of interruption and *losing the story*—whatever it was that made me want to write the story in the first place" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 231, italics added). This pattern of uninterrupted, circumscribed, contained bursts of productivity—a story a day—recalls the daily sessions of a psychoanalysis. And, just as significant material generated in an analytic session is repeatedly returned to in subsequent sessions, Carver continually recapitulated and reconfigured themes emerging in one story in the ones that followed.

While Carver's serial drafts were painstakingly and often obsessionally revised, the major features outlined in the first one—the rough plot and the characters—almost always remain intact (Sklenicka 2009). In particular, the first line tended to be invariant, a detail he pointed out more than once. For example: "When I sit down to write, I liter-

ally start with a sentence or a line. I always have to have that line in my head . . . . Later on everything else is subject to change, but that first line rarely changes" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 106).

Published versions of individual stories corroborate this. For example, the beginning of "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love" is virtually identical in the initial version, collected in the book of the same title (Carver 1981), with the later, anthologized version (1988) and the posthumously published early draft, "Beginners" (Carver 2007)—in stark contrast to the extensive revision evident throughout the rest of the story. Thus, the opening words of a story were uniquely privileged, as are the opening words of a session.

The first lines also served as the stimulus for the narrative that grew from it. Carver describes a spontaneous process that recalls free association: "I sat down in the morning and wrote the first sentence, and other sentences promptly attached themselves . . . . Pretty soon I could see the story" (Carver 1984, p. 17). Indicating a lack of conscious forethought or intent, the unexpected paths his stories would follow often took Carver by surprise, "veering away from what I had in mind and felt as I was writing them" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 143). The subjects of his stories were apparently as unplanned as the plot, and their impetus as unconsciously directed; he categorized himself as "an instinctual writer" who did not seek out stories "to fit particular themes" (Gentry and Stull 1990, pp. 198-199):

> When I'm writing I don't think in terms of developing symbols or of what an image will do. When I hit on an image that seems to be working and it stands for what it is supposed to stand for . . . that's great. But I don't think of them self-consciously. They seem to evolve, occur. [Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 106]

This remarkable subjective passivity was accompanied by an evident regression:

> I'm not saying that the early drafts are written unconsciously, in a trance or daze, but they're written in some kind of condition whereby you've taken leave of normal things, and the stories have kind of taken over and directed me somehow. [Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 144]

The opening line and the sentences that "promptly attached themselves" to it—what might be considered Carver's associations, or *associative equivalents* (Bergmann 1973)—triggered an intense sensory reexperience; this, along with his persistent reference to visuality, is consistent with the emergence of unconscious memories and attendant affects.

> I never start with an idea. I always see something. I start with an image, a cigarette being put out in a jar of mustard . . . . And a feeling goes with that. And that feeling seems to transport me back to that particular time and place, and the ambience of the time. [Gentry and Stull 1990, pp. 154-155]

Memories of a "particular time and place" accessed in this manner and incorporated into the story line often included "deeply rooted things that you don't forget and that go way back with you" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 61).

Carver neither set out to write in a free-associative way, nor was he instructed or encouraged to do so (as an analysand would be), nor did he valorize this method over others. Quite the contrary: for many years, he shamefully interpreted his indifference to volitional outlining and other conscious, secondary-process kinds of planning as indicative of poor writing skills—an assumption that added to his considerable self-doubt until he learned that many respected writers wrote that way.[6]

The structure and process of Carver's writing practice was thus comparable to the structure and process of a psychoanalysis, appearing to share in common its daily rhythm of discrete periods of free-associative unfolding, including a typically privileged opening, a regressive process of spontaneous association that takes an unpredictable course, and the recruitment of affect-laden preconscious and/or unconscious material. In order for this analogy to be more than superficially meaningful, Carv-

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[6] While tremendously heartened by this knowledge, Carver's rather frequent reiteration of it hints at lingering doubts. For example, he relates that Flannery O'Connor "says she most often did not know where she was going when she sat down to work on a short story . . . . She put together a short story whose ending she could not even guess at until she was nearly there . . . . It came as a shock that she, or anyone for that matter, wrote stories in his fashion. I thought this was my uncomfortable secret . . . . I thought this way of working on a short story somehow revealed my own shortcomings" (Carver 1984, pp. 16-17).

er's stories must be convincingly understood as narratives that reflect their author and his inner world.

Content and the Confrontation with the Self

Many have noted the exquisite empathy that Carver establishes with his diverse fictional characters, despite the economy with which they are drawn. Indeed, his acute observation of them and of their minute but eerily realistic interactions conveys a sense of the uncanny, recalling Margulies's (1993) remark that "deep empathy is fleeting, leaving a residue of wonder" (p. 58). Carver willingly, if ambivalently, acknowledged his profound kinship and identification with his characters and their lives. In fact, the admittedly autobiographical nature of his fiction was his trademark; as he put it, "A writer writes about what he knows, and he knows himself" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 79).

Within the proposition that his stories collectively comprise a composite portrait of his psychic landscape, Carver's characters may be considered, to a greater or lesser extent, as containing representations of parts of himself—projected facets of his inner world, his attributes, conflicts, and internal objects and object relations. Thus, while "fictional," Carver's stories may nevertheless be about *him* (Tutter 2009).[7] This conjecture, widely applied in the psychoanalytic study of literature (e.g., La-Farge 2009), dates from at least as early as 1908, when Freud presciently wrote that:

> The psychological novel in general no doubt owes its special nature to the inclination of the modern writer to split up his ego, by self-observation, into many part-egos, and, in consequence, to personify the conflicting currents of his own mental life. [p. 150]

Specific identifications that Carver may have had with certain characters will be discussed in Part II. The point I wish to stress here is that in the process of identifying and empathizing with the characters he created, Carver may well have nourished a *reciprocal discovery,* akin to how

[7] See the author's previous study of Carver for a further discussion of the autobiographical nature of his fiction (Tutter 2009).

Margulies (1993) describes his experience as a psychoanalyst: "In the circularity of empathy . . . *I empathize with another—and am startled to find myself*" (p. 55, italics in original). In addition, certain structural and thematic features of Carver's stories, as well as the structure of his *oeuvre* as a whole, can also be understood as mirroring singular features of their author. Before turning to them, I will first provide some necessary biographical context.

Carver had identified his vocation as a writer long before he married his pregnant, 17-year-old bride, Maryann Burk, at the age of eighteen. A father of two by the age of twenty, he would spend the next fifteen years trying to fulfill his unlikely ambition while supporting a family and battling what quickly became a catastrophic dependence on alcohol. These years were marked by frequent periods of poverty and near-poverty, semesters in and out of various colleges, short-lived jobs (many of them menial), numerous relocations (often to avoid creditors), multiple marital separations, occasional homelessness, two bankruptcies, bad checks, and jail time. And yet a relentless, rapacious love bound together Ray and Maryann Carver. There were lots of wild parties and lots of storytelling. Many of Carver's friends speak of his love for telling lavish stories about his life—often embellished, always entertaining, transforming yesterday's disaster into the next day's laughter (Stull and Carroll 1993).

Echoing this distinctive attribute of their maker, storytelling is embedded within and integral to virtually all of Carver's fictional pieces. The stories that Carver's characters tell each other are frequently felt to be incomplete and in need of being repeated, filled out, made sense of—and above all, *heard*. The compulsive, frustrated nature of this telling and retelling is amplified by the tendency of listening parties to be indifferent or as uncomprehending as the person relating the story. Carver explains that the narrator of one of his stories "can't quite make sense out of the story herself, all of the feelings she experienced, but she goes ahead and tells it anyway" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 211). Another narrator observes of a character, "She kept talking. She told everyone. There was more to it, and she was trying to get it talked out. After a time, she quit trying" (Carver 1981, p. 10).

Some of Carver's characters (mostly female) also speak of their dreams; while they consider them with puzzlement and wonder, other

characters (mostly male) are less comfortable with the idea of an internal, unknowable world. When one such character questions whether he even dreams, his girlfriend, who knows better, rebukes him:

> I said, "I can't remember what I dream. Maybe I don't dream. I don't remember anything when I wake up." I shrugged. I didn't keep track of what went on in my head when I was asleep. I didn't care.
>
> "You dream!" Patti said. "Even if you don't remember. Everybody dreams. If you didn't dream, you'd go crazy. I read about it. It's an outlet." [Carver 1983, p. 97]

Like Patti's boyfriend or a skeptical analysand who claims not to care about his dreams, when interviewed, Carver eluded questions about the more private meanings of his fiction, emphasizing its connection to outer rather than inner realities. But another part of Carver saw through such obstinacy, as reflected by his observant female characters: as Patti's rejoinder shows, she may be an unskilled analyst, but she is right. One senses that Carver needed—and *knew* he needed—to *tell* his stories: an "outlet," perhaps, one without which he might "go crazy," but at the same time needing to not "remember," not "care," not "keep track of what went on in my head." At once analyst and analysand, Carver in this briefest of dialogues crystallizes the dialectic of the story, the dream, the day-to-day process of psychoanalysis: the tension between the desire to expose, express, explore, and explicate, and the ineluctable reluctance to do so.

Carver's signature genre, the short story, was not predicated by fashion or ambition, for at the time he was writing, short stories were far less popular than they are today, and it was nearly impossible to publish a collection of stories without having first published a novel. It was therefore professionally disadvantageous to focus his efforts on this form. But he seemed to inhabit the short story naturally and intuitively, and his eventual fame would derive from his mastery of this genre rather than from his (mostly less successful) poetry. He endured substantial external and internal pressure to write a novel but never did, and eventually gave up trying, usually blaming his short attention span.

And yet while Carver usually framed his preference for short fiction as a failing, this form may have been better suited to the particular needs of his self-exegesis. I have previously suggested (Tutter 2009) that in their rapid construction of intimacy in the face of their frustrating brevity, the very form of Carver's short stories served to represent and illustrate his experience of fleeting connection to his father, with whom he identified as a storyteller. Here I will go further and posit that, by refracting a spectrum of split-off representations through the prism of fiction and distributing them amongst characters set in discrete, abbreviated scenarios, Carver could better regulate what and how much he exposed and examined in any given story, titrating it to what he could afford at any given time. Conversely, the consistency, depth, and development demanded of characters in lengthier treatments would have necessitated a more sustained and unrelieved confrontation, perhaps exceeding what he could tolerate at the time.

At the same time, and not without irony, by virtue of their very discontinuity and lack of cohesion, in the aggregate Carver's stories circumscribe the disjointed anatomy of a fragmented, compartmentalized world, reflecting his apparent lack of internal integration. In interviews, he projected this state onto the chaotic life circumstances that he also held responsible for his inability to write a novel—a conclusion that, while minimizing the contribution of inner difficulties, nonetheless appears to lie closer to the truth than the claim of attentional problems.[8]

> To write a novel, it seemed to me, a writer should be living in a world that makes sense, a world that the writer can believe in, draw a bead on, and then write about it accurately. A world that will, for a time anyway, stay fixed in one place. [Carver 1984, p. 26]

[8] As if sensing the existence of an actual coherent world beneath Carver's stories, the filmmaker Robert Altman tried to piece together a contiguous one in his film *Short Cuts* (1993), by creating bridging narrative connections between several different stories. The difficulty of this prospect, and (at least in my opinion) its relative failure only serves to underscore the success of Carver's segregating compartmentalization.

A lack of inner cohesion, and perhaps a preconscious awareness of it, is also evident in Carver's struggle to isolate himself from his past:

> The life back then is gone just as surely—it's as remote to me as if it had happened to somebody I read about in a nineteenth-century novel. I don't spend more than five minutes a month in the past. The past really is a foreign country, and they do things differently there. [Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 46]

This surface renunciation of history was served by his writing: by chopping up and transforming "life back then" into short pieces of fiction, Carver could thereby symbolize, neutralize, and disguise his past, retaining some contact with it while remaking it into something as remote and unfamiliar as "a foreign country." If Carver was, as he said, "more removed, more at a distance when I'm writing fiction" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 221), then the prospect of writing a coherent "twentieth-century novel" may have felt far too close for comfort.

And yet Carver seemed *compelled* to put his life into his fiction: "When I am writing . . . virtually everything suggests itself as a story . . . . I feel a necessity to start writing" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 144); "when a few days go by and I don't write, things don't seem quite right" (Gentry and Stull 1990, pp. 182-183).[9] Carver's son, Vance Carver, believes that this was a way of "gradually processing and coming to terms with his past life . . . . He was not someone who would see a professional about his demons" (Sklenicka 2009, p. 378).

And Carver had his share of demons. The violence he witnessed as a child was reenacted and enlarged upon in his own turbulent life; once, in an alcoholic rage, he lacerated his wife Maryann's neck with a broken bottle, and she nearly bled to death—as did the character Claire in the short story "Distance" (Carver 1977). The atypically female narrator in "So Much Water So Close to Home" is also named Claire (Carver 1977); her name reflects her role in the story: to shed light on the disowned immoral acts of men against women.

Given Carver's apparent difficulty with confronting his past, fictionalizing it was a far more adaptive way of grappling with himself than recapitulating it. Situating his actual world within a series of created ones, his

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[9] Myers, the only fictional character Carver identified as a writer, shares this quality: "He was between stories, and felt despicable" (Carver 1976, p. 134).

stories can be understood as compromise formations, but not without the strain between the compulsion to falsify and thereby separate himself from his life, and the resulting and somewhat paradoxical ability to see and scrutinize himself through the magnifying lens of his characters. This duality may have been crucial. I suggest that Carver could best wrestle with himself from the detached, face-saving position of externalizing disavowal—disclosing himself obliquely, surreptitiously, within the tissue of fiction.

A "self-analysis" conducted through fiction is clearly very different from what we normally understand self-analysis to be—a process that specifies introspection as an avowed goal, and as a volitional, deliberate act. Indeed, self-expression via fiction is arguably more comparable to those analyses in which the analysand tells us about himself primarily by proxy—by projecting himself onto (and into) the analyst, and by telling us stories about others, as Carver did. As we shall see, the distance between Carver and his characters gradually lessened; toward the end of his life, his fiction grew overtly self-referential and utilized the first-person position almost exclusively. But earlier in his career, his third-person narratives were more successful, as his first editor, Curt Johnson, cogently observed in a 1967 letter:

> First person with you often seems to be a fake first person, one you make one up out of whole cloth . . . . It seems to me you do better from third person unless—perish forbid—you break down entirely some day and tell it like it really is and come on strong in your own voice. [Sklenicka 2009, p. 143]

Similarly, his sentimental, confessional poems also fail to satisfy. They may have disappointed him, too; Carver notes that, when a theme appears in both a story and a poem, it

> . . . was dealt with first in the poem. Then I must have felt it making such a large claim on my emotional life that I felt somehow it was unfinished business and went back to it and dealt with it in a larger, fuller way. [Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 223]

Apparently, "unfinished business" was better finished in fiction. By allowing this intemperate and often destructive man to "use his words"—

as we ask of a child having a tantrum, as we ask of our analysands—writing seems to have helped Carver gain purchase on his "emotional life," making it more manageable and comprehensible, and allowing him able to inhabit it in a "larger, fuller way."[10]

As one by now might expect, Carver professed less interest in the psychological and historical underpinnings of his characters' behaviors than in the behaviors themselves.

> People's actions seem to be of more interest, finally, than *why* they do things . . . . I don't even want to know. The fact is, people do things, people commit terrible acts, acts of public or domestic violence. I don't need to go back on a twenty-year expedition to what brought this man to punch his wife in the eye, or this woman to hit her husband with a skillet. [Gentry and Stull 1990, pp. 146-147, italics in original]

This telling comment signals his own manifest resistance to going "back on a twenty-year expedition" to learn more about himself—*I don't even want to know.* The statement that he didn't "need to go back on a twenty-year expedition to what brought this . . . woman to hit her husband with a skillet" gains in meaning when one learns that as a child, Carver *did* see his mother strike his drunken father on the head with a heavy metal colander. Forgetting is one means of not knowing.

> Most of what now strikes me as story "material" presented itself to me after I was twenty. I really don't remember much about my life before I became a parent. I really don't feel that anything happened in my life until I was twenty and married and had the kids. [Carver 1984, p. 23]

Indeed, Carver's stories are rarely told from a viewpoint earlier than age twenty. He remembered his more distant history "as through a scrim of rain" (Sklenicka 2009, p. 16), and, moreover, acknowledged that

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[10] Although I have chosen not to frame this impact within a specific theoretical view, it is possible to conceptualize this from a variety of perspectives: e.g., ego psychological, as an adaptive use of symbolization (Bonomi 2004; E. R. Marcus 1999); or Bionian, as an example of metabolization and transformation of beta elements into alpha elements (Bion 1962; Ferro and Basile 2004), to name just two.

"certain areas . . . are completely closed." Attributing this to his "poor memory" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 184), he states that

> Much that has happened in my life I've forgotten—a blessing for sure . . . . When I try to recall the physical surroundings or furnishings bearing on a story situation . . . I'm often at a total loss. So I have to make it up as I go along. [Carver 1984, pp. 21-22]

His ostensible amnesia ("a blessing for sure") aside, Carver recast what he did remember (and, likely, what he did not know he did) as fiction: "There isn't a story in any of my books that hasn't really come from something I've either witnessed, lived through, or overheard" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 211). But consider the consistent passivity of this statement: whereas—like his characters who tell second-hand stories—he "witnessed, lived through, or overheard" certain events, he fails to identify or include his participation in them.

As we shall soon see, despite this neglect, his own actions nevertheless made their way into his prose. Disavowal via omission is one way in which Carver turned active into passive; the transformation of *things he did* into *things he made up* is another.

The duality of passive and active is central to Carver, and is symbolically elaborated in the linked dialectical theme of impulse and inhibition that pervades his work. Passivity is also linked to his critically important and charged trope of voyeurism and exhibitionism. While spectation in some stories is transgressive and implicates the danger and thrill of the primal scene, I propose that it simultaneously exposes a more curious, self-observing aspect of Carver. For example, in "Put Yourself in My Shoes" (Carver 1977), a couple renting an apartment go through their landlord's private things, opening boxes they were forbidden to. And, in describing his inspiration for the celebrated story "Neighbors," Carver recalls that

> Some neighbors who were going to be away for a week . . . asked us if we could look after their apartment . . . . I remember walking into their apartment and shutting the door behind me . . . and it was really spooky because, when I shut the door,

> I knew that it was possible to do anything in there that I wanted
> to do. [Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 19]

This "spooky" scenario can be read as a metaphorical allegory for the construction of a story that the author can enter and explore, looking inside sealed boxes and breaking taboos—doing "anything" "I wanted to do."

So, too, after "shutting the door behind" him in the consulting room, can the analysand open forbidden boxes and explore their contents with a watching, listening analyst. And while Carver did not have an analyst per se, his characters, significant readers, and larger audience approximated the role of transference objects in the sphere of his fiction—one reader in particular: his editor, Gordon Lish.

Transference Objects

While it could be argued that a genuinely analytic situation is necessarily constructed around two actual persons, Poland (1993) argues that "a self-analysis unfolds more within the fabric of human connections" than is immediately obvious (p. 225). The solitary activity of writing is also more peopled that it would appear—in part by the products of the writer's imagination. I have already implied that fictional characters can serve as transference figures onto which aspects of the writer and his internal and external objects may be projected. Thus contained, symbolized, metabolized, and re-internalized, the more unacceptable aspects of the writer may become better tolerated. And, depending on the writer's capacity for self-reflection, by projecting onto one or more virtual "analysts" he creates, he is able to hold their mirror to himself.[11]

The writer's audience may also serve important transferential functions, especially germane given Carver's resolute struggle for widespread recognition and the importance he placed on expanding his readership. In an elegant series of papers, Eifermann (1993) dissects the effect of her anticipated audience as she documented and discussed her self-analysis for publication: "I recognized that my audience not only affect[ed]

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[11] As concrete "things," books and manuscripts may themselves have transferential qualities: see Katz's (2010) fascinating study of the self-analytic function and physical object of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's diary.

what I said and what I refrained from saying, as well as how I said it, but also affected the very inner processes themselves" (p. 187). She in fact experienced her audience as a persistently meaningful transference object, one that "became a constant presence" (p. 173).

Thus, Eifermann continues, "even when I recognized the role the audience unconsciously served for me, I kept on regarding it simply in terms of an 'object' to whom I had assigned, in fantasy, a role it knew nothing about" (p. 188). We may hypothesize that Carver's audience similarly functioned as a curiously real, yet curiously unknowable other to which he exposed himself through his writing—a heroic achievement, one might argue, or an exhibitionistic or masochistic one—but in any case, a cathartic, brave, shameful and (in the end) remorseful one.

In contrast to the relative anonymity of a writer's readership, Carver's work was also conceived with actual readers firmly in mind, in parallel to the self-analysis that prefigured psychoanalysis—Freud's. Carver always placed great stock in the influence of his early editors and readers, especially his fortuitous first teacher, the author John Gardner (Tutter 2009), but it was the editor Gordon Lish who had the greatest impact on the form of his published work (Max 1998). I have previously discussed the history of Carver's relationship to Lish in some detail (Tutter 2009); here I will focus on its transferential aspect as compared with Freud's relationship to Wilhelm Fliess.

As Carver's editor at *Esquire* magazine and then at Knopf, Lish was a shrewd stylist who helped shape and market Carver's singular, pared-down aesthetic. Carver's idolatry of Lish, together with his intense need for approval, sense of indentured gratitude, and thirst for success (not to mention Lish's ability to help him achieve it) led to considerable anticipatory anxiety over Lish's response to his work, as evident in his many letters to him (*The New Yorker* 2007).

> [September 27, 1977] You know, old bean, just what an influence you've exercised on my life. Just knowing you were there . . . was an inspiration for me to write . . . . You, my friend, are my idea of an ideal reader . . . . You loomed large on the literary scene . . . but you loomed large in my conscious and unconscious life as well. [p. 95]

> [July 8, 1980] You are a wonder, a genius . . . and I'm not un-
> mindful of the fact of my immense debt to you . . . . This whole
> new life I have . . . everything, I owe to you. [p. 95]

Such sentiments are powerfully reminiscent of Freud's initially ardent,
arguably irrational veneration of Fliess—on whom he was as dependent
for encouragement, validation, and support as Carver was on Lish. From
Freud's letters to Fliess (Masson 1986):

> [May 21, 1894] I can barely do without the other—and you are
> the only other, the *alter*. [p. 73, italics in original]

> [Jan. 1, 1896] How much I owe you: solace, understanding,
> stimulation in my loneliness, meaning to my life . . . . Your let-
> ters . . . contain a wealth of scientific insights and intuitions, to
> which I unfortunately can say no more than that they grip and
> overpower me. [pp. 158-159]

Anzieu (1987) contends that Freud's self-analysis hinged on the nearly
daily letters he sent Fliess, detailing the exploration of his nightly dreams.
One might take the next step and postulate that Freud modeled the ana-
lytic frame after aspects of this epistolary relationship: verbal, often (and
frustratingly) one-way, and ultimately and essentially *transferential*.

Far more problematic for Freud than his transferential idealization
of Fliess were his frustrated longings and competitive envy, tensions that
became increasingly difficult to conceal (Masson 1986):

> [May 28, 1888] I look upon your efforts, so close to the heroic,
> without envy but with truly empathic satisfaction. [p. 22]

> [July 14, 1894] Your praise is nectar and ambrosia for me, be-
> cause I know full well how difficult it is for you to bestow it—no,
> more correctly, how seriously you mean it when you do bestow
> it. [p. 87]

> [Nov. 5, 1897] You said nothing about my interpretation of *Oe-
> dipus Rex* and *Hamlet* . . . . Last year you rejected many an idea
> of mine, with good reason . . . . Once again I do not know at all
> where I am . . . . It works only when we talk. [pp. 277-278]

Even as his career eclipsed that of his idealized friend, Freud maintained
an inexplicable dependency on Fliess ("It works only when we talk"),

and met his increasing withdrawal with considerable apprehension. After the already strained relationship reached its bitter end over Fliess's objection to Freud's use (or appropriation) of his theory of bisexuality,[12] Freud's wounded pride cooled into a somewhat sullen, detached resentment (Masson 1986):

> [Aug. 7, 1901] You . . . tell me that "the reader of thoughts merely reads his own thoughts into other people," which renders all my efforts valueless. If this is what you think of me, just throw my "[Psychopathology of] Everyday Life" into the wastepaper basket. It is . . . a testimonial to the role you have played for me up to now. The idea [bisexuality] is still yours . . . . Perhaps my sense of honesty will force me to ask you to coauthor the work. [pp. 447-448]

> [Sept. 19, 1901] I was sorry to lose my "only audience". . . . For whom do I still write? [p. 451]

But not only did Freud soon find other audiences; he went on to solicit the support he needed to obtain a title crucial to his reputation and credibility—a likely necessary action, one he had not been able to take before.

In a fascinating parallel to the falling out between Freud and Fliess, the tension that grew between Carver and Lish was similarly ignited by a clash over boundaries and authorial integrity. Having gained increasing public recognition, Carver began to resent the editorial liberties Lish took with Carver's texts, especially as rumors swirled that Lish was acting more as coauthor than editor. With great trepidation, Carver rejected Lish's heavy-handed edits of his third collection (Carver 1981)—an attempt to repair his eroded authority, but one that risked, so he thought, the loss of a friend and ally. Asking Lish to halt publication, he pleaded:

> [July 8, 1980] Your friendship and your concern and general championing of me have meant, and mean still, more to me

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[12] Of note, Carver was also not above appropriation—sometimes credited, sometimes not. One poem ("What You Need For Painting") is attributed to (verbatim) notes by Pierre-Auguste Renoir; another ("Kafka's Watch") closely follows a passage in one of Franz Kafka's letters but does not cite its source. One could also understand Carver's acceptance of Lish's extensive additions and rewrites as a collusive, uncredited collaboration.

than I can ever say . . . . Don't, please, make this too hard for me, for I'm just likely to start coming unraveled knowing I've displeased and disappointed you. [*The New Yorker* 2007, p. 97]

In the end, he capitulated. But when negotiating his next book (Carver 1983), a cool, subtly superior, and less anxious voice asserted ownership over the text with certainty.

[October 3, 1982] You know I want and have to have autonomy on this book and that the stories have to come out looking essentially the way they look right now. I'm of course not saying we can't change words or phrases or a line here and there, and punctuation, sure . . . . The matter of the text, in this case, has to be mine. [*The New Yorker* 2007, p. 98]

Still, Lish had been more than just a passive transference object, as Fliess seems to have been for Freud. While as an editor he at times obliterated what was for Carver the very core of the story (Tutter 2009), at other times he clarified it, distilled it, and laid it bare. Like an analyst making brutal id-interpretations, Lish stripped away literary equivalents of ego and superego defenses, excising from Carver's texts softening, mitigating distractions from central conceits (e.g., flights into sentimental, moralizing, or idealized fantasy, and subplot interventions meant to repair or undo aggression), and condensing attention around action and impulse (or lack thereof). For example, in "The Bath" (Carver 1983), Lish deleted the consolatory nourishment that a baker offers a wounded couple who has just lost their son to a hit-and-run accident, leaving them alone with their helplessness, grief, and rage.[13]

In a way, Lish could be said to have exhorted, perhaps even forced Carver to "tell it like it really is," as Curt Johnson had once advised. Unfortunately, in leaving his own distinctive imprint, Lish neglected the second part of Johnson's advice—for Carver to "tell it" in his "own

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[13] The baker's gesture, which Carver later restored, is referred to in the original title of the story, which was also restored: "A Small Good Thing" (Carver 1983). In another example, Lish cut the sentimental fantasy of a loving elderly couple who grow old together from the draft entitled "Beginners," which Lish retitled "What We Talk About When We Talk About Love" (Carver 1981). The deleted parts distracted from the palpable tension experienced between the couples in the story, providing an idealized and rather unrealistic alternative. See Tutter (2009) for an analysis of Lish's edits of two other Carver stories.

voice." Carver (along with countless critics) valued at least some of Lish's interpretive edits, as reflected by his choosing to retain several of Lish's versions in subsequent anthologies, even after moving to another editor (Carver 1984, 1988; Tutter 2009). Like the analysand who learns enough from his analyst to continue his own self-analysis after termination, by the time he left him, Carver had learned enough from Lish.

Thus, Fliess and Lish appear to have been unwittingly important to their talented charges in ways other than were apparent at the time.[14] Both Freud and Carver recovered fuller ownership of their achievements after working through submissive, idealizing transferences to Lish and Fliess, respectively, to whom they had formerly credited those achievements; both evinced greater confidence and assertion after accessing the underlying competitive aggression shielded by those transferences; both subsequently shifted their professional dependency to healthier and less subservient relationships.

And yet Fliess and Lish did not act alone. While conceding Fliess's importance to Freud, Conci (1998) emphasizes that others also materially impacted Freud's self-analysis, including his early mentors, his wife Martha Bernays, and her sister Minna. Likewise, Lish filled the shoes of previous editors and teachers who encouraged Carver—shoes later filled by fellow writers, including his second wife, Tess Gallagher. And rivaling if not exceeding all of them in importance was Carver's first wife, Maryann Burk Carver, a key early reader, a figure of nearly constant fictional representation, and, as I shall argue, a critical intended audience of his work.

PART II: THEMATIC EVOLUTION AND ANALYTIC PROCESS

The resolution of Carver's reliance on Lish, his enhanced functioning as a writer and teacher of writing, his successful negotiation of more stable relationships, and his sustained sobriety can all be understood

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[14] Yet Freud's extraordinary capacity for self-reflection allowed him some insight into the transferential dimension of the friendship and its protean, if not yet formulated, ramifications, as early as 1897: "Something from the deepest depths of my own neurosis set itself against any understanding of the neuroses, and you have somehow been involved in it" (Masson 1986, p. 255).

as markers of enhanced psychological health.[15] But perhaps the most compelling evidence for a process of personal growth can be located within the writing itself. Lacking an extended narrative such as a novel to track the developmental progress of its characters, we must turn to the whole of his fiction *oeuvre* to trace the developmental arc of its structure, register, characterizations, and revolving themes. Although all were disrupted by Lish's pencil, perhaps least disturbed were Carver's thematic preoccupations.

Here we will identify and trace one motif—*fire*—through six stories spanning twenty years. We might have chosen any of the other persistent themes in his work, including the less overt (secrecy, decomposition, paralysis, theft, cannibalism), more overt (infidelity, murder, male friendship, food, fishing, voyeurism), or ubiquitous (alcohol, and water in all its forms). But while not as nearly a manifold signifier as water and in places only a cryptic or buried one, *fire* is a particularly versatile and fertile vehicle of shifting, evolving, intensely personal meanings—including, most crucial to our purposes, those integral to the literary endeavor.

Specifically, protean fire can embody the creative spark *and* the destructive impulses fueled by jealousy, powerlessness, and castration that together power Carver's fiction. Increasing the valence of these meanings, the word *fire* and its derivative, *fever*, are featured in the titles of each of the three ur-texts referenced in the six stories in which fire plays a role.[16] The examination of this theme, considered in the context of plot, tone, and character, is thus a well-suited means with which to explore the process and progress of Carver's literary self-exegesis.

The apt title of one of Carver's few autobiographical essays— "Fires"—confirms the centrality and personal significance of this theme (Carver 1984).[17] Written in response to a request that he discuss his

[15] It is commonly suggested that the changes in Carver's writing occurred because he was no longer writing while intoxicated. However, Carver stated explicitly and repeatedly that he never wrote while under the influence of alcohol, during a hangover, etc.; he in fact wrote very little during the worst years of his alcoholism, leading up to his sobriety in 1976.

[16] Of note, references to literary texts are otherwise rare in Carver's prose.

[17] Carver also used this title for his first anthology, *Fires* (1984), in which he reprinted the essay "Fires."

literary influences, "Fires" contains Carver's description of his first en-counter with his teacher, John Gardner, who challenged his students to discover their Promethean gift, the spark of creativity, announcing "that he didn't think any of us had what it took to become real writers—as far as he could see none of us had the necessary fire" (p. 28).

Carver goes on to name "the main influence on my life and writing"—not a positive one, however, but a "negative one, oppressive and often malevolent" (p. 28). And this was his son and daughter, who smothered rather than sparked his creative flame: "If there'd once been a fire, it'd gone out" (p. 30). For Carver, the creative force and incendiary destruc-tion jointly signified by fire were necessarily entwined—in no small part because of the antipathy he felt toward his children for their supposed interference with his writing. Focusing on them, he thereby minimized that far greater and amply demonstrated threat, his alcoholism.

Carver's parents were effectively estranged. His mother, Ella, was perpetually disappointed in her lot, but perhaps more painful for Carver to witness was the relentless downward spiral of his father, Clevie. Also an alcoholic, Clevie had been a skilled saw-filer in the lumber mills of the Pacific Northwest, but suffered a complete mental collapse in his fifties and became a shadow of a man. His dream had actually been to be a railroad man, but his lone stint on the great coal locomotives was disappointingly short. Adding still further symbolic charge to the theme of *fire*, on the trains he had been proudly employed as a *fireman,* second only to the locomotive engineer in importance.[18]

Carver's brother, James Carver, remembers that their father "loved the railroad . . . . He was a fireman, and my mother wanted him to quit because he was gone so much of the time. I think he was unhappy because of that" (quoted in Sklenicka 2009, p. 14). Clevie returned to his old job, "bequeathing his sons his muted dreams and finely honed resentments of a disappointed man" (p. 14). Apparently his legacy also included the smoldering frustration of a man stifled by the demands of family life. One can imagine the ambivalence with which Carver held his own fires, identified so literally with his father's thwarted ambition.

[18] With responsibility for maintaining the coal fires, the job was a prestigious one involving regulation of the fire's heat according to the current energy needs of the train.

"Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?" (1964)

Fire makes its inauspicious entrance into Carver's fiction in the early story "Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?," written in 1964 (Carver 1976). In it, Ralph Wyman goads his wife Marian (names that cannot help but recall Raymond and Maryann) into confessing a past infidelity; meanwhile, she *irons* clothing, *lights* a cigarette, and *boils* water. When the truth is finally out, all this gathering heat ignites into a violent miasma of chaotic rage and sexual arousal.

> Then Marian on the floor, blood on her teeth: "Why did you hit me?" Then Marian reaching under her dress to unfasten her garter belt! Then Marian lifting her dress as she arched back! Then Marian *ablaze* . . . . Yes, there was a great evil pushing at the world, he thought, and it only needed a little slipway, a little opening. [Carver 1976, pp. 240-241, italics added]

Fleeing, Ralph goes drinking and gets mugged by "black men" on the wrong side of town—both symbol and atonement for his "great evil," his violent dark side. Back at home he takes a bath, but it is Marian's astonishing, unconditional tolerance that contains him, extinguishing his rage and cleansing him of his iniquity. A passage from an early version (notably, later excised by Lish) demonstrates Marian's virtual mirroring of him, his image bathed in her tear-filled eyes:

> Her eyes were filled and seemed to contain layer upon layer of shimmering color and reflection . . . . Then, as he gazed even deeper, he glimpsed first in one pupil and then the other, the cameo-like, perfect reflection of his own strange and familiar face. [Sklenicka 2009, p. 282]

Marian also contains Ralph's impotent, jealous, eroticized rage within the narrative by provoking it and then accepting its projection: it is Marian who gets Ralph heated up; it is Marian who is *ablaze.*

"Night School" (1970)

At the time "Night School" (Carver 1976) was written in 1970, the Carver family was temporarily homeless and dispersed, and Carver himself was living with his mother. Recently separated from his wife and,

like Carver, living with his parents and sleeping on a cot, the narrator in this story stands up two uneducated women whom he met in a bar. They wait, complaining, outside his door, but he inexplicably ignores them and associates to *a book he had read,* in which a man had a dream about a man having a dream. The narrator describes how, in the embedded dream, the dreamt dreamer

> . . . wakes to see a man standing at his bedroom window. The dreamer is so terrified he can't move, can hardly breathe. The man at the window stares into the room and then begins to pry off the screen . . . . The dreamer in the nightmare recognizes the man outside. It is his best friend, the best friend of the dreamer but no one the man having the nightmare knows.
>
> Telling it to my wife, I'd felt the blood come to my face and my scalp prickle. But she wasn't interested.
>
> "That's only writing," she said. [p. 100]

Insulated by four layers of nested narrative—the story, the book within the story, the dream within the book, and the dream within the dream— is the dreamer's "best friend," watching him. "Unrecognized" by the fictional, dreamt dreamer (and perhaps by the author of the story), could this represent an observing ego and/or superego ("best friends," of sorts), penetrating the "screen," the many layers of fiction and dream, and restraining the narrator from joining the two women outside?

This interpretation is suggested not only by the narrator's inaction, but also by the looming intimation of violence present in an earlier version of the story—although the latter was only to be excised by Lish in the collected (final) version (Sklenicka 2009). Thus, the narrator's abandonment of the two women can be understood as inhibitory, averting whatever transgressions the narrator may have entertained for the anticipated tryst. And, just as those evidently unspeakable (and eventually censored) fantasies are linked to *barely literate* women, when turned into a *story*, they remain, as the narrator's wife scoffs, *only writing*.[19]

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[19] This irony of comment cannot have been lost on Carver, pointing as it does to the power of fiction to negate the very realities it portrays. Significantly, there is no intervening inhibition in the 1969 story "Tell The Women We're Going" (Carver 1976), written one year before "Night School," in which the narrator participates in the rape and murder of two women he and a friend try to pick up.

