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Interpreting Interpretation in Psychoanalysis: Freud, Klein, and Lacan

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Interpreting Interpretation in Psychoanalysis:
Freud, Klein, and Lacan

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Introduction

What is it that the analyst *does* in psychoanalysis that makes the process work? This question has inspired numerous attempts to describe and understand the analytic process, and the various answers formed within different schools of psychoanalytic theory have produced divergent clinical practices. It is an important question, but obviously is also one that is not easily answered. There are many ways to take it up— following various theoretical and praxis-based paths—in an attempt to describe how psychoanalytic work functions, but even the attempt to locate foundational or key aspects of the analytic process often proves difficult. Nevertheless, interpretation, as a key ingredient in psychoanalytic work, does seem to provide one way to compare various schools of analytic thought around the issue of the therapeutic process.

Sigmund Freud, with his attempts to understand the talking cure, was the first to explore the function of interpretation as an essential component of the psychoanalytic endeavor. With his revolutionary text, *The interpretation of dreams* (1900/1965), Freud provided a whole new method for understanding the mechanisms of the mind. He allowed us to begin to grasp how we might access the powerful unconscious processes at work in the psyche; and subsequent analytic thinkers have worked to further our understanding of the role of interpretation in working with the unconscious. Understanding the psychoanalyst's role in relation to the material presented in the analytic session has been a central concern to those who have followed in Freud's footsteps, yet such work has all too often been the source of insular factionalisms that

have alienated various groups working within the psychoanalytic tradition. The followers of Melanie Klein and the followers of Jacques Lacan form two such groups.

Both Klein and Lacan can be read as working from, yet substantially revising and modifying, Freud's work. J. Mitchell (1998) writes of the relationship between Freud and Klein:

> In her first ten years as a psychoanalyst she was anxious to stress that her work was a direct and loyal extension of Freud's thinking. Gradually she acknowledged an occasional, important disagreement. By the second half of the 1930's, her contribution to psychoanalysis, though at least to her and her follower's minds remained within a Freudian framework, was developing into an autonomous unit, a growing independent body. (p.13)

Likewise, Hinshelwood (1994) writes, "Melanie Klein's contributions are so rooted in the basic Freudian discoveries that they cannot be comprehended without some understanding of Freud" (p. 9). Of Lacan, S. A. Mitchell and Black (1995) write, "[He] anchored his contributions in a reading of Freud (advertised under the banner of a 'return to Freud'). Lacan shared a common starting point with some other interpreters of Freud but ended up moving in a unique direction" (p. 195). In a similar vein, Letche (1994) writes, "Lacan re-read Freud so as to clarify and reinvigorate a whole series of concepts—not least of which being the concept of the unconscious" (p. 67). Their significant revisions of Freud's theories have contributed to each theorist developing his/her own school of psychoanalysis. These schools of psychoanalytic practice have

evolved separately, and each branch works within its own post-Freudian, revisionist paradigm. Unfortunately, little dialogue (though with a few notable exceptions which I will explore in the final section of this paper) has taken place concerning similarities and differences in both theory and practice between the two. For the most part, these two branches of psychoanalysis exist as discrete institutions of theory, practice, and training.

Kleinians and Lacanians have both come to understand the nature of the analyst's role in the psychoanalytic process in their own highly developed ways, but for the most part both groups have either found it difficult, or have not wanted, to exchange ideas and compare clinical practices, which has left both sides generally mystified by the analytic actions and conceptualizations of the other. Although there are historico-political forces behind this partisanship (ranging from world politics and history to institutional politics and history, as well as intellectual politics and history), it might also be considered the nature of revisionist ideas to separate, as they seek to rectify, elaborate or even overturn predecessors and their conventions. Nevertheless, the two are similar in their dialectical connection to Freud: as revisionists, Klein and Lacan are each interpreters of Freud's work as they form their own constructions of psychoanalytic theory and practice. However, the ongoing segregation of these revisionist psychoanalytic schools has meant that dialogue and debate rarely take place as each group pursues its own specialized project. Instead, a certain antagonistic alienation, often perpetuated by unsympathetic, caricatured critiques of the ideas and traditions of the other, has resulted in overarching conflict and discord within the psychoanalytic community (Bernardi, 2002; Burgoyne & Sullivan, 1997; Roudinesco, 1986; Turkle, 1978). This impasse has meant that open communication and exchange of ideas about the nature of the psychoanalytic endeavor

(as various schools understand it) rarely happens, resulting in a lack in the field of knowledge.

My intention is to address one aspect of that lack in this dissertation. I will examine the topic of analytic interpretation by reading next to each other, and through Freudian formulations, what both Melanie Klein and Jacques Lacan have written about it. My interest is to first better understand what each has said about interpretation and then to compare the two, seeing both points of agreement and points of divergence. To do this, I will explore the ways each theorist can be understood to be a revisionist of Freud, and, in so doing, I will return to Freud's work on interpretation to lay the groundwork for understanding Klein's and Lacan's modifications and revisions of his work. My hope is that this rereading of Klein and Lacan via Freud will add to the much-needed exchange of ideas around the very core problem of understanding the psychoanalytic process, a problem of interest to all psychoanalysts. Though theoretical in nature, this study is written with a focus on psychoanalytic practice and will aim to clarify our understanding of interpretation as a clinical practice.

What Is Interpretation?

Before proceeding, I will attempt an initial—albeit highly provisional—definition or explanation of what I mean by "interpretation." Of course, clarifying and specifying the nature of psychoanalytic interpretation as theorized first by Freud, then as it is revised

by Klein and Lacan, will be the work of this dissertation, but before delving into the nuances of each theorist's approach to and understanding of psychoanalytic interpretation, a broader definition of the term might help to refine the topic. *Webster's dictionary* (1989) defines interpretation as:

> 1. the act of interpreting; elucidation; explication…2. an elucidation; an explanation of the meaning of another's artistic or creative work…3. an understanding or conception of another's words or deeds…4. a way of interpreting…5. the rendering of a dramatic part, music, etc. so as to bring out the meaning, or to indicate one's particular conception of it…6. translation. (p. 744)

From these definitions, we can see that interpretation might be understood as including an action or process, aimed toward some originating piece, for the purpose of creating meaning. In exploring the Latin roots of the word as an act of translation, literary theorist Mailloux (1990) notes that it "conveys a sense of translation pointed in two directions simultaneously: *toward* a text to be interpreted and *for* an audience in need of an interpretation" (p. 121). This two-part characteristic is also true of psychoanalytic interpretation. Freud discovered, in the dream, a text to be interpreted, and provided, in *The interpretation of dreams* (1900/1965), a method for working with such material. Throughout his later formulations of psychoanalytic theory and technique, Freud continued to expand the psychoanalytic conception of the interpretive process. The content produced in sessions, by the subject of psychoanalysis—for example, dreams, daydreams, fantasies, parapraxes, symptoms and other traces of the unconscious—calls

for an explanation or translation, so that it may be brought into consciousness. The

analyst mediates between the material produced by the subject and the rendering or

creation of new, hitherto unknown, meanings. Psychoanalysis gives rise to new

meanings, but it is also something that is done for an audience, in this case the patient or

analysand,[1] with the purpose of addressing his or her suffering. The *for* aspect of

psychoanalytic interpretation is most fully theorized in terms of the transference, a

phenomenon understood first by Freud, then revised by both Klein and Lacan. This

aspect of analytic work requires attending not just to the analytic text, but also working

with the unfolding relationship between the analyst and patient or analysand (what is

called transference). Psychoanalytic interpretations are not simply bits of information

presented to the patient/analysand (as if a gift being given by the analyst). Instead

interpretations are linked—in fairly complicated ways, which I will explore in this

dissertation—to the transference relationship.

Research Method

The method used to create, render, or uncover meaning (what might be termed the

"research method") is ideologically tied to the epistemological assumptions of a given

field. For example, psychoanalysis is one of the many contexts in which this term

"interpretation" circulates, and psychoanalytic interpretation can be distinguished from

---

[1] Freud and Klein use the term "patient," whereas Lacan uses the term "analysand." I will use both terms throughout this dissertation, applying the term most appropriate in the context (e.g., when discussing Freud and Klein I will use "patient," when discussing Lacan I will use "analysand," and when exploring in more general terms, I will use both terms).

the interpretation of data characteristic of empirical research, legal interpretation, astrological interpretation of horoscopes, Biblical hermeneutics, and so forth. For each of these different types of interpretation, there is an intersection between form and content, topic and method. Methodologies governing knowledge production in one field are not necessarily appropriate for other fields. The question of how best to research psychoanalytic concepts has been the subject of much debate. Eagleton (1983) reports, "one American behaviorist psychologist remarked in conversation: 'The trouble with Freud's work is that it just isn't *testable*!'" (p. 162, emphasis in the original). Psychoanalysis has a long and troubled relationship to the scientific community from which it arose, and Freud himself had a somewhat fraught relationship to the scientific community to which he belonged. In a 1974 Conference on Psychoanalytic Education and Research organized by the American Psychoanalytic Association, analysts continued to struggle with this same issue. One conclusion reached in that meeting was that psychoanalytic "research is often inappropriately equated with restrictive experimental and laboratory models, rather than broadly defined and adapted to the particular discipline of psychoanalysis" (Goodman, 1977, p. 123). The nature of the psychoanalytic project requires research methodologies suited to the particulars of the field, and not necessarily matching the research models of other disciplines.

Since its inception, one of the primary modes for knowledge production in the psychoanalytic field has been written theoretical constructions, often based on clinical observation, yet extending beyond—and different from—empirical generalizations (Wolman, 1984). Freud gave us topologies, developmental schemas, and other metaphorical structures as theoretical ways to understand the mind and subsequent

psychoanalytic theorists have revised and challenged these theoretical constructions, resulting in a discipline organized around theory. I will be using psychoanalytic theory, as developed by Freud, Klein, and Lacan, to provide a way to understand or think about the issue of psychoanalytic interpretation. As such, their theoretical writings that address interpretation will be my "research data."

The "research method" used to analyze this "data" will be critical textual analysis. By "critical textual analysis" I mean a close reading of the text that attends to both the line of reasoning and the words/metaphors used by each theorist to explain his or her theory, yet which also allows for a critical perspective that notices gaps, contradictions, and weak spots in reasoning, in addition to reading for the ways the texts form a meaningful whole. For literary critic Belsey, a critical reading moves beyond the generally and "'obviously' intelligible" reading, which assumes "the position of a transcendent subject addressed by an autonomous an authoritative author," and seeks instead to "liberate the plurality of the text, to reject the 'obvious,' and to produce meaning" (1980, p. 55). My reading of the texts will aim to produce the kind of interpretation that will allow for dialogue and in that way will produce new meaning. Therefore, my interest in opening meaningful dialogue on this topic shapes my reading of the texts. I do not suggest it is a literal or determinate reading, nor would I claim to provide a rewording that aims at the author's intent or at a systematic explication of the theory. Instead, I propose to construct an argument based on a close reading or interpretation of the texts for the purpose of advancing dialogue between those working within the Kleinian and Lacanian psychoanalytic traditions about the interpretive process in psychoanalysis. In seeking a way to allow for an exchange of ideas between these

writers who are so often read or experienced as adversaries or rivals, I propose a dialogic reading of psychoanalytic theory, in which various theoretical voices are constituted through their relationship to other theorists.

As such, the method used in this dissertation is inherently interpretive. I raise this issue because there is clearly an intersection between topic and methodology here. Methodologically, I see a critical textual analysis as a particularly important, and apt, tool for understanding the work of psychoanalysis because psychoanalysts work with (and interpret) the material (what we might think of as a text) presented in the analytic session. However, the connection between the two is not easy to demarcate. Some readers have attempted to directly adapt the tools of psychoanalysis to textual criticism, and a whole subfield of literary criticism, psychoanalytic textual criticism, developed out of this attempt. Psychoanalytic textual criticism often either emphasizes the unconscious intentions of a text or author, or uses psychoanalytic theory to analyze the motives and actions (conscious and unconscious) of characters (Hilman & Harmon, 1992). Theory can be read with the same focus, such that the process can quite easily become lost in or overtaken by formulaic content. When psychoanalytic theory is read for its systems/conceptual structures, or when it is read for authorial intent and subjective presence in the text, psychoanalytic content runs the danger of eclipsing the psychoanalytic process. That is not the type of reading I propose here. Instead, the interpretation I have in mind will aim toward understanding and participating in the analytic process. I intend to draw on critical, analytic skills that seek to have a meaning effect—skills that are similar to the skills used by psychoanalysts as they listen to their patients, but instead of explicating psychoanalytic concepts as they are found in the texts,

I will be constructing an argument or interpretation of the texts that will move outside or beyond the texts. In the building of this argument, I will be doing as analysts do: interpreting (based on the texts of Freud, Klein, and Lacan)—that is constructing a reading for my readers (as audience). The critical textual analysis I have proposed above might be understood to be an attempt to implement the interpretive process that is the subject of this dissertation. This type of connection between textual analysis and psychoanalytic work is one Lacan directly addresses when he writes, "commenting on a text is like doing an analysis" (1975/1988a, p. 73). Fink explores this in terms of Lacan as a reader of/commentator on Freud, writing that for Lacan, "Freud's work must be grasped at the level of its twists and turns, reformulations, and new topographies" and elaborates that "Lacan even goes so far as to claim that the unconscious *is* those very 'twists and turns'" (2004, p. 67 and footnote 9, p. 177, emphasis in the original). This is juxtaposed to a reading that seeks either philosophic, "internally consistent arguments" or provable hypotheses (Fink, 2004, p. 67). Both of these types of reading involve claiming authority over the material, so that the truth-value is secured and can be mastered either through logic or the scientific method. But as I understand it, psychoanalytic work does not fit an authority-driven model because the analyst is unable to achieve (and therefore is unwise to claim) such mastery over the unconscious, and must instead approach the analytic process in search of meaning rather than claiming possession of it. Freud's important contribution lies not in the theoretical constructs or topographies themselves so much as "how he invents [and abandons or substantially revises] successive topographies to deal with specific theoretical and clinical problems" that are before him (Fink, 2004, p.

67). The importance of psychoanalytic interpretations is found in the analytic process from which they arise, not so much in the specific formulations given.

One issue that emerges from this way of thinking about interpretation—both within the psychoanalytic session and for my interpretive work here—relates to evaluation. If the value of a psychoanalytic interpretation (clinical or theoretical) lies neither in systematic, internal consistency, nor in empirical validation, on what grounds might it be assessed? Of course, this issue is addressed within psychoanalytic theory, because the criterion by which to judge the success or failure of a clinical interpretation is of interest both theoretically and at the level of practice. Freud takes up this issue through his interest in the process of creating clinically useful meanings or interpretations: for example, for him a dream interpretation seeks to put together, rather than distort and hide meaning (1940/1964a). In the interpretation, the analyst may give his conjecture about how to understand the material presented, but it is the use the patient makes of the material (the way in which it might further the associative process) that ultimately supports or challenges its significance. The success or failure of a particular analytic interpretation is retroactive, meaning its value can only be judged in relation to the new material that is produced *after* the interpretation is given. And because the matter of evaluation is of issue to my readers, I will briefly address the process of evaluation of a critical textual analysis. As I understand it, a good or successful critical textual analysis is one that makes sense to—or constructs meaning for—a reader. This view of significance is obviously very different from a scientific effort to find statistically significant results. It does not claim to provide the definitive reading, yet in placing its value in the audience's response, a critical textual analysis provides a way to evaluate

one's findings that I believe fits, given the nature of the object of study. I will take up

this study as an opportunity to create for my readers an interpretation of these texts, with

the goal of providing a meaningful contribution to the discussion and dialogue about the

nature of clinical, psychoanalytic interpretation.   The audience, for whom this

interpretation is given, will ultimately decide if this interpretation "works" as such.

Framing the Project

In this dissertation I plan to first introduce interpretation as the focus of this

dissertation by looking at Freud's writing on the subject in Chapter One. Then, Chapters

Two and Three on Klein and Lacan, respectively, will seek to structure a coherent

account of the nature of interpretation as presented by each theorist by looking at the

ways each theorist draws upon and revises Freudian concepts as they each elaborate their

own theoretical systems. I will focus on the following issues: interpretation as a

methodology, construction, fantasy, and transference, as they are formulated by each

theorist. In Chapter Four, I will compare Klein and Lacan, looking at points of

agreement and divergence, and looking for ways to allow for dialogue between the two

different schools of thought to take place.   As a part of this comparison, I will engage

Lacan's critique of Klein. The theory I will explore in this dissertation will deal with

psychoanalytic interpretation as a general phenomenon and will not engage the nuances

of how diagnostic issues impact interpretation.[2]

My attempts to create a dialogue between these theories will require translating or

interpreting the theory out of the terms of its original, self-referential logic and into terms

that will allow for an exchange of ideas. My hope is that reading Klein and Lacan as

each revising Freudian concepts will provide a way to ground a theoretical discussion of

otherwise incongruent theories. Klein and Lacan differ both in terminology and in style

of theorizing. Klein engages a great deal with clinical examples (from her work with

children, as well as adults); for it is through her own case material that Klein formulates

much of her theory. "Theory building was never an end in itself for Klein" (Spillius,

1988, Vol. 1, p. 2). Nevertheless, within her writings, Klein has developed her own

understanding of psychoanalysis, which includes a theory of interpretation. Klein's

writings are quite unlike Lacan's writings, which seem to work in an opposite direction,

presenting mainly theory, with few clinical examples. For Lacan, multivalent theory (in

which ideas are ambiguous and have several possible meanings or values) is a means for

teaching technique; therefore he invites the reader to adopt a position in relation to his

texts very much like the place from which psychoanalysts seek to engage clinical

material (Fink, 2004, pp. 63-75). He asks the reader to be an interpreter of his texts and

resists setting up a totalizing system, though many readers strain to read him that way

(Fink, 2004, pp. 63-75). Lacan remains famous (perhaps infamous?) for the difficulty of

his texts, and he purposefully presents his ideas in ways that often deter his readers

(Gallop, 1985). These differences in style complicate the attempt to create dialogue. It is

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[2] Roughly speaking, Lacan's approach to interpretation is very different in neurosis and psychosis; the same is far less true for Klein.

as though each theorist has written in a language that is foreign to the other. By returning

to Freud's work as a common link, an originating language if you will, I seek to translate

or interpret the writings of these two very different theorists into a more general

language, based on Freudian conceptualizations of interpretation, in a way that will allow

for communication and dialogue. In rereading Klein and Lacan in terms of the way each

takes up and modifies aspects of Freud's understanding of interpretation, I will create a

point of reference to ground the comparison of these two disparate theoretical structures

that in many ways (both in form and in content) seem unrelated at the outset.

Chapter One
Freud and Interpretation

Introduction

Through his work with the meaning and process of dreaming in *The interpretation of dreams* (1900/1965), Freud founded a methodology for psychoanalytic interpretation, offering not just a new-praxis based process for working with dream material, but also—more radically—formulating a new epistemology for understanding the mind. Freud's initial work in this text about dreams forms the basis of his broader psychoanalytic project, which seeks to understand and account for psychological phenomena that are significant both from a therapeutic standpoint (such as childhood development, personality structure, sexuality, psychopathology, and therapeutic intervention) and from a broader, cultural perspective (for example, the role of the psyche in the formation of society, religion, and art) by providing an interpretive structure or method for making sense of and accounting for such phenomena.

Psychoanalytic interpretation, as theorized by Freud, requires a stance of persistently seeking unknown and unconscious meanings. Segal (2000), in a defense of the ongoing importance of Freud's work, writes: "I would put it that Freud introduced us to the understanding of more meaning." The Freudian search for more meaning involves looking beyond surface, obvious, and literal meanings because it assumes the existence of underlying, unknown, and unconscious significance in mental phenomena. Due to the

phenomenon that Freud discovered and termed "the unconscious," there are always more psychic meanings to be discovered in psychic life. As that which lies outside consciousness, the unknown unconscious drives meaning production. For Freud, the unconscious functions as a new "trope"[3] for describing the nature of the mind. Freud revised his explication of the unconscious over the years he was writing, never formulating one ultimate and definitive description but reworking and even deeply modifying earlier formulations. As a result, the Freudian unconscious has a metaphoric, "as if," quality: as if it were spatial (the topographic unconscious) or as if it were energetic (the instinctual forces of the id characteristic of the structural model). In its various manifestations, the unconscious as theoretical construct or metaphor sparked a vast epistemological shift. Although the radical nature of this insight may be less obvious in a world that has in many ways (though certainly not wholly) come to incorporate and naturalize the concept of the unconscious, at the time it was revolutionary to posit the presence of and provide a way to make sense of an unknown, unconscious facet of the human mind that is active in dreams, fantasies, symptoms, relationships, speech, and deeds.

Accessing the unconscious requires unraveling or interpreting otherwise perplexing, even mystifying, phenomena. Nonsensical dream narratives that provoke what seem to be random thoughts, feelings, and recollections; bewildering or missing memories from early childhood; unrealistic yet intensely stimulating fantasies; and

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[3] "Trope," a literary term, is defined as a figure of speech which involves a turn in the meaning of a word in a way that changes it from its usual meaning (Holman & Harmon, 1992, p. 485). Metaphors are a type of trope. "The unconscious," as one such metaphorical trope, points to that which is not conscious as constitutive of what is known and experienced (thereby defining it through a negation that is filled in by conjecture).

typecast relational patterns are all crucial areas for analytic interpretation. The

psychoanalyst employs specific interpretive methods (the tools of psychoanalytic

methodology) to collaborate with the patient in describing and creating psychic

meanings, in bringing into consciousness that which feels foreign or unknown. At times

this means making hypothetical guesses in the form of constructions that seek to

imaginatively fill in information that is unavailable or inaccessible to consciousness. At

other times, it might involve searching out the idiosyncratic fantasy system(s) motivating

thoughts, feelings, and behaviors or identifying (and pointing out) feelings associated

with past relationships that are being transferred onto the person of the analyst. But

despite these complicated (and at times highly technical or theoretical) issues,

psychoanalytic interpretation has a relatively simple core meaning: to facilitate and

intervene in the process of making the unconscious conscious. Loewenstein (1951)

writes:

> What defines interpretation and distinguishes it from other interventions? In
>
> psychoanalysis, this term is applied to those explanations, given to patients by the
>
> analyst, which add to their knowledge about themselves. Such knowledge is
>
> drawn by the analyst from ideas contained and expressed in the patient's own
>
> thoughts, feelings, words and behavior. (pp. 3-4)

The intent of psychoanalytic interpretation is to acquaint the patient with that which has

hitherto been unconscious, thus making the unconscious conscious. By constructing

narrative explanations, exploring fantasies, and uncovering transference reactions—all of

which are based on the thoughts, feelings, words, and behavior expressed by the patient in the analytic work—the analyst engages with and intervenes in the patient's unconscious processes.

In this chapter, after first exploring the epistemology and methodology of psychoanalytic interpretation (section 1), I will examine construction (section 2), fantasy (section 3), and transference (section 4) as key constituents of the psychoanalytic interpretive project.

Section One
Psychoanalytic Epistemology

Freud, a medical physician who specialized in neurology by training, frequently located psychoanalysis within the domain of science. As a "child of the Enlightenment," he often presented his work in "rationalistic, empiricist, objectivist" terms: terms which were "the prevailing axioms and conventions of discourse of the natural sciences of his time" (Schafer, 1992, p. 148). But this historical embeddedness in 19th century science is not the only—or even most salient—feature of Freudian theory. Freud's innovative, even revolutionary, analysis or interpretation of what constitutes human experience marked a new ontology, and with this new ontology came a new epistemology. Within the Freudian ontology, instead of being autonomous, rational agents, humans are understood to be subjects shaped by unconscious forces. This new ontology has far-reaching consequences. Due to Freud's discovery, phenomena that had been largely discounted or

overlooked, particularly by the scientific community, came to have considerable meaning, specifically for treating psychological complaints. Symptoms without any apparent or organic cause were made intelligible and treatable within the psychoanalytic paradigm.

The epistemological basis of psychoanalysis has been an ongoing point of debate and contention within the history and philosophy of psychoanalysis. Despite Freud's desire to locate his work within the positivistic epistemology of natural science, developments in the philosophy and science of the mind allow for readings of Freud's work that find a different epistemology grounding psychoanalytic theory (Bruner in "Foreward" to Spence, 1987). As the reigning philosophical paradigms have shifted, new ways of reading Freud have evolved. Some philosophers, for example Ricoeur (1970), Habermas (1971), and Foucault (1998), situate Freud within hermeneutics and therefore locate his methodology, epistemology, and ontology outside the natural sciences (as they are most restrictedly defined). A hermeneutic reading of Freud conceives of psychoanalysis as an interpretive discipline, in which narrative or descriptive truths and an interest in the function of symbolic forms are favored over the search for causal and essential truth(s) (Spence, 1987). Within hermeneutics, reality is not an empirically secure fact and therefore knowledge is not contingent on discovering causally valid claims to explain such a reality. Rather, truth and knowledge are inherently interpretive, hermeneutic constructs that are always open to additional interpretations. Behind Freud's explicit claim that his work fits the scientific paradigm, a radically different hermeneutic epistemology that implicitly structures psychoanalysis can be recognized.

Others, for example Grünbaum, a critic of psychoanalysis, see this as a misreading of Freud (1984). Grünbaum situates Freud firmly within the natural sciences and critiques hermeneutic readings of Freud for failing to accept basic Freudian hypotheses (1984). Reading Freud within a natural science epistemology, Grünbaum contends "that all of Freud's clinical arguments for his cornerstone theory of repression should be deemed to be fundamentally flawed" (Grünbaum, 1984, p. xii). At issue in this debate are claims regarding the nature of human reality and knowledge: ontology and epistemology. Freud's new conceptualization of the human psyche—which drives his new ontology—continually resists the very rationalistic, empiricist, and objectivist terms that characterize the knowledge—ultimately, the epistemology—of natural science. Responding to Grünbaum's methodological critique of psychoanalysis, Strenger (1991) attempts to negotiate a middle ground between hermeneutics and the methods of natural science, arguing for "the crucial role of background knowledge in the epistemic assessment of psychoanalysis" (p. 5). Strenger (1991) suggests that "the coherence of psychoanalytic theory with accepted knowledge from outside psychoanalysis" (p. 185) provides essential validation for the psychoanalytic project. Rather than research meant to provide direct, empirical confirmation of basic psychoanalytic principles, Strenger proposes that there is an existing body of "extraclinical" (p. 197) controlled research, which also "draws on knowledge external to psychoanalysis in order to increase the plausibility of [its] hypotheses" (p. 198), and argues that this research provides sufficient evidence to support the validity of psychoanalytic knowledge. For Strenger, the universal laws discovered and verified through controlled, scientific research offer validation and

justification for the clinical insights that are uncovered and created through the

hermeneutic processes that characterize analytic practice.

