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METAPHORICAL INTERPRETATIONS OF THE NEUROTIC PARADOX

by

Mark J. Weaver

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Psychology

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Preface

This is a theoretical/philosophical paper which is intended to bring to the reader's attention an emerging literature and discussion which holds potentially productive consequences for the understanding of man. This thesis does not offer completed formulations or empirical groundings. The purpose is to create a basis for dialogue.

This paper will initially specify a current conflict in psychology around the different metaphors used to define the image of man. A theoretical/philosophical basis for viewing the process of generating models of man and his behavior as essentially "metaphorical" is then presented. A specific category of human behavior known as the neurotic paradox (henceforth abbreviated NP) is defined and a review of literature on the root metaphorical interpretations of the NP is discussed. The prominent extant models of human behavior reviewed in this discussion are those based on the metaphors Spirit, Disease, Machine, and Seed. The limitations of each model will be discussed with regard to that model's adequacy to provide understanding of the four basic defining characteristics of the NP. This section constitutes the main body of the thesis. This evaluative discussion of the theoretical/philosophical inadequacies of each model is intended to bring to light the process and strategies (both

explicit and implicit) which have evolved in the interpretation of the image of man.

Mark J. Weaver

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Metaphorical Interpretations of the Neurotic Paradox

Problem

Psychology is in a crisis. It is a conflict which has existed for some time and seems no closer to solution. One cause of the conflict is the harsh debates between behaviorism, Freudianism, and humanism-existentialism. Abraham Maslow calls these the three "forces" in psychology (1962, p. 9). The charges and counter charges are not frivolous. They are valid, significant and logical. They require answers which are difficult to achieve.

Another cause of the conflict in psychology is that each of the three major "forces" has been shown to generate severe internal inconsistencies. These will be discussed in detail later. Briefly though, behaviorism, through its particularly narrow scientism, has reduced away such human characteristics as soul, consciousness, particularly self-consciousness, the self, mind and will, among others. The paradox, to which this reductionism leads, is that it is difficult for the behaviorist to maintain that there is a psychologist to have a psychology. Freudianism also has developed internal problems. It has been demonstrated, for instance, that one such problem is that Freud's constructs cannot be translated into scientific language and therefore,

are untestable (see Bandura & Walters, 1963; Berkowitz, 1970; Singer, 1965; Silverman, 1976). This is true in spite of Freud's strong contention that his theory is scientific. It has been shown additionally, by Thomas Szasz (1961) and others, that Freud's "mental illness" postulate is not empirical. No physical disease or trauma has been discovered. The humanist-existentialist "force" admits that "scientism" has become a problem in the field of psychology. Therefore, they prefer to take man as the image of man. But they have been unable to establish an epistemology which can furnish an understanding of the self-reflexive paradox encountered when one takes this approach, or any of the other approaches for that matter. The problem stems from the paradox involved in self-knowledge, that is, when man is both subject and object to himself. This paradox is a reality which must not be ignored if we hope to understand man.

Philosophers of science have found a way to assert that paradox is not a serious problem in the physical sciences. Whitehead and Russell's theory of logical types reduced the problem of paradoxes to "sort-crossing" errors (1962, p. 37). Any paradox, they hold, can be solved if it is analyzed correctly into its components and these are correctly allocated to their proper domains or levels. But in psychology, the subject-object paradox cannot be so easily resolved.

For instance, the behaviorists, who take the position of the natural sciences most strongly, have been unsuccessful in avoiding the self-referring paradox. B.F. Skinner (1971) has given us the most popular reductive definition of psychology. He says it is the study of behavior. But R.D. Laing points out, "The other person's behavior is an experience of mine. My behavior is an experience of the other." (Laing, 1967, p. 17). In other words, the study of behavior is behavior and, therefore, the psychologist remains in the class which he studies. So, we cannot ignore the issue of the image of man because it is paradoxical. "The crucial category, for psychology," wrote Rollo May, "is the self in relation to itself." (1967, p. 192).

Still another cause of the conflict in psychology is the inadequate theoretical development and technical progress made by psychology as the "science of man." After one hundred years of labor, even the "scientific standing" of psychology is uncertain (Robinson, 1979, p. 5). Research in psychology lacks consensus and overall guiding theory (Jordan, 1968). Several things emerge as one thinks about and experiences the conflict in psychology. First, it has been, and continues to be, largely an epistemological issue. "When man is the subject, the proper understanding of science leads unmistakably to the science of understanding," is the

interesting way Floyd Matson states this issue (1976, p. 247). Modern psychology was founded with the motive to be a science. However, the philosophy of science which has been followed has become an issue itself. The reductive, positivistic, mechanistic, summative or additive, linear and categorical assumptions of science, each or in combinations, create problems when applied to man in his attempt to understand himself. The reductive effort did away with spirit, soul, self, personality, mind, consciousness (especially self-consciousness), will, and original or creative thinking. And what did psychology gain in exchange for what it gave up? Psychology acquired a methodology and a hope. The method, which was essentially an epistemological assumption, has been responsible for the reductive effort. The hope was founded upon the productivity shown by the natural sciences. This productiveness has not been forthcoming in psychology (Jordan, 1968).

Second, going behind the more obvious debates and frustrations in psychology, Joseph Rychlak states, "At heart it is the image of man which is at issue in psychology's internal conflict, let us make no mistake about that." (1968, p. 2). An image of man, then, as I understand and use the concept, is a complete or whole picture of man. Following Rychlak's logic it is the mechanistic image of man assumed

by the behaviorists, the sickness or illness image of the Freudians, and the seed or actor image of the humanist-existentialists which forms the deeper issue in psychology.

The act of embracing one of the many alternative images of man and the implied social order is not primarily a scientific exercise. As Matson has stated:

(it is) . . . an existential and moral task: a challenge to each human being to forsake the passive posture of acquiescence before immutable cosmic law, so long imposed upon us by religion and science, and to assume the role of self-creator--the maker of cultures and shaker of foundations--which is no longer forbidden by the reformed science of nature and is boldly encouraged by the revitalized science of man. (1976, pp. 12-13)

The attitude of this thesis is not meant to be one of simple critical analysis and exclusion. Indeed, the paradigms treated in the text may not be wholly discarded on the basis of any analysis. Exclusion is not the goal of this paper. It will be maintained that new and progressive meaning may be found within the existing models when viewed through the perspective outlined in this thesis. As Thomas Kuhn observed:

Confronted with anomaly or with crisis, scientists take a different attitude toward existing paradigms, and the nature of their research changes accordingly. (Kuhn, 1970, p. 90)

It is this change in attitude which I aim toward, and I do this by presenting a view of the theoretical/philosophical implications which subtly underly the different images or metaphors for the understanding of human behavior as they attempt to explain the specific category of behavior known as the neurotic paradox. While the case may at times appear overstated, it is presented with a gracious respect for the meaning these paradigms carry in their approximations of the understanding of human behavior. Before proceeding, however, it will be helpful to briefly review the position being taken here about the process of asserting different metaphors for the understanding of the image of man.

Conceptual Framework

Much of the content and form of this thesis relies on the following definitions:

Metaphor - A similarity of relations resulting in enhanced meaning through the juxtaposition of two (or more) images, fantasies, ideas, concepts, events or things where the person becomes aware, to some degree, of the relationships generated by this dialectic combinatorial activity. The metaphorizing process enables a person to interpret "unknown" phenomena in terms of "known" phenomena. (For a full discussion of metaphor see Turbayne, 1962; Ricoeur,

1975.) An example of a metaphor currently employed by a native American culture is the assertion that the moon's shape is like that of a bowl-like basket which changes its orientation in the sky to appear as it does. Another metaphor would be the interpretation of the brain as computer.

Model - An explicated metaphor. A model is a delimited set of relations. It may be physical, pictorial, formal, or verbal. The model of the moon metaphor is the basket. A more complicated model is that of the computer, with multitudinous functions, memory capacities, and infinite associational pathways to explain the workings of the brain.

Myth - An expanded or amplified metaphor. It is a set of extended relations to express or establish meaning of large scope. Truth, in an absolute sense, is not the primary issue in the use of this term. The emphasis is upon meaningful relations. Myths usually entail relations of the past, present and future in establishing meaning. An example of a myth would be an Indian belief system that god places his basket in the sky as the moon and occasionally shows his displeasure by removing it from view (lunar eclipse). Often, involved and emotionally intense rituals surround the myths of all cultures.