Lish also deleted the name of the book that the narrator remembers reading: *Set This House on Fire,* the 1960 novel by William Styron (Sklenicka 2010). Like his other excisions, this quells an allusion to violence, as *Set This House* revolves around the desecration of pure, idealized love by sexual and homicidal violence. Styron took his title from a 1623 sermon by John Donne:

> God . . . when he could not get into me by standing and knocking . . . hath applied his judgments and hath . . . *set this house on fire* with fevers and calentures, and frighted the master of the house, my soul, with horrors and heavy apprehensions and so made an entrance into me. [Donne and Carey 2009, pp. 319-320, italics added]

In the collected version of "Night School," all that remains of *Set This House* is its dream and its watching man forcing his way in, as does John Donne's God—who, when his polite knocking is rebuffed, "sets this house [i.e., the body] on fire with fevers." Here fire stands as much for the retribution for sins as for the sins themselves. In "Night School," the transgression signified by the leitmotif of fire is literally precluded by the memory of its ur-text: *it is contained by words.*

"A Serious Talk" (1979)

Nine tumultuous years after "Night School" was written, its inhibited symbolism of fire was unleashed in 1979 in "A Serious Talk" (Carver 1981). Burt is spending Christmas with his children and his wife, Vera, from whom he is separated; he is, however, expected to leave before Vera's new boyfriend arrives for dinner. "But Burt liked it where he was. He liked it in front of the fireplace, a glass in his hand, his house, his home" (p. 106).

Morose, Burt walks out, casually adding an entire carton of highly flammable wax and sawdust fire logs to the one burning in the fireplace, and swiping the line of pies cooling outside for good measure. The censored ur-text in "Night School" is thus revived and actualized: Burt nearly *sets the house on fire.* When he returns the next day, he denies his explosive aggression. Vera faces him.

"I can't take it any more. You tried to burn down the house."

"I did not."

"You did. Everybody here was a witness". . . .

A cone of ash filled the fireplace . . . . A trail of smoke stains rose up the bricks to the mantel, where the wood that stopped them was scorched black.

Vera turns and goes into the kitchen.

The pilot light was out again. She was at the stove trying to get the gas going under the pan of water.

"Don't burn yourself," he said. "Don't catch yourself on fire." [p. 108]

As her name implies, Vera speaks the truth and needs no witness to verify her accusation. Indeed, the story relates to what occurred on Christmas, 1976, when an intoxicated Carver almost set his own house on fire in exactly the same way (Sklenicka 2009).[20] In the fictional version, Burt refuses to admit to any malice or wrongdoing, but his suppressed, retaliatory fury nevertheless emerges again, penetrating into his fantasy of Vera catching fire. He tries to elude the fantasy by neutralizing it, turning it into a heroic rescue, ridden with eroticism.

He considered her robe catching fire, him jumping up from the table, throwing her down onto the floor and rolling her over and over into the living room, where he would cover her with his body . . . .

[20] Max Crawford, a writer and friend of the Carvers, recollects that several years prior to the 1976 incident, Maryann told an assembled party a story about a woman and her family living in a motel: "She gets drunk with the motel owner, who seduces her. In disgust with herself, she drops her kids' crayons in the furnace and sets her cabin on fire! . . . Her husband arrives in time to see the conflagration of his cabin. He thinks his family has all gone up in flames. But then, as he's weeping, here comes his wife, with lipstick all askew, out of the landlord's cabin . . . . There was Ray, just sitting there, and you could tell that the humiliation of the story was just terrible for him—but on the other hand, he loved [Maryann] telling it and making it up" (Crawford quoted in Sklenicka 2009, p. 239). Carver thus enacted Maryann's fantasy (which itself may have drawn on Styron's book) in fiction as well as in life. In fact, drafts of two other stories involve houses *actually* set on fire: "Vandals," set in the context of past infidelity and betrayal, and "Dreams," in which two children (!) are killed in a house fire; one can imagine why Carver may have hesitated to take these stories further. These were among the five posthumously published manuscripts found in fairly early stages of development (Carver 1991). Since they were undated, they cannot be ordered chronologically relative to other stories.

"Vera? . . . Do you have anything to drink? I could use a drink this morning." [p. 108]

Burt needs a drink to douse his disavowed flames, for he is *on fire,* and when at the end of the story he hears Vera on the phone with another man, he cuts the phone cable, a gesture confirming that *there are no words* to express or encase his consuming feelings, no text to contain, symbolize, and inhibit them as in "Night School"; there are only *acts*—combustible, irrepressible, inevitable. For Burt and Vera, there will be no "serious talk."

This story was written two years after Carver got sober and one year after he and his first wife, Maryann, separated for good. One senses that, like Burt, Carver had difficulty "using his words" during the events retold in the story and was trying to "talk it out" in the safer arena of fiction. We have less hope for Burt. At the close of "A Serious Talk," the static inhibition of "Night School" is replaced by the scorched residue of discord and jealous dislocation.

"Where I'm Calling From" (1982)

In the second line of "Where I'm Calling From" (Carver 1983), a 1982 story closely following Carver's experiences at a drying-out home, the first-person narrator identifies himself as "first and foremost a drunk" (p. 127). The facility's director advises him that "Jack London used to have a big place on the other side of this valley. Right over there behind that green hill . . . . But alcohol killed him. Let that be a lesson to you" (p. 137).

Carver revered Jack London—like himself, an alcoholic by the age of twenty.[21] The promise of self-recognition made at the very beginning of the story is fulfilled as we learn how alcohol spoiled the narrator's life and those of his fellow residents. One of them, J. P.—somewhat improbably, a chimney sweep—has nearly destroyed his marriage; still, his wife (also a chimney sweep) forgives him (as did Marian), visiting him with open arms. Separated from his own wife, the narrator is jealous of their

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[21] Carver had visited the London homestead referred to, in reality over the hill from the detoxification center where he spent time. He was also moved by London's 1913 cautionary memoir, *John Barleycorn* (Sklenicka 2009).

spark; he wants a kiss, too. It is New Year's Eve and he has the shakes. Trying to "put my mind on something else" (p. 144), he drifts, associating to J. P.'s conjugal bliss.

> I'm thinking about chimney sweeps—all that stuff I heard from J. P.—when for some reason I start to think about a house my wife and I once lived in. That house didn't have a chimney, so I don't know what makes me remember it now. But I remember the house and how we'd only been there a few weeks when I heard a noise outside one morning. It was Sunday morning and it was still dark in the bedroom. [p. 144]

As they lie together in bed, his wife recalls that the landlord was scheduled to paint the house that morning.

> I push the curtain away from the window . . . . It's the landlord, all right . . . . The old fart breaks into a grin. It's then I realize I'm naked . . . . I let go of the curtain. But I keep standing there at the window. I can see the old fellow nod to himself like he's saying, "Go on, sonny, go back to bed. I understand." [pp. 144-145]

J. P. and his wife—people who work in *fireplaces*—waken the narrator's memory of being at home with his wife, back at a time when the "home fires" still burned, even with no fireplace. Looking on, the landlord (another watching man, in another associative passage) might be a benign superego figure, the understanding "old fellow" who tolerates whatever our hapless narrator may inadvertently expose.

This is, of course, only one of many potential interpretations of this likely overdetermined scenario, which of all Carver's voyeuristic vignettes most vividly summons the primal scene, as well as oedipal victory—a sanctioned one, at that. This slant is a germane one, given the successes Carver had accrued: sobriety, rejuvenated health, a new partnership, and what had become a most spectacular career.

In a paragraph that follows the recalled memory, the narrator thinks about calling the women in his life, his wife and girlfriend (in that order). Again, these thoughts take him elsewhere.

> I try to remember if I read any Jack London books. I can't re-
> member. But there was a story of his I read in high school. "To
> Build a Fire," it was called. This guy in the Yukon is freezing.
> Imagine it—he's actually going to freeze to death if he can't get
> a fire going . . . .
>
> He gets his fire going, but then something happens to it. A
> branchful of snow drops on it. It goes out. Meanwhile, it's get-
> ting colder. Night is coming on.
>
> I bring some change out of my pocket. I'll try my wife
> first . . . . I won't raise my voice. She'll ask me where I'm calling
> from, and I'll have to tell her. [pp. 145-146]

This second example of explicit free association leads to the story's second reference to Jack London and to one of his texts, which, like Styron's, links fire to well-known writers. But unlike Styron's symbolism, in London's famed story, fire is desperately needed—life saving, not life taking. The bracketing textual context—the narrator's need to connect to the women he loves—points to an encompassing, generative meaning: burning, life-giving *love,* without which his world will grow cold. The narrator turns to "To Build a Fire" (London 1908) in order to "imagine," and thereby confront, the fearful consequences: *"imagine it—he's actually going to freeze to death."*

Likewise, Carver turns to *his* story and its encased ur-text. The story ends with the narrator's fantasy of telephoning his estranged wife, guiltily admitting "where he's calling from," and then, a bit more hopefully, calling his girlfriend. "'Hello, sugar,' I'll say when she answers. 'It's me'" (p. 146). These final two words suggest Carver's identification with the narrator: *it's me.* Recall that in "Fires," written in the same year, Carver blamed his children for putting out his creative fire, not mentioning his self-destruction. But the unnamed narrator of "Where I'm Calling From" knows that he needs love to stay alive, let alone to rekindle his fire, and that it is his alcoholism that was snuffing it out—killing him, as it killed Jack London.

Was Carver better able to avoid this truth by externalizing it and projecting it into the narrator? Or did he confront it by recognizing himself in the revealing guise of the narrator, the self-identified "drunk," and in the calamitous risk of its embedded ur-text? It was, after all, London's neck of the woods where the narrator in the story, and Carver in real

life, were "calling from." Might the story have acted as confession *and* defense?

In any case, accountability, guilt, and remorse appear to emerge far more willingly in fiction than in the guarded, ersatz confessional essay, "Fires." In a departure from the futile violence and paralysis of previous stories, "Where I'm Calling From" signals a new sense of agency. On New Year's Eve, a new leaf is turned over, in fiction as in life. The unassuming yet powerful torque of this story—from shame, demoralization, and jealousy to humility, forgiveness, and hope—is extraordinary, and unprecedented in Carver's fiction.

"Fever" (1982)

Fire is physically embodied in "Fever" (Carver 1983), a story written in 1982 in which the feverish body, previously represented by John Donne's house "set on fire," becomes a symbol for a more creative but no less consuming fire. Eileen has run off with another man, abandoning her husband Carlyle, an art teacher, and their two children—like Carver's, a boy and a girl. Carlyle must find a housekeeper so that he can return to work. He cares deeply about his children:

> He cooked for them—he had no appetite himself—washed and ironed their clothes, drove them into the country, where they picked flowers and ate sandwiches wrapped in waxed paper. He took them to the supermarket and let them pick out what they liked. And every few days they went to the park, or else to the library, or the zoo. They took old bread to the zoo so they could feed the ducks. At night, before tucking them in, Carlyle read to them—Aesop, Hans Christian Andersen, the Brothers Grimm. [p. 162]

This is not, I believe, wholly intentionally ironic. This father, the selfless good father of fairy tales, is perhaps the one Carver both wished he had been, and wished he had had—hence the ambiguously implicative name, *Carlyle*. Either way, he is a father whose concerns—including, pointedly, his literary ones—centered on his children, not himself.[22]

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[22] This is germane not only to Carver's ego-ideal, but also to his experience of his father's retreat into pulp fiction, which he would read to his son but not for long (Tutter 2009).

We can see a different side of Carver in Eileen, who with inflated self-importance and seemingly without heed, absconded and "went for it": as she tells Carlyle, "I don't want [our children] to forget I'm an artist. Maybe not a great artist yet . . . but an artist" (p. 167). Yet as absurdly pretentious as she is portrayed, and try as he might not to love her, Carlyle does, as Carver and Maryann loved each other, and cannot accept that she is gone.

The martyred Carlyle meets his equal in Mrs. Webster, the saintly housekeeper who saves the day. Carlyle's dream prefigures her arrival.

> When the alarm went off, he wanted to keep his eyes closed and keep on with the dream he was having. Something about a farmhouse. And there was a waterfall in there, too. Someone . . . was walking along the road carrying something. Maybe it was a picnic hamper . . . . In the dream, there seemed to exist a sense of well-being. [p. 169]

Mrs. Webster fulfills this sentimental fantasy—and then some.

> That afternoon he arrived home to find his house neat and orderly and his children in clean clothes. In the kitchen, Keith and Sarah stood on chairs, helping Mrs. Webster with gingerbread cookies. Sarah's hair was out of her face and held back with a barrette. "Daddy!" his children cried, happy. [p. 173]

Now Carlyle comes home "to the smell of something good coming from the kitchen" (p. 175); soon he feels "his life is beginning again" (p. 176). Thus supported, he falls sick, incapacitated by a fever. Mrs. Webster nurses him, gives him medicine, and spoon-feeds him like a baby. His children are "sweet to him . . . But he couldn't take care of them" (p. 176). Fortunately, he no longer needs to; they also have Mrs. Webster. His students do not need him either: calling in sick, he recommends a "substitute," an art teacher who does little else than paint but cannot sell his pictures.

Eileen, the would-be artist, connects Carlyle's fever to his creativity, urging Carlyle on the telephone to write about having a fever—as the French author Colette had. "She wrote a little book about what it was like . . . . Try writing about what it's like . . . . Translate that into something

usable" (p. 181). This recalls Maryann Carver, who steadfastly championed Carver's writing; but quite opposite to Eileen, Maryann steadily worked multiple jobs, including, like Carlyle, teaching—supporting her husband's vocation even during his extramarital affairs. The inversion of the Carvers' husband–wife scenario in "Fever," in which Carlyle assumes the best of Maryann and Eileen assumes the worst of Carver, gives some idea of the magnitude of shame around narcissistic self-interest and grandiosity that Carver seems to be working through here.

Buried inside the wrapping of the wishful fantasy of the morally superior, selfless Carlyle, and comprising but a fraction of the story, is its nucleus, the internal fantasy of the feverish Carlyle that supplies the story's title. This is also a wishful fantasy, but a regressive and self-indulgent one in which Carlyle's all-consuming artistic fire can rage, unquestioned and unopposed. For in this scenario, he can be selfish *and* be completely taken care of without blame or disgrace, as it is not his fault he needs to be spoon-fed like a baby by Mrs. Webster, the good mother/wife. With her aid and her assent, fever also renders Carlyle free from obligation, and like Eileen free from the guilt that this immoral abdication would ordinarily entail. In his consuming need, Carlyle approximates both Eileen and the substitute teacher, both of whom eschewed everything for their questionable "art"; indeed, they are virtual "substitutes" for a side of Carver that he found reprehensible—stand-ins for the driven, self-absorbed, infantile parts of his self.

And then there is Eileen's invocation of Colette, who preceded Carver in blurring the line between fiction and autobiography, and who exploited "fever" as a literary device to represent the force and consequences of privileged literary endeavors. While the text Eileen references is presumably Colette's "La Fievre" (1941), fever also figures in her autobiographical *My Mother's House* (1920), in which Colette's sister falls ill: a compulsive reader, she is literally *consumed by books.* In convulsive solidarity with her favorite authors, she converses incoherently with them in her delirium. Kristeva (2005) acutely notes that Colette's obsession with writing was itself "a fever," "a *greediness* that stands in for all the lacks it creates" (p. 394, italics in original)—a devouring need that Carver also experienced, and one that he could easily see in himself.

The reader feels Carlyle's pulse of anxiety when, six weeks after her arrival, Mrs. Webster gives leave. Next, something remarkable happens:

> [Carlyle] wanted to talk to her. He cleared his throat. "Mrs. Webster, there's something I want you to know. For a long time, my wife and I loved each other more than anything or anybody in the whole road. And that includes those children. We thought, we knew that we'd grow old together . . . ."
>
> Carlyle went on talking. At first, his head still ached . . . . But then his headache went away . . . . He had begun his story somewhere in the middle, after the children were born. But then he backed up and started at the beginning, back when Eileen was eighteen and he was nineteen, a boy and girl in love, *burning* with it . . . .[23]
>
> "Go on," Mrs. Webster said. I know what you're saying, Mr. Carlyle. Sometimes it's good to talk about it. Sometimes it has to be talked about. Besides, I want to hear it. And you're going to feel better afterwards." [pp. 184-185, italics in original]

Words can thus tame ills as well as incite them: in describing Mrs. Webster's talking cure, Carver invokes the *writing* cure: *"sometimes it has to be talked about."* And cure it does, and more than the headache. After Mrs. Webster—patient, gentle analyst that she is—waves goodbye, Carlyle "felt something come to an end. It had to do with Eileen and the life before this . . . . He understood it was over, and he felt able to let her go" (p. 186).

The desirable, nirvana-seeking, free-wheeling Eileen, and the asexual, cookie-baking, spoon-feeding Mrs. Webster represent the two faces of Maryann Carver, which, while neatly and diametrically split, are experienced in close juxtaposition in the narrative. Having Carlyle cared for in his moment of need may have helped Carver reconnect with the maternal, caring aspect of the woman for whom he *burned* with love— who not only loved him back, but tended him, fed him, and *nurtured his fever.*

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[23] Note that the "beginning" of "his story" is Carlyle's marriage at age nineteen, congruent with Carver's similar statements about the beginning of his remembered and fictionalized lives. Here, too, the story is not completely told.

If "Where I'm Calling From" demonstrates a new sense of account-ability and remorse, "Fever" apprehends and appreciates both sides of Carver's loss, as well as its finality. Together, the two stories point to a more integrated depressive position. On the other hand, the persistent segregation and compartmentalization of different aspects of Carver and Maryann into cartoonish figures in "Fever" may indicate that Carver's characters—and by extension, Carver himself—could still revert, particu-larly at times of stress or need, to a more regressed position character-ized by splitting, somatization, and projection, as LaFarge (2009) has persuasively argued for Dickens and his fictional characters.

Kristeva (2005) likewise notes the parallel "splitting in two that takes hold" (p. 394) during Colette's illness in "La Fievre." Here Colette re-calls how, when she was ill as a child, she would fantasize about an imag-ined twin who

> . . . had the luck to remain a little girl. She dates from long ago. In hours of my fever, my mother, Sido, bent over me: "do you want something to drink, *Minet-Cheri?*" I wanted above all for her not to perceive my suspect twin, the little straight-haired girl whom she might have loved. [Colette 1941 quoted by Kristeva 2005, p. 394]

Colette feared losing her mother's cherished attention to another, lit-tler girl—the more deservingly dependent child whom she longed to be. Given the splitting of its own characters and their regressive, deliciously gratified neediness, "Fever"—which is ultimately about the self-indulgent, all-consuming, greedy, feverish creative drive—appears patterned after Colette's text. Indeed, the figure of Eileen condenses Colette's libidinal abandon with Carver's entrenched skepticism regarding his own worth as an artist. Thus, Carver mingles in his fiction with Colette, London, and Styron—"conversing," like Colette's delirious sister, with the literary greats whose peership and company he so vigorously seeks.

"Intimacy" (1985)

The 1985 story "Intimacy" (Carver 1988) opens with a self-referen-tial, autobiographical, first-person monologue. The narrator, wanting to stay in touch with his ex-wife, has sent her letters "from time to time,

when something of mine appeared, or was written about me in the magazines or papers—a profile or an interview" (p. 444). When he pays her a surprise visit, we realize that he is a writer, who moreover has written about her: "She says I've caused her anguish, made her feel exposed and humiliated. Make no mistake, I feel I'm home" (p. 444).

Carver is clearly inhabiting familiar territory. The narrator willingly listens to his ex-wife reiterate his various transgressions and betrayals, but when she asks him to admit regret, he refuses. She explodes:

> You know what? I think that if you were on fire right now, if you suddenly burst into flame this minute, I wouldn't throw a bucket of water on you . . . . Your heart is a jungle, a dark forest, a garbage pail . . . . I served, buddy boy. Then you held me up to display and ridicule in your so-called work. [pp. 448-450]

Followed by a barrage of insults, the superficially silly statement that she "wouldn't throw a bucket of water on" him if he were on fire has another, deeply serious meaning: while she resents his obstinacy and his "display and ridicule" of her in his "so-called work," *she will not put out his fire.*

Hearing this, the narrator dissolves into prostration, a profoundly abject gesture of penitence.

> Then here's the thing I do next. I get down on my hands and knees, a big guy like me, and I take the hem of her dress. What am I doing on the floor? I wish I could say. But it's where I ought to be . . . . I'm still on my knees holding the hem of her dress. I won't let it go. I'm like a terrier . . . . I can't move.
>
>   She says, Get up now. What is it? You still want something from me. What do you want? Want me to forgive you? [pp. 450-451]

Here Carver alludes to a nickname he earned during the years of unfettered alcoholism: "Running Dog," a reference to his talent for dodging trouble—such as the predicaments Maryann often rescued him from (Sklenicka 2009).[24] Now, having listed his various misdeeds for this

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[24] These were no small troubles. Maryann once rescued Carver from a jail sentence for unemployment fraud by a virtuoso performance in front of a judge. Using Carver's first book—published literally the day before—as a prop, she gave spirited testimony that

repentant terrier, the narrator's ex-wife forgives them. Still he does not move. She tells him:

> Hey, stupid. Honey, I said I forgive you . . . . Get up. That's right . . . . Listen to me now. Look at me . . . . *You just tell it like you have to* . . . . There, I've done it. You're free, aren't you? . . . Maybe it'll make a good story. [Carver 1988, pp. 451-453, italics added]

Sensing his mute need for absolution of his betrayal, his pitiless disclosure of their intimacies and mistakes, she melts; invoking Curt Johnson's advice once more, she gives him permission to—no, she *tells* him to *tell it like you have to*. If the narrator is, as she says, "confused with someone else" (and that would be Carver, "a big guy like me," p. 450), this integrated—and yes, *intimate* portrait of Carver's loved, lost wife is not confused at all. Aided by her forgiving tolerance, intimated twenty years before in "Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?", the narrator finally, and openly, repents. While his apology is wordless, the surrounding apology, "Intimacy," is constructed from *words*.

At the time the story was written (1985), Carver had reached an apogee of productivity. After an exhilarating two months of steady writing, he marveled that "it would have been all right, you know, simply to have died after those sixty-five days. *I felt on fire*" (Gentry and Stull 1990, p. 218, italics in original). Despite the threat of death that the flush of success seems to warrant, Carver enjoys, even luxuriates in, the generative aspects of creativity that *fire* has come to symbolize—a far cry from the destructive, jealous rage it signified in the first three stories.

Thus, in 1964, Ralph's aggression is disowned as provoked, its heat and smoke projected into Marian in "Will You Please Be Quiet, Please?" (Carver 1976). In the 1970 story "Night School" (Carver 1976), the threat of danger is contained and restrained by the embedded text. Despite further attempts at suppression and disavowal, in 1979 the annihilative violence described in that text is acted out, in fantasy and reality, in "A Serious Talk" (Carver 1981). The arc of *destructive fire* thus travels from externalization and projection, to symbolization and inhibition, and finally to action and admission. This in turn sets the stage for locating

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artists were by nature less accountable and therefore deserving of discretionary latitude. Apparently, the judge agreed (Sklenicka 2009).

the origins of some of this aggression in guilt, narcissism, and shameful dependency. And so, in 1982, responsibility and remorse around alcoholism—both actual, and symbolic of other dependencies—emerges in "Where I'm Calling From" (Carver 1988), heralding a reawakened sense of agency and hope.

In "Fever," also from 1982 (Carver 1983), the elaboration of regressive, dependent longings and the sacrifices demanded by creation is accompanied by gratitude and the sad relinquishment of ambivalent attachment. And finally, in "Intimacy," the inarticulate conflict specified by the severed telephone line in "A Serious Talk" is replaced by mute resolution; forgiveness is asked for and received. Thus, *creative fire*, rekindled in "Where I'm Calling From," gains strength and sustenance in "Fever," and is authorized and absolved in "Intimacy." As if to comment on the function of literature as a textual mirror, the shifts in these stories are paralleled by their ur-texts: *Set This House on Fire* (Styron 1960), a narrative of inflammatory impulses; "To Build a Fire" (London 1908), a struggle for life-sustaining fire; and "La Fievre" (Colette 1941), an invocation of the author in all her incantatory power—a writer *on fire*.

A New Story

The self-reflective awareness evident in "Intimacy" is taken a step further in Carver's penultimate published work, the 1986 story "Blackbird Pie" (Carver 1988). The first-person narrator's wife is about to leave him. He finds a letter under his door, addressed to and apparently fairly critical of him. But although "purportedly" from his wife, it is neither in her handwriting, nor written in her style: as the narrator observes, "my wife *never* underlined her words for emphasis" (p. 496, italics in original).

In contrast, the narrator's own prose is *full* of stresses—as was, as we now know, Maryann's (Sklenicka 2009). Slowly, the reader begins to suspect that the narrator has *himself* written the letter. He proceeds to defend himself:

> I would go so far as to say that every word of this entire letter . . . is utterly false. I don't mean "false" in the sense of "untrue," necessarily. There is *some* truth, perhaps, to the charges . . . . All I

want to say, is that while the sentiments expressed in the letter may be my wife's . . . the force of the accusations leveled against me is diminished, if not entirely undermined, even discredited, because she did not in fact write the letter. [p. 497, italics in original]

Against its complex rationalizations, assumed identities, and confusing confabulations that speak to the defensive uses of fiction, this Borgesian exposition also speaks to the truth in fabrication, in fiction. All that is true about the letter—including its "falseness"—is true of the fiction it is part of. In "Blackbird Pie," Carver no longer needs a female character to indict him, a Vera to speak the truth or a Claire to illuminate it. Instead, his wife's accusatory voice is absorbed into the narrator's *own distinctive one*, as recorded and concretized in the letter. Demonstrating the command with which Carver now "comes on strong in his own voice," this is also suggestive of the internalizations that accompany and allow mourning. This is a *different* story.

The narrator returns to the mysterious letter:

My heart was racing. I sat in my chair and, trembling, picked up the pages of the letter once more . . . .

Instead of beginning to read the letter through, from start to finish . . . I took pages at random and held them under the table lamp, picking out a line here and a line there. This allowed me to juxtapose the charges made against me until the entire indictment (for that's what it was) took on quite another character—one more acceptable, since it had lost its chronology and, with it, a little of its punch. [pp. 500-501]

The following text collects hurried snippets of the letter as he skims it, an exquisitely experience-near exercise delivered in the self-consciously intellectual narrator's peculiar, stilted timbre. But one of these fragments ("talcum powder sprayed over the bathroom," p. 501) pointedly identifies an indelible image from Carver's first published story ("Furious Seasons," written in 1960; Carver 1977), thus stipulating that these "pages at random" are representations of his stories, and that, from the beginning, *his stories are the matter and essence of the letter*. In those stories, the past is parceled into extracts ("a line here and a line there"), reworked,

and reshuffled, thereby losing "its chronology and, with it, a little of its punch": the very *work* of fiction. The "letter from his wife" is a recursive fiction, but here, in this "fiction," the veil is lifted, revealing a confession under the pretext of a complaint. *This* fiction—indeed, in my view, the larger part of Carver's fiction—is a letter, a letter to Maryann, a letter *to* his former wife.

"Blackbird Pie" ends with a tremendous appreciation of her, despite her grievances and her leave-taking. There is a breathtaking, bottomless sorrow, and then an epiphany.

> It could be said . . . that to take a wife is to take a history . . . . I understand that I'm outside history now . . . . Or you could say that my history has left me . . . . Or that history will now have to do without me—unless my wife writes more letters, or tells a friend who keeps a diary, say. Then, years later, someone can look back on this time, interpret it according to the record, its scraps and tirades, its silences and innuendos. That's when it dawns on me that autobiography is the poor man's history. And that I am saying good-bye to history. Good-bye, my darling. [p. 511]

Leaving behind his life with his wife, but commemorating it in this "letter," "history," "diary," even "autobiography" (an admission as frank as any), Carver leaves us with this story—which, while "false," is still part of "the record," as are all his stories, the "scraps and tirades" left for us to put piece together and "interpret"—at once as enigmatic, and as prosaic, as the child's verse it takes its name from.

In writing on Borges, whose *Ficciones* clearly inspired "Blackbird Pie," Ogden (2009) offers that "consciousness is born at the intersection of the real and the imaginary. It is only when one can differentiate the two, and yet allow them to live in conversation with another, that one may achieve self-awareness" (p. 393). It is not hard to see, in Carver's final few pages, his profound insight into the coupled workings of fiction and recognition, the line between narrator and author fading and wavering. As art and life come together in this last story about his first wife, the defense rests, yields to a sad understanding and an immensely dignified grief, and says goodbye. As the front door closes behind her, our nar-

rator is adamant about one fact alone: "But let the record show: *every light in the house was burning*" (Carver 1988, p. 501, italics in original).

Instead of splitting off or renouncing his past, lost love, Carver knowingly honors it, retains it, and lets its burning light glow in his prose, prose that is part of his identity—his "poor man's history." The mystery of his exhausted marriage behind him, this blackbird will not only sing—he will fly.

CONCLUSION: THE MIRROR OF FICTION

Carver's fiction likely served many functions other than supporting insight and self-reflection. The parallels between certain features of his stories and aspects of analytic experience have only been touched on here, including the expression of a rich variety of fantasies, the utilization of defensive maneuvers, and the powerful containment they offer via language. Likewise, I have only alluded to their roles of expiation and reparation and the use of writing as a means to mourn. Instead, I have concentrated on those features of the form, content, and process of Carver's *oeuvre* that merit comparison to the analytic frame, suggesting that it functioned, like an analysis, as a holding container, symbolizing instrument, and reflective mirror of myriad aspects of his self—his attributes, actions, and object relations—that, when projected onto and symbolized by his many characters, could be recognized, metabolized, and reinternalized.

I have also focused on the features of that *oeuvre*'s developmental arc that indicate a process of personal growth. The conjecture that Carver's stories and their repetitive revisitation of meaningful themes engaged a process of discovery and working through on the part of their author is supported by the growing recursive self-referentiality and movement toward an integrated depressive position in his later work. I think it likely that Carver's personal development both *permitted,* and *was permitted by* the developmental unfolding of his fiction. If the similarity between Freud's "talking cure" and Carver's "writing cure" evokes convergent evolution, the growth achieved in Carver's life and in Carver's fiction could be modeled after *coevolution*, a term that describes the reciprocal, mutually influential evolution of different yet highly interdependent species.

Did Carver's body of short stories comprise a "self-analysis"? Anzieu (1993) holds that "we can speak of self-analysis only when there is a narrator who is the principal character in the work being created; and only when rules homologous to those of the psychoanalytic situation are set up" (p. 276). If this specification of the self-analytic situation is rather narrow, I would nevertheless argue that Carver's *oeuvre* lies close to it; the degree to which it was indeed self-analytic ultimately depends on the degree to which he recognized himself in the mirror of fiction. And while some will aver that a conventional self-analysis, or even psychoanalysis per se would be essential for a more complete analytic journey, if we accept Anzieu's assertion that "an unfinished part of the treatment is necessary for the psychological work of creativity" (p. 275), then it is surely fortunate that *all* analyses are, by definition, incomplete.

Is all creativity in some way self-analytic? Certainly, our own creative analytic work asks us to constantly turn our eyes and ears inward as we help our analysands tell their stories (Jacobs 1996; Sonnenberg 1995). As they do, they begin to reexamine old stories, long told and retold—now reevaluating them, revising them, restoring them, and ultimately bringing them to a new level of authenticity, resolution, and ownership. Hopefully, in doing so they become freer to write the story of their future.

In telling his story, Carver, too, was liberated; one can only imagine how much further his work might have gone had his life not been ended by lung cancer at the age of fifty. But within his lifetime, his stories of rage, impotence, and despair would give way to a *new* story—one of awareness and forgiveness, of mourning and remorse, of hope, and of letting go.

In Memoriam: This paper is dedicated to T. R.: a writer.

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INSIGHTS, EPIPHANIES, AND WORKING THROUGH: ON HEALING, SELF-HEALING, AND CREATIVITY IN THE WRITER AND THE ANALYST

BY THEODORE J. JACOBS

The author discusses similarities and differences between the way that writers and psychoanalysts go about their respective tasks. He raises questions about the role of creativity and its sources in both these vocations. He illustrates his points by relating a brief clinical vignette from his work with a patient who was a writer, and by sharing the description of a creative story he wrote many years before becoming an analyst. After presenting a story by James Joyce as also illustrative of these themes, the author concludes by comparing and contrasting the inner experiences of the writer and the analyst.

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I will offer some thoughts about writers and analysts as they go about their respective tasks. More specifically, I will focus on aspects of their psychologies that play key roles in the work they do. I will also attempt to delineate some qualities they have in common and in what ways they differ. What I have to say is quite limited and incomplete; I have made no effort to be thorough or comprehensive, but simply to present

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some preliminary ideas as a way of introducing this most intriguing and complex topic.

My interest in these matters began many years ago when, in an effort to overcome the boredom that I all too often experienced in medical school, I began to write stories about that experience. Learning that the great Irish storyteller Frank O'Connor was to teach a summer course in fiction at a nearby university, I applied for admission and submitted the required samples of my work. In reply I heard nothing, but, undaunted, I showed up at the school anyway, hoping to talk my way into the class.

What I discovered upon arriving on campus was that forty students were in the same boat. All of us had applied to the course and submitted stories, but no one had received a response of any kind. Concentrating on his favorite subject, Irish whiskey, O'Connor had read none of the submissions. Faced with this crisis, he had no alternative but to interview all the applicants and somehow, by means of this chancy method, to pick a class of twelve students.

When my turn came, the famous writer looked me over with a leprechaun's eye.

"And what is it that you do?" he asked, unleashing the flood tide of words that characterized most of his utterances.

"Me? Well, actually, I'm a medical student," I replied.

"A medical student?" O'Connor responded incredulously. "Glory be Jesus, what is it about the study of medicine that makes you so unhappy that you've got to write?"

Before I could utter the words that were on my lips—"gross anatomy"—he had already rushed past me.

"I've made up me mind, young fella," he said, "I'm going to take ye into me class. Not that I know you've any ability, mind ye. Faith!—From the looks of ye, I'm not at all sure you've got a bit of talent on ye a'tall. But I've a mind to take ye anyway, and can ye imagine why?"

I shook my head. "No," I said, "I can't."

"Because Chekhov was a doctor!"

CREATIVITY IN WRITERS AND ANALYSTS

I'm glad that O'Connor let me into that seminar because in the six weeks of contact I had with him that summer, I learned a good deal about put-

ting words together and about how much of good writing is rewriting. (O'Connor would rewrite a story as many as fifty times to get it right.) I also learned a good deal about my teacher's own unhappiness, about the furies that bedeviled him, and about how, through writing, he sought to deal with them.

It was this experience—as well as later experiences in doing psycho-analytic therapy with writers who, out of their inner struggles and efforts to realize wished-for aspects of themselves, forged works of the imagina-tion—that stimulated my interest in literary creativity and all that enters into it. I became interested, that is, in by what means and through what processes the writer, reaching down inside himself, is able to translate his inner experiences—often ones involving much pain—into a poem, a story, or a play that leaps from the page, transcends the private bound-aries of the self, and touches something deep and resonant in all of us.

And over the years, as I have worked in our field, I have been inter-ested in a parallel question about the analyst. How do we, as analysts, make use of ourselves in our work? How do we utilize, that is, our per-ceptions, our memories, our imaginations, and our bodily responses, as well as the *revenants*—the ghosts of old conflicts that rise and stir within us as we listen—to enter into worlds both new and familiar? How in the heat of the analytic moment do we transform these subjective experi-ences, with their power to evoke strong and sometimes disruptive feel-ings, into insights, into understanding, and into communications that illuminate for our patients pieces of their inner landscapes?

And are the processes that take place in the analyst similar or iden-tical to those experienced by the writer as she dramatizes, disguises, and transmutes her dreams and daydreams—and sometimes her night-mares—into acts of creation? If not, how do they differ? In short, how does creative activity in the analyst—if in fact one can speak meaning-fully of creativity in our work—compare with creative processes in the writer?

I wish I could supply satisfactory answers to these complex questions and offer the reader fresh insights into the inner workings of the minds of the analyst and the writer as they go about their respective tasks. All I can do at the moment, however, is to throw out some tentative ideas based on my experiences as an analyst, as someone who has written a bit of fiction, and as a reader of texts.

Although I am by no means an active writer of fiction—my total output in this area consists of a few stories published years ago in a national magazine and in an anthology of short stories, as well as a recently completed novel—for lack of adequate material from analyst-writers, I find it necessary to call on some inner experiences that I have had in writing, as well as in analyzing. Not surprisingly, there are only a handful of analysts or therapists who are also accomplished creative writers, and although I have been privileged to talk with a few of them, it was clearly not feasible to obtain from them the kind of in-depth material I was seeking.

