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**Psychoanalysis and constructionalism: Clinical and
metapsychological implications**

Loewus, Richard H., Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1993

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**PSYCHOANALYSIS AND CONSTRUCTIONALISM:
CLINICAL AND METAPSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

By

Richard H. Loewus

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York.

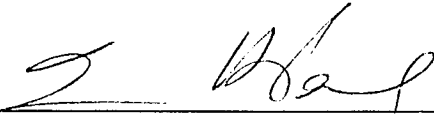
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APPROVAL

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CHAPTER 1
PSYCHOANALYSIS AND CONSTRUCTIONALISM:
AN OVERVIEW

The nature of psychoanalytic ‘knowledge’ has been the subject of controversy throughout its history. The epistemological validity of clinical interpretation (understanding offered in the clinical enterprise), metapsychology (the system of covering laws that is said to inform clinical enterprise), and methodology (whether clinical ‘data’ can be held as validation for the covering laws) have all been subject to debate.

These debates have been formulated in various terms on various dimensions: Is psychoanalysis Science or Not Science? Science or Art? Does psychoanalysis offer Causes or Reasons? Does it traffic in “Historical Truth” or “Narrative Truth”¹? Epistemological debates regarding psychoanalytic theory and practice necessarily reflect the philosophical position in which they are raised. This dissertation proposes that the epistemological nature of psychoanalysis is best understood within the philosophical position of Constructionalism².

Freud unwaveringly insisted psychoanalysis was a new natural science³. It is understandable, then, that challenges to the nature of psychoanalytic knowledge are often framed in terms of whether psychoanalysis is or is not science. From a historical perspective, such challenges are a legacy of Freud’s epistemological claims, his intellectual heritage, and the 19th century scientific *zeitgeist*. The strongest, if most naive, statement of this position is Eysenck’s assertion: “Psychoanalysis is a science or it is nothing” (Eysenck, 1963, p. 68).

Controversy is also fed by the theoretical and technical diversity within psychoanalysis itself. The proliferation of diverse schools, all competing for authority,

and claiming psychoanalytic authenticity, is often held as evidence that psychoanalysts cannot even agree among themselves on what is true.

Stephen Mitchell⁴ has recently organized a classification of analytic metapsychologies centering on their treatment of Freud's drive economics in opposition to an interpersonal "relational matrix" theory. "Loose Constructionism" includes those schools that hold that relational theories can be derived through interpretation of Freud's original writings. Hence, these analysts claim that relational theories add nothing essentially new to Freud's work. Loewald is offered as a loose constructionist, and one who explicitly acknowledges his use of free interpretation of Freud's writing. "Model Mixing" is a within psychoanalysis eclecticism which acknowledges the essential difference between the drive theory and the relational matrix theory, but holds that the two can be complimentary. Mitchell recommends the work of Kernberg and Pine as examples of this approach. Finally, Mitchell offers his own "Integrational Relational Model" in which the areas of self psychology, ego psychology, object relations, and interpersonal psychoanalysis are integrated into a relational theory that eliminates the drive economics of Freud.

The relational model of psychoanalysis⁵ has been an influential and popular one within modern psychoanalysis. Organizing schools of analysis around the respective positions they take regarding drive theory, however, is only one approach to what Schafer⁶ has called comparative psychoanalysis. Any inquiry into comparative psychoanalysis faces the central problem of the seeming contradictions between the respective versions it examines, and how to judge their relative power. This dissertation examines the work of some modern analysts with a focus on this dimension of comparative psychoanalysis.

Lear has underscored the seemingly paradoxical nature of the focus of analytic metapsychology, in general, in its attempt to be a “science of subjectivity” (Lear, 1990, p. 3). Lear suggests, however, that the conception of science that requires objective detachment, the positivism of Freud’s time, is inadequate to understand the kind of enterprise that psychoanalysis is. In this view it is the positivist empiricist conception of science that is the problem. Hence, the challenge is to be answered by a reconceptualization in the philosophy of science.

In effect, the debate regarding scientific membership for psychoanalysis has been reduced to these two strategies. Either psychoanalysis is not science, or the current conception of science is inadequate to capture the special, but nonetheless scientific, nature of psychoanalysis⁷. A third possibility is to examine the nature of psychoanalytic understanding without one or another philosophy of science being held as the gold standard against which it should be measured. Such an approach will be developed here by calling on the wider epistemological range that constructionalism affords.

Historically, one attempt to allow scientific status for psychoanalysis has been to divide the sciences into those that address natural phenomena (*Naturwissenschaften*) and those whose concern is the products of human beings (*Geisteswissenschaften*). The methodology and epistemological considerations of the *naturwissenschaften* are then held to differ from those of the *geisteswissenschaften*. Psychoanalysis, a member of the *geisteswissenschaften*, may not then be measured against the requirements of the *naturwissenschaften*. The most recent and popular strategy is to hold that psychoanalysis is a hermeneutic exercise.

Hermeneutics is defined as “the art or science of interpretation, especially of Scripture, commonly distinguished from exegesis or practical exposition” in the Oxford English Dictionary. Etymologically, hermeneutics derives from the Greek god Hermes,

the deliverer of the god's messages to mortals. Hermeneutics aspires to a methodology for interpreting the meanings that inhere in products of human creation. Proponents of modern hermeneutics assert that their discipline provides an epistemological foundation for the *geisteswissenschaften*⁸.

That hermeneutics appears to provide an apt framework for, and possible defense of, psychoanalytic interpretation is obvious. Clinical psychoanalysis is an interpretive discipline. Interpretation takes up the lion's share of the efforts of the psychoanalyst; it is the medium through which the mutative effect of psychoanalytic therapy is said to be delivered. The analytic dialogue, from the analyst's perspective, centers on interpretation, theoretically and technically. Since psychoanalytic interpretation holds such a central place in psychoanalytic therapy, the nature of psychoanalytic interpretation is crucial to its epistemological status. Hence, the attraction of many modern philosophers and analysts to a hermeneutic framework for psychoanalytic interpretation.

Hermeneutics has also been applied to metapsychology⁹. Those who ascribe to this position take Freud's original works as texts to be interpreted. Roy Schafer, for example, likens himself to a literary critic in his reading and reconceptualization of Freud's work¹⁰. Schafer appeals here to the hermeneutic idea that absolute authority of interpretation of a text is not given by authorship.

The most extensive attempts at epistemological support for Freudian psychoanalysis through hermeneutics are offered by philosophers. Habermas¹¹, Gadamer¹², and Ricoeur¹³ have offered hermeneutic accounts of psychoanalysis, and all have been critiqued by Grunbaum¹⁴.

Within psychoanalysis itself, both support and criticism have been offered from a hermeneutic perspective. At first, psychoanalysts tended to call on constructionalist principles such as "relativism"¹⁵, "perspectivism"¹⁶ and/or "constructivism"¹⁷ within their

hermeneutic accounts without fully crediting the degree to which constructionalism informed their views. As this area of inquiry has evolved, constructionalism has begun to play a more explicit role in these analysts' formulations. However, since psychoanalysis would appear to be greatly a linguistic enterprise, hermeneutics has maintained its prominent role.

In my view constructionalism provides a more fundamental epistemological foundation for psychoanalysis than does hermeneutics. Hermeneutics, a discipline whose subject is interpretation of texts, can be profitably understood within the larger range of constructionalism. What those who apply hermeneutics to psychoanalysis hope to accomplish is more directly achieved in terms of a philosophical constructionalism, and some of the problems that hermeneutic accounts create dissolve under constructionalist reformulation.

Constructionalism: A Brief Overview

Constructionalism, as I shall use the term in this dissertation, is the philosophical position most fully developed by the American philosopher, Nelson Goodman¹⁸. The fundamental constructionalist thesis is that we construct what we know, and that we do so through the creation and manipulation of symbols and symbol systems. Such symbols and systems are not tools of description of a ready-made world, but actively participate in the worlds we create with them. What we understand is embodied in "world versions"¹⁹. There are innumerable world versions, and worlds are embodied in "right" world versions. For constructionalists there is no one given world, only numerous versions, right and wrong. The processes and procedures we use to create world versions, and the considerations that go into the judgments we make regarding their "rightness" is called worldmaking²⁰.

Worldmaking starts with one world version and arrives at another through the application of the various processes of representation available to the worldmaker. I outline some basic aspects of these procedures now to introduce the nature of constructionalist worldmaking. Such processes include composition and decomposition, weighting, ordering, deletion and supplementation, and deformation²¹.

Composition and decomposition include all the ways in which we sort into categories and apply labels. Both metaphorical as well as literal denotation sort and organize categories. For constructionalists, metaphor is as true or false as literal denotation. The concepts of identity, what counts as a kind, and hence even such notions as scientific replication, depend on matters of composition and decomposition. Contrary to the empiricist notion that we *discover natural* kinds, constructionalism holds that we *construct relevant* kinds.

Weighting is the assignment of emphasis, relative significance, to the various kinds in world versions. This may involve hierarchical judgments of what is relevant, useful, important, or valuable. Versions may differ not in the classes they recognize, but in the relative significance they assign them. The various schools of psychoanalysis may be understood as assigning different weights to psychoanalytic phenomena. In a later chapter I will examine the difference between Hoffman's social-constructivist psychoanalysis and Schafer's narrational psychoanalysis as a difference in weighting regarding the analyst's subjective experience. Both these analysts accept, at least grossly, the existence of the same psychoanalytic phenomena, but emphasize them differently. Hence, through different weighting they arrive at different psychoanalytic world versions.

Ordering is concerned with measurement, derivation, and perceptual organization. Measurements provide order within world versions. In keeping with the fundamental principle of constructionalist worldmaking, there are no miles, hours, wavelengths, or

octaves found in the world. All are built into world versions. The concept of derivation plays an important part in the controversy regarding the primacy of the analyst's experience cited above. Hoffman holds that everything in clinical analysis derives first from the subjective experience of the analyst²². I shall explore the implications of this view in the fourth chapter of this work.

Deletion and supplementation add or subtract something from an old version. These processes are apparent in the statistical procedures of the social scientist, the smoothing out of curves of the physicist, and the perceptual experiments on the "phi phenomenon" in which two static flashes of light are perceived as moving from point to point. One way the psychoanalytic process promotes the analysand's understanding is through supplementation of heretofore unacknowledged unconscious fantasies and memories. From a constructionalist point of view such fantasies and memories are themselves constructions, an idea whose clinical implications I will investigate throughout this dissertation.

Deformation corrects or distorts older versions to arrive at new ones. Variations on a musical theme or a caricature are examples of deformation that create new versions. Schafer's use of the metaphor of the psychoanalytic "storyline"²³ makes use of the processes of deformation as well as supplementation and deletion.

A central thesis of this dissertation is that clinical psychoanalysis is applied worldmaking. As such the analyst and analysand start with the analysand's world version and through the process of psychoanalysis arrive at another, hopefully more adaptive, world version. On this account it may be said that each of us lives in a world of our own making, a world constructed of individual, characteristic worldmaking processes we select and apply to construct subjective experience. The psychoanalyst, a student of such constructions with a particular point of view, endeavors to understand, unravel, and

reconstruct (1) the ideographic subjective world the analysand has constructed, and (2) the particular processes, individually and in conflict and synthesis, each analysand has developed to continually recreate, and thereby sustain, the world already created. The purpose of analytic inquiry is to help the analysand realize the nature of his construction of the world, understand how and why he has previously and continues presently to construct his world this way, and to allow for the development of a wider, hopefully more adaptive set of worldmaking processes leading to his constructing a more adaptive subjective world version.

Roy Schafer has proposed that one of the dominant legacies of Freud's work is what Schafer calls the "transformational dialogue"²⁴, the use of words to reconstruct the analysand's narratives of self and subjective experience. Schafer's three aspects of the transformational dialogue are destabilization, deconstruction, and defamiliarization. The parallel between this thesis and constructionalist worldmaking is striking and will be developed in the third chapter of this dissertation.

How can we come to trust what we believe to be real? This is the essential epistemological question that philosophical systems attempt to answer. Empiricist science has long held that our descriptions, formulations, and laws must answer for their truth to a reality independent of them. Reality in this view is held as discoverable and unitary. Reality is given by experience. Constructionalism holds that our descriptions, formulations and laws are products of our own minds and the symbol systems we invent for our purposes. For constructionalists reality is invented and pluralistic; there is no reality independent of our constructions. To say that reality is given by experience is to ignore that our experience fundamentally affects how and what we take reality to be. From a constructionalist perspective experience and reality interact. Perhaps this more than any other constructionalist principle - that the line between subject and object is less

clear than empiricist accounts would have us believe - is what has attracted analysts to constructionalism. While it may be easier to defend empiricist accounts of reality regarding disciplines such as biology or chemistry, such a position has been increasingly more difficult to uphold regarding clinical psychoanalysis. The constructionalist position clearly has profound implications for psychoanalysis, conceptually and in clinical practice. Constructionalism

...has the effect of reinforcing (or perhaps even of having partly instigated) ...the current focus on the here-and-now aspects of the transference and countertransference; a view of character as an active, world-building process; an increasing emphasis on the person's status as active agent; the recognition of the immense contribution of the immediate interpersonal situation on any experience, even memory, that arises in that situation; the inaccuracy of the traditional concept of the analyst's neutrality; and the recognition that no single school of psychoanalytic thought holds the key to the truth (Stern, 1985, p. 204).

From the constructionalist perspective, an epistemology must be broad enough to encompass all the varied ways in which human beings represent and create understanding. Goodman and Elgin²⁵ (1988) propose a "philosophy of the understanding" in an attempt to reconceptualize epistemology. There are three basic postulates to their reformulation.

First, the concept of truth is limited in scope, because it applies only to verbal statements. The numerous other media in which representation and symbolization achieve and communicate understanding are left untouched by the concept of truth. Additionally, truth is often held as the measure of convergence of discourse to the real world. For constructionalism there is no world independent of some form of representation. Hence, the concept of *rightness* subsumes that of truth in constructionalism, so that symbol systems of all kinds can be considered epistemologically.

For the constructionalist, epistemology must include the philosophy of art as well as the philosophy of science. Thus, whereas a musical passage, a verbal question, or a glance

cannot be measured in terms of truth, all may be considered in terms of rightness. It is more fitting to ask if a theory is right than to ask if a behavior is true. Rightness opens epistemology to what is shown through the whole variety of referential media, as well as to what is stated linguistically.

Whereas truth can remain as a limited subclass of rightness, the concept of certainty has no useful place in constructionalism. In its place *adoption* is held as a more encompassing organizing principle. Adoption is seen as “putting to work, of making or trying to make a fit” (Goodman and Elgin, 1988b, p. 159). Adoption refers to what has been adopted, the process, or the state. It implies no degree of confidence, and permits inquiry into symbols, actions, and procedures of all kinds.

A related concept, that of *entrenchment*²⁶, provides a dimension which addresses the question of the degree of confidence a given principle, idea or practice achieves. An adopted principle, category, construction becomes entrenched as it demonstrates its rightness. The three principles are thus highly interrelated. Entrenchment refers to the idea that once a construction is adopted, it establishes a degree of fitting and working, of rightness. Entrenchment becomes a measure of the degree to which new ideas will have to assert themselves to replace an adopted construction, in some cases the degree to which a construction becomes an accepted background or frame.

Lastly, the concept of knowledge is replaced in constructionalist philosophy with that of *understanding*. Again, this can refer to what is understood, the process, or the state. Like its two former siblings the concept of understanding encompasses a wider range than that which it replaces. We can understand whether we hold what is before us as true or false, believed or not. We can understand art, facial expressions, gestures, behaviors. Understanding, like adoption, does not involve closure or finality. Understanding opens epistemology to emotional experience as well as rational thought.

Constructionalism thus aspires to a system in which symbols of all kinds refer in all the ways humans have at their disposal, currently and in the future. A fundamental problem for constructionalism, as for any pluralistic epistemology, is that it must provide principles that guide in choosing right from wrong versions, else doom philosophy to absolute relativism.

Constructionalism is a relativism with restraints, a relativism that asserts that although there are innumerable world versions, some are right and others wrong²⁷. An engineer can no more throw any materials together in any way and call it a bridge, than can others combine symbols and call it a right world version.

The particular version of constructionalism on which I will base my argument, then, rests on its technical and detailed theory of reference. The reference theory has much to offer in clarifying the nature of psychoanalysis. Individual postulates of the theory of reference will be discussed in following chapters in the context of their relevance to particular psychoanalytic problems²⁸.

In way of introduction, the two basic forms of reference in constructionalist theory are denotation and exemplification. In denotation a symbol points to something: denotation is “the application of a word or picture or other label to one or many things” (Goodman, 1984, p. 55). Exemplification runs in the opposite direction. It describes the phenomena of samplehood, “reference by a sample to a feature of the sample” (ibid., p. 59). Importantly, exemplification involves selection, because only some of the properties of the sample are held to be exemplified. Exemplification is often ambiguous and context dependent.