Spence (1987), defending the hermeneutic reading of Freud, understands Freud's

appeal to science to be a rhetorical performance that functions to legitimize his project.

Spence writes, "it should be clear that the claim to science is, in Freud…, a partly

rhetorical move and should not be taken as a necessary description of the product being

described" (1987, p. 73). Despite Freud's linking of psychoanalysis to science,

psychoanalysis proves to be a poor candidate for the method of inquiry—the scientific

method—associated with this epistemology because the unconscious as construct is not

empirically available for hypothesis testing.[4] Although (as Grünbaum reminds us) a

hermeneutic assessment of psychoanalysis is not the only way to read Freud, such a

reading provides an account of the relationship between knowledge and evidence that

engages Freud's most basic or fundamental insights about meaning formation and human

experience without holding him to the standards of an epistemology that in many ways is

unable to integrate Freudian theory. In leaving behind the need to fit psychoanalysis into

the epistemological model of the natural sciences, a reading of Freud that focuses on

interpretation as the methodological means by which knowledge is formulated is in

accordance with Freud's implicit epistemology.

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[4] The nature, limitations, and core definition of science have been debated in the philosophy of science. The definition of science I am using here (science as that which uses the scientific method of hypothesis testing to search for universal truths or axioms) is the one generally agreed upon within the American academy, though in many ways it is a highly restrictive definition of science. The limits of this version of a scientific epistemology have been challenged by work done within traditional realms of science and by philosophers of science such as Feyerabend (1975).

***The interpretation of dreams*:**
The Unconscious as More than Method

Interpretation is more than a technique or method for gathering data; it is the essential, defining characteristic of the psychoanalytic project. In *The interpretation of dreams* (1900/1965), Freud presents his initial theory of psychoanalytic interpretation and formulates a methodology for seeking, encountering, and understanding unconscious meanings. This search for more meaning in seemingly meaningless or nonsensical mental phenomena (dreams, slips of the tongue, bungled actions, symptoms) is at the heart of the Freudian discovery. I will begin my exploration of Freud's formulation of psychoanalytic interpretation by returning to this landmark text in which Freud put forward not just a method for working with dreams, but also a general theory about the structure of the mind and how psychological phenomena might be interpreted. Behind the nonsensical, Freud inferred what he termed "the unconscious." Freud was well aware of the revolutionary status of the formulation of the unconscious he presented in *The interpretation of dreams* and the far-reaching consequences of this theoretical inference. In a preface to the third English edition, written in 1931, he writes, "[this book] contains, even according to my present-day judgment, the most valuable of all discoveries it has been my good fortune to make. Insight such as this falls to one's lot but once in a lifetime" (1900/1965, p. xxxii). Because the Freudian analytic is more than an innovation at the level of technique, a discussion of psychoanalytic interpretation ought to also address the epistemic basis for new clinical procedures, seeing Freud's work as resulting in not just a new treatment method, but a new methodology.

Although imprecisely distinguished (and oftentimes interchangeable) in current usage, the terms "method" and "methodology" have different meanings. Whereas "method" refers to the level of procedure or technique, "methodology" signifies the principles behind such technique (*Webster's dictionary*, 1989, p. 902), including the epistemology that drives procedures. Methodology can be understood as the systematic application of various methods (tools of inquiry) within a given epistemology. This distinction is crucial for how one reads *The interpretation of dreams*. If read as a text about a method for interpreting dreams, then technique—for example, free association— as it applies to dream analysis is seen to be the primary focus of this work. However, if read as a text about psychoanalysis as an epistemology that structures a methodology, then the primary importance of this text lies in the relationship Freud formulates between knowledge (an understanding of the relationship between consciousness and the unconscious) and a system for accessing such knowledge (interpretation). Of course, *The interpretation of dreams* is both: method and methodology. But Freud's theory of interpretation addresses the status of knowledge formation beyond the dream as a particular phenomenon. The particular tools that comprise the method of dream interpretation are an instance of, but can also be distinguished from, Freud's epistemological innovation. Freud's epistemological innovation was located in his inferences about the nature of the unconscious, which in turn prompted a methodology that addresses the mode by which traces of the unconscious are interpreted and analyzed. The theory of interpretation Freud presents in *The interpretation of dreams* extends beyond the particular application of technique in psychoanalytic work with dreams (the

level of method) by addressing a broad-based methodology for interpretation in relation to multiple forms of clinical phenomena.

Freud begins *The interpretation of dreams* by telling the reader that in this text he will prove that there is a technique or method for interpreting dreams; he will show that dreams are organized according to certain structural characteristics that are meaningful for waking life; and, perhaps most radically, he will "deduce" from this explanation an account of "the nature of the psychological forces" at work in dreams (1900/1965, p. 35). What Freud ultimately deduces from his exploration of dreams and how they relate to consciousness is the influence of what he terms "the unconscious," and with this explanation Freud posits a new understanding of the mind.

Freud was not the first to explore an unconscious aspect of mental functioning. Following logically from the split Descartes theorized between the aware, conscious mind and the independent and separate, physical matter we term the body, subsequent thinkers were led to question and explore the possibility of mental activity that takes place outside of conscious awareness. Because describing unconscious mental processes was a longstanding, fundamental and challenging philosophical problem, "the discovery of the unconscious by self-conscious man occupied some two centuries, roughly from 1700 to 1900" (Whyte, 1978, p. 63). From Rousseau's romantic introspection about human emotions, to Nietzsche's skeptical assessment of the limitations and dangers of consciousness, to Marx's radical theorizing about the material factors that impact consciousness and the unconscious factors operative in class history, to Dostoevsky's fictional account of the unconscious drives and passions that structure his characters: numerous explorations of the nature of unconsciousness predated the Freudian discovery

(Whyte, 1978).[5] Despite Freud's many notable predecessors, his contribution to an

understanding of the unconscious was nothing less than revolutionary. Whyte (1978)

concludes:

> Freud's supreme achievement was to force the attention of the Western world to
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> the fact that the unconscious mind is of importance in every one of us, by giving
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> dramatic illustrations of the way in which it works, particularly when its
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> spontaneous formative processes are deformed by inhibition. He was the first
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> systematically to connect the general idea with a wide range of particular
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> distortions of behavior in a way that is manifestly valid to unprejudiced minds.
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> Freud changed, perhaps irrevocably, man's image of himself. (p. 177)

In linking particular mental phenomena such as dreams, symptoms, and slips of the

tongue to a complex explanatory structure for how such unconscious traces surface,

Freud outlined a new model of the mind. In conjunction with this model of mental

functioning, Freud also provided a methodology for accessing and working with such

phenomena.

To access unconscious knowledge, Freud structures a new methodology based on

interpretation. He writes, "'interpreting' a dream implies assigning 'meaning' to it—that

is, replacing it by something which fits into the chain of our mental acts as having a

validity and importance equal to the rest" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 128). He goes on to

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[5] This is a very partial list of the various thinkers (ranging from philosophers to poets to scientists) who addressed the issue of the unconscious prior to Freud. See *The unconscious before Freud* (1978) by L.L. Whyte for a more complete history of the idea of the unconscious prior to 1900.

specify that by "assigning meaning" he does not mean either symbolic interpretation or decoding, two common, lay strategies for dream interpretation. The symbolic method "considers the content of the dream as a whole and seeks to replace it by another content," usually by "hitting on a clever idea, of direct intuition" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 129). Freud rejects such symbolic interpretations as unscientific exercises in creativity. The decoding method, on the other hand, "treats the dream as a kind of cryptography in which each sign can be translated into another sign having a known meaning, in accordance with a fixed key" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 130). According to Freud, both methods are flawed: the first "is restricted in its application and incapable of being laid down on general lines," while the second "depends on the trustworthiness of the 'key'— the dream-book, and of this we have no guarantee" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 132).   In addition, because "the same piece of content may conceal a different meaning when it occurs in various people or in various contexts," there can be no general code or schema for psychoanalytic interpretation (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 137). Freud highlights the contingent, very personal and "egoistic" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 358) nature of the dream; dreams are not universal and therefore the interpretation of dreams is a highly idiosyncratic, individual process.[6]

Instead of the symbolic or decoding methods of dream interpretation, Freud revealed a method of "treating the dream like a symptom and applying to dreams the methods of interpretation that had been worked out for symptoms" through his earlier

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[6] Despite the overarching individual or personal nature of dreams, Freud did theorize a limited number of dream symbols that are common to all dreamers. These universal symbols usually allude to sexual matters, such that the sexual idea becomes displaced onto the symbol. However, Freud warns that most dream symbols (aside from the few he catalogues in *The interpretation of dreams*) are idiosyncratic and are not universal. Although these few exceptional dream symbols do seem to function universally, they do not provide enough material to interpret an entire dream (Fancher, 1973). In fact, they are usually based on German idiomatic expressions at Freud's time.

collaboration with Breuer (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 133). This method, free association, involves increasing the patient's "attention" to "his [or her] own psychical perceptions" and eliminating "the criticism" that normally hinders the patient from attending to his or her thoughts (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 133). The critical faculty that represses or censors "involuntary thoughts" is understood to be a form of "resistance" which must be overcome so that each aspect of the dream can be attended to fully (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 135). Dream interpretation involves working backwards from what is conscious by means of free association to access unconscious thoughts. As opposed to interpreting the dream as a whole, each piece of the dream is the focus of attention in free association. The psychoanalytic interpretive method for working with dreams involves using free association in relation to each piece of the dream to find additional, latent (as opposed to manifest or apparent) meaning. This focus on the fragmentary as opposed to unified meaning liberates the interpretive process from being determined by conscious meanings.

Meaning is distorted—Freud explores how such distortions take place in dreams—because the dream contains unacceptable material that we critically reject: namely, a wish-fulfilling fantasy. Freud tells us that on a structural level, every dream contains a disguised wish. However, the wish-fulfillment in the dream is "constructed by a highly complicated activity of the mind" which obscures its expression (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 155). The structural framework of the dream is related to its function but does not assign meaning to the content. It is through associations to the manifest content that the dream analysis arrives at latent meanings, which have been obscured. In moving from the manifest to the latent content, Freud recognized both the presence of unknown

meaning in need of interpretation and a dynamic force that disrupts the dreamer's

understanding by translating the latent into the disguised or manifest content.

Dreams, as they surface in sleep, already arrive as a form of interpretation that

calls for additional interpretation. Dream-thoughts, Freud says, have undergone an

alteration when they are "changed into the manifest dream which we remember when we

wake up" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 156). In what Freud terms a "primary process," latent

(unconscious) dream-thoughts are converted into "another mode of expression" in the

manifest dream-content. Freud terms the transformation by which the dream-thoughts

are translated into another "language," the language of the manifest dream-content, as the

"dream work" (Freud, 1900/1965). In chapter 6 of *The interpretation of dreams*, which

focuses on the dream work, Freud presents a kind of logic training for his readers in the

ways that meanings are represented in dreams, exploring condensation, displacement, and

other aspects of representation in dreams. "Dream work is made up of all the processes

contributing to the transformation of the unconscious wish fantasy into the manifest

dream" (Olsen & Koppe, 1988, p. 162). Freud is describing an encryption process in the

formation of the dream itself, a process that must be deciphered through the process of

seeking meaning in the dream. The dream is the distortion of a consciously objectionable

wish fulfillment into disguised, and therefore acceptable terms. Due to its selfish or

egoistic nature, the underlying dream wish, which is the locus of the dream, is blocked

from conscious recognition. Therefore, the unconscious wish is exhibited to

consciousness only in a disguised form in the material of the manifest dream. Added to

the dream work level of camouflage is yet another layer of distortion or "secondary

revision," which takes place as the dream is remembered after waking and recounted,

certain elements perhaps being added or omitted (based on an preconscious censorship by the dreamer as the dream is recounted).

Because dreams are a construction of multiple layers of disguised meanings and distortions, the analytic response is an interpretation or deciphering aimed at unraveling the twists and turns that are forced on the unconscious wish by the censorship. Dream analysis, therefore, adds another layer of meaning to the interaction the dreamer is having with his or her unconscious by undoing the disguise. This open and ongoing interpretive or hermeneutic process in psychoanalysis is described by Foucault as "the always-incomplete character of the regressive and analytic process in Freud" (1986/1998, p. 274). There is never a final interpretation that can completely decipher or definitively uncover the unconscious meaning of the dream. Instead, within the process of psychoanalytic interpretation the analyst and patient or analysand together seek significance and understanding within material (the dream, for example) that continually resists such insight and awareness. The dream experience, the recounting of the dream, the dream analysis: all are characterized by a tension between active misrepresentation and the attempt to interpret that suggests an inherently hermeneutic process of obscuring and uncovering meaning.

Methodologically, the psychoanalytic interpretive process involves searching for this altered, hidden meaning that is actively filtered out of conscious experience because it is deemed unacceptable. Freud's methodology, which applies more generally to all unconscious phenomena, involves following the associations, fitting them into an egoistic chain of meaning, until arriving at a place of understanding. The dream is "a process with a meaning" that "can be inserted into the chain of the dreamer's psychical

experiences" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 548). The same is true of other traces of the unconscious, such as symptoms, actions, and words. Psychoanalytic interpretation happens via a linking together of unconscious meanings brought out by the subject's free associations, not by means of inserting meaning either through cleverness on the part of the analyst or through reliance on some predetermined code of meaning.

But Freud goes further in his investigation by asking and answering an even deeper question: why do we dream what we dream? He explores the purpose of the dream, as a meaningful but distorted psychical experience, and from this he infers a new way to understand human experience. The answer he formulates about why we dream what we dream has ramifications on both an epistemological and an ontological level. Freud specifies that dream analysis does not explain the dreaming process—"since to explain a thing means to trace it back to something already known" (so to explain would therefore be impossible)—but instead the process of psychoanalyzing dreams allows him to "infer" the "structure of the apparatus of the mind" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 549). Freud knows he is in new territory with this inference and notes, "the easy and agreeable portion of our journey lies behind us" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 549). From this point forward in his theoretical journey, he is entering the darkness of unknown regions as he makes assumptions and draws conclusions about the unconscious (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 549). Freud bumps up against the conventional wisdom of the time, noting, "there is at the present time no established psychological knowledge under which we could subsume what the psychological examination of dreams enables us to infer" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 549). The inferential process that leads Freud to speculate about the workings of the mind can be recognized as a part of Freud's interpretive process. He writes:

No conclusions upon the construction and working methods of the mental

instrument can be arrived at or at least fully proved from even the most

painstaking investigation of dreams or of any other mental function taken *in*

isolation. To achieve this result, it will be necessary to correlate all the

established implications derived from a comparative study of a whole series of

such functions. Thus the psychological hypotheses to which we are led by an

analysis of the process of dreaming must be left, as it were, in suspense, until they

can be related to the findings of other enquiries which seek to approach the kernel

of the problem from another angle. (Freud, 1900/1965, pp. 549-550)

Freud's theory-making involves a generalization derived from particular mental

phenomena but is not necessarily able to hit some essential kernel of truth due to its

speculative nature. Freud turns to his scientific roots to chart a course for proceeding,

while at the same time making clear that he is proceeding beyond a point that is

intelligible within this paradigm. Freud the scientist hopes that future research will

substantiate his findings, but he proceeds, without such empirical validation, nonetheless.

With this speculation, Freud moves outside the epistemology of the sciences and begins

to formulate a new, psychoanalytic ontology. Freud provides hypotheses regarding

mental functioning that are inspired by but which nevertheless generalize beyond the

evidence at hand, culminating in an innovative account of mental functioning that marks

a radical departure from the established beliefs and research protocols of the day.

In the 7th chapter of *The interpretation of dreams* Freud outlines some foundational aspects of psychoanalytic metapsychology, moving beyond the particular problem of dreaming to explore the relationship between consciousness and unconscious processes. The topographic or spatial model of the mind presented in this chapter reflects Freud's attempt to grasp the unconscious aspect of psychic life, and although he would later reformulate his description of the mechanisms and nature of conscious and unconscious mental processes and provide additional models for understanding mental processes, this chapter maintains its foundational importance. Of particular importance for this exploration of Freud's understanding of psychoanalytic interpretation is an appreciation of the role of the unconscious in mental functioning.

According to Freud, primary, irrational, and unconscious thought processes are operative alongside conscious thought processes in human beings. Such unconscious thoughts are "dominated by the goal of attaining the immediate gratification of wishes" (Fancher, 1973, p. 127). Primary processes are governed by a pleasure principle that seeks the fulfillment of wishful fantasies. Freud writes, "as a result of the unpleasure principle, then, the first Ψ-system is totally incapable of bringing anything disagreeable into the context of its thought. It is unable to do anything but wish" (1900/1965, p. 639).[7] The unconscious is termed primary because it "is the true psychical reality" even though it is "as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 651). These unconscious primary processes are different and separated from the thoughts, feelings, and memories we are able to know consciously because our conscious

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[7] "Ψ-system" is Freud's shorthand for psychical systems, by which he means the "systems" or "agencies" that make up the "mental apparatus" that he is describing in his topographical model (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 575).

thoughts, feelings, and memories have been subjected to a critical agency which filters out material deemed to be unacceptable. The unconscious impacts all of consciousness because a secondary process, which takes place in what Freud termed the "preconscious" system, translates or makes logical for consciousness the inherently illogical unconscious impulses that are primary in human experience. The secondary process transforms the wishful impulse into an acceptable thought which is then available to consciousness. In the preconscious system, unconscious feelings or affects are transformed "to inhibit any development of unpleasure" (1900/1965, p. 640). The logical processes so central to consciousness are of secondary importance to the wish fulfilling, pleasure seeking unconscious realm in Freud's system.

Freud's revolutionary idea that "everything conscious has an unconscious preliminary stage," which is transformed through repressive filtering (censorship) and logical ordering in the preconscious, is important on both epistemological and ontological grounds because it (re)defines not just the nature of knowledge, but also the nature of what it is to be human (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 651). With his formulation of the topographical model of the mind in Chapter 7 of *The interpretation of dreams*, Freud proposes a new ontology that breaks with the ontology of the scientific understanding of what it is to be human. For Freud, consciousness and its associated reality-oriented logical thought processes are not the chief organizing features of the human mind. The unconscious is primary. For this crucial reason, the ontology of the natural sciences cannot assimilate Freud's theory of the mind as governed by a self-gratifying, pleasure-seeking unconscious. Owing to this new ontology, a new epistemology, which incorporates the existence of the unconscious, informs the interpretive methodology by

which mental life is understood: both in the particular and on a more universal or theoretical level.

Freud moves beyond what the science of his day was able to integrate, journeying outside the epistemology of the sciences into a new epistemological (and therefore methodological) ground. This theory-building move is a part of Freud's interpretative practice and therefore might also inform an understanding of his interpretive methodology. With the inference of the unconscious, Freud is demonstrating how to make sense of—interpret—clinical data, including data that do not conform to existing scientific knowledge. Freud is not cavalier about his process of understanding via conjecture or inference. He cautions, "we must be careful, however, not to pursue these hypotheses too far beyond their first logical links, or their value will be lost in uncertainties" (Freud, 1900/1965, p. 549). We can read Freud as describing for his readers the interpretive process, both as it is at work in his own theorizing and as it might be understood as a methodology. For Freud, interpretation is not simply decoding the material, nor is it restricted to observing and encouraging the patient's free-associations; interpretation also includes a logical process of cautiously exploring, uncovering, and inferring meaning. In seeking a way to understand both the how and the why of the dream process, Freud provides his own incredibly far-reaching interpretation of the mechanisms of the mind that puts forward both a structural way to understand (the unconscious as a structurally integral feature of the mind) and a method for continuing the process of interpreting.

Freud's Epistemological Revisions:
An Evolving Analytic Methodology

The vital inference Freud makes in *The interpretation of dreams* concerning mental functioning is his conjecture regarding the unconscious. The first model for the mind (based on the trio: the conscious, preconscious, and unconscious), is often referred to as Freud's topographical model. The model itself (as an object) is not Freud's essential innovation; he later substantially revises his account of the structure the unconscious. The unconscious, as first formulated in the topographical model, provides an initial interpretation or explanatory construction in the form of a trope. Beginning with this foundation, Freud added to, elaborated, and even altered his account of mental functioning as he formulated additional interpretive tropes. Freud supplements his theoretical formulation of the unconscious in various subsequent works, providing interpretation upon interpretation as he explores and seeks to decipher the nature of the mind. These revisions result in an expanded epistemology and methodology. This process of revising and expanding his explanation of the unconscious is not an incidental aspect of Freud's work: the formulation and reformulation of models for understanding mental life is in itself a fundamental aspect of psychoanalytic methodology.

Freud's metapsychology developed beyond the formulation presented in *The interpretation of dreams* as he explored the role of sexuality in human experience. Freud's first and most fundamental interpretive trope, the unconscious, gave rise to additional interpretive tropes, such as the Oedipus complex, as Freud worked to make sense of the relationship between wish-fulfillment and human sexuality. Through his free

association method (particularly in work with the dreams and slips of the tongue of the hysteric), Freud was led to consider and include the role of sexual fantasies in psychic experience, a process which sparked his theory of the Oedipus complex. Freud began to interpret certain sexual ideas and feelings that he witnessed in his clinical work and in his own childhood experience "as wishes rather than memories," noticing that these wishes followed the pattern of Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* (Fancher, 1973, p. 142). Sophocles' play becomes an additional interpretive trope—an explanatory metaphor or device—for Freud's theory making. Freud's Oedipus complex is another theoretical inference or interpretation of the structure of human experience, this time with a developmental focus. Freud attributed the feelings and fantasies at play in the Oedipal conflicts of childhood to instincts or drives. Nevertheless, "even while he was formulating new and different theories about sexuality and the instincts, he still regarded the most important *structural* components of the mind to be the unconscious and preconscious systems" that he introduced in *The interpretation of dreams* (Fancher, 1973, p. 196, italics in the original). The Oedipus complex influences analytic methodology by providing an additional interpretive trope, one particularly suited to explaining neurotic suffering. Freud calls the Oedipus complex "the nucleus of the neuroses" (1917/1963, p. 419) because as an interpretive trope it carries great explanatory potential for understanding the nature of neurotic conflict. He alleges that the perverse drives that characterize childhood Oedipal wishes carry on into adulthood in the unconscious, where they surface in the dreams of both neurotic and "normal" people (Freud terms people who have developed and resolved past Oedipal conflicts "normal"; he explains, "neurotics merely exhibit to us in a

magnified and coarsened form what the analysis of dreams reveal to us in healthy people as well" (Freud, 1917/1963, p. 420).

However, with the *Ego and the Id* (1923/1961), Freud provided a new model of the mind that deeply altered the theory of the unconscious and preconscious he had introduced in *The interpretation of dreams*. In this new model, "the major new psychic system…was a *moral* agency, referred to as the *super-ego*" (Fancher, 1973, p. 205). Often identified as "the structural model," this formulation of the mind separates psychical agency into three parts: id, ego, and superego. This alteration does not necessarily invalidate his earlier epistemology; but it does significantly modify it by positing three competing, constituent agencies of the self. As a result of this revision to the topographic model, Freud's epistemic insight formulated in the structural model of the mind sparked an additional method for psychoanalytic interpretation: interpretation of the defenses. Freud locates numerous defense mechanisms (e.g., displacement, denial, rationalization, projection, identification, and reaction formation) used creatively by the ego to allow "instinctual expression while at the same time modifying the instinct to accommodate the demands of reality and the forces of conscience" (Fancher, 1973, p. 222). The interpretation of defenses (which includes recognizing the instinctual drives connected to such defenses) is a crucial addition to the interpretive methods of psychoanalysis, an addition made possible by Freud's epistemological formulation of a structural model of the mind, which in turn impacts methodology. With the structural model, Freud theorizes the psyche as inherently riddled with conflict (due to the competing forces of the id, ego, and superego). Analytic interpretation does not aim to remove such intrapsychic conflict because unconscious conflict is ontological

(fundamentally constitutive of human experience) for Freud, but it does seek to affect manifestations of psychic conflict that have become symptomatic for the patient. In other words, although it is not possible to completely remove psychic conflict, there is the potential for better understanding and even influencing or changing the particular configurations of such conflict via analytic work. The structural model of the mind (id, ego, superego) can be understood to be an additional interpretive trope in Freudian psychoanalysis that functions as a revision to the unconscious/preconscious/conscious trope formulated in *The interpretation of dreams*. With this new structural description, Freud provided a model for conceptualizing the interaction between unconscious morality, which includes internalized cultural norms (the superego), sexual and aggressive drives (the id), and a conscious, defense driven adaptation to these unconscious processes (the ego). The epistemological grounding for a psychoanalytic interpretive methodology shifts with this revision, resulting in an interpretive method directed at uncovering the particular configuration of and affects associated with the various agencies, which includes a process of working with the defensive strategies that guard against conscious awareness of the forces of the id and superego.

For Freud, the interpretive methods tied to an amended epistemology do not replace the earlier interpretive method of free association presented in *The interpretation of dreams*; instead, revisions on the epistemological level result in an expansion of the psychoanalytic methodology and therefore of interpretive methods. Freud was aware of and even seems to appreciate the shifts and expansions in his explanatory structures, seeing new psychoanalytic formulas as additions to, rather than corrections of, previously articulated ways of understanding. He writes, "we can express the aim of our efforts in a

variety of formulas: making conscious what is unconscious, lifting repressions, filling in gaps in the memory—all these amount to the same thing" (1917/1963, p. 541). Freud continues to elaborate and expand upon his theory of psychoanalysis in subsequent writings, offering case studies of ways he himself uses this interpretive method, providing further structural models to make sense of or make meaningful perplexing psychical material, and giving technical suggestions for performing such work. These revisions are significant in that they point to a process at work in analytic understanding. Freud's own interpretive work included continually revising and modifying his theory as his ideas evolved and his understanding deepened. Psychoanalytic interpretation as described by Freud does not ever hit a definitive core explanation that concludes or resolves the interpretive process (despite Freud's positivistic claims to the contrary).