Paradox - ". . . a contradiction that follows correct deductions from consistent premises." (Watzlawick,

Beavin, & Jackson, 1967, p. 188). In this paper it refers to relations which are correctly deduced (according to implicit or explicit rules from a generic and specified set of relations but which are contradictory. I use the term paradox in a somewhat qualified manner here. There are, in the literature of philosophy, accounts of great paradoxes encountered by men. The intended use presently does not coincide with the classical meaning of logical paradox, nor does it refer to what logicians have (for a long time) been referring to as a "reductio ad absurdum."

Probably, Quine's (1966) description of antinomy comes closest to what is meant here by the term paradox. "An antinomy produces a self-contradiction by accepted ways of reasoning." (Quine, 1966, p. 7). He furthers this distinction by comparing antinomy to falsidical paradox, which necessarily includes a fallacy in the proof. A falsidical paradox connotes a "surprise" in meaning, which disappears when the underlying fallacy is solved. An antinomy, though, carries with it a "surprise" which may be accommodated only be repudiating part of our conceptual heritage. It is this function precisely which distinguishes the meaning of paradox assumed here.

. . . . antimony (paradox) establishes that some tacit and trusted pattern of reasoning must be made explicit and be henceforward avoided or revised. (Quine, 1966, p. 13)

The "tacit and trusted pattern of reasoning" corresponds with "premise" as used by Watzlawick in his definition cited above.

It is with the above qualifications that the term paradox is implemented in this discussion.

The creation and utilization of symbols is regarded by most as a uniquely human process (Cassirer, 1946; Klee & Schrickel, 1963; Langer, 1942; Maddi, 1970; White, 1949). The implementation of these symbols (or metaphors) often takes the form of cognitive metaphorizing. Take, for instance, the following line of thought as an example of this intellectual process:

If you program the environment effectively, human behavior can be seen as mechanically responding to antecedent and consequent stimuli in an understandable and predictable fashion. Therefore, man is like a machine.

Note the assumptions which are interjected in this metaphor about behavior through the language (behavioristic in this example) employed by the metaphorizer. Referring back to the definition of metaphor above, machines with their

structures and functions constitute the "known" phenomena in this metaphor, human behavior the "unknown."

Meaning and meaningfulness are contextual and relational. "We understand something by referring to something we already know." (Schliermacher quoted in Palmer, 1969, p. 87).

Meaning is thus defined as the perception of relations; relations made possible by the dialectical interaction of different elements or frames of reference in our environment. Meaning is merely the name given to different kinds of relationships recognized in the process of dialectical interaction.

An important observation about this process is that there is an irreducible difference between the world and our experience of it. That is, human beings living in a "real world" do not operate directly or immediately upon that world, but rather construct a model, or representation of their experience that functions to generate and guide their behavior. Our representation of the world determines to a large degree what our experience of the world will be, how we will perceive the world, and what choices we will see available to us as we live in the world.

It must be remembered that the object of the world if ideas as a whole is not the portrayal of reality--this would be an utterly impossible task--but rather to provide us with an instrument for finding our way about more easily in the world. (Vaihinger, 1924, p. 15)

The position being taken here is based on the assumption that even though the model is not an accurate portrayal of reality, it does, however, represent some similarity to what is real.

A map (model) is not the territory it represents but, if correct, it has a similar structure to the territory, which accounts for its usefulness."
(Korzybski, 1933, pp. 59-60)

Following these premises, it is not surprising that no two human beings have exactly the same experiences; therefore, each of us may create a different model of the world we share and come to live in a different "reality." (See W.V. Quine's philosophical discussion of radical translation as a basis for the possibility of differences between the conceptual schemes of people, Word and Object, Chapter 2, 1960.) If we learn to view another person's behavior (thoughts, feelings, acts) in the context of the choices generated by their particular model, then we may see them not as sick, crazy, or bad. Rather, they may be seen as making the best choices they are aware of, the best choice available to them in their model of the world.¹

While this leads into a currently busy area of inquiry and research relative to the application of these ideas to

¹This observation has also been made by Bandler and Grinder. See their book The Structure of Magic, for a similar discussion. (Bandler & Grinder, 1975, Vol. I, pp. 1-4)

psychotherapy, the focus here is on the implications for theorizers in metaphORIZING about human behavior out of their experiential models of reality. The ideas of Freud, for instance, as one who theorized about the etiology of aberrant behavior, may be seen in this light. The observation has been made by many that the importance and centrality of sex in his model of neurosis may be associated with the extreme sexual repression he witnessed in his day. The myth (expanded, amplified metaphor) evolving from his work that sex plays such a pervasive role in neuroses has survived to the present, despite the claims to the contrary from current professionals.

The conviction that human beings possess this novel capacity to manipulate symbols--to metaphORIZE--rests in the writings of some contemporary language theorists which suggest that language is essentially metaphorical in its nature and development (Campbell, 1975; Frenzt, 1974). Suzanne Langer has suggested that "a metaphor is the law of growth of every semantic . . . not a development, but a principle" (1942, p. 119). In her extended discussion of language she observes that,

Language is a vast repository of "faded metaphors," i.e. words originally used in a metaphoric sense which have not acquired the abstract relational meaning they first metaphorically suggested . . .

metaphor is the force that makes language essentially relational, intellectual, forever showing up new abstractable forms of reality." (Langer, 1942, p. 115)²

This theory that language is essentially metaphorical is, in turn, grounded in the school of neurophysiology which assumes that symbolization is an inherent function of the nervous system, that the nervous system does not return direct impressions of the external world, but indirect symbolic representations (Gordon, 1961, p. 111). This theory further maintains that the rudimentary symbolization process of the nervous system is elaborated on higher and higher levels, culminating in the cortex of the brain.³ Thus, when this argument is extended, language is asserted to have its roots in metaphor and through metaphor in the rich, symbol-generating nervous system.

The position being taken here, then, is that the process of metaphorizing is fundamentally a mental principle (inherent in language and grounded in the nervous system) and

²For a further discussion of the evolution of words via metaphoric extension, see Barfield, 1926.

³Maddi has developed his theory of personality under the assumption that the human needs to symbolize, imagine, and judge in order to feel satisfied and avoid frustration because that is the nature of his organism (Maddi, 1970). In addition, there is some research (Reisen, 1961) indicating that the use of neural structures is necessary in infancy if they are to develop normally.

is essential in creating meaning from experience and in constructing behavior-directing models.

The use of metaphors in conceptual functioning as well as theoretical activity has been favorably argued from a general philosophical standpoint by Cassirer (1953-1957). Mehrabian (1968) presents a discussion on the use of basic metaphors and examples of their use in personality theory. While much has been written about the use of metaphor within many disciplines, a review of what has been the history and development of this work goes well beyond the scope of this paper. What is appropriate to mention are some of the dangers around the use of metaphor.⁴

The power of metaphor has been emphasized by Pepper (1942) in his discussion of "root metaphors" (pp. 239-40). For instance, in the work of Kurt Lewin, the network that interrelates words like field, vector, phase-space, tension, force, boundary, fluidity, etc., is a metaphorical understanding of perception which pervasively colors his theory. The more powerful metaphors serve to organize pieces into paradigms. Black (1962), in his article "Models and Metaphors" (cited in Ricoeur, 1975, p. 243) points out two

⁴For a comprehensive annotated bibliography and history of metaphor, see Shibles, 1971. An excellent scholastic work on metaphor may be found in Paul Ricoeur's book The Rule of Metaphor which takes a multidisciplinary look at the creation of meaning in language (1975).

powerful characteristics of these metaphors: their "radical" and "systematic" aspects.) Idealistic empiricism holds that one need only to subject his theories and hypotheses to empirical scrutiny and then test his observations against statistical probability to verify their usefulness in describing reality, there is much more than meets the eye. The experimenter's framing of the research question, his perceptions, and his interpretations of the "raw" data are all subject to the metaphorical bias he holds in reference to his work. In agreement with Pepper (1942) it is suggested here that a metaphor or analogy (Simon & Newell, 1963) typically determines the kind of theory (i.e. categories, assumptions, and hypotheses) which underlies observation and description.

A related danger concomitant with the process of metaphorizing is the tendency to confuse theory based on metaphor with "reality" or "fact." This mistaking the map for the territory is called reification (Sarbin, 1967), hypostatization (Turbayne, 1962), or misplaced concretion (Whitehead, 1948).