One thesis to be developed here is that psychoanalytic clinical interpretation can be profitably understood in the framework of constructionalist exemplification. Within the context of a psychoanalysis, selective instances of an analysand’s productions are taken

by the analyst to be samples of psychoanalytically salient clinical principles. A given narrative is analytically relevant not for what it denotes, but to the degree that it is held to exemplify this impulse, that defense, this superego condemnation, that developmental fixation. Importantly, anything the analysand presents - behaviors (silence, lateness, absences), dream images, memories - all can be held as samples of analytic phenomena. When Schafer asserts that in the clinical dialogue, "The facts are what the analyst makes them out to be" (1983, p. 255), he is claiming the power of exemplification for psychoanalytic dialogue.

Art, Science, and the Nature of Psychoanalysis

The controversy regarding the nature of psychoanalysis as an art versus a science can be traced historically Freud. Freud placed psychoanalysis, the new natural science, in opposition to the triumvirate of art, philosophy, and religion²⁹. Although artistic productions and their artist creators were fair game for analytic inquiry, art for Freud was itself epistemologically a benign intellectual avocation. Much as the middle class parent chastises his child to pursue a 'real' vocation for fear that his art might fail to provide for him, Freud, concerned for the future welfare of his progeny, was resolute that psychoanalysis attain 'real' epistemological status.

Nonetheless, many analysts since Freud have considered that analysis, at least its clinical practice, has much in common with artistic endeavors. Loewald, for example, considers metapsychology the scientific aspect of psychoanalysis, and the clinical application of this body of knowledge its artistic aspect³⁰. Schafer's hermeneutic reconceptualization of psychoanalysis places psychoanalysis firmly in the humanities rather than science or medicine. For Freud, this was untenable. As long as art was held epistemologically less than science, Freud could not allow psychoanalysis to be banished from the nest of science.

Since constructionalism insists that art is a valid and important form of, and forum for, the growth of understanding, the degree to which a given discipline is science or art is, to the constructionalist, no measure of its epistemological validity. Rather, inquiry into a discipline's referential nature, the species of reference it employs and the symbol systems it develops, determines the nature of the understanding it achieves. Were Freud a constructionalist, he need not have feared the characterization of psychoanalysis as art, if that is what such an inquiry were to reveal, for art is understanding, just as is science.

In fact, the first full account of constructionalism's theory of reference is formulated in the context of an inquiry into the nature of reference in the arts³¹. Goodman's investigation into the various species of reference enlightens the question of how best to characterize the epistemological nature of psychoanalytic understanding.

Goodman proposes that science values articulate referential systems, systems that develop and apply species of reference that are denotative and unambiguous³². In the realm of art, reference is exemplificational and ambiguous. In science transparent reference is valued. We want to look through the symbol to what it represents. In art, the symbol itself takes center stage. We cannot simply look through the artistic symbol for meaning. Rather we focus on it, study it in every aspect. Whereas we read a meter, we interpret a work, and the difference inheres in the differences in the nature of symbolic reference between the sciences and the arts.

I propose that analytic interpretation, in this regard, shares more with art than science. Analysts more interpret a work, then do they read a transparent instrument. The psychoanalytic concepts of overdetermination and multiple function³³ stand in opposition to the scientific postulate of Ockham's razor. Multiple meaning reigns in analytic interpretation. The constructionalist concepts of complex reference³⁴ and referential distance³⁵, long chains of simple species of reference, invokes the referential exercise that

analysts engage, for example, when tracing a manifest dream to its latent content. The analyst, like the artist, traffics in and celebrates complex reference.

Hence, I propose that some of the challenges to the epistemological status of analysis may be revealed as inapt in the context of the nature of the referential phenomena analysis addresses. For example, analysis is often faulted for failing to be able to provide for prediction, a mainstay of scientific knowledge and methodology. Additionally, analysis is faulted because clinical replicability is not obtained.

Considering these challenges in light of artistic productions is enlightening. Given the theory of diatonic music, can we predict a particular piece of music? Given the laws of melody, harmony, rules of style, even such more detailed 'hints' as tempo markings, key changes, and form could we 'predict' Bach's double violin concerto in D minor? Is Bach's piece, or the understanding it represents, therefore, 'false' or 'invalid'? Further, in the face of such failure, are the principles on which we draw in order to make such a prediction invalid or false? And what can it mean to ask if we can replicate Bach's achievement? Certainly these questions appear inapt and off-target.

Such considerations suggest psychoanalysis may profit by inclusion in the realm of the artistic rather than the scientific. This will only suffice, however, if artistic understanding is epistemologically valid. I will appeal to constructionalism's claim that all forms of reference can be judged for their rightness in this regard. Whereas we may characterize as 'knowledge' an awareness of the structural rules of species counterpoint, it is awkward to characterize as knowledge the experience we have upon hearing a particular fugue. Again, it is more apposite to speak of both of these as forms of artistic understanding. In this sense, psychoanalytic understanding would have more directly in common with drama, literature, and/or poetry than music or other non-verbal art forms. Analytic therapy might be characterized as a singular improvisational drama form, the

focus of which is a singular subject, and whose text is spontaneously written and enacted dyadically along prescribed psychoanalytic storylines³⁶.

Summary

Psychoanalysis, held to the criteria of scientific discourse, evidence, methodology, must fail the test, in part, because the species of reference and the nature of the systems in which it operates are inapt for scientific evaluation. Freud feared that if he allowed his new discipline to be regarded as anything other than science, it would be disrespected, devalued, rejected. We need not fall prey to this historic fear. The various controversies which hold psychoanalysis as Science or Nothing, Science or Art, Science or Storytelling, reduce to pitting Freud's absolutism against radical relativism. What is common to both is the view that there is either one given, ready-made world against which we must check our views, formulations, ideas (absolutism), or, if not, anything goes, and the same reduce to simple storytelling that answer to nothing (radical relativism). While these two alternatives may appear to set the limits for an epistemology of interpretation, I will argue they do not.

Constructionalism holds, with radical relativism, that there is no one given real world to which all our ideas must answer, but rather that there are innumerable world versions, many of which are contradictory. All our formulations, scientific or otherwise, are constructions of our own symbol systems and answer to our own purposes, not to some ready-made world. Unlike radical relativism, however, constructionalism asserts that not everything qualifies as a right world version. That is, to say that we construct the world to our own purposes is to set important limits on the constructions we can call right versions. The assertion that there are many world versions in no way disarms some versions of their relative rightness, usefulness, or power, because our purposes are specific criteria - criteria such as survival and the growth of understanding. Instead it

opens the field of epistemology to all the modalities in which humans endeavor to understand, and provides new standards for judging their value. Art no less than science, beauty no less than truth, metaphor no less than literal denotation, exemplification no less than denotation, contribute to the creation of human understanding, and the one is no more valuable or potent in the development of the range of understanding than the other.

As an interpretive discipline, psychoanalysis has much in common with artistic enterprises. But there is no danger for psychoanalysis here. In fact, accepting the nature of the analytic enterprise frees it from the constraints of a naive scientism or an epistemologically nihilistic aestheticism. Once it is accepted that there are right and wrong interpretations, even if not one ultimate truth, many of the arguments against the epistemological value of psychoanalytic interpretation evaporate, and the nature of psychoanalysis is revealed and can then build on and develop itself.

I will begin my examination of constructionalism and psychoanalysis with the work of Donald Spence. Spence asserts that psychoanalysis is essentially a hermeneutic endeavor³⁷. However, to the degree that analysis is hermeneutic, it is epistemologically weakened in his judgment. Thus, Spence appears to measure hermeneutic psychoanalysis against some standard of objectivity.

Spence's work provides a fertile field in which to detail the constructionalist conceptualization of metaphoric reference and to explore the implications of the inescapability of frame of reference. My examination of Spence's work highlights the "lingering positivism" (Bruner, 1990, p. 112) in his thesis, and I propose constructionalist reformulations to the questions he raises.

In contrast, Roy Schafer has worked to evolve a fully hermeneutic or narrative account of psychoanalysis³⁸. Chapter 3 of this dissertation examines Schafer's modern work, from his Action Language³⁹ project through his attempts at developing a fully

hermeneutic or narrative version of psychoanalysis⁴⁰. Schafer asserts that psychic reality, a fundamental postulate of psychoanalysis, is “as real as any other reality” (1983, p. 256). In the clinical arena, Schafer holds that “The facts are what the analyst makes them out to be” (ibid., p. 255). These two propositions amount to a fundamental constructionalist epistemology for psychoanalysis. I will show that Schafer’s reformulation embodies constructionalist worldmaking in both the clinical and metapsychological arenas.

Interpersonalist psychoanalysts have offered their own constructionalist formulation of psychoanalysis⁴¹. These analysts have responded to what they believe is a limitation in Schafer’s view, a limitation that springs from Schafer’s intellectual heritage as an ego psychologist. In Chapter 4 I review applications of constructionalism to psychoanalysis by interpersonalist analysts. I present their critiques of Schafer’s psychoanalysis, and offer my defense of Schafer’s position. Contrary to his interpersonalist critics’ characterization of him as a “limited constructivist”⁴², I propose that Schafer’s is the more complete and coherent application of constructionalism to psychoanalysis.

The final chapter revisits the controversy of psychoanalysis as art. I examine the specific proposals of Goodman⁴³ regarding the nature of reference in aesthetics, and propose that psychoanalysis traffics in just such types of reference. Having established a constructionalist basis for considering psychoanalysis an art, I explore implications of applying other aspects of artistic endeavor to psychoanalysis.

¹Spence, 1982.

²Goodman and Elgin, 1988; Goodman, 1983, 1978.

³Freud, 1933; Gay, 1988.

⁴Mitchell, 1988

⁵Mitchell, 1988; Mitchell and Greenberg, 1983

⁶Schafer, 1992b, 1983c.

⁷Alston, 1967.

⁸Dilthey, 1962; Gadamer, 1967; Ricoeur, 1981.

⁹This is precisely what Mitchell has in mind when he refers to “Loose Constructionism”.

¹⁰1983, p. 241.

¹¹Habermas, 1971.

¹²Gadamer, 1975.

¹³Ricoeur, 1970.

¹⁴Grunbaum, 1984. For a thorough review of this debate see Beaudoin, 1986.

¹⁵Schafer, 1983; Spence, 1987.

¹⁶Schafer, 1992; Spence, 1987.

¹⁷Stern, 1991.

¹⁸Goodman, 1984, 1978; Goodman and Elgin, 1988.

¹⁹Goodman, 1984; 1978.

²⁰Goodman, 1978. Goodman and Elgin, 1988.

²¹Goodman, 1978.

²²Hoffman, 1992, 1991, 1983.

²³Schafer, 1992, 1983.

²⁴Schafer, 1992, p. 15.

²⁵Goodman and Elgin, 1988b.

²⁶Goodman and Elgin, 1988.

²⁷Goodman, 1978.

²⁸The reader interested in a full exposition can refer to Goodman (1976) or Elgin (1983). Alternatively a detailed summary is offered in this work as an appendix.

²⁹ Freud, 1933.

³⁰Loewald, 1980a.

³¹Goodman, 1976.

³²Goodman, 1978.

³³Waelder, 1930.

³⁴Elgin, 1983.

³⁵Goodman, 1984.

³⁶Schafer, 1992, 1983.

³⁷Spence, 1982; 1987.

³⁸ Schafer, 1992, 1983.

³⁹Schafer, 1976.

⁴⁰Schafer, 1992, 1983.

⁴¹Hoffman, 1992, 1991; Stern, 1992, 1991, 1985; Protter, 1988, 1985.

⁴²Hoffman, 1992; Stern, 1991.

⁴³Goodman, 1983, 1978, 1976.

CHAPTER 2

A CONSTRUCTIONALIST CRITIQUE OF THE WORK OF DONALD SPENCE

The frontispiece of Spence's 1987 monograph cites Max Black: "Perhaps every science must start with metaphor and end with algebra; and perhaps without metaphor, there would never have been any algebra"¹. The message is clear. Metaphor is a "perhaps" necessary, if primitive, starting point for knowledge; but it is clearly secondary, an inchoate form along the way to 'real' knowledge, to mathematical formulation.

I propose that this aspect of Spence's thesis reveals an unacknowledged rejection of certain tenets of constructionalist epistemology which underlies an avowed denial of the epistemological validity of metaphor. At the same time, however, Spence believes psychoanalysis is a constructionalist enterprise. This chapter investigates the problems that result from this limited endorsement of constructionalism, and reframes the valuable questions Spence raises in a wholly constructionalist context. I explicate fundamental constructionalist principles in the context of their psychoanalytic relevance and utility, and offer constructionalist alternatives to Spence's formulations. Specifically, Spence's considerations regarding the "metaphoric unconscious"² are answered by application of constructionalism's treatment of metaphor, fictive and figurative reference. His concerns regarding the concepts of free association and evenly hovering attention are enjoined by constructionalism's approach to copy theories of representation. Lastly, his juxtaposition of a public versus a private explanation is considered in terms of constructionalism's assertion of the ontological necessity of frame of reference.

I suggest there are two readings of Spence's thesis, the strong critique and the gentle critique. The strong critique is an attempt to debunk psychoanalysis as science. To

the degree that psychoanalysis confuses, on one hand, “narrative truth” with “historical truth”³, and on the other, “metaphor” with “reality”⁴, it cannot lay claim to scientific status. On the strong critique, Spence is calling for the rescue of the science of psychoanalysis, or at least to move it more firmly into the scientific community, by eliminating narrative as explanation, and denying the potential of metaphor as a vehicle for truth. This aspect of Spence’s thesis asserts that finally a story is “just” a story.

The gentle critique allows that short of eliminating narrative and metaphoric reference from the fabric of psychoanalytic thinking, analysts must acknowledge that to the degree they rely on these tools, they are not engaged in scientific reporting, research, therapy. Under the gentle critique Spence hopes to disabuse psychoanalysis of its ambitions to science, thereby allowing the therapeutic aspects of psychoanalytic psychotherapy even as it renders metapsychology epistemologically impotent.

Seen in this light, psychoanalytic metapsychology is the target of the strong critique. The use of narrative and metaphoric techniques is permissible as long as such are not held to be applications of theoretically valid tenets, objective methodology, or validation of theoretical postulates. At the same time that Spence hopes for the elimination of narrative and metaphor, or their evolution into the systematic laws of an “algebra” for psychoanalysis, he is acutely aware of the ambiguity inherent in psychoanalytic enterprise and the unlikelihood of such a possibility.

Hence, Spence wholly endorses a pluralistic epistemology regarding the clinical encounter; in fact, the inescapability of pluralism in clinical psychoanalysis is fundamental to his critique. However, the essential epistemological problem for pluralism (and relativism) - how to deal with the problem of the truth value of different, potentially contradictory, accounts - forces Spence to retreat from a complete constructionist account. Although Spence asserts many versions of a clinical event are possible, he

maintains that ultimately there can only be one right version, presumably answering to the one and only true metapsychology. In Spence's account of psychoanalysis, clinical pluralism must answer to metapsychological positivism. I propose that constructionalism successfully addresses the problem of various clinical accounts without retreat to positivism.

Spence's View of Metaphor

The objections Spence raises to the psychoanalytic use of metaphor can be profitably reframed through application of aspects of constructionalist reference theory. These objections to the validity of metaphoric reference cloud the more fundamental epistemological issues at the core of his critique. As a result these issues remain not clearly formulated.

In my view there are two related problems regarding Spence's concerns with the use of metaphor in psychoanalysis. The first is an overinclusive use of the concept of metaphor. In holding metaphor epistemologically less than literal reference, Spence tends to collect what he finds to be the shortcomings of analytic theory and practice and concludes that these problems are a result of the use of figurative reference. Having proposed that the real problems he raises inhere in application of metaphor and figurative reference, Spence looks out across the analytic landscape and finds metaphor wherever he encounters rough terrain. Secondly, and as a result, Spence disallows the use of these tropes, especially for metapsychology, as important and powerful referential tools.

In his opening paragraph Spence asserts, "Many of Freud's conventions were intentional uses of figurative language, which allow us to see clinical happenings in a new and different manner, but have no necessary connection with reality" (Spence, 1987, p. 1). Thus, as far as treatment and technique are concerned, clinical utility is relevant in judging the usefulness of our use of figurative language; however, this should not fool us

into the belief that we have made any “necessary connection with reality.” Although explicitly denied elsewhere in the text, it seems here, at least, that in Spence’s epistemology there is a reality apart from our constructions against which they must be tested. This view opposes the constructionalist principle that there are no worlds apart from our constructions.

Constructionalist reference theory proposes that both literal and metaphoric reference are forms of denotation, the application of a label to one or more things. Metaphorical denotation involves the transfer of one scheme of sorting the objects of a realm onto another realm. Metaphoric reference is as true and false, as real and actual as is literal reference, and contributes to the growth of knowledge as much as does literal denotation in constructionalist worldmaking. Thus, metaphoric denotation can be as factual as literal denotation⁵.