Section Two
Constructing Meaning

Toward the end of his career Freud returns to the issue of interpretive methodology as he explores the role of constructing memories in analytic work. The core methodological issue Freud addresses in "Constructions in analysis" (1937/1964b) concerns the link between external reality (specifically, memories of historically factual experience) and narrative truth, which at times calls for strategic, imaginative conjecture on the part of the analyst about historical events that are not available to the patient's memory. This issue is of particular importance because it reaches to the heart of the

interpretive process, examining the source of meaning production in the analytic process. In this paper, Freud looks at the analyst's role in the process of constructing memories from the traces or fragments that linger. He writes,

> The analyst has neither experienced nor repressed any of the material under consideration; his task cannot be to remember anything. What then *is* his task? His task is to make out what has been forgotten from the traces which it has left behind or, more correctly, to *construct* it. (Freud, 1937/1964b, pp. 258-259)

Constructing is not the same thing as actually remembering (the analyst's task is not to remember for the patient); instead, constructing is the analyst's guess at or proposal of a forgotten history formulated on the basis of *both* clinical traces of that past and psychoanalytic theory, which serves as a guide for filling-in missing information. At issue in the process of clinical construction is the inference of memories that are not present in the patient's memory but are assumed to exist due to certain theoretical presuppositions on the analyst's part. Freud explores those times in psychoanalytic work when a "real" memory fails to surface in the clinical material, and proposes that in such instances the analyst constructs (or reconstructs[8]) the missing memory based on the clinical material at hand. Construction, as an interpretive gesture, requires the analyst to

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[8] Freud uses the terms "construction" and "reconstruction" interchangeably. A more precise distinction might specify reconstruction as the use of a newly constructed structure (in this case a memory) that is designed to mimic an original (in this case the forgotten event from childhood). Rubovitz-Seitz (2001) makes a distinction between reconstructions, which deal "specifically with formulations of repressed experiences from the patient's early life," and constructions, which involve a more general, interpretive process in which "the interpreter attempts to formulate a tentative overall or 'whole' (thematic) meaning of the current data being studied" (p. 130).

participate in the task of creating meanings that surpass but nevertheless remain faithful to the evidence.

The distinction Freud makes between interpretation and construction in this paper is unclear. Is construction a type of interpretation, or is interpretation a type of construction? Freud's classification is imprecise. He writes:

> If, in accounts of analytic technique, so little is said about "constructions," that is because "interpretations" and their effects are spoken of instead. But I think "construction" is by far the more appropriate description. "Interpretation" applies to something that one does to some single element of the material, such as an association or a parapraxis. But it is a "construction" when one lays before the subject of the analysis a piece of his early history that he has forgotten. (1937/1964b, p. 261)

Here Freud seems to suggest that construction may be a more general and better term to describe analytic work, whereas interpretation is a more restrictive method. It is as if interpretation as an instance of psychoanalytic method (as something one does with associations or parapraxes, for example) might be differentiated from a more general psychoanalytic process that aims at something deeper having to do with the whole structure of the person. Whether or not the term "construction" applies to other types of interpretation that move beyond "a single element of the material" but not necessarily via a focus on early life history has been a point of debate amongst various readers of Freud. Geha (1988) writes, "Our literature on technique often grants to construction a role

ancillary to interpretation," as if it were a type of or secondary to interpretation, but continues that he finds, "instead, it is the quintessence of the analytic enterprise from whichever angle we choose to appraise it" (p. 104). For Geha, "construction and interpretation fuse in a hermeneutic circle; we never find one without the other" (p. 104).[9] Geha shifts the focus of interpretive work from empirical fact to narrative value, calling Freud a "thoroughgoing constructionist, [who was] inventing and interpreting fictional worlds whose reality resides only in their fictionality" (p. 117). In this way of thinking about construction, the key feature of the construction is not that it addresses or puts in place historical fact. Rather, constructions in psychoanalytic work are seen to be fictions or narratives that are fabricated for the purpose of furthering the analytic work. Constructions are an explanatory (and therefore interpretive) means of gaining access to the unconscious by way of hypothetical formulations.

There is an important theory of knowledge underlying the distinction between interpretation and construction. Freud first presents interpretation as a process or method for seeking truth, then revises this with the notion of construction, which is presented as a process of conjecture aimed not so much at the truth per se, but at imagined or narrative knowledge. Here we have two types of knowledge: one based on empirical truth, the other on something else. For Freud, the something else was the metapsychology he proposed. As an example of construction he writes:

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[9] The term "hermeneutic circle" refers to a dialectic between "guess and validation" that is essential to the interpretive process (Ricoeur, 1979, p. 91). A construction, like a guess, posits an interpretation, but that interpretation remains open to future revisions in the form of new interpretations (given the validation or lack thereof for the guess).

But it is a 'construction' when one lays before the subject of the analysis a piece

of his early history that he has forgotten, in some way such as this: 'Up to your

nth year you regarded yourself as the sole and unlimited possessor of your

mother; then came another baby and brought you grave disillusionment. Your

mother left you for some time, and even after her reappearance she was never

again devoted to you exclusively. Your feelings toward your mother became

ambivalent, your father gained a new importance to you,' … and so on.

(1937/1964b, p. 261)

This construction sounds formulaic for a reason: it is. Here Freud proposes a type of

interpretation based on material present not in the patient's associations but in

psychoanalytic metapsychology. It is an explanation that addresses a fantasy, in this

case, a narrative about the effects of the Oedipal fantasy (e.g., sibling rivalry and ensuing

ambivalence toward the mother and identification with the father). "Freud defended the

use of hypothetical constructions as being in principle a fully acceptable means of

gaining access to the unconscious by stating that fantasies, which were fictive traumatic

experiences, were the most important structures of the unconscious" (Olsen & Koppe,

1988, p. 265). Construction, as a part of the analytic process, is the insertion of an

explanatory narrative in place of memories. Constructions can be understood to be

explanations that are fabricated by the analyst for an analytic (or therapeutic) purpose.

Freud tells us that the knowledge created in the construction is meant to access the

repressed material, which the unconscious dynamically defends against remembering,

and in that way it is meant to fill in. However, Freud also points out that the construction

will not necessarily lead to recovering memories, and suggests that other mechanisms of confirmation will surface (negation, transference reactions, associations with analogous but indirectly connected material, and parapraxes). The value then is in the function the construction plays, not so much in hitting some core historical truth that is taken to be reality. Constructions supply a connection between past and present to further the analytic process; they are a type of interpretation in which the analyst, rather than the patient, introduces hypothetical, explanatory material. Loewenstein (1951) reports that Freud also used a method of "reconstruction upwards," in which the interpretation moves from regressive, historical material to "reconstructing a relatively recent pathogenic conflict, when the regression started" (p. 10).

The fundamental problem Freud deals with as he explores construction concerns the nature (narrative or empirical) of the truth which psychoanalysis is meant to impact. Freud presents archaeology as an extended analogy for analytic construction that directly addresses this issue. Freud (1937/1964b) tells us that construction in psychoanalysis is "identical" to

> an archaeologist's excavation of some dwelling-place that has been destroyed and buried or some ancient edifice…except that the analyst works under better conditions and has more material at his command to assist him, since what he is dealing with is not something destroyed but something that is still alive. (p. 259)

And like the archeologist, the analyst has "an undisputed right to reconstruct by means of supplementing and combining the surviving remains" (p. 259). One of the interesting

things about this metaphor is that it opens the space for a type of interpretive action that is based on conjecture. The analyst is engaged in the process of formulating meaning on the basis of the historical traces that live in the patient without his or her conscious memory of them. Freud maintained his belief in the presence of such unconscious memories—"even things that seem completely forgotten are present somehow, somewhere, and have merely been buried and made inaccessible to the subject" (1937/1964b, p. 260)—but also suggests that recovering such memories is not the true aim of psychoanalysis. Instead, unlike the archaeologist, the psychoanalyst's reconstructions are "only a preliminary labor"; the rightful purpose of the construction lies in its function of furthering the analytic process (1937/1964b, p. 260). A good construction produces more analytic material. The value of psychoanalytic constructions is not that they hit or uncover an empirical truth, but instead that they advance analytic work by allowing the associative process to move on.

Freud had a longstanding interest in archaeology (Schnapp, Shanks, & Tiews, 2004) that influenced his use of this metaphor for the psychoanalytic project. Gay (1988), in his biography of Freud, reports,

[Freud] told the Wolf Man that "the psychoanalyst, like the archeologist in his excavations, must uncover layer after layer of the patient's psyche, before coming to the deepest, most valuable treasures." (p. 171)

Gay goes on to write that Freud's lifelong fascination with the processes and objects of archeological excavation allowed archeology to become "a master metaphor for his life's

work" (p. 172). However, the significance of the archeological metaphor for Freudian psychoanalysis is unclear. Just as the epistemological basis for psychoanalysis has been questioned and reformulated in the context of shifting philosophic paradigms, so too have the epistemological foundations operative within the field of archaeology been challenged and rearticulated over the past century. Both fields have cast doubt on the applied validity of knowledge acquisition focused exclusively on empirical data and analyzed solely within the procedures prescribed by the scientific method (the mode of thought characteristic of the epistemology of the natural sciences). Within the field of archeology, questions related to the interpretation, and even the nature, of data have motivated an ongoing critique of research and knowledge formation (Renfrew & Bahn, 2000, p. 39). An interpretive "postprocessual" archeology looks to the hermeneutic tradition to discover procedures for inferring internal meanings, with the goal of *creating* meaning (Renfrew & Bahn, 2000). Interpretation, writes one archeologist working within this tradition, "releases the past into public debate. It forces us to translate the past into a story we can understand" (Hodder, 1991, pp. 14-15). As archeologists such as Hodder illustrate, the hermeneutic revolution has opened a debate about both the practical and the theoretical nature of archeological knowledge. And just as psychologists and psychoanalysts continue to struggle to define the epistemological basis of their work, so too are other areas of the social sciences, including archeology, asking foundational questions about the nature of meaning/knowledge formation and the nature of data.

If an epistemological shift from scientific method to a hermeneutic methodology is incorporated into an understanding of construction, it is possible to read Freud's archaeological metaphor as being in keeping with his larger epistemological project. In

linking psychoanalysis to archaeology as another and kindred realm of knowledge that requires working with inferred truths, Freud points to the importance of creative imagination as an integral part of problem solving within a psychoanalytic epistemology. Methodologically, Freud suggests the analyst use imaginative inferences to make these linking conjectures or constructions about events that are not empirically present.

However, this is not the only way to read Freud's use of the archaeological metaphor. For Spence (1987), Freud's use of the archeological metaphor points to a search for empirical evidence (as truth)—the sort of data that might fit into an algebraic formula—but for Spence "no signs of this algebra exist" and therefore "there are no clinical specimens which convincingly support the archaeological metaphor" (1987, pp. 78-79). Freud's comparison of psychoanalysis and archaeology, Spence writes, "may be a substantially misleading analogy" (1984, p. 35). If archaeology is understood to be a field that deals only with empirical evidence, then this critique holds. But if, as I have suggested, there is an epistemology operative within archaeology that allows for a creative process of meaning formation inferred from, yet extending beyond evidence, then Spence's critique may miss the point. Unlike Spence, Brooks sanctions Freud's archaeology metaphor, seeing it as an "invaluable" model (1984, p. 321). For Brooks, Freud's archaeological metaphor points to a dialogic, dynamic process of meaning production in narrative form (Brooks, 1984). He writes:

> Freud…is not only a man of great literary culture and a highly perceptive reader, he is also—in a sense that may legitimate the somewhat pretentious word—a semiotician, intent to read all the signs produced by humans, as individual and as

a culture, and attentive to all behavior as semiotic, as coded text that can be

deciphered, as ultimately charged with meaning. (Brooks, 1984, p. 322)

Spence and Brooks are both interested proponents of the narrative, interpretive, and

hermeneutic aspect of psychoanalytic work, yet each responds differently to Freud's use

of the archeological metaphor to explain the nature of analytic construction.   Perhaps this

divergence most aptly points to the ways in which interpretation (in this case, the

interpretation of Freud's archeological metaphor in relation to psychoanalytic

construction) is a process that cannot claim empirical validity—neither Spence nor

Brooks is able to turn to the text as a definitive source of theory validation, but instead

each uses Freud's text to create a possible explanation—yet which is nevertheless able to

uncover important issues of meaning. Despite their different assessments of Freud's use

of the archeological metaphor, both authors agree that Freudian psychoanalysis is an

inherently interpretive discipline, in which narrative or descriptive truths and an interest

in the function of symbolic forms are favored over the search for causal and essential

truth(s) (Spence, 1987; Brooks, 1984).

Construction, as a key aspect of the interpretive process, can be understood to be a

hermeneutic, meaning-making intervention on the part of the analyst that involves

moving beyond the information or data formally supplied by the patient to piece together

a guess or conjecture that is informed by theory about underlying, unconscious meanings.

Such constructive guesses or conjectures of meaning are structured by abductive logic,[10]

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[10] Pragmatist C.S. Peirce first formulated abduction as a logical or thought process involving inferences for generating explanatory structures (Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy, 2005). Eco (1990) later expanded this concept, formulating additional levels of abduction involved in interpretation as a semiotic process.

in which "the principles of inference to the best explanation" combine with "imagination, abstraction, intuition, and both inductive and deductive inferences" in the process of formulating new knowledge (Rubovitz-Seitz, 2001, p. 164). Rubovitz-Seitz goes on to note, "the process of abduction" (which "applies to all scientific fields") "cannot be formalized…because there is no consistent logic of guessing in the discovery process" (2001, p. 164). For Rubovitz-Seitz (2001), such lack of formalization points to the importance of narrative coherence or continuity, which requires that the analyst draw on the parts (data formally supplied by the patient) to construct a meaningful whole (the interpretation). "Coherence," he writes, "means that the parts of a whole constructed meaning are not only connected but cohere in a self-consistent way that omits nothing relevant" (Rubovitz-Seitz, 2001, p. 165). Psychoanalytic theory provides the structure for such coherence.

Psychoanalytic constructions are meant to provide a lucid, well-integrated account or interpretation of clinical material that extends beyond both empirical "data" and general psychoanalytic theory, to imaginatively incorporate personal and idiosyncratic manifestations of the unconscious. Freud's metapsychology makes available theoretical metaphors—the unconscious, the Oedipus complex, and the superego are examples of such Freudian tropes—that guide the interpretive process and supply a framework to the analyst as he or she constructs clinical suppositions. But constructions are also specific to the individual, and in that way psychoanalytic constructions move beyond a straightforward application of theory because they incorporate and develop a uniquely personal explanatory narrative. Including psychoanalytic constructions as an integral factor in clinical interpretations highlights an epistemological shift in the psychoanalytic

project away from a scientific methodology to a hermeneutic methodology, which

provides a means of accounting for the nature of such imaginative guesses or conjectures

in the meaning making process of analytic work. The important aspect of analytic

constructions is not that they hit an underlying, empirical reality, but that they produce

new meanings that are intended to further the analytic process.

Section Three
Fantasy and Interpretation

The account of Freudian psychoanalytic interpretation I have been exploring in

this chapter raises key issues about the nature of reality in relation to clinical intervention.

By locating analytic work within the hermeneutic tradition, I have described both a

methodology and an epistemology driving the psychoanalytic project that are organized

around narrative, as opposed to empirical, truths. In this reading of Freud, narrative

constructions regarding psychic functioning on both the individual level (construction as

a clinical interpretive method) and the theoretical level (theoretical constructs as

imaginative explanations of that which cannot be seen and measured) play an essential

role in understanding the psyche. But the analyst is not the only one to introduce such

non-empirical material into analytic work. The patient's fantasies, which surface both

consciously and in unconscious material, are also a central aspect of psychoanalysis and

an understanding of clinical interpretation must include an appreciation for the role of

fantasy in the formation of "psychical reality." Psychical reality is a "hybrid concept"

(Rand & Torok, 1993, p. 589) used by Freud to denote a personalized reality that is based

on an idiosyncratic dialectic between material (or empirical) reality and a fantasy reality; this dialectic is shaped by the individual's unique unconscious mental processes. In *Introductory lectures on psychoanalysis* (1917/1963), Freud writes: "phantasies possess *psychical* as contrasted with *material* reality, and we gradually learn to understand that *in the world of the neuroses it is the psychical reality which is the decisive kind*" (p. 368).[11] Likewise, in *The interpretation of dreams* (1900/1965) Freud asserts that "nothing but a wish can set our mental apparatus to work"(p. 637). Because phantasy plays such a crucial role in formulating psychic reality within the psychoanalytic paradigm, I will first address the theoretical importance of this concept within the Freudian psychoanalytic epistemology and then I will explore the role of clinical interpretations of fantasy on a methodological or technical level.

The issue of material or empirical reality versus psychical reality is at the heart of Freudian interpretive theory. Through his work with hysterics, Freud confronted the very challenging issue of childhood sexual trauma as he formulated his theory of neurosis. The central question Freud faced was: were the memories of sexual trauma from childhood (for example, sexual seduction/abuse, witnessing intercourse/sexual contact, or castration threats) that surfaced in clinical material empirically "real" or were they phantasies? At first, Freud believed such memories of sexual trauma indicated abuse or mistreatment that was materially real (and could be factually verified) and he believed this childhood trauma accounted for psychological symptoms in adulthood. This

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[11] Generally, fantasy as an unconscious process is spelled with a "ph" in the Standard Edition of Freud and in Klein's work. However, in neither theory nor practice is the distinction between conscious fantasy and unconscious phantasy unambiguous. Although some authors use the spelling differences ("ph" or "f"-antasy) to indicate theoretical differences, I will address such differences explicitly, rather than on the basis of spelling. Unless otherwise stated, *f*antasy and *ph*antasy are transposable terms in this paper.

explanation is referred to as Freud's "seduction hypothesis." But as Freud explored the

nature of such "trauma memories" further, the relationship between empirical reality and

narrative, fantasized reality became less clear. Freud abandoned his seduction hypothesis

in 1897.[12] Instead of pursuing the empirical reality of such memories, Freud shifted his

attention to the relationship between neurotic fantasies and unconscious forces (such as

the repressive censorship of sexual desires/drives).

Freud was more interested in finding a narrative explanation that worked

clinically to further the analytic process, than he was in issues of factuality and liability.

In *Introductory lectures on psychoanalysis* (1917/1963) Freud explains:

the position can be shown to be that the childhood experiences constructed or

remembered in analysis are sometimes indisputably false and sometimes equally

certainly correct, and in most cases compounded of truth and falsehood. (p. 367)

Therefore, "we should equate phantasy and reality, and not bother to begin with whether

the childhood experiences under examination are the one or the other" (Freud,

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[12] Although 1897 is commonly accepted to be the year Freud rejected the seduction hypothesis, Rand and Torok (1993) contend that Freud continued to vacillate between a belief in the fictionality and a belief in the reality of such seduction scenes throughout his life. They take this vacillation to be a "perilous" and "core contradiction" (Rand & Torok, 1993, p. 592) in psychoanalytic theory. According to Rand and Torok (1993), the danger of the psychoanalytic theory and practice regarding fantasy and memory is the potential for misinterpreting real trauma as fantasy. The debate concerning the reality of such trauma memories continues to this day. For example, the documentary film *Capturing the Friedmans* (Jarecki, 2003) explores the legal, ethical, philosophical, and psychological challenges that memories and allegations of childhood sexual (in this case pedophilic) trauma raise. The film presents two equally persuasive and compelling but factually conflicting and contradictory narrative accounts of reality. These competing narrative truths confront the viewer with the difficulty (or even the impossibility) of definitively discriminating between true (materially verifiable) versus false (fictionalized or fantasy) trauma memories. Given that determining the factual veracity of such memories often proves to be difficult (if not impossible), Rand and Torok's (1993) censure of psychoanalysis for refusing to be the arbiter of this issue appears to be somewhat misguided.

1917/1963, p. 368). The *effects* of such memories—be the memories real or imagined— were what concerned Freud. Freud shifted the project of psychoanalysis away from a pursuit of material truth, and aimed it instead toward understanding and exploring the patient's psychical experience.

Beneath the "conspicuous symptoms" of neurotic suffering, Freud uncovered "hidden unconscious phantasies" shaped by wish-fulfilling desire (1908/1959, p. 162). He explains:

> Every desire takes before long the form of picturing its own fulfillment; there is no doubt that dwelling upon imaginary wish-fulfillments brings satisfaction with it…thus in the activity of phantasy human beings continue to enjoy the freedom from external compulsion which they have long since renounced in reality. (Freud, 1917/1963, p. 372)

Wish-fulfilling phantasies free humans from the constraints of external reality and thereby provide a process for gaining satisfactions that would otherwise be prohibited. Likewise, in "Creative writers and day-dreaming" (1908/1959), Freud writes, "the motive forces of phantasies are unsatisfied wishes, and every single phantasy is the fulfillment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality" (p. 146). What is important for Freud is that in this imaginary sphere of fantasized satisfaction, wish-fulfilling desire reigns supreme (trumping external reality). With this turn from external reality to the individual's psychic reality, Freud opened a space for understanding the importance of phantasy without focusing on the issue of resolving questions related to material fact. Because

psychoanalysis, as both a discipline and a practice, "is an inquiry upon the particular subject's psychic reality" (Barratt, 1984, p. 7), external, empirical reality takes a back seat to the particular, idiosyncratic, and fantastic nature of psychic life. Freud discovered that for some people (particularly those with neurotic symptoms), phantasy becomes disruptive by taking on too great a role, such that the person loses the capacity to function in external reality. Freud discovered that "it was possible to account for otherwise inexplicable disturbances of conscious experience in terms of the intrusion of an unconscious fantasy" (Arlow, 1969a, p. 1). "Out of the ruins of the seduction theory soon emerged a general theory of neurosis, which held that neurosis was not caused by genuine repressed traumatic memories, but by unconscious wish fantasies" (Olsen & Koppe, 1988, p. 128). In abandoning the seduction hypothesis, Freud set aside the issue of empirical truth in favor of a narrative truth that might account for neurotic suffering.

Because fantasies are a constant feature of mental life, the role of fantasy in psychic life is complex. Conscious fantasies are only a small part of the fantasy structure that organizes psychic reality. In psychoanalytic theory, the term "fantasy" refers to something more intricate than daydreaming or the flight of the imagination that is associated with a general, non-specialized definition of the term. Unconscious (primary process) fantasies, which lie outside of awareness, are distinct from conscious (secondary process) fantasies, such as daydreams. Fantasies orchestrate the intersection between internal and external reality, such that there is

a mutual and reciprocal effect of the pressure of unconscious fantasy formations and sensory stimuli, especially stimuli emanating from the external world.

Unconscious fantasy activity provides the "mental set" in which sensory stimuli

are perceived and integrated. External events, on the other hand, stimulate and

organize the re-emergence of unconscious fantasies (Arlow, 1969a, p. 8).

Unconscious fantasies make their presence known through symptomatic intrusions upon

ordinary conscious experience (p. 8). Such intrusions structure dreams, symptoms, slips

of the tongue, bungled actions, character style, and feelings.

Unconscious fantasies are narratives that dynamically organize human

experience. Edelson (1992) characterizes the psychoanalytic account of unconscious

fantasy in hermeneutic terms, writing:

An analysand's unconscious fantasy might be called his master story. Or course,

he may have more than one master story or unconscious fantasy. Revisions or

variants of a particular master story, evolving through a lifetime, constitute a

fantasy system. (p. 104)

The idiosyncratic fantasy system characteristic of each individual psyche functions as a

master story that structures individual psychic reality. Psychoanalysis involves engaging

with these fantasy systems in an effort to explore the ways that such master narratives

influence experience. The rules that govern unconscious mental processes are very

unlike the organizing directives of consciousness. Secondary, conscious mental processes

are characterized by "organized, purposeful thought [that] makes use of representational

rule-governed language," whereas primary, unconscious thought is characterized "by an

active suspension of concern about the truth" (Edelson, 1992, p. 110). Unconscious fantasies, therefore, are of particular importance to psychoanalysis because they organize psychic experience according to a highly personal and unique logic that defies the rules of "rationality." The narrative aspect of this unique logic suggests a consistency to the fantasy. A particular portrayal of desire or story about wish fulfillment is replayed in the unconscious fantasy, and though it may vary in form as it makes its intrusions on consciousness (just as details of a story change with each retelling), there is a reiteration of a basic plot line in the fantasy that structures individual experience.

This view of fantasy has important implications not just for Freud's metapsychology (as theory), but also on the level of technique or practice. Interpretation in psychoanalysis aims to catch sight of the particular unconscious fantasy system that organizes psychic life for the individual and explore the way that fantasy system impacts the individual experience of external reality. "It is not only the contents of an unconscious fantasy that become conscious in psychoanalysis but also the particulars of that fantasy's relation to [so-called] external reality" (Edelson, 1992, p. 113). The analyst engages unconscious fantasies though a focus on primary, unconscious mental processes. When primary, unconscious mental processes become "ascendant" (as happens in free association, dreaming and symptom formation), the unconscious fantasy "increasingly dominates [a person's] interpretation of what he experiences" (p. 111). The psychoanalytic focus on the unconscious fantasy system of the patient or analysand facilitates a process in which such unconscious material moves to the surface of consciousness. In making the unconscious conscious, psychic material that would otherwise be obscured and hidden becomes knowable. According to Freud, it is through

gaining insight into the ways that the patient's fantasy system (as a relatively fixed internal structure that makes its appearance in numerous specific manifestations) interacts with what is termed external, or empirical, reality, that the hold that the fantasy system has on the patient's life is relaxed.

Achieving a productive familiarity with the particular nature of a patient's unconscious fantasy system is one aim of psychoanalysis. Edelson (1992) writes, "A goal of psychoanalysis is to loosen the grip of a particular master story on the analysand and therefore to reduce the effort allocated to realizing it on the screen of imagination or in relations with external reality" (p. 113). Edelson continues:

> Ideally, the psychoanalyst's repeated interventions make it possible for the analysand increasingly to achieve access in consciousness to his own mental states. He thereby achieves insight: insight into the workings of his own mind; insight into the ways he forges links—and the kind of links he forges—between unconscious fantasy and external reality; insight into how such linkages cause him to confuse what belongs to him and what belongs to others, to distort what he is like and what objects and persons in external reality are like, and to mistake just what he is doing when he carries out some particular psychological function; and insight into how such linkages and their effects produce the symptoms from which he now suffers. (p. 113)

Edelson's focus here is on the importance of gaining insight through psychoanalytic treatment, and he eloquently describes the ways such insight can be a useful and curative

force, but the psychoanalytic interpretive approach to fantasy material involves more than

acquiring and communicating knowledge regarding the nature of the patient's unique

fantasy system. Understanding alone is insufficient. Freud, addressing the issue of

interpretive technique, denounces "any line of behavior which would lead us to give the

patient a translation of his symptoms as soon as we have guessed it ourselves," even

though "it is not difficult for a skilled analyst to read the patient's secret wishes plainly

between the lines of his complaints and the story of his illness" (1913/1958b, p. 140).

Interpreting, directly to the patient, his or her fantasy system is inadequate because such

insight will inevitably lead to increased resistance to the treatment process. The patient's

conscious knowledge or "intellectual interest and understanding" are a "helpful factor" in

psychoanalytic treatment, "but this alone hardly comes into consideration in comparison

with the other forces that are engaged in the struggle" (1913/1958b, p. 143). Because

these "other forces" complicate the relationship between fantasy and insight, the

psychoanalyst must grasp not only the function of the fantasy system or psychic reality in

the patient's (analysand's) relationship to external reality, but also both the mechanisms

of and the motivation for resisting such knowledge.