I have discovered, however, that although severely limited, my experience in writing fiction has been sufficient to give me at least some feel for the kinds of phenomena that, typically, arise in the writer's mind as he goes about transforming and reworking his private concerns—concerns that have their roots in powerful and, not infrequently, emotionally searing experiences—into works of fiction.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF COMPOSITION

Let me begin by underlining some of the problems we face in attempting to understand not the writer as an individual, but what we might term the *psychology of composition*—that is, the way in which the mind operates during the writing process. As analysts, we come to know writers primarily as our patients and, not infrequently, we observe particular attributes in these individuals: an unusual keenness of perception; a heightened sensitivity to visual, auditory, or tactile stimuli; a gift for language; and the like.

What we do not and cannot observe, however, because it is an intensively private matter, is the act of composition itself. It is this that we cannot witness. As a result, we can only guess at what happens at those moments—at how the writer's synthetic abilities and transformational powers not only conjure up a make-believe world, but also manage to both objectify and disguise highly personal concerns. Although often current and pressing, these concerns in most instances also represent long-standing preoccupations.

Speaking about the private and intensely personal nature of the writing process, the gifted author Paul Theroux (1997) has this to say:

"My secret is safe. No one ever sees me write. One of the triumphs of fiction is that it is created in the dark. It leaves my house in a plain wrapper, with no bloodstains" (p. x).

I am aware, of course, that much more than personal struggles enters into the process of literary creativity. Talent, experience, discipline, identifications, the influences of tradition and literary convention, and conscious artistry involving form and style as well as subject matter—these are only a few of the elements that contribute to the creation of a literary work. My focus here, however, is on the psychological aspects of literary creativity. Analysts, of course, have had a long-standing interest in what goes on inside the head of the artist, and much has been written about the psychology of creativity. I will not attempt even a cursory review of this literature here, but will merely touch very briefly on two contributions that are relevant to creative processes in the analyst as well as the artist.

Albert Rothenberg (1971), a psychiatrist and researcher at Yale University who has devoted many years to studying creative individuals, concluded that their thinking has particular qualities. One of these characteristics he terms *Janusian thinking*, named after the Roman deity Janus, whose many faces looked in several directions at the same time. "Janusian thinking," Rothenberg says, consists of "the capacity to conceive and utilize two or more opposite or contradictory ideas, images, or concepts *simultaneously*" (p. 313, italics in original). Opposites or antitheses are conceived of as existing side by side or as equally operative and equally true. As opposed to dreams and primary process thinking, which typically condense and fuse opposites, Janusian thinking, which is conscious, keeps them apart but holds them in suspension. The images of a lover as devil and angel, child and man, ascetic and voluptuary, for instance, exist side by side in the palm of the poet's hand and provide the raw material for her verse. The analyst, too, holds such contradictory images in mind and, along with the affects and imaginations that accompany them, these images constitute the stuff out of which he crafts an interpretation.

The other quality that Rothenberg identifies in creative individuals is what he calls *homospatial thinking*. Homospatial thinking consists of "actively conceiving two or more discrete entities occupying the same space,

a conception leading to the articulation of new identities" (Rothenberg 1971, p. 311). In other words, there is a fleeting superimposition or fusion of images from which a novel and original configuration arises.

As an example of this mental process, one could imagine, for instance, that in composing the poem "Sailing to Byzantium," Yeats (1928) might well have pictured several overlapping images: the thin and scrawny body of an old man, a torn and shabby coat hanging on a stick, and the idea of a soul made incarnate—that is, the notion of a soul come alive, one that lives, breathes, and engages in song. And from this conglomeration of fused and interweaving ideas and images, ultimately, sprang these memorable lines:

> An aged man is but a paltry thing,
> A tattered coat upon a stick, unless
> Soul clap its hands and sing, and louder sing
> For every tatter in its mortal dress . . .
>   [pp. 1-2]

In psychoanalysis, we are also familiar with this type of thinking. Listening, for instance, to a patient criticize a colleague in the same tones, overtones, and phrases used by his mother when she reprimanded the patient in his childhood, we may, as we listen, envisage two overlapping faces or overlapping forms: that of the patient and his mother, entwined or conjoined like figures in a Picasso painting. Responding spontaneously to that image, we may find ourselves interpreting to the patient not that "you are speaking like your mother," but something like "that is your mother speaking." The image that arrives in our minds contains the insight, and then, using words, we attempt to convey to our patient the way in which, through the fantasized fusion of self with other, he retains his mother inside himself.

While no doubt thinking of the kind that Rothenberg describes is an important ingredient in the mental processes of both writer and analyst, what distinguishes the gifted from the not-so-gifted practitioners of each seems to be something else: the rare ability, granted to few, to transform images held and fused in the mind into something new, into the novel conception, the original idea, the surprising and resonant image.

CREATIVITY AND TRAUMA

Rose (1980) stressed the importance of trauma and its mastery in art. Not that all art has its roots in psychological trauma; it would be a mistake, I believe, to take that view. Other considerations, as mentioned, play roles of varying importance, including the need to exercise innate talent; efforts to augment, complete, or alter the self-representation; the pursuit of certain ambitions; the enactment of particular fantasies; and the living out of certain identifications.

And it is true, of course, that art can neither be understood nor explained in psychological terms alone. Talent, largely innate, can be enhanced or thwarted by external experiences and internal forces, including inner conflicts, but it cannot be created by them. In the area of writing, talent includes not only unusually keen observational powers, richness of imagination, and a facility for expression, but also the ability to create forms and structures that convey and yet also conceal our deepest, our most existential concerns. And, ultimately, for the writer, it is her ability to use words in magical ways that is perhaps her greatest gift.

Critic Robert Alter (1997) captured this quality in a *New York Times* book review:

> Literature is not merely an articulation of patterns but a deep imagining of the world through words, so that words themselves, in the hands of a great writer, attain an authority, a complexity of interaction, a power of enchantment they do not otherwise possess.

It is nonetheless true, however—and this is the aspect of the writer's psychology that I will focus on—that for certain gifted individuals, their art, among other things, serves as a vehicle through which they seek to master or to come to terms with certain painful, disruptive, and psychologically traumatic experiences, of both earlier and later life. And in not a few cases, the artist's life suffers while his art flourishes. In modern times, this sad paradox has been amply illustrated by writers such as Dylan Thomas, Anne Sexton, Sylvia Plath, John Ashberry, Cesare Pavese, and, more recently, novelist David Foster Wallace—all of whom, driven

by demons, destroyed their lives while at the height of their creative powers.

Discussing the role of trauma in art, Rose (1980) views the artist as seeking to master his traumatic past

> . . . by reshaping aspects of himself, of space and of time in the externalized forms of his work . . . . What began as the common task of mastering one's personal past becomes, for the creative artist, a process of externalizing and transcending it to disclose new aspects of reality itself. [p. 210]

Rose continues:

> Like psychoanalysis, art leads to a type of mastery that is characterized by the inner reintegration of feelings with thought and perception. Unlike psychoanalysis, however, which operates primarily by means of the interpretation and verbalization of warded and split-off aspects of thought and feeling [in the patient], art creates fresh sensuous forms which have the effect of stirring emotions and reassimilating them with thought and perception . . . . This process leads to the illumination of the real from within, the characteristic fusion-re-separation experience of the aesthetic moment. [p. 211]

The artist, in short, creates images that, through their evocative power, construct bridges—bridges to aspects of her own psychological past that need reclaiming; and, insofar as these images transcend the purely personal, bridges to the reader or spectator whose own memories and fantasies, resonating with those of the artist, are activated by the strong affects aroused by these images.

SOME PERSONAL HISTORY

In an effort to compare the ways in which certain life experiences and the conflicts they mobilize may be unconsciously utilized by writers and analysts, I would like to share particular experiences of my own that, outside my awareness, found their way both into a story that I wrote and into my analytic work with a patient who was himself a writer.

Mr. C

Let me turn first to the analysis. I will describe something about that situation and about my patient, Mr. C, and what he was struggling with at that time.

An author who had earlier, at the height of his career, enjoyed a reputation as both a superb craftsman and a keen observer of his fellow man, Mr. C had fallen on hard times in recent years. As the result of a series of losses and personal setbacks, he had become increasingly distraught, and now found himself unable to complete any of the writing that he began. By nature a person who avoided unpleasant realities, he had developed a lifelong pattern of warding off depressive and other negative feelings by focusing on the lives of others—that is, by gathering, recording, and telling stories. Meticulous in his approach, he would work and rework a story in search of just the right tone, just the right phrasing; and in fact it was for the elegance of his style that he was best known. Now, however, this drive toward perfection had become an obsessional ritual, one that—although this was not obvious to the casual observer—was being used to fend off threatening feelings of helplessness and despair that had arisen in response to a series of recent losses.

Mr. C's wife and best friend had died, and a sister was terminally ill. He himself was not in the best of health and he imagined that he, too, might die soon. He expressed the hope that he might publish more of his work before he did.

It seemed fairly clear to me that Mr. C was depressed and that his depression was taking its toll on his ability to work. I thought, too, that he was suffering from an incomplete mourning reaction, since he had cut off his feelings following the loss of his wife and had attempted to plunge into his work as a way to deflect and overcome grief.

In retrospect, I do not think I was entirely wrong in this assessment, but other factors, too, contributed to my patient's difficulties, factors that only gradually emerged in treatment. One of these related to Mr. C's son, a young scientist of increasing prominence. Another factor, unconsciously linked to the son, involved a piece of history that initially Mr. C had not revealed: the fact that he had an older brother who had died in his twenties, when my patient was seventeen years old. At the time of his

death (from a cancer not unlike the kind from which Mr. C's wife had died), this brother had a growing reputation as a promising young poet.

After some months of treatment, my patient began to bring in scientific articles written by his son, partly to impress me, partly to elicit an admiring response. Unconsciously, he was also showing me an area of concern and of conflict. As I listened to Mr. C talk about his son, I often found myself uneasy. I would feel a tension in my abdomen, and sometimes I would notice that my body was rotated away from the patient. A certain edge often came through in Mr. C's voice as he praised this young man, a quality that was hard to define. On several occasions, as he spoke, images of my own father came to my mind; I recalled times that he had similarly praised me for some accomplishment, but in a manner that conveyed an undertone of envy and hints of regret about his own unfulfilled ambitions.

On the basis of these inner experiences, as well as the mixture of affects that came through in Mr. C's accounts of his son's achievements, I became convinced that there was more ambivalence in my patient's attitude toward his son—and toward me in the transference—than he was aware of. It was also clear, however, that this material was not transparent enough, not close enough to consciousness, to bring to his attention. It was necessary to wait, to let things develop, and to see whether, in the transference, some of the negativity and resentment that I sensed behind Mr. C's surface charm would become palpable enough to interpret.

As time went on, Mr. C became increasingly interested in me and my work and would ask questions about it. Of special interest to him were my psychoanalytic publications. Without saying anything about it in his hours, he began, outside of them, to seek out and read things I had written. He also sought the opinions of friends, including analysts, about my papers. All of this he did secretly.

One day, Mr. C related a dream in which he was teaching a class of young and rebellious poets who, in disagreeing with his conventional views, became unruly and threatened to attack him, so that he had to flee the classroom and shut the door on them. After describing the dream, Mr. C held forth on the younger generation of writers. In a way that was caustic, but that also conveyed feelings of hurt—both at being ignored by them and at their gaining the recognition that now escaped him—he

took these young colleagues to task for their lack of classical education, their desire to cut corners and not serve apprenticeships, their empty experimentations, and, especially, for their preoccupation with their own histories as poetic material. "They call themselves *confessional* poets," he said disdainfully, "but they confuse confessions with genuine poetry."

As soon as Mr. C began to speak, I knew that he had read some articles of mine in which, to illustrate particular countertransference reactions, I had cited certain personal experiences that had arisen for me as memories in the course of the work. These papers have been the object of some criticism from colleagues, but only rarely in tones as severe as Mr. C used to attack these young poets. His envy, anger, and evident wish to demolish them clearly came through in his critique. What clued me in to the fact that he was indirectly referring to my own work was his use of the word *confessional*. In a previous hour, Mr. C had mentioned that an analyst friend of his had told him I had written of countertransference issues in a rather open way. He had wondered at that time if my writing might be the psychoanalytic equivalent of the *persona* poem; in this genre, poets such as Robert Lowell and Anne Sexton utilize personal and sometimes quite private material as a way of speaking concretely of issues of general significance.

In this earlier hour, Mr. C had used the term *confessional poetry* in referring both to this type of writing and, by indirect comparison, to my own reports of countertransference experiences. When in the later session the word came up again, it triggered in me an association to the previous hour, and, intuitively, I sensed that now as then Mr. C was making indirect references to my writing.

The Role of the Analyst's Memories

That other factors were also operating in Mr. C's psychology and in our relationship became clear via two memories that arose in my mind during that hour. The first concerned an incident that took place during my first clerkship in medical school. At the time, I had not mastered the techniques of physical examination and, especially, I was not proficient with an ophthalmoscope. I did my best but was awkward at it, and often saw nothing but a pupil staring back at me when I tried to examine a patient's eye. One day, I was using my ophthalmoscope in a not-very-

successful effort to perform such an examination on a quite elderly man. Try as I might, I could not focus on the retina. After about five minutes of this, the old gentleman suddenly jumped up in frustration, grabbed me by the jacket, and pushed me onto the examining table. Then, menacingly, he stood over me.

"You don't know what you're doing, Doctor!" he exclaimed. "You've got it all wrong. Look up at me. I'll show you how to examine an eye!" The patient turned out to be an emeritus professor of ophthalmology at a nearby medical school.

The second memory involved Gus, the leader of an after-school sports club that I attended from the ages of eight to twelve. Though Gus was a strange and unpredictable fellow, given to impulsive actions, he was emotionally important to me as a father surrogate in those years. Eventually, though, in part because it became clear to parents and youngsters alike that he was gay, and in part because he began to deteriorate and to act in quite irrational ways, I left the group and lost touch with him.

One day when I was fifteen, I was walking with friends on Broadway, near where I lived. In the distance, we saw a figure approaching us, moving rather unsteadily. It turned out to be Gus. As he drew near, one of my friends remarked a little too loudly, "Here comes Gus the fag." Suddenly, the old man turned, lunged at me, and, grabbing me by the throat, threw me to the pavement.

"I've made you everything you are!" he shouted, "Never forget that! I've made you everything you are." (What he thought I was at fifteen, I have yet to figure out.)

A Story of My Own

These two experiences became the nuclei of stories that I later wrote, some years ago now. One of them was called "The Extern," and it recounted the harrowing adventures of a callow medical student who encounters, as his adversary on the ward, an irritable, crotchety, and sometimes menacing old man to whom he is assigned as his first case on the medical service. The old fellow delights in making the student's life thoroughly miserable. Finding fault with everything the young man does, he criticizes his every action, his every effort to be helpful. Theirs, of course, is a love-hate relationship and, in the end, the old man dismisses the ad-

vice of the eminent physician called in to see him and indicates that he will do what his real doctor, the student, advises. Or something like that. (I have spared myself the trauma of rereading this story in recent years.)

In "The Extern," I dealt not so obliquely with my fear of my father (and of Gus)—with some of the trauma I experienced at their hands, my wish for their love, and my long-standing wishful fantasy that it would all come out right in the end. Patient and student, initially alienated, are reconciled and develop a fond relationship. In writing it, I drew on experiences that had great resonance for me; they concerned conflict I had been living with for many years, which was exacerbated by increased personal difficulties my father was having at the time. In writing it, I tried both to grapple with and to transform those struggles.

Memories of my experiences with the ophthalmology professor and with Gus arose in the analytic hour with Mr. C, I believe, as a short-hand way of signaling something not only important to me, but that in time I could interpret to my patient: that not only was Mr. C envious of and highly competitive with me (and with his son), but he was also defending against long-standing yearnings for love from a man. These wishes, thinly concealed behind his criticism of the younger generation of poets—which I understood partly because they were at the heart of the memories that arose in my mind during the hour—had increased since the deaths of Mr. C's wife and his best friend, and since his son had become increasingly independent of him. They had begun to surface in the transference but were being warded off by an unconscious defensive mechanism that turned them into their opposite. A negative sign was being placed in front of them, so that Mr. C experienced not longing but anger and disappointment.

My patient's rivalry with men and his yearning for their love was also an important factor in his relationship with the brother who had died. As was characteristic of him, he had managed to blunt his reactions to this profound loss, reactions that were composed in almost equal mea-sure of grief and guilt over his rivalrous and competitive feelings. For years these feelings had been bottled up, and now, due to the evocative power of the transference as well as to changes in Mr. C's life that made him more needy, they were threatening to emerge in full force.

The conflicts that were surfacing were being defended against in a number of ways, including by means of Mr. C's behavior in compulsively writing and rewriting the same piece. A biography of a contemporary figure whose troubled childhood and adolescence were a key part of his story, this was a work that he labored over endlessly but could not finish. In this instance, I was able to use memories that arose in my mind as clues that told me something important about Mr. C's feelings for me— feelings of love and rivalry that formed a powerful undercurrent in our relationship. This mix of emotions, once understood and interpreted to Mr. C, illuminated the troubling ambivalence that he felt toward both his son and his deceased brother, a conflict that lay at the root of many of his difficulties.

As an analyst, I had no need to transform and disguise the material that arose from within as I had had when, confronting similar issues in my personal life at an earlier time, I sought to deal with them in part through creating stories. And if, out of anxiety, I had transformed these subjective responses by writing stories about them, I do not think that it would have been a very useful process to me. I had no need to alter these responses, I believe, primarily because the conflicts to which they alluded were no longer active at that time. It was only their shadow, the ghosts of these old issues, that was mobilized by the transference. And because I was dealing with revenants and not the heat generated by ac- tual relationships, it was possible for me to simply experience the affects aroused by the material. In other words, I could allow memories to arise and I could feel with full force whatever that material evoked in me.

If, on the other hand, I had been actively engaged in an ongoing conflict with my father or some psychic representative of him—as might easily have been the case—in all likelihood, I would not have been able to allow the experience to simply surface untouched. In this situation, struggling with these conflicts, I could not have achieved the kind of inner neutrality that is necessary if we are to listen well. Instead, in an effort to manage the anxiety connected with my own responses, I would have had to inhibit, alter, or transform them in some way.

In that event, rather than being able to use my subjective experi- ences in the service of understanding—as, hopefully, the analyst is able

to do—I would actually have functioned psychologically more like the fiction writer who, in projecting and disguising her conflicts through the creation of characters who give voice to them, does not attempt to monitor, control, and harness the affects and fantasies connected with ongoing conflicts and memories. Instead, she satisfies a need to express these conflicts and to discharge the related affects, but in a manner that not only conceals and displaces them; it also keeps them at a safe distance. In that way, the writer is able both to reconnect with certain emotionally important experiences and to protect herself against their potentially disruptive effects.

If as a young man I had not written the story about the extern and the old man, I have little doubt that I would have been in a state of greater turmoil than I was. At the time that I wrote the story, my father was having a particularly hard time. His business was failing and, as a result of certain actions he had taken, he had brought pain and misery to himself and his family. In addition, like Mr. C, he was showing some early signs of memory loss. His plight, in turn, evoked feelings in me that I had long repressed: sadness, anger, frustration, helplessness—and, as I was to learn only later, a measure of satisfaction. Not knowing how to deal with this inner turmoil and seeing no clear pathway to effective action, I found myself, as many others have done, seeking both to remove myself and to engage the feelings aroused in me through the writing of fiction.

In "The Extern," I, as the callow medical student, relive my fear of my father (and of Gus, my surrogate father), who were the models for the character of the obstreperous patient. I reexperience and seek to master the pain and disappointment inherent in my relationship with each. I express in thinly disguised form my wish for their love, and I realize in fantasy the long-standing hope that it would all come out all right. Since I was experiencing both shame and guilt as a result of the troublesome feelings that pressed in on me, writing this story had a distinctly therapeutic effect.

In a similar vein, Theroux (1997) describes how, for him, writing fiction brings to life and gives reality to certain concealed and wished-for aspects of himself:

> As a person, I am hurt and incomplete . . . . My stories are the best of me. I inhabit every sentence I write. I tear them out of my heart. People have said, you are your stories. I protested, no, no, my stories are better than me. [p. ix]

The story I wrote not only served defensive purposes and created a welcome self-image; it also served as a reminder of certain traits of my father's, namely, his generosity and capacity for warmth, which in the heat of the moment I had put out of mind. This story, then, was more than an exercise in wish fulfillment. It also suggested a process through which a resolution of the conflict might be achieved. If you can stick in there with this difficult man, be patient, and not be driven away by his crotchety and defensive manner, the story seemed to say, you might yet find a way to reach him and to resolve your differences.

THE WRITER'S INNER STRUGGLES

The writing of "The Extern" gave me some distance from my immediate reactions to my father and pointed a way toward some resolution of our difficulties. This happens, I believe, with some frequency in the writing of fiction. In the tales that he tells, it is not unusual for the writer not only to depict in disguised and symbolic form certain inner struggles with which he is contending or that he identifies with, but to search for trial solutions as well. Not infrequently in fiction, these solutions are hard won. Typically, they are arrived at only after the protagonist has met and faced severe difficulties, including, at times, outright threats to his emotional well-being, his relationships, or his physical self.

While these plot developments are part of the writer's technique—part of her art consciously employed to achieve certain effects—unconsciously, they frequently serve a purpose related to her psychology. In essence, they often rehearse worse-case scenarios, potentially threatening outcomes to her situation. In that way, they prepare her psyche and, by extension, that of the reader, who through the author's craft is induced to identify with the protagonist against the shock of the unexpected, that is, against unanticipated and unprepared-for psychological trauma.

At the same time, by offering some resolutions of the conflict, subtle or obvious, temporary or more permanent, the writer points toward pos-

sible solutions, ones that ultimately may serve him as well as his characters. Thus, among other functions, stories and their endings can serve psychologically as a stalking horse, as experiments in problem solving, and as a means of exploring conflicts and their potential vicissitudes, as well as possible strategies for their resolution.

In psychoanalysis today, we hear a great deal not only about the inevitable subjectivity of the analyst and the inevitability of countertransference enactments, but also and increasingly about endorsement of them as therapeutically valuable. Without a doubt countertransference can be, and is, useful in this way. However, the idea that it is not only inevitable but permissible for the analyst to give rein to the expression of her conflicts and then attempt to deal with their impact on the patient and the analysis is, from one point of view, to ask her to make a shift from being primarily the listener who processes her inner responses in an effort to convert them into interpretations, to utilizing herself in a manner that comes closer to that of the writer who expresses his conflicts through his characters. In this situation, then, the analyst enacts his countertransference feelings with and through the patient, but without the disguises and inventive creations that transform the writer's representation of his inner world.

A Case in Point: James Joyce and "The Dead"

I will turn now to a story by James Joyce, "The Dead" (1914), the final story in *Dubliners,* as an example of how a writer, through the stories he tells, seeks to grapple with certain long-standing problems in himself. In Joyce's case, it was troubling aspects of his character that he often wrestled with in his fiction. In "The Dead," he fictionalizes his well-known narcissism, his preoccupation with self, his lack of empathy for others, and his intense—and sometimes morbid—jealousy of any man with whom his wife, Nora, had had any involvement in the past. He accomplishes this through the creation of his alter ego, the central character, Gabriel Conroy.

There are those who say that Joyce was unconcerned about these personality traits of his; that in fact he defended them as the inevitable accompaniments of his genius, qualities that, for better or worse, one has to expect in the true artist. While to some extent this is true—Joyce's

intense pride surely prevented him from openly displaying self-doubt, no less contrition—there is evidence in his work, and in some of his private communications to Nora, that he was well aware of and remorseful about his insensitive and hurtful behavior. And in his own way, as reflected in the insights achieved by his characters and the changes in attitude that they undergo, he sought to transcend his narrow self-interest and to reach out to his wife and others with as much empathy as he could manage.

Many readers are familiar with "The Dead," but for those who have not reread it recently, I will give a very brief synopsis. The setting is the annual Christmas party given by the elderly aunts of Gabriel Conroy, an aspiring writer whose description matches that of Joyce himself and who has generally been taken to represent aspects of Joyce, as the writer viewed himself as a young man.

At the beginning of the story, the aunts, who live in another town, are anxiously awaiting Gabriel's arrival. Characteristically—and insensitively, since he knows how eager they are to see him—he arrives late. And when he does appear with his wife in tow, he reveals himself to be a sharp-tongued, rather callous fellow. He makes several thoughtless remarks to a servant girl and to other guests, and it is clear that he regards some of them with unabashed disdain. Primarily interested in his own career at the moment, he is preoccupied with thoughts about the after-dinner speech that he is to deliver later in the evening. When he does so, he speaks with a kind of self-conscious rhetoric. Clearly, he is a performer, always aware of the way in which he is coming across to an audience.

It becomes clear, too, that Gabriel is a snob. He has contempt for Ireland, for Irish culture, and for the simple rural folk among whom he was raised. He idealizes Europe and European achievements in music and art, and considers himself part of that tradition. In short, in Gabriel we have the depiction of a gifted but very self-involved and quite pretentious young man.

Like Joyce, Gabriel is married to a woman whom he needs and admires and of whom he is jealously possessive. It is clear, as Gabriel and his wife, Gretta, leave the party, that he is looking forward to making love to her in the hotel room that he has engaged for the night. (During

Joyce's childhood, his parents always stayed in a hotel after the aunts' annual party.)

Once in their room, however, Gabriel discovers to his dismay that Gretta is not interested in lovemaking. She is preoccupied with something else. Her thoughts have turned to a young man, Michael Furey, of whom she was fond in her youth. Michael's situation was tragic. Stricken with rapidly fatal tuberculosis at a young age, his love for Gretta and his courtship of her were cut short by his early death. Thinking about Michael, as she does from time to time, makes Gretta melancholy. That night after the party, she becomes preoccupied with memories of Michael and his fate, and experiences both deep sadness and feelings of tenderness toward the lost youth.

This episode as recounted in "The Dead" was taken from real life (Ellman 1959). Nora Joyce had had an admirer, Michael Bodkin, who had been in love with her and had died young of tuberculosis. Joyce was intensely jealous of Michael and found it unbearable when Nora spoke or thought about him. As happens in the story, however, he made efforts to overcome his jealousy, even going so far on one occasion as to visit Michael's grave and to write a poem in Nora's voice about her lover. This poem, incidentally, not only contains many of the same sentiments expressed in "The Dead," but uses almost the same imagery to convey the binding universality of death.

When in the story Gabriel realizes that Gretta has been thinking about Michael and is emotionally unavailable to him, initially, he becomes enraged and expresses his anger in the typically frigid, sarcastic, and accusatory way that was Joyce's trademark. Then something happens. After caustically attacking his wife, Gabriel begins to think about the evening just past and about his aged aunts. He realizes that soon they, too, like Michael, will be gone, and how quickly the living pass on to the realm of the dead. And he thinks about the continuum that exists between the living and the dead, the continuity between generations, between those alive and those in their graves; and he realizes that it is this continuum that links and binds them, one to the other.

Although this is not spelled out in the story, it is quite clear that, for Joyce, the aunts, of whom he was quite fond, were unconsciously linked to his mother. A few years before he wrote *Dubliners,* Joyce's be-

loved mother died. In typical fashion, Joyce steeled himself against experiencing any sadness, any pain. He did not grieve and he forbade those around him to grieve. His feelings remained locked up inside, accessible to no one, not even to Joyce himself. They seeped out, however, in his stories, perhaps most notably and poignantly in "The Dead."

In light of the reality of death that links man to man, Gabriel realizes that his self-important behavior at the party and his rage at Gretta represent nothing but vanity—the foolish behavior of a popinjay blind to the transience of life and the ever-present fact of death. With this insight, Gabriel can now put himself in Gretta's shoes and understand her feeling of loss and her connection with Michael, just as he is connected with his mother, his aunts who soon will be joining her, and others close to him who have passed on. He understands that the dead have a permanent place in our minds and hearts, and that all mankind is joined through the fact of death. In a metaphor used repeatedly in the story, we all travel west—travel to the grave where others close to us have traveled before and now lie.

Snow is the image that Joyce uses to express this connection. Snow falls at the beginning and again at the end of the story, onto roads and cemeteries, blanketing the universe.

> Snow . . . was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and, farther westward, softly falling into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon every part of the lonely churchyard on the hill where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead. [Joyce 1914, p. 168]

In "The Dead," Joyce allows Gabriel, finally, to put himself in the shoes of one who feels great pain, one who is grieving deeply for a loved one now gone. In that way, through this fictional representation of himself, Joyce lowered the barriers to his own deep sadness, to his own grief. And, like Gabriel, he intuitively recognized that it was only by opening

the door to grief and its companion, empathy, that change in himself could take place.

Some cynics will say that, although the character Gabriel changes and grows in the story, James Joyce did not; that after writing *Dubliners,* he remained the same cool, aloof, intellectually formidable but self-absorbed person whom he always was. Perhaps this is true—and perhaps not. Perhaps the very fact that Joyce wrote "The Dead" was a sign that some movement, some change had already begun within him—a change that, promoted by the new openness to grieving reflected in the story, was no doubt also stimulated by the very act of writing it.

In any event, it is clear that in "The Dead," Joyce wrote a story that was better than he was; it is a story that not only gave voice to his deepest personal concerns, but that also pointed the way toward the kind of change—the humanization of himself—that he was to struggle to attain throughout his life.

THE WRITER'S EXPERIENCE AND THE ANALYST'S EXPERIENCE

I will turn now to a few thoughts about the inner experiences of writers and analysts as they go about their work. A fundamental similarity between the two, I believe, is that to find truth, both the writer and the analyst must reach deep inside themselves. Like the accomplished artist who creates from a place of deeply felt experience, the analyst, too, must be in touch with reservoirs within herself, reservoirs of affect, fantasy, and memory. She must be receptive to the stirring of ghosts—to the reawakening and coming to life of old, buried fantasies; to the long-forgotten moments of joy, pain, and loss in childhood and adolescence that, lying fallow beneath the surface of our lives, are roused once more by the impact on us of our patients' stories, of the tales that they tell. If on the other hand, she is unable to do this, if she has a need to ward off these subjective experiences as they emerge, the analyst may, unconsciously, discourage the patient from transmitting material that will arouse them.

One of the most important functions of the analyst's own analysis and, arguably, one of its most enduring legacies, is to open up the channels of memory and affect, to create fluidity and access where before

there were strictures and blockades. The analyst who is analyzing well, who is in touch with memory and fantasy, who experiences intuitive moments and has the freedom to be surprised, has access not only to preconscious mental processes in himself, but, specifically, to childhood and to the world of early impressions. As Blum (1980) noted, reawakening and reconstruction of the analyst's childhood proceeds—often silently and unconsciously—along with that of the patient.

This experience of reliving, of refinding, is essential to mastery—that is, to the working-through process that takes place in both analyst and writer. For the analyst, working through begins, but surely does not end, with her own analysis. With each of our patients, the process continues. Every individual we work with will jar and dislodge pieces of our past, pieces of unfinished business, that rise to the surface—often in the form of a countertransference moment. The experience of such revenants, disconcerting and painful though they sometimes are, provides the analyst with fresh opportunities for their reengagement. In the course of an analytic hour and, ultimately, in many hours, she encounters the residues of old issues, buried conflicts, and early trauma newly awakened. And by confronting them—now through a memory, now in an enactment, now through the rising of unexpected feelings—she continues the process of working through.

In his own way, the writer, too, engages in a process of working through, although he does not call it by that name and usually does not identify it as such. It often happens, however, that in story after story, novel after novel, an author returns to familiar issues and to familiar problems, presenting them each time in a new setting and with a new cast of characters. The theme, however, and the underlying concerns that cause its repetition remain essentially the same. They remain the same, that is, until some change takes place in the inner world of the author; until, in other words, through the process of writing, some solution to or working through of the problem has been achieved. Then significant changes may take place in the basic story told, in its resolution, or in the characters' ways of dealing with the issue. Just as in the analyst, it is, in large measure, by means of his engagement with patients—that is, in the course of analyzing—that working through takes place, so in the

writer it is the act of writing and the body of work he creates that provide the vehicle for working through.

Joyce, I believe, demonstrated a continuing effort to engage and work through certain critical issues: the wrenching loss of his mother, his fury (remember the name of Gretta's former boyfriend, Michael Furey), his neediness, and his rigid self-protectiveness. One can see these in his writing—evidence of an effort that began with *Dubliners* and that perhaps is most evident in the character of Gabriel Conroy, the fictional version of Joyce, whose epiphany—whose sudden but clear insight—sparked a meaningful change in his behavior.

For reasons that have to do with my own psychology, I find that memories from various aspects of my life often rise up to meet parallel experiences and memories of the patient's. Not all analysts work this way. For some, spontaneous fantasies are more frequent; for others, thoughts, ideas, or affective and bodily experiences predominate. For still others, visual experiences or bits and pieces of auditory memory may surface as responses to the patient's communications. Some analysts maintain that they are aware only of the patient's material, both present and past, or of theory that relates to it. These colleagues have a need, I believe—not always recognized—to defend against the inevitable personal resonances stirred up by analytic work. In such individuals, however, it is highly likely that those resonances will find expression in displaced and disguised form within their conscious reflections on the patient's world.

The analyst, however, does not purposefully search for memories in herself or seek to track the affects and fantasies that arise within her in order to understand and communicate with her patient. Quite the opposite—she gives herself over totally to the process of listening in a way that seeks to grasp not only what is said, but equally what is communicated while remaining unspoken. Rather than functioning psychologically like the writer who seeks to reach an imagined audience, and who, therefore, transforms his inner world to create a story, the analyst's experience is closer to that of a deeply engaged reader immersed in a work of fiction—one whose mind is stimulated by, and produces, fantasies in response to the drama unfolding before her. Imagining herself into the patient's world, she loses herself, and, in the process, finds aspects of her own life and her own psychology that resonate with those of the patient.

Both the analyst and the writer reach deep inside themselves, but in different ways. The writer is driven, unconsciously, to deal with, transform, and re-create aspects of his psychological experiences in a new fashion through the telling of tales. This imaginative act provides some relief of tension through the externalization of inner conflicts, grapples with them in disguised form via the narrative and the characters who are created, and through the story and its resolution, often points the way toward solutions to some of the author's—as well as his characters'—emotional conflicts.

The analyst eschews the creation of stories. He must experience his own inner world, insofar as is possible, in raw form, that is, as it ascends into consciousness. Only in that way can it be used to grasp parallel experiences in the patient. If the analyst, for defensive reasons, creates a narrative out of the fragments of memory and affect that arise from within, he may in effect block access both to his own unconscious and to that of the patient.

The artist, of course, uses her knowledge of craft, her talent, and her artistic sensibilities to shape the raw material that largely resides in the preconscious. She gives form to the emerging material, and that form is, in large measure, responsible for the artistic effect that is produced. Form is used both to express and to conceal, both to communicate and to obfuscate. And in that tension lies art. Enough of the passions, the anxieties, the universal concerns must get through so that they resonate with the unconscious of the reader. And yet enough must be concealed so that what is communicated is not too obvious, not too open, not too bold and plain. In language, metaphor, and symbol lies the message.

The analyst's form is his technique. Listening for messages that flow beneath the surface of the analytic exchanges as well as those contained within them, he imposes his own discipline on what he experiences both from within and without. Taking this raw material, what he hears and what arises from within, he crafts an interpretation—a communication to the patient that is itself a synthesis of the objective and the subjective, data arising from the patient's material and the analyst's inner responses to it. In the absence of form, or with inadequate form that cannot effectively contain and reveal its contents, there is no art. And without adequate form in analysis—that is, skilled technique that draws on the

analyst's inner experience, just as it draws on the patient's material—there can be no true insights, no generative interpretations.

CONCLUSION: SOME COMMONALITIES AND SOME DISTINCTIONS

So artist and analyst are both alike and different as they go about their callings. What they share as essential to their work is the use of themselves and, specifically, their ability to tap into and—each in his own way—utilize unconscious forces (or, perhaps more accurately, preconscious ones): the rich reserves of affect and memory that, for both, function as vital reservoirs. To work well and imaginatively, each must make a descent, experience an immersion.

Bollas (1987) speaks of the analyst's need to establish certain conditions in order to be in touch with himself: the need to lie fallow, to attain a state of quietude, and to allow what lies deep within him to rise to the surface. For, as Bollas is fond of saying, news from within comes on its own terms.

And the poet Anne Sexton (1985) once put it this way:

> The only source of greatness is the writer's ability to go down deep into the unconscious. You can call it craft; it doesn't matter how you get there, but it has to dive down. That's what I try to do in a poem, though I don't always succeed. [p. 231]

The artist and the analyst are different largely because their aims and their motivations, conscious and unconscious, are different. The artist seeks to create a world and, in that creation, to find ways both to render and disguise, by means of form and style, what is most personal and personally felt within him. For her part, the analyst, too, unconsciously employs creative processes in the operation of the analytic instrument. The experience of intuition, so important in our work—the flash of insight after long listening, the arrival of an enlightening interpretation—is like the surfacing of just the right metaphor for the poet. These processes are part of the ongoing creative activity that takes place in the mind of the analyst.

But, as distinguished from the writer at work, the analyst functions largely or primarily as a reader, a reader of human texts. To read well, he

must also experience and reexperience aspects of his own inner world, aspects of his own journey. These revenants arise in resonance with and in response to unconscious communications from his patient. And, putting himself at the service of another, he uses what arises within him—the shards of memory and fantasy that surface as he works—to understand and to illuminate those communications.