My criticism of Spence’s views are illustrated by examining his discussion of Freud’s horse and rider metaphor. Spence asserts that one of its main points is to imbue the unconscious with a “life of its own” (Spence, 1987, p. 39). He compares this to recent thinking about mind as parallel distributive processor and modular models of mind, and reviews the debate over these paradigms. Borrowing their inconclusiveness, Spence questions the validity of the autonomous unconscious and faults Freud’s metaphor. But notice what has happened here. The Freudian “metaphor” has been replaced by the more modern, acceptable computational “model”; but the latter is no less metaphoric than the former. Spence seems to be taken in by the scientific framing of mind as computer and disregards the very nature of the reference - thus it is a model, rather than an “empty construct” (Spence, 1987, p. 35) or (at best) “innocent metaphor” (ibid.).

I assert it is more useful to consider the computer “model” a true metaphor; here one schema (computer processing) is transferred to a new realm (mind). Freud’s use of

“the unconscious” was a denotative term within a new conceptualization of mind. Thus, the transfer of a scheme from one realm to another, the *sine qua non* of metaphoric reference, was, at least originally, absent. To liken the relationship of id to ego to that of horse to rider is certainly metaphoric; but the unconscious *qua* concept is no metaphor, rather a heuristic organizing principle. Thus, Freud, the writer and theorist, often relied on metaphor to describe his concept of the unconscious. In this sense Spence’s chapter title, “The Metaphorical Unconscious” (1987), is apposite, but only in this limited sense.

This overinclusive misassignment of the concept of metaphor leads Spence to identify psychoanalytic metapsychology’s epistemological problems as embedded in application of metaphor and to call for its elimination from analytic literature. Short of this, Spence asserts we must be vigilant of its usage; such vigilance “...gives us the freedom to indulge in Freud’s fanciful language without taking it seriously....” (1987, p. 41). The question is not whether we are to consider Freud’s metaphors seriously, but *literally*. Here vigilance, and a cogent knowledge of the usefulness of metaphor serves us well. What Spence wants to underscore is the mistake of reification of metaphor, taking metaphor literally.

The question of the validity of a central psychoanalytic principle, unconscious mentation, may be argued in the context of parallel distributive process models, modular models, horse and rider models, or countless other metaphors. The question of its validity is not to be measured by the literal truth or falsity these metaphors, but the rightness of the concept such reference denotes. Does the concept of the unconscious “fit and work” (Goodman and Elgin, 1988, p. 158), does it forward our understanding of human psychology?

A second objection aimed at the related concepts of the analyst’s evenly suspended attention and the analysand’s free association suffers, in part, from a similar

misunderstanding. The heart of the problem is again epistemological, a rejection of constructionalism; but Spence's objection is less enlightening because it is framed as misuse of metaphor. "If understanding requires commitment, and if we decide that there is no such thing as evenly suspended attention, then we must conclude that it is more metaphor than 'impartial calculus'" (Spence, 1987, p. 44). That is, if there can be no such entities as evenly suspended attention or free association, these terms must be metaphors, hence not to be taken seriously.

A Constructionalist Reformulation of the Question of Metaphor in Spence's Critique

The nature of fictional reference, an important postulate of constructionalist reference theory, is particularly useful in reformulating Spence's critique of metaphoric reference in psychoanalysis. Spence's critique rests on the assumption that literal denotation can be judged as true or false, but other referential species, specifically metaphor, cannot. Constructionalist epistemology asserts that metaphoric, fictional, and figurative reference may be judged for truth or falsity, just as can literal reference.

A favorite form of the problem is the question what does a picture of a unicorn denote⁶? Since there are no unicorns to be denoted, the answer must be the null class. If all references to fictions denote the null class, however, then the result is that all fictional references have identical denotation. This leads to the conclusion that there is no difference between pictures or descriptions of different fictions. "Yet surely to be a picture of Pickwick and to be a picture of a unicorn are not at all the same" (Goodman, 1976, p. 21).

The constructionalist solution is to characterize the two as different *kinds* of pictures, a Pickwick-picture and a unicorn-picture. Rather than refer to a picture of x, we refer to references with null denotations by the one-place predicate x-picture. Thereby we avoid being misled by conventional language into the inference that there is an actual

something the picture denotes, and the problem that different fictional references must then denote the same thing.

Linguistic descriptions can likewise be description-kinds or descriptions of, depending on whether their denotations are figurative or literal. In order to address the problem of what it means to use a fictive term without its -description or -picture extension, Elgin cites Israel Scheffler's concept, mention-selection: "In a mention-selective application, a term is applied not to what it denotes, but to what it mentions" (Elgin, 1983, p. 47). It is often difficult to decide whether a particular representation has a literal denotation or not. In such cases we must default to the null⁷.

This formulation is clearly applicable to psychoanalytic metapsychology. If we cannot decide whether our metapsychological terms have literal extensions, we default to the null and use the terms as description-kinds. If the literal existence of "id," "ego," "drive," is inconclusive, we must treat the use of these terms as description-kinds. However, *this in no way weakens them conceptually*. The epistemological status of these postulates will not be decided by identifying them as metaphors, fictions, or the use of figurative language:

'Don Quixote', taken literally, applies to no one, but taken figuratively applies to many of us Whether a person is a Don Quixote (i.e., quixotic) or a Don Juan is as genuine a question as whether a person is paranoid or schizophrenic, and rather easier to decide (Goodman, 1978, p. 103).

Spence's faulting psychoanalytic concepts as metaphors, and as such his insistence that they are somehow less actual, can now be reconsidered in constructionalist terms. I propose that the use of such metapsychological terms as "the unconscious", "id", "ego", and "drive" should be considered mention-selective psychoanalytic terms rather than literal denotations or metaphors: The use of the term "id" refers to id-mentions, and as such to id-descriptions.

In the same way, I suggest that it is more useful to consider “evenly suspended attention” and “free association” as mention-selective terms - labels that, although their denotation is null, are actual descriptions. In this sense we consider them mention-selective psychoanalytic terms, as perfect vacuum or absolute zero are mention-selective terms in science⁸. Although there is no literal perfect vacuum or absolute zero we introduce these fictive idealizations.

... to effect a simplification by highlighting features that the theory takes to be significant or central and overshadowing those that appear unimportant. And the grounds for criticizing a theory’s employment of such terms is *not that their denotation is null ... but that the theory oversimplifies or introduces inappropriate simplifications...* (Elgin, 1983, p. 48; italics added).

Here we meet with the heart and the usefulness of Spence’s thesis. Are these concepts inappropriate, do they serve to oversimplify, or do they serve to organize important postulates of the theory well? Do they ignore significant aspects for the convenience of the theory? I take up these matters in following chapters, in the context of the related controversy of the blank screen conceptualization of transference.

On Representation without Construction: Narrative Smoothing Reconsidered

The controversy over evenly hovering attention and free association is the focus of a second of Spence’s critiques, the use in psychoanalysis of narrative as explanation. Spence fashions the concept of “narrative smoothing”⁹ to expose the force narrative asserts *qua* explanation, hence rendering it, in his evaluation, epistemologically invalid.

There are two forms of narrative smoothing. First is “editorial smoothing in the service of justification” (Spence 1987, p. 133); this form of narrative smoothing asserts that clinical events are selectively reported under the sway of the narrative appeal of the theory. In this regard narrative smoothing performs as a procrustean editor, rendering case reports rhetorical.

The second form of narrative smoothing occurs in the clinical setting itself. On this account Spence holds that the analyst may offer “leading suggestions ..., urging certain interpretations more than others, supporting the patient in certain kinds of explanations, ‘hearing’ one meaning in a tone of voice or a dream as opposed to others” (Spence, 1987, p.135).

True, or rather pure, free association, then, is a chimera. The analyst’s selective responses to the patient influence the ‘data’ the patient produces. The freer are the associations of the patient, the more psychoanalytically structured must the analyst’s listening be. An inverse relationship obtains between the degree of freedom of the patient’s associations and the evenly suspended attention of the analyst. Structure must come from somewhere, else all is anarchy. And the structure of a psychoanalysis is delivered through the narrative power of psychoanalytic metapsychology.

Thus, for Spence, on both the theoretical and the clinical levels, it becomes more interesting, compelling, comforting to construct a dramatic, unified narrative than to include alternatives, unrelated, seemingly irrelevant, or hard to understand elements of a case history. For Spence, narrative smoothing insidiously pervades psychoanalysis. The selection of data used to validate the theory is done under the pressure of the theory’s narrative appeal, rather than from disciplined scientific objectivity. Narrative smoothing forces both a particular creation and a particular selection of data, data which in turn are used to validate the theory. Finally, “because of its narrative appeal, the theory becomes more interesting than the facts; failures of confirmation are ignored because they cannot compete with what is really a rather marvelous metaphor. But to the extent that the metaphor has taken over, it has become a serious obstacle to clinical wisdom” (Spence, 1987, p.42).

The “metaphor” Spence is attacking here is again the unconscious, and I have shown that the unconscious is not a metaphor at all, but an organizing principle. More important to my current consideration however, is that here Spence’s essential rejection of constructionalism is evident. “Metaphor” takes over where “facts” should dictate. For the constructionalist facts are constructions, fabrications of symbolic reference: “...facts, after all, are obviously factitious” (Goodman, 1978, p.93).

Spence’s treatment of evenly hovering attention and free association in terms of narrative brings a central, historic, and ongoing controversy regarding psychoanalysis into the context of modern criticism. While Spence focuses on these two psychoanalytic principles, there are many others in which the same fundamental epistemological question is at issue. For example, the issue of neutrality is closely related to evenly hovering attention. In the clinical setting, technical neutrality might also be a target of Spence’s second form of narrative smoothing¹⁰. The clinical blank screen model might be critiqued using a similar strategy¹¹.

What all these concepts and techniques share is their original historic empiricist positivism. They all assert a position in which the analyst is the objective observer of the analysand as that which is given. The analyst is to divest himself of any and all preconceptions, biases and personal interests, while the analysand jettisons any and all filters and resistances so the two may enjoin a dance in which neither partner consciously leads, a dance choreographed by, and to the music of, the analysand’s unconscious. The music of the unconscious is held as simply ‘there,’ timeless, awaiting realization through the teamwork of the analyst’s innocent discovery and the analysand’s absolute exposure. It is this that Spence aptly and lucidly critiques. However, I argue that in so doing he throws out the epistemological baby with the methodological bath water.

Thus, these psychoanalytic principles and techniques can be understood as expressions of an enduring positivist heritage within psychoanalysis, a heritage that endorses a clear boundary between observer and observed, between object and subject. The problem of objectivity, however, is not exclusive to psychoanalysis. Constructionalism asserts we can achieve understanding but that we cannot do so by courting objectivity.

Goodman's treatment of the copy theory of representation¹² can serve to enlighten Spence's critique of the nature of free association and evenly hovering attention. It introduces a fundamental aspect of constructionalist epistemology into this long-standing psychoanalytic controversy, and demonstrates the clarification an application of constructionalist reference theory can achieve for psychoanalysis. Goodman's examination is in terms of pictorial denotation, but its points are no less relevant regarding verbal description.

Simply stated, the copy theory of representation declares " 'To make a faithful picture, come as close as possible to copying the object as it is' " (Goodman, 1976, p. 6). The problem is embedded in the clause "as it is" because there are countless ways that any object is. The person who comes to treatment is a patient, a client, an analysand; a husband, a lover, a philanderer; an abuse victim, a survivor; a biochemical system, an organization of atoms. All are true, and true in the sense of 'as he is' depending on the context.

We will do no better if we shift our focus to the receiver rather than the received. The idea that the receiver must represent the received with a "free and innocent eye" (ibid., p. 7) is also critically flawed. A central constructionalist thesis asserts there is no such thing as an innocent eye. The eye "... organizes, discriminates, associates, classifies, analyzes, constructs. It does not so much mirror as take and make." (ibid., pp. 7-8).

The innocent eye and the absolute given are, for constructionalists, “unholy accomplices” (ibid., p. 8).

Both derive from and foster the idea of knowing as processing of raw material received from the senses, and of this raw material being discoverable either through purification rights or by methodical disinterpretation. But reception and interpretation are not inseparable operations; they are thoroughly interdependent. The Kantian dictum echoes here: the innocent eye is blind and the virgin mind empty. Moreover what has been received and what has been done to it cannot be distinguished within the finished product. Content cannot be extracted by peeling off layers of comment” (loc. cit.).

For constructionalists all discovery is invention, all copying is creating. If this is the case for basic sensory phenomena, it is surely so for as complex an interaction as the production and interpretation that is the psychoanalytic dialogue. The latter, of course, is precisely Spence’s point. When Spence faults free association and evenly hovering attention as the psychoanalytic version of the absolute given and innocent eye he is on firm constructionalist ground. However, constructionalism shows us that *all* perception is constructed, that no understanding is given without construction. To expose analytic phenomena as constructed is accurate, but for the constructionalist it is an empty criticism. Spence faults analysis for its false claims to objectivity. However, he does not see that analysis in this respect is essentially no different from any other form of understanding. Instead he retreats into a positivist call for a transformational grammar for clinical interpretations or an algebra for metapsychology.

Constructionalism, however, begins with the inescapability of frame of reference in all forms of understanding, and shows how, given this ontologically necessary condition, we can, and do, proceed. Spence holds that to the degree that we are context bound, our claim to truth is empty. Constructionalists assert that without context we are rendered mute; without a frame of reference we can understand nothing.

Returning now to constructionalism's examination of the problem of objective representation, Goodman questions what it means to accurately represent a person pictorially. He suggests that the artist may search after an unbiased approach to good purpose, providing different insight and freeing him from common ways of seeing. The same result may just as well obtain through an idiosyncratic and subjective perspective. "But the most neutral eye and the most biased are merely sophisticated in different ways. The most ascetic vision and the most prodigal, like the sober portrait and the vitriolic caricature, differ not in how much but only in how they interpret" (ibid., p. 9).

Constructionalism holds that nothing is ever "represented either shorn of or in the fullness of its properties. A picture never merely represents *x*, but rather represents *x as a man* or represents *x to be a mountain*, or represents *the fact that x is a melon*" (loc. cit., original italics). A psychoanalytic autobiography represents a person as a psychoanalytic analysand.

Using this dimension regarding pictorial representation is one way to reframe the question as to the nature of a psychoanalytically constructed autobiography. Is it a "sober portrait" or "vitriolic caricature?" Omitting the value judgments results in a dimension from portrait to caricature, diagram to picture, clinical description to psychoanalytically biased construal. Spence seems to hold that the psychoanalytic autobiography, because it is not objective and cannot achieve historical truth is more caricature than portrait. Constructionalism holds that answers to these questions will not be found in the endeavor to assess "accuracy" to a "given".¹³ Answers will have to be framed in terms of the constructionalist principles of rightness, adoption, and understanding.

The Private and the Public

Another form in which Spence presents his objections, and one that parallels my earlier characterization of the gentle and strong critiques, is his proposal of the "private"

versus the “public” explanation¹⁴. This opposition contrasts interpretations in the therapeutic interaction with the literature of case reports, the clinical narrative (the mutative interpretation) versus the explanatory narrative, respectively. What Spence upholds here is an acceptance of a limited pragmatism - clinical utility - that cannot lay claim to truth in the theoretical arena because of a reliance on concepts that disallow “usual rules of inductive and deductive reasoning and the possibility of falsification” (Spence, 1987, p. 129). Thus, Spence holds metapsychological accounts to the standards of positivist scientific methodology. I have already demonstrated that many of the specific concepts Spence objects to can be profitably considered as constructionalist mention-selective terms or description-kinds.

Spence invokes Bruner’s two modes of thought to organize his case regarding the nature of clinical case reports. Bruner’s paradigmatic mode¹⁵ is denotative and unambiguous; it emphasizes “reference at the expense of sense” (Bruner cited in Spence, 1987, p. 142). Transparent reporting is emphasized, to allow comparison across cases. Bruner’s narrative mode is metaphoric and ambiguous. It “maximizes sense at the expense of definite reference. ... The metaphoric richness ... is as important as the events to which it refers and why” (Bruner cited in Spence, 1987, p. 143). In constructionalist terms Bruner’s paradigmatic mode is denotative and articulate, and his narrative mode is exemplificational, expressive, and replete¹⁶.

Spence acknowledges that a form of narrative smoothing occurs in both the paradigmatic and the narrative modes. He recognizes psychoanalytic clinical reports as narrative rather than paradigmatic. As such they suffer the consequences of the form of narrative smoothing that befall narrative presentation. If the ‘story’ is more important than ‘the facts’, and rhetoric overtakes objectivity, then we should not consider case

reports capable of consolidating a body of knowledge that serves to support and develop psychoanalytic theory.

This brings Spence to the threshold of a confrontation with constructionalism, and he does not retreat. He realizes the problem of

an impossible position which assumes that all meanings are ‘out there’, ready to be described and put into words. A smoothing which maximizes facts over feelings may, ironically, end up by doing an injustice to the facts because they frequently do not speak for themselves, and no amount of transparent, referential description can bring them alive. (Spence, 1987, p.144).