Section Four
Transference and Interpretation

Psychoanalytic interpretive practice involves negotiating not just the content or

knowledge that comprises the interpretation, but also the specific nature of the

relationship between analyst and patient. Freud noticed that the ever shifting and

evolving relationship between the analyst and patient influences the patient's capacity to take in and make use of interpretations. Indeed, the effectiveness of psychoanalytic instruction—which includes interpretations of dreams, fantasies, memories, associations, and other unconscious material—is ultimately dependent upon the particulars of the transference relationship. "The patient," writes Freud, "makes use of the instruction in so far as he is induced to do so by the transference" (Freud, 1913/1958b p. 143-4). Transference refers to the assigning of attributes and characteristics of other significant relationships (especially important past relationships) to the present relationship between therapist and patient. Transference brings the past alive in the present analytic relationship. This transfer of a relational history onto a current relationship happens unconsciously; it "is a sort of acting out, and as such is in contrast to remembering" (Olsen & Koppe, 1988, p. 264).

Freud realized that the unconscious makes its appearance not only in the content that the patient brings to the analysis (symptoms, slips of the tongue, dreams, et cetera), but also in the evolving relationship between patient and analyst in the present. Freud presents his first major encounter with and formulation of transference in the case of Dora (1905/1953). The failure of this treatment (Dora's transference reaction to Freud prompted her to terminate her analysis prematurely) forced Freud to address the relational aspect of the unconscious. He writes

> What are transferences? They are new editions or facsimiles of the impulses and phantasies which are aroused and made conscious during the progress of the

analysis; but they have this peculiarity, which is characteristic for their species, that they replace some earlier person by the person of the physician. To put it another way: a whole series of psychological experiences are revived, not as belonging to the past, but as applying to the person of the physician at the present moment. (p. 116)

The impulses and fantasies stirred by past relationships live in the present through the transference relationship the patient has with the analyst, such that the analyst becomes the living stand-in or embodiment of some psychologically important person in the patient's past. Although Freud did not "succeed in mastering the transference in good time" (p. 118) in this case, he retrospectively analyzes the "cruel impulses and revengeful motives" (p. 120) characteristic of Dora's transference that symptomatically disrupted the treatment and generalizes from this case to present a theoretical account of transference. Freud notes that some transferences are structured as substitutions or "reprints" of the past, while others "are more ingeniously constructed" by modifying "some real peculiarity in the physician's person or circumstance" and thereby forming "revised editions" of the original, past relationship (p. 116). As either reprint or revision, the transference is the intrusion in the present of a symptomatic relational pattern originating in the past.

In his essay "The dynamics of transference" (1912/1958a), Freud explores the ways in which a "stereotype plate" that is "constantly repeated—constantly printed afresh—in the course of a person's life" (p. 100) makes its appearance in the present in response to current circumstances and relationships. This stereotyped imprint is shaped

by a series of early (childhood) erotic experiences and occurs both in more conscious, reality-oriented forms and in unconscious, phantasy-driven forms (Freud, 1912/1958a). Because these early erotic experiences are most often associated with powerful, affectively positive or negative experiences, often relating to the mother and/or the father, the historically-based stereotype that is transferred or imprinted onto present relationships is accordingly marked by strong, though often unconscious, affects that are regularly associated with the parents (Freud, 1912/1958a). Present relationships become the stage on which to replay formative, past experiences. Positive transference, or transference shaped by feelings of love, appears consciously as affection and admiration, but unconsciously such transference stirs sexual or erotic excitation (Freud, 1912/1958a). Negative transference, on the other hand, is marked by hostile feelings tied to childhood erotic experiences and also manifests itself in both conscious and unconscious forms (Freud, 1912/1958a).

"Transference is an inevitable necessity" that must be dealt with in the analysis, writes Freud (1905/1953, p. 116). It is the source of "all the obstacles that make the [analytic] material inaccessible to treatment" (p. 116), and as such is a "dangerous weapon" (1940/1964a, p. 177) that is powerful enough to undermine, or even destroy, the course of treatment, as happened in Freud's work with Dora. Freud goes so far as to call transference "*the most powerful resistance*" and "the strongest weapon of the resistance" (Freud, 1912/1958a, pp. 101 & 104). Transference plays such a powerful role in resisting treatment because in its negative form (negative transference), it produces a hostile rejection of the analyst and analytic work, while in its positive form (positive transference) it unconsciously eroticizes or sexualizes the analytic encounter (p. 105). In

both cases, the analyst has been transformed into something other than what reality or consciousness might validate (something that is determined by the particularities of the patient's unconscious). Transference to "the doctor is suitable for resistance to the treatment only in so far as it is a negative transference or a positive transference of repressed erotic impulses" (p. 105). Such manifestations of transference feelings erect a barrier to the progress of the treatment, and as such are understood to be forms of resistance, used by the unconscious, to ward off change (progress through treatment).

But at the same time the transference is also the "most powerful ally" in the treatment "if its presence can be detected each time and explained to the patient" (Freud, 1905/1953, p. 117). It allows the patient to arrive "at a sense of conviction of the validity of the connections which have been constructed during the analysis" (p. 117). The transference does "the inestimable service of making the patient's hidden and forgotten erotic impulses immediate and manifest" (Freud, 1912/1958a, p. 108). If interpreted, transference can also be a valuable tool for gaining insight. "It is the analyst's task constantly to tear the patient out of his menacing illusion and to show him again and again that what he takes to be new real life is a reflection of the past" (Freud, 1940/1964a, p. 177). The analyst uses the transference to gauge the patient's capacity to tolerate and take in interpretations. "In certain cases and at certain moments of analysis," when a patient's "withdrawal from reality becomes too intense" (as happens when "displacement and projective processes gain too much over objective perception"), "the management of transference becomes difficult or impossible" and therefore Lowenstein (1951) advises against interpretation at such times (p. 2). But at those times when an interpretation of transference phenomena is appropriate in the analytic work, the

transferred unconscious feelings are interpreted to the patient. Transference

interpretations facilitate the movement of unconscious relational mechanisms into

consciousness via a focus on the present relationship between analyst and patient.

"Interpretations of transference are so effective" because transference "reactualizes the

past" (p. 6), thereby making unconscious historical material accessible for inspection and

analysis in the present.

Chapter Two
Klein and Interpretation

Introduction

"Psychoanalysis starts but does not end with Freud" (J. Mitchell, 1998, p. 12).

Later psychoanalysts have revised and expanded Freud's work, developing new ways of

conceptualizing and practicing psychoanalysis, as well as elaborating Freud's basic

conceptual and praxis oriented theories. Melanie Klein is one such Freudian revisionist.

Klein can be read as working from, yet substantially revising and modifying, Freud's

work. As a revisionist, Klein developed a reading of Freud that is firmly grounded in

basic Freudian theoretical assumptions yet which also introduces innovative concepts and

practices to the field of psychoanalysis. Like all revisionists, Klein's innovations

challenge the field to consider and make sense of new ways of thinking that differ from

tradition.

The nature of the relationship between Freudian and Kleinian psychoanalysis has

been and continues to be debated. Some critics assess Klein as having fundamentally

deviated from the Freudian project, while others chart a clear lineage between the two

theorists. "[Klein's] intent, which she continually reaffirmed throughout her long and

productive career, was to merely validate and extend Freud's hypotheses through direct

observation and clinical work with children," write S. A. Mitchell and Black (1995, p.

85). But as Klein's work developed, J. Mitchell (1998) charts an evolving deviation from

Freud's work, wherein she moved from initially expanding Freud's work to really

developing her own autonomous body of work by the second half of the 1930's (p.13). J.

Mitchell notes, "it is for the new territories she explored and started to chart, not for the

failure or successes of orthodoxy, that Melanie Klein should be acclaimed" (1998, p. 13).

Klein's "discoveries led to a vision of mind that is strikingly different from Freud's in

many basic respects" (S. A. Mitchell & Black, 1995, p. 85).

Anna Freud (Freud's youngest daughter, and founder of the American ego-

psychology branch of psychoanalysis) was a particularly outspoken critic of Klein. She

rejected Klein's work as heterodoxy. "Whereas Anna's efforts were to adhere to her

father's ideas precisely, without change," write Hinshelwood, Robinson, and Zarate

(1998), "Melanie [Klein] strove to develop her work from a basis of Freud's ideas" but

was also creative and unconventional in her theorizing (p. 65). Differences in their

viewpoints on psychoanalytic interpretation, particularly in analytic work with children,

became a leading source of conflict between Klein and Anna Freud. "All through her

lectures, Anna [Freud] explicitly or implicitly argued against Melanie Klein's view that

full analytic interpretations could be made, just as in adult analyses" (p. 63). But the

primary discrepancy between their two versions of psychoanalysis (psychoanalysis as

formulated by Anna Freud versus psychoanalysis as formulated by Melanie Klein)

stretches beyond the level of technique: their diverging approaches to clinical

interpretation are the result of fundamental disagreement about key theoretical issues.

Stonebridge writes:

Anna Freud's own concern in *The ego and the mechanisms of defense* was with

'objective anxiety'; for her the task for the analyst was to show the child that there

was really nothing to be anxious about. Klein, on the contrary, insisted that there

was something to be anxious about—oneself, and one's own primary rage (in

Phillips & Stonebridge, 1998, p. 195).

Whereas Klein actively sought out the anxieties that the patient violently projects onto

the outside world, Anna Freud encouraged supporting the development of an autonomous

ego (an ego able to defend against anxiety) through the curative interpersonal contact

made possible by positive feelings toward the analyst (Elliot, 2002, p. 27). For Anna

Freud such positive feelings in analytic work with children were not the repetition or

projection of feelings onto the analyst that is characteristic of transference, but were

instead a form of "original" love; Anna Freud did not believe children younger than three

were able to form transference feelings, while Klein found transference feelings projected

onto those outside the self from the earliest moments in the infant's development

(Hinshelwood, Robinson & Zarate, 1998, p. 62). The disparaging assessment of Klein's

work presented by Anna Freud's ego psychology remains the principal critique of Klein's

legitimacy as a leading figure in psychoanalytic theory. But despite Anna Freud's

critique of Klein in defense of her own work (which she believed properly extended her

father's ideas), Melanie Klein can be and is often read as a follower of Freud, whose

revisions to psychoanalytic theory seek to add to his account of the nature of unconscious

experience.

In this chapter I will explore Kleinian theory as both working within yet

substantially revising the Freudian tradition. I will concentrate on the epistemology and

methodology of Kleinian psychoanalytic interpretation (section one), construction

(section two), the role of phantasy (section three), and transference (section four) in

Kleinian theory. By drawing connections between Freudian interpretive theory (as

presented in Chapter One) and Klein's formulation of psychoanalytic interpretation, I

locate Klein decisively within the Freudian tradition; yet by highlighting her revisions of

Freud and her new formulations, I will also be drawing attention to Klein as an innovator

who introduces novel and original theories and practices to the field of psychoanalysis.

Rather than seeking to resolve issues of orthodoxy, my goal is to facilitate meaningful

dialogue between different perspectives or psychoanalytic schools on the key issue of

interpretation in psychoanalysis.

Section One
Psychoanalytic Epistemology

In Chapter One, I explored the philosophical foundations of Freudian

interpretation, locating an interpretive or hermeneutic epistemology based on the

unconscious within Freud's new ontology. I also contend, in Chapter One, that Freud's

formulation of the unconscious functions as a trope, or a descriptive metaphor, for

describing the nature of being (ontology) and of knowledge (epistemology). The

unconscious is a crucial and indispensable psychoanalytic concept or theoretical

construct. Yet for Freud the unconscious is a fluid concept, which provides the starting

point for numerous, at times contradictory, explanatory models or metaphors for

describing human experience. This results in an evolving psychoanalytic epistemology

within Freud's writings. One way to understand the revisionist work of subsequent

psychoanalytic theorists is in terms of this evolving epistemology. As Freudian

psychoanalytic epistemology developed (through revisions to Freud's metapsychology),

the particular methods and methodological principles for accessing unconscious

knowledge have also been revised and elaborated. Klein's contribution to this evolving

psychoanalytic epistemology develops out of her novel inferences about the nature of the

unconscious.

Just as Freud encountered certain clinical phenomena that motivated his

construction of psychoanalytic theoretical concepts (this included a process of suggesting

multiple theoretical models as Freud added to and revised his own hypotheses), Klein too

presented additional theoretical structures or systems based on her own clinical

experiences that were intended to further the psychoanalytic project of understanding the

mind. These theoretical constructions (that go beyond empirical observation) add to the

psychoanalytic understanding of the mechanisms of the mind on a structural level, by

introducing new concepts to the framework of (or system of tropes that is)

psychoanalysis. For Klein, as for Freud, the presence of the unconscious "as unknown,

but nevertheless a dominating influence on the life of the person" is an absolute truth (a

foundational concept) (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 467). Klein accepts Freud's radical theory

that human being and knowledge are both fundamentally constituted by the unconscious,

and therefore works within Freud's requisite psychoanalytic ontology and epistemology.

However, just as Freud continued to expand upon his own epistemological framework

throughout his career, developing new tropes as explanatory structures, Klein too

introduced new inferences about the nature of the unconscious. Klein's new theoretical

inferences do not defy or undo Freudian suppositions; instead her conjectures about key psychoanalytic issues (for example: childhood experience, the Oedipus complex, and the nature of fantasy) are meant to build on and enrich the theoretical tools that comprise the Freudian hermeneutic.

Klein's formulation of infantile experience can be understood to be a key psychoanalytic metaphor or trope that opens a new way to interpret the nature of the mind, thereby revising Freudian theory. Infancy, as described by Klein, is fraught with conflicts that give rise to particular psychic defenses. These defenses remain active throughout life, influencing adult experience, as well as structuring the developmental tasks of childhood. Infantile experiences comprise the core of psychic experience, according to Klein and her focus on describing and treating "the infant in the patient" is a key feature of the Kleinian psychoanalytic framework (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 239). Klein put into words or language that which prior to her work was impenetrable, even unthinkable: she saw in the infant very deep levels of aggression and anxiety and described defense mechanisms used by the infant as he or she struggles to manage these powerful affects. Klein's theoretical formulation of the nature and temporality of infantile experiences provides the foundation for Kleinian interpretive methodology.

Much of Klein's theory developed out of her work with children and reflects differences in technique or method specific to that work; but her work with children also served a more general function in relation to psychoanalytic theory. The nature of childhood experience, extending back to pre-linguistic, infantile states, provides Klein with a new trope for describing the subject of psychoanalysis. Klein's work with children opened for her new descriptive metaphors to explain various aspects of human

experience, thereby facilitating the development of new psychoanalytic theory. "Klein came to regard the adult mind in the same way she understood the child's—as beset with deep, psychotic-like terrors, as unstable, dynamic, and fluid, and as always responsive to 'deep' analytic interpretations" (S. A. Mitchell & Black, 1995, p. 88).

Through working with children, Klein discovered a link between their play and the free association method Freud had developed for working with adults. According to Klein, children's play is a form of free association. She writes:

> The child expresses its phantasies, its wishes and its actual experiences in a symbolic way through play and games. It makes use of the same archaic and phylogenetically-acquired mode of expression, the same language, as it were, that we are already familiar with in dreams; and we can only fully understand this language if we approach it in the way Freud has taught us to approach the language of dreams. Symbolism is only a part of it. If we wish to understand the child's play correctly in relation to its whole behavior during the analytic session we must not be content to pick out the meaning of the separate symbols in the play, striking as they often are, but must take into consideration all the mechanisms and methods of representation employed by the dream-work, never losing sight of the relations of each factor to the situation as a whole. (Klein, Vol. 2, 1932/1975, p. 7-8)

Children's play, like adult's free associations, provides the analytic material by which the unknown unconscious is made conscious or knowable. In what was for Klein a

prototypical play therapy, Freud (1920/1955) analyzed and interpreted the psychic

meaning involved in his grandson's game of fort-da (in which the infant cast away then

reeled in a small bobbin, while declaring "fort—da" or "gone—here," as a way to cope

with feelings related to the fluctuating presence and absence of his mother).

Hinshelwood (1989) writes, "Klein took as her model Freud's interpretations of an infant

of eighteen months playing with a cotton reel" (p. 12).   In transforming children's play

activities—through interpretation—into conscious and therefore knowable feelings, Klein

sought to help the child contain otherwise unconscious anxieties.[13] Following Freud,

Klein characterizes psychoanalytic interpretive activity as distinct from a clear-cut or

simple process of assigning predetermined meanings to play scenarios. And although it

is something that she has been accused of, "Klein denied making wild interpretations of

the symbols in play and claimed she always had evidence of the link between the figure

in the play and the primary object before interpreting, though in her papers she frequently

does not give the actual links that come out in the session" (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 27).

Just as Freud identifies the pitfalls of both the symbolic method of interpretation (in

which one sign or symbol replaces another) and the decoding method of interpretation (in

which signs or symbols are translated according to a fixed key), Klein too points to the

importance of the "wider connections and the whole analytic situation" in interpreting the

unconscious associations in play activities (Klein, 1932/1975, Vol. 2, p. 8). For Klein,

the psychoanalytic interpretative method for clinical work with children entails eliciting

unconscious, associative material in play activities for the purpose of uncovering the

unique chain of distorted, latent meanings that lie behind the manifest meanings in the

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[13] For Freud the child did not yet have an unconscious at this age, whereas Klein proposed unconscious
processes were present from birth on.

play. This unconscious material is then named—through the analytic interpretation—thereby undoing the distortions of unconscious censorship and bringing the unconscious into consciousness.

Klein's focus, in analytic work with children, is on interpreting play activities, but she also stresses the importance of language. She believes that interpretation of play opens the way to "making speech…an instrument of analysis" and that "no analysis of a child, whatever its age, can be said to be really terminated unless the child has employed speech in analysis to its full capacity, for language constitutes the bridge to reality" (Klein, 1932/1975, Vol. 2, p. 14). Play, like dreams, opens the realm of the unconscious, providing access to aspects of the mind not available to consciousness, while language opens the possibility of connecting the conscious and unconscious aspects of the mind.

In addition to this correspondence between free association and play, Klein also identified forces at work in children's play that were not accounted for in Freudian theory. From these observations, Klein developed a radical new understanding of infantile experience. This new understanding is a theoretical construction: it is based on traces evident in children's play, but is nevertheless a conjecture. Klein's theoretical construction of infantile experience provides the basis for a type of psychoanalytic interpretation that moves beyond the associative material that is present in children's play (the manifest material). In her work with children, Klein develops a method of interpreting anxiety, such as it is noticeable in the child's play, for the purpose of allowing the child to move ahead or progress in analytic play. Based on her understanding of infantile states, Klein's interpretations were directed toward the (unconscious) anxieties produced in play and free association. Hinshelwood (1994)

terms this the "anxiety-interpretation-response" sequence in Klein's work, and identifies this process occurring repeatedly in her case studies (p. 38). Hinshelwood reads Klein as attempting "to put into conscious words those ideas, emotions (especially anxiety) and relationships that are hidden, or part-hidden; in effect to speak the unspoken to the child" (p. 39). In *The psycho-analysis of children* (1932/1974) Klein argues for immediate and "deep-going interpretations" (which seek to address resistances and therefore "open the door to the unconscious" and "diminish the anxiety") (Vol. 2, p. 24). For Klein, interpretations are meant to modify anxiety by directly addressing both disturbing (for example, aggressive) and hostile (negative transference) mental contents. Her concern is "not only the representational content but also the anxiety and sense of guilt associated with it" (Klein, 1932/1975, Vol. 2, p. 25). This stress on affects—anxiety and guilt, in particular—associated with the material presented in analytic work, not just the symbolic content of the material, is characteristic of Klein's interpretive stance toward all patients, regardless of age. The anxieties Klein noticed in children's play allowed her to reconceptualize free association (in work with adults) as containing the same affects.

Kleinian interpretations attempt to bring the child's unconscious ideas and emotions into consciousness by speaking them or putting them into words (Hinshelwood, 1994, p. 39). This is in keeping with Freud's interpretive methodology. However, there are differences at the level of method between how Freud and Klein make their interpretations. At least in part, these differences can be understood to be a result of Klein's clinical work with children. Hinshelwood (1994) writes,

> With children there is much more a sense of doing something together with the
>
> patient (or even *to* him or her); this contrasts with adult psychoanalysis, where
>
> there is a tendency to speak *about* things. It should be noted, however, [that]
>
> there has been a realization that adult psychoanalysis is also a "doing something"
>
> together with the patient. (p. 39)

Klein's interpretations to children were particularly graphic, in ways that can offend adult

sensibilities. She spoke to children about sex, bodily functions, body parts, death, fears,

aggression, hatred, envy, and other such topics that are normally censored from

interactions with children. Her "brisk, overtly sexualized discourse" (Kristeva, 2001, p.

55) and focus on "psychic negativity" (Rose, 1998) can be disturbing. As a result of this

interest in anxiety and guilt, Klein is sometimes charged with single-mindedly

concentrating her interpretations on negative affect. This indictment, however, is

countered by the Kleinian claim that it is precisely those psychic junctures where anxiety

and guilt dominate that block access to the unconscious. Such affects are obstacles to be

overcome, via interpretation, for the purpose of making the unconscious conscious. Klein

focused "on the preverbal and on deeply repressed material and felt that interpreting at

this level was where the analyst's work made a difference" (Young, 2000). Kristeva

(2001) writes: "Klein's play technique proves to be inseparable from her style of

interpretation, one in which a fantasy *enacted into play*, turned into a fantasy *narrated by*

two people, leads to an awareness of reality" (p. 52). For Klein, the interpretive

methodology that developed through her play technique applies not just to work with

children, but also to interpretive practice in psychoanalysis with adult analysands because, for Klein, the conflicts of childhood remain active throughout adulthood.

Behind the infantile affects of anxiety and guilt, Klein theorized a destructive, aggressive drive that draws from but also extends Freud's formulation of the death drive (Elliot, 2002, pp.79-80). Klein's focus on the death instinct is a key aspect of her revisions of Freud's theoretical tropes. Klein draws from Freud's work, but also articulates a new metaphor by which to understand the death drive. According to Klein, even before libidinal conflicts surface, the infant is entwined in psychic, oedipal conflict (conflict that gives rise to first anxiety and later feelings of guilt) stemming from unconscious aggression and violent feelings. Klein was interested in the pre-genital (the oral and anal) aspects of oedipal phantasies and explored the very early stages of the Oedipus complex in her clinical work with children (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 57). These pre-genital, oedipal phantasies predate, but also prefigure, the Oedipus complex Freud theorized. Klein writes,

If we are right in supposing that the child's Oedipus trends set in when the sadism is at its height, we are led to the conclusion that it is chiefly impulses of hate which initiate the Oedipus conflict and the formation of the super-ego and which govern the earliest and most decisive stages of both. (Klein, 1932/1974, Vol. 2, p. 135)

Sadistic, pre-genital phantasies, driven by anxiety, are directed towards the parents

(according to Klein this includes the parents' sexual relationship) in ways that impact

both identifications and prohibitions. Hinshelwood (1989) writes,

> The aggression that is evoked in these pregential phases of the complex creates
>
> already complicated relations with the primary figures even before genital
>
> impulses take over. These complex, ambiguous and terrifying figures, when
>
> introjected,[14] become internal persecutors. Klein argued that internalized versions
>
> of parents which attack the ego are clearly phenomena in the same category as the
>
> superego described by Freud. (p. 61)

According to Klein, the instinctual aggression of the infant creates complicated, conflict-

laden relations with parental figures before sexual (libido driven) impulses surface. "The

infant, says Klein, experiences fantasies of attacking and destroying the maternal body,

and in turn suffers paranoid anxieties that it too will be destroyed" (Elliot, 2002, p. 80).

These aggressive feelings are directed both internally (as an unconscious fear of self-

destruction) and outward, resulting in both a paranoid fear of, and feelings of rage

against, the infant's earliest object: the mother.

Although "the notion of an object comes directly from Freud's scientific theories"

(Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 362), Klein significantly develops the definition and stresses the

importance of psychological objects in her approach to psychoanalysis. In Freud's work,

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[14] Introjection is a psychoanalytic term that describes the process wherein an object that had once been experienced as external (for example, another person) is incorporated within (internalized as a part of) the self. This defense mechanism will be explored more fully later in this chapter.

"object" is a term used to denote "something upon which impulses of energy [instincts]
were discharged, recognized only for the purposes of the subject's pleasure-seeking,
satisfaction and relief" (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 362). However, Klein (1952/1975)
expands this definition by including "the infant's emotions, phantasies, anxieties, and
defenses," in addition to instincts, as a necessary part of the relationship to the object
(Vol. 3, p. 51). According to Klein, it makes no sense to conceive of instincts without
also addressing how such instincts are related to psychological objects. She writes:

> The analysis of very young children has taught me that there is no instinctual
> urge, no anxiety situation, no mental process which does not involve objects,
> external or internal; in other words, object-relations are the *centre* of emotional
> life. Furthermore, love and hatred, phantasies, anxieties and defences are also
> operative from the beginning of life and are *ab initio* indivisibly linked with
> object-relations. (Vol. 3, p. 53)

Emotional life—indeed all of psychic life—is bound up in object relations according to
Klein. "For Klein the basic units of mental processes are not packets of objectless energy
[e.g. drive], but relational units *ab initio*" (Greenberg & S. A. Mitchell, 1983, p. 137).
This emphasis on the relational and affective—rather than solely on the instinctual—
quality of psychic object relations is one of Klein's key innovations in psychoanalytic
theory and "represents a fundamental shift in vision concerning human motivation and
mental processes in general" (p. 137). Klein shifts the focus away from an instinct-based
drive to a complex set of relationships with real and imagined/internalized others. For

her, "the organization and content of object relations, particularly relations with the fluid and complex world of internal objects, are the central determinants of experience and behavior" (p. 145).

The mother[15] is the first and primary external object experienced by the infant. As a result, the mother, as object, is the first to become the focus of the child's destructive, instinctual impulses and related affects. Klein (1932/1974) writes:

> The anxiety evoked in the child by his destructive instinctual impulses makes itself felt in the ego, I think, in two directions. In the first place it implies the annihilation of his own body by his destructive impulses, which is a fear of an internal instinctual danger; but in the second place it focuses his fears on his external object, against whom his sadistic feelings are directed, as a source of danger. The onset of the development of its ego which is accompanied by the growing ability to test reality leads the child to experience his mother as someone who can give or withhold satisfaction and in this way it acquires the knowledge of the power of his object in relation to the satisfaction his needs—a knowledge which seems to be the earliest basis in external reality for his fears of the object. In this connection it would appear that he reacts to his intolerable fear of instinctual dangers by shifting the full impact of the instinctual dangers on to his object, thus transforming internal dangers into external ones. Against these

---

[15] The mother as object could also be a surrogate care giving and therefore maternal-type personage, if not a biological mother. One of the primary distinguishing features of motherhood, and consequently the mother figure/object, is feeding (either via the breast or feeding by some breast substitute such as a bottle).

external dangers his immature ego then seeks to defend itself by destroying his object. (Vol. 2, p. 128)

Klein describes the child's attempt to negotiate, or manage, the anxiety stirred by aggressive impulses via an internal representation of the mother (the mother as object). Klein theorized that the internal conflicts, and resulting object relations that are sparked by aggressive impulses, eventually lead the child to feelings of guilt, and ultimately a desire to compensate. "Feelings of guilt give rise to the tendency to make reparation to the injured object" (Vol. 2, p. xiii). According to Klein, distress in the form of remorse and alarm about internal aggression stirs feelings of love and a desire to restore good in the object.