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SELF-ANALYSIS AND CREATIVITY: VIEWS FROM INSIDE AND OUTSIDE

BY WARREN S. POLAND

Keywords: Self-analysis, creativity, language, insight, writing, conflict, trauma, literature, Raymond Carver, Freud, imagination, self-definition.

> *Je est un autre.*
> —A. Rimbaud (1871)

It is not accidental that psychoanalysis, the long-delayed fulfillment of the Socratic injunction to know oneself, was born in a self-analysis. It is no surprise that self-analysis preceded clinical analysis, for even if the self is a foreign country, it is unremittingly closer than are the more distant other people's minds. Despite the highly valued powers of empathy and projective identification, the way one can know oneself and the way one can know another are not the same. No one ever fully knows what it is like to be someone else, certainly not in the way one can know oneself. Yet the capacity to know oneself increases the depths to which one can come to know another. It is self-analysis that makes clinical analysis possible.

While the tasks an analyst performs for an analysand are called *analyzing,* they are hardly the same as the introspective work someone carries out in being an analysand. That deeply personal inner work is also called *analyzing,* with the word here used in the more keenly narrow sense reflected in the statement that the only person in an analysis whom an analyst can analyze is himself. Using the same word, *analyzing,* to describe the professional efforts one person performs for another and the introspective processes one performs and experiences for oneself is

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troublesomely misleading. A patient's self-analysis lies at the center of a clinical analysis, or else unassimilated identification and imitation have substituted for self-knowledge and self-mastery. This seems what Anna Freud (1981) had in mind when she distinguished *insight,* how one can see into oneself, from *understanding,* how one person can grasp the mind of another.

As each clinical analysis has one's self-analysis at its core, at the same time no self-analysis is truly solitary, for no person lives outside the context of engagement with others. Despite the discomfort of contradiction for our logical minds, self and other are simultaneously distinct and interwoven. Every man is an island; no man is an island.

The singularity of each self is not undone by the impact and import of others. As each life is uniquely particular, so, too, no single life exists outside the fabric of connection with others. If, faced by this paradox, we are to move beyond polemical battle between those who prioritize the individual and those who prioritize what is relational, we are left with the need to integrate, or at least to oscillate between, such contrary stances.

The raison d'être of any clinical analysis is the patient's self-knowledge and self-mastery. The analyst's self-analysis is essential to the collaborative task, but whatever those contributions, the patient's self-analysis lies at the essential heart of the patient's growth and change.

When we recognize this by saying that the clinical space is a transitional one, we acknowledge that the analyst is sometimes a distinct presence apart from the patient and sometimes a participant sharing in the actualized transferential engagement—perhaps always a mixture of both. Whatever its manifest content, the effect of any analytic interpretation reminds both partners that the analyst is someone else, someone not the patient and not one of the patient's transferential ghosts.

We are familiar with the increasing range of functions through which an analyst serves an analysis. Beyond interpreting lie the analyst's structuring of the analytic situation, holding, containing (not the same as holding), witnessing, identifying with and withdrawing from identification, putting into words—*et* an ever-growing *cetera.*

What in this enactment of two people in a clinical analysis can clarify what goes on in one person's nonclinical self-analysis? All the analyst's clinical functions may find their parallels in the effects of others in a

self-analysis. The passing remark of a stranger can be heard for its interpretive value (e.g., Poland 2011).

That others can be felt as both deeply internal and clearly external is evident in the power of drama. Literature, theater, and all the arts derive their significance not only from their ability to express what is unsaid in one's own mind, but also, and vitally, from their power to stir and incite new feelings and possibilities.

For our examination of self-analysis, we now have the benefit of three uncommonly thoughtful and serious studies of the life and work of writers: one a scholarly analytic consideration from the outside; the other two similarly incisive analytic examinations from both inside and outside. In each of the three, the medium of literary creativity is examined for its self-analytic implications.

As we proceed, we must respect caution about whether creativity necessarily implies that self-analytic work has been done. Not all growth and not all change for the better are the results of psychoanalytic work. Neither clinical analysis nor self-analysis can have a meaning unless there are boundaries to their domains. If either is allowed to swell so as to take credit for all enlarging character change, then they swallow up all causes of inner taming and their names lose meaningful specificity.

To speak of analytic achievement is always to imply the results of analytic *work*, change consequent to significant internal emotional effort. To define change as *analytic* requires the actuality of inner toil, the labor of confronting and mastering previously present psychological forces, regardless of where that work unfolded on the spectrum of consciousness.

How should we judge changes that follow significant shifts in one's outer world, alterations that are not the result of inner work? The removal of a terrified, abused child from the care of someone sadistic to a life in the secure warmth of loving respect is an example. Great character change may then ensue, but even if the child was thus able to be at more peace with himself, it would not be accurate to call that liberation and growth *self-analytic*. Self-analysis cannot be an umbrella covering all emotional growth.

So is it also uncertain when psychic mastery and liberation result from inner shifts that derive mainly from an individual's own efforts—efforts not necessarily introspective, such as leaps of courage (including

those leaps of courage intrinsic to creativity). Through such acts one can change, moving to a new self with new capacities, yet it may well not be valid to speak of all such advances as self-analytic. It is here that creativity enters the picture.

The presence of creativity adds complexity to our examination of self-analysis. One of the three other contributors in this section, Haseley, offers us a working definition when he turns to Greenacre (1959, p. 61). Her definition calls creativity "the capacity or activity of making something new, original or inventive . . . which has the characteristic of originality." We have yet to see how far we can go when addressing the questions of whether all creativity is self-analytic, of how and how much creativity and self-analysis may influence each other.

As posited, not all psychic growth and progress can be deemed the result of successful analytic work, or else analysis itself no longer has meaningful specificity. Creativity may evidence recent self-analytic work, or it may not. That creativity often comes to life after a spurt of psychic growth related to inner self-analytic work need not imply that such is always the case.

Let us now turn more directly to the three excellent contributions of Dennis Haseley, Adele Tutter, and Theodore Jacobs. We are indebted for the understandings brought us by these gifted colleagues.

HASELEY ON HASELEY

Let us begin with an analytic study of a writer seen from both outside and inside. Haseley presents us with a situation where all the main players are one—a situation in which a creative writer of children's books, a person who struggles in the service of self-analysis, a person who has had the benefit of a useful formal analysis, and a practicing analyst are all wrapped into the single person who now reports to us.

Haseley is a practicing psychoanalyst in all senses: he has a clinical analytic practice; having had a formal analysis, he now also clearly practices self-analysis; and as a writer of children's books, he works to analyze both what he has written and how he has written. His paper, aptly entitled "Catching Ghosts," details a study of his successful children's book *Ghost Catcher*, which deals directly with our own central theme, the place of self and other.

Haseley's protagonist is a loner, someone so detached as not to have a shadow, someone never scared, never mad, never sad. Not only apart from others, he is apart from himself. Despite that extreme separateness, Ghost Catcher is a helper, one who can save lost and hurt others. However, when Ghost Catcher's curiosity drives him to explore the land of lost souls, he is so disconnected from parts of himself that he is unable to save himself. Salvation comes when he allows himself to be touched by the love of others. Only then is he able to have both: self (evident in his now having his own shadow) and true regard for others are unitary.

While Haseley's book was written seven years before he began his formal personal analysis, he was already engaged in therapy while writing it. One cannot but suspect that, in writing his story, he felt himself a lonely seeker of ghosts, already very introspective in nature long before he structured formal personal analytic work or training. Keen curiosity does not appear fully formed like Venus rising from the sea.

Haseley records his memory of how he wrote his book. Charged by an admired editor to write a ghost story, he imagined a tale of a boy and a ghost, and he found that he identified more with the ghost than with the lad. His associations go next to concurrent losses: the loss of a woman with whom he had a nascent romance, and the death of a loved cat he had rescued. He next describes a keen sensory experience, the intense consciousness of the sensation of the darkness of street shadows after leaving a therapy session. (How convincingly Proustian, this linking of memory and sensation!)

Creativity implies a quality that is unique, the capacity for originality. In the presence of conflicts, this speaks of a capacity for original resolutions. For the creativity to be noteworthy to others, as in literary work, special talent and skill are required. Haseley's sentence describing his awareness of black shadows, the sentence that starts "I was walking down the sidewalk" (p. 884), evidences the presence of both a poetic gift and technical mastery. Talent matters for mastery to extend to creativity.

As what is self-analytic may not be creative, so, once again, what is creative may be so without being self-analytic. Nonetheless, Haseley (like Jacobs, discussed in what follows) watched himself at the task of creativity. Clearly, the concurrence of his shifting mood in association with his therapy session suggests the likelihood that substantial introspection

was in process. The report alone, of course, does not suffice for that conclusion. Whether or not self-analysis is demonstrable as active at that moment, as likely as that is, such a process is clearly evident in the new paper we now have in hand.

Self-observation may be essential to self-analysis, but by itself it is not sufficient. As noted, what is observed must be assimilated for character change to ensue. Watching and reworking are not the same. Haseley's description of his writing shows how his mind indeed was then at work.

Returning to Haseley's description of his process of writing, we find he next speaks directly of his functioning "as a kind of magpie," taking from others bits of what he can use. Others are in play. Haseley cites Kris's having said that it is "almost always" possible to find traces of external stimuli. That "almost always" matters. Demand for absolute and total originality is often the rationalization used to obscure conflicts over creativity. It is a defense signaled when a writer justifies inhibition by speaking of fear of being "not truly original."

Like Jacobs, Haseley, as combined author-analyst-patient-writer, is in the unusual position of being able to describe how the flow of interplay between self and other unfolds within one's self, how parts of self are experienced as other, how the results of internal processes can be felt as coming from outside. Such is often the nature of inspiration perceived as if coming from the outside. It does arrive from "outside" the conscious self. To detail how Haseley reflects analytically on the vicissitudes of self and other within himself in the process of creativity would be to repeat his paper.

Still, certain landmarks Haseley mentions merit highlighting because they can be seen from both solitary and interactive, from intrapsychic and interpersonal, perspectives. These include regression, early turning activity into passivity, and later turning passivity into activity. What is self and what is other become hazy; boundaries are lost only to be redrawn, a process that repeats over and over. "And behind the companionship of my own creation—my own dissociated aspect of myself—there were imagined inner and outer objects keeping me company: aspects of my ego ideal, fragments of other writers I have valued, my editor, my mother, other known and unknown women . . . who would love me" (Haseley, p. 891).

Also, just as Ghost Catcher and his others interchanged their roles, Haseley implies that for the creative person at work, Orpheus and Eurydice internally are one. One lets go of and loses parts of oneself and of one's attachment to others in order to find them anew and as new.

Haseley draws attention to yet another aspect of creativity, a common experience often ignored though innate to the creative process. It is the roller coaster ride of self-esteem that is often part of the creative process (certainly evident with Raymond Carver).

Creativity, by definition, implies going somewhere new, strange and unexplored. In daring to create, one is never certain whether one is being wondrously original or foolishly reckless. Engaged in creative activity, for moments one feels grandiose, seen in Haseley's "as though I were writing something that was the best I had ever done, or maybe simply *the best*" (p. 897, italics in original). On the other hand, although he does speak of depression, Haseley does not describe the sense of shameful embarrassment, the dread of mortification, that often alternates with the grandiosity of creativity. For many if not most writers, wonder at how successful a piece of writing has been alternates with horror at how one could ever have valued or even written such dreadful pap. (The disappearance of that emotional swing betokens having let go, having completed the project.)

Such ups and downs, necessarily shaped by each writer's individual character, do not suggest pathology. Rather, they reflect the sense of dislocation when ordinary landmarks in the geography of self and other have been let go of and lost. Sadly, when acted on too directly, they lead at times to taking out into the public work that does not yet merit the light of day. More sadly still, they lead at times to authorial destruction of manuscripts that would have been of true value. It is not possible to think of past writers of talent, known and unknown, without wondering what masterpieces have been lost, perhaps burned, as Kafka had wished for his work.

"Over years of analytic treatment, I reluctantly came to understand" (p. 899). The word *reluctantly* adds further conviction to that already evoked about what substantial psychological work had gone on in Haseley's self-analysis. The inner work Haseley carried out was reworked, likely reworked again and again, in progressive steps.

As Haseley himself so poignantly summarizes, "Past *and* future ghosts—might these be what both psychoanalysts and writers try to catch?" (p. 902).

TUTTER ON CARVER

Tutter presents the fiction of the celebrated short story writer Raymond Carver as an illustrative model of how writing "served as the fulcrum and focus" (Tutter, p. 915) of self-analysis, detailing shifts of the motif of fire in Carver's stories as evidence of working through, with helplessness and rage giving way to mourning, forgiveness, and hope.

As the opening words of an analytic session may provide a key to a central theme, so with a paper may the opening words suggest central issues. Tutter starts by speaking of bats and birds, species that share a common ability to fly despite the absence of a common ancestor, that is, despite their genetic and structural differences. Tutter argues that "correspondences between Carver's short-story *oeuvre* and Freud's psychoanalytic methodology reflect the independent, convergent formulation of *similar structures that serve similar functions*" (p. 917, italics in original). However, as with bats and birds, the similarity of Carver's and Freud's ultimate character growth need not imply that the same process, that of self-analysis, accounted for the outcome in both.

While attainment of conscious insight is no longer the shibboleth defining psychoanalysis, psychic change reflecting inner taming and mastery remains crucial. The first question with Carver, as with any instance of possible self-analysis, is how much change has resulted from self-knowledge (even unconsciously or preconsciously) with mastery, and how much it results from other diminution of inner conflicting forces. As Kohut (1966) so wittily observed, "The ego's ultimate mastery over the narcissistic self, the final control of the rider over the horse, may after all have been decisively assisted by the fact that the horse, too, has grown old" (p. 269).

Tutter confronts this crucial question of whether and how creativity may relate to self-analysis. She does not suggest that the two, creativity and self-analysis, are identical, yet her study of Carver argues for the self-analytic function of creative writing—at least at times.

In a previous paper (Tutter 2009), to be read in conjunction with the present one, Tutter clearly names sections "Carver and Lish" and "Breaking Away." The place of an other in terms of one's creative efforts is not identical with the place of an other in one's self-analysis. For instance, Lish's editorial influence had a powerful effect on Carver's creative literary work. However, Lish may have had much less to do with Carver's self-analytic growth other than to embody the undermining authority from whose sway Carver eventually was able to liberate himself. This *may* be an instance in which an other's impact and contribution to creativity worked against a person's growing self-definition, at least until that person defiantly emerged.

To demonstrate the extent to which Carver did indeed struggle with inner forces and the extent to which those forces were ultimately tamed would be to repeat both Tutter's present paper and her previous contribution. Yet there are aspects that call for added comment.

Tutter suggests that fictionalizing is an alternative to recapitulating one's past. It may be that putting conflicts into stories is a way of enacting that recapitulation in externalized displacement, permitting the issues to be slightly disowned so that they can then be played with before being possibly reclaimed. Therefore, central to self-analysis is the question of whether Carver (or any writer) does in fact "scrutinize himself"—whether what is brought to life is simply repetitively discharged, or whether it is considered and recognized—even if such processing is accomplished preconsciously rather than consciously. Has the writer overheard himself and listened?

Carver's seeming passivity was evident in the way he lost himself in his characters who, like dolls in a child analytic playroom, became the incarnations through which conflicts could be enacted. In a clinical analysis, the patient's need to *say* what comes to mind is fully familiar, while the equally difficult yet also equally essential need for the patient to *hear* what has newly been brought into the open is less often addressed. The way in which Carver's characters were compelled to tell their stories yet felt themselves unheard reflected Carver's own sense of outsiderness and existential anxiety. The questions for self-analysis are whether, how, and how much Carver also heard himself as he had his characters enact his multiple parts.

In a clinical analysis, it is not merely the similarities, the analyst's empathic counteridentification, that make understanding and mastery possible, but also—and necessarily—the differences. The differences must be recognized, since without that the dyadic work would end in a *folie à deux*. For the writer, fictionally created characters offer imagoes with whom the author can repeatedly alternate identification and self-distinction. Clinical impasses may have their parallel in the breakdown of authorial self-analysis when there is failure of the writer's distinction of himself from his character imagoes.

The presence of change, well detailed in the closing section of Tutter's present paper, argues strongly for the case that Carver at least in part heard/observed as well as said/enacted/wrote—that he took in and assimilated some implications of what he wrote. We know that *any* analysis, self- or clinical, is always incomplete. For our broad consideration of this subject, it is the writer's own hearing and integration that is a sine qua non for change to be called self-analytic.

The atmosphere of essential safety while addressing relentless curiosity with unremitting honesty may be the most important quality an analyst's attitude has to offer a patient in analysis. Where can this be found in self-analysis? The emotionally safe space one creates for oneself when writing can be, for a writer, a personal equivalent to that offered by an analyst. Such clearly has been so for most of the writers with whom I have worked clinically, and it seems to have been so for Carver. It also appears to have been so for Freud and his writing. Yet that alone is rarely enough. Most often some actual other person is needed to serve as a stand-in for the imagined welcoming and cared-for human other.

As Tutter observes, as Freud had his Fliess, Carver had his Lish. Tutter cites Freud's having said to Fliess, "it works only when we talk." Such a statement need not be taken only at a literal level. It does capture Freud's sense of needing an accepting other person. Like any statement in an emerging transferential engagement, it may also capture Freud's nascent recognition of his readiness to be done with Fliess, his offering a reassuring denial of that beginning recognition to himself as well as to Fliess.

In clinical analysis, our patients shape us to be the analysts they need, and they do so more than we customarily prefer to acknowledge.

We know that the historical Fliess was not the brilliant genius Freud imagined him to be. Individuals engaged in self-analysis, with or without originality lurking in the wings, create the analytic other whom they need, just as indeed do formal analytic patients.

Freud had it easier with Fliess than did Carver with Lish. Freud idealized Fliess and Carver idealized Lish, but Fliess mattered little if at all to Freud's revolutionary thinking. He intruded little if at all on Freud's groundbreaking discoveries.

Lish, however, intruded greatly, having a strong hand in altering Carver's writing. Lish crucially changed Carver's voice, giving it a pithy sharpness it did not have on its own. It was a change that most critics value, a change that provided the path to Carver's fame. While eventually Carver was strong enough to move out from under Lish's influence—a claiming of himself as his own well described by Tutter—for a very long time he was shaped to Lish's mold, his writing greatly changed by what Lish brought.[1] Even if Lish's effect on Carver's literary success is greatly valued, it could hardly be argued that Lish fostered Carver's self-definition and growth—any more than Fliess did Freud's.

Tutter recognizes the excesses of Lish's work, their undermining Carver's strengthening of his own voice. As much as she and others appreciate the writer that Lish turned Carver into, she also knows that Carver the person (even if not indeed also Carver the writer) needed to get out from under Lish: "Like the analysand who learns enough from his analyst to continue his own self-analysis after termination, by the time he left him, Carver had learned enough from Lish" (p. 935).

What Carver learned from Lish led to greatly increased literary success. The alterations that resulted from Lish's impositions on Carver's voice may or may not have increased Carver's creativity. It could hardly be argued that they increased Carver's self-knowledge, that they aided Carver's self-analysis.

In this instance, what might be called *self-analysis* would be what was involved when Carver withdrew from control by Lish. In a clinical analysis, such a shift is a result of collaborative work in which the analyst

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[1] For a brief statement that goes against the current mainstream appreciation of Lish's contributions, see the British novelist Litt (2009).

facilitates a patient's increasing self-definition and autonomy. Carver's personal progress appears not to have come from such sensitivity on Lish's part. Paraphrasing Freud's words with Fliess, for self-analysis to be active, it was necessary for Carver to say implicitly to Lish, "it works only when we *don't* talk."

Ultimately, Carver had to resist Lish to claim himself, Lish's contribution to his literary glory notwithstanding. Self-definition includes the capacity to say: *this* is me and *that* is you. No more can it be accepted that the hands are the hands of Esau, but the voice is the voice of Jacob. Each must be unique and whole, with the separateness of the partners respected. Who knows what Carver would have written without Lish? Who can say how much of Carver's later self and writing was free of the shadow of his dominating editor?

JACOBS ON JACOBS

Jacobs is a famously keen observer of patients, of the analytic process, and in groundbreaking ways also of the analyst at work. His writings on the place of the analyst's self-analysis within clinical work are such recognized landmarks in psychoanalytic knowledge that they do not need to be detailed here (see, most notably, Jacobs 1991).

Jacobs's background as an analyst who has long studied writing and as an award-winning fiction writer who has long studied and practiced psychoanalysis provides a depth of experience that now allows him, with his customary incisive candor, to compare the "psychology of composition" (Jacobs 2011, p. 964) with the psychology of analyzing.

What Jacobs details is rich and enriching, a characteristically Jacobsean contribution that exposes, explores, and enlightens. He details the vicissitudes of his writer-patient's unfolding mind and the echoing resonances and disharmonies within his patient and himself, as well as between them. He makes the central point that as an analyst—rather than using his subjective experiences as a fiction writer would, that is, by creating characters who provide voice and situations that can give imagined resolutions—he had to use his inner experiences in the service of understanding, in the professional service of the other. The taming required of a writer with freedom of expression differs from the taming

required by an analyst working in the service of the patient-other and the patient's analysis.

Adding to this, Jacobs shows how, as a writer, he himself had created fiction to resolve the issues he identified with in his patient. This material presents in succinct clarity what Racker (1957) must have meant when he spoke of a "paranoid ping-pong" (p. 318) in the analytic work, as well as what Gardner (1989) likely had in mind when he described the psychoanalytic process as a pair of reciprocal self-inquiries.

BEYOND CONFLICT AND TRAUMA

Rather than address the details of his sensitively abundant contribution, I will turn to what Jacobs and the others, in focusing their attention, have necessarily left aside. I do so in no way to dilute the striking value of their discussions, but rather to reflect on what often gets left out in analytic studies.

With his customary incisive thoroughness, in narrowing his study to "the psychological aspects of literary creativity," Jacobs credits the "talent, experience, discipline, identifications, the influences of tradition and literary convention, and conscious artistry" (2011, p. 965) that are essential to creative writing. Like Tutter and Haseley, Jacobs is keenly sensitive to the creative imagination. Yet in the oldest and what is usually considered best analytic tradition, he examines chiefly "the much trampled soil from which our virtues proudly spring" (Freud 1900, p. 621).

The "psychological aspects of literary creativity" that we chiefly study are those of conflict and trauma, drive and object, identifications and defenses, etc. These matter and matter very greatly. Yet there is more to the creative imagination than just the vicissitudes of instincts and object relations. That "more" includes those aspects of the creative imagination that have been acknowledged, yet too often set aside by all of us. And whatever its multiple sources in inner turmoil and outer connections, that "more" includes processes freed by sublimation for pleasurable play.

Pleasure does not have its only source in the resolution of conflict or in satisfying others. There is also the pure delight a self can experience from the pleasure of mastery (Hendrick 1942, 1943a), with "pure" implying freedom no longer fettered to instinctual conflict. While no

human activity can ever be totally unrelated to fundamental urges, once those urges have been tamed, once sublimation brings ease, the instinct to mastery yields the functional pleasure of potential fulfilled.

As that is so from the dynamic point of view, so is it also from the genetic. We know development throughout life to be epigenetic; we expect what has been before to remain alongside of or behind what is new. The inevitable presence of anlagen to current processes, including the creative, does not mean that every original accomplishment has those anlagen as active tap roots.

All of us likely know the pleasure of mastery felt when speaking a phrase that captures a complex circumstance in succinct clarity. From their writing, I have no doubt that Haseley, Tutter, and Jacobs know well the delight of creating, of stating something with a novel clarity or beauty. The anxiety of creativity contains oedipal concerns (Loewald 1979), but there is also a complementary guilt over *not* actualizing one's own creative potential. How are we to understand the delighted satisfaction that comes from exercising one's creative capacities, a joy that feels beyond self and other?

Psychoanalysis, as Freud described from the start, involves study of the much trampled soil of the mind. In that study, the blossoms and the blooms are too often neglected.

I have had the good fortune to work analytically with a range of writers, including novelists. Most of my own experience has been similar to that described by Haseley, Tutter, and Jacobs. However, I have been particularly impressed by my work with a successful author of novels, someone for whom the content of stories, including characters and circumstances, has been remarkably detached from the character conflicts captured in the process of writing and of publishing—indeed, from those of living in the world of writers.

Inner conflicts have been as fully alive in the transference within the analysis of this writer as with any other patients with whom I have worked. Yet for this successful author, the creative play of imagination has long been set aside from other areas. The childhood origin of this pattern has been given substantial analytic attention, but the capacity to protect an area of free imagination has seemed impressively valid.

As practicing analysts, we know we must overcome our own resistances and turn our eyes to the dark places of inner experience. However, as a result we may have too great a tendency to view colors seen in light as if they can only be known by how they relate to what is dark.[2]

While self-analysis and creativity profoundly affect each other, they are at times interlaced and even merged, while at other times distinct.

LANGUAGE

This has been a discussion of self-analysis in the world of writers. The place of self and other in self-analysis, in the contributions of Haseley, Tutter, and Jacobs and in their literary creations, cannot be considered without at least brief acknowledgment of the essential aspect crucial to all: the role of language. The vital importance of language requires avowal even though this is not the place for approaching its deeper exploration. Indeed, how could one even consider self and other in self-analysis without acknowledging the central relevance of language?

While there is good reason for calling clinical analysis a talking cure, we have learned how central and vital are the dynamic forces at work beyond words. For the writer, words are necessarily of the essence. In contrast to the multileveled nature of clinical work, for writers, words are the substantial medium. That is so whatever may be mastered through self-insight or displaced through character development, and whatever the gift for creative imagination. For writers, words are the medium, with the style of language usage often part of the evocative message. Language is the place where conflict and creativity, self and other, insight and repression all come together.

Inside and outside: language is at once expressive and communicative. From its earliest emotional bodily and nonverbal origins to its most sophisticated literary achievement, language is the medium that not only unites intrapsychic and interpersonal, but also is cogent in transformations within each realm. Indeed, all transformations within a mind and between minds can be viewed as forms of translation. Even when it ap-

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[2] For evidence of the historic resistance among analysts to address pleasures beyond the conflictual, see the letter of response by Hendrick (1943b). I believe the focus of the authors discussed here to be narrowed by choice, not resistance.

pears to be static, as in the written word, language captures emotional experience that was actively in process when written and again actively alive as read.

Regarding self-analysis and creativity, our focus has been on self and other. The experience of something inside with mental representation, the carrying of messages from one level to another in both intrapsychic and interpersonal realms, the transformations and translations as such messages move inside and between people, reflecting on sensations and feelings and thoughts and engagements, communication within oneself and between selves—all of these are alive in the medium of language.

Language is both learned and generated from inside. Many voices, many ghosts, contribute to the choice of a word, to the structure of a sentence, to the developing of a tale. What a crowded universe is at hand even when one talks to oneself!

At the same time, even when not consciously thought, the words said or written are shaped in anticipation of how they might be heard. Inner and outer worlds have a complex phenomenological unity that defies our carving out separate theoretical compartments for them.

The analytic attitude is, in part, a perpetual wondering in response to any statement, "Who is talking to whom?"

Analysis turns ghosts into ancestors (Loewald 1960, p. 29). Imaginative creativity turns them into literature. The two are not the same. Analysis may open up fresh creativity, or it may not. Creativity may lead to fresh self-knowledge, or it may not. Self and other are ever present in language, ever present in stories told and written, ever present in self-analysis. Self and other must each be given full respect in all their interwoven complexities, with neither cluster allowed to obscure its intrusive and overlapping complement.

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THE IMPOSTOR: CONTRIBUTION TO EGO PSYCHOLOGY OF A TYPE OF PSYCHOPATH

BY HELENE DEUTSCH

For psychoanalytic research in the field of psychopathy, the year 1925 constitutes a historical milestone, as it was then that Aichhorn published his book, *Wayward Youth* (Aichhorn 1925) and Abraham his paper, "The History of a Swindler" (Abraham 1925). Whereas Aichhorn drew his knowledge from many years of observation and from the therapy of numerous cases, Abraham based his psychoanalytic findings on the study of one psychopath of a certain type. Abraham's paper has remained one of the classics of psychoanalytic literature. Following his example, I consider it especially valuable to single out from the many varieties of psychopathic personality one particular type and to attempt to understand him. The type I have chosen is the impostor. I will restrict myself to the undramatic kind of impostor and leave the others—more fascinating ones—to a later publication.

About twenty years ago, the head of a large agency for the treatment of juvenile delinquents persuaded me to interest myself in a fourteen-year-old boy and, if possible, to lead him into analysis. The boy came from an exceedingly respectable family. His father, a business magnate, was a well-known philanthropist to whom the agency was indebted for major financial assistance. A typical American business man, he was entirely committed to the financial aspects of life. His sincerity and altruism gave him a dignity which everyone respected. He never pretended to be something he was not, and his business acumen was accompanied by a great sense of social responsibility. Son of a poor Lutheran clergyman,

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the manners and morals of his pious father were engrained in his character.

This father's hard work, perseverance, and—judging from his reputation—his "financial genius" had made him one of the richest men in the community. He loved to stress the fact that he was a "self-made man," and it was his great ambition to leave his flourishing business to his sons for further expansion. At home he was a tyrant who made everyone tremble and subject to his command. His wife was a simple woman from a poor family, not very beautiful, not gifted with any sort of talent. He had simply married an obedient bed companion and housewife, let her share his material goods and, in part, his social prominence, and supported various members of her family.

Jimmy, the patient, was born late in the marriage. At his birth, his older brother was eleven, the next ten years old. The mother, always anxious, but warmhearted and tender, devoted herself completely to her youngest child. She indulged him endlessly, her chief interest being to please him. All his wishes were fulfilled and his every expression of displeasure was a command to provide new pleasures. In such an atmosphere, narcissism and passivity were bound to flourish. These were the foundations, the powerful predisposing factors for the boy's further development. The growing brothers abetted the mother's coddling, and for them the little boy was a darling toy to whom everything was given without expecting anything in return.

The father did not concern himself with the boy during the first three or four years of his life. In those days Jimmy escaped the paternal tyranny, and the older brothers' battle against the despot took place outside the little boy's sphere of living. As the two older boys entered adolescence, this battle became more intense and ended in full rebellion. The younger brother, an introverted, artistically inclined boy, exchanged home for boarding school; the older, mechanically gifted, soon became independent and left the family.

The father was not a man to accept defeat. He simply renounced the older sons and with his boundless energy turned to his youngest, thus transferring the boy from his mother's care into his own. He partially retired from business but continued the pursuit of his financial and

philanthropic activities from home. Jimmy, then four years old, spent the major part of the day with his father, and heard his conversations with visitors who were all in a subordinate position to his father and in many cases financially dependent on him. The father became to him a giant, and the boy reacted to his father's efforts to make him active and aggressive and to arouse intellectual interests in him with some anxiety, yet with positive signs of compliance. A strong unity developed, and the process of the boy's identification with his father, which the latter had mobilized, was in full flower.

When Jimmy was seven, his father became the victim of a serious chronic illness resulting in five years of invalidism, during which time he lived at home in a wing removed from the central part of the house. Whether this illness was pulmonary tuberculosis or lung abscess never became clear. The boy saw very little of his father and the most vivid memory of this sickness was his father's malodorous sputum. According to Jimmy's report, his father remained alive only to spit and to smell bad.

Around this time a change took place in Jimmy. He developed a condition which appears to have been a genuine depression. He stopped playing, ate little, and took no interest in anything. Then—in a striking way—he became very aggressive, tyrannized his mother, and attempted to dominate his brothers. His first truancy was to run away to a nearby woods and refuse to come home. He created for himself a world of fantasy and described in a pseudological fashion his heroic deeds and the unusual events in which he had played a prominent role. These pseudologies, typical for his age, may well have been the precursors of Jimmy's future actions. While his mother—"for the sake of peace" and not to disturb the sick father—continued giving in to him in everything, his brothers now ridiculed him and relegated him to the role of a "little nobody."

In the course of the next few years, Jimmy had some difficulties in school. Though he was intelligent and learned quickly, he found it hard to accept discipline, made no real friends, was malicious and aggressive without developing any worth-while activity—"a sissy"—as he characterized himself. Since the father's name carried weight in the community, Jimmy felt with partial justification that nothing could happen to him,

his father's son. He was not yet guilty of asocial acts, not even childish stealing.

When he was twelve years old, his once beloved father died. Jimmy did not feel any grief. His reaction was manifested in increased narcissistic demands, the devaluation of all authority, and in a kind of aggressive triumph: "I am free—I can do whatever I want." Soon afterward, his asocial acts began to occur.

Before we discuss his pathology, let us say a few words about this boy's relationship to his father, which suffered such a sudden break. In this alliance with his father, which began in his fifth year, the spoiled, passive little boy became in part the father's appendage. Identification with the powerful father created a situation in which the ego was simultaneously weakened and strengthened. When he had been in competition with the father, he was forced to feel small and weak, but when he accepted as a criterion of his own value his father's verdict: "You are my wonderful boy," and his plans for the future: "You will be my successor," then Jimmy's self-conception and ego image resembled his marvelous father, and his narcissism—originally cultivated by his mother—received new powers from his relationship with his father. In his seventh or eighth year Jimmy lost this "wonderful" father (not yet by death, but by devaluation), and his *own* conception of himself as a "wonderful boy" suffered a heavy blow.

The events of later years give more understanding of what took place in this period which was so fateful for him. As mentioned before, I first saw Jimmy when he was fourteen years old.

FIRST PHASE OF TREATMENT

I was determined to resist accepting Jimmy for treatment. I had never had any experience in treating juvenile delinquents, associating such cases with Aichhorn and his school, which I considered outside my sphere. I yielded, however, to the pressure of the boy's mother, whom I knew and respected, and to the pleas of the heads of the social agency. Because of the uncertainty of my approach and in contrast to my usual habit, I made notes of Jimmy's behavior. They contain the results of four to six interviews. At the time they seemed somewhat sterile to me and

yet, regarding them in the light of later insights, they are extraordinarily illuminating. The interviews took place in 1935.

Jimmy was a typical young psychopath. He was increasingly unable to submit to the discipline of school. There was a repetitive pattern in his pathological acting out. At first he ingratiated himself by doing quite well; after a time he became insolent and rebellious toward his superiors, seduced his friends to break discipline, tried to impress them by the extravagance of his financial expenditures, and started quarrels and fights only to escape in a cowardly fashion under the ridicule of his companions. He forged checks with his mother's or older brother's signatures and disrupted the school and the neighborhood by his misdeeds. Every attempt to bring about his adaptation by changing schools ended in truancy. Toward me he behaved very arrogantly. With an obvious lack of respect he stated that he had not come of his own accord. He claimed nothing was wrong with him; that it was "the others" who would benefit by treatment.

He admitted he had again run away from school, and that this has been bad for him, and insisted that his trouble started when he began to "grow very fast." He wanted to remain a little boy; when he was little he was his father's pet. His father used to say, "Just wait until you are grown-up: *we* [father and he] will show the world."

Jimmy complained that the boys laughed at him; but "You know," he said, "I can defend myself." Sometimes he was sincere and admitted that essentially he was helpless and weak: "You know, they never took me seriously at home. For my big brothers I was sort of a puppet, a joke. I was always a kid whose ideas did not count and whose performance was laughable."

School was like home. He had difficulties because not to learn meant showing them. "I can do what I want, and do not have to obey." He forgot everything he learned, so "Why learn," he asked, "if I forget it?" He told me that his father had cursed his brothers: "I will show them," he had said, "they will end up in the gutter without my help." But to his father, Jimmy was different: father based all his hopes on him. When he was a little boy he felt that nothing could happen to him because his father was very powerful. Everything was subject to his father and together they

were allies against all hostile influences. His father's sickness changed all this. The big promise, "We will show them," could not be redeemed. The brothers were now stronger than he. They ridiculed him and he was waiting to be grown-up; then he would show them!

In school it was always the same story. The teachers and especially the headmasters were "no good." They pretended to be something they were not. Of course he did not wish to obey them. He knew at least as much as they did, but they refused to acknowledge it. The boys were no good. Some might have been but they were led on by the others. And all this was instigated from "above," because "they" knew that he would not let himself be put upon.

In this short period of observation I learned that Jimmy was infuriated by not being acknowledged as someone special; some of his complaints had an uncanny, paranoid character.

During our meetings, Jimmy played the undaunted hero, but with no trace of any emotion. One got an impression of great affective emptiness in him. All his asocial acts were his means of showing that he was something special. Stealing, debts were ways of obtaining money for the purpose, one might say, of buying narcissistic gratifications. He rebelled against all authority and devalued it. The moment he perceived that the methods he employed no longer sustained his prestige, his displeasure quickly mounted and drove him away.

With me he was overbearing, arrogant, cocksure. One day he came with the question: "Are you a Freudian?" He then proceeded, most unintelligently, to lecture me about analysis with catchwords he had picked up, or remarks based on titles he had seen. For instance: "That thing about civilization is particularly idiotic;" or "The old man [meaning Freud] isn't even a doctor." When I tried to point out to him that, after all, he did not know anything, and that I believed he talked so big because he was afraid, he stopped coming; as usual, a truant.