Paul Ricoeur had these words to say about this danger:

A line of demarcation should be drawn between "to use" and "to be used," lest we fall victim to metaphor, mistaking the mask for the face. In brief, we must "expose" metaphor, unmask it. This proximity between use and abuse leads to a

correction of the metaphors about metaphor. . . . facts are reallocated by metaphor; but such reallocation is also a misallocation. Metaphor has been compared to a filter, a screen, and lens, in order to say that it places things under a perspective and instructs us to "see as . . ." . . . "to explode a myth" is to expose the model for the metaphor. . . . critical consciousness of the distinction between use and abuse leads not to disuse but to re-use of metaphors, in the endless search for other metaphors, namely a metaphor that would be the best one possible. (Ricoeur, 1975, pp. 252-3)

Given these dangers then, of allowing experience to be interpreted for us by the metaphors we embrace, of mistaking the metaphor for reality, of being used by metaphor, what can we do to escape our own delimited worlds? The answer, I believe, lies partly in the sort of critical thinking on a philosophical level as follows in an analysis of the extant metaphorical interpretations of human behavior seen as painful, self-inflicted, and problematic. "The greatest thing by far," said Aristotle, "is to be master of metaphor." (Turbayne, 1962, p. 21). This sort of review and re-interpretation does not assemble empirical studies and perform meta-analyses of data. This is a theoretical/philosophical work reaching toward the assumptions underlying such research.

The Neurotic Paradox

Having stated the thesis that theories attempting to accurately define the image of man are essentially metaphorical, and that the models rooted in these metaphors carry with them certain inherent dangers, the assumption to be added is that the conflict in psychology as described earlier may be seen to be intimately related to this. It would be an enormous task to undertake an analysis of the major "forces" in psychology on the whole. It can be realistically and relevantly explored, however, through an analysis of how the major models of human behavior, based on their respective metaphorical images, fare in a theoretical/philosophical analysis of how adequately they each provide understanding of a specific category of human behavior known as the neurotic paradox (NP). The strengths and weaknesses of the various models will be stated.

The NP is simply that some people who are assumed to be motivated by pleasure often exhibit behavior which brings about personal suffering and defeat. Apparently, these people are unable to change their behavior and to prevent pain from recurring. The title was formally assigned by O. Hobart Mowrer (1948) in his analysis and critique of Freud's writings.

Interest in this behavior does not derive simply from

seeing man suffering or being defeated. Most people are able to conceive of and admit their weaknesses in the face of powerful natural and social forces with which they must contend. Defeat is a humiliating, painful, and a potentially destructive outcome. Both psychology and theology have addressed themselves to the effects of defeat upon a life. A number of metaphors, models, and myths of human behavior concern themselves with the human spirit as it faces overwhelming odds and sometimes succumbs. We see various images of heroic and tragic people. But defeat is not the exact focus of the behavior to be discussed in this paper. Suffering and defeat are not paradoxical in themselves.

Of greater fascination for man, to himself and for psychologists, has been suffering and defeat in which the individual is personally involved: self-defeat. It has been exceptionally difficult for man to grasp the meaning of personally inflicted suffering. Such behavior seems to border on "insanity" because it challenges the validity of some of our fundamental rationalistic assumptions.

Of almost total perplexity to the human mind is the behavior of repetitive self-inflicted suffering and repetitive self-defeat. Not only do some people defeat themselves, but they will repeat the same behavior.

Defeat surely is a wound to the human spirit; self-defeat

or self-punishment is almost mentally incomprehensible; but, repetitive self-defeat seems beyond understanding. It is paradoxical for it leads to contradictory conclusions from logical deductions drawn from our common perceptual and conceptual backgrounds. It is this repetitive self-defeating paradoxical behavior which is of specific interest presently.

There is yet another provocative and paradoxical thing about repetitive self-inflicted suffering. These people sometimes appear to be creative and they often seem to be ahead of the masses, predictively pointing the way in which the society or culture may go. Rollo May (1969) and Norman O. Brown (1959) have written about such paradoxical behavior and its relation to, if not the foundation for, creativity and predictive understanding of the future of a society. May wrote, "The problems of (our day) have a curious characteristic not yet adequately appreciated: They predict the future." (May, 1969, p. 18). Again, "Art and neurosis both have a predictive function." (May, 1969, p. 21).

The writings of philosopher Michael Polanyi provide an explanation which is very helpful in understanding this creative and predictive characteristic of some behavior, both normal and neurotic. The predictive nature of neurosis may

be seen as follows: When a relational system (a logic, a science, a society, or a personality) has been thoroughly exploited in terms of its seminal, generative, discoverable relations, the limits of the underlying generic relational set begin to emerge. At this stage, the emergence of the limits of a system tend to take the form of paradoxical deductions (see Polanyi, 1951, 1959, 1969). These paradoxes emerge from the generic set of relations but they also point in the direction of potential resolutions and/or solutions.

This process, I believe, may be seen in the functioning of the neurotic personality as well as in the historical shifting of paradigms within the sciences. The deductions following the conceptual structure of a theory, or the behaviors (acts, feelings) based on an existing personality structure may eventually become anomalous (to use Kuhn's terminology); inconsistent in some way and perhaps lead to a crisis, or a neurotic way of behaving. This is an indication that the limitations within the relational system are emerging. New meaning is needed. People at the point of paradox, who live with it, through it, and begin to solve it (rather than escape from it), build the future by opening up possibilities. Man, therefore, is viewed here as a transcending organism. The nature of the inconsistencies (anomalies, contradictions, antinomies,

paradoxes) provides clues as to the needed modification of the existing relational system, or the creation and implementation of a new metaphor.

An additional element of understanding comes from Kuhn (1970). It may be as Kuhn suggests that when the paradoxical stage is reached it takes a new metaphor to unleash creative progress and to provide the solutions to such paradoxes. But before new metaphors can be used, the hold of previous metaphors must be broken. This conflict can be seen as similar to the crisis which the neurotic person feels. Accepting Polanyi and Kuhn's interpretations provides a specific explanation of the predictive nature of neurotic behavior.

In summary, an adequate model of the behavior upon which we are focusing will need to be able to explain the following defining characteristics of the NP:

- (1) Self-inflicted suffering and defeat,
- (2) Repetitiveness of self-defeating behavior,
- (3) The paradoxical nature of the behavior,
- (4) The creative and predictive potential of the behavior.

In the following sections of this paper will be found analyses intended to show how neurotic behavior has been interpreted by the prominent extant models. Through the centuries models of man have been drawn from relatively few metaphors. The major ones have been Spirit, Disease,

Machine, and Seed (see Langer, J., 1969; and Mehrabian, 1968, for further discussion of these basic metaphors and examples of their use in personality theory). Specifically, these metaphors have been implemented to state that:

- (1) The relation between a person and his behavior is like the relation between behavior and a spirit which inhabits a person (Spirit).
- (2) The relation between a person and his behavior is like the relation between a disease and the symptoms (Freud, 1964).
- (3) The relation between a person and his behavior is like the relation between a machine and its action or product (Skinner, 1971).
- (4) The relation between a person and his behavior is like the relation between a seed and a flower or fruit (Maslow, 1962).

The limitations of each metaphor will be discussed with regard to that model's adequacy to provide understanding of the four basic defining characteristics of the NP which are listed above.

Inhabitation Model of the Neurotic Paradox (Spirit Metaphor)

This historically earliest interpretation of the NP was not in model form. It existed before men understood the use of models.

In terms of early attitudes about persons who repetitively exhibited self-destructive behaviors, which they seemingly could not change, they were considered to be ignorant, mistaken, cheating, or sinning (Alexander & Selesnick, 1966). It was assumed, probably on the basis of a combination of Greek and Christian thought, that if these people were ignorant or mistaken they should be instructed and they would, naturally and rationally, change their behavior. If they were cheating they would be punished and they would change to avoid pain.

Inhabitation Model

If the self-defeating repetitive behavior continued in spite of corrective instruction, punishment, or confession and restitution, it was easy to fall back to an historically earlier understanding in which the fundamental model was possession or inhabitation.

For centuries, we conjecture, man had attempted to understand his own mysterious self through metaphors drawn from human experiences with inanimate objects and physical movements. The primary relationship was that things move. Men experienced them move, but did not experience why they moved or the causal relationships between their movements. Consequently, man created a metaphorical relation and projected the experience he had of himself as a mover.