Klein describes this internal psychic process unfolding in two main phases or positions in the first six to eight months of life, which she terms: the "paranoid-schizoid position" and the "depressive position." These positions describe infantile states of development that occur prior to the developmental stages proposed by Freud. Her formulation of the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions addresses what she sees to be a shortcoming in Freudian theory. For Klein, Freud's "concept of stages of development through which a child passes in a well-defined order was too limiting" (Segal, 2004, p. 33). Her choice of the term "position," as opposed to "stages" of development, intentionally highlights the overlapping, repetitive, and fluctuating nature of certain constellations of anxieties, defenses, object relations, and impulses (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 393). "Like Freud, she did think that children's primary interest shifted from oral, to anal and then genital concerns, but she found that there was constant

movement from one to the other and back again" (Segal, 2004, p. 33). Klein's

developmental positions designate "certain constellations of attitudes and [defense]

mechanisms" (p. 33).

S. A. Mitchell and Black (1995) observe, "Klein's most important and abiding

contribution to the development of psychoanalytic thought was her depiction of what she

termed the 'paranoid-schizoid' and 'depressive' positions" (p. 88). The paranoid-

schizoid position refers to an early state of mind in which destructive, instinctual

impulses are externalized by being cast onto an outside object, resulting in paranoid

anxiety about retaliation or persecution by the "bad" object with which such impulses are

associated. At the same time, the infant attempts to draw in, and therefore "rob," the

object of its good contents (for example, by devouring and ingesting the good contents

that come from the mother's breast) (Klein, 1946/1975, Vol. 3, p. 2). In this bifurcated

process of consuming and assimilating the good, gratifying parts of the object and

expelling the aggressive parts of the self, the ego's coherence is threatened, resulting in

"a tendency toward disintegration, a falling into bits" that is characteristic of psychosis

(1946/1975, Vol. 3, p. 4).[16] Working through both the terror of internal fragmentation, in

which the ego's coherence is jeopardized, and the fearful mistrust of harm from outside,

according to Klein, is an integral part of normal development. "Klein stresses that the

paranoid-schizoid mechanisms are a normal defense against early, primitive anxieties"

(Elliot, 2002, p. 85).

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[16] This infantile psychotic "falling to bits" is related to, but is not identical with, the fragmentation characteristic of adult schizophrenia. For more on the relationship between infantile states and adult psychosis in Kleinian theory see W.R. Bion, (1957) "The differentiation of the psychotic from the non-psychotic personalities." In "normal" development, the child will come to work through and better contain these instincts and anxieties, leading to a more consolidated ego.

Typically, as the child matures, the persecutory anxiety stirred in the paranoid-schizoid position develops into a persecutory guilt that is characteristic of the depressive position. Hinshelwood (1989) writes:

In the paranoid-schizoid position the conflict is more over the survival of the ego, which feels under threat of death. In the depressive position this threat passes more toward the loved objects, and the subject regrets their suffering with an intense remorse that is felt as guilt and responsibility. (p. 314)

"States of integration" (both of the self and of the object) become "more frequent and lasting as development goes on" and the "synthesis" between good and bad "gives rise to depressive anxiety, guilt and the desire to make reparation to the injured loved object" (Klein, 1948/1975, Vol. 3, p. 34-5). "From this tendency toward integration, the small infant is led in the second half of its first year to perceive other people as whole objects" (Elliot, 2002, p. 86). The shift from part to whole object relations is a defining element of the depressive position. As the infant comes to perceive both self and others as more complete/whole and stable, feelings of love and an awareness of the origin of aggressive impulses triggers depressive feelings of guilt and sorrow. These feelings eventually produce a more mature desire to make reparations for harm done. The "feelings of guilt, loss and reparation" that are characteristic of the depressive position "are connected to the interplay of destruction and reintegration which underpins mature self-organization" (p. 87). According to Klein, the conflicts underlying these developmental positions are never entirely resolved, and even those who have successfully reached the depressive

position will nevertheless regress into the paranoid-schizoid position at particular key moments throughout life. Adults can retreat or regress into the paranoid-schizoid position during stressful periods when more mature defenses break down and give way to infantile defenses. For those unable to come to terms with integrated, whole objects (and thereby move past the conflicts and defensive strategies of the paranoid-schizoid position), severe psychotic pathologies dominate.

In addition to initiating a new form of child psychoanalysis, revising Freud's developmental theory, and offering a new conceptualization of psychoanalytic objects, Klein also alters Freud's model for several of the defense mechanisms. Klein includes in her developmental theory an account of how children manage anxiety as they move between the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions through the use of key primitive, infantile defense mechanisms: in particular, splitting, introjection, projection, and projective identification. According to Klein, these infantile defense mechanisms come into being prior to the more mature, neurotic defense mechanisms Freud focused on (repression, above all). She draws from but also expands Freud's work on these more primitive defense mechanisms. In "splitting," either the object or the ego is divided—in a process that can be characterized as either differentiation or fragmentation—into good and bad aspects or bits. For example, the mother has the potential to be both split into a good object, who is able to provide satisfaction and relief from internal impulses, or a bad object, whose capacity to frustrate and withhold satisfaction provokes fear and retaliatory rage. Likewise, a phantasy of the self as containing only good or bad parts or as falling to pieces in the face of its own badness can develop.

As well as this parsing of the object or self via splitting, there is also an impulse driven movement of the object either into or outside of the self. Oral impulses stir a fantasized taking in or internalization of the object, in a process termed "introjection." Introjection serves as one defensive way of dealing with anxiety-provoking experiences. The child internally establishes or "introjects [unrealistic] imagos, both phantasized good imagos and phantasized bad ones" of the object (Klein, 1932/1975, Vol. 2, p. 137).[17] Each external object is liable to become at times good, and at other times bad, resulting in both idealized (good) and persecutory (bad) objects. External objects become introjected as unrealistic imagos or internal objects. However, "as his adaptation to reality and the formation of his super-ego go forward [gradually], those imagos approximate more and more closely to the real objects they represent" (p. 137). Likewise, through the discharge or expulsion of anal impulses onto the object—via "projection"—the object, which in Klein's theory is again prototypically the infant's internal representation of the mother, is transformed into a source of either goodness or badness: the mother as good or bad object. "Projection" describes a process wherein a person "attribute[s] certain states of mind to someone else," such that "something of the ego is perceived in someone else" (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 397). States of mind are projected outside the self and into the object. Although introjection and projection both include the repositioning of either positive or negative feelings, projection is a particularly necessary defense mechanism for dealing with sadistic or aggressive feelings and provides a source of relief from the anxiety that accompanies the death drive. "Deflecting anxiety in this manner is soothing

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[17] "Imago" is a psychoanalytic term first used by Freud to denote the unconscious representation of an external object, but more specifically the term has come to designate an idealized image of a person (e.g., a parent) that is formed in childhood.

for the infant, as aggression is no longer experienced on the inside and bad feelings are projected and installed outward" (Elliot, 2002, p. 83). Klein highlights the way in which projections carry not just impulses, but parts of the ego.

Alongside the projective process, a related process, termed "projective identification,"[18] also takes place in which there is a "splitting off [of] parts of the self and projecting them into objects," resulting in a "weakening and impoverishing of the ego" in "abnormal object-relations" (Klein, 1946/1975, Vol. 3, p. 8-9). Spillius (1988) writes:

> [Klein] thought of projective identification as a phantasy in which bad parts of the self were split off from the rest of the self and, together with bad excrements, were projected into the mother or her breast to control and take possession of her in such a fashion that she was felt to *become* the bad self. (Vol. 1, p. 81)

One of Klein's contributions to an understanding of primitive defense mechanisms is that she noticed that "impulses do not just vanish when projected; they go into an object, and they distort the perception of the object" (Spillius, 1983, p. 322). Klein's formulation of projective identification can be understood to "add depth to Freud's concept of

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[18] "Considerable controversy has developed over the definition and use of this concept" (Spillius, 1988, p. 81). According to some readers of Klein it is neither "useful" (Spillius, 1983, p. 322) nor "clear" (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 182) to draw a distinction between projection and projective identification, while for others it is one of her most popular concepts. Young (1994) writes, "projective identification is the most fruitful psychoanalytic concept since the discovery of the unconscious" (Young, 1994). However, this debate is beyond the scope of this work. I include projective identification here because this difficult concept "has come more and more to centre stage in Kleinian psychoanalysis" (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 180). But I exclude from my discussion more contemporary formulations, most of which took "place after Klein's death in 1960," (p. 180), and many of which see projective identification as a defining feature of Kleinian psychoanalytic interpretation.

projection" (p. 322), but in its originality, it also adds a new metaphor to psychoanalytic theory for understanding the way in which the unconscious is manifest in lived experience.

These Kleinian innovations on the level of theory expand psychoanalytic interpretive methodology in new directions. Kleinian interpretive methodology is based on a bold, new way of conceptualizing the psychoanalytic mind; Klein's innovations regarding psychoanalytic epistemology resulted in new interpretive practices. "Klein made deep, even militant interpretations of the anxieties about breasts and other body parts, about hate, tearing, scooping out, biting and murderousness which shocked non-Kleinians" (Young, 2000). Klein formulated her interpretations on the basis her developmental theory, unraveling and revealing the aggression, anxiety, psychic disintegration, and various other responses to reality that are stirred by the patient's shifting object-relations. Her theoretical formulations were not separate from her clinical work. "In a clinical setting all these defenses and positions that Klein describes are discoverable in the present relationship between patient and analyst; they are primitive, preverbal or extra-verbal ways of communicating an experience, and they can be understood and put into words in an interpretation which can bring clarity and relief" (J. Mitchell, 1998, p. 22). Klein's interpretive methodology is structurally akin to Freud's, but Klein significantly revises and expands the metaphors and tropes that comprise the epistemology, which results in a changed method of interpreting.

Section Two
Constructing Meaning

Klein's interpretations of infantile experience, like the reconstructions Freud

explored in his paper on "Construction in analysis" (1937/1964b), are guesses or

conjectures on the analyst's part about infantile, preverbal experience. Klein bases her

hypotheses about this preverbal, infantile experience on her observations of children: She

studied both infant behavior and children's play activities, which she took to be a

communication of unconscious material. From her observations, she developed her

theory of the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions and described the defense

mechanisms characteristic of both positions. But this description of infantile

development is also an interpretation of the child's preverbal past that is based on

inferences and speculations that are guided by psychoanalytic theory. Klein's theory

moves away from a more narrow interpretive process of observing and accounting for

facts, to include a far-reaching process of constructing meaning by narrating experiences

that would otherwise remain outside of language. As an interpretation that moves beyond

empirical fact, Klein's theoretical assumptions about infantile experience can be

understood to be a construction in the Freudian sense. Working from clinical traces and

guided by psychoanalytic theory, Klein constructs fictitious memory narratives that are

an interpretation of infant experience. Because they address a time in human

development prior to language (in which thoughts and feelings are neither experienced in

words nor expressed in words), her interpretations cannot be checked against empirical

reality. In this way, Klein's theoretical constructions of infantile psychic positions correspond methodologically to Freud's theoretical constructions of an early forgotten, past. Rose (1998) writes of Klein: "In the tradition of Freud, she saw her task as one of excavation, as the retrieval of something which even Freud, she argues, had barely been able to approach" (p. 128).

However, despite the way Klein's theoretical hypotheses about—or construction of—childhood fit Freud's general interpretive methodology (in particular the constructive process in psychoanalysis), Klein's specific approach to the role of history and the clinical use of memory in the analytic process differs from Freud's. Like Freud, Klein maintains that historical factors play an important role in current life conditions. Highlighting the link between her view of the past and Freud's, Klein (1927/1975) writes, "one of the bases of psychoanalysis is Freud's discovery that we find in the adult all the stages of his early childish development" (Vol. 1, p. 170). But unlike Freud, Klein sees the past, not as a remote relic to be unearthed, or even imaginatively constructed, but as alive and operative in the present. Despite a Freudian inspired excavation of the past in Klein's theoretical work, Freud's archeological metaphor does not fit Klein's praxis-based technique for working with issues of the past (or personal history) in psychoanalysis. For Klein, there is no static, repressed past to be retrieved and brought into the present via the analytic reconstruction; instead, the past is alive and active in the patient's way of being in the present (which is made manifest through the transference relationship). "Where in Freud repression is a defense that creates a past and a symptom is a return of that past, Klein is more interested in the defenses which have no such dimension of time past and with atemporal inhibitions of the ego, not with symptoms" (J.

Mitchell, 1998, p. 27). On the level of theory-making, Freud and Klein are engaged in

similar constructive processes, but when it comes to interpretive technique in the analytic

session, their understanding of the analyst's interpretive role in relation to historical

issues differs.

There is not the Freudian reconstruction of missing early memories in Kleinian

analytic practice because what is seen to be of historical importance is that which is

discernible in the present. Klein's constructions intervene or create meaning by putting

into words or constructing infantile experiences that are beyond language:

> All this is felt by the infant in much more primitive ways than language can
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> express. When these pre-verbal emotions and phantasies are revived in the
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> transference situation, they appear as 'memories in feelings', as I would call them,
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> and are reconstructed and put into words with the help of the analyst. In the same
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> way, words have to be used when we are reconstructing and describing
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> phenomena belonging to the early stages of development. In fact we cannot
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> translate the language of the unconscious into consciousness without lending it
>
> words from our conscious realm. (Klein, 1957/1975, Vol. 3, p. 180*n*)

Klein deliberately named or put into language preverbal experiences and phantasies,

seeking to bring the infant's unconscious into consciousness by drawing upon the

constructive, meaning-making, linguistic capacities of the adult. Klein justifies such

interpretations by noting that the past is not buried away as an inert relic, but instead lives

in the feelings that are made evident by the present-day transference relationship.[19]

Hinshelwood (1994) describes the importance of the simultaneity of past and present for

interpretation:

> It is no good, therefore, making interpretations of the type 'You see me as your
> father'. What is transferred from the past is not just the father, nor just the
> defense…, nor just a relationship…What is transferred is a particular way of
> using the object that serves a function right now—the function it served
> then…The means are borrowed from the past, resemble the past, but are in service
> to the present. (p. 227)

The interpretive emphasis is placed on the current object relationship; this relationship is

assumed to carry a past, to have a history, but is important precisely because it is

operative in the present. "Freud's theory revolves around the question of the past,"

whereas for Klein, "infancy is perpetually present" (J. Mitchell, 1998, pp. 25 & 26,

respectively). J. Mitchell (1998) writes, "Freud's historical imagination examines the

present (the adult illness) and from it reconstructs a hypothetical past determinant. For

Klein the past and the present are one" (p. 26).

Unlike Freud, who describes stages of conflict structuring a temporal trajectory in

development, Klein sees childhood conflicts as constitutive of, and active in, present day

experience. Whereas Freud described a developmental process driven by the resolution

of conflicts, Kleinian psychoanalysis focuses on an infancy that is never really left

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[19] See section four of this chapter, which addresses Klein's formulation of transference.

behind. Commenting on this vital alteration of Freudian theory, J. Mitchell (1998) writes,

> From her observation of normal children she is led to an analysis of infantile development that finds the points of psychosis which at the present time, or repeated in the future because they are always current, will be echoed in a psychotic illness. At first, it looks as though we have here a parallel with Freud's work. It is often claimed that, where Freud found the child was father to the man, Klein found the infant gave birth to the child and adult. The resemblance between the notions is illusory. (J. Mitchell p. 27)

For Klein, there is no static past to be retrieved and brought into the present via analytic reconstruction; instead, the past is alive in the patient's way of being in the present. This understanding of the nature of time in personal history impacts Klein's use of positions in her developmental theory. For Klein, developmental conflicts are never fully resolved. Instead, they continue to appear throughout life, such that the historical dimension of the unconscious exists in the present as shifts between the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions occur. Where developmental stages provide, for Freud, an interpretive or hermeneutic framework for building clinical constructions of a remote, inaccessible past, for Klein, because the past is never really relegated to the past, the reconstructive process in psychoanalysis carries a different significance. Kleinian clinical interpretations draw upon a theoretical understanding of infantile experience that is reconstructed via adult language. Klein's formulations of the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions are an

effort to provide narrative truths that reach beyond what is empirically knowable. In this way Kleinian interpretations are like the reconstructions Freud formulated that draw upon theoretical metaphors or tropes such as the unconscious, the Oedipus complex, and the super-ego. However, because the focus of the Kleinian analytic remains in the present, rather than on a forgotten historical dimension, Kleinian interpretations do not include a process of reconstructing specific missing memories and the historical focus evident in Freud's work is left out of the Kleinian hermeneutic.

Schafer (1997b) censures the contemporary Kleinians because they "deemphasize reconstruction" and instead "remain intent on developing explicitly the phenomenology of the internal world and the way it is played out in relations with the external world" (pp. 20-21). Favoring the more traditional Freudian stance that allows for "thinking causally and retrospectively," he "believe[s] that this restricted emphasis [amongst the Kleinians] on the present, technically and interpretively, pushes other aspects of the analytic context out of sight" (Schafer, 1997b, p. 21). Although Klein does work with such causal and retrospective or reconstructive explanations on a theoretical level, Kleinian clinical interpretive technique is more closely focused on phenomena that are empirically observable in the present, perhaps at the cost of a consideration of historical causality on the individual or personal level.

Section Three
Fantasy and Interpretation

Klein's focus on the interpretation of clinical material that is manifest in the observable present, as opposed to historical material, might be mistakenly understood to imply a positivistic epistemology centered on knowing and explaining empirical reality. This would be a misreading of Klein. Instead, Kleinian interpretation is structured by a keen appreciation for the role of unconscious fantasy in psychic life, an appreciation that developed from her observations of infant and childhood experience, but which looks beyond the observable to infer and name, or reconstruct, early mental processes. Isaacs, a leading Kleinian analyst and theorist, (1948) writes: "Unconscious phantasies are always inferred, not observed as such; indeed, the technique of psycho-analysis as a whole is largely based upon inferred knowledge" (p. 74). In psychoanalysis, including Kleinian analysis, fantasy is understood to be situated outside the realm of empirical reality; it follows a uniquely individual logic that is not subject to the rules of an external and objective reality. Like Freud's hybrid concept of psychical reality, in which memories and fantasies work together to produce what is experienced as reality, Klein's formulation of the role of fantasy in relation to empirical reality focuses on the seminal role of the individual's unconscious processes in shaping reality. Indeed, for Klein (as for Freud), that which is termed "reality" is fundamentally constituted by fantasy. As a result, Klein can be understood to be following Freud's lead by working within a hermeneutic epistemology, in which reality and knowledge are inherently interpretive constructs that are shaped by unconscious fantasies.

Much has been written about Klein's notion of phantasy, including the ways it revises, and/or deviates from, Freudian theory, but the bulk of this scholarship is based on Isaacs' essay, "The nature and function of phantasy" (1948). This seminal paper "was a landmark in trying to define and catalogue the characteristics of unconscious phantasy" within Kleinian psychoanalysis (Hinshelwood, 1994, p. 33) and Isaacs "provides a detailed exposition of the Kleinian theory which is lacking in the work of Klein herself" (Leader, 1997, p. 85). However, because my intent is to focus specifically on Klein's own formulations, I will limit my discussion of unconscious phantasy to Klein's writings on the topic and to commentary that deals with primary texts by Klein. This means presenting a view of unconscious phantasy that is different from the one Isaacs presents, and to which most of Klein's followers adhere.[20] But despite the lack of an explicit formulation of the nature of phantasy in Klein's writing, "the idea of phantasy as an unconscious activity was present for Klein from the beginning of her work" and the "basic clinical importance of unconscious phantasy has remained unchanged all through Kleinian thought" (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 32-33).

Phantasy, according to Klein, is "a basic mental activity present in rudimentary form from birth onwards and essential for mental growth, though it can also be used defensively" (Spillius, 2001, p. 363). The infant develops internal images or imagos of the objects he or she encounters in the external world (for example, the infant develops and incorporates his or her unique, imaginative mental representation of the mother,

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[20] I do this primarily for pragmatic reasons. Just as others, such as Isaacs, have expanded Klein's work, so too with Freud and Lacan, and such an overview of the history of psychoanalytic thought is both beyond me and beyond the scope of this dissertation. I aim in this dissertation to take the texts of these writers as my subject, and for Klein that means making sense of her understanding of phantasy such as it is present in her own writings. This results in a rather piecemeal approach to explicating the Kleinian formulation of phantasy, for there is no central work in which Klein lays out her theory on this topic.

which often includes the infant's first experience of the mother in the form of the breast as object). Such phantasies are connected with affective experiences of frustration and satisfaction, which therefore endow the phantasy with a sense of goodness and/or badness that is unique to the individual. Klein (1932/1975) writes,

> As far as can be seen, there exists in the quite small child, side by side with its relations to real objects, a relationship to unreal imagos which are experienced both as excessively good and as excessively bad, but on a different plane. Ordinarily these two kinds of object-relations intermingle and colour each other to an ever increasing extent…But in the mind of the quite small child its real objects and its imaginary ones are still widely separated. (Vol. 2, p. 151)

Human development involves a process of coming to terms with the conflicts that arise when internal phantasies are challenged by external reality. Through this process, the relationship between external reality and the imaginary realm of phantasy is clarified and consequently managed, although the influence of phantasy remains always active. "This matching of inner phantasies against external reality takes place throughout life" (Segal, 1997, p. 97). Elsewhere, Segal (1973/1988) writes:

> Unconscious phantasies are ubiquitous and always active in every individual. That is to say, their presence is no more indicative of illness or lack of reality-sense than is the presence of the Oedipus complex. What will determine the

character of the individual's psychology is the nature of these unconscious

phantasies and how they are related to external reality. (p. 12)

For Klein, phantasies are used both to give meaning to the external world and to incorporate and interpret external reality, so that the internal realm and the external world are mutually, interactively permeated with phantasy. However, when adequate reality-testing fails to develop and infantile phantasy remains omnipotent, the desire that gives rise to the phantasy is replaced by a "compulsive and repetitive" delusion (Segal, 1997, pp. 91-92). In Kleinian thought, the failure to acquire a capacity to negotiate between external reality and infantile, omnipotent phantasy is a developmental aberration that results in psychosis (Segal, 1997, p. 91). In normal development, as phantasy becomes increasingly "adapted to reality," phantasies become much less easily recognizable (Klein, 1932/1975, Vol. 2, p. 81), but the influence of phantasy, as constitutive of psychical reality, remains active throughout life. In Kleinian psychoanalysis, "what matters" is how an event is "experienced in unconscious fantasy or psychic reality, and it is that experience that should be the focus of the interpretation" (Schafer, 1997b, p. 7).

Klein called "early infantile thought…phantasy and assumed that it was closely linked to bodily experience" (Spillius, 2001, p. 365). Phantasy is both the process and the product of a uniquely human mental process that is set in motion by the instincts or drives; it is the mental and emotional experience that accompanies somatic sensation (Hinshelwood, 1989, pp. 34-35). Phantasies exist "on the borderline between the somatic and the psychical" (Segal, 1973/1988, p. 13). For example, Klein's (1932/1975) case work with Trude (aged three years and nine months) illustrates how "aggressive trends

connected with the Oedipus conflict," which surfaced when Trude was not yet two years old, provoked "very severe night terrors" which caused the girl to "run into her parent's bedroom again and again at night without being able to say what it was she wanted" (Vol. 2, p. 5). Klein writes,

> Trude…repeatedly played 'make-believe' in her analysis that it was night-time and that we were both asleep. She then used to come softly over to me from the opposite corner of the room (which was supposed to be her own bedroom) and threaten me in various ways, such as that she was going to stab me in the throat, throw me out of the window, burn me, take me to the police, etc. She would want to tie up my hands and feet, or she would lift up the rug on the sofa and say she was doing 'Po-Kaki-Kuki'. This, it turned out, meant that she wanted to look inside her mother's bottom for the "Kakis' (faeces), which signified children to her…By analyzing her wetting and dirtying herself which stood for attacks upon her parents copulating with each other, these symptoms were removed. Trude had wanted to rob her pregnant mother of her children, to kill her and to take her place in coitus with her father. She was two years old when her sister was born. It was those impulses of hatred and aggression which, in her second year, had given rise to an increasingly strong fixation upon her mother and to a severe anxiety and sense of guilt which found expression, among other things, in her night terrors. (Vol. 2, p. 4-5)

Via the play scenario in her analysis with Klein, we can see how Trude's symptoms—

night terrors, bed-wetting and dirtying herself—are connected to the underlying drive.

Aggressive instincts are manifested as impulses of hatred and violence, which give rise to

Trude's early Oedipal phantasy of attacking her rivals (her mother and, as a result, her

siblings, signified by the feces inside her mother) so that she might possess her father.

The phantasy is rich with somatic significations, but it also has its origins in somatic

experiences. Trude's phantasy ideas represent anal aggressive instincts that surface in

response to Oedipal frustration (jealousy sparked by her mother's copulation with her

father). "Klein held that the child's play expresses its preoccupations, conflicts and

phantasies, and her technique consisted in analysing the play exactly as one analyses

dreams and free associations, interpreting phantasies, conflicts and the defenses" (Segal,

1973/1988, p. 42).