He presented such a typical picture of a juvenile delinquent that I felt concern about his future, wondering whether he would eventually become a criminal. His lack of affect, inability to form human relationships, and paranoid ideas led me to consider the possibility of an incipient schizophrenia.

SECOND PHASE OF TREATMENT

I did not see Jimmy for eight years, but remained in contact with several people close to him. Some of the news about him was reassuring. He nevertheless confronted those around him with one problem after another. These were truancies in a more adult sense. He accepted positions which he did not keep, responsibilities he failed to meet. He made promises and broke them, with serious consequences to himself and to others. He accepted financial commitments, but neglected them so that they ended in failure. He provoked situations ominous not only for himself but also for those whom he had lured into these situations with false promises which to him, however, were real. Up to the time he came of age, his misdeeds were regarded as youthful indiscretions by the executors of the family estate. At twenty-one, he assumed that he was now financially independent and had already made financial commitments in the most extravagant ventures, when, to his fury, he was placed under legal guardianship.

With his customary bravado, Jimmy volunteered for military service during the war. He reported for duty on his new, shiny motorcycle. Soon he was the center of admiration among his comrades. Neither he nor they had any doubt that he would become one of the heroes of the war. He had, after all, volunteered to protect his fatherland, and his grandiose spending, his hints at connections with military authorities left no doubt that he was someone quite special. In this atmosphere he thrived until one day the news came that a commanding officer, noted for his severity, was to attend inspection. Jimmy had sufficient orientation in reality to realize that one cannot fool military authorities. The "hero" turned into a truant. But in military life that was not so easy. One does not desert, as one does in civilian life under the auspices of an approving family. On the contrary, one is punished for such actions, and Jimmy could never tolerate punishment. He had an attack of anxiety—which was genuine—and a delusional state—which was not. He was declared to be sick, taken to a hospital, and from there was sent home.

The anxiety had been real, and his fear frightened him. His dream of being a hero was shattered. It is quite possible that under more favor-

able circumstances Jimmy, like so many other heroes of wars and revolutions, might have made his pathology serve a glorious career. Now he remembered that years ago a woman had predicted just this kind of fear, and he came straight to me for help.

He was in analysis so-called, although it was actually more a supportive therapy, for eight years. The success of this treatment, while limited, was nevertheless important for him. During that period I witnessed many episodes in his pathological acting out, and gained some insight into its nature. What kept him in treatment, however, was his anxiety which had increased since the war episode. It was evident that the defensive function of his acting out had been sufficiently threatened by reality that it was no longer adequate to hold internal dangers in check.

During the eight years which had elapsed since my first contact with Jimmy, he had been put through high school and prep school by the combined efforts of tutors, teachers, advisors, the head of the child guidance clinic, and his financial managers. They had even succeeded in having him admitted to a college where he stayed half a year. His intelligence and ability to grasp things quickly had, of course, been a help, but further than this he could not go. His narcissism did not permit him to be one of many; his self-love could be nourished only by feeling that he was unique. This desire for "uniqueness" did not, however, make him a lonely, schizoid personality. He was oriented toward reality which to him was a stage on which he was destined to play the leading role with the rest of humanity as an admiring audience. There were for him no human relationships, no emotional ties which did not have narcissistic gratification as their goal. His contact with reality was maintained, but it was not object libido which formed the bridge to it. He was always active and he surrounded himself with people; he sent out "pseudopodia," but only to retract them laden with gifts from the outside world.

After Jimmy left college, it was necessary to find him a job, to settle him in some field of work. All attempts at this of course failed. As in his school days, he could not tolerate authority and had no capacity for sustained effort. Success had to be immediate; he had to play the leading role from the start. He decided to become a gentleman farmer. A farm was purchased for him and he worked zealously on the plans for the farm. The preliminary work was done, the livestock was in the barn, and

Jimmy even behaved as a socially responsible person. He created several positions at the farm for his former cronies; the fact that they knew as little about farming as he did was to him beside the point. His adaptation to reality had come to its end, and the enterprise was doomed to failure. Jimmy, however, acquired an elegant country outfit, saw to it that his clothing was saturated with barnyard smells, dyed his hair and eyebrows blond, and appeared among a group of former acquaintances in a New York restaurant as a "country gentleman." His farm project was soon involved in various difficulties, and his protégés deserted him; he was in debt, and financial ruin seemed imminent, when his guardians came to his rescue and he was saved by his fortune.

In another episode Jimmy was a great writer. Here his pseudocontact with others was even more intense. He presided over a kind of literary salon where intellectuals gathered about his fireplace, with Jimmy in the center. Short stories were his specialty for, of course, he lacked the capacity for prolonged, patient creativity. He knew how to make life so very pleasant for his literary admirers that they remained within his circle. He had even drawn several well-known writers into his orbit. He already visualized himself as a great writer, and brought a sample of his productivity for me to read. When I seemed somewhat critical (his writing was pretentious and quite without originality) he was furious and told me that I simply did not understand modern literature.

He soon gave up his literary career to become a movie producer. He made connections with men in the industry and spent considerable sums of money, but the result was always the same. At one time he became an inventor and even succeeded in inventing a few small things. It was fascinating to watch the great ado over these little inventions and how he used them to appear a genius to himself and to others. He had calling cards printed with the identification "inventor" on them, and set up a laboratory to work out his discoveries. This time he chose as his collaborator an experienced physicist, and within a short period succeeded in making this man believe that Jimmy was a genius. With uncanny skill he created an atmosphere in which the physicist was convinced that his own achievements were inspired by Jimmy, the genius. His pretense that he was a genius was often so persuasive that others were taken in for a short time. Jimmy's self-esteem was so inflated by these reactions from

his environment that occasionally he was able to achieve things which to some degree justified the admiration which he himself had generated.

In the course of his treatment I succeeded in getting Jimmy through college. His success in temporarily impressing his teachers as an outstanding student of philosophy was almost a farce. Actually he knew little beyond the titles and the blurbs on the jackets of the books; but on this basis he was able to engage for hours in polemics, and it was some time before he was found out. In these activities Jimmy did not impress us as a real impostor. His transformations from a pseudoimpostor into a real one were only transitory. For instance, he made certain connections by using the name of the above-mentioned collaborator; another time he altered his name in such a way that it was almost identical with the name of a celebrity in a particular field. He was not an extravagant impostor; his pretenses were always close to reality but were nevertheless a sham.

For purposes of comparison, it may serve to summarize briefly the stories of impostors who are closely related to the type described. They differ only in the stability of their chosen roles. A fascinating example is the well-known case of Ferdinand Demara, which was much discussed several years ago.[1] After running away from home, Demara became, in turn, a teacher of psychology, a monk, a soldier, a sailor, a deputy sheriff, a psychiatrist and a surgeon—always under another man's name. With almost incredible cleverness and skill he obtained each time the credentials of an expert, and made use of knowledge acquired *ad hoc* so brilliantly that he was able to perpetrate his hoaxes with complete success. It was always "by accident," never through mistakes he had made, that he was exposed as an impostor. In his own estimation, he was a man of genius for whom it was not necessary to acquire academic knowledge through prolonged studies, but who was able to achieve anything, thanks to his innate genius.

Reading his life history, one sees that he was perpetually in pursuit of an identity which would do justice to his narcissistic conception of himself in terms of "I am a genius," and which at the same time would serve to deny his own identity. This denial of his own identity appears to me to be the chief motive for his actions, as is true in the case of other

[1] McCarthy, J. (1952). The master impostor. *Life Magazine*, January 28.

impostors. In the course of his masquerading, Demara did much capable work and could bask in the sunshine of his successes. His parents had wanted to finance his way through college and medical school but he was never interested in a conventional way of life. When interviewed by reporters he acknowledged his enormous ambition and his need to take "short cuts." He declared that he would like for a change to use his own name but that he could not because of all that had happened. Whenever Demara resumes his activities, one may presume it will be possible only under a usurped name or not at all. His statement that he cannot use his own name—however rational it may sound—is nevertheless the expression of a deeper motive.

Another famous impostor of recent years is the "physicist" Hewitt, who, under the name of Dr. Derry, began teaching theoretical physics, mathematics, and electrical engineering in numerous universities with great success, without ever having finished high school.[2] Like Jimmy, he sometimes used his own name, but again like Jimmy, under false colors. He impersonated two different actual doctors of philosophy in physics, masqueraded as a nationally known man, and took responsible positions under various names. He had been unmasked twice, yet tried again to achieve success under still another physicist's name.

In Hewitt's life history there are many analogies to Jimmy's history. Hewitt's need for admiration was as great as Jimmy's, and the narcissistic motive behind his masquerading was equally evident. At the beginning of his career as an impostor, Hewitt was somewhat unsure of himself, but when he found himself being admired, his personality unfolded its full capacities. He was able to create for himself an atmosphere of power and prestige. When he felt that his masquerading was becoming too dangerous, he abandoned his project, changed his name, and embarked on another masquerade which became a new source of narcissistic satisfaction. Sometimes he was presented with an opportunity to work under his own name, as he was a gifted and really brilliant man who could have had a successful career. Such offers he always turned down: he could work only under another name, in an atmosphere of tension, in the precarious situation of imminent exposure. Like Jimmy, he regarded him-

[2] Brean, H. (1954). Marvin Hewitt Ph(ony)D. *Life Magazine*, April 12.

self as a genius and courted situations in which he would be exposed as the counterpart of a genius—a liar, an impostor.

Demara, Hewitt, and Jimmy appear to be victims of the same pathological process of the ego—only the level of their functioning is different.

Demara changed the objects of his identifications perhaps because he was driven by fear of impending unmasking. The objects whose names he temporarily bore corresponded to his high ego ideal, and he was able to maintain himself on the high level of the men he impersonated. His manifold talents and his intelligence were outstanding, his capacity for sublimation was but little impaired. It was not lack of ability, but psychopathology which made him an impostor.

Hewitt had a much more consolidated ego ideal. His interests were from the beginning oriented toward physics, his talent in this direction even made him a child prodigy; his path was marked out. But he rejected any success which he could realistically achieve through work and perseverance under his own name, and preferred *pretending* under the mask of a stranger's name. The objects of his identification were physicists of repute, men who already were what he would have liked to become. In this as in the other cases, I consider the incapacity to accept the demands imposed by the discipline of study, and the lack of perseverance, to be a secondary motive for becoming an impostor.

Jimmy, in his striving for an ego ideal, appears to us like a caricature of Demara and Hewitt. In contrast to them he was unable to find objects for successful identification because his limited capacity for sublimation and his lack of talent made this impossible for him. He was able to satisfy his fantasies of grandeur only in naïve acting out, pretending that he was *really* in accordance with his ego ideal. On closer examination I was struck by the resemblance of his acting out to the performance of girls in prepuberty. "Various identifications which later in puberty can be explained as defense mechanisms and which one meets in schizoid personalities as expressions of a pathologic emotional condition, prove, on closer inspection, to have a specific character in prepuberty. They remind us strongly of the play of small children, and seem to be an 'acting out' of those transitory, conscious wishes that express the idea, 'That's what I want to be like.' It is noteworthy that this acting out has

a concrete and real character, different from mere fantasying" (Deutsch 1944, p. 9).

Jimmy too acted out his transitory ideals which never became fully established. Compared with Dr. Greenacre's "psychopathic patients" (Greenacre 1952, p. 167), Jimmy's ideals did not have the character of magic grandeur, and were not so unattached to reality. Quite the contrary. Jimmy always turned to external reality to gratify his narcissistic needs. His emptiness and the lack of individuality in his emotional life and moral structure remind us furthermore of the "as-if" personalities (Deutsch 1942). In contrast to these, Jimmy's ego did not dissolve in numerous identifications with external objects. He sought, on the contrary, to impose on others belief in his greatness, and in this he often succeeded. His only identifications were with objects which corresponded to his ego ideal—just like the impostor Hewitt, only on a more infantile level. Another difference is that the "as-if" patients are not aware of their disturbance, whereas Jimmy, while firmly pretending that he *was* what he pretended to be, asked me again and again, sometimes in despair: "Who am I? Can *you* tell me that?"

In spite of these individual differences between the various types, I believe that all impostors have this in common: they assume the identities of other men not because they themselves lack the ability for achievement, but because they have to hide under a strange name to materialize a more or less reality-adapted fantasy. It seems to me that the ego of the impostor, as expressed in his own true name, is devaluated, guilt-laden. Hence he must usurp the name of an individual who fulfils the requirements of his own magnificent ego ideal. Later we shall see that Jimmy's fear of being unmasked as an impostor increased when he began to be successful under his own name and figure.

As his treatment proceeded, Jimmy's fears increased as his acting out lessened. With this change of behavior he entered a new phase in his therapy: the phase of anxiety. It was this phase which revealed more of the nature of the process. But this does not mean that the phase of acting out was free of anxiety. It was anxiety that brought him to me, and anxiety kept him with me. In time, his increasing anxieties assumed a more hypochondriacal character. He examined his body, his pulse, etc., and wanted to be certain that a physician could be reached. It was not

difficult to assume that a man whose personality was limited by an unsuccessful identification with his father repeated his father's disease in hypochondriacal symptoms.

By and by Jimmy gave up his grotesque acting out and his behavior became increasingly realistic. First, he founded an institute for inventions. This project was still in accordance with his fantasy of being a great inventor. Because he had associated himself with a friend who, despite his naïve belief in Jimmy, was genuinely gifted scientifically and had already achieved recognition, and because of the considerable sums of money available, Jimmy gradually worked his way toward acquiring a going concern. Here, for the first time in his life, he functioned well and enjoyed a certain solid respect. He limited his acting out to founding a colony for artists in which he acted the role of a "brilliant connoisseur of art;" also he set up for himself some sort of an "altar" at home. He married a girl with an infantile personality who blindly believed in his "genius" and adored him. When she began to have doubts, he simply sent her away and threatened her with divorce. Love he never experienced; even from his children he expected gratifications for his narcissism and he hated them when they failed him in this respect.

The condition which now confronted us seemed paradoxical: the more effectively he functioned in reality, the more anxiety he developed. In the days when he had really been a swindler, he never feared exposure. Now that he worked more honestly and pretended less, he was tortured by the fear that his deceit might be discovered. He felt like an impostor in his new role: that of doing honest work. Obviously he remained an impostor after all, and in his very real personal success he now had an inner perception of his inferiority. In the beginning, we had had the suspicion that Jimmy always feared his own inferiority, and that he was hiding his anxiety behind a bloated ego ideal. It could now be better understood why he inquired after his identity, why he had the depersonalized feeling, "Who am I really?" In this he reminds us of those more or less neurotic individuals who, having achieved success, experience like Jimmy the painful sensation: "I am an impostor," stemming from the same inner motivation.

Jimmy's anxieties gradually acquired a phobic character. His professional activities were impeded by a fear of leaving town and of being too

far from home. This evidently represented a counterphobic mechanism against his earlier running away.

Thus we may speak of a certain success in his treatment which was never a psychoanalysis. In my forty years of practice I have never seen a patient as little capable of transference as Jimmy. He and I sometimes talked of "hot-air therapy," for I called his grandiose acting out, "hot air," until it was greatly devalued. At the same time I appealed to his narcissism by showing him what he could really achieve. In this way we continued for eight years. About two years ago I passed him on to a colleague who is continuing the therapy.

Reviewing Jimmy's pathological behavior chronologically, the connection between his preadolescent delinquency and his later acting out becomes clear. By the phrase he used when he came to see me as a fourteen-year-old, "I became grown-up too fast," he meant to say that he did not yet feel capable of playing the role his father had assigned to him for a time when he would be grown-up. His high ego ideal, cultivated by the father and an identification with the "great father," did not permit him—despite a certain degree of insight—to wait for the process of growing up to take place. He demanded that the world treat him not according to his achievements but according to his exalted ego ideal. The refusal of his environment to do so was an attack on himself, on his grandeur, on his ego ideal. This feeling that hostile elements were aligned against him grew at times into paranoid reactions. He responded to these insults in a way which brought him to the borderline of real criminal behavior; but when he began to feel that he was defeated, he ran away.

Perhaps if he had had enough aggression at his disposal, he would have continued his career as a criminal. An appeal to his conscience was fruitless, as, after all, he considered himself to be a victim and his actions as self-defense. Maybe this is true of all juvenile delinquents. Social injustice and a desire to avenge oneself for it is often given as a reason for delinquent behavior. In Jimmy's case such a rationalization could not be used.

His passivity led him in another direction. Instead of fighting for his narcissistic "rights," he found less dangerous and more regressive methods of asserting his ego ideal. What he was not, he could become by "pretending." Only when this was made impossible for him—first

through external reality (the army), then through his treatment—was he overwhelmed by anxiety and feelings of inferiority, and one could then realize the defensive function of his pathological behavior.

We suspect that Demara and Hewitt, the other two impostors mentioned, were also hiding such an ego through identification with someone else's ego, by means of what might be called a "nonego ego." In these cases of a more solidly constructed imposture, the inner anxiety is partly projected to the outside, and the impostor lives in perpetual fear of discovery. Jimmy did not fear such discovery, for he had not assumed another's name. What threatened him was that if his "pretending" were to be unmasked, he would be laughed at, as he was once ridiculed by his brothers and later by his schoolmates. He developed real anxiety only when he gave up "pretending" so that both he and others were confronted with his "true" ego.

Let us consider the causes of Jimmy's pathology: Dr. Greenacre (1952)—in agreement with other writers—finds etiological factors in the emotional deprivation of psychopaths and delinquents. Her emphasis rests on the combination of both indulgence and severity on the part of the parental figures; this is in accordance with Wilhelm Reich's (1933) conception of the character structure of the psychopath. The emotional climate of Jimmy's childhood was different, but evidently no less disastrous. Whereas Dr. Greenacre's patient was emotionally deprived, Jimmy was overloaded with maternal love. I knew the mother very well, and I know that she was one of those masochistic mothers who, loving and warmhearted, completely surrender themselves for the benefit of others. She was a masochistic victim not only of the despotic father, but also of her children, especially Jimmy. Her last child's every wish was granted. Any active striving he had was paralyzed through premature compliance; every need for wooing and giving was smothered by the mother's loving initiative in meeting his demands.

I believe that the emotional "overfeeding" of a child is capable of producing very much the same results as emotional frustration. It contributes to an increase of infantile narcissism, makes adaptation to reality and relationships to objects more difficult. It creates intolerance of frustration, weakens the ego's ability to develop constructive defenses, and is in large measure responsible for passivity.

Jimmy's relationship with his father was very well-suited to strengthen the predisposition created by the mother. The powerful, despotic personality of the father contributed to Jimmy's passivity, and the father's narcissism prepared the ground for Jimmy's later, fateful identification with him.

These attitudes of the parents created a predisposition for the pathological development of the boy. But it was a traumatic experience which activated this predisposition. The father's sickness and isolation caused an abrupt interruption of the normal maturing process of Jimmy's ego. The frustration stemming from the fact that Jimmy was no longer able to feel himself to be part of a great father crippled his ego which was not yet strong enough to endure the brutal attack of separation. The enforced awareness of his self as being distinct from that of his father was anachronistic in his development. The normal process of identification had not yet reached that degree of maturity from which further development would have been possible.

Simultaneously with the separation from his father came the devaluation of that "powerful" figure. Consequently, the character of his identification also underwent a change. What had so far strengthened his ego was no longer available. With the devaluation of the father, a shadow fell across his own identified ego. The fact that the traumatic event occurred in the latter part of latency was decisive for Jimmy's psychopathology. As we know, this period is of utmost importance for the maturation of the ego apparatus, for the establishment of a less rigid superego, and for the capacity to cope with reality. In a normal, gradual development of a boy in latency, not harmed by trauma, Jimmy would have transferred his identification with the father onto other suitable objects. Eventually his ego would have been ready to assimilate the identifications into the self, and to achieve a reliable degree of inner stability. His ambivalent sexual relationship to the father would have yielded to tender love, and a path toward reality and toward the formation of constant object relationships would have been made.

The pathogenic force of this trauma was due to two factors: first, its suddenness; second, its daily repetition during the four years that preceded his father's death. As a result, regressive forces in the ego replaced progress in development, and the whole process of sublimation was im-

paired.[3] The boy was incapable of goal-oriented endeavor, because he was unable to postpone reaching an attempted goal. The fact that his relationship to the father never became desexualized was revealed in his masturbatory fantasies of a passive-feminine-masochistic character and in his fears of homosexuality. His relationship to his mother became submerged in his identification with her as his father's debased sexual object. The manifestations of this identification could be traced back from his recent masturbatory fantasies to that period of his childhood in which he had been enuretic (Michaels 1955).

It is interesting to observe pathology in what is commonly agreed to be "normal." The world is crowded with "as-if" personalities, and even more so with impostors and pretenders. Ever since I became interested in the impostor, he pursues me everywhere. I find him among my friends and acquaintances, as well as in myself. Little Nancy, a fine three-and-a-half-year-old daughter of one of my friends, goes around with an air of dignity, holding her hands together tightly. Asked about this attitude she explains: "I am Nancy's guardian angel, and I'm taking care of little Nancy." Her father asked her about the angel's name. "Nancy" was the proud answer of this little impostor.

Having referred to "normal impostors," I should clarify my conception of the term "impostor." The pathological impostor endeavors to eliminate the friction between his pathologically exaggerated ego ideal and the other, devalued, inferior, guilt-laden part of his ego, in a manner which is characteristic for him: he behaves as if his ego ideal were identical with himself; and he expects everyone else to acknowledge this status. If the inner voice of his devalued ego on the one hand, and the reactions of the outside world on the other hand, remind him of the unreality of his ego ideal, he still clings to this narcissistic position. He desperately tries—through pretending and under cover of someone else's name—to maintain his ego ideal, to force it upon the world, so to speak.

A similar conflict, though in a milder form, seems to exist also in the normal personality. In the complex development of a "normal" indi-

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[3] There are psychopaths endowed with great capacities for sublimation and creativeness, although their ego functioning is gravely impaired.

vidual, there are certain irregularities, and only seldom can a successful harmony be attained. Perhaps the identity between the ego ideal and the self is achieved only by saints, geniuses, or psychotics. As one's ego ideal can never be completely gratified from *within*, we direct our demands to the external world, *pretending* (like Jimmy) *that we actually are what we would like to be*. Very often we encounter paranoid reactions in normal personalities, which result from the fact that their environment has refused to accept an imposture of this sort.

Both history and belletristic literature are rich in impostors. Thomas Mann's (1954) story about the impostor Felix Krull shows the most profound understanding of this type. It is amazing to consider how the psychological genius of a writer is able to grasp intuitively insights at which we arrive laboriously through clinical empiricism. The passivity, the narcissistic ego ideal, the devaluation of the father's authority, and the complicated processes of identification of the impostor Felix Krull are very well understood by Mann; and even the profound similarity between the shabby Krull and the wealthy, distinguished prince whose name and existence Krull, the impostor, takes over, is well understood by the writer.

I wish to close by repeating what I stated at the beginning. The case here discussed represents only a certain type of psychopath. I believe that such an individual typologic approach to the large problem of psychopathy may prove very fruitful.

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THE IMPOSTOR

BY PHYLLIS GREENACRE

An impostor is not only a liar, but a very special type of liar who *imposes* on others fabrications of his attainments, position, or worldly possessions. This he may do through misrepresentations of his official (statistical) identity, by presenting himself with a fictitious name, history, and other items of personal identity, either borrowed from some other actual person or fabricated according to some imaginative conception of himself. There are similar falsifications of that part of his identity belonging to his accomplishments, a plagiarizing on a grand scale, or making claims which are grossly implausible. Imposture appears to contain the hope of getting something material, or some other worldly advantage. While the reverse certainly exists among the distinguished, wealthy, and competent persons who lose themselves in cloaks of obscurity and assumed mediocrity, these come less frequently into sharp focus in the public eye. One suspects, however, that some "hysterical" amnesias and dual or multiple personalities are conditions related to imposturous characters. The contrast between the original and the assumed identities may sometimes be not so great in the matter of worldly position, and consequently does not lend itself so readily to the superficial explanation that it has been achieved for direct and material gain. The investigation of even a few instances of imposture—if one has not become emotionally involved in the deception—is sufficient to show how crude though clever many impostors are, how very faulty any scheming is, and how often, in fact, the

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element of shrewdness is lacking. Rather a quality of showmanship is involved, with its reliance all on the response of an audience to illusions.[1]

In some of the most celebrated instances of imposture, it indeed appears that the fraud was successful only because many others as well as the perpetrator had a hunger to believe in the fraud, and that any success of such fraudulence depended in fact on strong social as well as individual factors and a special receptivity to the trickery. To this extent those on whom the fraudulence is imposed are not only victims but unconscious conspirators. Its success too is partly a matter of timing. Such combinations of imposturous talent and a peculiar susceptibility of the times to believe in the swindler, who presents the deceptive means of salvation, may account for the great impostures of history. There are, however, instances of the repeated perpetration of frauds under circumstances which give evidence of a precise content that may seem independent of social factors.

Well-defined cases of imposture are quite rare in analytic practice. The analyst, however, quite frequently gets glimpses of such traits, only partly realized or appearing brightly in an incident or two, without emerging into overt fraudulence in the lives of a number of patients. Clinical investigation of such occult imposturous tendencies, embedded in the character of individuals, some of whom are productive and talented, and supplemented by the study of some notorious impostors of history, is the basis of this study.

The life stories of the following impostors will be referred to throughout this paper:

Titus Oates (1649–1705) was probably the main impostor at the core of the fictitious "Popish Plot" in the reign of Charles II of England. His lifelong imposturous tendencies were used by craftier political schemers

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[1] The Second Earl of Rochester, known as Rake Rochester, intimate friend, and one of the Court of Charles II of England, showed both the repeated impostures of men of lowly background and the consistent showmanship. Clever, versatile writer, known mostly for his obscene verse, prankster and supreme rake in a court of rakes, he would from time to time disappear from his usual haunts and set himself up under an assumed name in some lowly and obscure part of London, doing some menial work, but always with a theatrical flourish. At one time he posed as an itinerant tinsmith, going from door to door collecting battered kitchen utensils for repair; also he established himself as a fakir and healer by occult powers. These impostures were episodes in a scattered, dissolute, and sexually polymorphous perverse life (Longueville 902; Norman 1955).

and caused the death or disrupted the lives of countless people, simply on the basis that they were, or were supposed to be, Catholics (Anonymous 1685; Brown 1693; Burnet 1838; Lane 1949; Macauley 1858; Seccombe 1894). He was one who, in the language of Pope, was damned to universal fame (Howard 1855).

George Psalmanazar (1679?–1763) never revealed his true identity. He was probably a Frenchman, presented himself in London as a Japanese converted to Christianity, invented a fictitious history and a geography of Formosa for which he also invented an alphabet and a language. He became depressed and partly reformed after a serious illness. He became a Hebrew scholar, and in his old age a crony of Samuel Johnson. He was among those responsible for the founding of the Universal History to which he contributed (Psalmanazar 1704, 1765).

James Macpherson (1736–1796) was a very slight poet in his own right who presented, as a translation, the works of Ossian, poetry which received much acclaim, was imitated by Goethe, Byron, and others, and is credited with influencing the Romantic Movement in literature. His poetry was the subject of intense and repeated literary controversy over a period of more than a century. He was ultimately discredited and regarded essentially as an impostor (Black 1926; Grant 1814; Macpherson 1893; Saunders 1895; Smart 1905; Tovey 1899).

Thomas Chatterton[2] (1752–1780) was a really talented poet who perpetrated a literary hoax while still in his teens and poisoned himself before he was eighteen (Ingram 1910; Masson 1901; Russell 1908; Wilson 1869).

There are other less well-known impostors such as Bedloe (Anonymous 1881) and Fuller[3] (Roper 1692; Vian 1889), who cooperated with

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[2] Chatterton was the most renowned of this group. His genius is commemorated by Shelley in "Adonais," by Wordsworth in "Resolution and Independence," by Coleridge in a "Monody on the Death of Chatterton," by Keats who inscribed "Endymion" to his memory, and by D. G. Rossetti in *Five English Poets.*

[3] In support of Oates's attack on James Stuart, Fuller wrote a fictitious account: *A Brief Discovery of the True Mother of the Pretended Prince of Wales Known by the Name of Mary Grey. To Which Is Added, A Further Discovery of the Late Conspiracy Against His Majesty's Sacred Person, and Government. As/and Before the King and Deposed to a Committee of Parliament,* by William Fuller, Gent. Sometime Page of Honour to the late Queen of France. London: Printed for the author, A.D. 1696. Dedicated to the Duke of Gloucester.

Oates, and Bower who was a contemporary and acquaintance of Psalmanazar.

The Tichborne Case (1865) was a direct misrepresentation of identity in a suit to claim an inheritance (Gilbert 1957; Woodruff 1957). This instance has the distinction of extreme notoriety and vulgarity.

Three basic constellations of disturbing symptoms in clinically well-developed cases of imposture are at once impressive: first, the dominant and dynamically active family romance; second, the intense and circumscribed disturbance of the sense of identity, a kind of infarction in the sense of reality; third, a malformation of the superego involving both conscience and ideals. It is certainly not the presence of and only to a small extent any special variation in the content of the family romance which is significant. Based as it is on the Oedipus complex, this fantasy is probably one of the most frequently expressed themes of children's fairy tales.

It is the endurance past puberty, the intensity, and the compulsive pressure to live out the family romance which are characteristic of impostors. This fantasy usually reigns only during the latency period. It is then expressed in the predilection for such stories, in acting it out in play and make-believe; it is the motive for some escapades of running away, and it is clearly evident in the intensely infatuated contemporary interest of some youngsters in, for example, Princess Anne and Prince Charles. One way or another, it contributes much to the content of defensive fantasies of this developmental period. It seems closely related in time and origin to the period of superego development which is ordinarily taken up mostly by beginning social identifications and formations of ambitions and ideals, reaching far beyond the limits of family relationships. A very strong libidinal investment in the family romance might be a substitute in large part for these influences, associated with a considerable failure or delay in the development of the more impersonal ego ideals due to a persistence of Oedipal problems. More than this, it is a memory of the earliest awarenesses of the parental relationship from the dawn of even the slightest sensing of the self as a separate being. It is the extraordinary and continued pressure in the impostor to live out his fantasy that demands explanation, a living out which has the force of a delusion, (and in the psychotic may actually appear in that form), but it is ordinarily associated with "formal" awareness that the claims are false.

The sense of reality is characterized by a peculiarly sharp, quick perceptiveness, extraordinarily immediate keenness and responsiveness, especially in the area of the imposture. The over-all utility of the sense of reality is, however, impaired. What is striking in many impostors is that, although they are quick to pick up details and nuances in the lives and activities of those whom they simulate and can sometimes utilize these with great adroitness, they are frequently so utterly obtuse to many ordinary considerations of fact that they give the impression of mere brazenness or stupidity in many aspects of their life peripheral to their impostures.

A patient whom I saw years ago had repetitively impersonated a doctor, received and carried out appointments on hospital staffs with only the medical training he had had in serving as a hospital orderly during World War I. He had, however, apparently observed with extraordinary accuracy many of the surgical techniques and procedures which he was able to reproduce in so creditable a fashion that he was well accepted by able colleagues with whom he worked. Nonetheless, he failed in the simple precautions against detection that any shrewd schemer or good conspirator would certainly have taken. During the periods of active imposture he was calm, placid, and happy. It may be said, and probably rightly, that this defect was due to his inner conflict and his wish to betray himself, but it was deeply repressed and he showed no anxiety about detection. I would emphasize, however, that the failure to protect adequately against detection is not only due to unconscious guilt, but even more fundamentally to the peculiar disturbance of the sense of identity. The impostor has, then, a specially sharpened sensitivity within the area of his fraud, an identity toward the assumption of which he has a powerful unconscious pressure, beside which his conscious wish, although recognizable, is relatively slight. The unconscious drive heightens his perceptions in a focused area and permits him to ignore or deny other elements of reality which would ordinarily be considered matters of common sense. It is this discrepancy in abilities which makes some impostors such puzzling individuals. Skill and persuasiveness are combined with utter foolishness and stupidity.

In well-structured impostures this may be described as a struggle between two dominant identities in the individual: the temporarily focused

and strongly assertive imposturous one, and the frequently amazingly crude and poorly knit one from which the impostor has emerged. In some instances, however, it is also probable that the imposture cannot be sustained unless there is emotional support from someone who especially believes in and nourishes it. The need for self-betrayal may then be one part of a tendency to revert to a less demanding, more easily sustainable personality, particularly if support is withdrawn.[4]

The impostor seems to flourish on the success of his exhibitionism. Enjoyment of the limelight and an inner triumph of "putting something over" seem inherent, and bespeak the closeness of imposture to voyeurism. Both aspects are represented: pleasure in watching while the voyeur himself is invisible; exultation in being admired and observed as a spectacle. It seems as if the impostor becomes temporarily convinced of the rightness of his assumed character in proportion to the amount of attention he is able to gain from it.

In the lives of impostors there are circumscribed areas of reaction which approach the delusional. These are clung to when the other elements of the imposture have been relinquished. Although Macpherson, the fraudulent "translator" of the Ossianic poems, did not continue and multiply his deceptions so openly, to the end of his life he maintained that he would continue to work on "the originals" of which he had almost none, and more grotesquely, he developed the idea that he could work by substituting Greek for Gaelic characters. This was nevertheless a worldly man and an experienced politician.

Oates took to imposture like to a drug, changing readily from one variety to another; yet the imposition which he defended most vehemently and undeviatingly was that he had received a D.D. degree from the University at Salamanca, from which he had never received a degree and to which he had never been. He reacted with rage whenever he was ridiculed on this score.

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[4] On one occasion when I had the experience of working for a year with a colleague who made exaggerated claims concerning the nature and efficacy of his treatment, I became aware of what a burden it was to him to maintain them. He was not a fully developed, "smooth" impostor. Although he was then driven forward by a brief period of fame, he could hardly have got himself into this fix nor have continued in it, except for the ambitions of his wife, supplemented by the opportunistic exploitation of some of his staff. Following the collapse of his claims, he went through a period of confusion and amnesia in which he could not remember his name nor where he lived.

This need to have the imposture sustained by successful exhibitionism is glaringly apparent in the Tichborne Case in England, perhaps the most notorious imposture in modern history. About the middle of the nineteenth century a roving Englishman, temporarily a butcher in a place with the improbable name of Wagga Wagga, Australia, was brought to England claiming to be heir to the enormous fortune of the Tichborne and Doughty families. The heir, Sir Roger Tichborne, had presumably been lost in a shipwreck traveling from Rio de Janeiro to Mexico. It was asserted later that a few of the passengers had been picked up and taken to Australia. The claimant emerged some eleven years later at a time when the dead man's mother, herself an impostor of a kind, was denying his death and putting out searchers for him in the form of advertisements in the London papers. It appears that his case would almost surely have collapsed quickly, in spite of the love of the populace for a lost nobleman, had it not been for the determined and pathologically gullible acceptance of him by Sir Roger's mother (herself a resentful natural child) who had treated her son so badly that she had almost of necessity to deny his untimely death. It seems that in its early stages, this extraordinarily complicated hoax was certainly a cooperative, symbiotically determined affair between the aging Lady Tichborne and the illiterate butcher from the Australian bush country. The case did not however collapse with her death. The structure of the pretense had seemingly acquired a kind of autonomy, having taken hold of the popular imagination, which gained it further support. Lady Tichborne may have abetted the publicity, partly as bitter retaliation toward her proper English relatives, a retaliation which in other forms had been a sustaining influence in her life for years. The claimant proceeded to make public demonstrations, lectures, and rallies, exceeding the noisiest and brashest political campaigns, in asserting his rights as the lost Sir Roger. In a sense, it was rather like an election campaign, the public being called upon to take sides.

It was most striking, however, that after serving ten years of a fourteen-year prison sentence for perjury, during which he became more sober, reasonable, and in better health than at any time in his meteoric and pretentious career, when his release was granted—on condition that he should not encourage any public demonstrations—he had been out

of prison only a few hours when he signed a contract to give short addresses on his case in any hall or place which his backers (the proprietors of a traveling circus) might select. It had been but a short time earlier, while still in prison, that he had written, possibly with insight arising from the enforced deprivation of his exhibitionistic activity: "I know I am an enigma to many—and this principally caused by the horror I have to two things: egotism and flattery. My motto has always been that if you show me an egotist, I will show you a worthless scamp. Show me a sycophant and I will show you a worthless scoundrel" (Woodruff 1957, p. 420).

It is obvious that anyone who perpetrates such a fabric of fraudulence has some fundamental pathological development of the superego. Certainly some elements in this may vary according to the nature of the total structure of the character from which the imposturous drives arise. The significant nuclear disturbance, however, appears to consist in the weakness of any strongly established principles of behavior involving consistency of reality testing. Once an imposturous goal has been glimpsed, the individual seems to behave without need for consistency, but to strive rather for the supremacy of the gains from what can be acted out with sufficient immediate gratification to convince others. For the typical impostor, an audience is absolutely essential. It is from the confirming reaction of his audience that the impostor gets a "realistic" sense of self, a value greater than anything he can otherwise achieve. It is the demand for an audience in which the (false) self is reflected that causes impostures often to become of social significance. Both reality and identity seem to the impostor to be strengthened rather than diminished by the success of the fraudulence of his claims.