Here, then, is the part of Spence’s thesis that endorses constructionalism, that “What ‘really happened’ has many different faces and can be told from many points of view” (Spence, 1987, p. 103). At the same time he endorses pluralism in the clinical endeavor, however, he insists that case reports must be judged for their truth value by comparison to some given event or series of events.

The pluralistic nature of the facts and the multiplicity of possible contexts make it clear that no one version will be sufficient. Until *that final version* is achieved, we are dealing with trial accounts, possible *constructions* of a complicated event The final version might be called a true reconstruction, but since that final version will always elude us, it seems safer to speak of better and better approximations to this version, all called *constructions*. (Spence, 1987, p. 104, first italics added).

Here, in my view, is the essential problem with Spence’s limited constructionalism. His is a constructionalism that must ultimately answer to positivism. Rather than endorsing a complete constructionalism, in which constructions *are* the world, embodied as world versions, Spence holds that our constructions are “approximations”, accounts *of* the world, a world never fully realized or achieved by our constructions, hence a world apart from our constructions. Approximations are acceptable in the clinical arena for here the “...narrative is tailored to the patient for its therapeutic effect” (Spence 1987, p. 129).

Spence asserts that clinical approximations must not be allowed to serve as explanation or validation of theory. He is left with the position that the truth value of

clinical accounts is “everywhere and nowhere” (Spence, 1987, p. 104); different interpretations of the clinical report have their own value “but it is hard to see how they can be arranged in some final hierarchy of certainty” (loc. cit.). He is caught in the very sticky problem of how to save pluralism from radical relativism, and seems to propose that therapeutic utility can decide in the clinical arena,¹⁷ but has little bearing on theory.

Spence’s approach, then, is an attempt to escape the bounds of context, at the same time he champions the position that contextless listening is impossible. This essential contradiction causes the split between what I have called the strong and weak interpretations, and Spence’s own public and private explanations. For Spence, whereas clinical utility, a therapeutic pragmatism, is an acceptable mandate for psychoanalytic therapy, it cannot be validly cited as theoretical evidence.

The value in acknowledging the ubiquity of frame of reference is in determining a given context’s nature, and thereby the nature of understanding achieved within its perspective. In this fundamental sense, psychoanalytic understanding is no different than any other exercise in understanding. What is called for is an examination of the particular world version that is psychoanalysis.

Summary

Where language is metaphorical or figurative it is not epistemologically empty. Psychoanalytic terms such as the unconscious cannot be successfully dismissed because they do not literally denote, and their lack of empirical denotation does not immediately qualify them as metaphors.

Where denotation is literally null, it too is not epistemologically empty. The concession that pure forms of free association, evenly hovering attention, the blank screen, or neutrality are not technically attainable, does not disempower their theoretical

validity. These concepts will have to be critiqued on other grounds if they are to be dismissed.

Regarding free association and evenly suspended attention, what Spence questions is the epistemological validity of selection and emphasis of psychoanalytically significant concepts from their considered clinical manifestations. Constructionalism asserts that this is exactly what worldmaking, all worldmaking, is. The problem is not that we listen contextually, nor that the way we listen influences the ongoing analytic dialogue, but whether we can make judgments regarding the psychoanalytic rightness of these interactions in the constructionalist sense. Are analytic constructions useful, consistent, valid within the context of the analysis? Do they fit and work? These difficult problems cannot be dismissed by banishing metaphor or underscoring the impossibility of the absolute given of free association or the innocent eye of evenly hovering attention.

¹Cited in Spence, 1987, frontispiece.

²Spence, 1987.

³Spence, 1982.

⁴Spence, 1987.

⁵Goodman, 1984.

⁶Goodman, 1978, 1976.

⁷Goodman, 1976.

⁸Elgin, 1983.

⁹Spence, 1987.

¹⁰See e.g. discussion of behavioral neutrality in Franklin, 1990.

¹¹See, e.g. Hoffman, 1983.

¹²Goodman, 1976.

¹³It is interesting to note here that DSM-III-R diagnostic criteria are an attempt to provide “givens” for diagnostic categories. It is often overlooked by diagnosticians, however, that these categories are no less constructions than are analytic diagnostic formulations. Whereas Spence warns against the danger of reification of metaphor in analysis, no such warning is issued regarding taking medical nosological constructions too seriously. The DSM-III-R diagnosis of Borderline Personality Disorder, for example is no less naturally found than is the psychoanalytic narcissist. Both are constructions. Spence seems, however, to find the psychoanalytic narcissist a vitriolic caricature and the DSM-III-R borderline a sober portrait.

¹⁴Spence, 1987.

¹⁵Bruner, 1984.

¹⁶See appendix.

¹⁷The problems that result from this limited pragmatism are not addressed by Spence. Clinical utility has no necessary connection with truth or rightness. It is easy to create a scenario in which, for example, the analyst purposely lies to the analysand for its beneficial clinical effect. See Cheshire, 1974.

CHAPTER 3

ROY SCHAFER'S NARRATIVE PSYCHOANALYSIS

This chapter explores the modern work of Roy Schafer, beginning with his revision of the language of metapsychology¹ through his recent hermeneutic² and narrative³ versions of psychoanalysis. I propose that Schafer's version of psychoanalysis rests wholly on constructionalist epistemology. As such it benefits from a clear exposition of the general constructionalist principles on which it relies, and the specific constructionalist techniques it applies. Schafer's work demonstrates a proactive application of constructionalism to psychoanalysis.

Where it is appropriate I will contrast Schafer's use of constructionalism with that of Spence. Essentially Schafer begins where Spence concludes. That is, Spence finds psychoanalysis imbued with the positivism of Freud's heritage, and disabuses psychoanalysis of its claims to positivist science by exposing its pluralism and relativism. Schafer begins by placing psychoanalysis in the humanities. Rather than finding fault with analysis for its lack of objectivity, Schafer begins with a relativistic, perspectivistic epistemology⁴, and goes on to examine the particular ways in which analysis constructs its vision of the world.

At the close of this chapter I consider problems in Schafer's overinclusive use of the idea of text interpretation, and set the stage for a clarification of the nature of psychoanalytic interpretation through the application of Goodman's theory of reference.

Action Language: Rightness and Adoption

I take as my starting point for examination of Schafer's reconceptualization his 1976 A New Language for Psychoanalysis. At the heart of Schafer's work is a fundamental constructionalist principle: Symbols create worlds. In this case Schafer asserts that the language of Freudian metapsychology, a pseudo-biological, physico-chemical language, no longer aptly serves psychoanalysis, and must be replaced for metapsychology to evolve.

A product of his intellectual heritage, Freud's metapsychology is a language of quantitative energies that cannot be measured, structural agencies of mind described through spatial references that cannot be located. This language has led critics of metapsychology and psychoanalysts alike to challenge its truth value.

Schafer's solution is to rule out such quantitative, substantive and spatial references in favor of actions. Action Language is offered as a reformulation of theory, a set of language rules for metapsychology. Stated in its simplest form, Action Language replaces nouns with verbs, adjectives with adverbs. Schafer is careful to point out that behaviors are only one class of action; actions are not to be identified with behaviors. Thinking, wishing, emoting - all are actions. Actions occur in various psychoanalytically relevant modalities - unconsciously, conflictedly, defensively.

The psychoanalytic subject is no longer a passive victim of id impulses in conflict with superego prohibitions and/or ego instincts. Instead the subject is an agent who acts. The Action Language metapsychologist speaks of the analysand who "wishes unconsciously" rather than one who "has an unconscious wish."

This approach to the problem of how to refer to, hence conceptualize, phenomena that are not directly measurable, parallels constructionalist analysis of the cognitive psychologist's use of the term "mental representations" (Gardner cited in Goodman and

Elgin, 1988, p. 8.)⁵. Just as the cognitive psychologist cannot point to pictures in the brain for proof that mental images are real, the psychoanalyst has no way to directly measure or locate impulse, drive or libido.

The constructionalist solution proposes that “having a mental image may be construed in terms of ability to perform certain activities” (ibid., p. 91). If I can draw a horse, pick out horse pictures from non-horse pictures, describe a horse verbally, the constructionalist will allow my statement “I have an image of a horse in my mind.” The reference to a mental image is understood to refer to a coherent and consistent organization of actions, without asserting there is any such substantive image.

Thus, Schafer’s approach is in concert with constructionalist thinking. His requirements for Action Language are, however, more rigorous. Action Language requires elimination of substantive formulations, whereas constructionalism is willing to allow them with the understanding that they refer to classes of actions. Schafer, emphasizing the active voice, would require I say of the horse image, “I am imagining a horse.” Since attacks on metapsychological formulations are often focused at the level of their spatial, substantive, and/or energetic references, Schafer’s uncompromising requirements are well-advised.

To further demonstrate and develop the constructionalist nature of Action Language I will now survey a number of its postulates, then demonstrate their reliance on constructionalist principles. Specifically, the three fundamental constructionalist concepts of Goodman and Elgin (1988) cited in the introduction of this work are the epistemological grounding of Action Language. The principles of rightness and adoption are especially relevant here.

I start with Schafer’s last rule, as it is a fundamental statement of his constructionalist position: Rule 12 asserts:

As a set of rules for saying things, a language is not subject to tests of truth or falsity. Neither metapsychology nor action language is true or false; in either case it is always a question of whether one is following the rules consistently so as to be always constructing facts of the same kind and interrelating them in an orderly and enlightening fashion. ... There is however, a sense in which a system that is more consistently applicable, more coherent, and more useful than another is the truer of the two or has more truth value (Schafer, 1976a, p. 372).

In this last rule, Schafer asserts that Action Language may be judged to have more “truth value” than Freudian metapsychology. Schafer begins with the constructionalist principle that truth is not relevant in adjudging the value of a world version, but goes on to appeal to a concept of relative truth in asserting the power of Action Language over metapsychology. Hence, his position is more accurately served by the concept of rightness than that of truth.

Where truth is absolute, rightness is relative. Rightness refers to “standards of acceptability” (Goodman, 1978, p. 110), and depends on “relevance, effect, and useability” (Goodman and Elgin, 1988, p.157), “fitting and working” (ibid., 158). Such fitting does not refer to a match with what exists independently, because for the constructionalist nothing exists independently of its symbolic construction. Rightness is rather a “... fitting into a context or discourse or standing complex of other symbols” (loc. cit.). Schafer’s Action Language itself “fits and works” as a psychoanalytic implementation of this fundamental constructionalist principle, a set of language rules to structure an inquiry into how humans construct experience, each of whose statements must fit into and work within its context coherently and effectively.

Constructionalism holds that rightness is to be judged by the degree to which it forwards understanding through “achieving a firmer and more comprehensive grasp, removing anomalies, making significant discriminations and connections, gaining new insights” (Goodman and Elgin, 1988, p. 158). These standards are just what Schafer recommends for psychoanalysis - consistency, applicability, usefulness, coherence,

completeness. These considerations are the criteria by which fundamental psychoanalytic concepts may be evaluated. Where Spence questions the validity of the unconscious because it has been impossible to demonstrate its literal extension, Schafer would have us consider whether it organizes coherently and consistently, provides a useful and powerful explanatory framework.

The first rule of Action Language states: “One shall regard every psychological process, event, experience, response ... as an action...” (Schafer, 1976a., p. 364). Actions are stated in the active voice in order to avoid resorting to notions of autonomous forces or agencies that initiate, maintain, or terminate actions.

Rule 2 states that there are innumerable ways to describe any action, and that there is no one final or correct version of action. Some descriptions can, nonetheless, be judged more useful or fitting than others. Every description of action should be understood as only one of many possibilities. A new designation of an action, even one that contradicts a former one, does not cancel out the first. Rather, it creates a new action in addition to the first.

Rule 7 states that experience is action, “the construction of personal or subjective situations” (ibid., p. 368). Included here are experiences of fundamental psychoanalytic concern: experience of self, of psychic reality, of emotion.

In these three language rules Schafer asserts constructionalism and pluralism for psychoanalysis. Subjective meaning and experience are constructed by a process of symbolic representation. Relevant variables for psychoanalysis are described as actions through language. No one description of an action is final, captures its “reality” or “truth.” Nonetheless, there are constraints to psychoanalytic descriptions of actions, so that some descriptions may be judged more useful, relevant, and powerful than others. Like Goodman’s constructionalism, Action Language is a relativism with restraints⁶.

Rule 5 addresses the complexity of actions described psychoanalytically. Polarities of feelings - pleasure and pain, loving and hating - among countless others - are often present in psychoanalytically construed action. This rule reframes the analytic ideas of conflict, multiple determination, overdetermination, and multiple function, formerly described in terms of psychodynamics, as complex actions. Schafer asserts that no one constituent action, nor one group of constituents, can be taken as more real than others. This is not to say they may not be considered more right.

The claim that there is no one final version of an action is to assert not only the essential plurality of constructionalism, but also the principle of adoption⁷. Adoption is, in part, a method, a procedure of trying to make a fit or put to work. Adoption is open-ended. It allows for unending development and denies certainty or finality. As an adopted hypothesis or category gains in application, usefulness, and power, it becomes “entrenched” (ibid., p.160). Entrenchment thus contributes to rightness, but always in a continuing and provisional way. Adoption is developmental, always open to revision.

Rule 8 states that actions do not have causes but reasons. As such psychoanalysis asks after subjective meanings. This rule embodies Schafer’s assertion that psychoanalysis is not a deterministic science but an interpretive humanity. It does not search for necessary and sufficient conditions so as to predict and control, but seeks retrospectively to understand.⁸ Many reasons may be ascertained for any action, and one reason may be cited for multiple actions.

Action Language is important to an understanding of the development of Schafer’s narrative psychoanalysis in two central ways. First, it places at its center an active agent rather than a passive victim of psychic forces or structures in conflict. Self agency is a central principle and value of Schafer’s version of psychoanalysis. One of the aims of psychoanalysis, then, is the analysand’s increasing acknowledgment of responsibility for

his constructions of his world. Second, the person constructs experience through narrative; narrative becomes both the focus and the medium of clinical psychoanalysis, as well as the organizing structure of its theory.

The Psychoanalytic Vision of Reality

A central tenet of constructionalism holds that accepting the necessity of multiple world versions builds none. Neither does acceptance of multiple versions countenance wrong or false or merely possible versions. Since plurality of world versions is the rule, each discipline must determine what count as phenomena for examination (composition, weighting, ordering) and what are its ongoing standards of rightness. That is, each discipline is responsible for the world version it creates and how it evolves, what is acceptable as right, and which principles it adopts and which become entrenched. A fundamental requirement for determining such criteria is acknowledging what the version values and emphasizes⁹.

Schafer's "psychoanalytic vision of reality" (Schafer, 1976b) is Schafer's effort to begin to explicate psychoanalysis at this level. It includes four aspects - the comic, the romantic, the tragic, and the ironic.

The comic vision of reality is optimistic. Its focus is on realizing hope. No problem is insurmountable. It selectively emphasizes external, everyday, familiar phenomena. The promise of the comic vision is rebirth. Its optimism is informed by the notion that time is cyclic, that history can be rewritten. The very process that is analysis depends upon the analysand's exploration and reexperience of his history in the context of analytic inquiry.

The romantic vision characterizes life a quest, "... a perilous, heroic, individualistic journey" (ibid., p. 31). The goal of the quest is release from history, a magic conquest of the conflicts inherent in human experience. As analysis matures the quest focuses inward,

away from the presumed hostility of the environment. Psychic reality becomes the arena of struggle, and the quest develops into one of insight and working through.

This aspect of Schafer's vision is well documented in various analytic developmental theories. The infant is born helpless, disoriented, undifferentiated, and autistic, only to go through various stages of omnipotence, symbiosis, and narcissism, replete with delusions and hallucinations. He takes on depressive and paranoid positions. The quest to arrive at all oriented, adapted, functional is a feat of Romantic heroism.¹⁰

The tragic vision addresses "the inescapable dangers, terrors, mysteries, and absurdities of existence" (ibid., p. 35). Inherent in this aspect are attention to and respect for the complexity of human experience and the classic polarities so crucial to analytic formulations. The tragic vision is inherent in and structured by the fifth rule of Action Language.

The tragic vision characterizes time as linear. The genetic aspect of psychoanalysis is embodied in the tragic vision. Deeds done are irrevocable; there is no rebirth, no escape from, no passing over history. Rather, through a retelling of history guided by the master narratives of psychoanalysis, the analysand gains new insight and understanding into how he has previously constructed experience.

Clinically, the tragic vision requires the analyst's "empathy, reflection, and inquiry" (ibid. p. 40), rather than action or intervention into the tragic circumstances. It includes the analyst's realization that change rarely occurs without suffering. An important aspect of the tragic view is the realization by both parties that there is never a complete and final version of the analysis, that some things will remain to be understood no matter how thorough or detailed the analysis. The acknowledgment that there will always be something left unexplored, and the respect for the necessity of incompleteness of understanding, are central characteristics of the "Analytic Attitude"¹¹. Their clinical

manifestation is the analyst's consistent maintenance of listening in a psychoanalytically informed and searching manner.