Physical objects became inhabited in the same way as man felt he inhabited his body and, within it, made things move. However, when men could not understand their own actions and movements, the projection was introjected metaphorically and man himself became inhabited. These spirits caused man to do paradoxical things like repetitively hurt himself (Alexander & Selesnick, 1966).

The basic model was inhabitation by a spirit. The fundamental metaphor was one between inner feelings of causing one's self to move and inanimate movements. Expanded, this metaphor became the mythology of spooks, spirits, and ghosts.

Even from a traditional Christian position affirming the existence of God, the model does not essentially change, Satanic forces are the cause of this kind of behavior. The problem remains how to deal with Satan's inhabitation.

Exorcism became the "therapy." To help the process, experts emerged in the form of priests and their perversion into magicians (Goshen, 1967).

Inhabitation Model and the Defining Characteristics of the NP

Now, if we compare this model to the four defining characteristics of paradoxical neurotic behavior, some interesting implications arise.

Self-inflicted behavior. The self-inflicted nature of suffering and defeat are denied and logical and rational assumptions about man are maintained. This is a strong element which supported this model in an interesting way. It is rational and logical if not empirical. (It is interesting to note that this model also takes the responsibility for good, healthy behavior away from the self, apart from sin.)

Repetitive behavior. The repetitiveness of the behavior is placed outside the person and beyond their immediate control. However, they do remain partially culpable in the sense that they may be responsible for becoming reprobate enough for a spirit to enter. And freedom could be obtained for a remedy is available. The remedy is penance and restitution. Repetition of a behavior, thus, is unnecessary and not paradoxical, but sinful.

Paradoxical behavior. The paradoxical appearance of the behavior disappears since it is explained. The paradox is given ontological status. It is raised to the mythological level. Opposing gods are in serious conflict. Man is in some respects a helpless onlooker. But he is expected to be rationally and logically on the side of good unless he is reprobate and inhabited. Then he can do those things necessary to regain his placement on the side of good.

Creative and predictive behavior. This behavior is also explained in this model. It is moved to the level of the will and intentions of the inhabiting spirit (which is understood in terms of a developed mythology) and the will and intentions of a man in heroic struggle with or against the gods. One needs little more information to begin to grasp the stability and power of this model and its ability to be creative and predictive regarding future life. Men lived it out. The belief system was consistent and coherent.

Critique of the Inhabitation Model

As this model was explored and exploited over the centuries, its finite limits began to be encountered. Different metaphors and models were proposed and paradoxes began to be generated. There are more of these than can be realistically considered here. Some major paradoxes are that the model essentially makes man both responsible and irresponsible, it treats man both as rational and irrational, and it emphasizes spirit as real and the real as spirit. It gives meaning to how men become possessed with such strange behavior.

This model essentially moves the NP to the mythological level where the conflict takes place between the gods. Man looks on as a victim. It is necessary to note that this movement of the paradox to the mythological level is the

fundamental solution provided by this interpretation of the NP.

The Spirit model may sound outmoded and unbelievable. Science has been able to show us, through a different metaphor, what most of the physical movements are, and has even demythologized man and his own movements. The need for anthropomorphic projections has greatly diminished. However, these metaphors are not completely dead. As long as science has not shown the complete interrelations of the universe we will have some mystery. On this basis, the fundamental power of the spiritualistic metaphors will remain and men will use them to understand.

It would be very incorrect to believe that the spiritualistic metaphor has eroded because it has been disproved or because it does not work. As provocative to the scientific mind as it may be, it is a testimonial fact that on the basis of this model, through logic, punishment, exorcism or penance, for example, people do modify their behavior. They become dispossessed.

We are presently undergoing a resurgence of the popularity of this metaphor-model-myth. This is seen in the interest in things like UFO's, the occult, ESP, Zen Buddhism, other religions, drugs, and meditation (Samples, 1976).

What is being asserted here as a major hypothesis of

this paper is that any model will explain and it will be effective as long as it stands in a united, consistent, coherent, and socially accepted fashion. The logical and psychological integrity of the metaphor and the subsequent models and myths built upon it, taken together or separately, give it meaning and power.

Old metaphors are not disproved, they are replaced.⁵ When an existing model is exploited to its limits a new metaphor has a chance to replace it. The scientific (mechanistic) metaphors have split the spiritualistic metaphor-model-myth complex and it has began to erode.

We would guess that if the integrity of the spiritualistic metaphor could be restored and strengthened, for an individual or a society, its therapeutic and explanatory processes would again be effective.

Freudian Model of the Neurotic Paradox (Disease Metaphor)

It was Freud who provided the vocabulary and delineated the modern problem known as the NP. Instead of searching through all of Freud's writing, to follow the development of the NP in his theory, the reader is referred to Thompson (1957) and Ricoeur (1970). In his early clinical and

⁵Isreal Scheffler, in his book Science and Subjectivity (1967), has disputed this view of science held by Thomas Kuhn, among others. His claims in defense of "objectivity" are answered by Kuhn in a postscript to the 1970 edition of The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.

theoretical experience, Freud had taken mechanistic, scientific (medical), and hedonistic positions. The fundamental life drive (libido) followed the "pleasure principle" and worked mechanically (medically and biologically). A mechanistic-medical model has the three necessary elements: (1) a specific disease or trauma, (2) a specific course, (3) a specific outcome. Knowledge of these three things makes it possible to develop a specific intervention. These assumptions and this model guided Freud's work even though he didn't think in terms of models.

Freud was an acute and honest observer even if his observations were contradictory to his assumptions. He began to notice persons who exhibited behaviors which seemed counter to the "pleasure principle." These were cases of World War I veterans who would re-live their experiences and do so repetitively and with much pain. He also recognized other patients such as hysterics who seemingly had no discoverable organic disease but who complained of physical suffering. Freud was motivated to develop a theoretical position which could explain these behaviors because they seemed so contradictory to his assumptions. This behavior could not be interpreted as sexual wish fulfillment (pleasure). This was why Freud saw this behavior as paradoxical.

Solution to NP

There are three elements in Freud's solution to the NP. Two elements were theoretical. These were thoroughly explicated by Freud. These were 1) the idea that symptoms are defenses binding anxiety over repressed wishes and fantasies; and later 2) the death instinct (Thanatos). They are in the realm of "focal" knowledge (Polanyi, 1951). That is, these theorizations were the objects of conscious intellectual attention and manipulation. In the language of the gestaltist, they provide the "figure" in Freud's thought on which attention is drawn, against a backdrop of unnoticed assumptions. We will return to these. The third element was subtle and essentially a shift in "tacit" knowledge (Polanyi, 1951). This provided the "ground" or backdrop to Freud's thought and was not explicated. Indeed, Polanyi's definition of tacit knowledge specifies that it is a-critical, not subject to the scrutiny and analysis which focal awareness necessarily includes.

Freud's Tacit Paradigm Shift

Freud's tacit solution was essentially accomplished through authoritarian assertion and rhetoric based upon "science" and the medical model (Szasz, 1961). The theory went as follows: During infancy, behaviors are emitted on the basis of the pleasure principle (Id). However,

the parents begin to "socialize" the child by punishing forbidden actions (even thoughts). Thus, a fundamental conflict between the pleasure principle and reality principle develops. The child must learn to suppress or repress his "bad" impulses and/or find socially approved ways to express them. All of this is for the purpose of maximizing pleasure and reducing pain.

There is one drive which was rigorously socialized in Freud's day and in regard to which it was not easy to find socially approved outlets. This is sex. Freud initially interpreted this problem in a narrow medical model. Severe socialization and/or sexual molestations cause trauma. Freud actually sought for the organic damage caused in this way. He believed this damage created the symptoms of neurosis and if he could have found it he would have been able to fulfill the requirements of the medical model. He was not able to accomplish this.

Freud was a creative thinker. When he began to realize that the traumatic experiences which his patients reported might be fantasies or wishes he followed this data and modified his theory. However, he never changed the "tacitly" held medical hypothesis: the "ground" from which he perceived the world. Patients continued to be looked upon as sick with all the privileges pertaining to this status.