This gives us some understanding of the fragile but artistically driven young Chatterton, fatherless, impoverished, and considered a freak who wrote but poorly under his own name, but by impersonating a fictitious sixteenth century bard, who was part of the court of a munificent city father, won interest and recognition which enabled him to develop his talent. There was a hint of something similar about Jonathan Swift who was also a posthumous child.

As one studies a series of impostors, their compulsive pressures become clearer. It is an urgency to perpetuate fraudulence rather than an

exaggerated sense of righteousness as is true of most neurotic compulsiveness. It is necessary to be schematic in presenting the essential pathology of this seemingly paradoxical situation. Examination of the developmental history of the impostor reveals that the child had characteristically from the beginning a definite type of disturbance of evolution of object relationship. From birth, the mother has regarded the infant with extreme possessive and ambivalent concern and constant watchfulness. Whether this appeared as marked anxiety and guilt, or as great pride, seems less important than the fact that the attachment was extreme. In those cases in which an early history was obtainable, the parents were at odds, the mother frequently despising, reproaching, or attacking the father who either remained detached from the child or removed himself by death or desertion.

In one of my own cases a not very reliable father deserted when the child was about three, after a period of open conflict and violence. During his absence the mother spoke often but disparagingly of the father to the child. In two other cases, the mother blatantly "showed off" and admired the child while derogating the father, who was in each instance ineffectual and disappointing in his achievements. In one of these the father was absent during the child's second and part of the third year, his place being taken by an uncle. In a fourth case, the rigidly conscientious mother showed a constant nagging anxiety toward the child and a naggingly critical attitude toward the father who was unreliable and dishonest and who, while taking some interest in the child, taught it to conceal much from the mother in order to avoid reproach and worry from her.

Chatterton's father died before he was born. Oates's mother was a pious midwife, married to a psychopathic scoundrel who was a clergyman. The child was deformed, appeared stupid, ugly, and had convulsions until he was five. The parents separated when he was six. The intensity of the disturbance between them is indicated by the mother's account years later that during pregnancy she dreamed repeatedly that she had conceived with the Devil. She considered the birth itself as the worst she had ever known and wondered that it did not kill her. The child was so ugly the father did not want to look at it. Psalmanazar's childhood is described in his own memoirs, unreliable as they may be,

in which he depicts an anxious, devoted, ambitious mother, separated from an unsuccessful but pretentious father when the boy was six. Fuller was possibly an illegitimate child, and the presumptive father died when he was six months old. The mother remarried, but the boy had a bad relationship with his stepfather. Bedloe was a child of extraordinary precocity, wit, and beauty. His father died when he was very young. He too did not get on with a stepfather. About the Tichborne Claimant, it is of interest that, while comparatively little is stated regarding his real parents, except that he was the youngest child, he is stated to have been genitally deformed (pseudohermaphroditic), son of a father who was a violent Wapping butcher, and of a mother who was said to be decent but not otherwise described. The parents of Roger Tichborne, who he claimed to be, fit accurately into the pattern for parents of an impostor, and Roger Tichborne's brother was an unreliable psychopath.

The intense maternal attachment to which the future impostor is subject, as if he were a part of the mother, undermines his sense of a separate self and the development of his own identity. By placing the child in a position of definite superiority to the father—either through the mother's attitude alone, or by fate through the death or desertion of the father—there is set a potentially serious imbalance of the Oedipal relationship, the child being able to assume an uncontested supersedence over its father. This inevitable intensification of infantile narcissism favors a reliance on omnipotent fantasy in other aspects of self-evaluation to the exclusion of reality testing.

Such a child comes into the Oedipal period in an already greatly impaired state. The conditions of the family relationships being chronic do not change (except sometimes for the worse, through parental death or desertion), and the early assumption of having vanquished the father remains. The frustration due largely to the inability to live out the Oedipal sexual urges, and the aggravated fear of the father based on hostility unrelieved by any possibility of positive identification with him, make the conflict both sharp and insoluble. I have elsewhere (Greenacre 1956) indicated that if, under these conditions, the child has been exposed to the sight of the genitals of an adult male, it may produce in fantasy an illusory enlargement of its own phallus which becomes indeed a kind of local imposture involving the organ and contributes to the already

forming tendency to general imposture.[5] In the struggle to maintain supremacy there is then reinvoked the attitude of a quasimagic power which is inherent mostly during the second and third years of life. There is a great interest in gesture and imitation which gives to the young child a convincing "as if" behavior, and makes great appeal in charming cuteness to the adult.

This period may be one of special cathexis for the potential impostor, since it contains the exhilaration of seeming independence with the great pleasure in and capacity to win admiration for the recently developed skills of walking and talking, but without real responsibility. Indeed, the behavior of the impostor utilizes exactly these characteristics with a very great dependence on *Gestalt* gestures which are acted out with plausible and sometimes astounding mimicry. It is also conspicuous that impostors utilize words in a similar way, with punning variations and substitutions, especially in names through which nuances of change in identity may be implied.[6]

The impostor seems to be repeatedly seeking confirmation of his assumed identity to overcome his sense of helplessness or incompleteness. It is my impression that this is the secret of his appeal to others, and that often especially conscientious people are "taken in" and other impostors as well attracted because of the longing to return to that happy state of omnipotence which adults have had to relinquish.[7]

The study of the lives of these versatile gentlemen has led to the conclusion that sustained imposture serves two important functions in the life of the pretenders. It is the living out of an oedipal conflict through

[5] It is true that the subjective sense of the genitals is important in the establishment of the sense of identity (Greenacre, in press, a).

[6] Titus Oates made an anagrammatic version of his own name, as Testis Ovat. George Psalmanazar adopted his name first from the Biblical character of Shalmanezer, later changing it to Psalmanazar. In his later years, during his reformed period, he claimed authorship of a book published seemingly by S. Palmer. Samuel Palmer, the supposed author, had died some time before. The question naturally suggests itself whether Psalmanazar was actually the author or whether the similarity in names suggested the claim to him.

[7] It is interesting in this connection how much Samuel Johnson became involved with impostors. He was one of the most violent and constant attackers of Macpherson. On the other hand, he was first fooled by one William Lauder, who attempted by a hoax to prove that Milton was a plagiarist, then Johnson detected the trick and condemned Lauder (Lauder 1939). But Johnson became a great friend of Psalmanazar, whom he professed to admire greatly, and was also acquainted with A. Bower, another impostor.

revival of the earliest definite image of the father. In so far as *the imposture* is accomplished, *it is the killing of the father through the complete displacement of him. It further serves to give a temporary feeling of completion of identity* (sense of self) that can be more nearly achieved in this way than in the ordinary life of an individual so impaired from having been psychologically incorporated by his mother. As part of this imposturous impersonation there is a seemingly paradoxical heightening of his feeling of integrity and reality. This is certainly re-enforced and sustained by the sense of being believed in by others and, with the intoxication of being in the limelight (which reproduces the infantile situation with the general public taking the place of the mother), furnishes a most powerful incentive for endless repetition of this special type of gratification.

It is indeed striking in the cases of the great impostors of history how much the fraud is clearly directed at the father, though sometimes mediated through a brother, whether he be represented by the King, his surrogate the Duke, the tribal father and his accessory poet or bard, or the superior artist. In any case, there is repeated fluctuation between attack and identification. Thus Oates, after having with great difficulty edged himself into Jesuit schools, accused the Jesuits under the leadership of James Stuart, Duke of York, of plotting to kill King Charles II. Soon he was, however, implicating Charles himself in the Popish Plot. From scrutinizing his life one sees that this probably represented an interplay between him, his father, and his older brother.[8] Both father and brother played less conspicuous but equally fluctuating roles in connection with the plot. At the end of his life Titus Oates was reduced to swindling on so ignominious a scale as trying to fleece two Baptist clerical brothers of an inheritance from an old lady parishioner. Macpherson, of Ossianic fame, dealt with a tribal father, the great mythical Gaelic, Fingal, Highland Chief, whose blind son, Ossian, was a poet. Somewhat similarly Thomas Chatterton produced the Rowley poems as though written by a monk close to the sixteenth century Mayor of Bristol, who was a great traditional figure for his endowment of the city.

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[8] Some of the older accounts of Titus Oates state that he was an only child (Seccombe 1894). The more careful study by J. Lane (1949) shows quite conclusively that Titus's father, an older brother, and less frequently a younger brother were involved in the work of informing sometimes in support and sometimes against Titus himself. None of them was so talented an impostor as Titus himself.

There is another unconscious gain sought through the work of the impostor over and above regaining his "rightful position" in life, (which we have indicated means the overthrowing of his father and realizing his own "little kingship" from the past), and this has to do with impersonation for material advantage. The unconscious motivation is to rob the overthrown father of his penis which, it is imagined, furnishes a better equipment than the inferior infantile one which the impostor feels himself to have. This fantasy has become clear to me from the analysis of patients with occult imposturous symptoms, and has been reported elsewhere (Greenacre, in press, a). While this cannot be clearly demonstrated from the life stories of the notorious impostors of history, it is in accordance with certain noted findings. As mentioned, Titus Oates, late in his life, tried to get from a fellow churchman against whom he had a grudge an inheritance which had been left by an elderly widow. James Macpherson, who was not wholly an impostor, succeeded in capitalizing on his talents by becoming an early version of a public relations man combined with ghost writing for the government. With this advantage he managed his affairs so well that he was offered (and "righteously" refused) the confiscated estate of Ewen Macpherson, head of the clan who had much earlier turned in rebellion against the British government. James, who in boyhood was in the position of a poor relation, subsequently bought and developed a much grander property in his native county of Inverness and lived the life of a country gentleman until he died in 1796.

Oates had one leg shorter than the other and was notable for this extraordinary physical ugliness. Macpherson, in general good looking, was inordinately touchy about the thickness of his legs. The Tichborne Claimant had a genital malformation which had made him doubt whether he could have children, although he succeeded in proving himself amply in this respect. All these three had bodily defects toward which they reacted with extreme sensitivity, indicating probably an excess of castration anxiety, and narcissism.

While the emphasis of this study has been on the defective development of the ego in these cases, some attention is due the sexual functioning. All of the cases I have analyzed were men who had considerable impairment of sexual potency. Two had severe potency problems, but

all were inhibited in full enjoyment of sexual activity. It was quite apparent that genital sexuality, though seemingly functioning adequately, was more a narcissistic gratification or an attack than a truly libidinal satisfaction. It might be said that the genital function was in the service of proving the capacity of an illusory penis. Of the four patients, three had suffered from a "small penis complex," while the fourth showed this in reverse with the idea that his penis was oversized and thus a betrayal of his excessive masturbation. Passive homosexual trends were marked, as would be expected.

Among the historical impostors, Titus Oates was a known homosexual with a predilection for sodomy, an accusation which he was also wont to make against young men who stood in his way. He apparently did not marry until forty-four, when he selected a girl of twenty-three, who had a reasonably good fortune which he soon squandered. He ultimately produced one daughter after a period in which he publicized the number of his wife's miscarriages, using this as the basis for soliciting support from public funds. He died at fifty-six.

James Macpherson never married. He abandoned his aspiration to be a poet, leaving Scotland where he was held in high esteem, preferring to live in London despite suffering there many scornful attacks on his literary ability and integrity. He prospered cannily in political and business pursuits. He always preferred English women to Scottish. On his death he provided handsomely for five illegitimate children ("by several mothers") by whom he was so much esteemed that even the entirely legitimate descendants of his daughter took the name of Macpherson. Agile man that he was, he succeeded in getting himself considered for poet laureate, and when he died, he was buried in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey beside Ben Jonson. He was the only one among them all who was successful in playing off both ends against the middle. William Bedloe, an associate of Titus Oates and a confirmed impostor, was a transvestite. He married around thirty, a short time before his death. George Psalmanazar was addicted to laudanum for many years. According to his memoirs (Psalmanazar 1765), he so much enjoyed his reputation for taking it in enormous doses that he concealed the fact when he succeeded in reducing the amount. Although he lived to be past eighty, there is no record that he married. One suspects from the

general tenor of his life that he may have had polymorphous perverse tendencies, but specific knowledge is lacking. The Tichborne Claimant certainly led a varied sexual life. Alcoholic, gluttonous, explosively violent, suffering from tics and possibly from convulsions in infancy, his life was characterized by lack of restraint. He married at thirty-one, had several children, later separated from his wife and kept only intermittent contact with his children. By and large, the impression is of a polymorphous perverse sexual organization with almost no object relationship in any of these men.

It will be noted that the cases here mentioned are all males. It is possible that cases of well-developed imposture are more frequent among men than among women, due essentially to its relation to phallic strivings and to the difference of the maternal influence on the male and on the female Oedipal problems. It is probable also that social conditions may somewhat favor the maturation of impostural attitudes in males more than in females. Conditions related to imposture that occur more frequently among women are malingering, the "as if" characters in which there is a diffuse rather than a focused activity of imposture, and especially kidnappings in which the kidnapped infant is passed off as their own. One can see a relationship to these characteristics which cause a woman to go from one man to another assuming successfully the interests and coloring of each man as though they were her own, the type portrayed in Chekhov's, *The Darling*.

One great feminine impostor, more ancient than any other mentioned, is Joan or Joanna of the ninth century. After being elevated to the papacy, and reigning as Pontiff for more than two years, she gave birth prematurely while riding in a papal procession. She died, as have so many impostors since and probably before, as a result of her compulsion to betray herself. Whether she was a true impostor or whether this is an imposturous story of an impostor, each reader of the evidence must decide for himself. The story has been handed down through the ages, but the version I have read was presented in 1896 by a Greek writer of skill and delicacy, Emanuel Royidis, and was charmingly translated by Lawrence Durrell in 1954. Mr. Royidis was excommunicated. Mr. Durrell has been living on the Island of Cyprus and has recently published two books. It is remarkable that while the story is generally discredited, still,

as Royidis points out, Pope Joan is included in the Canon of Popes by so faithful and serious a historian as Platina himself, a secretary to a Pope and a librarian to the Vatican.

It is fascinating to see that the story of Joan follows inversely the outline of the male impostors. Joan was the child of Judith, a fallen goosegirl, who fell finally into the arms of a monk, who was in consequence after some time defrocked. On the travels together of Judith and the former monk, he was attacked and emasculated beyond repair while Judith was impregnated and bore Joan as the result of a woodland encounter with two archers. Judith died when Joan was young (Royidis says eight years old) and the child was so precocious that she preached her mother's funeral service. Her pseudo father, the former monk, then made such use of her talent that it supported them both, for he taught her to perform like a dancing bear and to answer encyclopedic questions, after which the hat was passed with great profit. In this way then Joan was launched in her extraordinary career, to become ultimately the Holy Father.

The psychoanalytic literature in regard to imposture is scant. While the field of delinquency was opened to psychoanalytic investigation by Aichhorn's striking contribution, Wayward Youth (1925), Abraham in the same year gave the first clinical case report of an impostor looked at through psychoanalytically trained eyes. His article (Abraham 1935) together with those of Helene Deutsch in her study of the "as if" character (1942) and the impostor (1955) furnish the basis for any further work on the subject. Dr. Deutsch alone has had the advantage of a long period of observation and psychoanalytic treatment of an impostor, a treatment which evidently had to become largely a supportive psychotherapy. She emphasizes that there are different types of impostors and different degrees of imposture. The chief case of her presentation is a young man—adolescent when she first saw him—in whom there was some improvement as he adapted better to reality under treatment, but from the patient's angle this was paradoxical in that he now had more anxiety and, what was more, now *felt* like an impostor. His anxiety broke through during participation in a war from which he could not feign his way out. The treatment may have furnished some support to his weak ego, and he gradually came to conform more to standards of reality. It

still could not furnish him with as much semblance of strength and verve and of being someone as he could get from time to time in his earlier impostures.

It may be that vision and the reflection of oneself from and by others play a crucial part in early problems of identity (Greenacre, in press, a), as well as the fact that the sado-masochistic excitement of imposturous states gives a heightening of sensation and perceptiveness with strong narcissistic libidinal investment, and that the sense of reality in these deformed characters depends more on this than on the depth of object relationships. The further question would be how much can this be changed by treatment. Annie Reich recently reported a case, much more resembling an "as if" character than an impostor, in which she got a good therapeutic result through a forceful concentration of interpretation in the transference with a subsequent shift in values to more workable ones (Reich 1957). My own experience would lead me to ask how much was there developed a real incorporation of these values through the transference to form a different structure of ego ideals and the way of utilizing them, and how much might there be developed what one could call a therapeutic compulsion neurosis, with the patient always carrying the voice of the analyst with her, and the obligation to think "what would she say (or do) under these circumstances?" It is not only the standards and values which need to be changed in such cases, but the ability itself to convert a narcissistic identification into a critically selective and internally structured set of ego ideals, which is ordinarily only accomplished through resolution of the Oedipal problems at the beginning and later at the end of the latency period.

Dr. Helene Deutsch emphasized that her patient was "overfed" with tender solicitude by his really very warm mother and that this diminished the development of early active ego strivings in him, everything being so well supplied that there was little need for him to make efforts in his own behalf. It would seem to me that this must have been heightened by the stated fact that during the first three or four years "the father did not concern himself with the boy," but that he did with the much older brothers. In this setting, the boy would, of course, identify himself with the somewhat devalued mother, and the closeness of

the relationship between them would have further absorbed the child's envy of the brothers, which was then forcibly turned in the reverse direction, the father actively enticing the boy into an alliance and narcissistic identification with himself in a powerful, spiteful, and vindictive attitude toward these same brothers—all this to be followed when he was seven by the collapse of this grandiose paternal figure into a weak and foulsmelling man who died when the boy was twelve. It would appear to me that while the schema of the early relationship of the boy to the parents is not what I have described in my cases, the forces in it are similar. The boy's subsequent defiant, persistent imposturing was a repeated attempt to reclaim the role which he had glimpsed early among the father and the brothers—which he later briefly experienced in his triumphant alliance with the father when the father used him as his agent. One suspects that this attitude of the father toward his children must have been extremely intense since the two older brothers established their independence from him at such an extraordinarily high price.

One item in this case is of special interest: the anal problems of this patient. The "hot air" talk and the reaction to the foul sputum of the father are mentioned by Dr. Deutsch. In my experience, patients in this group, who have strong anal identifications with others, have an increase in their problems of identity and illusion because the stool substitutes so readily for the phallus, and for a devaluated image of the self, and flatus contributes to the sense of the sublime power of an illusory counterpart. Dr. Deutsch's earlier paper on the "as if" character seems to me to give invaluable help in understanding that type of encroachment on the spontaneous development in which the need to please substitutes both for deeper libidinal gratification and for ego development involving genuine reality testing, since this is always routed through the other person and is achieved through narcissistic identification rather than through a direct approach to reality.

Abraham's article on this subject gives the picture of a classically compulsive, repetitive impostor, whom he saw first in 1918, when it was necessary to examine him because of many delinquencies. This man repeatedly impersonated officers and obtained money under false pretenses. He was convicted but was soon released in a general amnesty at the close of the war. Abraham saw nothing of him until 1923, when

at the request of the civil court he was asked to re-examine the patient and make a report. He then found to his surprise that in 1919, a few months after his sentence, the patient had improved suddenly and markedly and subsequently had lived a responsible active life, well respected in his profession. This reform occurred when, in his usual trouble with the police, he had attracted the interest of an older woman with half-grown children of her own. She responded to his story of destitution and of unemployment by befriending him and finding work for him as a draftsman where his definite artistic talent could be used. Later, they married and "he rose to a place of responsibility in the business (hers and her former husband's) which incidentally insured him a good social position." It was through her, whom he called "little mother," that he maintained himself as a responsible person. In other words, he lived out in an acceptable form his Oedipal wishes and could do so with less guilt, as this father, his wife's former husband, was dead, and she rather than he had taken the initiative in the attachment. This, at least, is the gist of Abraham's explanation. As both he and Abraham realized, this adaptation was a vulnerable one. This kind of solution is certainly an exception, but not an extreme rarity. It is the more striking, however, since the delinquent activity and the imposturous ambitions appeared as early as five years and had been fairly constant through the intervening years. What seems to me very important in the change of the direction of this patient's life, and perhaps not sufficiently emphasized by Abraham, is the role of his apparently definite talent. It appears that this was the first time that his artistic talent was recognized as something more than a plaything with which to charm others. Of his childhood it is only said that he was the youngest child in a large family of brothers and sisters of a poor minor official, but nothing is said of the attitudes and characters of the parents. The life story brings into focus the question of unusual talent and its effect on a child, especially if it is the source of derogation rather than recognition, and touches on the complex problem of the artist in accepting, assuming, and synthesizing the sometimes unusually diverse elements in his identity (Erikson 1956), a subject with which I would wish to work, i.e., consideration of the relation of the artist to the impostor (Greenacre, in press, b).

SUMMARY

While this paper has emphasized the importance of the Oedipal problems in the production of imposture, it should be stressed again that one might better refer to these as the effects of an Oedipal phase than the effects of the Oedipal relationships. The acting out of the impostor is largely an attempt to achieve a sense of reality and competence as a man more than to claim the mother in any deep sense. From the material of my analytic cases, it seemed indicated that the mother might be a phallic mother and that in so far as the child was closer to her than to the father and might identify with her phallus, this increased the whole quality of illusion with which the impostor paradoxically struggles for some self-realization.

It will be noted that this paper has dealt more explicitly with cases from history or from reports of others than from my own. This was unfortunately necessary since after a number of years of analytic practice and with a number of published articles, it becomes increasingly difficult to give the rich full clinical details that one would wish. This is particularly true when so delicate a subject as imposturous tendencies and impostures is involved. Patients tend to become aware of the analyst's writing and may later look for themselves in clinical publications. While it would be unfair to publish anything without the consent of the analysand, this still does not resolve the problem. To see their own life histories in print may, in any event, be too great a narcissistic injury even though permission has been given for such publication.

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TWO PAPERS ON "THE IMPOSTOR"

BY LUCY LA FARGE

INTRODUCTION

The interest that impostors hold for others, evident in the popularity of novels and movies about them, is much greater than the imprint they have left upon the world. Although some impostors, particularly those for whom imposturous tendencies are interwoven with genuine ability, produce serious works of art or function fairly effectively in certain organizations, the greatest accomplishment of most impostors is imposture itself.

Impostors fascinate us because it is difficult for us to understand exactly what they are doing, even when the falseness of their performance has become known to us. Do they believe in the roles they play, we wonder. Do they simply wish to become the figures they portray, or is deception an important aim as well? And what of those whom the impostor deceives—why do they believe in what is often a laughably superficial imitation of life? Do they simply wish to believe the imposture is real? Or is there something about these believers that draws them easily into the role of being deceived?

From a psychoanalytic standpoint, imposture can be placed in relation to the development of the ego: its early identifications and the equilibrium that it establishes with superego, ego ideal, and reality. The story-

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like, performative, and evocative quality of imposture, however, seems to call out for a broader canvas, for the use of such terms as *identity;* for the delineation of a complicated internal object world to explain the contradictory, even fantastic qualities of the impostor; and for an interactive, interpersonal dimension to comprehend the impostor's obligatory relationship with his audience.

In this paper, I will consider two papers: Helene Deutsch's "The Impostor: Contribution to Ego Psychology of a Type of Psychopath" (1955) and Phyllis Greenacre's "The Impostor" (1958a). Both these authors attempted to place the psychology of the impostor within the ego psychological framework that dominated the psychoanalytic world they inhabited. For each of them, the complexity of imposture posed a challenge to this framework.

Deutsch, who had explored similar themes in a more wide-ranging way in earlier papers, constructed a conventional theoretical model in her paper on the impostor, but used a fairly successful clinical approach that was not entirely contained within her theory. Greenacre, whose paper on the impostor was not a clinical one, was able to present a more complex theoretical model for imposture by drawing upon previous work in which she herself had expanded the purview of ego psychology.

HELENE DEUTSCH

Earlier Related Contributions

For Helene Deutsch, the 1955 paper on the impostor was the fourth in a series of papers on lying and false belief that spanned her career. Her first approach to the subject of deception, "On the Pathological Lie (Pseudologica Phantastica)," written in 1921 (Deutsch 1922; Deutsch and Roazen 1982), focused on the *content* of the lie, and the meaning and function that this had for the liar. Drawing in part upon her own experience of keeping a fictionalized journal in adolescence (Roazen 1985), Deutsch argued that a lie's content screened and expressed a piece of objective reality that had been repressed in early life and was now reevoked by contemporary experience.[1] Although lies differ from

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[1] Interestingly, for the case that Deutsch described, as for Deutsch herself, this piece of reality was an attempted seduction by an older brother when she was four years old.

daydreams in that lies need to be told to another person, Deutsch strongly insisted in this paper that the sole function of the lie is to gain relief for the liar; the specific reaction of the liar's audience is irrelevant.

Subsequently, Deutsch (1937, 1938) moved further from her own personal experience and considered myriad forms of false self and false belief. In a highly original way, she began to play with the different perspectives from which falseness might be understood. In a short paper on Don Quixote (1937), she placed Quixote's psychology within a developmental and ego psychological frame, arguing that Quixote's story represented an extreme version of the conflicts of puberty. Here an everyday figure, Alonzo Quixano, abandoned instincts and real objects, and lost his real personality in the fantasy of being the noble Don Quixote. The flight from instinct into grandiose fantasy was reflected in a shift in the balance of psychic structure—an impoverishment of the ego in favor of the ego ideal—and an impairment of reality testing, which, Deutsch argued, rested in part upon identifications, object ties, and aims in external reality.

In her consideration of Cervantes's 1605–1615 novel, however, Deutsch's ideas ranged far beyond these thoughts that albeit interesting, were elaborations within a conventional framework. In effect, Deutsch constructed a complex idea of an object world involving split objects, in which she placed the figure of Quixote in relation to the world of the novel, and the novel itself in relation to the larger world of its readers. For Quixote, Deutsch argued, Sancho Panza represented a piece of the self, "a fraction adapted to reality, and instinct-accepting rather than instinct-denying" (1937, p. 218). And in another capacity, Panza also served as a different kind of object for Quixote, an audience who, by believing in Quixote's delusions, provided him with a bridge to reality.

Deutsch observed that the split between two aspects of Alonzo, represented by the dual figures of Quixote and Sancho Panza, was reflected in a split response that Cervantes's novel evoked in its audience: one group of readers identified with Quixote's ego ideal and located the problems he encountered within a crude and lamentable reality; a second group identified with that crude reality and responded to the caricatured nature of Don Quixote, enjoying the sense that they themselves had triumphed over illusion by devaluing him.

Continuing with the themes of illusion and delusion in a third paper, "Folie à Deux" (1938), Deutsch further explored the ways that beliefs and the sense of reality were entwined with ties to objects. In early life, she argued, the child relied in part upon the perceptions of others in order to distinguish inner from outer reality. For those with a "slight adaptation to reality" (1938, p. 316), the surrender of the individual's own reality testing in favor of the object's was a regressive pathway that was easily reopened. A shared delusion might rest primarily upon a common wished-for belief, or upon the tie between the two believers. For psychotics, Deutsch observed, "the *common delusion appears to be an important part of an attempt to rescue the object*" (p. 317, italics in original). Prefiguring Steiner's (1993) concept of *psychic retreat,* Deutsch also noted the way in which a false belief shared within a family operated as a stable structure, in which a movement of any member toward disbelief led to a countermovement by the others to pull him back in.

"The Impostor: Contribution to Ego Psychology of a Type of Psychopath" (1955)

Viewed in the context of these earlier contributions, Deutsch's much more famous paper, "The Impostor: Contribution to Ego Psychology of a Type of Psychopath," seems to the contemporary reader to reflect both the author's further development of an ego psychological perspective and the constraints that this perspective imposed upon her imagination. The paper centers upon a clinical case: that of an imposturous character, Jimmy, whom she first met during a phase of delinquency at age fourteen, and later treated in what appears to have been a mixture of psychoanalysis and supportive therapy from ages twenty-two to thirty.

Supporting her conceptualization with a detailed history of Jimmy's early life and adult development, Deutsch traces a much more complex etiology for his disorder than she did for the cases described in her earlier papers. Jimmy was the third and youngest son born to a masochistic, overindulgent mother and a father who, while tyrannical at home, was seen by Deutsch as the personification of civic virtue. During his first four years, Jimmy remained entirely in his mother's orbit while his father interested himself exclusively in his two older sons.

After the older sons broke away in adolescence, the father turned his attention to Jimmy, focusing solely on this last remaining son. But the period of union between father and son ended abruptly when the father was stricken with an illness that isolated him from Jimmy, and eventually claimed his life when Jimmy was twelve. Jimmy's psychopathology first became evident after the father became ill, when he aggressively rebelled against authority and created a world of grandiose fantasy, which he presented as reality to others. After his father's death, Jimmy's aggressiveness and narcissism intensified and he became delinquent, causing disruption at school and at home. This was the point at which he first came to see Deutsch.

Deutsch observed in these early meetings with Jimmy a "great affective emptiness" (p. 1010)[2] and an "uncanny, paranoid character" (p. 1010) to some of his complaints. Jimmy formed no attachment to Deutsch that was evident to her at this time; the immediate cause of his leaving treatment was his rejection of her interpretation of his grandiosity.

A second phase of treatment began when Jimmy returned to see Deutsch eight years later. By now Jimmy had begun to assume a grandiose, imposturous identity. In the army this posture was challenged, and a consequent outbreak of anxiety led to his discharge. Now suffering, Jimmy was motivated to stay in treatment, and an eight-year period ensued in which Deutsch focused her interpretations on the way in which a series of imposturous identities assumed by Jimmy functioned as grandiose defenses against his underlying sense of inadequacy.

A second line of interpretation, in which grandiosity and imposture were seen as defenses against the danger associated with actual, realistic accomplishment, emerged from Deutsch's observation that Jimmy's anxiety increased when he took steps toward authentic success in reality. Throughout, Deutsch says, she also made supportive interventions, and "appealed to . . . [Jimmy's] narcissism by showing him what he could really achieve" (p. 1019). As a result of this therapy, although his ob-

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[2] *Editor's Note:* In this article, page numbers from Deutsch 1955 refer to the numbering of the republication in this issue, not to that of the original *Quarterly* publication of that year.

ject relations remained arrested at a narcissistic level, Jimmy was able to tolerate a partial shift in orientation toward functioning in a reality in which he was not entirely unique.

From Jimmy's history—partly known from the outset and partly constructed during the treatment—Deutsch built a complex developmental model to explain his imposturousness. Overindulged by his mother, Jimmy's confidence and frustration tolerance had been stunted; the turn toward his father had intensified this passive trend. Reiterating the split within the ego that she had observed in Don Quixote, Deutsch reflected that Jimmy's ego was both strengthened and weakened by his role as "the father's appendage" (p. 1008). Identified with the powerful father, he felt omnipotent, while in perceiving himself as separate and in competition with the father, he felt small and weak. Jimmy found a solution to this conflict in a representation of himself as the father's wonderful boy—at once small, passive, and imbued with the father's greatness.

All these factors, in Deutsch's view, led to a predisposition to narcissistic pathology, but the decisive factor in the development of Jimmy's psychopathology was the trauma of his father's illness, which led to the double loss for Jimmy of the actual father and of the idealized, omnipotent figure with whom Jimmy had identified. This trauma prevented Jimmy from negotiating the resolution of the early split within the ego and incorporating within ego and superego more realistic identifications with the father and others. Frozen in a narcissistic solution forged in latency, Jimmy could tolerate neither the shameful defeats nor the guilty triumphs of action in reality, substituting instead a magical performance in which he identified himself with aspects of his ego ideal and partially denied his actual identity.

Although tilted more than we would expect nowadays toward oedipal-phase determinants, Deutsch's ego psychological schema does not seem highly inaccurate. Rather, it appears to us now to be quite limited, surprisingly so in light of the imaginative excursions of Deutsch's earlier papers. Placing herself firmly within the framework of a one-person psychology, Deutsch seems to have forgotten in this paper the ideas that she introduced in her paper on Don Quixote—that splits in the ego might be accompanied by splits in the object, and thus the impostor might evoke a split response in others. Lost, too, is an idea she presented in

her paper on *folie à deux*—that the developing child's sense of reality is shaped in part by early objects, and that the child may actively surrender his sense of reality to them in order to establish or maintain an object tie.

This latter line of inquiry could have led, in the case of Jimmy, to an exploration of the meanings that Jimmy held for each of his parents and the ways in which they imposed these meanings upon him. Ultimately, it might perhaps have led to the understanding that, in his imposturous denial of his own self-experience, Jimmy was identified with parents who had earlier crushed and misunderstood it, substituting for it their own wished-for vision (LaFarge 2004, 2006).

For the contemporary reader, these omitted elements of Jimmy's story appear, at least in part, in the way Deutsch conducts the treatment and the language she uses to describe it. As we read this paper, her powerful, unacknowledged negative countertransference toward Jimmy is highly apparent. Deutsch fails to recognize the aggression in each of Jimmy's parents—the irreproachable, tyrannical father who attacks his own origins by declaring himself a self-made man, and the masochistic mother, whom Deutsch says she knew well, whose failure to recognize Jimmy's needs was inherently depriving.

Instead, Deutsch herself plays out the role of the negative, crushing parent, ridiculing not only Jimmy's grandiose "hot air" (p. 1019) but also the "few small things" (p. 1013) that he has accomplished in reality. Even as an impostor, Jimmy is found to fall short, meriting the description "pseudo-impostor" (p. 1014). Reflecting on this patient who remembered her well enough after a few meetings in adolescence to return to her when he was in trouble as an adult, and who then stayed in treatment with her until early middle age, Deutsch tells us that "in my forty years of practice I have never seen a patient as little capable of transference as Jimmy" (p. 1019). Ultimately, Deutsch ends the treatment, without evident self-reflection, by handing Jimmy off to a colleague.

If Deutsch's complementary identification with Jimmy stands out in bold relief, a second reading of her paper shows us that her response to her patient was actually split in the manner that she had postulated for the audience of Don Quixote. In a less salient set of countertransference reactions, Deutsch plays out a concordant identification with Jimmy.

Identifying herself with his inadequacy and falseness, she berates herself and the treatment she delivers for failing to live up to her standards. It was "an analysis so-called" (p. 1012), a "hot-air therapy" (p. 1019)—a description that implicitly devalues both Jimmy's illusions and Deutsch's work with him; it achieved only "a certain success" (p. 1019).

It is likely that, however conflictual it was for Deutsch, this concordant identification fueled the progress of the treatment, giving Jimmy much-needed support and a feeling of being understood, which allowed him to tolerate her deflating interpretations. On balance, as we consider the result of Jimmy's treatment—that he achieved a stable marriage and work of sorts, and that he "gave up his grotesque acting out and his behavior became increasing realistic" (p. 1018)—I think we should conclude that Deutsch underestimates her own work, and that she in fact achieved a good result with a very ill patient.

PHYLLIS GREENACRE

Earlier Related Contributions

Greenacre's classic 1958(a) study of the impostor brings together three major currents in her work: her study of the rootedness of severe psychopathology, particularly narcissistic pathology, in very early bodily experience; her recognition that identity had two aspects, one related to internal experience and the other to relationships with objects; and her interest in the split or even fragmented identity characteristic of the artist.

In two of her earliest contributions, Greenacre (1941a, 1941b) constructed a developmental proto-framework within which she was able to begin to think about severe psychopathology. In the perinatal period, constitution and environmental stress give rise to pre-anxiety responses that have very little psychic content, she believed. As development continues, these states give an "organic stamp of suffering" (1941b, p. 610)—a heightened sensitivity and drivenness—to subjective experience. In response to this largely physiological state, the child also develops a heightened infantile narcissism in which his sense of reality is compromised both by a sense of omnipotence and by a tendency to mirror others. Throughout life, Greenacre said, this early vulnerability

leads to a continuing "disturbed or fragile sense of reality" (1941a, p. 91); such individuals have the capacity to *test* reality—in fact, they have a particularly vivid visual representation of reality—but they easily relinquish their own views in favor of those of others, she felt.

Over the following two decades, Greenacre elaborated a highly original vision of the interplay of bodily experience and fantasy during the preoedipal period, and she traced the way in which such early events cast their shadow upon later developmental phases. The concept of identity, with its "two significant faces—an inner and an outer one" (Greenacre 1958b, p. 113), becomes an important organizer for the relationship between internal and external reality. In the first instance, the child develops a sense of self through bringing together sensations and instinctual pressures from within the body and identifications with others whom he has seen or touched, while the ongoing sense of identity brings together the individual's own sense of self and the way others see him.

Greenacre believed that disturbances could occur in either process of identity formation: trauma or a predisposition to anxiety could lead to a heightening of the aspect of identity that was taken in from outside and a potential disjunction with the internal, sensory aspect—for the boy in particular, the representation of the genital organs was especially vulnerable to disturbance—while the response of others to what one put forward could either reinforce one's identity or disrupt it. Thus, Greenacre's model of early development created a conceptual framework in which the observations of others could be elaborated—such as Deutsch's description of the entwinement of the child's developing sense of reality with early object ties.