Klein understood "the child's play as the symbolization of his phantasies" (Segal,

1973/1988, p. 9). "Phantasy emanates from within and imagines what is without, it offers

an unconscious commentary on instinctual life and links feelings to objects and creates a

new amalgam: the world of imagination" (J. Mitchell, 1986, p. 23). J. Mitchell

continues: "phantasy is both the activity and its products" (p. 23). The child's

imaginative world is communicated via the symbolic activity of play. Through the

process of creating and symbolically enacting phantasies, the child develops an ability to

imaginatively equate objects. This equation forms the basis of the capacity for symbol

formation. In Kleinian theory, unconscious symbolism provides the "essential link

between primitive phantasy and…reality" (Segal, 1979/1989, p. 72). Klein writes, "not

only does symbolism come to be the foundation of all phantasy and sublimation but,

more than that, it is the basis of the subject's relation to the outside world and to reality in general" (1932/1975, Vol. 1, p. 221). "A certain amount of anxiety is necessary to spur this development. If the anxiety is excessive, however, the whole process of symbol-formation comes to a stop" (Segal, 1973/1988, p. 5). Addressing the anxiety connected to phantasy is a crucial objective of Kleinian psychoanalysis. Klein (1932/1975) writes: "Once the child's phantasy has become more free as a consequence of its lessened anxiety, we have not only gained access to its unconscious but have also mobilized in an ever greater degree, the means at its command for expressing its phantasies" (1932/1975, Vol. 2, p. 14). The means, as she explains in a footnote to this sentence, is speech, and she concludes her footnote by commenting, "I believe that no analysis of a child, whatever its age, can said to be really terminated unless the child has employed speech in analysis to its full capacity, for language constitutes the bridge to reality" (Vol. 2, p. 14, n. 1).

In her case study of Dick, Klein (1930/1975) describes an example of such inability to tolerate anxiety and the resulting symptom of an inhibited capacity for symbol formation. Profound anxiety stirred by internal aggression results in Dick's rejection of language:

In Dick's phantasy faeces, urine and penis stood for objects with which to attack the mother's body, and were therefore felt to be a source of injury to himself as well…Dick cut himself off from reality and brought his phantasy-life to a standstill by taking refuge in the phantasies of the dark, empty mother's body. He had thus succeeded in withdrawing his attention also from the different objects in

the outside world which represented the contents of the mother's body—the
father's penis, faeces, children. His own penis, as the organ of sadism, and his
own excreta were to be got rid of (or denied) as being dangerous and aggressive.
(Vol. 1, pp. 226-227)

Dick dreaded his own aggression, which he linked to both the penis (his own and his
father's) and his excreta; likewise, he was terrified of the contents of his mother's body
(he fantasized that his father's penis was inside his mother's womb). This anxiety caused
him to empty the world (including his mother's body) of its symbolic significance, a
move that resulted in his profoundly underdeveloped capacity to partake in language.
"Dick's further development had come to grief because he could not bring into phantasy
the sadistic relation to the mother's body" (Vol. 1, pp. 224).

Klein's intervention with Dick went to the heart of the symbolic process: she
named his fantasies for him by drawing him into symbolic play and then providing
languaged accounts of the anxieties that gripped him. She explains:

I took a big train and put it beside a smaller one and called them "Daddy-train"
and "Dick-train." Thereupon he picked up the train I called "Dick" and made it
roll to the window and said "Station." I explained: "The station is mummy; Dick
is going into mummy." He left the train, ran into the space between the outer and
inner doors of the room, shut himself in, saying "dark" and ran out again directly.
He went through this performance several times. I explained to him, "It is dark
inside mummy. Dick is inside dark mummy." (Vol. 1, p. 224-225)

Her interpretations constructed an account of his internal experience that Dick was not able to symbolize himself. Klein writes,

> In general I do not interpret the material until it has found expression in various representations. In this case, however, where the capacity to represent it was almost entirely lacking, I found myself obliged to make my interpretations on the basis of my general knowledge. (Vol. 1, pp. 228-229)

Through interpreting the unconscious phantasy, Klein opens a space for Dick to tolerate his own feelings so that he might enter the shared reality of linguistic experience. Klein writes, "as his interests developed he at the same time enlarged his vocabulary" (p. 228).

Klein's work with Dick provides a specific clinical example of a Kleinian interpretation of phantasy, but it also demonstrates why she places such significance on interpreting the phantasy. We see not only what Klein did, but also why: as a result of Klein's interpretations, Dick's anxiety is contained enough to allow him to enter the field of symbolic relations, which in turn provides the basis for continued psychic development. Through Klein's interpretation of the conflict at the center of Dick's unconscious phantasies, his latent anxieties became manifest enough to allow him to continue to develop and engage with reality ("the working-over of this anxiety was beginning by way of the establishment of a symbolic relationship to things and objects" Vol. 1, p. 227). Such intervention at the level of the unconscious phantasy is vital in Kleinian analysis: "In the course of development, and also in the course of a successful

analysis, a shift must be achieved from an archaic phantasy organization, which distorts perception and leads to compulsive action, to one allowing a greater capacity for reality testing" (Segal, 1997, p. 93). Dick's inhibition and delayed development was a defense against the phantasies that were a source of anxiety; making those phantasies symbolic, through interpretation, opened a path to reality.

Understanding the role of phantasies in relation to the defenses is a key aspect of Kleinian theory and interpretive practice. In addition to the possibility of retreat into phantasy, as was demonstrated by Dick's rejection of symbolism and language, Klein also describes several standard or prototype phantasy structures operative in particular psychic defenses. "Certain phantasies…can function, as it were, as a defense" (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 35). Defense mechanisms, in Kleinian theory, are the enactment of particular infantile patterns of unconscious phantasies; they describe ways of relating to the object. However, "what an observer can describe as a mechanism is experienced and described by the person himself as a detailed phantasy" (Segal, 1973/1988, p. 17). The atemporality of the phantasy accounts for this difference; unlike a repetition, which implies a pattern with a historical trajectory, the phantasy driving the defense is experienced as being fully of the present, despite its roots in infancy. Kleinian defenses are "atemporal inhibitions of the ego," unlike the Freudian defenses, which deal with the past, via "a return of that past" in the form of a symptom (J. Mitchell, 1998, p. 27). Such "inhibitions of the ego," or infantile states, correspond to certain phantasy structures that are characteristic of the primitive psychic positions: the paranoid-schizoid and the depressive positions. "The externalization of the 'bad' object [projection] and the internalization of the 'good' object [introjection] are the prototype defense mechanisms"

(Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 36). Exploring the relationship between introjection, projection, and phantasy, Klein (1959/1975, Vol. 3) writes,

> introjection and projection, though they are rooted in infancy, are not only
> infantile processes. They are part of the infant's phantasies, which in my view
> also operate from the beginning and help to mould his impression of his
> surroundings; and by introjection this changed picture of the external world
> influences what goes on in his mind. Thus an inner world is built up which is
> partly a reflection of the external one. That is to say, the double process of
> introjection and projection contributes to the interaction between external and
> internal factors. This interaction continues throughout every stage of life….The
> processes of projection and introjection…have to be considered as unconscious
> phantasies. (p. 250)

The phantasy that structures introjection as a defense is an infantile "impulse to suck dry, bite up, scoop out and rob the mother's body of its good contents," while projection "implies expelling dangerous substances (excrements) out of the self and into the mother" (Klein, 1946/1975, Vol. 3, p. 8). Although these defenses form early, in infantile experience, they remain operative throughout life, particularly during moments of high stress or anxiety, when reality testing breaks down.

The interface between the internal and external, via the defense mechanisms of introjection and projection, is both an unconscious phantasy-formation action and is comprised of an unconscious phantasy, on the level of content. "A given individual's use

of" the defense mechanisms "is expressed through a particular phantasy" (Spillius, 2001, p. 367). Commenting on this relationship, Schafer (1997a) writes, "In Kleinian thought defensive operations are viewed as both expressions of unconscious phantasies and as mechanisms" (p. 73). According to Schafer, this "two-pronged approach" in Kleinian psychoanalysis, which focuses on both the operation (or method) of the defense mechanisms and the content of the phantasy behind the defense mechanisms, marks a difference from Freudian theory, which deals only with the function and structure (the method) of the defense mechanisms (p. 73). The theoretical principle that phantasy imparts the motivation for the defense leads to an emphasis, in Kleinian analytic technique, on interpreting the defenses. Schafer (1997b) states, "Kleinians are centrally oriented to the analysis of defense" (p. 17). For Klein, the interpretation of defense mechanisms in analysis is also an interpretation of the unconscious fantasies that motivate such defenses.

Section Four
Transference and Interpretation

Although it is true that Kleinians place a great emphasis on the interpretation of phantasy (including phantasy as it is manifest in the defenses), the nature of such interpretations—what exactly is interpreted in an interpretation of phantasy or an interpretation of the defense?—remains unclear without an understanding of the importance of transference in Kleinian psychoanalysis. Just as Freud sought to understand and explain the evolving and highly charged relationship between patient and

analyst, Klein too paid particular attention to the transference relationship and theorized an essential link between the content of, or knowledge behind, interpretation and the transference relationship in the course of treatment. Even more so than Freud, Klein works with transference as a guide to both the timing and the content of psychoanalytic interpretations. In fact, an "emphasis on the importance of transference interpretations is one of the distinctive features of the Kleinian approach" (Segal, 2004, p. 69). Klein sees in analytic material, particularly in transference content, the same infantile states that she inferred (or constructed) based on the conflicts displayed in children's play.

Klein, unlike Freud, did not emphasize the transference as a past relationship to be reconstructed in the analysis. Instead, she was interested in phantasies, primitive defense mechanisms, anxieties, and so forth that are currently lived out via transference in the relationship between analyst and analysand. Transference is one of the primary vehicles for accessing and exploring the unconscious. The transference, for her, is "an externalization of unconscious phantasy here and now in the analysis" (Bronstein, 1997, p. 38). "Klein's technique gives more weight to the transference than does classical Freudian technique. The evolution of the transference in the psychoanalytic process, rather than the reconstruction of the past, became the centre of attention" (Segal, 1979/1989, p. 163). Kleinians mark their approach to transference as one of the major ways in which they have moved away from Freud's original formulations. "[Klein's] emphasis is not, as in Freud's work, on the reconstruction of a past relationship which is transferred onto the analyst, but rather on the development within the analytic setting of a relationship which displays all the mechanisms, anxieties, love, guilt, and phantasies which characterize the analysand's way of dealing with life in the world outside"

(Mitchell 1986, in introduction to *Origins of Transference*, p. 201). Transference is "not

simply a repeat of some past event which can be reconstructed" (Hinshelwood, 1994, p.

233-234). In her theoretical work, Klein expanded the nature and importance of

transference beyond Freud's formulations of it, and shifted the emphasis away from

transference as a repetition of the past to transference as a present enactment of conflicts

and phantasies. Transference is one of the key places where Klein's role as an innovator

of psychoanalytic theory is most apparent.

The Kleinian view of transference interpretations stresses the simultaneity of past

and present in the relationship between patient and analyst; Kleinians work with the "here

and now" of the patient's present conflicts (rather than concentrating on "genetic

interpretations" that refer to the patient's history) (Malcolm, 1986/1988, p. 73). Although

Klein retains Freud's belief that transference contains an historical dimension, for her that

historicity is important primarily insofar as it is brought into play in the here and now (the

present). "The practice of Kleinian psychoanalysis has become an understanding of the

transference as an expression of unconscious phantasy, active right here and now in the

moment of the analysis. The transference is, however, moulded upon the infantile

mechanisms with which the patient managed his experiences long ago" (Hinshelwood,

1989, p. 465). Elsewhere Hinshelwood (1994) writes,

> Transference is generated from the present use of historical defenses: in other
>
> words, the adult personality's unconscious phantasies (which underlie all these
>
> defense mechanisms) is transferred from the present unconscious into the analytic

relationship—although, to be sure, the unconscious phantasy of the adult has been

progressively elaborated out of the infant's relations with objects. (p. 234)

The infantile past shapes the phantasies and defenses of the adult, but what matters is not

so much the historical influence or historical dimension, but the way the phantasies and

defenses, which are shaped within a developmental trajectory, manifest in the present-

day, something which is known via the transference.

"Transference," in Kleinian psychoanalysis, is understood to be "an expression of

unconscious phantasy" (Hinshelwood, 1989, p. 465). Klein extends the definition of

transference beyond direct references to the analyst in material presented by the patient,

to include a much broader and all-encompassing understanding of transference as present

in all unconscious content. The analytic field "covers all that lies between the current

situation and the earliest experiences," and in order to access "the earliest emotions and

object-relations," the analytic work must "examine their vicissitudes in the light of later

developments" (Klein, 1952/1975, Vol. 3, p. 56). The past does not trump the present for

Klein, and any exploration of the unconscious (unconscious phantasy) will include a

transferential dimension. Klein writes that transference comprises a "total situation,"

which includes "emotions, defenses, and object-relations" transferred from the past onto

the present (Vol. 3, p. 55). But with this phrase, "total situation," Klein also highlights

the enactment of a core, unconscious phantasy in all the material of a given analytic

session (Vol. 3, p. 55). For Klein, the "whole material presented"—including "reports of

patients about everyday life, relations, and activities"—provides transference material

about the unconscious phantasy (Vol. 3, p. 55).

Klein, like Freud, was aware of the importance of negotiating and managing the transference in relation to the process of making clinical interpretations. Segal (1988) writes, "the interpretation of mechanisms of defense is often ineffective" until there is a transference component, so that the interpretation is "meaningful to the patient in terms of what he actually feels that he does to the analyst in the transference…whilst using these mechanisms of defense" (p. 18). In an unpublished paper from 1943, Klein writes:

> From my work with children I came to certain conclusions which have to some extent influenced my technique with adults. Take transference first. I found that with children the transference (positive or negative) is active from the beginning of analysis, since for instance even an attitude of indifference cloaks anxiety and hostility. With adults too I found that the transference situation is present from the start in one way or another, and I have come, therefore, to make use of transference interpretations early in analysis. (cited in Hinschelwood, 1989, p. 15)

The transference reflects the patient's infantile anxieties and other conflicts as they are manifest in the moment and therefore provides material upon which to base interpretations.

Klein's formulation of transference interpretations, like other aspects of her analytic theory and methodology, both revises and modifies Freud's theories. Freud's own difficult experience with encountering and seeking to make sense of transference phenomena not only pushed him to provide ways to understand how the interpretive process might account for and work with transference, but it also prompted later

revisionist theorists, such as Klein, to push analytic understanding further on this important aspect of the treatment. What for Freud was an important, though it seems also perplexing and sometimes dangerous, aspect of the psychoanalytic encounter was for Klein a key tool for guiding the treatment process. Psychoanalytic interpretive practice, for both Freud and Klein, includes a content-based understanding of the unconscious (both structurally and as it operates on an individual level); but it also requires understanding, negotiating, and using the transference to guide the analytic process.

Chapter Three
Lacan and Interpretation

Introduction

Lacan introduced a radical new way of conceptualizing the psychoanalytic project

that has had a deep impact on psychoanalytic practice throughout much of the world.

However, for many in the Anglophone psychoanalytic community, Lacan's work either

remains largely unknown or is mysteriously obscure. His work does not fit neatly into

the trajectory of developments that characterizes the two dominant forms of

psychoanalysis in the United States: conventional Freudian psychoanalysis and Ego

Psychology (Anna Freud's contribution to the field). Nevertheless, Lacan's influence on

Continental and South American psychoanalysis is undeniable. As a revisionist, Lacan

initiated an interdisciplinary approach to psychoanalysis that engages influential

theoretical concepts developed in other fields, including linguistics, philosophy,

mathematics, and literature. In particular, Lacan takes Anna O. (via Freud) at her word

when she described psychoanalysis as "the talking cure," seeing the analytic project as

thoroughly linguistic in nature.

Lacan's return to Freud is not just an effort to restore attention to Freud's original

texts, but is also a critique of the psychoanalytic movement which Lacan feels has

deviated from Freud's original purpose. As a revisionist, Lacan's "style of presentation"

is "so original" that it seems to "belie his modest claims to be a mere commentator"

(Evans, 1996, p. 68). Lacan's "so-called 'return to Freud' [does] not consist in a mere repetition of the Freudian hypotheses" but instead provides "the opportunity for a further theoretical elaboration and foundation of psychoanalytical experience" (Geerardyn, 1997, p. 159). Lacan believes that "a return to the use of symbolic effects" will lead to a "renewed technique of interpretation" in psychoanalysis (Lacan, 1966/2002b, p. 81, 294 in the original). Like Klein, Lacan presents a reading of Freud that extends beyond the original to present an innovative, new way of understanding the analytic project. "Lacanian psychoanalysis might therefore be described as a 'post-Freudian' form of psychoanalysis, along with ego-psychology, Kleinian psychoanalysis and object-relations theory" (Evans, 1996, p. 68).

If the infant or child is Klein's organizing metaphor or interpretive trope, then language could be said to be Lacan's (at least by the 1950's). This difference is reflected in both the theory itself and the writing style of the two authors. While Klein relies on clinical case examples and explicit (oftentimes blunt) language to provide an account of her theoretical concepts, Lacan's writing is labyrinthine and contains few case examples. Lacan's interest in and appreciation of language is apparent both in the theoretical or philosophical nature of his account of psychoanalysis and in his writing style: his texts are at times poetic, at times ambiguous and perplexing, but rarely unequivocal. The word play, verbosity, and obscure references characteristic of Lacan's writing style make his theoretical concepts notoriously difficult to pinpoint. Overall, despite their shared background in psychoanalysis, Klein and Lacan are extremely different in their approach to explicating psychoanalytic theory. This difference creates a difficulty for a reading such as this one, where the goal is to provide an outline or overview of the theory that

opens the way for comparisons with other psychoanalytic schools of thought. The

challenge is to create a reading of Lacan's work on interpretation that respects his

polyvalent style, yet which also extracts enough of a synopsis that a space is opened

where meaningful dialogue might occur despite such differences in style. Rather than

force or compel a transparent and univocal summary of what is presented as purposefully

opaque, I will attempt to construct a reading of Lacan's writings on interpretation that

seeks to appreciate Lacan's dialogic style while nevertheless communicating what I hope

is a reasonable overview or account of his theory. My approach will not provide an

historical account of the developments and modifications in Lacan's thinking as it

progressed throughout his writings, but will instead draw concurrently from various

phases or periods of Lacan's work. Although a more historical account allows more room

for a detailed or nuanced juxtaposition of various concepts, my goal here is to synthesize

and simplify enough to facilitate a general dialogue. See Nobus (2000), "Chapter 4:

Tactics of interpretation" (pp. 153-183), for an excellent reading of the alterations in

Lacan's formulations of interpretation in various phases of his work.

Section One
Psychoanalytic Epistemology

In the previous chapters of this dissertation I explored the hermeneutic

epistemology that grounds psychoanalytic methodology. In the writings of both Freud

and Klein, I locate a critical interpretive practice at work in relation to the unconscious.

As Freud first formulated it, the unconscious has a metaphorical, or "as if," quality: he describes this unknown, unconscious aspect of human ontology via various metaphors or tropes that shift and evolve throughout his writings. Likewise, Klein's formulation of the nature of the unconscious continues this process of developing psychoanalytic theory by exploring the unconscious through the trope of infantile and childhood experience. Just as Freud, and later Klein, encountered certain clinical phenomena that motivated the construction of additional psychoanalytic theoretical concepts, Lacan too formulated additional theoretical models based both on his clinical experiences and on philosophic insights that were intended to further the psychoanalytic project of understanding the mind. These theoretical constructions (that go beyond empirical observation) add to the psychoanalytic understanding of the mechanisms of the mind on a structural level, by introducing new concepts to the framework of (or system of tropes that is) psychoanalysis.

As psychoanalytic epistemology has developed, the particular methods and methodological principles for accessing unconscious knowledge have also been revised and elaborated. In reading both Freud and Klein as revisionist thinkers—Freud repeatedly revised his own theories, and Klein later added her own modifications to Freudian psychoanalysis—I chart an evolving epistemology that is an essential aspect or defining feature of psychoanalysis. Lacan's revisionist formulations can be placed alongside the metaphors or tropes articulated by both Freud and Klein as key aspects of this evolving epistemology. Lacan's most important contribution to this evolving psychoanalytic epistemology is the introduction of innovative explanations or descriptions of the nature of the unconscious. In Lacan's work, the unconscious is

explored through the metaphor of language. Indeed, one of his core theoretical concepts is that "the unconscious is structured like a language" (Lacan 1973/1981, p. 20), and therefore psychoanalysis must be approached and understood in terms of linguistics. The metaphorical structure of language—words refer to, or are defined through, other words in an endless stream of signifiers—is also "inherent in the unconscious" (Lacan, 1973/1981, p. 247). The unconscious is "primarily linguistic" according to Lacan (Evans, 1996, p. 218). By defining the unconscious as the function or effects of the signifier (or symbolic) on the subject, Lacan points to the "exteriority" of the unconscious, locating the unconscious outside of the individual (p. 218). In so doing, he presents a socially constructed unconscious that is quite different from the interior unconscious presented by Klein. Lacan writes, "the exteriority of the symbolic in relation to man is the very notion of the unconscious" (cited in Evans, 1996, p. 218). The Kleinian unconscious develops as an internal response to the external world, whereas for Lacan the unconscious is in language and therefore predates—and even forms—the subject. As a result, there is no preverbal unconscious (as there is in Klein's work) in Lacanian theory. This formulation of the unconscious has far reaching theoretical (and practical) consequences for understanding interpretive methodology in Lacanian theory.

Lacan's work is marked by "the linguistic turn" that shaped 20th century critical thought. "The linguistic turn" refers to the influential philosophical premise that language constructs and reproduces reality, such that nothing can be known or experienced outside of language. This assertion, which is rooted in the philosophical linguistics of Wittgenstein (1953/1999), Saussure (1916/1983), and Austin (1962), is a foundational concept in post-structuralism and has impacted all areas of the humanities

and social theory. Working within this philosophical context, Lacan provides a

linguistics-based description of psychoanalysis. He writes, "Bringing psychoanalytic

experience back to speech and language as its foundations is of direct concern to its

technique" (Lacan, 1966/2002b, p. 76, p. 289 in original). To understand psychoanalytic

technique, as formulated by Lacan, we must accept that psychoanalysis is a language-

based phenomenon. Burgoyne (1997), clarifying in plain terms the linguistic facet of the

Lacanian position, explains:

> Words constitute the basic vehicle of the psychoanalytic situation: they are the
>
> means by which a symptom and its underlying structure are analyzed, and as a
>
> result they are the heart of the question of interpretation. (p. 45)

Likewise, Lacan (1966/2002b) writes, "psychoanalysis has but one medium: the patient's

speech" (p. 40, p. 247 in original). Throughout his work, Lacan attempts to describe and

account for the nature of this medium and the psychoanalyst's role in relation to the

patient's speech.

For Lacan, as for Freud and Klein, the unconscious is a key, governing force in

the analysand's life. In keeping with Freud's psychoanalytic ontology, according to

Lacan there is something radically unknown, alienating, or other, about being human.

Lacan describes this unconscious component of ontology in terms of an otherness that is

constituted in and through language. This otherness can be understood to be both an

effect of and a stance within language. "The subject's unconscious," writes Lacan, "is the

Other's discourse" (1966/2002b, p. 55, p. 265 in original) and the Other is "the locus in

which speech is constituted" (1981/1993, p. 274).[21] In other words, "the unconscious

consists of those words which come from some other place than ego talk" or conscious

communication (Fink, 1995, p. 4). Language (which includes speech) is beyond

conscious control. Just as we must use the language into which we are born (we speak

our mother tongue), so too does this language use us, communicating via speech

unconscious desires not tied to the ego or self. Such communications happen despite our

conscious intentions. This Other discourse speaks through us without our conscious

assent, naming desires that inhabit us even though they are not experienced as being a

part of us. Psychoanalysis, according to Lacan, is fundamentally interested in this Other

discourse; therefore, to encounter the unconscious we must pay close attention to

language (both structurally and at the level of technique).

Before addressing Lacanian interpretive technique or interpretive methodology, I

want to explore what it means that Lacan places language at the center of psychoanalysis.

To do this, we must be aware of how language is understood within linguistics. Although

this may seem to take us away from the topic, it is central to understanding the Lacanian

formulation of psychoanalysis.   Within Saussurian linguistics, language is understood to

be a formal system of organized differences (Saussure, 1916/1983). "Lacan takes up

Saussure's theory that language is a structure composed of differential elements" but

modifies it by stressing that "the basic unit of language is not the sign but the signifier"

(Evans, 1996, p. 97). This modification marks a shift away from Saussure's notion that

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[21] The capital "O" in "Other" is meant to designate the otherness "in the function of speech" (Lacan, 1978/1988, p. 236) and can be distinguished from "the little other who is not really other, but a reflection and a projection of the ego" (Evans, 1996, p. 133). The otherness designated by the capital letter (Other) has the characteristic of radical alterity or that which is completely beyond the self, whereas the other with a little "o" is the otherness of another person (which includes a projection of the self).

there is a fixed relationship or correspondence between the signified (for example, the object being named) and signifier (the word that represents the object), to the idea that signifiers produce the signified. Lacan's distinction is important because it highlights the primacy of the signifier over the signified (for example, any connection between an object and its name/label is determined by the word, not the object itself). Signifiers are the basic unit of language, according to Lacan, and they operate according to certain laws. The laws that govern the signifier are what provide the structure of language: language can be understood to be a structure of signifiers.

This linguistic background is important for understanding the link Lacan makes between language and the unconscious. Lacan "argues that the unconscious is, like language, a structure of signifiers" (Evans, 1996, p. 97). Lacan's notion that the unconscious is organized via certain structural characteristics (according to the same laws that govern language) is crucial. Such laws include "the manner in which the various lexicological and grammatical elements are organized, the manner in which the significations refer to each other, the employment of usages" and so forth (Lacan, 1978/1988b, p. 278); these abstract organizing features (as opposed to the specific laws that make up a particular language system, such as English, French, or Latin) constitute the structure of language. Because it is structured like a language, the unconscious uses the organizing characteristics of language--the laws that govern the nature and function of signifiers within a language--to give voice to those desires that the subject cannot know consciously. Following Freud's discovery that the unconscious operates via a process of distortion, Lacan suggests that such distortions follow the same rules that govern language. A ciphering (or encryption) takes place in the unconscious, whereby desires

are hidden from conscious awareness. Manifest content (for example: the dream, the slip of the tongue, and other instances in which the unconscious speaks) can be understood to be latent content (unconscious desire) that has been ciphered. Analysis, therefore, requires a deciphering process based on the laws (or encryption algorithms) of language. "Language in the unconscious, and as the unconscious, ciphers. Analysis thus entails a significant deciphering process" (Fink, 1995, p. 21).

We are now better equipped to understand the link between the linguistic principles explored above and Lacanian psychoanalytic interpretive technique. Lacan calls for a "renewed technique of interpretation" through "a return to the use of symbolic effects" (1966/2002b, p. 81, p. 294 in original). By "technique" Lacan does not mean a code of conduct or rules for interpreting. Lacan distinguishes between a practical formalization, which lays out "a [set of rules] regarding what is done and what is not done" (1966/2006b, p. 324 in the original) and theoretical formalization, which outlines the formal structures of linguistic practices. According to Lacan, interpretive technique requires the latter: an understanding of the formal structures of language. Just as Freud denounced the symbolic and decoding methods of dream interpretation, Lacan rejects the notion that interpretation can be based on symbols or follow a fixed code, even if that code were to be based on Freud's own analytic practices. We are not meant to copy Freud's interpretive content. Lacan writes,

> The point here is not to imitate him [Freud]. In order to rediscover the effect of Freud's speech, I won't resort to its terms but rather to the principles that govern it. (1966/2002b, p. 78, p. 292 in original)

Deciphering the unconscious requires knowledge of the principles that govern the ciphering process, but such laws do not reveal meaning or content. Instead, the associative chain (the speech-based phenomenon Freud discovered and termed "free association" as a method for accessing the unconscious), which functions through the slippage inherent in the signifier, provides the guide and material for the unfolding analytic encounter.