This "tacit" shift was the unexplicated aspect of Freud's solution to the NP. Szasz (1961) believes that Freud took this attitude from Charcot. However Freud came upon it, he was a major contributor to its eventual social and cultural success. The triumph of this new paradigm was based upon the authority exerted by science and medicine--not new knowledge or truth. The philosophical assumptions were never changed. For this reason, however, Freud's theory became a mixed model (one built upon a hybrid of two metaphors: the disease and the spirit) which generated many contradictions.

Freud contributed to the erosion of the spiritualistic model by moving "tacit" understanding from spirit to medicine. The medical model called for a new approach to treatment much more in line with modern scientific assumptions.

Freud's Early Explication of the NP

The first explicit interpretation of the NP took the following direction: If punishment was traumatically severe or inconsistent, the child developed a life style in which repression and the reality principle dominate. Freud's significant insight was that in this condition, the energy of the pleasure principle is not reduced and it tends to return from the unconscious in disguised forms (wishes,

fantasies, and indirect behaviors) in an attempt to re-live and master or undo the original problematic situation or trauma. This was referred to as the return of the repressed and is his earliest model of the NP. Since the returned material is socially condemned and it is no longer under the subject's conscious control, the person will repetitively find himself in painful traumatic situations. Symptoms are behaviors which reduce the anxiety of this situation but which do not solve the underlying repression. Thus, this is an anxiety reduction and avoidance model.

When repression is relatively weak, the forbidden impulses may threaten to merge into conscious awareness. The person may then unconsciously administer self-punishment. This behavior will also appear to the subject as beyond his own control. He may even feel inhabited and be drawn into a spiritualistic interpretation of his behavior.

Freud's Later Explication of the NP

The second solution of the NP is an extension of the first. As Freud continued to work with WWI veterans and hysteric patients it became more difficult for him to theoretically account for the self-inflicted suffering through the model of the "return of the repressed." The drive and energy toward self-destruction seemed more universal and more persistent than the model could explain,

especially as the role of wish and fantasy came to dominate his thinking. Consequently, he posited another "instinct" or basic energy. This he called Thanatos, the death drive.

In proposing a death drive, in conflict with the life drive, Freud resolves the NP by making it an ontological problem. He actually performs the same maneuver that the spiritualistic interpreters did. He moved the solution to the mythological level.

Freud was able to show how patients suffering from the "return of the repressed" could be treated through techniques to lift the repression. However, he did not resolve the ontological conflict between Eros and Thanatos. He increasingly became directly interested in mythology and its contribution to understanding this conflict. Individual neurosis became universal social neurosis.

Freud not only maintained that human history can be understood only as a neurosis but also that the neurosis of individuals can be understood only in the context of human history as a whole. (Brown, 1959, p. 12)

Freudian Model and the Defining Characteristics of the NP

Now let us examine the Freudian model in light of the four defining elements of the NP which have been listed.

Self-inflicted behavior. The pain of neurosis is explained through the return of the repressed, and the development of symptoms which are essentially avoidance

techniques. The symptom represents both the biologically fundamental libidinal gratification and the imposed suffering inflicted by the super-ego. Society becomes the villain. The neurotic is not possessed, he is not a sinner, he is a victim who has fallen ill because of traumatic repressive actions done unto him. He is ill. Thus, it turns out that the suffering is not basically self-inflicted and the individual is not responsible for his condition.

In this interpretation the logical, rational, and self-responsible elements of personality are reduced to a rigid determinism. Man is free from the paradox, but not personally free. Man is an organism which stands in eternal danger from the conflicts of his own drives.

Repetitive behavior. Freud's model explains the repetitiveness of neurotic behavior by pointing out the need to undo or master a previously traumatic life event by repeating it. But this is done unconsciously through symptoms and the situation is never really solved. Later, Freud began to believe that this tendency to repeat may be stronger than the pleasure principle. He then selected the model of the tendency of organic life to return to the inorganic state from which it came. Thus, repetitiveness becomes an ontological problem. The repetitiveness is ontological and beyond man's control. It is a biological and

determined action about which man has no choice. The NP is solved, but a larger problem is created. How can man control his aggressive destructive tendencies?

Paradoxical behavior. The paradox of the NP is resolved in the Freudian model. However, it is resolved in a curious manner. Typically, behavior is first reduced to a biological language. However, the language turns out not to be the model-level language Freud claimed, but mythological-level language. Consequently, it is fair to assert that the paradox is actually resolved by moving it to a mythological level.

Creative and predictive behavior. Creativity for Freud was identical to illness, or neurosis. The general cause for illness is repression. Creativity can happen when reason is relaxed and the unconscious can tell its truth (Rieff, 1959, p. 90); or, when the person regresses and the truth escapes. Creativity of a person remains an ideosyncratic symptom for Freud (Arieti, 1976, p. 24).

The creativity and predictability of the Freudian model really rests upon the success of the "tacit" paradigm shift which Freud accomplished. The explicated models end in pessimistic predictions only. This shift was successful through mixing models even though it may have been unintentional.

Therefore, according to the hypothesis of this paper, the Freudian model became effective because the disease metaphor and the generated model and myth came to "stand" within society.

There is no denying the creative and predictive impact of psychoanalysis upon society. It is seen in art, literature, education, child rearing, business, advertising, and even religion. Even the pessimistic conflict between life and death seems predictive enough to worry many people.

Critique of the Freudian Model

As psychoanalytic theory has been amplified and exploited over the years its limits are being exposed. Freudian thought is an exasperating mixture of realism and idealism, biology and mythology, determinism and teleology, logic and rationalism and irrationalism, and many others.

The most surprising thing which emerges from this analysis is that Freud's method of solving the NP is not different from that of the spiritualistic resolution. Both models use avoidance explanations and fundamentally move the NP to the mythological level to solve it. Even for Freud the struggle eventually is between the gods. Even if we grant that Freud wants to use the mythologies metaphorically, the method is suspect to the scientific mind. Freud's model never seems to get legitimately

reinterpreted into physical and biological language of a satisfactory nature to the scientist. On the other hand, Freud's denial about his gods is never quite enough for the spiritualists and there is a suspicion that psychoanalysis may be a religion after all.

Behavioral Model of the Neurotic Paradox (Machine Metaphor)

The mechanistic model will now be considered in conjunction with scientific philosophy and methodology, as it was the model which superceded the spirit metaphor and tacitly supported the psychoanalytic model on "scientific" (if not medical) ground. The mythology of behaviorism contains philosophical assumptions which deny the possibility of genuine or realistic paradoxes. Paradoxes are mistakes, incorrect operations of logic, linguistic excesses, or mixed metaphors (Turbayne, 1962). Science is assumed to be based upon realism, logical positivism, operationalism, linear assumptions, Aristotelean logic, mechanism, and induction (Maslow, 1966, p. 72ff). In spite of these attitudes, behaviorists were unable to ignore the NP.

Early Behavioral Model

A primary principle of learning, according to behavioral learning theory, is that emitted behavior which is rewarded will be repeated. Skinner's radical behaviorism focuses

more on the R in Watson's S-R (stimulus-response) formula. B.F. Skinner's (1953) system of operant conditioning is a descriptive behaviorism devoted entirely to the study of responses. He flatly rejects the language of subjective "mentalistic" concepts and leans so extremely toward an empirical tradition that he maintains he does not need a theoretical framework. Consequently, his behavioral model utilizes inductive reasoning which leads its proponents to conclude that what is true of certain individual cases is true of all cases, or what is true at certain times, will be true under the same circumstances at all times. In contrast, deduction is the process which starts with certain premises or propositions and attempts to draw valid conclusions from them. Noam Chomsky (1979) addresses the problems inherent in Skinner's inductive approach by questioning the generality of application of concepts derived from the relatively restricted type of behavior that Skinner has studied in his experimental programs.

A second primary principle of Skinner's brand of behaviorism is that behaviors which are unrewarded should extinguish (Skinner, 1953). The occurrence of negative reinforcement is distinguished from punishment in that the negative reinforcer (or aversive stimulus) increases the strength of the operant behavior to avoid that stimulus.

The NP stated in this language is: Why does behavior, motivated by reinforcing consequences, not discontinue where it in fact leads the organism into punishment or pain?

Negative reinforcement should prevent the recurrence of such behavior, or in the absence of a reward--extinction should lead to an ending of the behavior.

The explanation of this seemingly paradoxical behavior hinges on the hypothesis of avoidance response. Extinction is an active process and occurs only in the presence of the conditioned stimulus (CS) without reinforcement (negative CS in this case). If the organism is allowed to avoid the CS it will never learn that the punishment will not follow. Thus, the behavior will never extinguish.