The last aspect of Schafer's psychoanalytic vision of reality is the ironic. It refers to the ubiquity of contradiction, ambiguity and paradox in human experience. While the ironic and tragic visions share the same subject matter, the ironic "aims at detachment, keeping things in perspective, taking nothing for granted, and readily spotting the antithesis to any thesis so as to reduce the claim of the thesis upon us" (ibid., p.51).

Each of the singular visions offers its advantages but is limited in scope and power, and each must be integrated with the others to approach therapeutic power. The tragic and ironic aspects point to an "emphasis on reflective thought and inner articulation of feeling" (ibid., p. 52) and as such are "important in the investigative aspects of psychoanalysis" (loc. cit.). The comic and romantic aspects are outwardly focused, and related to the "healing and emancipating aspects" (loc. cit.) of analysis.

It is clear that Schafer's characterization of psychoanalytic reality places psychoanalysis firmly in the realm of the humanities. Tragedy and comedy, romanticism and irony, are uncooperative themes for the objective techniques of science, whose aims are control, prediction, and unitary versions. Given this view, this frame of reference for human experience, Schafer's more recent concern has been to develop a narrative version of psychoanalysis¹². His work develops the constructionalist position and psychoanalytic world vision he embraced with his Action Language project.

Schafer's Narrative Psychoanalysis as Constructionalist Worldmaking

Schafer's most recent position is that narrative is the fundamental organizing structure of both theory and clinical work. Psychoanalysis is "... a way of constructing the world it tells about through application of its master narratives and the storylines they generate" (Schafer, 1992, p. 272). The master narratives of psychoanalysis are its theory.

Clinically, analysts listen, within the context of these master narratives, to arrive at a co-constructed autobiography that constitutes, at the termination of analysis, a psychoanalytic version of the analysand's life. Viewed in this regard, clinical psychoanalysis is an example of constructionalist worldmaking.

A given narrative is only one of many possible accounts of a life. Spence considers construction of differing and multiple histories of the same analysand a critical problem. For Spence there must exist one final version that is the arbiter of the truth, even if we can never attain it. For Schafer there is no such final true and complete version. Multiple right histories are the order of the day.

Constructionalism supports such a view. In an example of weighting in worldmaking, Goodman points out that different histories of the Renaissance obtain from the very same data if both include battles and art, but stress one or the other¹³. Goodman and Schafer agree, in that historians and analysts alike fill in important gaps, gaps of particular moment to their particular world view, and delete and underemphasize others that are not relevant to their purpose. "Histories are narrative constructions, each history being controlled by storylines" (Schafer, 1992, p. 114).

When an analysand speaks to an analyst about his life, he is giving his current narrative version of his experience. For Schafer, narration constitutes experience. His assertion is a direct descendant of the line of thought he began with Action Language. As such, a major goal of analysis remains the analysand's increasing acknowledgment of his actively having constructed his experience in the past. The method for this awakening responsibility for one's experience comes through examining the analysand's reasons for having constructed experience in the ways he has, and revising these constructions in the here and now of the analysis.

Hence, as analysis progresses, the analyst joins the narrational activity of the analysand to psychoanalytically revise the analysand's version of his life. As a result, not only the analysand's narrative changes; so, by definition, must his experience. Schafer credits Freud with having created a new kind of dialogue in which words change worlds, the Transformational Dialogue¹⁴.

The fundamental principle of constructionalist epistemology is again the foundation of Schafer's view of clinical analysis. Symbols, now language in the form of narrative, create worlds. The processes and devices that Schafer proposes as the methods of interpretation and that serve to structure the clinical dialogue are psychoanalytic implementations of the processes of constructionalist worldmaking described in the first chapter of this dissertation.

In an exposition on psychoanalytic interpretation Schafer¹⁵ holds the processes of redescribing, reinterpreting, recontextualizing, and reducing as formats for psychoanalytic interpretation. The analyst may, for example, take the analysand's description of himself as powerless in his relationship to a superior and *redescribe* it as not voicing his opinions. The analyst may further *reinterpret* his passivity as defending against acting aggressively, *recontextualize* the current action in the setting of childhood danger situations, for example, fearing retribution by a castrating father figure. The effect of these processes is *reduction* of the analysand's description of his experience to analytically relevant terms.

In his later discussion of Freud's transformational dialogue, Schafer adds the processes of destabilizing, defamiliarizing, and deconstructing the analysand's presentation of self and history as fundamental psychoanalytic narrational procedures. Destabilization, for example, may address the analysis of defenses, in order to arrive at a richer narrative that reflects the more complex analytic visions of irony and tragedy. Defamiliarization refers to enriching the analysand's narrative by adding new

psychoanalytic meanings, revising it, for example, by placing greater emphasis on unconscious modes of experience. Deconstruction revises unidimensional versions of self and others by relocating the analysand's assumed positions on dimensions of psychoanalytic relevance (e.g. heterosexual/homosexual; sadism/masochism; wish/defense) to relatively more complex and inclusive positions. Schafer is careful to point out that the purpose of deconstruction is reconstruction - worldmaking.

The analyst may suggest that an analysand's constantly expressing disdain for her lover's retreat from conflict reflects her fearing acting angrily and, hence, destructively (Destabilization). Adding to this interpretation, the analyst may suggest that her fearing acting destructively speaks to guiltily wishing to defeat her lover (Defamiliarization). The hypothetical analysand may begin to accept an enriched view of herself as not simply the rational responder to her lover's withdrawal, but come to understand her feelings regarding attacking aggressively as both pleasurable and painful (Deconstruction). As a result of this new narrative construction - that her lover is, in part, responding to her unconsciously wishing to attack him aggressively - the analysand reclaims a sense of her own agency in the creation of her world and constructs new understanding of her experience of herself, of her lover, and of their mutual interaction (Reconstruction).

Goodman asserts that all worldmaking starts with one version of the world, and, through processes such as composition and decomposition, weighting, ordering, deletion and supplementation, and deformation, arrives at another¹⁶. Schafer's processes are psychoanalytic variants of Goodman's worldmaking processes.¹⁷ In Schafer's terms, psychoanalysis begins with the analysand's narrative version of his world and arrives at a psychoanalytic world version through the processes of interpretation and the transformational dialogue. What the analysand originally presents as the facts of his life "become *psychoanalytic* facts ... only after they have been systematically retold by the

analyst...” (Schafer, 1983, p. 189, original italics). The congruence of Schafer’s narrational psychoanalysis with Goodman’s worldmaking is striking.

Hence, unlike Spence, Schafer relies on constructionalist epistemology and need not despair the loss of one ultimate truth. Schafer recognizes that we cannot check the truthfulness of our analytic life historical constructions against ‘what really happened’ because what really happened is a construction and function of the analysis. Furthermore, all constructions will be subject to changes as analysis progresses. Psychoanalytic master narratives guide the analyst in selecting what is relevant, defining gaps to be filled, inconsistencies to explore. For Schafer these master narratives determine the facts of the analysis.

In developing his narrational version of analysis, Schafer continues the work he began with his psychoanalytic vision of reality by defining characteristics and requirements of psychoanalytic worldmaking. Perhaps most important is the emphasis psychoanalysis places on what Schafer calls psychic reality. Psychic reality emphasizes the ubiquity and power of the influence of complex and conflictual unconscious modes of human construction of experience. Psychic reality represents an additional reality to the conventional world. It is the focus of psychoanalytic activity, the realm of transference and defense, a world of “... unrecognized symbols, concretized metaphors, reductive allegories, or repressed storylines of childhood” (Schafer, 1983, p. 257).

A second defining quality of the psychoanalytic dialogue is its self-reflection. One of the identifying characteristics of a psychoanalysis is its focus on the evolution of meanings within the dialogue itself. “The analyst’s highest priority must be to attempt to understand *in a psychoanalytic fashion* the construction and communication of experience in the here and now of the analytic session” (Schafer, *ibid.*, 252, original italics).

As such, the most important history that is constructed within analysis is the history of the analysis itself. Meanings captured in the here and now of the clinical dialogue are taken as models for structuring interpretations of the past, present, and future¹⁸. One measure of psychoanalytic rightness of interpretation, then, is the degree to which the current meanings constructed of the analysand's experience of the ongoing history of the analytic relationship itself, fit and work as a structure for organizing and understanding his past and present experience outside analysis. Transference interpretations that fit and work in this way are adopted by the analyst, and may become entrenched as a storyline within the analysis as the analysand too, comes to adopt it as an enlightening organizing structure.

This amounts to an account of the use of adoption, entrenchment, and rightness in the context of transference interpretation. The master narrative of transference is by now well entrenched in psychoanalytic theory and practice. The relative rightness of any given transference interpretation is judged by the degree of correspondence to, and continuity with, other narrative reports by the analysand of relationships in his past and present.

When Schafer suggests that analysis is a "set of principles for participating in, understanding, and explaining the dialogue between psychoanalyst and analysand" (Schafer, 1983, p. 212), he is invoking the constructionalist principles of rightness and adoption: not any construction can be characterized as psychoanalytic, and not all constructions that qualify as psychoanalytic are equally right.

An important corollary to this line of thought is Schafer's discussion regarding how the analyst shall regard the analysand's descriptions of others outside analysis¹⁹. The analyst's general approach to this material will be much like that to the manifest content of a dream. However, there are standards by which the analyst can regard the relative rightness of such reports. One of these is the correspondence and continuity mentioned

above; that is, how well do the analysand's descriptions of others fit and work with the analyst's current understanding of the analysand's understanding of the analytic relationship? While many versions may be constructed from the analysand's life, not just any will do. Psychoanalytic versions will have to adhere to psychoanalytic master narratives and fit and work within the context of the ongoing analytic interaction between analysand and analyst.

A third characteristic of clinical analysis is attention to the influence of an inner dialogue that includes "... a multitude of voices rising from [one's] own inner world ... that, by perception or projection or both, the analysand locates in the analyst or others in the surround" (Schafer, 1992, p. 160). Thus does psychoanalysis include narration not only between real others in the here and now, but also an inner dialogue with voices from the past.

Schafer on Text Interpretation

In Schafer's narrational version of psychoanalysis, the analyst "takes everything in the analytic situation as a text that requires interpretation" (Schafer, 1992, p. 176). In discussing the idea of text interpretation, Schafer asserts that the analyst is "an influential co-author" ... [who] ... cohabits" (ibid., p. 177) the text with the analysand. As such any claim to a stance of objective observationalism or empirical science will not do. Rather, the idea of a cohabited ongoing text interpretation "accord[s] to constructivism and its corollary, perspectivism, an essential place in psychoanalysis" (loc.cit.).

At the same time, Schafer frequently reminds his reader that all "tellings" are also "showings"²⁰. Analysts take speech as a communicative action, a performance as well as communication through the delivery of the content of speech. We may dismiss, on this account, critiques that fault analysis as limited to text interpretation, hence only to content, to what is said²¹. This is clearly not what Schafer has in mind.

However, Schafer's assertion that "text" refers either to anything that occurs within analysis, or, alternatively, to anything which may be interpreted, results in a less clearly articulated thesis than if he were more discerning in his application of the term. In fact, he claims that once one endorses perspectivism "... there is no way to say what the text is that is to be approached other than to construct reality by means of a particular perspective and to use consistently the language that manifests this perspective" (Schafer, 1992, p. 177). While Schafer is careful throughout his writing to avoid a radical relativism, here he appears to have gotten tangled in its web.

In examining the possible differences between applied and clinical analysis, and in keeping with the above position, Schafer implies that multiple interpretations are tantamount to multiple works:

.... it can be argued that the poem changes with the reader as the reader becomes more expert. It is no longer the same poem. There is no determinate text of the poem. Markings on the page - the last resort of the anticonstructivist - are not the poem (Schafer, 1992, p. 184).

Schafer is forced to take this position because it appears to fit with his assertions that the analyst and analysand co-author and cohabit an analysis. An analysis is a unique co-creation, one of many potentially right analyses, but at the same time a singular co-creation of this analyst and analysand at this point in their development. To change any element would be to necessarily create a different analysis. So too, then, would it seem that the reader and the text must uniquely interact to, in effect, co-author the work.

In an explication of text interpretation, Goodman and Elgin take exactly the opposite position regarding text interpretation. They show that different right interpretations of a text do not require that there are therefore different works²². Rather, the identity of a text is given by the syntax of the language to which it belongs. "A text is

an inscription in a language” (Goodman and Elgin, 1988a, p. 59). A transcript of an analysis would then constitute the text of an analysis.

Clearly, Schafer would object that such a transcript would not constitute an analysis, for much else transpires in an analysis that is not captured by such a text. In fact, in a later chapter of the same work²³, Schafer suggests that analysis needs a concept to capture communication that occurs extra-verbally, through completely non-verbal modalities as well as communicative aspects of speech not related to content. The term he recommends is

enactment [which] may include communication through the timing and manner of saying things and not saying things both within the session and outside it; the use or nonuse made of interpretations; lateness, absence, symptomatic regressions and flights into health; and so forth (Schafer, 1992, pp. 232-233).

In my view, Schafer takes the view that multiple works are a necessary consequence of the inescapability of multiple interpretations because he believes such a position is required in order to sustain his assertion that any given clinical analysis is a unique creation. In the last chapter of this dissertation I propose another approach to defending the singular identity of a clinical analysis derived from the constructionalist theory of aesthetic reference . I will also offer a re-examination of the question of text identity, enactment, and interpretation in light of constructionalist reference theory with the aim of a critical inquiry into the nature of symbolic reference in clinical analysis.

¹Schafer, 1976.

²Schafer, 1983.

³Schafer, 1992.

⁴Schafer, 1992.

⁵See Gardner, 1985, especially chapters 1 and 11, for a discussion of the use of the term by cognitive scientists.

⁶Goodman, 1978.

⁷Goodman and Elgin, 1988.

⁸Strictly behavioristic versions of human action are, for Schafer, not psychological versions.

⁹Goodman, 1984, 1978.

¹⁰Protter (1988), citing Schafer, has referred to a Romantic aspect of the analyst's quest to know the analysand through enactments of empathic understanding, especially apparent in the self psychology schools.

¹¹Schafer, 1983.

¹²Schafer, 1983 especially chapters 14 and 15 and Schafer, 1992.

¹³Goodman, 1978, pp. 102-103.

¹⁴Schafer, 1992, pp. 156-160.

¹⁵Schafer, 1983a.

¹⁶Goodman, 1978.

¹⁷Both Schafer (1983) and Goodman (1978) allow that the processes they suggest are meant only to begin to delineate methods their respective endeavors utilize.

¹⁸Schafer, 1983.

¹⁹Schafer, 1992.

²⁰Schafer, 1983.

²¹Shapiro, 1989.

²²Goodman and Elgin, 1988a.

²³Schafer, 1992, chapter 14.

CHAPTER 4

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM: CONSTRUCTIONALISM AND INTERPERSONAL PSYCHOANALYSIS

Recently a number of interpersonal psychoanalysts have advocated a shift from positivism to “constructivism”¹ as an epistemology for psychoanalysis². With its heritage of participant-observation³, interpersonal psychoanalysis is a likely arena for constructionalist reformulation of psychoanalysis. Opposed to the classic Freudian position of analyst as detached objective observer, participant-observation underscores the involvement of the analyst in the creation of phenomena he simultaneously observes. Constructionalism’s attention to the necessity of context for the development of understanding has attracted interpersonalist psychoanalysts.

Irwin Hoffman’s Social-Constructivist Critique of Schafer’s Narrative Psychoanalysis

Hoffman’s 1983 paper, along with that of Stern in the same year, may be marked as the beginning of the movement of constructivism in interpersonal psychoanalysis. In his critical review of the status of the concept of the blank screen, a concept he asserts identifies “asocial conceptions of the patient’s experience in psychotherapy” (1983, p. 390), Hoffman proposes that any conceptualization that upholds a division between “real” and transference aspects of the analytic relationship is by definition “conservative”. Only those reformulations that fully disavow any clear “dichotomy between transference as distortion and non-transference as reality-based” (ibid., p.393) can be viewed as the more complete, or “radical” critique of the blank screen. Furthermore, the radical critique requires acknowledgment that the patient can and does perceive in the analyst aspects of

the analyst's experience that the analyst may not. The radical critic rejects what Hoffman calls the "*naive patient fallacy*" (ibid., p. 395, italics in original).

Hoffman has developed this line of thinking into what he calls "social-constructivism"⁴. Its central focus is the inescapability of the analyst's reliance on his own moment to moment experience in the development of new clinical understanding. Accordingly, any analysis is by definition a function of the analyst's current perspective, both conscious and unconscious. The analyst now is a "participant-constructivist" (Hoffman, 1991, p. 78), an epistemologically evolved participant-observer. For Hoffman, the constructivist men are separated from the constructivist boys by the stance each takes regarding the nature of transference.