During the period when she was engaged with the study of imposture, Greenacre (1957, 1958a, 1958b) also published several papers (1957, 1958c, 1958d) on the unusual course that ego and identity formation take for the artist or the creative individual. She saw creativity as constitutional, "a gift from the gods" (1957, p. 52), already laid down at birth. A child so endowed has—in addition to a heightened sensitivity to sensory stimuli and an unusual capacity to apprehend form and rhythm—an expanded potential for empathic engagement with animate and inanimate objects. The artist-to-be grows up in two parallel worlds, and, Greenacre felt, has object ties in both: he is bound, like others,

by ties to his primary objects and plays out with these the conventional conflicts of the preoedipal and oedipal phases; in addition, however, the artist makes a host of investments in the objects he encounters through his extended empathy—objects that Greenacre called "collective alternates" (1957, p. 56).

Each of these sets of object investments gives rise to a separate identity for the artist, in Greenacre's view; each can be used defensively to escape from the other; and each presents the artist with its own needs and demands. The artist's split identity and his need to find an object of sufficient power and creativity with whom he can identify in his identity *as artist* often leads to a heightened reliance on the family romance (1958c), while the availability of an alternate set of object investments leads to an incomplete resolution of the artist's oedipal ties to his actual early objects.

"The Impostor" (1958a)

Turning from this work on identity formation and the identity of the artist to write "The Impostor," Greenacre has a ready-made frame within which to place the distinctive psychopathology of the impostor. Like other disturbances of identity formation, imposture is best understood in terms of a relationship between inner and outer experience, she writes: it arises in a very early two-person matrix and continues to rely upon external objects for its maintenance. The vastly disproportionate representation of men within the group of impostors is likely linked, within Greenacre's established model, to male vulnerability to disturbance in genital representation. Splits, prominent in the psychology of the artist, are to be anticipated in disturbances of identity; understanding the impostor requires not simply the recognition of such splits, but also the understanding of their peculiar qualities and how they have arisen. Similarly, the family romance fantasies evident in the stories of impostors, as in those of artists, could be seen as manifestations of identity disturbance.

Thus, Greenacre comfortably begins her paper by establishing a two-person frame: "An impostor is not only a liar, but a very special type of liar who *imposes* on others fabrications of his attainments, position,

or worldly possessions" (p. 1025, italics in original[3]). More is at stake, she observes, than material gain; the impostor needs his audience and would not be content to operate in secret. The impostor's performance is persuasive because of a special quality of showmanship—through the impostor's grand gestures rather than in his attention to detail. And the audience as well as the impostor is an active participant: "In some of the most celebrated instances of imposture, it indeed appears that the fraud was successful only because many others as well as the perpetrator had a hunger to believe in the fraud" (p. 1026).

Then, delineating three main symptom constellations in imposture, Greenacre puts first the aspects of identity disturbance with which she is highly familiar—the presence of a "dominant and . . . active family romance" and an "intense and circumscribed disturbance of the sense of identity, a kind of infarction in the sense of reality"—and leaves for last a "malformation of the superego involving both conscience and ideals" (p. 1028).

Drawing upon the stories of historical impostors, Greenacre builds up a detailed and highly specific description of the impostor's special qualities and typical history. Like the artist, the impostor has a powerful investment in the family romance and often plays this out in his life. If for the artist, the fantasy father serves as an object for identification, a support for creative potential that is developed in reality, the impostor's imagined father serves entirely as a narcissistic support—a means by which the impostor can feel whole and real—and the impostor's identification with him must be compulsively played out throughout the life cycle.

Similarly, the impostor, like the artist, has a split identity. However, for the artist, both sides of the split reflect object-related investments, and the split is between "the personal self and the collectively stimulated and responsively creative self" (1958d, p. 521). For the impostor, both sides of the split reflect narcissistic ties, and the split is between "the temporarily focused and strongly assertive imposturous . . . [identity],

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[3] *Editor's Note:* In this article, page numbers from Greenacre 1958a refer to the numbering of the republication in this issue, not to that of the original *Quarterly* publication of that year.

and the frequently amazingly crude and poorly knit one from which the impostor has emerged" (1958a, pp. 1029-1030).

Greenacre traces the impostor's malformed identity to a specific constellation of early relationships: the impostor grows up in a family where he is particularly close to the mother and is felt by her to be almost her appendage. "The intense maternal attachment to which the future impostor is subject, as if he were a part of the mother, undermines his sense of a separate self and the development of his own identity" (p. 1034). The close, appropriating attitude of the mother leads to a disturbance of the impostor's physical identity and a weakened sense of himself as phallic; Greenacre notes that many impostors are sexually impotent.

The impostor's father is missing, distant, or devalued and excluded by the mother. Oedipal conflict is entirely dominated by the impostor's driven wish to acquire the power and potency of the father—often the imaginary father of the family romance—a wish that is played out over and over again through the act of imposture. The illusory quality of this quest is reinforced by the fact that the impostor's wished-for identification is fundamentally one with the phallic mother—an unreal image of the only object with whom he has had real contact. Greenacre emphasizes the hostile, destructive import of imposture: the impostor not only wishes to become the father, but also to replace and annihilate him; similarly, the impostor wishes not only to impress his audience, but also to deceive them—he feels an "urgency to perpetuate fraudulence" (p. 1032).

Like the artist, the impostor uses each side of his split identity defensively against the other. Imposture makes the impostor feel complete and, paradoxically, real; it temporarily assuages the sense of fragmentation and worthlessness that he feels in his ordinary identity. Conversely, a retreat to the cruder, non-imposturous self is "part of a tendency to revert to a less demanding, more easily sustainable personality, particularly if support is withdrawn" (p. 1030).

Greenacre ends her paper on a note of pessimism about the extent to which the impostor can be helped by treatment. She questions the favorable results reported by others, such as Annie Reich. The impostor can be understood, but a genuine change in his psychic structure would require not only a change in his standards and values, but also

> . . . the ability itself to convert a narcissistic identification into
> a critically selective and internally structured set of ego ideals,
> which is ordinarily only accomplished through resolution of the
> Oedipal problems at the beginning and later at the end of the
> latency period. [p. 1041]

The latter was a change that she doubted could occur in the analysis
of an adult.

CONCLUSION

How do we understand the impostor's prospects today? Greenacre's
paper remains richly explanatory for the contemporary reader. How-
ever, she did not elaborate a theory of clinical technique based upon
her theoretical model. And the contemporary analyst has available con-
ceptual avenues that are not a part of Greenacre's model or Deutsch's.
We have a better elaborated vision of both the internal object world of
the impostor—with its fantastically distorted and split representations of
self and other—and the way this world is played out, through the opera-
tion of projective identification, in both gross and subtle ways between
patient and analyst.

The understanding and treatment of narcissistic pathology have de-
veloped greatly since the 1950s. Many of us—like Greenacre—have en-
countered patients with a partial picture of imposture and have treated
them with some success (LaFarge 1995, 2008). Nevertheless, I think, the
full-fledged impostor remains rather inaccessible to our ministrations. A
review of the pioneering contributions of Deutsch and Greenacre, fifty
years after their publication, continues to shed light on what remains in
part an enigma.

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THE IMPOSTOR REVISITED

BY JOHN STEINER

> **Keywords:** Phyllis Greenacre, Helene Deutsch, impostor, Freud, identity, identification, mourning, internalization, projection, Kleinian theory, introjection, narcissism, as-if personality.

Phyllis Greenacre (1958a) begins her classic paper, "The Impostor," by reminding us that "an impostor is not only a liar, but a very special type of liar who *imposes* on others fabrications of his attainments, position, or worldly possessions" (p. 1025, italics in original[1]). Yet she also recognizes a wide range of conditions that bear a resemblance to impostors, and she observes that the analyst often "gets glimpses of such traits, only partly realized or appearing brightly in an incident or two, without emerging into overt fraudulence in the lives of a number of patients" (p. 1026).

Helene Deutsch, in "The Impostor: Contribution to Ego Psychology of a Type of Psychopath" (1955), is even more explicit about the ubiquity of variants of this condition, and clearly sees the impostor on a continuum that includes the *as-if personality* of her earlier descriptions. She writes:

> The world is crowded with "as-if" personalities, and even more so with impostors and pretenders. Ever since I became interested in the impostor, he pursues me everywhere. I find him among my friends and acquaintances, as well as in myself. [p. 1022]

The authors agree that we are all impostors to varying degrees, and even suggest that talented individuals, especially artists, may be particularly susceptible to suggestions of fraudulence.

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[1] *Editor's Note:* In this article, page numbers from Greenacre 1958a and Deutsch 1955 refer to the numbering of the republications in this issue, not to that of the original *Quarterly* publications of those years.

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Along the same continuum are patients who hide their true self within a false self (Winnicott 1960), and those who defensively adopt a *character armour* (Reich 1933). These two papers are therefore important in our understanding not only of these interesting patients, but also of the impostor element in all our patients as well as in ourselves. Furthermore, they are a step toward the understanding of how it is that a sense of personal identity develops. The papers are of special interest to me because of my work with patients who hide in a psychic retreat, protected by a narcissistic organization (Steiner 1993, 2011).

I am impressed by the special expertise that both authors bring to play on the problem of the impostor. Deutsch is able to make links with her earlier classic work on patients with an as-if personality (1942), her studies of female sexuality (e.g., 1925), and her papers on *folie à deux* collusions and the family romance (1938). Greenacre makes connections to her work on psychopathic personalities (1952) and on the biological origins of a sense of identity (1958b). She also wrote about the family romance of the artist (1958c) and the relation of the impostor to the artist (1958c). Both authors clearly look beyond the specific and unusual features of their patients and recognize the universality of the problem.

Greenacre feels that she cannot present psychoanalytic material because of problems with confidentiality, and these patients clearly present special difficulties over and above those with which we all struggle. Instead, she discusses famous impostors described in biographies and makes pertinent observations based on what is clearly a considerable clinical experience. Deutsch, too, brings a huge amount of experience to her article, making many general observations as well as describing a patient in detail.

FACTORS IN THE CREATION OF THE IMPOSTOR

Both Deutsch and Greenacre recognize the importance of pathological narcissism, and they are very aware that the impostor depends on his audience. Indeed, sometimes they are led to admire the skill with which the impostor enlists the observer to join him in his deception. Some-

times the observer has his own agenda for colluding with the impostor—as, for example, in the story of the emperor's new clothes, where the admiring audience saw through the narcissism, but for reasons of their own went along with it and flattered the emperor.

The authors agree that a false self or an as-if personality is not sufficient to define the impostor; additional features are required. Deutsch and Greenacre suggest that a particular excitement, often arising from an oedipal triumph, fuels the deception. The excitement and narcissistic gratification that arise from the capacity to dupe an audience function as a defense against the infant's sense of smallness and helplessness. This helplessness is transformed into a narcissistic superiority through identification with powerful objects, and the success of the identification is supported by the encouragement of an accomplice. Both authors see this as representing an oedipal triumph in which, with the support of the mother, the father is defeated.

Another issue prominent in both accounts is the failure of the superego to create a climate in which reality can be faced. Deutsch speaks of her patient's bloated ego ideal, and both authors recognize that part of the impostor's achievement is to foster a belief that he has achieved his ego ideal. There is then no conflict between his actual self and what his ideal self might be.

Self-doubt, as Greenacre suggests, may be particularly a feature of creative artists who present a work of art for the judgment of others. Enormous internal strength may then be required in order to retain a judgment of worth, if the work is not supported by the admiration of others. The case of the artist represents a paradox since the artist's creative work—at the same time that it creates a propensity toward becoming an impostor—requires real contact with reality, which often demands honesty and strength. I will discuss this issue in the case of Leonardo da Vinci later in this paper.

Looking at these two papers more than fifty years after they were written and from a transatlantic, Kleinian perspective, I am impressed by the depth and subtlety of these experienced and sensitive clinicians. In a schematic way, I will describe our current approach to identifications, both introjective and projective identifications, and discuss how these may lead to disorders of personal identity. I will describe the importance

to Kleinian analysts of the idea of an internal world and discuss how internal objects are constantly being projected onto figures in the external world and then re-introjected, sometimes modified by the experience.

A critical issue in the genesis of an impostor arises when an individual's objects are unable to contain and understand what is projected into them, and instead are drawn into enactments of various kinds. If the patient can recognize his analyst's limitations, it helps him to think about his own. For both, it is often the relinquishment of omnipotence that is most resisted, and when it can be let go of, it must be painfully mourned.

Finally, I will outline the importance of tolerating and mourning losses. I will suggest that it is through the process of mourning that previously disowned elements of the self can be regained, so that both self and objects can be seen more objectively.

NARCISSISTIC IDENTIFICATIONS

The more one studies these classic papers, the more one is impressed with the importance of narcissism in impostors, who carry out their deceptions sometimes for material gain, it is true, but chiefly to elicit admiration and achieve aggrandizement. Narcissistic identifications at their most primitive involve a sense of *being* the object in which no separateness between self or object is experienced. This is nicely put by Freud in a posthumously discovered snippet, "Having and Being in Children" (1938):

> Children like expressing an object relation by an identification: "I am the object." "Having" is the later of the two; after the loss of the object it relapses into "being." Example: the breast. "The breast is a part of me, I am the breast." Only later "I have it," that is, "I am not it." [p. 299]

Greenacre understood this and described how "the intense maternal attachment to which the future impostor is subject, as if he were a part of the mother, undermines his sense of a separate self and the development of his own identity" (1958a, p. 1034). Later, Rosenfeld (1971) observed how a narcissistic identification defends against any experience of sep-

arateness and difference between self and object. It is the experience of separateness that allows the object to be observed as a whole, enabling both good and bad elements to be recognized. Bad elements lead to frustration and good ones provoke envy, so that obliterating separateness is an efficient way of avoiding both.

Freud (1917) noted that the loss of the object is denied through the creation of an identification. The patient complains that he is ill, worthless, guilty, etc., and Freud recognized that these descriptions apply to the lost object. In the melancholic state, the patient has incorporated a damaged, dying, or dead object and has identified with it. Klein (1935, 1940), in her papers on depression, stated that alongside this depressed, persecuting object, represented by the maternal breast, an idealized object is also internalized. This may enable a manic, omnipotent phantasy to arise, involving the possession of an ideal object and leading to a blissful state, such as that in the Garden of Eden. In a similar way, the father and his penis are internalized in both persecutory and idealized aspects. Deutsch and Greenacre describe the impostor's frequent identification with a father who is omnipotently able to elicit endless admiration.

Alongside such introjective identifications, projective processes are simultaneously active, complicating the nature of identifications and object relations. In her papers on projective identification, Klein (1946, 1955) described how both good and bad parts of the self may be split off and attributed to objects. When combined with narcissistic identifications, this leads to a narcissistic object relationship similar to that described by Freud in his Leonardo paper. Discussing Leonardo's relationship with his pupils, Freud (1910) wrote:

> The child's love for his mother cannot continue to develop consciously any further; it succumbs to repression. The boy represses his love for his mother: he puts himself in her place, identifies himself with her, and takes his own person as a model in whose likeness he chooses the new objects of his love. In this way he has become a homosexual. What he has in fact done is to slip back to auto-erotism: for the boys whom he now loves as he grows up are after all only substitutive figures and revivals of himself in childhood—boys whom he loves in the way in which

his mother loved him when he was a child. He finds the objects
of his love along the path of narcissism. [p. 100]

Here an infantile part of the self is disowned, projected, and identi-
fied with the pupil, while the self is narcissistically identified with the
mother. One could say that Leonardo adopts a false personality and in
the process disowns infantile elements in himself. In this sense, he is an
impostor claiming to offer maternal care while failing to acknowledge
his own longing for precisely such care.

In fact, Freud (1910) observed that the pupil containing the pro-
jected self may become a sexual object:

It has always been emphasized that [Leonardo] . . . took only
strikingly handsome boys and youths as pupils. He treated them
with kindness and consideration, looked after them, and when
they were ill nursed them himself, just as a mother nurses her
children and just as his own mother might have tended him. As
he had chosen them for their beauty and not for their talent,
none of them . . . became a painter of importance. [p. 102]

It is interesting that a completely different self emerged in Leon-
ardo's artistic and scientific work, in which his capacity to observe reality
was supremely present. In his art, Leonardo seemed to find a creative
identity, but when he tried to look after his apprentice's clothes, he
falsely represented himself as an ideal mother.

It seems that we can all be both true and false in different situations
as our needs come to be expressed or fail to be expressed. If analysis
helps us to know ourselves, then it often confronts us with the unhappy
realization that we are to varying degrees impostors, becoming caught
up in projective identifications that defend us against reality.

When projection is used excessively, important elements of the self
are lost. This may lead to a weakening of the ego, and sometimes the
patient will describe an emptiness and an inability to know what he be-
lieves. He may also be led to fill the internal vacuum left through exces-
sive projections by internalizing and identifying with powerful objects,
both good and bad. The resulting identity may serve some of the pur-
poses of successful living, but is often felt to be fraudulent—sometimes
by the patient and often by others.

To make the total situation even more complex, we must recognize that, in addition to being the active agent deploying identifications for defensive and aggressive purposes, the patient is also the passive recipient of projections from the objects with whom he is in a relationship (Williams 1997). It is almost inevitable in our profession that we project disabled infantile sides of ourselves into our patients and narcissistically identify with omnipotent objects in an attempt to cure ourselves.

THE INTERNAL WORLD

It is through these complex introjections and projections that an internal world is built up that contains the self and objects in various states and in various types of relationships with each other. These internal objects are distorted through having elements of the self projected into them, and the self is to various degrees depleted by projection and augmented by narcissistic identifications.

We still understand very little of how a sense of personal identity develops. But the idea of a true self uncontaminated by identifications is a schematic model, and in practice it is a fiction that can never be attained. All we can do is recognize some of the processes involved, and when we move away from distorting identifications, we become a bit more ourselves and pretend less to be someone else. Nevertheless, it is important to try to understand how such identifications may be recognized and reversed.

It is implicit in this discussion that a true self can be postulated to exist but is tricky to define, since it tends to involve abstract and idealized concepts, such as being true to oneself, honest, and genuine—all of which are rather difficult to measure and easily lend themselves to invidious comparisons. It is perhaps easier to consider the dishonesty and falseness of the impostor as a condition that we all find ourselves slipping into, and to ask how such a propensity can be understood. An advantage of thinking in these more negative definitions is that we can consider that we move toward a truer identity as we relinquish identifications. This in turn can be linked to the idea that the aim of psychoanalysis can involve helping the patient recover parts of himself formerly lost through projective identification (Steiner 1996).

Schematically, we can consider movements toward a true self and away from an impostor to involve the rediscovery of a self no longer distorted by projective and introjective identifications. Parts of the self attributed to objects have to be regained and recognized as belonging to the self, and narcissistically possessed objects have to be relinquished and recognized as belonging outside the self. Although always incomplete, movements toward this kind of recovery of the self can be observed clinically and are closely related to the process of mourning.

The problem is how to understand what might enable a patient to relinquish a narcissistic relationship and to replace it with a dependent one involving a separation between self and objects. While much remains poorly understood, this process has common elements with those observed in mourning following a bereavement, which have been extensively studied since Freud's (1917) original exploration of them. Freud notes that, following a bereavement, the subject's first reaction is to deny the loss through an intensification of identification with the object. If the patient can proceed no further, mourning has failed, and the object remains concretely incorporated and identified with. The critical issue that determines whether the patient can proceed to the second stage of mourning is his capacity to face the reality of the loss. In this second stage, according to Freud, "reality-testing has shown that the loved object no longer exists, and it proceeds to demand that all libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to that object" (1917, p. 244). He continues:

> Each single one of the memories and situations of expectancy which demonstrate the libido's attachment to the lost object is met by the verdict of reality that the object no longer exists; and the ego, confronted as it were with the question whether it shall share this fate is persuaded by the sum of the narcissistic satisfactions it derives from being alive to sever its attachment to the object that has been abolished. [p. 245]

Today, as we recognize the central role of projective identification in the creation of pathological object relations, we can restate Freud's formulation in terms of detachments of parts of the self from the object, rather than in terms of detachment of libido. It then becomes clear that, as reality is applied to each of the memories of the lost object, what has

to be faced is the painful recognition of what belongs to the object and what belongs to the self. It is through the detailed work of mourning that these differentiations are made. In the process, the lost object is seen more realistically, and the previously disowned parts of the self are gradually acknowledged as belonging to the self.

Some of these lost parts of the self are valuable and have been disowned for complex reasons—for example, out of fear of being envied. Others, such as aggression or rebelliousness, may have been seen as undesirable, but when regained are felt to strengthen the self. In any event, an enormous gain derives from a sense of wholeness and integration. If separateness between self and object can be achieved, it has immense consequences and enables further development toward individual growth and responsibility and a sense of identity. Indeed, all aspects of mental life are affected, including thinking and symbol formation (Bion 1962; Segal 1957).

Moreover, what applies to the mourning connected with an actual bereavement is in its essentials also true for all experiences of separateness, which at a primitive level is felt as a loss. In analysis, it is often actual separations—such as those occurring over weekends and holidays—that enable these processes to be studied, but the same reactions occur whenever the analyst is experienced as independent and separate, forcing the patient to face the reality of relinquishing possessive control over him. If this can be achieved, a quantum of mourning can take place and a quantum of self is returned to the ego. If the ego is strengthened, a benign cycle can then be established and a more flexible and reversible form of projective identification deployed.

Problems of identity are central to the impostor. Deutsch's patient, after a good deal of analytic work, was able to articulate his failure to find an identity by asking his analyst, "Who am I? Can *you* tell me that?" (1955, p. 1017, italics in original). He seems to have realized his failure to internalize a self with a clear identity. In the course of his childhood, he appears to have held onto objects through identification with them, and he could not tolerate losses or mourn them. It is also possible that his objects were unable to function as adequate containers for his anxieties, and in their attempt to relieve him, they colluded to encourage his omnipotence.

These two papers raise such fundamental questions, especially about identity and identification, that their richness remains fresh today and allows us to productively explore these areas anew.

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BOOK REVIEWS

A DISTURBANCE IN THE FIELD: ESSAYS IN TRANSFERENCE-COUN-
  TERTRANSFERENCE ENGAGEMENT. By Steven H. Cooper. New
  York: Routledge, 2010. 237 pp.

Steven Cooper's new book is a contribution to the growing body of lit-
erature attempting to integrate classical theories of the psychoanalytic
process and situation with the once-subversive insights of the relational
school. Like many contemporary American analysts who are neither
wedded to a one-person view of the psychoanalytic situation nor per-
suaded that a purely interpersonal approach can substitute for an ap-
preciation of conflict, defense, and internal object relations, Cooper
writes here in a very personal register about his own struggles to find
technical and conceptual approaches both flexible and rigorous enough
with which to do effective treatment.

   The author notes that relational theory, having arisen primarily as a
critique, and whose guiding principles explicitly include "the dialogical
nature of psychic meaning and . . . an ethic of disciplined experimenta-
tion" (p. 14), has not provided a systematic theory of technique, some-
thing that frustrates learners. Although explicitly eschewing the goal of
creating a model, Cooper seeks to provide an overview of his own efforts
at integration in a collection of papers that will be of particular interest
to those clinicians who, like Cooper himself, find the current language
of psychoanalysis to be "still primitive and undeveloped" (p. 2), and are
looking for new ways to describe and think about what analysis is.

   While Cooper ties together this collection of papers—many of which
have been previously published or presented—with the theme of "tran-
sitions in clinical work" (p. 1), I think it would be more accurate to
characterize the book as an exploration of what is evidently an abiding
interest: the nature and uses of the analyst's experience of his work. This
exploration leads repeatedly to Cooper's main point: that the psychoana-
lytic goal of helping the patient to integrate more of himself is a project

of the imagination, best accomplished by an analyst whose imagination encompasses a wide variety of ways of understanding. Cooper pursues this interest by way of clinically rich explorations of, among other topics, the analyst's relationship to theory, the analyst's experience of being an object of transference, the analyst's use of his own internal experience in the moment with the patient, and the analyst's fantasies about the way the treatment will unfold.

The author writes as an experienced clinician and teacher, using reflections on extended case vignettes to illustrate how he thinks and works. He explicitly disengages himself from debates over the distinction between psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, providing his own—possibly controversial—definition of psychoanalytic process solely in terms of the analyst's intentions (to elicit and develop the patient's curiosity about the unconscious elements of his mind).

He begins by explaining that he sees analytic work as a "field" with "two frontiers" (p. 2), one intrapsychic and one interpersonal, and that he finds it essential for the analyst to be equally interested in both, because of their constant and inevitable entwinement. To understand the intrapsychic dimensions, he finds the ideas of the contemporary Kleinians most congenial, while relational theory orients his approach to the interpersonal side.

Cooper emphasizes several major ideas. One is his belief that every analyst has a particular relationship to theory per se. He argues that such relationships tend to fall along a spectrum limited by points that he calls *romantic* and *melancholic,* depending on how much the relationship emphasizes a sense of the helpfulness and organizing aspect of the analyst's preferred theory (romantic) or how much it emphasizes a sense of the limited nature of every theory. He notes that each of these positions can take a degraded form, becoming idealizing and rigid, on the one hand, or cynical and nihilistic on the other. Within this model, Cooper identifies his own position as "decidedly melancholic" (p. 7).

From this melancholic position, the author advocates the clinical use of what he calls the *pluralistic third.* This term refers to the analyst's commitment to regularly and rigorously examine and critique his formulations and interventions from the perspective of a theoretical model other than the one he is primarily working within at any given moment.

This idea, as well as the use of the concept of the *field,* bears a resemblance to the Barangers' notion of the *second look,* although Cooper does not himself make this connection. He argues that every school of psychoanalytic thought has clinical uses as well as risks, and advocates for pluralism as a way to correct for the inevitable distortions and blind spots of each approach.

Over several chapters, Cooper examines and extends Ogden's explorations of the analyst's reverie, arguing for the importance of "post-reverie" thought (p. 42). He advocates for a commitment (he views this as not only a technical but also an ethical commitment) to thinking critically and reflectively about how we are understanding things, and about how we are using our understanding. While these points in the abstract have been made before, Cooper makes good use of detailed case vignettes to illustrate the gradual shifts in understanding that occur as the analyst's attention is drawn first in one direction and then in another. In one instance, he speaks and then reflects on his intervention; in another instance, he considers and anticipates possible consequences of intervening and then reflects on the meaning of his anticipatory fantasy.

Finding a way to get some (necessarily limited) measure of reflective distance from taken-for-granted theoretical positions is one of Cooper's main objectives. In one chapter, he examines the analyst's experience of being a transference object. That is, he hopes to reflect not on the analyst's experience of particular types of transferences, but on what it feels like to be, by virtue of one's profession, the designated object of projection and fantasy-driven attribution, all day long. He wonders whether in their commitment to exploring transference, analysts defensively detach themselves from their negative reactions to being "misknown." He makes the interesting point that beginning analysts who are less habituated to being in this position may have more insight into negative reactions.

I find this chapter less successful than some, in part because, in his zeal to look at things from multiple points of view, the author seems to lack a theoretical fulcrum on which to balance his formulation. He seems to be arguing on the one hand that each participant's experience is inextricably embedded in the analytic field, and yet also that a general feeling can be abstracted from it. A chapter on "good enough vulnerability, victimization, and responsibility" (pp. 129ff.) suffers from a similar

inconsistency in theoretical clarity. For example, the term *victimization* is used variously to describe the analyst's feeling of being acted on, the patient's position in relation to the analyst's authority, and the experience of a sadomasochistic enactment.

Theoretical looseness may be an almost inevitable quality of an approach that privileges a roving theoretical viewpoint, and Cooper shows himself here to be more of a collector of ideas than a synthesizer. Throughout the book, he is generous in crediting his many psychoanalytic forebears with ideas that he finds useful and that he has incorporated into his working model. He is especially fond of the work of Caper, Ogden, and Benjamin. At the same time, deeming a number of time-tested theoretical terms "woefully inadequate" (p. 125) for describing the two-frontier field, he displays a marked penchant for coining new terms and phrases, some helpful and creative, but others—in my view—unnecessary and distracting.

Because the book is a compilation of related papers rather than a new work of synthesis, there is a pronounced repetitiveness. Favorite quotations reappear frequently; the same terms and phrases seem to be coined several times over; and even jarring editorial lapses (such as the use of "proscribe" to mean its opposite) recur. But despite such imperfections in the book's form and style, this window on the thinking of an experienced and dedicated analyst will be stimulating and useful for readers at all levels of experience.

WENDY KATZ (NEW YORK)

THE EXPERIENCE OF TIME: PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVES. Edited by Leticia Glocer Fiorini and Jorge Canestri. London: Karnac, 2009. 200 pp.

This book was conceived as part of the "Controversies in Psychoanalysis" series, under the aegis of the Publications Committee of the International Psychoanalytical Association. The aim of this series is to bring together psychoanalysts from diverse geographical backgrounds, and especially from different theoretical perspectives, to present their ideas about a psychoanalytic topic, so that readers can compare the various perspectives and learn from them.

The Experience of Time is composed of ten chapters by analysts affiliated with psychoanalytic institutes and societies in Brazil, Argentina, Italy, France, Canada, the United States, and England. A brief mention of some of the chapter titles will give the reader a sense of this: the topics include "A Problem with Freud's Idea of the Timelessness of the Unconscious," "Unconscious Memory from a Twin Perspective: Subjective Time and the Mental Sphere," "The Impact of the Time Experience on the Psychoanalysis of Children and Adolescents," "The First Narrative, or in Search of the Dead Father," and "Hindu Concepts of Time"—to name but a few. Each chapter addresses a different aspect of the experience of time (some beautifully and usefully, others less so), *and herein lies the problem with this book.*

The chance to have a meaningful dialogue about differing analytic viewpoints regarding any particular topic increases greatly if we can clearly define *what* we wish to discuss and *which* aspect of that particular topic we want to hear different viewpoints about. Accordingly, it would have been very useful for readers of this book to hear what André Green or Charles Hanly or Michael Parsons or any of the other contributors might have to say about *one* particular aspect of the experience of time— *the same aspect to be addressed by all the contributors.*

Only then would the reader be in a position to usefully compare the different viewpoints and learn from them, since all the contributors would be addressing one and the same aspect of the experience of time, each from the vantage point of his or her preferred theoretical framework. Without this protocol in place, we end up paying lip service to the idea of pluralism. It is true that, when each analyst writes about a different aspect of the experience of time, we can certainly find it all quite interesting; but we are in no position to really know how each of the analysts thinks about and technically deals with *one and the same issue* regarding matters of time in clinical work, and thus we lose the very opportunity this book wishes to offer us.

There is an old joke about an aspiring Indian actress who went to a famous director and said, "Sahib, I hope you will cast me in your upcoming movie: see, my eyes resemble Rekha's [a beautiful and famous heroine of Indian movies]." The director took a long hard look at the would-be movie star, who unfortunately had a squint, and responded,

"Madam, what are you talking about? Your eyes don't even resemble *each other!*"

This same built-in problem is evident in efforts to compare and contrast divergent clinical viewpoints when the topic under discussion is extremely broad (for example, "the experience of time"), rather than more sharply and narrowly defined. That is, such efforts become a triumph of intellectual hope over the constraints of intellectual reality. Boesky (2008) refers to a similar problem encountered when we attempt to compare how analysts from different schools of psychoanalytic thought understand a particular piece of clinical material; indeed, we have yet to clearly understand how analysts belonging to the *same* school of analytic thought develop their hypotheses about the *same* piece of clinical material. Boesky writes, "We have erred in starting our studies of comparative psychoanalysis from the top down instead of from the bottom up on the ladder of levels of abstraction."[1]

Nevertheless, I would like to highlight some of the very useful ideas presented in a number of chapters in *The Experience of Time.* My intent in doing so is not to compare divergent viewpoints; given what I have stated above, I do not find myself in a position to do so. I will instead focus selectively on certain important theoretical and technical considerations presented by some of the contributors.

Charles Hanly's excellent chapter addresses Freud's notion of the timelessness of the unconscious. Hanly's argument is that Freud's notion of the timelessness of the unconscious is inconsistent with the fact that events that occurred in the past and were repressed at one time are subject to change through psychoanalysis. "What cannot be changed by time, what has not been changed by life, still can be changed by psychoanalysis, as Freud recognized" (p. 31), he notes. Hanly suggests that Freud used the words *timeless* and *immortal* "poetically, in order to express a narcissistic wish or a stoical irony" (p. 29). He believes that what Freud might have meant by these terms is that early experiences, such as the birth of a sibling when a child is very young, remain in the unconscious, and the memories and fantasies connected to these experiences are not

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[1] Boesky, D. (2008). *Psychoanalytic Disagreements in Context.* Lanham, MD/Plymouth, UK: Jason Aronson, p. 8.

extinguished. Rather, they are expressed in the patient's dreams, slips, symptoms, character styles, and disturbances in object relationships.

Memories and fantasies repressed in the unconscious remain unchanged, as though frozen in time, and the mere passage of time does not heal conflicts caused by these early experiences, nor does it change the fantasies and feelings attached to them. However, a certain type of "good fortune in life" (p. 31), Hanly writes, or an analytic treatment, often can and does bring about a change in these unconsciously held beliefs. Hanly suggests that Freud's idea of the timelessness of the unconscious should therefore be reconsidered, since

> Unconscious contents originate with developmental or object relational calamities . . . . They have a beginning; they will have a variable history according to their influence in the life of the individual . . . and they will end with death. In themselves, unconscious processes are no less temporal than conscious psychic processes . . . . They are not at all immune to change. [pp. 30-31]

In a lovely chapter titled "Why Did Orpheus Look Back?," Michael Parsons builds upon the work of Winnicott, Balint, Bion, and Ogden. He proposes that "to be fully and creatively alive means living at a point of intersection between time and timelessness" (p. 37). He goes on to say:

> Temporal existence allows one to have faith that at least some aspects of one's life are predictable and potentially manageable. In conditions of timelessness, this disappears. There is no before or after. One event cannot be the consequence of another, or have any influence on another. What happens is unpredictable and outside any kind of control. [p. 38]

As an example of this idea, Parsons shares with us a case presented by an analytic candidate in a seminar he was teaching. The patient had a history of traumatic abandonment by both parents in his very early years, followed by his being looked after in an erratic way by grandparents and neighbors, later returning to one of his parents, from whom he escaped to go to the other parent. The patient's life was characterized by chaos and disruption. Forty-five minutes into the presentation, one of the members of the seminar asked the presenter the age of the patient.

Parsons recognizes the striking fact that very basic information such as the patient's age was initially ignored by the presenter, and the entire group was discussing the patient without knowing his age. Parsons and the group realized that the absence of temporal structure in the patient's experience was expressing itself in the candidate's presentation and in the listening group, so that "we were unconsciously caught up in it as well" (p. 41).

The presenter then revealed that the patient was in his late thirties, and the group was again surprised because they had all been thinking that he must have been in his twenties. They now began to ask questions regarding the chronology of events in this man's life, over-focusing on an attempt to arrange his life history temporally. Parsons notes that they had all "fallen out of time and were trying to scramble back into it" (p. 41). He then tried to help the group realize that they had initially been caught up in a kind of timelessness with regard to this patient's history as they first listened to the material. Having now learned his age, they were focusing too narrowly on the historical facts and the chronology of the patient's life. In doing so, they were "using the patient's history as a refuge from the disconcerting timelessness in which we had been caught. I thought we needed to savor the quality of both at the same . . . time" (p. 41).

Parsons describes his need to help the group "to dream the seminar . . . just as analysts need to dream their patients, so as to help their patients dream themselves" (p. 41). He suggests that the analyst's capacity to live at the point of intersection of time and timelessness makes it possible for him or her to help the patient develop a similar capacity, thus freeing up the way toward a greater "imaginative and creative aliveness" (p. 42) within the patient.

Another particularly noteworthy chapter in *The Experience of Time* is by Ingeborg Bornholdt, a child and adolescent psychoanalyst connected with the Porto Alegre Psychoanalytical Society. Bornholdt describes the development of the experience of time in the psychoanalysis of children and adolescents. She begins by describing the early state of fusion between the infant and mother:

Gradually, the mental representation of the object emerges. In the beginning, the object is felt as part of the subject, later on,

it is partially differentiated, and finally, the differences between the self and the object are defined. It is a journey of psychological development that reaches its highest point in a state of relationship with the total object. At this stage, there is also the consolidation of temporality as a result of the elaboration of the mourning due to the "interpenetrating mix-up." [p. 99]

The author illustrates this idea with a few case reports. One is of a six-year-old boy, Peter, who had serious narcissistic problems and was not able to initially consider his analyst as another human being. Bornholdt demonstrates that, over a period of time, developments occurred in Peter's mind that indicated he was beginning to be aware of "linear time" (p. 100)—such as when he started curling up in sessions in the fetal position and asking how long it would take to finish the session. Over time, Peter could plan to say goodbye at the end of the session by anticipating how the analyst behaved or what the analyst said as the end of the session drew closer.

At the age of eight, Peter began asking the analyst many questions about his own age, now realizing that the analyst was older than he. He became frightened by the possibility of the analyst's death as he became more aware of aspects of reality regarding time. Bornholdt observes that Peter was "functioning more and more at the level of secondary process, which is less regulated by omnipotence" (p. 102). However, she points out that the development of a sense of temporality is simultaneously progressive and regressive.