But why does the avoidance response itself never extinguish? Because the CS (situation) causes an increase in drive (negative autonomic nervous system response) and avoidance causes a reduction in drive. This reduction is a positive reinforcement for avoidance behavior. Therefore, the avoidance response is continuously reinforced and the original conditioned response cannot extinguish.

Temporal factors are important in this solution. If the avoidance response can be delayed until non-punishment occurs, or a counter-response is elicited, then extinction, or counter-conditioning may take place. In other words,

long-term pleasure is given up in favor of short-term pleasure (Mowrer, 1948).

For the behaviorist, using this solution to the NP and the assumptions of this philosophy of science, neurosis is a mistake based upon avoidance behavior.

Mowrer's Critique of the Avoidance Model

Mowrer has lead a concerted attack against both Freudianism and Skinner's naive behaviorism. He believes the two solutions to the NP are not essentially different since they both are avoidance models.

Perhaps Mowrer's most direct point is that both approaches " . . . are predicated on the contrary assumption of the essential permanence of some (why not all?) fears unless they are subjected to special 'treatment' procedures." (Mowrer, 1964, p. 217). In other words, these solutions of the NP are contrary to the well-established principles of extinction. That is, to continue approaching the initially aversive situation (CS) without experiencing some sort of contiguous reinforcement is contradictory to behaviorist law. Mowrer argues that these explanations are very circuitous in their attempt to get around this principle in its most direct application, and violate the principle of parsimony.

But Mowrer also believes this naive behavioral explanation violates learning theory in an even more direct way.

Where, we may ask, is the evidence that fears are either established or perpetuated by means of rewards? Habits, as overt, voluntary behavior, are reinforced in this way. But fears, which are mediated by the autonomic nervous system (and are involuntary), are established and perpetuated by means of punishment (drive increment), not by means of reward (drive decrement). The notion that fears are reinforced by rewards is thus not a legitimate application of 'learning theory' but a perversion thereof. (Mowrer, 1964, p. 219)

The same critique is applied by Mowrer to Dollard and Miller (1950), Wolpe (1958), and Szasz (1961).

Mowrer's Solution

Mowrer has been interested in developing a neo-behavioristic learning theory which could account for " . . . goal directed, purposive, deliberate, or, if you will, free and responsible behavior." (Mowrer, 1964, p. 11). Fundamental to his model is the principle of cybernetics. Mowrer proposed a mediational theory of learning in which both fear (and avoidance responses) and hope (and approach responses) are conditioned reactions which, as feedback occurs, allow the organism to guide his behavior instead of simply react.

Applied to the NP, Mowrer's model would indicate that the neurotic refuses to heed the feedback he is receiving (in the form of hope and approach responses) and instead he goes ahead with uncorrected responses with the desire to achieve advantage. Because of this, the neurotic has a real stimulus of which to be afraid. The fear is not unreal. Mowrer concludes: ". . . so called psychoneuroses and functional psychoses can be understood only in terms of palpable misconduct which has not been confessed or expiated." (Mowrer, 1964, p. 20).

Arguing with Szasz (1961), that neurosis involves play-acting, impersonation, deception and cheating, Mowrer says this is the way it begins and is perpetuated. "But in its manifest, explicit form neurosis also involves an involuntary out-cropping of the truth." (Mowrer, 1964, p. 139). The truth is that the neurotic is disregarding hope for change and refuses to emit approach responses. He is unwilling to change. This out-cropping is the symptomatology of the neurotic. The derivation of the symptoms is the conscience which makes the neurotic different from the sociopath because the neurotic has the decency to suffer even though he is hiding. The neurotic represses the super-ego, according to Mowrer, rather than the id, as Freud held.

It is not that "symptoms" merely represent a strategy by means of which the individual displaying them is trying to manipulate others, in a selfish, infantile, irresponsible way. It is rather that a symptom is indeed a form of "communication," not in this manipulative sense, but as an involuntary confession which the individual (ego) continues to try to avoid but which "the voice within" (super-ego) is trying to effectuate. (Mowrer, 1964, p. 134)

But why do human beings err in the first place? "Not because we are necessarily stupid or inherently evil, but because we are personally inexperienced and unwilling to 'take the word' of others." (Mowrer, 1964, p. 228).

Mowrer does not explain how this deduction is generated by his model.

Treatment for neurotic behavior is confession, restitution, and re-establishment in "community"; or, fellowship with other people. This means that one takes the instruction of other people and does not hide the failure to do so.

Thus, "therapy" cannot be predicated on any such simple program as extinction or counter-conditioning. Instead, the desideratum, as Jourard properly notes, is that of courage, the courage to be known. (Mowrer, 1964, p. 233)

Behavioral Models and the Defining Characteristics of the NP

As the discussion demonstrates, there are two behavioral models, the early avoidance model and Mowrer's two-factor model.

Avoidance Model

Self-inflicted behavior. The defeat of the neurotic is explained as secondary unintended results of avoidance behavior. The avoidance behavior does not in fact prevent the primary pain or suffering, but it does reduce the anxiety and the person temporarily feels better. It is a substitution which helps the person avoid the fundamental problem. The temporal element is important in that short-term pleasure is pre-potent over long-term pleasure.

Repetitive behavior. The repetitiveness of the behavior is explained through drive reduction acting as a reinforcement. But since the fundamental problem is not solved, the anxiety will return and again need to be avoided.

Paradoxical behavior. Paradoxical behavior disappears because the requirements of behavioristic mythology are met. The underlying physical properties, conditions and relations are described. The explanation seems reasonable. However, as shall be shown in the critique, the whole system remains paradoxical.

Creative and predictive behavior. According to Skinner, creativity is the emission of a novel, low probability response from the response hierarchy, which achieves positive reinforcement from the environment. Creativity, in its old-fashioned meaning, goes out with the qualities of freedom and dignity. The creative and predictive potential

of neurotic behavior is not well explained in an avoidance model. All creativity becomes substitutive, secondary and epi-phenomenal behavior. In this mythology, neurosis is stupidity and cannot have fundamental predictive validity.

Criticism of the Avoidance Model

In addition to the criticisms which Mowrer gave, the following items are relevant. The drive reduction hypothesis has not stood the test of empirical research. The model cannot explain the phenomena of "secondary gain" which is an important factor in neurotic behavior. The secondary benefits (or liabilities) of exhibiting neurotic behavior are not easily accounted for through drive reduction and/or extinction concepts. The model cannot explain the origin of the responses which become symptoms. The model is circular and paradoxical: How can an organism avoid a situation without recognizing it, but if it is recognized, how is it avoided?

There is much written which points out the many paradoxes of mechanism (Bronowski, 1956; Turbayne, 1962; Maslow, 1966; Matson, 1976; Chomsky, 1971). There are also many ways that the limiting paradox of Skinner's writing has been stated. Matson worded it thusly: "Where man himself is empty, passive, only awaiting the sculptor's hand, his society palpitates with ongoing motivations and manifest destiny." (1976, p. 117).

Consequently, behaviorism becomes extremely conservative.

It is not the reform of society which behaviorists pursue.

It is the reform of individuals through adjustment.

As various critics have pointed out, there is a curious contradiction in this line of argument. For, if Skinner is correct in his deterministic assumptions, then his argument is superfluous and futile since (as Paul Kurtz has put it) "if everything we do is strictly determined, then we cannot choose to master or control the environment, nor can we choose to follow Skinner's recommendations, unless we are determined (by the external forces) to do so." On the other hand, if there is any point at all to the discussion--if we can act upon the environment, design our cultures and initiate behavior techniques--Skinner is thoroughly refuted on his basic premises. (Matson, 1976, p. 123)

Mowrer's Model

Self-inflicted behavior. Suffering is the conscience reminding the person he has done wrong. In this sense the self-inflicted suffering is admitted as legitimate, normal, and moral behavior. Avoidance is an escape and a cover-up.

Repetitive behavior. The repetitiveness of the behavior is explained on the basis that the conscience has a real sin with which to contend. There is a stimulus to fear. Avoidance is only temporary and the fear will return. Only confession can stop the vicious circle.

Paradoxical behavior. the paradoxical appearance of the behavior is translated into a lie.

Creative and predictive behavior. The creative and predictive nature of neurotic behavior is seen only in a short-term sense. It has corrective and directive value.