Hoffman wants to be clear that his proposals reflect a reformulation of the epistemological nature of psychoanalytic knowledge. He asserts his work should not be confused with advocacy for the relational matrix paradigm⁵, nor is it solely a critique of technique, that is, of the degree of activity the analyst allows himself. For Hoffman, neither the relative focus of the clinical encounter, nor whatever the analyst does, has any relation to the epistemological nature of the understanding he achieves in the process.

Hoffman criticizes Schafer's position as a "limited constructivist view"⁶. He faults Schafer's constructionalism on two related accounts. First, Schafer is held as a "conservative critic" of the blank screen/transference concept⁷. Second, he asserts that Schafer emphasizes the influence of the analyst's theoretical beliefs at the expense of what Hoffman holds to be the more fundamental effect of the analyst's personal involvement in the analytic interpersonal field⁸.

Hoffman's trouble with Schafer springs from his reading of Schafer's views on transference and countertransference. For example, Hoffman takes Schafer's recommendation for "continuous scrutiny of countertransferences" (Schafer cited in

Hoffman, 1991, p. 81) to indicate a belief on Schafer's part that "[w]ith respect to the issue of personal participation, the analyst remains quite detached and objective" (loc. cit.).

Hoffman draws his citation from Schafer's consideration of the consequences that his choice of the terms 'analyst' and 'analysand' have on the resulting narrative structure of analysis. Schafer acknowledges that any characterization cannot completely capture the analytic interaction, be it doctor and patient, therapist and client, or his own choice of analyst and analysand. He underscores three weaknesses in his usage, the first of which Hoffman cites: his choice does not refer to "the analyst's also being subject to analysis through his or her necessarily continuous scrutiny of countertransference" (Schafer, 1983, p. 221). Hoffman stops here and concludes that Schafer means that such scrutiny is both possible and that it succeeds in washing the analyst clean of any personal interference with his objectivity regarding the analysand's experience.

This, in itself, is a debatable reading. But it is Schafer's third point, not cited by Hoffman, that makes his critique a mystery: "...[T]he division into analyst and analysand does not provide for the increasing extent to which the analysand becomes coanalyst of his or her own problems, and, in certain respects, *those of the analyst, too*" (ibid. 221-222, italics added). While Schafer stops short of an endorsement of Hoffman's radical critique, the social-constructivist's sine qua non, he clearly disavows the naive patient fallacy and an asocial view of the patient's experience in analysis.

Hoffman repeats and develops his critique of Schafer in a later consideration of the clinical implications of differences between social-constructivism and limited constructivism in psychoanalysis⁹. He emphasizes that the analyst cannot know from moment to moment the effects his decisions, choices, and personal participation have on the ongoing interaction: "The [social-constructivist] model requires that analysts embrace

the uncertainty that derives from knowing that their subjectivity can never be fully transcended” (ibid., p. 287).

Hoffman indicates the analyst’s participation operates temporally in two directions, both of which require attention. Retrospectively, the analyst must attend to the way his personal involvement has contributed to the nature of the understanding he currently has about the patient’s experience in analysis. Prospectively, the analyst must be aware of his participation as a part of the construction of a contemporary history for both the patient and himself. The result is a picture of the action of analysis as a dialectic between the analyst’s often unwitting involvement with the patient in the construction of meanings in the interpersonal field, and his attempt to extricate himself from it so as to construct new understanding.

These considerations are in harmony with Schafer’s recommendation that the most important co-authored narrative history in analysis is that of the analysis itself. Schafer’s assertion that analyst and analysand cohabit a co-authored text in the ongoing narrative construction of the analytic relationship is an elegant expression of his respect for the degree to which the analyst’s participation in the analytic project influences its form and content. Underscoring that there is no one final version of action is another at least implicit acknowledgment that the analyst is not a final arbiter of truth. In addition, by realizing as a facet of the tragic view of reality that every choice made by either party in analysis forever disallows innumerable others, Schafer attests to the ubiquity of the analyst’s effect on the analysis, and allows for his inability to know what their full meanings are or will be.

Hence, the difference between Schafer and Hoffman cannot be that Schafer claims the analyst is an objective observer while Hoffman rejects this claim. Rather it is Schafer’s willingness to acknowledge the analyst as the authority within the analytic

dyad. While it may be useful to create categories of limited constructivism and social-constructivism, Hoffman, in my view, fails to show that Schafer should be characterized as a limited constructivist.

Donnel Stern's Constructivist Psychoanalysis

Donnel Stern, a preeminent contributor to the development of the constructivist paradigm in interpersonal psychoanalysis, would likely disagree with my defense of Schafer. Like Hoffman, he congratulates Schafer for exposing the ubiquity of the influence of theory on clinical observation, but faults him for de-emphasizing the analyst's personal participation.

At the same time, Stern's position has much in common with Schafer's. Stern's "unformulated experience"¹⁰, for example, is a constructivist reconceptualization of the unconscious and of defense which Stern has developed, in part, into a framework for understanding the experience of the participants in the clinical interaction. His ideas are in concert with Schafer's views regarding self-agency as well as the principles of Action Language.

Freud's associationist view of cognition held that exposure to a given reality resulted in a formed 'piece' of perception that was then either consciously perceived, stored in memory for later retrieval, or repressed¹¹. Psychoanalysis was the retrieval of received experience, the remembering of historic truth. In Freud's well known formulation: "The hysteric suffers mainly from reminiscences" (Freud, cited in Gay, 1988, p. 71).

Stern's unformulated experience is a concept born of constructionalist epistemology and modern cognitive research that opposes the associationist conceptualization of cognition, memory, and defense. On this view mental representation is created through an active process which proceeds through progressive levels of

articulation, rather than being imprinted on a passive receiver. Cognitive representation of experience, be it apprehended, perceived, or retrieved from memory, is as much created as it is received or retrieved.

This view leads to a reconceptualization of defense as the interference with, or active turning away from, the process of constructing experience through symbolic representation. Where Freudian defense mechanisms act on fully formulated mental representations of experience, through various distortions or repression, Stern's defense prevents mental representation from being formulated into a form capable of conscious articulation in the first place. Psychoanalysis is reconceptualized as the reinstatement of the active formulation of experience.

Unformulated experience, then, is experience that has not achieved symbolic representation. For Stern, thinking means putting experience into language. It follows that defense is "... a refusal to make this leap into meaning" (Stern, 1983, p.91), "purposely never having known" (ibid., p. 84). When defense is lifted, fully formed memories, thoughts, or fantasies do not simply reappear. Rather, the lifting of defense opens the door to "transformation of certain murky and unnoticed cognitive and affective material of the patient's into clear and convincing meaning" (Stern, 1989, p.10). Since such meanings are not predetermined or given, in fact have never been consciously formulated, it follows that multiple meanings may be constructed from unformulated experience.

The closeness of fit of Stern's concept of unformulated experience and defense with Schafer's Action Language is clear. To describe defense as purposely not thinking is to heed the central principle of Action Language to refer to psychological phenomena as actions of an active agent. It is also in concert with the ninth rule of Action Language:

One may not use inability words in connection with actions..... [W]hen people say they cannot do an action, they are referring to their not doing it, even though it

may be inferable that, unconsciously, they are refusing to do it while disclaiming their refusal by pleading inability (Schafer, 1976a, p. 370).

When the analysand says “I can’t remember,” both Schafer and Stern will hear some version of “You won’t or don’t think.” In Stern’s reworking of defense, at the center of the analytic inquiry stands an active agent who turns away from constructing experience.

Stern describes two aspects of unformulated experience in order to organize his view of the goal of psychoanalysis. “Familiar chaos” (Stern, 1983, p. 72) amounts to a defensive acceptance of unformulated experience, that, were it more fully articulated, would be noxious. It results in a sense that things are familiar but not understood, a state of abstruse familiarity.

“Creative disorder” (ibid., p. 86) is the foil to familiar chaos. It refers to the proactive potential and possibilities that inhere in unformulated experience. It is an acceptance of the necessity for active construction of experience, that unformulated experience cannot be forced into articulation by retrieval, or by simply turning attention to it. Without censorship or selection we strive to capture as many meanings as we can from previously vague or unarticulated experience through symbolic representation. One way of characterizing creative disorder, then, is as a constructionalist version of free association. Rather than fully formed experiences rising into consciousness, now we freely and openly attempt to construct the formerly unconstructed.

From this perspective, the aim of psychoanalysis is the development of unformulated experience from familiar chaos into creative disorder. Psychoanalytic inquiry no longer endeavors to search after buried historic truth, a truth which is not there to be found at any rate. “... [B]y creating between them a world of thought and curiosity, patient and analyst rescue unformulated experience from the oblivion of the familiar” (ibid., 96).

Stern has applied the concept of unformulated experience to explore the nature of transference¹² and countertransference¹³. Transference becomes a positive to the negative of familiar chaos - the patient's rigidly experiencing the analyst in only one way puts into relief his "unconscious refusal to formulate alternatives" (Stern, 1987, p. 486). Stern relies on modern linguistic theory which asserts that there is no meaning without alternatives. The clinical aim of analysis of transference is specifically the realization of "the patient's experience of alternatives to the transference or the patient's experience of the transference. They are the same" (ibid., p. 488). That is, only through a new response - for example, an interpretation, a verbalized curiosity about a taken for granted reaction to the analyst, or perhaps a new or uncharacteristic behavioral response - can the analyst transform the patient's transference into a meaningful and therapeutic experience.

Countertransference, too, may be conceived as the analyst's acceptance of his own unformulated experience of the analytic interaction. The analyst's sense of ennui, unclarity, lack of curiosity, frustration, all may point to countertransference as acceptance of unformulated experience. Alternatively, countertransference may take the same form as the above description of transference - an inflexible conviction that one is right with a refusal to formulate alternatives.

Until the analyst is able to break free from his unformulated experience of the patient, he is doomed to reenact with the patient the patient's characteristic problems. This has a familiar ring to it. Gone is the analyst as blank screen, now to be an active participant-constructor of the analytic field. But notice, the field that is created reenacts the patient's problem. While the analyst is not an inactive tabula rasa for the patient to make of what he will, Stern's view of the therapeutic potential of the analytic relationship depends on the premise that the patient will do so anyway. In this respect the phenomenon of transference remains intact - the patient, now with the active, if

unwitting, participation of the analyst, recreates in the relationship with the analyst characteristic problems.

Conservative and radical critiques of the blank screen notwithstanding, the essential nature of the concept of transference survives social-constructivist reformulation. Social-constructivism's theory of transference represents an interface between a fundamental constructionalist principle and a central psychoanalytic master narrative. While multiple constructions of the analytic relationship is the rule, such constructions are constrained by the patient's characteristic problems in forming and understanding interpersonal relationships. Transference is a psychoanalytic embodiment of constructionalism, a relativism with restraints. Importantly, the coherence of the concept of transference depends on the assertion that in good measure, those restraints are the patient's restricted capacity to construct relationships.

Stern on Schafer's Narrative Psychoanalysis

I turn now to Stern's criticism of Schafer. Stern asserts that Schafer should not be considered a radical critic of the blank screen¹⁴, and hence, I conclude, is to be considered a limited constructivist: "Schafer seems to accept that there are certain ways in which the observer can remain separate from the observation. The analyst may be embedded in his theoretical commitment, but he is not necessarily embedded in the [interpersonal] field" (Stern, 1991, p. 75).

One can cite numerous protestations by Schafer that his reworking of psychoanalysis holds that there can be no clear demarcation between observer and observed¹⁵. However, a less hasty dispatch of Stern's critique will reveal what I consider to be the fundamental difference between Schafer and his social-constructivist critics.

To support his position, Stern cites Schafer's statement that

The major transference phenomena represent the achievement of such simplified, focused ways of defining and acting within the analytic relationship that *there can be no mistaking their meanings or avoiding their emotional manifestations or implications* (Schafer cited in Stern, 1991, p. 75-76, Stern's italics).

In my view, Schafer's characterization of transference as an "achievement... within the analytic relationship" is evidence that in his view transference is, at least in part, a new, co-construction that is, again in part, a function of the analytic interaction.¹⁶ Schafer implicitly includes, even if he does not explicitly emphasize, that the analyst's involvement in the field is significant.

Consider, then, the emphasized passage in Stern's citation of Schafer - "*there can be no mistaking their meanings or avoiding their emotional manifestations or implications*". The problem with Schafer's statement appears to be its finality, that there "can be no mistaking ... or avoiding" what it is he claims. Schafer might be faulted here for stating himself too strongly. In my view, however, to hold the strength of this statement as indicative of a claim that there is some ultimate true reality of the interaction exclusive of the analyst's personal perspective, is to take his statement out of context in the worst way. A more coherent reading is to take Schafer to mean that within the analytic interaction there are certain occurrences, enactments, or statements that cannot be "mistaken" or "avoided" as non-psychoanalytic phenomena. That is to say, within the context of psychoanalysis, they cry out for interpretation. All through his reformulation of analysis Schafer asserts relativism over one final truth and the principle of adoption over certainty. To hold this statement as evidence to the contrary is not well supported.¹⁷

Interestingly, Schafer's view includes Stern's characterization of interpretation of transference as the realization of meaning through experience of alternative, accomplished in the analytic interaction. "It is inherent to the analytic attitude that it is only by finding other ways to understand what the analysand holds to be ...

unquestionably true..." (Schafer, 1983b, p. 126) that the analysis can use the transference to develop new understanding.

Schafer also includes in the paper cited by Stern a view of defense that echoes Stern's concept of unformulated experience. Schafer asserts that interpretation is not constrained to repressed or distorted material.

Not everything that is adequately organized has been actively kept apart by defensive measures; *not everything that has failed to be recognized has been denied*. This point is obvious, really, but is often obscured by formulations, Freud's among them, which suggest that interpretation is just uncovering" (Schafer, 1983b, p. 133, italics added).

Schafer explicitly includes both phenomena as potential modalities of defense: repression or distortion of already formulated experience, as well as the active turning away from the construction of experience. Schafer's is the more complete view because Stern does not account for the possibility that once experience is formulated, it would appear to be subject to some form of classic defense.¹⁸

Thus far my examination of Stern's critique of Schafer has uncovered more congruence than disagreement in their conceptualizations. I return to the point of departure for Stern's critique.

Stern emphasizes, as does Hoffman, that a given analyst's personal experience of a particular analysand is inextricably entwined with the creation of the particular form of transference. As such, the primary, first order perspective from which interpretive phenomena derive is the analyst's experience of the patient, and this perspective must allow for and include the patient's experience of the analyst. Most fundamental to the epistemological nature of the analyst's understanding, the analyst can never be certain that he has escaped "the grip of the field" (Stern, 1992, p. 357). Appeal to theory cannot prescriptively guarantee, nor in the moment of clinical interaction can it assure, that the analyst has effectively disentangled himself from his personal perspective.

No doubt. But at some point *it is the analyst who decides*. It is the analyst, based on his experience, his theory, his training, what he holds to be the relevant phenomena given the history and current condition of this particular analysis, who interprets transference, who offers that the patient has no alternatives, that his view is monolithic.

Based on his current perspective, which must always be a product of an interaction between his experiential and theoretical perspectives, the analyst formulates an interpretation. Here again, the constructionalist's principle of adoption suggests itself. Adoption is provisional, affords the constructionalist analyst procedures and a range of confidence with which to regard interpretations as constructions.

The question of the analyst's authority cannot be solved or evaded by retreating to a field theory of interpersonal interaction. That is, the degree to which the analyst can or cannot interpret with confidence is not simply a function of theory versus interpersonal embeddedness. As Schafer says with clarity "The facts are what the analyst takes them to be" (Schafer, 1983, p. 255). Put another way, the therapist supervises the therapeutic process (Paul, 1989). Adoption of meanings or facts are conventions of the system within which the clinician is operating. Be that a theory based narrative structure or an interpersonal subjective perspective, the analyst is still the clinician.

This point is not lost on Stern nor Hoffman. The social-constructivist analyst's authority derives from "a special kind of authenticity" (Hoffman, 1992, p. 295) comprised of the analyst's subjective experience in the moment, professional training and identification, theoretical understanding, and clinical experience. The social-constructivist difference is that there is an emphasis on the analyst's subjective experience as important and valid clinical phenomena rather than intrusive countertransference. There is a shift from reliance on theory for authority to reliance on subjective experience. Importantly, the analyst's authenticity "is continually the object of psychoanalytic skepticism and

critical reflection” (ibid., p. 296). It is difficult to understand in this context Stern’s objections to Schafer’s recommendations for “continuous scrutiny of countertransferences”.

Hoffman asserts that freed from the constraints of a positivistic requirement for a right or true interpretation, the analyst has “... more leeway for a spontaneous kind of expressiveness” (Hoffman, 1992, p. 292), an expressiveness which includes personal conviction based on subjective experience. However, in my view, the analyst’s having more freedom of expression is a technical issue separate from the theoretical problem regarding the nature of the source of the relative validity of analytic interpretation.¹⁹

Here then is the crux of interpersonal psychoanalysis’ argument with Schafer:

Schafer (and Spence as well) treats theoretical commitments, not personal prejudices developed in the interaction, as the primary imposition of order on the analytic material. These prejudices have nothing to do with the interpersonal situation formed by a specific analyst-patient pair. And so, from the perspective of the radical critic, Schafer misses the most important psychoanalytic application of hermeneutics. Of course we must be open to the prejudices of our theories. But in the social paradigm theoretical commitments occupy the second rung of importance. (Stern, 1991, p. 75).