When Peter was ten, he was faced with a significant loss in his life. Feeling depressed and rather quiet one day, he started counting the number of beats of his pulse, and made a comment to the analyst about the number per minute. He then became worried that he might not have counted correctly, and he pointed to the analyst's wrist, indicating the *analyst's* pulse, saying, "Check if I got it right" (p. 106). This poignant moment, in which Peter felt that his analyst could count his heartbeat by taking her own pulse, demonstrated "an experience of symmetrification and lack of differentiation of bodies and identities . . . taking place at the same time as solid space–time differentiation was being achieved" (p. 106).

Bornholdt refers to patients with serious narcissistic difficulties and their particular style of defending against dependence. She points out

that this leads to difficulties in the patient's recognition of limits and in "building notions of temporal, sequential, and *future* order" (p. 109, italics in original). Bornholdt's experience has been that, in patients who deny their limits and helplessness, grandiose fantasies of immortality are created, such that reality and the sense of time are dealt with through omnipotent denial. Technically, in the clinical situation, such patients can be helped by the analyst's receipt of "the projection of the object from the patient's imaginary *past, present, and future.* As the archaic objects can be differentiated from the real objects, a clearer differentiation of temporality takes place in all dimensions" (p. 110, italics in original).

Elaborating on issues of narcissism and problems with the sense of time, Otto Kernberg discusses the destruction of time in pathological narcissism (in a chapter previously published as a journal article). He presents many useful theoretical and technical ideas, pointing out that:

> The invitation to free associate, with its explicit discouragement of "prepared agendas" and related moves towards action, is often misinterpreted as an invitation to passivity that narcissistic patients unconsciously translate as a projection of all responsibility on the analyst, and a defiant expectation of gratification from him . . . and his defeat. [pp. 160-161]

Kernberg goes on to say that:

> The emptying out of the narcissistic patient's life experiences during analysis, in fantasy, becomes a triumph over the analyst's capacity to influence them. Green has pointed to the function of repetition compulsion, when it is employed as a form of "murder of time," as an expression of the death drive. This certainly applies to some cases of narcissistic personalities. [p. 162]

Many of us have had the experience of working with a narcissistic patient over time, and have been deeply puzzled by the patient's seeming improvement in object relationships, while at the same time noting that, on a deeper level, shallowness and emptiness continue to color all these relationships, including the one with the analyst. Kernberg notes that such a patient is demonstrating "the unconscious use of the destruction of time as a triumph over the analyst while also expressing the fantasy of an available eternity of life" (p. 168). He reminds us that the analyst

must pay careful attention both to the description of the patient's relationships with others and to the patient's relationship with the analyst, in order to confront the external veneer of improvement used by the patient to mask an inner core in danger of remaining untouched by the analytic treatment.

In addition to the chapters discussed above, significant contributions by Green, Puget, and others will be of great interest to analysts wishing to learn more about what their colleagues around the globe are thinking and writing regarding the experience of time. If approached with this general idea in mind, this book will be worthwhile for many analytic readers. However, those wishing to seriously compare how their international colleagues think in different ways about a particular aspect of the experience of time will not find what they are looking for.

AISHA ABBASI (WEST BLOOMFIELD, MI)

SULLIVAN REVISITED—LIFE AND WORK: HARRY STACK SULLI-
VAN'S RELEVANCE FOR CONTEMPORARY PSYCHIATRY, PSY-
CHOTHERAPY, AND PSYCHOANALYSIS. By Marco Conci. Trento,
Italy: Tangram Edizioni Scientifiche, 2010. 563 pp.

Harry Stack Sullivan (1892–1949) was a formative figure in American
psychiatry in the first half of the twentieth century. A disciple of Wil-
liam Alanson White and Adolf Meyer, and a friend of Smith Ely Jelliffe
and A. A. Brill, Sullivan played a major role in the Americanization of
psychoanalysis and the evolution of humane psychodynamic treatment
of schizophrenic and other severely disturbed patients. To this day, his
influence is felt in such institutions as the White Institute in New York
and the Washington School of Psychiatry, and in the development of the
interpersonal and relational schools of psychoanalysis.

Marco Conci is an Italian psychoanalyst, working primarily in Mu-
nich but partly educated in the United States, who can, I think, be fairly
described as a Sullivanian zealot. In the past twenty-odd years, he has
published or presented (by his own account in his bibliography) twenty-
seven books or papers dealing with Sullivan and his work. The present
massive volume—published in Italian, German, and English editions—

would seem to constitute the culminating product in Conci's effort to bring to the international world of psychiatry, psychology, and psychoanalysis the full breadth and depth of Sullivan's lifetime achievement.

The task of working through the 500 pages of *Sullivan Revisited* is somewhat lightened by the fact that about a third of the text consists of lengthy footnotes, testifying to the author's impressive erudition, but elective for all but the most dedicated reader. He or she need not be put off by the innumerable typographical and grammatical errors consequent on the English edition's publication in Italy.

Conci reviews in great detail the history of Sullivan's early life (including his troubled childhood and his somewhat obscure adolescent psychiatric disorder and hospitalization), the influence of William James on his undergraduate education, that of White during the years Sullivan spent under his tutelage at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, and that of his peers and colleagues such as Edward Sapir in the social sciences at the University of Chicago. All this is summed up in Sullivan's 1938 credo:

> The primary concern of psychiatry as a science . . . is relatively narrow. Psychiatry seeks to discover and formulate the laws of human personality. It is only indirectly concerned with the study of abstractions less or more inclusive than the person. Its peculiar field is the study of interpersonal phenomena. Personality is made manifest in interpersonal situations, and not otherwise. It is in the elucidation of interpersonal relations, therefore, that psychiatry applies itself. [p. 115]

Thus, as Conci acknowledges, in Sullivan's work, "we are dealing less with a neo-Freudian point of view and more with the anticipation of a future development . . . . The definition of 'conflict' formulated by Sullivan . . . is far from Freud's so-called intrapsychic perspective" (p. 169).

The greater part of the book is devoted to an extended, richly detailed, and uniformly laudatory exegesis of each of Sullivan's published works—both those that appeared during his lifetime and those (the majority) published posthumously. Conci is aware of his own powerful identification with his subject; Sullivan was, he says, "the unsurpassed maestro" (p. 89), and the word "brilliant" appears frequently in the course of his narration. Indeed:

It is clear [Conci observes in a footnote] that the relationship (analyzable as transference) which develops in one who, such as myself, writes an "intellectual biography," is worthy of its own treatise. The process of identification with the author about whom one is writing certainly represents a fundamental requirement. [p. 18n]

Unfortunately, this identification sometimes comes at the cost of critical thinking. For instance, Conci appears to accept without reservation Sullivan's firm conviction that schizophrenia is largely attributable to parental neglect, especially to failures in maternal empathy. The "maestro" would thus seem to have been a significant contributor to the once widely held but long-ago-discredited notion of the "schizophrenogenic mother," a fact about which Conci has little to say.

Conci's explication of Sullivan's creative integration of his clinical experience and of social science concepts into his interpersonal framework is convincing, if highly repetitive. (A more concise and equally accurate account of the evolution of Sullivan's thought can be found elsewhere.[1]) He makes a persuasive claim for Sullivan's clinical skill and his sensitivity to the emotional needs of the severely ill patients with whom he chose to work.

Perhaps the most valuable segments of *Sullivan Revisited* come toward the end, where the author details Sullivan's influence on such colleagues as Frieda Fromm-Reichmann and Harold Searles, in their dedicated, if controversial, efforts to treat schizophrenic patients psychotherapeutically at Chestnut Lodge. Also of note are Conci's remarks in his final chapter about Sullivan's influence on the recent work of such interpersonal and relational theorists as Edgar Levenson, Jay Greenberg, and, especially, the late Stephen Mitchell. As Conci correctly notes, the work of these authors is increasingly becoming assimilated into mainstream psychoanalysis.

The book is marred by factual errors about some institutions in the United States that are perhaps accounted for by the author's geographical distance. The Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital in Towson, Maryland, usually known as "Sheppard Pratt," is regularly referred to, oddly,

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[1] See: Person, E., Cooper, A. & Gabbard, G., eds. (1955). *Textbook of Psychoanalysis.* Washington, DC: Amer. Psychiatric Publishing, pp. 65-66.

as "the Sheppard Hospital." Conci has Sullivan meeting Brill at "Bellevue Hospital (today the Westchester Division of Cornell Medical Center)" while "he was a patient there between 1909 and 1911" (p. 238). But Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital, an affiliate of the New York University Medical College, is not and never has been connected with Cornell; presumably, the author confuses it with the old Bloomingdale Hospital in White Plains, New York, now renamed and integrated into the Cornell system.

Conci's book is, in the end, a devout statement of attachment by a deeply committed and scholarly follower of an important but by-now-somewhat-outdated predecessor in the development of modern psychiatry and psychoanalysis. Sullivan's true legacy is the increasingly diversified character of contemporary psychoanalysis and dynamic psychiatry, and their openness to, even acceptance of, varying theoretical perspectives and alternative technical approaches to the understanding and treatment of a wide range of emotional and mental disorders.

AARON H. ESMAN (NEW YORK)

ENDURING LOSS: MOURNING, DEPRESSION, AND NARCISSISM
    THROUGH THE LIFE CYCLE. Edited by Eileen McGinley and Ar-
    turo Varchevker. London: Karnac Books, 2010. 270 pp.

The incentive for this thought-provoking volume on loss—as Arturo
Varchevker, its co-editor, explains in his introduction—is that "mourning,
depression, and narcissism constitute the basic fabric of psychoanalytic
theorizing" (p. xiii). For this purpose, he has chosen two early, influen-
tial papers by Freud, "On Narcissism: An Introduction"[1] and "Mourning
and Melancholia,"[2] for contributors to discuss using clinical illustrations.
The twelve contributors, specialists in working with different age groups,
were chosen from both Freudian and Kleinian camps.

    Is it too speculative to suggest that another motive in choosing these
particular contributors was to find common ground among them? Since
all the authors address the task with civility, respect, and generosity,
Varchevker and co-editor Eileen McGinley have succeeded in this sec-
ondary goal as well.

[1] Freud, S. (1914). On narcissism: an introduction. *S. E.,* 14.

[2] Freud, S. (1917). Mourning and melancholia. *S. E.,* 14.

Perhaps it is no coincidence that Varchevker has chosen early papers of Freud, because they are examples of a one-person theory of the mind. Here both early Freud and Klein are considered to have shared common ground. Freud's one-person psychology was basically a theory of energy flow, bi-directionally, of the two drives that he designated as motivators of human behavior. "On Narcissism" addresses libido by postulating a cathexis of the self in the newborn, which he termed *primary narcissism,* from which internal objects are cathected. If in this flow a quantity of energy is blocked, it returns to the self as *secondary narcissism.* An extreme example would be the eventual development of a grandiose delusion. In "Mourning and Melancholia," Freud saw the directional reversal of aggression in melancholia as an explanation for the exaggerated self-reproaches of the melancholic.

I suggest that this theory borrowed heavily from Einstein's discovery of the conversion of matter to energy and its reverse, which took the scientific community by storm at the beginning of the twentieth century. The theory of the convertibility of energy to matter found a psychoanalytic parallel in the conversion of energetic affect to material hysterical symptoms. It was prescient in foreshadowing the surprising connection of experience with behavioral change. This change does not follow the principles of physics, but of biology, and serves to protect the infant from abandonment by caretakers and from increasing self-stimulation and even injury, such as self-scratching, hair pulling, and rocking. Later, the child finds a multitude of self-inflicting means with which to connect with caretakers when words fail.

The energy theory has long been rejected both in European and American psychoanalysis. In the United States, Jacob Arlow and Charles Brenner demonstrated how Freud gradually shifted away from an emphasis on drives to the ego and its defenses.[3] In England, Joseph Sandler developed an empathic theory of safety and role responsiveness while discarding the distinction between primary and secondary narcissism.[4] The concept of *regression,* which is also derived from a one-person psy-

[3] Arlow, J. A. & Brenner, C. (1984). *Psychoanalytic Concepts and the Structural Theory.* New York: Int. Univ. Press.

[4] See, for example: Cooper, A. M., Fonagy, P. & Wallerstein, R. S., eds. (1999). *Psychoanalysis on the Move: The Work of Joseph Sandler.* London: Routledge.

chology, has recently been challenged. And, in discussing psychoanalytic innovations since Freud, one cannot omit Donald Winnicott's two-person concepts, such as the *good enough mother,* the *holding environment,* the *transitional object,* and the *false self*.[5]

Sándor Rado, displaced from Europe, denounced the energy theory as belonging in the room with poetry.[6] Freud, always ambivalent about his metapsychology, might have agreed with Rado; Freud is reputed to have said, "Everywhere I go I find that a poet has been there before me."[7] At about the time of the writing of these two papers, he tried out—in Lecture XXV, called "Anxiety"[8]—his energy concepts on this subject, but ended with the conviction that observation alone adequately demonstrates that the cause of anxiety is separation from the mother. The majority of the contributors to *Enduring Loss* support this evolving side of Freud.

In the first chapter of this book, Anne Alvarez points out that Freud himself, in "Mourning and Melancholia," wrote that a theory based on libidinal economics cannot explain the extraordinary pain of melancholia. Today, nearly one hundred years later, we have the findings of precise neurobiological observation in mammals on how separation causes pain. This research demonstrates how experience changes the epigenetics that control the genes' capacity to turn a stress response on and off. Once that capacity is interfered with, it will not shut down spontaneously.

It has been shown that even a modest separation in rat pups from their mothers, such as three hours daily for ten days, knocks out a protein (MeCP2), without which the epigene goes unmethylated.[9] When unmethylated, the epigene cannot turn off its argenine vasopressin gene, and the rat stays in stress mode for life. Information this specific was not available at the time of compiling *Enduring Loss,* yet almost all

[5] See, for example: Winnicott, D. W. (1965). *The Maturational Processes and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development.* London: Hogarth/Inst. of Psychoanalysis.

[6] I recall Rado having made this remark in a lecture that I attended at Manhattan State Hospital in 1959.

[7] See the following website: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal:Psychology/Quotes.

[8] Freud, S. (1916–1917). *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis. S. E.,* 15/16.

[9] Medina, J. J. (2010). The epigenetics of stress. *Psychiatric Times, 27*(4), April 7.

its contributing authors reflect on Winnicott's *holding environment;* in the childhood section of the book, these reflections include nimble, running commentaries on patients' reactions to loss or separation in the consulting room.

Clinically, the holding environment, with its emphasis on a two-person psychology, incorporates the representation of a new object, the therapist, who becomes available for internalization. The cause of self-hatred is not only retroflexed aggression, but also the absence of ongoing recognition and appreciation of the child, and appropriate ministering and protection, which when present are internalized, contributing to a positive self-concept. Practically, deprivation can be equated with loss, which leaves a subjective sense of emptiness or is replaced by negative internalization. The melancholic believes that "no one can love me because I cannot love; instead I hate, I am envious and jealous"—a belief that carries suicidal potential. Clinically, a focus on aggression and narcissism leads to interpretations that can potentially further the negative self-concept.

In a chapter entitled "The Lost Child: Who Is the Face in the Mirror?," Maria Rose touchingly describes her work with a young girl whose experience with loss was so great that she herself is lost and has to find herself in mirror play. Only in being seen by her analyst and through the analyst's astute commentary can the child find herself.

More often, young patients have difficulty giving up parental attachments, and they may have incorporated identifications with the aggressor in order to fill the vacuum of the absence of love. This is the subject of Caroline Polmear's chapter, "Dying to Live: Mourning, Melancholia, and the Adolescent Process." She well describes the difficulties in treating such adolescents because of parental encouragement toward destructive identifications. In another chapter, Denis Flynn and Helga Skostad conclude that the degree of tolerance for separateness determines the adolescent's capacity to give up destructive identifications.

Eileen McGinley presents a case illustration of the problem of narcissistic features. Here I find McGinley's view of the patient as narcissistic to be not optimal; when narcissism is seen as the problem, it positions the therapist to oppose the patient. Simply opposing the patient repeats the rejection by early caretakers. Conversely, when loss is seen as the

problem, it positions the analyst to "hold" the patient in the Winnicottian sense.

The mother of the patient described by McGinley told the patient that she had wanted to abort her pregnancy with her—a common phenomenon reported by depressed patients. Later, the mother made a suicide attempt, which the patient experienced as another attempt at riddance, from which she derived a feeling of being excrement-like, someone whom nobody wanted. She had adopted a *false self,* Winnicott's term that assumes the presence of a narcissistic injury connected with a hostile superego, leading to a damaged self-concept.

The false self represents the internalization of a deluded idea and is opposed by the patient—invariably, not with a realistic self-concept but with a defensive one that departs from reality and approaches exaggerated entitlement or destructiveness. It carries with it over- and under-valuations of self and others, and is manifested in McGinley's case as an idealizing transference. Further, the analyst is experienced not "as if" she were the patient's mother, but—because of the extent of the patient's loss—as her *actual,* idealized mother.

For this reason, such maternally deprived patients may be injured by so-called transference interpretations, those that draw parallels between current and past experience. These patients are not interested in their actual mothers. The *real* mother is now the analyst, and they want to know if she loves them here and now, not only by her words but by her actions.

At this point in the treatment, McGinley seems not to have recognized how deprived her patient was of positive internalizations, and seems surprised by the responses to her two significant announcements: namely, that she is going away on vacation, and that she will raise her fees once she returns. She is surprised that the patient does not return to treatment, and then, after phone calls, does so only sporadically. The patient has no memory of being told of the fee increase, which itself demonstrates how intolerable it was for her to be expected to pay more. McGinley courageously examines her countertransference, seeking a way out of the impasse, but I suspect that the therapist's theory of narcissism was the culprit in the derailment of this treatment. Relinquishing it would have allowed McGinley to apologize and rescind the fee increase.

Interestingly, Stefano Bolognini, in the chapter following McGinley's, pays more homage to Freud's early theory than does McGinley, who correctly wrote that Freud moved away from those early theories. Bolognini, on the other hand, is the only commentator who describes the theory of primary and secondary narcissism as indisputable, but it seems he does this more to ignore it than to praise it.

Bolognini, who has published many papers and a book on empathy, shows himself to be true to this concept.[10] He reports that he waited three years to question an entitled patient about his entitlement. The patient confirms the theory of defensive identification with the aggressor by responding with the explanation that his mother acted in this way, and that he liked it because it allowed him to stay connected with her, while seeing her and himself as strong rather than childlike. (In addition, it is likely that she responded approvingly to him as long as he did this only to others and not to her.)

I am reminded of Pablo Picasso, whose mother sent him away to boarding school when he was very little. He shadowed the mistresses of the school until they sent him back home. Despite his mother's initial rejection of him, she also told him that, if he were to become a soldier, he would be a general, and if a priest, the Pope. His resultant sense of entitlement showed itself in different ways; for instance, he is reputed to have said, "If there is something to steal, I steal it!"[11]

Most readers are familiar with Freud's early- and middle-period dictums of how psychoanalysis functions clinically to achieve certain goals. The first was to "make the unconscious accessible to consciousness."[12] The second was "where id was, there ego shall be."[13] Less familiar is Freud's later emphasis on the superego; the clinical task became to finally demolish the hostile superego.

That Freud did not intend to leave a vacuum in the hostile superego's place was clearly indicated by the report of his last living patient, Margarethe Walter, who was interviewed at age eighty-eight as part of

[10] See, for example: Bolognini, S. (2004). *Psychoanalytic Empathy,* trans. M. Garfield. London: Free Association Books.

[11] See the following website: http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Talk:Pablo_Picasso.

[12] Freud, S. (1916–1917). *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis. S. E.,* 15/16, p. 435.

[13] Freud, S. (1933). *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis. S. E.,* 22, p. 80.

the events arranged to mark the 150th anniversary of Freud's birth. Correspondent Peter Roos's detailed story based on the interview was published in the *Berlin Times* on April 29, 2006, and was subsequently abstracted and circulated in newspapers around the world.[14] The interview took place in the very office (now the Freud Museum in Vienna) where, at age eighteen, Ms. Walter had been brought by her father to see Freud for a single session.

Ms. Walter's father insisted on replying to all Freud's questions himself, until finally Freud asked him to wait in an adjoining room. Returning to his chair, Freud listened intensely and encouragingly as she told how her controlling father, in collaboration with her stepmother, was choking the life out of her by keeping her isolated and making every life decision for her. To illustrate her father's overbearing nature, Ms. Walter said that he would take her to the movies, but when the kissing began, he would get up and make her leave with him.

Freud told her that, as an adult, she had to stand up for what was right for her needs and wishes, saying, "I tell you explicitly, when he tells you to go [from the movie theater], stay seated." Knowing that this disobedience could lead the dictator to abandon and punish her, thus furthering her deep sense of aloneness, he actively offered himself as an object for internalization, saying, "Think of me!" Profoundly affected by their single session, Ms. Walter ended her 2006 interview by saying simply that Freud "saved my life."

Like Freud, the contributors to *Enduring Loss* write poetically and use poetry to make their points, so that, although the book starts with theory, it always ends with feelings. This is evidence that Arturo Varchevker was successful in his primary goal for the book: to reexamine the role of Freudian theory in the treatment of pain caused by enduring loss. Moreover, the contributing authors give of themselves to mitigate the loss that Varchevker is concerned with. He and his co-editor, Eileen McGinley, have succeeded in their aim of laying out a contemporary theory, one

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[14] For the original German text of this article, see the following website: http://www.zeit.de/2006/18/Freuds_Patientin. For an English-language summary published in *The Sydney Morning Herald,* see: http://www.smh.com.au/news/world/last-link-to-freud-reveals-how-he-saved-her/2006/05/02/1146335735390.html.

that stresses internalization of the helper and that permits the beginning of healing.

ERIC LAGER (PHILADELPHIA, PA)

THE GENDERED UNCONSCIOUS: CAN GENDER DISCOURSES SUB-VERT PSYCHOANALYSIS? By Louise Gyler. London: Routledge, 2010. 171 pp.

Psychoanalysis, with its potential to analyze how subjectivity is constructed, is hampered by ideas about gender that are deeply embedded in theory and practice. This book considers the binary basis of Western thought that underlies gender opposition in which the feminine is discounted. Its author, Louise Gyler, suggests that contemporary Kleinian psychoanalysis offers a more radical conception of the psychoanalytic clinical encounter than contemporary psychoanalytic feminism, and recommends the former as the more fruitful path toward promoting an understanding of gender bias and increasing our ability to hear our patients.

Freudian psychoanalysis has a masculine bias. For years now, many of us, myself included, have been finding ways to include the feminine in psychoanalytic understanding. This book furthers that effort. It takes an interesting twist in finding that Kleinian ideas offer a better way forward than contemporary feminist thinking. I applaud the author's effort, although I believe her objective could have been accomplished in a more concise, clear-cut manner.

Gyler has given us an erudite, detailed, historical compendium of psychoanalytic thought that encompasses Freud, Klein, and contemporary feminist psychoanalysts. She compares theory and practice and the interaction between them. This is quite an undertaking, and although extensive and interesting, it may be more than most readers anticipate. Clinical examples do lighten the effort. Greater succinctness would have demanded a greater economy and clarity of thought, and would have had a greater impact on a North American audience and made a stronger case for this interesting, provocative read of a possible trajectory in psychoanalysis. Klein trumping contemporary feminist psychoanalytic theory and practice in furthering the effort to open up our under-

standing of our women patients and of the gendered mind . . . ? Quite a turn of events—who would have thought!

Gender bias is inevitable and inevitably constrains what we are able to perceive and know. It is this that has complicated our efforts in coming to terms with the phallocentric bias of classical Freudian psychoanalysis. Embedded in every psychoanalytic theory is a gendered set of power relations shaping our ability to observe, listen, think, and talk. Gendered minds and psychoanalytic developmental theory are conflated, so that what is considered normative becomes part of theory, which in turn reinforces cultural expectations and gendered power relations, and limits possibility.

Theory and practice mutually influence each other. Traditionally, the masculine attributes of differentiation and autonomy have been emphasized and valued. The feminine attributes of sameness and connection need to be reconsidered. Neither nature nor nurture fully explains gender difference, and the sociocultural environs play an important role. Gyler wants to increase our awareness and suggest a road forward, with the hope that this will lead to a representational space for a sense of agency, autonomy, authority, and connectedness, as well as dependency and receptivity.

The book opens by introducing debates over the nature of femininity. Female identity and sexuality have been troublesome for psychoanalysis from the beginning because of the discipline's strong emphasis on dualities: the either-or of culture or nature, mind or body, male or female, subject or object, rational or emotional—with one of each pair privileged while the other is devalued. For Freud, masculine gender bias is basic and inherent. Gyler characterizes Kleinian psychoanalysis as encompassing the same theoretical biases, but differentiates it in its clinical use as a tool rather than as an unmodifiable theory.

A review of the psychoanalytic theories of Freud and Klein and of the emergence and development of feminist theory follows. Essentialist, constructivist, and embodiment positions are explicated. Academics in various disciplines have claimed gender to be fluid, multiple, and ambiguous—not fixed, not normatively binary and heterosexual. Psychoanalysis has been called into play as the need has arisen to ground theory in clinical experience. The feminist psychoanalytic union was born. The

classical Freudian position was questioned by feminists and Kleinians alike. Meanwhile, biases of psychoanalytic theory and practice began to be recapitulated in revisions and reconstructions.

Relationship became the greater concern for both Kleinian and contemporary feminist psychoanalysts. Klein, promoting the preoedipal and a darker view of human nature, diverged from Freudian analysis in her focus on the relationship of the infant to the mother's body as a source of gratification and frustration. Sexual development was reconceptualized, with an interest in love-hate feelings in the early experience with the mother's body, including both active and passive urgings. Aggression, not split off in the mind of the girl—or in the theory—created a space for female agency. A conceptual framework was established that was subjective as well as objective, thereby opening up space for observation, listening, and thinking. It is the subjective emphasis in Kleinian thinking that Gyler underlines.

Clinically, words were attached to the bodily and sensory experiences of the infant and small child, giving meaning to the child's subjective experience. Some of these ideas ultimately complicated Klein's normative agenda of biological determinism and heterosexism. However, in line with the point of this book, it is in the context of subjectivity that sexuality and gender are conceptualized and function to generate meaning and value. Gyler contrasts this with what is presented as the Freudians' more narrow sexual theorizing and focus on verbalization; but here, it seems to me, we are seeing an outdated side of Freudian psychoanalysis rather than the evolved version of the present-day Freudian approach.

Kleinian analysis is then compared with contemporary feminist psychoanalytic theory and practice. Blind spots, biases, and preconceived notions are highlighted. In the representation of the feminine in the contemporary feminist psychoanalytic position, Gyler sees an implication of equality and freedom that supports a too-easy togetherness, negates the significance of the preoedipal mother, and avoids the importance of aggression. She sees the focus on aggression and destructiveness in the Kleinian model as allowing a sense of agency and aggressive expression without necessarily resorting to self-defeating strategies. Splitting, projection, and introjection, with ultimate reintegration, are contrasted with Jessica Benjamin's relational mode of expression carrying ideas of likeness and connection.

Gyler turns to Benjamin as representative of contemporary psycho-analytic feminism, and wonders about the impact of American ideals of equality and democracy on American feminist theory. Ideas of mutual recognition, identificatory love and gender overinclusiveness, the greater patient–analyst interaction, and a tendency toward idealization of em-pathic attunement ought to disrupt the gendered structure of psycho-analytic discourse; instead, Gyler notes the silencing effect of the inter-subjective approach, which neglects defensive sameness and aggression. She fears the loss of an intrapsychic focus, with this turn to mutuality and likeness leading to a nonrecognition of anger, resentment, and disap-pointment. Focus is taken away from the part object, the bad mother, the preoedipal mother, from splitting and the paranoid-schizoid position—all so important to Kleinian psychoanalysis. When anxiety and defense against difference and hatred are occluded, something vital is lost.

There are theoretical problems on the Kleinian side as well. These relate to underlying assumptions about gender difference and the privi-leging of heterosexuality, the understanding of the oedipal complex and the primal scene, and the phallus as symbol of a state of completeness. A dichotomy is established between the maternal function—the experi-ence of *being with*—and the paternal function of observing and linking. Observation and rational thinking, associated with the masculine, main-tain the male–female opposition. What is needed is a psychic balance between the two internal parents or a dialogue between two disparate elements. Both maternal and paternal functions are necessary for the development of the ability to participate in a relationship while simulta-neously observing self and other.

Present-day gender theory seeks to integrate these opposites—male–female, close–distant, fused–separate—rather than split them off or es-tablish an either-or position. In Kleinian theory, slippage occurs in the restatement of normative social and cultural ideals when clinical descrip-tions are too concretely generalized and become conceptual abstrac-tions. Klein's unique contribution is the focus on the interplay between the depressive and paranoid-schizoid positions, between splitting and in-tegration, projection and the intersubjective. Rather than the resolution of conflict, what is stressed is the flow between opposing forces, between inner and outer reality, which promotes the ego's capacity to tolerate the

painful experience of not possessing the parent and the exclusive sexual relationship between the parents. This results in triangulation. It is in this context that awareness of anatomical sexual difference arises and the oedipal complex is formed.

In summary, the author believes that the more conservative Kleinian theory, with its normative, heterosexist biases, offers greater possibilities for clinical practice than contemporary feminist psychoanalytic theory, which challenges the normative social developmental trajectory but translates disappointingly in clinical practice. However, I hear screaming objections to this premise from the contemporary feminist psychoanalytic camp!

At times, Gyler's effort seems somewhat schematic, as complexities and influences of one theoretical school on another are not given due weight. Freudian analysis has incorporated many new ideas since Freud, such as the importance of countertransference, enactments, emotional contact, the nonverbal interchange, and the preoedipal mother. Indeed, it is interesting to consider how many ideas that were once categorized as exclusively Kleinian have been incorporated into present-day Freudian theory and practice.

The Gendered Unconscious is a consideration of two possible pathways to take us forward in our quest to deal with the problem of gender dichotomy: contemporary Kleinian thinking and the relational, feminist theory of Jessica Benjamin. Benjamin's ideas are seen as reinforcing the masculine-feminine binary due to their overemphasis on connection, at the cost of the integration of oneness and separateness, objectivity and subjectivity, closeness and distance, activity and passivity. Klein's clinical practice, Gyler asserts, is a better way forward in spite of some underlying theoretical problems. Kleinian theory offers the best hope out of this conundrum as it focuses on the analytic process and not on verbal content, as Freudian theory does.

Although this would also seem to be the advantage of contemporary feminine psychoanalysis, with its relational focus, Gyler sees in the enthusiasm for this new theory an overreaching of the goal and the establishment of another binary. For her, the feminized discourse defends against the masculine side of the binary, risking the capacity for thought and observation. We need both the feminine and the masculine

discourse, and we need discourse as well as co-construction. These are thoughts well taken.

Gyler leaves us with her conclusion that it is in the integration of split-off and projected parts of the ego that a more robust subject is discovered and the possibility for an enhanced sense of agency is born. And, most important, it is Klein's account of subjectivity that offers the best tool with which to analyze how we construct knowledge and gender our experience. It is this that makes Kleinian psychoanalysis so useful to the goal of feminism, notwithstanding its heteronormative framework. The reader is left to decide whether Gyler has made a convincing case for the validity of this argument.

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INJURED MEN: TRAUMA, HEALING, AND THE MASCULINE SELF.
   By Ira Brenner. Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson, 2009. 241 pp.

This volume presents a curious amalgam of well-written pieces on a va-
riety of psychoanalytic topics. The various issues discussed are linked to
each other through the central concept of trauma. Psychoanalytic theo-
ries of the dynamics and effects of trauma—both those of the author, Ira
Brenner, and of others—are discussed extensively and illustrated with
rich clinical material. The topic of healing is less extensively addressed,
while the concept of the *masculine self* is mentioned at several points but
not discussed systematically.

      The introduction offers a clever paragraph on clichés about man-
hood (p. xii) and a clear statement of the author's intention: "I realized
that most of the volumes on trauma relied on clinical material almost
exclusively about women," so this book is "an effort to remind practitio-
ners . . . that men too can be victims or survivors of trauma and their
presentations may be obscured by a masculine overlay" (p. xiv)—an ad-
mirable project. Brenner acknowledges that this is "not intended to be
a gender studies book," and that he is not "trying to promulgate a par-
ticular theory of masculinity," noting "the chapters stand on their own as
clinical studies" (p. xiv). These statements are more true than the reader
realizes at first, since the book turns out to include fourteen case studies

of lengths varying from one to seventy pages, four of which concern people who are biologically female.

The case reports are dramatic, fascinating, and enlightening to read. The analytic work is impressive and the literary style masterful. Furthermore, interspersed with the clinical cases one finds clear and thorough reviews of the analytic literature on topics as varied as trauma theory, dissociation, Holocaust studies, therapeutic action, and even confidentiality. Like the case reports, these could stand on their own and be well worth reading.

Much of the clinical material concerns the phenomenon of dissociation, as described both in the author's work with patients and in the biographical and autobiographical accounts of public figures. Brenner clearly identifies himself with those who believe that the entity currently labeled *Dissociative Identity Disorder* (formerly known by a variety of other labels, including Multiple Personality Disorder) is a genuine clinical phenomenon rather than an iatrogenic artifact. Each case he presents of dissociation in adulthood turns out to be based on trauma in early childhood; while this interpretation is unsurprising, the clinical stories are both moving and convincing.

At times, the author stretches the boundaries of the concept of dissociation, applying it to phenomena ranging from schizophrenia to ordinary parapraxes, on the theory that these processes are "perhaps more akin to a mini-trance because the patient speaks, albeit briefly, without observing ego and awareness of his vocalization or gesturing" (p. 41), and speculating that "a lot of people, possibly all people, have multiple personae" (p. 29). Such a broad interpretation of "dissociation" implies that this mechanism lies at the root of all psychopathology, though this claim is not made explicitly.

Like the title of the book, the chapter title "September 11th and the Analytic Process" is misleading. It presents a 10-page report of an analytic patient who had no direct contact with the events of September 11th, but was upset by hearing about them. The analyst/author's interpretation that the patient's distress resulted from reactivated memories of his mother's sudden disappearance when he was a teenager appears insightful and useful, but the story has only an accidental relationship with the events of September 11th, and nothing to do with masculinity.

The case report is followed by a well-reasoned discussion, including a literature review, of the consequences of asking the patient's permission to publish confidential material in a professional setting. This insertion, while unrelated to either trauma or masculinity, is nonetheless interesting and worthy.

The chapter "Echoes of the Battlefield" includes the story of an American soldier who was shot in Vietnam, and whose subsequent symptoms of post-traumatic stress are interpreted as aggravated by an identification with his mother's victimization in the Holocaust. The soldier was not a patient but volunteered to be interviewed for the book, and Brenner presents an unabridged 69-page transcript of their interview. The need for this is unclear; given the author's writing skill, the story could have been summarized well in a few pages.

The topic of "Healing" is addressed in the final chapter, which grows out of a skillful wordplay. Using a story about a patient who gave him a crystal ball, the author spins a theory of therapeutic action, according to which the analyst functions as a "medium" in multiple senses of the word. Once again, the ideas are clever, suggestive, and well presented, but without any particular connection to the dynamics of trauma or the concept of masculinity.

In the absence of an explicit consideration of the *masculine self,* the reader looks for clues in the occasional appearances of the term. The story of a patient who became preoccupied with a pair of boots that his father had saved from the Holocaust implies that the masculine self centers on the dynamics of aggression; this impression is underscored by a passing reference to the climactic moment in the film *Back to the Future,* in which the protagonist's father fights back against a bully. Furthermore, the female patients whom the author describes as having Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) all have male alters who are viciously aggressive. So perhaps *masculine self* means *aggressive self,* but the stories of the DID patients effectively illustrate the counterargument: that overt aggression is by no means confined to the biologically male, and that the equation of "masculinity = aggression" is a caricature.

A brief discussion of specific techniques used to torture male victims, including sexual humiliation and anal rape, concludes that "intentional dissolution of the masculine self appears to be a time-honored and uni-

versal strategy among torturers" (p. 103), suggesting that the masculine self is more closely identified with genitality. But another discussion—of men who have opposed warfare and torture on the basis of identification with victimized parents—suggests instead that the masculine self centers on moral integrity. A later discussion of resilience identifies the masculine self with the refusal to surrender and the successful use of manic defenses. In the course of an effort to add a biological dimension to these speculations, Brenner notes that "testosterone . . . contributes to energy, activity, at times aggressivity . . . . However, it is not exclusive to males and in no way can be simply equated with masculinity or the masculine self" (p. 186).

Perhaps all of the above are true and relevant, and we are forced to conclude that the concept of the masculine self is too subtle and too varied to permit a clear definition. If this is the case, a straightforward statement to that effect would be welcome, along with an explanation of why such an elusive concept should be considered useful.

The reader who approaches this book hoping to learn something about the masculine self and its response to trauma may come away confused about this concept, but in the process that reader will have benefited from a series of insightful case studies, a persuasive immersion in the psychoanalytic ideas linking trauma and dissociation, and several thoughtful discussions of tangential but important issues in psychoanalytic theory and practice.

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