Criticism of Mowrer's Model

Surprisingly, Mowrer's model comes out more like the spiritualistic model than either the psychoanalytic or earlier behavior models. It is very difficult to see the way in which Mowrer derives his final solution, that men are not evil or stupid, but are hiding, from his model. It is probable that this conclusion comes from moralistic and rationalistic metaphors and mythology. The interpretation Mowrer gave his model is easily translated into authoritarianism. We shall also see that it is similar to the existential model in that the final solution is moral fortitude, conviction and courage. The model does not reveal the source of courage.

General Critique of Behavioral Models

As behavioristic models have been exploited and explored, they have become the dominant approach in modern American psychology. At the same time, it has come to be seen as a paradoxical system. Its definitions are essentially cir-

cular and it is paradoxical in nature for it has no way to explain avoidance except through "infinite regresses." (Mehrabian, 1968, p. 97). David Bakan puts this conclusion in strong language: "The delineation, abstraction, and identification of the stimulus is the response." (Bakan, 1968, p. 56).

Another critical issue is the problem of induction. Induction is a foundational assumption of his model. For a general introduction and discussion of this issue, the reader is referred to Jordan (1968, p. 123ff). Popper expressed the problem this way: The whole inductive program of science underlying behaviorism is paradoxical (Popper, 1962, p. 42ff).

A critical issue today is the problem of meaning. Behaviorism has become a victim of its own reductionism and apparently must commit verbal redefinition to explain behavior on a meaningful scale. The simple models examined here can legitimately deal only with very specific and limited behaviors. Even though B.F. Skinner has explicitly taken a life-long atheoretical position, he could not resist trying to give his theory meaning in his book Beyond Freedom and Dignity (Skinner, 1971). It should be noted that this book is essentially a mythology generalized from his

metaphors, model, and assumptions.⁶

Perhaps most surprising from the analysis is that Mowrer is correct in showing the essential similarity of the Freudian and behavioral models. They are both avoidance and drive reduction models.

And, Mowrer's model, in attempting to refute the Freudian and naive behavioristic models, becomes very similar to the spiritualistic and existential models.

Existential Model of the Neurotic Paradox (Seed Metaphor)

Existentialism, humanism, and phenomenology do not form a well-unified philosophy or psychology. The common similarity they share is the metaphor of the Seed. Seeds grow, develop, fulfill, and actualize. The "within" is important rather than stimuli or responses. You do not create the qualities which emerge from a seed. You set the conditions which permit them to develop and prevent damage. Existential emphasis on freedom stands in sharp contrast to Freudian and behavioristic determinism. Existentialism emphasizes the future and becomingness, as opposed to the past and fixedness. Each individual is held to be unique and so cannot be forced into a categorical mold. Existentialism, humanism, and

⁶For an excellent review of Skinner and radical behaviorism, see Noam Chomsky's New York Book Review article, "The Case Against B.F. Skinner," 1971. The language and assumptions Skinner uses to construct his model are expertly revealed.

phenomenology also share antagonisms: They are negative to mechanistic, reductive, and disease metaphors about man.

Model of the NP

Sartre, who is mainly a philosopher, and May, a psychologist, have provided similar verbalizations of the NP from the point of view of existentialism. It is this: "How can we conceive of a knowledge which is ignorant of itself?" (Chein, 1972, p. 92). In other words, how do you deceive yourself without knowing you are deceiving yourself?

According to existential thought, man is alone in a morally neutral and indifferent universe. Within him is all that he has. There are no apriori reasons and purposes. There is no established meaning to life.

Because freedom is inherent in being, so is anxiety. To choose is necessarily to take risks, possibly to lose all or to make a disastrous choice, or to confront the meaninglessness and dark aspects of being. Being is aware of its own finitude. Therefore, added to anxiety (inherent in choice) is dread of non-being. Anxiety may impel a flight into an inauthentic mode of existence--detachment, hedonistic pursuits, or loss of individualism in conformity. Anxiety can be lessened by authentic living through commitment. In doing so the ontological anxiety is covered and one feels less anxious.

The authentic man must make honest choices with full awareness of the consequences even if these involve an increase in anxiety. Nevertheless, one continues to be existentially anxious. It is in this way that life becomes a deception without one knowing it.

The Existential Solution to the NP

Interestingly, existentialism does not attempt to resolve the paradox. Sartre's answer to the question of self-deceit is that you deceive yourself by lying to yourself and then "living into" the lie. One attempts to make the lie more real than being. You deceive yourself by refusing to accept responsibility for yourself and by not constituting your own being through choice and decision. Sartre called this "bad faith;" Eric Fromm called it Escape From Freedom, (Fromm, 1941).

The paradox stands: man must suffer either as a false self or as a being alone in the universe. The existentialists' answer is bravery. It takes will and strength. It is a tragic view similar to Freud and Mowrer:

The drama (Oedipus as retranslated by Rollo May) is the tragedy of seeing the reality about oneself, confronting what one is and what one's origin is, the tragedy of man knowing and facing conscious self-knowledge his own destiny. (May, 1967, p. 101)

May indicates to us that, "To live with sensitivity in this age of limbo indeed requires courage." (May, 1975, p. 1). The obstruction to courage is the contradiction that one must be fully committed to the act of bravery yet remain aware that at the same time, one may possibly be wrong. May concludes: "My freedom. . . in any genuine sense . . . is to live in the dialectic relation." (May, 1967, p. 101).

People who become neurotic deceive themselves and refuse to "spell out" how they are engaged in the real world.

Neurotic guilt--as is the case with neurotic anxiety--is simply the end result of unconflicted, repressed, normal guilt. (May, 1967, p. 108)

Rollo May (1950, 1969, 1975) has provided us with an interpretation of the seed metaphor which may appear more optimistic, but upon examination, reveals a basic image of man in line with most other existentialists. He uses a concept of eros which includes the diamonic, defined as "any natural function which has the power to take over the whole person" (May 1969, p. 123). Sex, anger, rage, and the craving for power are examples. In seeking love (eros) to overcome existential anxiety, there is death; the possibility of destruction in one's present state of existence (anxious as it is) and being thrown into a void with even less security.

"May holds that man must confront . . .

. . . what is tragic in our day, namely the complete confusion, banality, ambiguity, and vacuum of ethical standards and the consequent inability to act . . . (May, 1969, p. 10)

He maintains that man must courageously transcend the diemonic by "taking a stand," and integrating this shadow of Being into himself, aspiring toward a deepening and widening of his consciousness leading to creative growth. The paradox, May points out, is that it is, at one and the same time, a potentially creative and destructive act.

Man's attempts to make meaningful the seemingly pointless efforts in Being (the fate symbolized in the eternal going and returning, laboring and resting and laboring again, growing and disintegrating and growing again portrayed in the tale of Sisyphus) is a recognition of our fate, and the beginning of finding meaning in an otherwise meaningless fatalism.⁷ While we may not negate or mitigate the evil, horror, and inevitable anxiety of Being, " . . . we find ourselves better able to encounter it and less lonely because we encounter it together." (May, 1969, p. 302).

It is in a relationship of caring that we are able to survive the cynicism and apathy which are the psychological illnesses of our day. So alienation is recast, in the "schizoid system" of technological man, as a loss of the capacity to be ultimately personal. Courage is shifted from

⁷The implementation of this myth to describe the existential position is credited to Albert Camus in The Myth of Sisyphus, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955.

simply fighting society's mores to the inward capacity to commit one's self, through love and will, to another human being. Tragedy is in how we as humans relate to the inescapable necessities of human fate.

Existential Model and the Defining Characteristics of the NP

Self-inflicted behavior. The existential model explains the self-inflicted nature of neurotic behavior as being due to escape from man's fundamental ontological status in being, or the anxiety of unauthentic experience. Neurotic behavior is non-self-fulfilling and deceptive. One is usually unaware of the self-infliction because the fundamental avoidance is denied and the pseudo-existence is strongly asserted.

Repetitive behavior. The repetitiveness of neurotic behavior is explained. The person must repeatedly assert the reality of the pseudo-existence he has adopted. Each momentary glimpse of the underlying emptiness and/or deceptiveness requires a stronger assertion of the assumed self.

Paradoxical behavior. Life is paradoxical because few men are able to stand in the tension of being and not escape. To stand in being is to experience the reality of "nothingness" and the ontological meaning of anxiety. To escape is to experience the anxiety of falseness and deceit. There is no satisfactory way out.