Stern is aware that one’s theory effects one’s understanding of the nature of transference and countertransference, but once he acknowledges this argument he dismisses it because it requires more exploration than he can afford it in his paper. But the paradox of Stern’s position is more troublesome than he allows; in order to put theory in a secondary role, he appeals to what amounts to a theoretical principle. Thereby he simultaneously asserts theory as primary and not primary.

Stern defends his position because “Psychoanalysts are no less immune to common human influence than others. This influence, then, being closer to ‘what comes naturally’ than theoretical commitment, has had its impact by the time the effect of theory kicks in” (Stern, 1991, p. 75). His position is arguable. The purpose of the training analysis is

specifically to aid the analyst to become more sensitive to “common human influence” as it affects him particularly. While this does not result in absolute immunity, it can be argued that analysts are more aware of the subjective effect their patient’s have on them in the clinical relationship, and are trained in the therapeutic use of their sensitivity to such interpersonal effects.

Furthermore, the influence that analysts encounter from analysands, and their responses to it, must vary. There is a range of experience the analyst encounters from a sense of relatively complete understanding to one of utter confusion.

At the start of his paper on the analyst’s experience of the patient Stern states that the analyst often senses that his involvement with the patient has some meaning which he cannot yet put into words. He must wait until things become more clear. At other times the analyst is immediately clear “about the state of relatedness the patient intends to create” (Stern, 1989, p. 2). Stern is here pointing to the difficulty that the analyst sometimes has in “knowing countertransference” (*loc. cit.*) and how important it is for the analyst to be able to put his experience of the patient into words, even if only to himself. How different is this caveat than Schafer’s regarding the necessity of “continuous scrutiny of the countertransference”? How different is Stern’s assertion that at times “the analyst’s reaction informs him immediately about the state of relatedness the patient intends to create” from Schafer’s that regarding the analysand’s transference reactions “there can be no mistaking their meanings or avoiding their emotional manifestations or implications”? Again it would appear that there is more in common than there is substantial difference in the views of Stern and Schafer.

As I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, Hoffman asserts that he is offering an alternative epistemology for psychoanalysis that must not be conflated with a shift from classical technique to interpersonal technique, or from drive theory to a relational

matrix theory. I accept his assessment. However, examination on an epistemological level has yet to reveal some *essential* difference between the social-constructivist paradigm and Schafer's narrational psychoanalysis. Once the epistemological position of constructivism is granted, the objections raised by Hoffman and Stern with Schafer reduce to continuation of the historical debate between interpersonal psychoanalysis and Freudian ego psychology within a different epistemological framework.

Schafer is careful to acknowledge the value of the existence of competing versions to the psychoanalytic culture as a whole. Rather than discredit, dismiss, or devalue their contributions, Schafer encourages the development of a field of study he calls comparative psychoanalysis in which differences and commonalities may be clearly discerned and studied with an eye toward the evolution of analytic theory and practice. For Schafer, just as for Stern in his view of transference, psychoanalysis evolves through examination of alternatives, "through unsettledness" (Schafer, 1992, p. 192). In considering the ideas of colleagues from other schools, Schafer recommends to analysts the curiosity that is vital to Stern's creative disorder. Thus, the spirit of Schafer's inquiry, embodied in his call for a comparative psychoanalysis, applies the analytic attitude self-reflectively on the field of analysis itself.

Linguistic Considerations

An important problem that is overlooked more often than not in discussions regarding the issue of transference and countertransference is linguistic. In modern usage countertransference is used to refer to a dimension of the analyst's experience that may range from everything the analyst consciously or unconsciously feels, thinks, or enacts in the analytic interaction to a very prescribed area of unconscious, neurotic experience in reaction to the patient's transference²⁰. It is often not clear where a particular theorist

locates countertransference along this dimension. The result is often a debate over different phenomena.

For just these reasons, Schafer recommends we consider the denotative use of transference and countertransference, among many other psychoanalytic terms “treacherous” (Schafer, 1992, p. 188).

It is useful in the present context to examine how the terms are used by Stern and Hoffman, and to contrast their usage to Schafer’s. In one paper on the unformulated experience of the analyst, Stern says of his use of the terms:

I will use ‘the patient’s experience of the analyst’ and ‘the analyst’s experience of the patient’ synonymously with ‘transference’ and ‘countertransference.’ The everyday terms convey better what I mean since the technical language was coined to refer only to an aspect of the analytic relationship. I wish to describe the analytic relationship as the complex interaction of two real people. (Stern, 1989, p. 2)

It is difficult in this instance to see how Stern’s use of these terms retain any theoretical power when they are to refer to everything experienced by analyst and analysand. In fact, if Stern wants to include everything felt and enacted, consciously and unconsciously, as countertransference phenomena, what can it mean to say of any single clinical report that it is an example of countertransference? Stern’s own insistence that lack of alternatives results in lack of meaning, critically weakens his use of the term. Further, if Schafer’s use is different, a critique of his position will have to be based on his use, else the critique is incoherent.

In all fairness, it would appear that Stern means this usage only for the purposes of the paper cited. However, it points to a danger to which social views fall prey; in their enthusiasm to include the analyst’s subjectivity as an important, even necessary clinical phenomenon, social paradigms may lose more than they gain. The discussion above attests to the fact that Stern does not consistently hold to such a liberal extension of

transference and countertransference. Nonetheless, in social-constructivist tracts regarding the analyst's subjectivity, this is not an uncommon problem²¹.

For Schafer, countertransference is a sense by the analyst that his purview has shifted out of the analytic attitude²². I will not detail Schafer's usage further. What is relevant here is that since it marks off a particular kind of experience, Schafer's is the more theoretically useful and coherent application of the term.

Protter's Ways of Knowing in Psychoanalysis

Protter has begun the work of comparative psychoanalysis by examining the kinds of 'knowledge' differing schools of psychoanalysis favor²³. He has proposed a triadic epistemology for psychoanalytic praxis that organizes schools of psychoanalysis based on their view of the nature of knowledge gained through clinical analysis.

It is important to underscore the nature of Protter's project. Specifically, his focus is psychoanalytic practice. He is concerned with the clinical psychoanalyst as a practitioner in applied epistemology, a kind of "psycho-epistemologist" (Protter, 1985, p. 221). As Protter cogently points out, discussions regarding the epistemological status of psychoanalysis often conflate its "dual identity as a theory of the mind and a practice of treatment" (ibid., p. 499).²⁴

Protter's first modality is existential knowing. This encompasses "Knowing, comprehending, perceiving, or understanding what another person is experiencing within" (Protter, 1988b, p. 508). Empathy is the most often used term to refer to this kind of psychoanalytic clinical understanding. Phenomenological and existential approaches are included here, in their striving to understand the subjective experience of the other without superimposing theoretical or otherwise extra-personal structure. The modalities of understanding for existential knowing are "phenomenologic-empathic modes" (ibid., p. 520). Protter includes the concept of psychic reality within existential knowing, by which

he refers to an acceptance of the “...(self reported) psychic experience of the other as an epistemic given, without the analyst imposing his own emendations (interpreting it, consensually validating it, etc.)” (ibid., p. 510). Clearly Protter and Schafer differ in their application of this term.

Contextual knowing, the heritage of Sullivan and his followers, focuses on interpersonal interaction: “...what people do to and with each other and how this affects the sense of knowing self and other” (ibid. p. 510). Transference is the arena for contextual knowing in psychoanalysis. Using Hoffman’s own phrase, Protter regards Hoffman as advocating the “radical adoption of contextual knowing,” (ibid., p.511), which adoption results in the emphases I have identified: use of transference/countertransference phenomena as the preeminent analytic arena, reciprocity of analyst and patient in relation to one another, and the inescapability of the analyst’s subjectivity. The clinical modes of understanding emphasized in contextual knowing are “interpersonal-relatedness modes” (ibid., p. 520).

Textual knowing is the heritage of Freud, a position of the analyst as the “...Essential Interpreter, ... a kind of pre-eminent textual authority from a spectator (outside of the field), foundational position in uncovering the essentialist meaning of the patient’s production” (ibid. p. 513). The various hermeneutic and narrative reformulations of psychoanalysis have developed out of this Freudian essentialist legacy into the perspectivist/relativist position of, for example Schafer. This is the heritage of “knowing through the word” (loc. cit.), the original Judeo-Christian (“the truth shall set you free”) and Socratic (“know thyself”) philosophical roots of Freud’s psychoanalysis (ibid., p. 499). The clinical modality of textual knowing is the “interpretive-narrative mode” (ibid., p. 520).

Notions of truth are most relevant to this area of psychoanalytic knowing because they are closest to theory; theory is seen as a master narrative that informs the interpretive action of the analyst. Protter suggests that a hermeneutic-pragmatic approach could embrace “scientific extra-clinical” (ibid., p. 516) phenomena as well as clinical accounts as a contribution to assessing the validity of the master narrative. He sees Spence’s call for a “rule governed legal” model for psychoanalytic truth as such an account. Interestingly, Schafer, consistently held as the foremost hermeneutic theorist, disagrees²⁵.

Protter suggests that each way of knowing and its related clinical modality marks off where the others begin and end. “A kind of dialectical and critical interplay in which one mode alternately deconstructs the other(s) leads toward a sense of coherency.....” (Protter, 1988b, p. 520). Nonetheless, schools of psychoanalysis clearly favor one mode over the others. Protter makes a strong case for a comparative psychoanalysis based on the form of knowing each school favors in practice. At the same time, he makes an interesting appeal to a new form of eclecticism in the clinical arena based on the interplay of this triadic epistemological model.

Schools of Clinical Psychoanalysis: Worldmaking Revisited

If we assess the criticisms raised by Stern and Hoffman in terms of Goodman’s worldmaking, it is clear that the difference is one of weighting or ordering, rather than an essential disagreement regarding positivism/constructionalism. Whether theory, embodied in master narratives and storylines is a first order phenomenon, and subjective experience a secondary one is a matter of choice. The assessment of such choice, and the world versions that result from their application, will have to be based on standards of rightness. Which is the more complete, coherent, consistent? Which fits and works more effectively?

In my view, it is more coherent to include the importance of the interpersonal interaction within the theory of clinical psychoanalysis than it is the other way around. Theory is ubiquitous, hence primary. The very notion of subjective experience, let alone whether it is a primary or secondary worldmaking element, is theory laden. Schafer's organizing principle of master narratives as guidelines for theory and clinical practice offers a more flexible model, and facilitates acceptance of multiple and conflicting versions, than does the social-constructivist paradigm.

In Schafer's paradigm, it can be held that the thread of personal experience is woven into the analytic experience. A ubiquitous storyline that must be constantly constructed, interpreted, told and retold, involves the ongoing meanings each participant constructs within the analytic interaction. As Schafer says, analyst and analysand "cohabit" the analysis. Again, the requirement of the training analysis, a requirement respected by all schools of analysis, is precisely due to the concern that analysts cannot escape subjectivity. In Schafer's paradigm, this common aspect of psychoanalysis is part of the master narrative of transference/countertransference.

The analyst's experience, while subjective, includes as a part of his subjectivity, his training, his theory. A fundamental requirement of all analytic theories is the necessity for the analyst to question and monitor his own subjectivity. That this can never be complete does not of necessity overpower theory. Hence, Schafer's characterization of countertransference as the interruption of the analytic attitude, in the context of a constructionalist epistemology which asserts the necessity of the analyst's involvement and effect on the analysis, regards the analyst's subjectivity as dimensional. Analytic subjectivity is ubiquitous but varies in its action from problematic to proactive.

¹For purposes of this part of my discussion I shall respect their term, and refer to constructionalism as constructivism.

²Hoffman, 1992, 1991; Stern, 1992, 1991, 1985; Protter, 1988b, 1985.

³Sullivan 1954; 1953.

⁴Hoffman, 1992, 1991.

⁵Mitchell, 1988; Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983.

⁶ Hoffman, 1992, 1991.

⁷Hoffman, 1983.

⁸Hoffman, 1992, 1991.

⁹Hoffman, 1992.

¹⁰Stern, 1983.

¹¹ibid.

¹²Stern, 1987.

¹³Stern, 1989.

¹⁴Stern 1991.

¹⁵See e. g., Schafer, 1992, p.189; 1983, p. 184, p. 203.

¹⁶As in Hoffman's assessment, transference phenomena are "... multidirectional ... creating the past in the present ... [but also] represent movement forward" (Schafer, 1983b, p.132).

¹⁷Stern, of course, is not unaware of Schafer's pluralism and relativism. In fact, in his earlier paper on transference, Stern (1985) cites Schafer to support his own constructivist view that there is no one final version of reality to which transference interpretations answer, but that this need not result in a radical relativism.

¹⁸Stern favors the "relative perspective" over the "absolute perspective" of the unconscious, and cites Spence's attack on the substantive unconscious as in concert with this view. See his discussion "The Absolute and Relative Perspectives on the Unconscious" in Stern, 1992. See also Fourcher, 1992 for advocacy of inclusion of both perspectives, a view I hold is more congruent with Schafer's.

¹⁹This sticky issue, often referred to as countertransference disclosure has been debated widely, and I shall not engage that literature here. See e.g., Burke, 1992; Burke and Tansey, 1991.

²⁰Kernberg, 1963.

²¹See e. g. Modell, 1991.

²²Schafer 1992, p. 229.

²³Protter, 1988.

²⁴The social-construcitivist theories I have explored focus more on clinical phenomena than do they address metapsychological issues. In my view, Schafer attends to the metapsychological underpinnings of his ideas with greater coherence.

²⁵See Schafer, 1992, pp. 303-304.

CHAPTER 5

THE NATURE OF CLINICAL UNDERSTANDING: PSYCHOANALYSIS AND AESTHETIC REFERENCE

The nature of understanding gained in a psychoanalysis has been characterized in the preceding chapters variously along dimensions of historic/narrative truth, literal/metaphoric truth, hermeneutic/scientific understanding, and according to whether analysis belongs to science or humanity, the *naturwissenschaften* or *geisteswissenschaften*.

This controversy is often formulated, however, in the form of a debate over whether psychoanalysis is an art versus a science¹. While there is a certain undeniable intuitive appeal to this organization of the argument, the question of what exactly makes for artistic understanding or experience, let alone artistic truth or rightness, is itself controversial and complex. That is, the question “What is art?” is notoriously difficult to answer. Most psychoanalytic writers either assume the lines of demarcation between scientific and aesthetic experience are clear or obvious, or they refer their readers to one or another source for a ruling. Inevitably this approach leaves unspecified exactly what a particular theorist’s understanding of the art versus science classification is. The reader is left with a sense that something has been asserted regarding the nature of analytic understanding, usually that analysis is less a science than Freud originally insisted, but just what it is to be considered is left unclarified.

The position I will take in this chapter is that clinical psychoanalysis is better characterized as artistic creation than application of scientific principle, following Goodman’s examination of the nature of symbolic reference in aesthetic experience. I

first establish the parallel of Goodman's characterization of art to clinical psychoanalysis. Next I develop the idea of analysis as art in exploring challenges to psychoanalysis regarding validity and replicability. I also reconsider how best to conceptualize the analyst's subjectivity in the context of a classification of different forms of aesthetic works.

In the previous chapters I have reviewed and critiqued a number of psychoanalytic theorists' applications of constructionalist principles to the psychoanalytic situation. Constructionalism, in various incarnations, has been a controversial but influential philosophical movement in modern psychoanalytic literature. It is remarkable that Goodman's thinking has been all but absent from the bibliographies and citations of this literature. He is cited only once briefly by Protter², in passing twice by Schafer³, and three times by Cheshire⁴. Bruner, not a psychoanalyst, is alone in his more thorough consideration and utilization of Goodman's ideas⁵.

Goodman's constructionalism has a good deal to offer regarding the controversies considered in the previous chapters of this dissertation. Goodman's view is in accord with Schafer's: theory is a master narrative, not a lawlike statement about the one world out there, but a set of rules of discourse, a way of organizing a life story. Theory is akin to the laws of harmony in music, not true or false but adopted as relatively right or wrong, useful, something that provides a context that fits and works. I agree with Schafer: theory does not provide for causality of behavior or pathology; instead it organizes experience around reasons. In this sense one can say one has a knowledge of theory - that is, like the horse picture in the mind, one can demonstrate actions such as the ability to interpret psychoanalytically, that attest to such "knowledge." But the use of this knowledge results in a particular kind of understanding, a particular construction of a life from a psychoanalytic perspective, and not in some certain truth about a life separate from said

construction. I have offered in previous chapters some considerations regarding how Goodman's ideas of understanding, rightness, and adoption apply in this regard.