Having explored the theoretical principles behind Lacan's claim that "the unconscious is structured like a language" (1973/1981, p. 20), I would now like to address what this means for interpretive methodology in Lacanian analytic practice. The theoretical formulations Lacan introduces to the psychoanalytic field, from his over-arching connection of the unconscious to language to his various descriptions of particular facets of psychic life, all function as new tropes or metaphors for describing the nature of the mind. Lacan draws from Freud's categories (he directly addresses issues such as interpretive methodology, reconstruction, fantasy and transference), but he also introduces much new terminology and moves beyond Freudian categories and vocabulary by presenting novel ways of describing psychic life. Concepts such as "the discourse of the analyst," "the divided subject," "object *a*," "the real," etc. require engaging with Lacan in terms unique to his discourse.

Lacan most fully describes how the analyst positions him or herself in the discourse of the analytic encounter through his formulation of the analyst's discourse. Lacan's conception of the analyst's discourse does not describe what an analyst should say; rather it theorizes a particular kind of "social link, founded on language" and

elaborates how such discourse is related to truth and desire (Lacan, 1975/1998, p. 17). This concept provides a way to look at Lacan's understanding of the relationship between knowledge and the analytic process. The analyst's discourse, for Lacan, is not a prescriptive formula, but instead is one of several (Lacan explicitly theorized four: the discourse of the master, the discourse of the university, the discourse of the hysteric, and the analyst's discourse) structural possibilities within language. Lacan represents each of the discourses with an algorithm which includes the following algebraic symbols: S_1 (the master signifier), S_2 (knowledge), $ (the divided subject), and *a* (the cause of desire) (Evans, 1996, p. 44). The algorithm for the analyst's discourse (Lacan, 1975/1998, p. 91):

$$\underline{a} \;\rightarrow\; \underline{\$}$$
$$S_2 \qquad S_1$$

is meant to represent through a formula the way these four components relate to become the discourse of the analyst. The *a* represents the cause of desire, in this case the analyst as the cause of desire (for example, the analyst must represent the desire for more analytic material, the desire that the analysand speak his or her associations aloud). This desire "interrogates" the divided subject ($) (Lacan, 1975/1998, p. 91), which invariably causes the divided subject to produce more associations. This does not mean that the analyst cross-examines everything the patient says, but instead questions the relationship between what is said and the unconscious (by listening for the ways the unconscious speaks despite conscious or intentional speech). Lacan refers to the subject as "divided" because the subject is split between the conscious ego and the unconscious: this split means the subject is intrinsically alienated from his or her own being (Fink, 1995).

The result of the desire-driven interrogation that provokes or causes the patient's

free associations is the production of the master signifier (S_1). The master signifier is "the

nonsensical signifier, the signifier with no rhyme or reason" (Fink, 1995, p. 131).[22]

Lacan (1991/2006) writes of the analytic process, the analysand "is asked to abandon all

other reference than that of the four walls that surround him and to produce signifiers that

constitute this free association that is, in a word, master of the field" (p. 37 in original).

The associative chain leads to the "master signifier." We might also think of it as the

place in the associative chain at which there is a failure to make meaning, where things

only make "half-sense" (Lacan, 1975/1998, p. 80) and the associations come to a

grinding halt (Fink, 1995, p. 135). However, despite its "stupidity" (Lacan, 1975/1998,

p. 13), the master signifier is significant because it is the signifier by which the divided

subject's "relation to truth" is "resolved" (Lacan, 1975/1998, p. 91). The knowledge (S_2)

produced in analytic work "is unconscious knowledge" (Fink, 1995, p. 136). The S_2 is the

addition of a new signifier, a signifier unlike the S_1's that comprise the analysand's

associations. Some symbolized bit of knowledge of the unconscious is revealed in

arriving at the new signifier produced in analytic work, the S_2 (Geerardyn, 1997, p. 163).

This does not mean that the unconscious is slowly territorialized via naming or

signification through the process of psychoanalysis; on the contrary, the knowledge

produced via analytic discourse is an enigmatic encounter with the Other. Lacan asks,

"How can we know without knowing?" and replies, "it's an enigma" (1991/2006, p. 39 in

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[22] The master signifier is a particularly insistent and consequential signifier that reappears (perhaps in multiple forms) in the signifiers the analysand produces in the treatment (in the free associations, symptoms, dreams, slips of the tongue, etc.).

the original).[23] Unconscious knowledge is an enigma because it can only be "half-said" (p. 39 in the original), which means it is never fully known.

The analyst's discourse results in a "half-said" truth and Lacan defines such "half-said" truth as an interpretation. He writes: "knowledge as truth—this defines what the structure of what we call an interpretation must be" (Lacan, 1991/2006, p. 39 in the original). "The value of an interpretation does not lie in its correspondence with reality, but simply in its power to produce certain effects; an interpretation may therefore be inexact, in the sense of not corresponding to 'the facts,' but nevertheless true, in the sense of having powerful symbolic effects" (Evans, 1996, p. 89). Lacan is not interested in a kind of truth that can be empirically validated; instead, he argues for the kind of truth that makes narrative sense. However, the sense-making must be in the context of the patient's particular associative material, not in the form of an understanding located in the analyst: that kind of understanding implies "a kind of listening that seeks only to fit the other's speech into a preformed theory" (Evans, 1996, p. 89). Lacan warns, "we always understand too much, especially in analysis" (1978/1988b, p. 103). Explaining further, Lacan writes, "To interpret and to imagine one understands are not at all the same things. It is precisely the opposite. I would go so far as to say that it is on the basis of a kind of refusal of understanding that we push open the door to analytic understanding" (1975/1988a, p. 73). Lacan does not suggest that the analyst need make logical sense or generate an account of the unconscious based on insight, but rather that an interpretation facilitates the analysand's encounter with his or her own unconscious. He writes, "The

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[23] Lacan, like Freud, describes psychoanalysis as a process of making the unconscious conscious, while at the same time theorizing the unknown unconscious as a fundamental feature of human ontology.

effect of interpretation is to isolate in the subject a kernel…of *non-sense*," but this "does not mean that interpretation is in itself nonsense" (1973/1981, p. 250).

Lacan's version of analytic "stupidity" (Lacan, 1975/1998) might be read as a reformulation of Freud's interpretive methodology. Following Freud's lead, Lacan presents analytic interpretation as a methodology rather than a sense-making production of a symbolic or coded meaning (Evans, 1996). Freud pushes the analyst to find more meaning in the dream, the symptom, and the slip of the tongue, and Lacan takes this further, suggesting the analyst assume the position of a "dummy" (Fink, 2004). Fink (2004) writes,

> According to Lacan, the kind of interpretations Freud made went well beyond what contemporary analysts offer up…for example, Freud went out on a limb and divined events in the Rat Man's past that *must* have occurred, this divination having little to do originally with the *hic et nunc* (here and now) of the transferential situation, but being based, rather, on the larger symbolic frame of the Rat Man's life. Freud, Lacan argues, knew how to situate himself as Other and interpret from that place, foreshadowing Lacan's own notion about how that place can be occupied by *un mort*, that is, a dead man or a dummy. (p. 9)

In addressing the place in which the analyst should be positioned, Lacan explores the knowledge (or more rightly the lack thereof) upon which interpretations are based. The analyst does not create meanings, but instead upsets meanings, through the use of "linguistricks." "Linguistricks" is Lacan's term for the ways the analyst makes use of the

signifier, via techniques such as punctuation and punning, thereby opening the space for the analysand to have his or her own encounter with more meaning (Lacan, 1975/1998; Fink, 2002). Lacan writes, "It is the subject's refusal of this meaning that poses a problem for him. This meaning must not be revealed to him: it must be assumed by him" (1975/1988a, p. 29). The value of the interpretation is not found in the formulation itself; instead, the value is found in how an interpretation impacts the process by subverting and unfastening the ways the analysand already understands, so that something new can happen and a form of acceptance or incorporation might take place.[24] This then can be understood to be the methodology behind Lacanian interpretation: it is a type of intervention that upsets understanding rather than offering a type of meaning that is achieved through understanding.

The extent to which Lacan's methodology differs from Freud's methodology (as I understand it) is unclear. In the first section of this dissertation I described Freudian psychoanalysis as an inherently interpretive discipline, in which narrative or descriptive truths and an interest in symbolic forms are favored over a search for causal truths; I described this as a hermeneutic methodology. According to Nobus (2000), however, "the theory of interpretation [Lacan] developed from the mid-1960s was radically anti-hermeneuticist" (p. 175). This assessment is based on Lacan's stance that interpretation does not aim toward making meaning. My sense of this distinction is that Lacan is attempting to highlight the unsettling nature of psychoanalytic interpretation and critique the claims of authority that might accompany interpretations focused on assigning meaning. In this way, Lacan can be read as critiquing both Freud and Klein.

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[24] In Lacanian interpretation, the subject "assume[s]," owns, or takes upon him/herself the symbolic effects.

Elsewhere Lacan likens the interpretive process in psychoanalysis to the textual analysis characteristic of literary criticism. Lacan writes, "Commenting on a text is like doing an analysis" (1975/1988a, p. 73). In fact, Lacan proposes training in literature and language as a part of analytic training. He writes, "To be taught and learned, this technique would require profound assimilation of the resources of a language [*langue*], especially those that are concretely realized in its poetic texts" (Lacan, 1966/2002b, p. 81, p. 295 in the original). This, according to Lacan, is both in keeping with Freud's own training and areas of expertise (Freud was well read, a "man of letters") and is necessary to develop the skill required for analytic listening. Lacan stresses that interpretations must be based on the analyst's close attention to the wording of the associations, a process similar to the way the textual critic attends to the working of a text. This metaphor of textual criticism highlights the importance of attending to language in Lacanian analytic practice, but it also addresses the issue of truth-value in relation to psychoanalytic interpretations. The textual critic's work relies on an inexhaustible interpretive process. This interpretive process is very different from the controlled experimentation designed to uncover empirical truths that is characteristic of the scientific method. Texts remain open to additional interpretations even after a brilliant interpretation has been written. There is never a definitive interpretation in the field of textual analysis.[25] However, this does not mean that any and all interpretations are equally valuable. "Not every random bit of language has the same value for the subject" (Lacan, 1978/1988b, p. 278). In psychoanalysis, the value of an interpretation lies in the effect it has on the analysand as subject (in textual analysis the value is often judged in

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[25] Shakespearean literary critics, for example, continue to construct interpretations of the bard's work despite hundreds of years of commentary pre-dating their intervention in the field.

terms of the effect it has on, or value it has for, the audience). Analytic interpretations are intended to have an effect: "In order for the analyst's message to respond to the subject's profound questioning, the subject must understand it as a response that concerns him alone" (Lacan, 1966/2002b, p.78).

Interpretations must arrive at something real or genuine about the divided subject who, as a result of the unconscious, is alienated. In Lacanian terms, interpretation "hits the real" (Fink, 1997, p. 47). Interpretations articulate something that has not yet entered the symbolic realm; putting into words something real for the patient which had previously existed outside of language or that which might be said. "The Lacanian real, as manifested in the patient's discourse, is that which makes the analysand come back to the same subject, event, or notion over and over, revolve around it endlessly, and feel unable to move on" (Fink, 1997, p. 48). The analyst's task is to listen for this real in the analysand's discourse and when necessary intervene through interpretations that bring something of the real into the symbolic. This means that the interpretation must be addressed directly to the subject's individual being. Interpretation proceeds from the ontological, structural fact that the unconscious results in alienation (on this level, the unconscious is a general truth), but is nevertheless particular (the unconscious discourse that concerns psychoanalytic technique is always focused on the individual, particular, personal associations of a given analysand). Lacan writes, "Analysis can have as its goal only the advent of true speech and the subject's realization of his history in its relation to a future" (1966/2002b, p. 86). In the following section, I will explore further Lacan's formulation of the role of history and its impact on analytic interpretive methodology.

Section Two
Constructing Meaning

Freud explored reconstruction in psychoanalysis as a way to address the issue of history in the form of forgotten, inaccessible memories. He proposed that an aspect of psychoanalytic interpretive methodology includes the construction of imagined (hypothetical), narrative truths regarding unconscious memories. For Freud, such narrative truths extend beyond empirical "data" to fill in a piece of missing history. Lacan reformulates Freud's work on reconstruction by understanding the process in terms of the linguistic structure of the unconscious. In this way, Lacan's approach to construction, like Klein's, is a revision of Freudian theory. However, although both theorists consider themselves to be revising Freud's work, Lacan's approach to historical clinical material differs significantly from Klein's. Whereas Kleinian interpretive practice rests on a theoretical reconstruction of preverbal, infantile experience and a focus on the here and now based on the conviction that the past is perpetually present, Lacan's approach to memory is tied to his theory of the function of language. Lacan uses language, in particular his formulation of the symbolic order, as a theoretical construct that guides the level of practice or technique. For him, the process of reconstructing the analysand's past in the present requires both a theoretical understanding of the field of language and an aptitude for attending, in analytic practice, to the concrete, idiosyncratic, and personal use and function of the signifiers that constitute the analysand's speech. Through language analytic work is able to access and narrate unconscious history. Memory, for Lacan, is a symbolic process that "involves the patient tracing the master

signifiers of his life" (Evans, 1996, p. 162). Lacan criticizes Klein's approach to reconstructing preverbal memories (both in her treatment practice, as recorded in her case examples, and in her formulations of theory), seeing Klein's work as located in the imaginary (Lacan, 1975/1988a). For Lacan, the imaginary order is a realm separate from the signifier, or symbolic order. The imaginary is the realm of images (whether visual, tactile, olfactory, or auditory) and of the signified, while the symbolic is the sphere of the signifier.

In the previous section of this chapter, I explored Lacan's understanding of the signified (for example, the object as what is named by the signifier) as an effect of (or as constituted by) the signifier.[26] Although we imagine the preverbal existence of objects prior to their being named, Lacan theorizes this as a function of the imaginary realm, and argues that in truth, the signifier has "logical priority" (Evans, 1996, p. 186), such that the symbolic constitutes what is knowable in language (which includes anything we might articulate about subjectivity). Therefore, for Lacan, the symbolic order must be the focus of psychoanalytic work. He writes,

> Freud's discovery was that of the field of the effects, in man's nature, of his relations to the symbolic order and the fact that their meaning goes all the way back to the most radical instances of symbolization in being. To ignore the symbolic order is to condemn Freud's discovery to forgetting and analytic experience to ruin. (Lacan, 1966/2002b, p. 63)

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[26] Lacan's explanation of the relationship between signified and signifier was a major reformulation of Sausserian linguistics and can be understood to be a part of the movement termed "the linguistic turn."

Lacan criticizes psychoanalysis for losing sight of Freud's most basic discovery. "The Kleinian school," writes Lacan, has "failed to even glimpse the category of the signifier" (1966/2002a, p. 260). With her focus on preverbal, pre-Oedipal stages of development, and her associated approach to object-relations, Klein theorizes an unconscious infantile experience that exists prior to language but which can nevertheless be reconstructed via adult language. Lacan has a radically different definition of the unconscious. According to him, preverbal experience is imaginary, and predates the unconscious. "For Lacan there are no pre-verbal areas of the unconscious, since the unconscious *is* a linguistic structure" (Evans, 1996, p. 93). The unconscious is a linguistic structure consisting of repressed signifiers.

Because, according Lacan, the only access we have to the unconscious is via language, the only understanding we have of past events is through recollection, which for Lacan is a symbolic process. Lacan writes, "the remembering [*mémoration*] at stake in the unconscious—and I mean the Freudian unconscious—is not related to the register that is assumed to be that of memory, insofar as memory is taken to be a property of living being" (1966/2006a, p. 42 in the original). The kind of remembering Lacan is interested in is distinguished from the evoking and reliving of past experiences and the habitual memory that is "a property of living being."[27] Instead of passively reminiscing and uncovering forgotten events, he is interested in memory that is actively reconstructed and subjectified. He writes,

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[27] The memory that is assumed to be part of living being generally is the biological form of memory: for example, the memory referred to in discussion of grey matter or animal memory. This is not the kind of memory Lacan is interested in.

the fact that the subject relives, comes to remember, in the intuitive sense of the

word, the formative events of his existence, is not in itself so very important.

What matters is what he reconstructs of it. (Lacan, 1975/1988a, p. 13)

Lacan theorizes that the remembering and reconstruction that are part of psychoanalytic

work must be understood in terms of the memory that is a structural part of the

unconscious. The laws or rules that structure the unconscious constitute "a type of

memory [in which] the past is recorded in the chain itself" (Fink, 1995, p. 19). The

symbolic order ciphers reality according to syntactic laws that determine what is yet to

come (what is possible) (Fink, 1995, p. 19). In other words, the past is always operative

in structuring the present and future because it exists in the laws that organize the

symbolic.

The distinction between recollection and reminiscence has practical implications

for psychoanalytic interpretive technique. Because psychoanalysis is concerned with

accessing the unconscious, Lacan theorizes that recollection (which happens through

tracing the signifiers that surface in the analysand's free associations), as opposed to

reminiscing about the past, is the process whereby an unconscious history is integrated by

the subject.   Lacan writes "the dimension proper to analysis," or the realm of

psychoanalytic treatment, "is the reintegration by the subject of his history right up to the

furthermost perceptible limits" (1975/1988a, p. 12). He continues,

The restitution of the subject's wholeness appears in the guise of a restoration of

the past. But the stress is always placed more on the side of reconstruction than

on that of reliving….The precise reliving—that the subject remembers something

as truly belonging to him, as having truly been lived through, with which he

communicates, and which he adopts—we have the most explicit indication in

Freud's writing that that is not what is essential. What is essential is

reconstruction, the term he employs right up until the end. (Lacan, 1975/1988a, p.

14)

Lacan follows Freud in stressing the importance of reconstruction but formulates the

process through terms that fit his innovations. Within Lacanian terminology, the

recollection of the past is a form of reconstruction. At times such reconstructions are

spoken by the analyst, in the form of an interpretation, but the reconstruction itself—

whether articulated by the analyst or the analysand—involves tracing the signifiers that

surface in the analysand's free associations. In deciphering the master signifiers,

something new is symbolized: knowledge based on a "half-said" truth (the S_2 explored in

the previous section of this chapter). Because signifiers (and especially master signifiers)

are ciphered according to historically derived laws, there is always a component of

recollection in accessing the unconscious. However, in seeking "the path of restitution of

the subject's history," psychoanalysis seeks a "history [that] is not the past," per se, but

"is the past in so far as it is historicized in the present" (Lacan, 1975/1988a, p. 12). This

past historicized in the present involves "rewriting history" (Lacan, 1975/1988a, p. 14).

There is a retroactive, meaning-making process at work in Lacan's notion of history.

"When all is said and done, it is less a matter of remembering than of rewriting history"

(Lacan, 1975/1988a, p. 14).

Section Three
Fantasy and Interpretation

Rewriting history includes a process of reconstructing the analysand's

unconscious "fundamental fantasy."[28] Following Freud's lead, Lacan works from the

basic psychoanalytic premise that unconscious fantasies dynamically organize psychical

reality. In the first chapter of this dissertation, I explored Freud's formulation of an

unconscious fantasy structure that functions as a master narrative, arranging psychical

experience according to a highly personal and unique logic that defies the rules of

rationality, to shape the analysand's relationship to reality.   Lacan's fundamental fantasy

is the equivalent of Freud's unconscious, narrative fantasy system. According to Lacan,

the fundamental fantasy—the definitive fantasy structure that organizes the many

possible particular fantasy scenarios produced by the subject—becomes inflexible and

constricting and therefore must be loosened or released through the signifying process

that takes place in psychoanalysis. Such freeing happens through a two-part process of

traversing or passing through the preexisting fantasy, together with the "construction in

the course of analysis of a new 'fundamental fantasy'" (Fink, 1995, p. 62). One way to

think about this twofold process is in terms of a clarification, in which, through the

analytic encounter, the fantasy structure that had dominated the analysand's unconscious

experience is both articulated and, as a result of this discursive clarification, modified via

an associated reconstruction or working-through of the fantasy structure. Such

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[28] This is a concept that Lacan begins to develop a few years after many of the texts I have been citing thus far, and emphasizes most in the 1960's.

reconstruction includes an interpretive elaboration that profoundly alters the preexisting fantasy structure.

Lacan's formulation of fantasy goes beyond a description of fantasy as it appears in specific instances (for example, a particular fantasy or wish underlying a dream, a hallucinatory or day-dream fantasy, or a fantasy about relationships manifest in a transference response in the treatment) because it formulates the underlying structure that produces each fantasy manifestation. Lacan theorizes the existence of a fundamental organizing configuration for fantasy that is based on his structuralist understanding of the unconscious. For him, each particular fantasy is brought about or caused by a foundational fantasy about his or her relation to the Other that is unique to each subject. For Lacan, the fundamental fantasy is "the subject's most profound relation to the Other's desire" (Fink, 1995, p. 62). In this conceptualization, fantasy is born of the subject's relationship with the Other.

Lacan provides a formula for fantasy: $\$ \Diamond a,$ which can be translated into the narrative, "the divided or barred subject in relation to the object of desire" (Fink, 1995). The subject has a particular (unique to each individual and most often unconscious) relationship with her or his object of desire. In fantasy, the subject is able to sustain an "illusion of wholeness," "completeness, fulfillment, and well-being" that allows the subject to "ignore his or her division" (Fink, 1995, pp. 59-60). The subject's unconscious object of desire (*a*) is, according to Lacan, the Other's desire. In other words, unconsciously the subject clings to some residue of the Other's desire in the form of object *a*.

Object *a* is a complex theoretical formalization in Lacan's work, with various elaborations and revisions (see Fink, 1995, Chapter 7). Object *a* functions in fantasy as the subject's imagined representative of the Other's desire and is part of how the subject would "like to be positioned with respect to the Other's desire" (Fink, 1995, p. 60). Lacan theorizes a "vanishing desire" that drives fantasy formation. He writes, "in its fundamental use, fantasy is the means by which the subject maintains himself at the level of his vanishing desire" (Lacan, 1966/2002a, p. 260, p. 637 in the original). Fantasy relies on the subject's individual psychic blueprint to create an imagined wholeness of being.

A way to approach an understanding of object *a* is in terms of Lacan's response to Klein's formulation of object relations. Lacan (1966/2002a) writes:

> The dialectic of fantasy objects promoted in practice by Melanie Klein tends to be translated in the theory in terms of identification. For these objects, whether part-objects or not, but certainly signifying objects—the breast, excrement, and the phallus—are no doubt won or lost by the subject; he is destroyed by them or preserves them, but above all he *is* these objects, according to the place where they function in his fundamental fantasy. (p. 240, p. 614 in the original)

Lacan criticizes Klein's emphasis on the object as an internalization of external others (which he terms a process of identification), shifting the emphasis instead to the signifying importance of the object in the constitution or being of the subject. The divided subject's relationship with the object is determined by the fundamental fantasy,

which is a part of a signifying structure. Lacan (1966/2002a) criticizes Klein for reducing

"fantasy to imagination," and therefore charges that she "failed to grasp the importance of

the signifier" (p. 260, p. 637 in the original). Instead, Lacan (1966/2002a)

defines the unconscious fantasy as "an image set to work in the signifying structure" (p.

260, p. 637 in the original). For Lacan (1966/2002a), the object in fantasy (object *a*) is a

signification "which comes from the Other, insofar as it depends on the Other whether or

not demand is met" (p. 261, p. 638 in the original). In other words, there is a "circuit" (p.

261, p. 638 in the original) in which the subject's need or demand becomes bound up in

fantasy with the Other's desire, such that the object of desire (object *a*) is transformed

from an imagined response to an internal demand (as is characteristic of Klein's theory of

the object) into an object that also incorporates the Other's desire, which the subject

encounters through the symbolic order, most notably through speech.[29]

　　　　Previously in this chapter, I looked at how object *a* functions within Lacan's

formula for the analyst's discourse. There object *a* was understood to represent the

analyst as cause of the analysand's desire in the analytic encounter. This is one of

various associated ways of taking up this key Lacanian concept and can be related to the

function of object *a* in Lacan's formula for fantasy.   Just as the analyst's task is to

assume (in analytic discourse) the position of cause of the analysand's desire, that

position is already prescribed structurally in the analysand in terms of the fundamental

fantasy. The fundamental fantasy is a predetermined positioning (it is a developmental

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[29] Desire, for Lacan, is essentially of language, unlike need. Due to our being speaking beings, human desire is radically different from animal desire, and cannot be satisfied in the way that animal desire can be satisfied.

phenomenon[30] from early childhood which therefore far pre-dates the analysis) of the subject's relationship to the Other's desire. The analyst's work involves assuming the role of desirousness (a non-specific desirousness that simply asks for more: by eliciting more associations, by suggesting there is more than consciously intended meaning in what is said, by seeing complexity in the obvious and so forth) in a way that illuminates the fundamental fantasy structuring the subject's psychical experience. Rather than function as a figure for identification (or idealization), the analyst's task is to abandon his or her own specific, self-serving desires (e.g., the desire that the analysand come to think/behave in a certain way) in order to facilitate the analysand's encounter with the highly personal, idiosyncratic residue of the Other's desire (object *a*). The analyst's capacity to assume the position of object *a* is based on the types of interpretations he or she makes in the analytic work, as I shall explain below.