Creative and predictive behavior. Existentialism has been particularly excellent at describing man's predicament. As a humanist, Maslow takes man as the model of man. He departed from previous psychologists and studied "healthy specimens." In this way, he found self-actualizing people to all be creative. Thus, it is the essence of man to be creative, and the more creative the more freely human a person he is. Creativity is a "genetic" quality which needs to be supported and permitted to grow, develop, and actualize. In other words, it is reasonable to say that creativity is self-expression in the existentialist framework. It is potential in all persons and is seen in the lives of self-actualizers.

The limiting paradox of this model is the problem of self-reflexivity. The subject and object are identical. All self-expression is not creative, nor developmental, or good. We never know what the seed is until it grows. The future is not to be stated, it is to be discovered. The explanation of the creative and predictive potential of neurotic behavior is essentially pessimistic and apparently does not go beyond this. Concepts such as the "goodness of man" and the "freedom of man" are not really derived from the seed metaphor, but are carried in from an humanistic philosophical bias. The literature of existentialism is darkly tragic except for that of a few thinkers like Kierkegaard. He moves beyond

the existential crisis through a "leap of faith" (Bretall, 1951, p. 255).

Critique of the Existential Model

The existential approach has produced much rhetoric and literature, but little theoretical advance. (Braginsky, & Braginsky, 1974). It is essentially an avoidance model which allows for no avoidance. In this manner it is similar to both psychoanalysis and behaviorism. It may be seen as equally pessimistic in the sense that its basic image of man portrays him as lost, left up to his own devices to create meaning out of meaninglessness, and without any frame of reference or rules from which his risky steps toward authentic Being may be measured.

It is a circular system. Using Maslow as an example, the Braginskys' make this point clear:

a brief examination of some of these testable propositions will be sufficient to indicate that Maslow, like Skinner, presents us with nothing more than his own value premises in the guise of a "theory"; that his propositions and central concepts, like Skinner's, are tautological and untestable. (Braginsky & Braginsky, 1974, p. 78)

Again, these same authors write:

This "testable" proposition, then, tells us that to be self-actualizing, by definition, a person is "meta-motivated." How do we know that he is

metamotivated? Because he is self-actualizing. Circularity is by no means the exclusive property of the behaviorists. (Braginsky & Braginsky, 1974, p. 79)

One of the interesting characteristics of the existential-humanist movement has been its group or social activism in the face of an ontologically individualistic problem. The group therapy movement, altered states of consciousness, etc., are very attractive to existentialists and humanists.

Like behaviorism and psychoanalysis, the model does change the language used to talk about man. This change is more significant than appears on the surface. Translations do sometimes create different meanings:

Thus just as the behaviorists have eliminated the chance for understanding man by using object rather than people language, the humanists have done the same by destroying the meaning of people language. (Braginsky & Braginsky, 1974, p. 81)

The existential model seems to be a description of the NP which has no solution except a call to bravery. There is no explanation of how one becomes brave other than to accept one's givenness. Mowrer and Freud conclude with this same call for bravery.

Summary and Discussion

I have been working with the conclusion that an image of man includes the original metaphor asserted to provide

meaning for understanding and predicting behavior, and the subsequent models and myths generated by that metaphor.

The intent of this essay, as stated at the beginning, has been to impact the attitude of the reader interested in the state of affairs in psychology due to the various metaphors used to describe and give meaning to the image of man. I hope that this interpretation of the literature and the conflict has brought light to a few of the contradictions and patterns of resolution employed by the great thinkers in psychology. The point has not been to topple any theories based on any of the metaphors. The point is the process we go through in interpreting and attempting to resolve problems like the neurotic paradox.

We have seen that fundamentally all the models of the NP analyzed above have resolved the paradox by moving it to the mythological level. This is generally permissible; except, the models themselves do not include this solution within their own interpretive rules. There are two essential problems with this solution even though the models may be partially effective on the practical level.

First, as particularly exemplified by the Freudian and behavioristic models, the root metaphor is expanded to the myth level apparently without recognition of this fact. While a clinician may maintain a certain distance in appropriating

any one or a number of the images of man in doing therapy, the theorist generating the metaphors, myths, and models does not have the freedom or interpretive rules within the images presented to transcend the limitations he encounters.

Second, because each of the models we have considered is on one level, they become paradoxical because they tend to get caught in self-referring thought and language and contain no explanatory relations or rules which allow for transcending their own paradoxes. They tend to be closed systems. We have seen in the critique of each model that it is doubtful if any escape paradoxical status. Perhaps the important meaning of this is that they turn out to be very limited models. Their generative potential is rapidly exhausted and the resultant paradoxes become acute rather rapidly.

Creativity for Freud is a result of sickness; for Skinner it is an improbable response in the "response hierarchy;" for Maslow it is being the best human you can possibly be. None of these psychologies can help in understanding man as a creative being.

Probably all metaphors have a limited disclosure range. Some, however, may provide more interpretive power than others.

The limits of the metaphor and generated models and myths are discovered in several ways. First, the "fit" of the image with the phenomena being experienced begins to be too loose. In this case it will no longer give adequate meaning to experience.

Second, the usefulness of a metaphor may become limited when it becomes eroded. This is, it becomes so common it is no longer recognized as an interpretation. It is perhaps reified and taken as "reality" uncritically. It becomes a closed system. Meaning and understanding become arbitrary and rigid.

Third, interactions between different models (mixing metaphors) may cause conflicts. For various domains of experience we can have simultaneously different metaphorical frameworks. I believe the problems of clients in therapy may be understood in this way. A person may hold conflicting metaphorical understandings of his conflicts and experience the anxiety described earlier. A therapist's role may be to uncover the client's image of himself and the antinomies at root of the conflicts, and either to operate within that metaphor-model-myth framework or provide alternative images to enhance meaning and possibilities for resolution. Any treatment can be effective if it stands within, and is coherent with, a metaphor-model-myth complex. It may be that

if clients were preselected on the basis of their image of man and matched to therapists and interventions, the statistics of helpful interventions might be significantly increased.

Analyses similar to those completed above could be done for all other leading images of man. The metaphors which men have used to understand man are rapidly being exhausted. They are limited by the rapid development of serious paradoxes. Psychology needs new metaphors, new explanations of the NP, new images of man, to transcend its present state (Matson, 1976, p. 157). It seems to me that the process of demystification, as difficult as this may be, is rather easy compared to the next step--creating new images. A new metaphor is necessary to resolve a true paradox. Then work is done to explicate the metaphor (construct models), perform tasks of confirmation (empirical research), and amplifying and generalizing the metaphor (developing myths). This technical development continues as long as it is productive and/or until it begins to produce paradoxes again. I am indebted to Thomas Kuhn for this hypothesis (Kuhn, 1970).

Psychologists must create new images of man, but they have no new images of man. The models examined here do not genuinely allow for creativity. This is the limiting paradox of present day psychology in attempting to resolve the neurotic paradox.

To resolve the bind in the expression, explanation, and translation dimensions of meaning in interpretation, we need a model which includes not only the language, thought or action under consideration, but broader contexts which expressly allow for transcending deductions which are paradoxical (self-referring).

The suggestion here is that psychologists return to the liberal arts, to think creatively out of a broadened reservoir of ideas. A free mind is one which is not "mystified" and is therefore able to destroy the limiting conditions of one's own metaphorical understanding. The creative mind playfully juxtaposes symbols. J.J. Gordon wrote:

The element of playful impracticality is repeatedly emphasized in autobiographical accounts of scientific discovery and fit on a corollary to the double assertion that (a) language is essentially metaphoric and playful and only secondarily utilitarian; and (b) the child's grasp of language is initially playful and only later utilitarian. (Gordon 1961, p. 114)

Jerome Bruner agrees and chides teachers thusly:

The shrewd guess, the fertile hypothesis, the courageous leap to a tentative conclusion--these are the most valuable coin of the thinker at work. But in most schools, guessing is heavily penalized and is associated somehow with laziness. (Bruner, 1960, p. XX)

In closing, I would like to quote Michael Polanyi:
"Any effort made to understand something must be sustained
by the belief that there is something there that can be under-
stood." (Polanyi, 1964, p. 45). I hope in this thesis
there has been something to entice the reader into believing
there is something to be understood.

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