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, an interpretive exchange between analyst and analysand leads to an uncovering and reconstruction of the fundamental fantasy. Žižek (1989) addresses the relationship between interpretation and fantasy in Lacanian psychoanalysis:

> We can also articulate two stages of the psychoanalytic process: *interpretation of symptoms – going through fantasy* [i.e., traversing fantasy]. When we are

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[30] Object *a* can be theorized in terms of infant development. Nobus (1997) writes, "In Freudian terms, the father bars the child's access to the mother as a sexual object and in this way deprives the child of a piece of jouissance [pleasure/desire]. The object *a* is the substitute object for this lost piece of jouissance. In this way, it can temporarily restore the original experience of jouissance, but it can never reinstall the original object" (p. 117). In other words, as the child grows it is cut off from the pleasure it shares with its mother (through breast feeding, for example), yet the child holds onto this lost pleasure both as it functions for the child and as the child experiences it as a desire from without (the mother's desire), in the form of an object invested with pleasure. This unconscious investment in object *a* determines the subject's fundamental fantasy.

confronted with the patient's symptoms, we must first interpret them and penetrate through them to the fundamental fantasy as the kernel of enjoyment which is blocking the further movement of the interpretation; then we must accomplish the crucial step of going through the fantasy, of obtaining distance from it, of experiencing how the fantasy-formation just masks, fills out a certain void, lack, empty place in the Other. (p. 74)

By wanting to hear more and believing there is more to understand, the analyst opens a space for interpreting symptoms. In the process of interpreting the symptoms, the analyst is led to the underlying fundamental fantasy operative in the symptoms, associations, dreams, and other analytic material. If the analysand is to traverse the fantasy, the analytic work must provide a reconstruction of the fantasy structure that recognizes its role in a larger psychical economy (the analysand encounters his/her own role in the fantasy formation and also recognizes something about the Other as it is present in the fantasy structure). Fantasy functions as a construction, as an imaginary scenario filling out the void, the opening of the *desire of the Other* (Žižek, 1989, p. 114). Because we can never know with certainty what the Other desires—we can only make suppositions about this desire—we are left with a void concerning our knowledge of the Other's desire. The fundamental fantasy is a supposition about that desire; it attempts to fill in this opening by finding a way to again encounter the lost object that represents the Other's desire. Traversing the fantasy involves constructing a different relationship to the Other's desire. It can be understood as that which determines the association or

relationship between the divided subject and the object of his/her desire (the $\lozenge$ in the formula $\$ \lozenge a$).

Section Four
Transference and Interpretation

This section on the relationship between transference and interpretation in Lacan's theory will be particularly brief because Lacan essentially separates these two key psychoanalytic concepts. He recommends that the analyst not interpret the transference, cautioning: "*whenever analysts are inclined to interpret 'the transference,' they are likely to be interpreting the imaginary component alone and not the overall symbolic framework*" (Fink, 2004, p.19). Insofar as the analyst does work with the transference in a Lacanian analysis, his or her task is to encourage the analysand to "reestablish the connections between the content (thoughts and feelings) and the persons, situations, and relationship that initially gave rise to it" by putting it into words, but not to point out the fact that such connections occur (Fink, 1997, p. 41).

Whereas for Freud and Klein, transference denotes the special relationship that develops between patient and analyst during the course of treatment, a relationship marked by the transfer (or reassignment) of attributes and characteristics of other (often past) significant relationships in the patient's life onto the relationship with the analyst, transference means something very different within Lacan's theory. The emphasis on working with the transference in analytic interpretations, especially in Kleinian theory, is criticized by Lacan. Whereas Klein relies heavily on transference interpretations, Lacan

is wary of transference interpretations. He says that transference gives the analyst a certain "power" over the analysand that the analyst must not use (1966/2002a, p. 225, p. 597 in the original). This power is derived from the imaginary feelings that get attached to the analyst as "someone who *sees* or *views* the analysand in a certain way" (Fink, 2004, p. 6). Lacan suggests that rather than work on the imaginary or real facets of the transference, analytic work should be directed toward the symbolic level. "In its symbolic aspect," the transference "helps the treatment progress by revealing the signifiers of the subject's history, while in its imaginary aspect (love and hate) it acts as a resistance" (Evans, 1996, p. 212). Therefore, insofar as the transference is used in the analysis, the analyst focuses on the symbolic aspect of the transference.

Conclusion

My goal, in the previous chapters of this dissertation, has been to describe how Freud, Klein, and Lacan each present the foundational psychoanalytic concept of clinical interpretation in their writings. Because Klein and Lacan are both revisionist interpreters of Freud, my hope is that returning to their Freudian roots will provide a way to promote dialogue between these two schools. Both theorists draw from, yet substantially rework and revise Freud's work to present their own articulation of the psychoanalytic interpretive process. By recognizing and presenting each as a Freudian revisionist, my aim has been to construct a way to explore an evolving psychoanalytic epistemology in which new theoretical formulations (as they have developed within various analytic schools) seek to contribute to the process—which was begun by Freud—of describing psychoanalytic knowledge. So often, rather than a meaningful exchange of ideas, comparative approaches amongst differing branches of psychoanalysis have resulted in unsympathetic, caricatured critiques that are used to validate one theoretical approach over another. This form of debate tends to leave different schools of psychoanalysis mystified by (and even scornful of) the beliefs and practices of other schools. My hope has been that the Freudian foundation of each theorist's work could be a place for finding the kind of common ground needed for a true discussion or dialogue.

In this final chapter I will review the existing literature that has tried to create a dialogue between Klein (or Kleinians) and Lacan (or Lacanians) around the subject of interpretation and add my own conclusions regarding some ways we might understand

their similarities and differences. I will then explore the issue of debate and dialogue in psychoanalysis and address why such debate matters to me. This last section will provide an opportunity for me to explore the research and writing process for me as I worked on this dissertation, and therefore create some space for a more personal consideration of the project. Such self-reflection will provide an opportunity for me to clarify my own engagement in the project, in particular by addressing the ways my understanding and experience of the project changed as I worked on it. By ending with a more autobiographical description of my approach and my various reactions to the research process, I hope to articulate at least some of the connections between the content of my research, the approach I took toward exploring this topic, and my own interests and biases that drew me to pursue such a project. Such personal reflection is considered to be an integral part of qualitative research because it makes explicit the connection(s) between the researcher and the results (Walsh, 1995).

The most clear-cut attempt to create dialogue between Kleinians and Lacanians in the Anglophone world took place in a 1994-1995 seminar hosted by THERIP (The Higher Education Network for Research and Information in Psychoanalysis) in Britain. During the seminar a group of distinguished scholars from both schools gathered to debate and discuss the works of Klein and Lacan. The panel discussions presented at those meetings were published in *The Klein-Lacan dialogues* (Burgoyne & Sullivan, 1997). As might be imagined, the topic of interpretation came up in the context of several of the papers presented during the course of the seminar, but most explicitly so in a panel on technique and interpretation, in which Bronstein's paper "Technique and interpretation in Klein" and Burgoyne's paper "Interpretation" (in Lacan) were presented

alongside one another and discussed. Bronstein's paper focuses more on technique via case material (with a brief theoretical synopsis at the beginning of her paper), while Burgoyne's paper remains more fully entrenched in theory. This mode of presentation results in the two theories sitting side by side, but without as much exchange as one might hope for. In the panel discussion following the papers, the respondents struggle to become interlocutors. We see some minimal interchange generated as they try to locate points of difference, but more pronounced is a general difficulty the discussants seem to have in engaging with each other in dialogue. Each side tries to present (defend?) its own theorist's formulations but this comes at the expense of a more open, candid conversation. Finally, the collection concludes with an essay entitled "Rethinking Kleinian interpretation: What difference does it make?" by Laurent (a Lacanian analyst), in which Laurent more explicitly links the two theorists around the topic of interpretation. Laurent works closely with Klein's little Dick and Richard cases, weaving in Lacan's critique and articulating the Lacanian approach as he explores Klein's work. This way of reading the two theorists is interesting, in that it provides a rich reading of Lacan's critique of Klein's work, but it also serves to silence the Kleinian formulations at work by overwriting them with Lacanian theory. What we get in Laurent's reading is not so much a picture of how each understands interpretation but a story about how Klein did not fully understand the analytic process, with the suggestion that a Lacanian reading might fill in those gaps. Because Laurent's paper was commissioned for the book, there was not a panel discussion of his work.

Keylor (2003) presents another key dialogic reading of Klein and Lacan. Although her article "focuses primarily on the establishment of a sense of subjectivity

during an early Oedipal phase, sometimes referred to as the primitive Oedipus" (Keylor, 2003, p. 215), and works for the most part with Lacan's earlier writings, she does provide some more general points of comparison between the two theorists. For example, she notes:

> Both [Klein and Lacan] retained Freud's language of the life and death instincts, yet both redefined those instincts through new metaphors that rendered their meaning quite different from the metaphors of Newtonian physics and neurological science employed by Freud. For Klein, the libidinal and death instincts are more synonymous with affects of love and hate arising initially out of the bodily experience of drives directed toward primary objects. Lacan, by contrast, preferred the metaphors of linguistics and structural anthropology. (Keylor, 2003, p. 214)

Likewise, she goes on to note that although both Klein and Lacan "violated the hallowed rules of technique," they also both "strongly endorsed traditional aspects of technique, particularly that of interpretation and analytic neutrality" (Keylor, 2003, p. 214).[31] And although her work concentrates first and foremost on the issue of infancy, Keylor does address the topic of interpretation briefly in a footnote:

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[31] Some might disagree with Keylor's assessment here. For example, prominent Lacanian theorist, J. A. Miller (who is also Lacan's son-in-law), claims that Lacan heralded the end of interpretation, that "interpretation is dead." See "Interpretation in Reverse" (Miller, 2001). However, in this paper Miller also claims that this pronouncement was designed to surprise and have an effect on the reader.

Whereas Kleinian interpretation aims fundamentally at articulating the context of

specific unconscious phantasies that may be presumed to underlie the associative

content, Lacanian interpretation, particularly in its oracular and paradoxical form,

aims to sustain and promote the contribution of the unconscious to the dialogue.

(p. 223)

Unfortunately, Keylor does not provide textual citations from Klein and/or Lacan for

these more comprehensive or wide-ranging assessments. Nevertheless, she offers cogent

points of contrast, she provides an excellent history of the two thinkers that positions both

within the history of psychoanalysis, and she goes on to explore how each developed

her/his theoretical work as a response to the issue of infant development. Keylor is able

to create a true dialogue between Klein and Lacan by including throughout her text an

analysis of ways they are either similar or different in how they think about particular

analytic ideas and techniques. In this way she accomplishes something that *The Klein-*

Lacan dialogues does not quite achieve.

The difference in style between the dialogue structured in *The Klein-Lacan*

dialogues (1997) and the dialogue structured by Keylor's (2003) essay "Subjectivity,

infantile Oedipus, and symbolization in Melanie Klein and Jacques Lacan" points to a

difficulty in constructing debate in the psychoanalytic world. What Keylor was able to

do (that Bronstein, Burgoyne and Laurent weren't) is something Bernardi calls creating

"a shared argumentative field" (2002, p. 851). Bernardi (2002) proposes that ideally a

debate should construct a common ground for the discussion so that differences and

similarities can be appreciated. Bernardi, a South American psychoanalyst, explores the

nature of analytic debate and controversy (both in its ideal and in its most factional and divisive forms), focusing on the Kleinian and Lacanian Rio de la Plata debates of the 1970's. This series of debates that took place in 1972 in The Rio de la Plata (a part of Buenos Aires and Montevideo) signaled a general shift during the 1970's in the South American analytic community, which had been highly influenced by Klein, toward Lacanian ideas. Bernardi looks at ways in which this debate centered more on defensive strategies than on content, charting various rhetorical strategies used by participants to defend their own ideas from attack and exploring the obstacles created by differing epistemologies (2002). Bernardi's interest is in the debate process itself, not so much the content of those debates. Rather than competitive, defensive positioning, "aimed at keeping each theory's premises safe from the opposing party's arguments," psychoanalytic debate would benefit from "a comparison of the way each position interweaves theoretical ideas with clinical practice" (Bernardi, 2002, p. 851 & 870). Bernardi believes—and I agree with him—that the interaction of various hypotheses is more important than reaching consensus and that the "intellectual and emotional effort" required for accepting other viewpoints is what will carry "us forward in the search for new ideas" (2002, p. 870). And this, it seems to me, is ultimately in keeping with Freud's position on and practice of interpretation.

Mindful of Bernardi's critique of the debate process in psychoanalysis, I would like to review some of the points of comparison I encountered in my Freudian reading of Klein and Lacan. This will certainly not be anything close to an exhaustive comparative assessment. Instead, I would like to simply highlight some of places I believe a dialogue about similarities and differences between the two theorists might begin.

In Chapter One of this dissertation I described Freud as engaged in a hermeneutic process of presenting various metaphors (or using assorted tropes) as he describes psychoanalytic ontology and epistemology. I identified this hermeneutic, interpretive process as a key factor in psychoanalytic epistemology and found it to be a fundamental, constituent facet of psychoanalytic methodology. Freud repeatedly encountered clinical phenomena that motivated the construction of additional psychoanalytic metaphors and concepts. As Freud's psychoanalytic epistemology developed, the methodological principles behind and methods of analytic interpretation also developed. In Chapters Two and Three I went on to look at how Klein and Lacan are also involved in a process of adding new metaphors or tropes to psychoanalytic theory. These new metaphors or tropes are intended to open new ways to interpret or elucidate Freudian theory. For Klein childhood/infancy is the crucial interpretive trope that opens a new way to interpret or describe what it is to be human, whereas for Lacan it is language. Klein's attunement is toward an infantile unconscious wrought with internal conflict, aggression, and anxiety, whereas Lacan presents a linguistic, socially constructed unconscious. Klein formulates the unconscious in terms of internal, preverbal processes in the infant, while Lacan moves the unconscious outside of the individual. For Lacan, the unconscious is in the signifying chain, which comes to inhabit us as individual speaking beings but which is never reducible to the individual. The unconscious Lacan presents is radically Other, whereas for Klein the unconscious is comprised of infantile phantasies. Klein's innovative way of describing childhood (even infant, preverbal) experience allows for a new description of the subject of psychoanalysis. Along with Klein's new way of thinking about the subject of psychoanalysis come various innovations in analytic

interpretive theory and technique.   Likewise, Lacan's linguistics based formulation of the subject of psychoanalysis also leads to innovations in analytic interpretive theory and technique. For him the unconscious is present in the signifiers that comprise language and is subject to or structured by the rules of language. Therefore, for Lacan there is no preverbal aspect to the unconscious as there is for Klein. Their different metaphors or tropes also lead to different styles of theorizing. Klein uses case examples, drawn from her clinical work with children, to explicate her theoretical concepts, while Lacan's interest in language can be seen both in the theoretical or philosophical nature of his theory and in his labyrinthine writing style (in both content and form). Both Klein and Lacan follow Freud's lead in seeing interpretation of the unconscious as the central feature of the psychoanalytic methodology, but each introduces a new method for attending to the subject's free associations: Klein's new interpretive method analyzes children's play, whereas Lacan's deciphers the signifying chain.

In addition to formulating their theoretical revisions of Freud around different organizing metaphors that impact analytic methodology, I also noted some differences in the way Klein and Lacan understand the role of psychoanalytic reconstruction, fantasy, and transference. Variations in their conceptualization of these concepts impact how each formulates interpretive technique. These differences are key aspects of their revisionist readings of Freudian theory. I will briefly review some of the points of comparison I noted in the previous chapters. This summary is intended to highlight (and recap) the concepts that I believe a dialogue about the similarities and differences in interpretive technique might most fruitfully engage. Of course, there is a great deal of room for a far richer and much more comprehensive analysis of similarities and

differences between these theorists, and others readers might discover very different points of comparison from the ones I chose to address, but my hope is that my analysis can be a small contribution to a larger project of striving to create a more meaningful debate and dialogue within the psychoanalytic community.

For Freud, reconstruction creates a hypothetical narrative about the forgotten past that is meant to supplement the patient's associative material and further the analytic process. Like the archeologist's excavation (one of Freud's favorite metaphors), the psychoanalyst's reconstruction narrates an account of the patient's missing history or memory through combining, and supplementing with theory, the remnants that linger. The analyst's reconstruction is a conjecture that extends beyond both empirical data and general psychoanalytic theory, to provide a uniquely personal explanatory narrative. Klein, on the other hand, takes up reconstruction at the level of theory making as she presents her own interpretation of preverbal, infantile experience. Klein's reconstructions interpret experiences that would otherwise remain outside of language by producing fictitious memory narratives. Although this generally fits with Freud's formulation of construction in psychoanalysis, Klein's specific approach to a patient's personal history differs significantly from Freud. Unlike Freud, she does not consider the past to be a relic that psychoanalysis might unearth, but instead focuses on the past as it is lived in the present in current object relations. Although object relations are assumed to have an historical dimension, the interpretive emphasis remains focused on present day experience. For Klein, infancy is perpetually present and developmental conflicts are never fully relegated to the past. Lacan, on the other hand, formulates reconstruction in terms of the symbolic order. Through a process of recollection, which involves tracing

the (master) signifiers of a patient's life, history is rewritten or reconstructed anew. The goal of tracing the history recorded in the signifying chain is that the analysand reintegrates that history, not at the level of egoistic self-knowledge (which would be a form of reminiscing, or reliving that which is already incorporated) but instead in the form of an encounter with a new, unconventional account of the past. According to Lacan, through attending to the historical dimension of the analysand's master signifiers, something new is symbolized; history is rewritten. This is very different from the type of reconstruction Freud presented. Like Freud, Lacan shifts the focus of reconstruction away from remembering and instead emphasizes rewriting a new account, but unlike Freud, he does not suggest this happens at the level of understanding; rather, in Lacan's account it occurs via the symbolic order.

In seeking to explore the ways Klein and Lacan approach fantasy, I first explored Freud's work on psychical reality (as opposed to empirical reality), as the realm in which fantasies shaped by wish-fulfilling desires predominate over external or empirical reality. Neurotic suffering, according to Freud, is caused by unconscious (primary process) fantasies that organize psychical experience. Such fantasies often take the form of master stories which seem to reiterate a basic (unconscious) plot line in constitutive ways. Freud sought to help the patient bring these unconscious fantasies into consciousness and thereby loosen the grip of the master story. Klein and Lacan both follow Freud's lead in seeing that which is termed reality as fundamentally formed by fantasy. Klein speculated that as the infant comes to experience external reality, a very complicated psychical world begins to develop internally that is dominated by phantasies about objects encountered in the external world. These phantasies form and govern the unconscious

object relations that are so central to Kleinian psychoanalysis. Klein believed that interpreting such phantasies is vital so that the patient might experience a shift from infantile, archaic phantasies (which appear throughout life) into the shared world of external reality. Klein's emphasis on the shift into external reality as a goal of psychoanalysis is akin, but not identical to, Freud's goal of making the unconscious conscious. Likewise, Lacan's notion of traversing the fundamental fantasy seems to be related to making the unconscious conscious but in addition to releasing the analysand from the constrictive fantasy structure, this notion of traversing the fantasy also involves a process of constructing a new fantasy structure in the face of the unbearable nature of the old one. The interpretive elaboration involved in reconstructing the fundamental fantasy radically alters the fantasy structure. For Lacan, fantasy involves more than the internal object relations Klein theorized; it also involves the Other, which the subject encounters in the symbolic order. For Lacan, however, the role the analyst assumes in relation to fantasy is very different from the analytic role or technique proposed by Klein, or even Freud. Both Freud and Klein seem to present interpretation in terms of explanation and adaptation to external reality (which includes a reduction of symptoms), whereas Lacan's interpretive method shifts the focus away from insight and calls into question the very notion of external reality as something that is knowable.

Finally, at the end of each chapter I included a brief description of the relationship between transference and interpretation. Transference is one of the most important and most basic of all Freudian concepts and the relationship between transference and interpretation is far more complicated than the brief, cursory gloss I added to each chapter would suggest. This is certainly one of the chief limitations of this dissertation (a

limitation that is the result of needing to create some parameters on the project as a way to contain the scope) and one of the places that could most easily benefit from additional study. Nevertheless, I included this brief account of transference because it is one important element within psychoanalytic interpretation.

The brevity of the transference sections in each chapter was something I struggled with. I found it difficult to boil down such a thorny and controversial aspect of psychoanalytic theory into a brief overview restricted to the link between transference and interpretation (and therefore not engage in a more comprehensive overview of transference as conceptualized by each theorist). The complexity of the construct itself either threatened to take over—I could easily imagine a second dissertation looking at transference in Freud, Klein, and Lacan—or felt emptied out, as my overview became cursory glosses rather than more substantial explorations. However, it also seems plausible to me that part of what was challenging about writing these sections extends to something more personal, beyond wanting to limit the span of the study. The extent to which this struggle can be understood to be a more individual reaction to the topic—a transference to transference, if you will—or is characteristic of some inherent difficulty in the theory itself is unclear to me at this time. Of course, it also seems reasonable to wonder if perhaps some combination of the two (the complications of the theory itself on the one hand, and a more personal reaction stirred by the material on the other) accounts for a more general problem within the psychoanalytic field regarding how best to account for and work with transference. Ultimately I decided to live with this tension, accepting rather superficial overviews of transference for each theorist as one of the limitations of this study.

Such tensions are, I believe, an expected part of entering the field of intellectual debate and dialogue. By looking beyond ideas that are comfortable and safe, we enter a realm characterized by possible confusion, misunderstanding, half-formulated truths, differences of opinion, and even argument. Yet through the exchange of ideas it is possible to have an encounter with difference (in particular, a different way of thinking) that is both intellectually productive and emotionally worth the frustration that it can provoke. Indeed, part of the appeal of the topic of interpretation for me stems from my interest in intellectual debate, dialogue, exchange of ideas, and disagreement. I find Bernardi's (2002) call for "a shared argumentative field" (p. 851) in psychoanalytic debate particularly appealing because it addresses the importance of finding enough of a common ground that a true intellectual meeting between various psychoanalytic schools might take place. For me, as I formulated and worked on this project, this meant trying to contextualize Klein and Lacan as revisionists working in a mutual theoretical language that was prescribed by Freud. Within the context of such a shared domain, areas of convergence and divergence can be explored and considered without being overshadowed by issues of competition, authority, and legitimacy. Each responds to, comments on, and assesses critically different aspects of Freud's thought by working within different tropes, tropes that are intended to further elucidate key psychoanalytic concepts. I find encouraging such "a shared argumentative field" (Bernardi, 2002, p. 851) to be particularly appealing as a model for intellectual exchange because it allows for the possibility that different theories, organized around diverse metaphors, might add to our clinical understanding and further the process of seeking to articulate psychoanalytic knowledge. Theory then becomes a tool for furthering reflection rather

than an articulation of truth, and the issue of rightness gives way to an evaluation of usefulness.

However, as I reflect on writing this dissertation and my desire to find a space for dialogue, I would also like to address an experience I had as I worked with each of the theorists. Much to my surprise, I found that, as I grew more immersed in working with each individual theorist I became so wrapped up in what each was communicating that I felt myself become more drawn into issues of legitimacy. "Freud got it right—No, it was Klein who was right—No, it was Lacan who really figured it out!" Despite my own intentions I felt myself pulled into a search for Truth, Authority, and Legitimacy. At times it was hard to set aside the matter of rightness as I worked, even though I had set out explicitly to strive for a different form of assessment. As an interpreter, I certainly brought my own judgments and way of thinking to how I approached the material I was working with in this project, resulting in interpretations of each theorist that are shaped by my own biases and assumptions.

Alongside my own inconsistent attitude about truth-value, I also noted that a certain thrill or pleasure developed as I came to more fully understand the technical language and metaphors used by each theorist. One way to describe this pleasure is in terms of obtaining insider or emic knowledge.[32] Technical language that had previously felt rather obscure and alienating came to have meaning for me as I began to better understand each theorist's work. What had previously felt frustrating was transformed

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[32] "Emic" is a term that is used in various ways in the social sciences. I am using the word here to describe the way a system or cultural is articulated and understood based on its own terms, rather than on the basis of external structures or systems (Jahoda, 1995). In using the term this way I am describing various analytic schools as having their own culture and I am suggesting that understanding the terms and internal systems used in the culture (and which are definitive of that culture) allows one a place within that community.

into a collective language and understanding that increased my capacity for dialogue with those within a particular tradition. While learning and writing about Klein for my Klein chapter, I was able to engage with Kleinian ideas in a new way; and the same was true of Lacan. There is a certain gratification in both the process of interpretation and in the outcome, or interpretation itself.

It is unclear to me the extent to which this knowledge—specifically the new technical language and theoretical insights I have acquired—has impacted my clinical practices. For example, at least at this point in my work I have not found that I explicitly switch around between wearing Freudian, Kleinian or Lacanian hats in clinical practice (one might imagine offering a "Freudian interpretation" one moment, followed by a "Kleinian interpretation" or a "Lacanian interpretation" the next, but I have not found this to be case). However, I can see that I am now in a different position to engage in dialogue about clinical work with colleagues from various backgrounds. For example, in case consultations I feel better able to describe, wonder about, and listen to conceptualizations of clinical work (my own and others) in ways that encourage dialogue, rather than leading to battles for legitimacy or power. It is precisely this capacity to engage in and encounter different ways of thinking that appeals to me as I seek to promote increased dialogue within the psychoanalytic field.

Ironically, although theoretical specialization provides the intellectual tools and vocabulary with which to conceptualize and speak about clinical phenomenon, and in that way creates a space in which dialogue might occur, it also runs the risk of creating a canonic, authoritative discourse. I raise this issue of specialization because I believe it can account for some of the isolation that has developed between various analytic groups.

As specialization grows (which does allow for a deeper level of analysis), it also alienates those unfamiliar with the fine distinctions in concepts and nuanced terminology characteristic of such specialization. This issue of specialization also provides a valuable reminder concerning resistance toward engaging other theories. Such resistance is particularly evident with Lacan, whose highly theoretical writings seem to so often provoke an alienated refusal to engage by those who are unfamiliar with his work, but can also be seen in those who encounter but are unfamiliar with either Freud or Klein.[33] The daunting task of entering a highly specialized discourse can drive people away. For some, such a filter on the discursive field might seem appropriate (the logic behind such a sentiment might be: after all, if a reader is not willing to invest in understanding the texts, maybe she/he should remain outside the debate), but a counter-argument might posit that some form of preliminary entry must be made available to outsiders or the uninitiated if a conversation is to be sustained. There must be some openness to that which feels outside of the self or foreign for an engagement or encounter to take place. In other words, a good faith effort by all parties to make their premises accessible is called for if a true dialogue is to occur. This is not to say that forging ahead in search of such dialogue is easy. S. A. Mitchell and Black (1995) note,

> At present it is very difficult to find any psychoanalyst who is really deeply
> conversant with more than one approach (e.g., Kleinian, Lacanian, ego
> psychology, self psychology). The literature of each school is extensive and each

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[33] This notion is based on personal experience, anecdotal experience and my own impressions of other's encounters with psychoanalytic theory. It is a personal reflection and therefore expresses a bias or preconceived idea that I have carried with me as I have approached this project.

clinical sensibility finely honed, presenting a challenging prospect to any single

analyst attempting to digest it all. (p. 207)

Perhaps this struggle—between the attempt to assimilate or appropriate more knowledge

into one's own discursive and conceptual system on the one hand, and the simultaneous

effort to release discourse from authoritative, alienating specialization, on the other—is

an inherent aspect of the human condition and the best we can do is seek some form of

balance between the two by working to encounter and comprehend as much as possible,

while also attaining the keen acumen made possible via a more concentrated focus.

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