The power of Goodman's version of constructionalism for psychoanalysis especially derives from his studied and detailed examination of symbolic reference. To review, Goodman's central principle is that we construct what we understand through the use of all the various forms of symbol systems we invent. For Goodman, to characterize and assess the nature of what we understand, we must characterize and understand the nature of our use of symbols of all kinds.

Schafer asserts that a fundamental difference between his modern narrative psychoanalysis and Freud's psychoanalysis inheres in their different assessment of the nature of language. For Freud, in the context of the rationalism and empiricism of his day, language was transparent, a tool for describing a world separate from it; for Schafer, in the context of modern critical thought, language "... makes the world it tells about. ... it is a message disguised as a medium" (Schafer, 1992, p. 149).

Schafer's formulation is one form of the central principle of Goodman's constructionalism. But Goodman does not stop with language. For Goodman, a "philosophy of the understanding" must consider and include all the ways human beings create understanding through symbolic representation⁶.

While psychoanalysis is primarily a linguistic activity, it is not exclusively so. In addition, Goodman's inquiry into other than linguistic forms of representation provides new and important insights into the subtleties of linguistic representation that can inform thinking on the nature of the psychoanalytic dialogue.

In the course of his inquiry into the various forms of symbols and their systems, Goodman has offered a beginning characterization of the nature of artistic representation. In this connection Goodman has suggested that the question "What is art?" is the wrong

question. We would do better to consider “When is art?” That an object may at times function as a work of art and at others not is well accepted. Goodman suggests that a symbol functions artistically when it functions in certain ways⁷.

I propose that the clinical phenomena of psychoanalysis depend on taking the analysand as an artistic symbol in Goodman’s sense. The context of psychoanalysis, its master narratives, prescribe that the analysand be considered as we consider Goodman’s artistic symbol. Here too it is more apposite to ask “When is an analysand?” than “What is an analysand?” In the true constructionalist sense, psychoanalysis creates the analysand.

Symptoms of the Aesthetic: The Analysand as Symbol

Goodman offers what he calls five “symptoms of the aesthetic”⁸. In his use of the term “symptoms,” Goodman recommends them as neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for a symbol to qualify as functioning aesthetically. He does suggest, however, that they might be “disjointly necessary and conjointly sufficient” (Elgin, 1983, p. 83).

The first such symptom is exemplification. To review: Exemplification refers to representation by a sample, a two way symbolic relationship in which the sample both possesses a quality of the label of which it is a sample and simultaneously refers to the label. Exemplification is highly context bound. Understanding what a particular sample exemplifies requires understanding the system in which it so acts. An apple variously exemplifies “red,” “fruit,” “nourishment,” etc. Inherent in exemplification, then, is choice, and such choice is based on a knowledge of the context in which the sample is offered.

Exemplification is an ubiquitous form of representation in psychoanalytic clinical dialogue. The clinical saw embodied in the analyst’s question, “What does the patient want me to hear today?” is an embodiment of this ubiquity. The analyst puts less stock in the denotative content of the analysand’s narrative than in what he takes it to exemplify.

One crucial difference between literary texts and scientific texts or manuals is the emphasis on the use of exemplification in the former⁹. Clinical psychoanalysis is clearly more akin to literature in this respect than to scientific text.

Exemplification in the clinical dialogue is active in two central interrelated contexts. One is the context of the psychoanalytic world view, what Schafer calls its master narratives, or theory. The other is the context of this particular analysis at this particular time between these particular participants. The controversy between Schafer and his interpersonalist critics can be understood as a disagreement regarding what his critics take Schafer's view of the relative primacy of these contexts to be.

The implications of this view are significant. When the analyst takes some piece of narrative as interpretable, he is asserting that it is a sample of an adopted psychoanalytic principle. Hence, one form of poor technique is immediately eliminated, along with the kind of theoretical formulation regarding causality to which Schafer objects. We do not say "You came late today *because* you are resistant." Rather we say, "I believe that your coming late today *has to do with* (that is to say, it both possesses the quality of and refers to) feelings (anger, disappointment, fear) or thoughts (You [the analyst] don't understand me, you can't/won't help me, I will go crazy) about your treatment." That is, an overriding form for interpretation is exemplificational: "I take your action (in Schafer's sense) to possess the qualities of this psychoanalytic tenet. Furthermore, and importantly, I believe that your acting this way calls attention to this tenet; your action not only possesses said quality but *refers* to it as well."

Psychoanalytic interpretation, like all exemplification, requires, or more strongly, *is*, a choice - in this case a choice by the analyst within the context of his understanding. Which context is the more active at the moment is also, to an important degree, a matter of choice. Transference interpretations are a consummate form of the interaction between

the two contexts I have identified, or what Protter refers to as textual and contextual knowing. Transference is at once a master narrative of psychoanalysis (textual knowing) played out in a particular analysis at a particular time (contextual knowing). My argument in the previous chapter regarding the characterization of Schafer as a limited constructivist by Stern and Hoffman is recalled here. It is my contention that for the sake of coherence it makes more sense to include the ideographic form of a particular instance of transference within the master narrative of transference *qua* concept.¹⁰

When Schafer speaks of master narratives and storylines he may be understood in part to hold that analysts listen to the narrative of analysands in a search for examples of master narratives. To assert exemplification as a primary form of psychoanalytic reference is to take a fundamentally opposite position from Spence's regarding evenly hovering attention: Psychoanalytic listening is listening in a context, for particular kinds of narrative fit to master narratives. To grant this, however, is not to say that anything goes, that we can find anything we look for, or that any fit works as well as any other.

Exemplification can inform an understanding of the analyst's effectiveness as well. That is, exemplification is active in the direction from analysand to analyst. Analysts cannot declare their understanding, empathy, or the acuity of their listening prowess to analysands to any therapeutic effect. These must be exemplified in the clinical interaction. Accordingly, interpretations must both possess and refer to said qualities in order to be effective. Critically important, it is the analysand here who must acknowledge whether an interpretation is empathic, understanding, hostile. Hoffman's radical critic of the blank screen holds that the exemplificational aspect of the analytic relationship is bi-directional.

This is also one way to understand Protter's use of the concept of psychic reality within existential knowing - it is in the context of the analysand's world that the analyst's interpretations exemplify relational qualities. Many treatments may fail because the

analysand does not take the analyst's interpretations to be samples of these important aspects of the analyst's skills. More specifically, it is the problem of reference that is the focus here. While the analyst's interpretation may assert that the analysand's narrative or action possesses some psychoanalytic quality, if the analysand does not see that at the same time his same narrative or action also refers to this quality, the interpretation will not be experienced as in concert with the analysand's experience or understanding. The analyst must communicate psychoanalytic understanding in a such way that the analysand can experience its two-fold exemplificational nature - that is to say, the analyst is empathic.

Alternatively, the ongoing failure of the analysand to allow for such references can become a critical focus for further inquiry and interpretation itself. It is at this point that the analyst must take a position regarding the dialectic between theory and subjectivity. Perhaps here is one place that the frustrated analyst can usefully employ his subjective experience: "Just when I feel that I have understood you, you insist I have not. I wonder what this means regarding your sense of yourself (You want to frustrate or defeat me, want me to feel your frustration or defeat; You want to prove to yourself you are beyond help or that I cannot or will not help.).

As I demonstrated in the example regarding lateness, exemplification provides a concept for understanding other than linguistic phenomena as psychoanalytically relevant data. Exemplification includes behaviors as symbolic as well as language.

Expression is a form of exemplification, but here what is exemplified is metaphorically possessed by the sample. Expression plays a significant role in artistic representation of all kinds, as well as in the analytic interaction. That a painting is barren, a musical piece majestic, or a poem melancholy are all examples of expression in art.

That an analysand's silence is angry, his body language resigned, his protests impotent, are expressions in psychoanalysis.

Expression, like all exemplification, is manifest in language as well as action. Body language can be expressive because, like dance, movement possesses emotional qualities metaphorically. So too regarding facial expression, changes in tone of voice, and a host of behavioral enactments.¹¹

Overdetermination and multiple function are also comfortably contained in exemplification. As the analyst's context changes, or more contexts are included, any given symbol takes on new symbolic meaning. Again the inescapability of the choice inherent in exemplification is congruent with psychoanalytic interpretation.

Schafer's over inclusive use of text interpretation can be qualified in terms of exemplification and expression. Shapiro, following in the tradition of Reich, has admonished that the "patient is the therapeutic material"¹². As I reviewed earlier, Schafer loosely refers to everything in analysis as text to be interpreted, not simply verbal productions. Later he suggests that analysts include "enactments"¹³ as an additional category for interpretive phenomena in order to free the analytic dyad from "the tyranny of the spoken word" (Schafer, 1992, p. 232).

Schafer indicates throughout his treatises on narrative that tellings are also showings and showings, tellings; Shapiro warns therapists to remember that "Saying something is doing something" (Shapiro, 1989, p. 62). Both underscore the ubiquity of exemplification and expression in analysis. I have pointed out that this is a two way street; not only do patients' narratives and actions exemplify and express - so too do analysts' interpretations and actions.

The use of the term 'text' by Schafer and Shapiro also points to different levels of exemplification. The speech act itself may be exemplificational as an act. Simply

speaking (or not), say by interrupting an interpretation, may express anger (or fear) through action with no relation to what is said. On another level, linguistic communication may itself exemplify or express through the saying rather than through what is said. How something is said may express sadness through, for example, tempo or volume, even though what is said does not denote sadness.

One way in which Schafer defends the existence of conflicting interpretations in analysis is to compare the purview of analysis to that of common sense lore: “Absence makes the heart grow fonder” but “Out of sight out of mind.” Schafer characterizes psychoanalysis a kind of “refined common sense” in that it takes as its material the same phenomena, emphasizing the importance of certain polarities over others¹⁴.

Psychoanalysis has its share of common sense contradictions. “All is grist for the mill” but “Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar.” The confounded beginner insists “When is a cigar grist for the mill?” The choice required by exemplification can provide some comfort. When Schafer asserts “The facts are what the analyst takes them to be” (Schafer, 1983, p. 254) he is, in part, asserting the power of reference by exemplification. Differing schools of analysis will heighten the importance of certain ‘facts’ over others. What the Klienian, Freudian, interpersonalist, etc. hears as ‘fact’ in this sense, relies on the master narrative from which he is listening. The question “When is a cigar grist for the mill?” recalls Goodman’s suggestion that we substitute “When is art?” for “What is art?”. In psychoanalysis it may be better to ask “When is an interpretation?” rather than “What is interpretable?”.

There are important implications for the relevance and utility of the concept of truth in psychoanalytic interpretation once it is accepted that exemplification is its predominant mode of reference. The analyst is no longer so much concerned with whether an interpretation is true, but more how it fits and works in the two contexts mentioned

above. Does it fit and work with the master narratives, that is, is it theoretically coherent? Does it fit and work in this analysis at this time with this analysand, that is, is it technically coherent - well timed, tactful? Can the analysand accept that his actions possess and refer to the qualities the analyst says they do? Does the interpretation organize in a psychoanalytic way other parts of the analysand's story, contribute to a more comprehensive storyline? Is it coherent in the bridge it makes between these two contexts? The measure here is constructionalist rightness, the ongoing fitting and working into contexts, a dialectic between master narrative and ideographic analysis.

It is interesting to note here that some analysts have read Freud's (1938) Constructions in Analysis as hinting at a similar approach to the one I have just proposed, and hence, wonder if Freud may have been moving to a more modern constructionalist view towards the end of his career. In this paper Freud was concerned with the problem that the patient may need not realize or consciously retrieve fully the repressed memory that was the source of his problems in order to benefit from the therapy. If the analyst's construction of the event were correct, Freud hypothesized, this might be enough. The analyst could judge the closeness of his construction to the actual event through the congruence of any number of psychoanalytic standards of evidence - parapraxes, dreams, fantasies, associations, resistances, and transference.

But ultimately, Freud did not stray from his positivist stance, for constructions were judged by these evidences for their closeness to reality. Like Spence, Freud held narrative truth up to the reckoning of historic truth. In fact, towards the end of his paper, Freud proposes an heuristic extension of his original formulation of hysterical neurosis to delusional psychosis. Perhaps, hypothesized Freud, delusions represent, as do dreams, core pathogenic events. The delusional patient, then, like the hysteric, suffers from

reminiscences. So, for Freud, constructions are the analyst's attempts to reconstruct real events in the patient's history - archeological truths buried hidden from consciousness.

I return now to my investigation into the usefulness of Goodman's examination of aesthetic reference for psychoanalysis.

A second aesthetic symptom is repleteness¹⁵. A symbol is said to be replete when relatively more of its properties are taken to be relevant to, or constitutive of, its referential nature. The symbol that utilizes relatively fewer of its properties is said to be attenuated. As an example Goodman suggests we compare an electrocardiogram tracing to a drawing of Mt. Fujiyama in which the lines and paper are identical. The only features of the cardiogram that have referential relevance are the distances from the horizontal and vertical axes. In the drawing this is not the case; "Any thickening or thinning of the line, its color, its contrast to the background, its size, even the qualities of the paper - none of these can be ruled out, none can be ignored" (Goodman, 1976, p. 229). For Goodman the drawing is relatively more replete, the diagram relatively more attenuated. The distinction is not absolute, but one of degree, and a continuum from the diagrammatic to the pictorial runs along the dimension from the attenuated to the replete.

Analysts take analysands as replete symbols. Each facet of action (again in Schafer's sense) is relevant and potentially meaningful. The concept of repleteness is another way of fleshing out Shapiro's statement that the patient is the therapeutic material. What Shapiro wants us to know is 'the patient' is everything about him - nothing is irrelevant. Schafer's assertion that everything in analysis is to be taken as text to be interpreted can be understood as an endorsement of the analysand as replete symbol.

I have demonstrated many facets of the repleteness of the analysand as a symbol in my discussion of exemplification and expression. When something is said or not said, done, in what way, body language, facial expression, the fluency or paucity of speech - all

of these and many other variables are of moment in analytic interpretation. Nonetheless, exemplification and relative repleteness need not covary. We may gain access to various dimensions of a symbol through exemplification or denotation, but the relative repleteness of the analysand as symbol is a separate matter. A symbol may exemplify relatively few of its qualities.

Repleteness requires that analysts must constantly be inquiring into what they have not previously seen or heard. Repleteness, in this regard, can act as a limit on entrenchment. This is an essential quality of Schafer's "analytic attitude"¹⁶, as well as an embodiment of Stern's use of surprise¹⁷ and curiosity¹⁸, and Hoffman's call for uncertainty in the clinical interaction¹⁹.

Syntactic density, a third aesthetic symptom, provides that any change in the quality of the symbol itself changes the syntactic function and identity of the symbol. Alphabets are not syntactically dense systems. We may substitute an 'a' for any other 'a' in an alphabetic language without losing identity of spelling. Thus, discursive languages are not syntactically dense. On the other hand, gesturing is syntactically dense, as every difference in movement constitutes a different gesture. We cannot make 'alphabetic' substitutions with gestures.

Schafer's call for inclusion of enactments as psychoanalytic phenomena can be understood, in part, as testimony to the presence of the syntactically dense facet of psychoanalytic interaction. What is said in words can be captured in a syntactically non-dense system, a simple transcript of discursive language. However, those syntactically dense aspects of the saying are lost to a transcript. Since analytic symbolic reference is replete in nature, these aspects are critically important to analytic understanding. Important elements of analytic symbolic reference occur along dimensions that are syntactically dense.

Semantic density provides for ever more discriminating classes. A semantically dense system provides that for any two compliance classes a third may be inserted. Such a system provides for levels of semantic discrimination beyond our means to decide to which class a given object might belong. Discursive languages are semantically dense. The analysand can always add more refinement to a description of the color of an image in a dream, or the intensity of sadness felt. Nor can analysts in case reports ever exactly locate through language their experience of an analysand's sadness, anger, or withdrawal.

Multiple and complex reference, a fifth aesthetic symptom, refers to a symbol's referring through chains of different modalities of reference, including through other symbols. The fit of this concept with psychoanalytic technique is clear. Free association is an example of multiple and complex reference. The manifest symbols in dreams are traced back to their latent meaning through chains of associations which may denote, exemplify, and/or express.

The summative effect of these five characteristics is to focus the beholder on the symbol:

Where we can never determine precisely just which symbol of a system we have or whether we have the same one on a second occasion [syntactic density], where the referent is so elusive that properly fitting a symbol to it requires endless care [semantic density], where more rather than fewer features of the symbol count [repleteness], where the symbol is an instance of properties it symbolizes [exemplification] and may perform many interrelated simple and complex referential functions, we cannot merely look through the symbol to what it refers to as we do in obeying traffic lights or reading scientific texts, but must attend constantly to the symbol itself as in seeing paintings or reading poetry. (Goodman, 1978, p.69)

And, I would add, in considering analysands and making psychoanalytic interpretations.

One consequence of this view of the nature of symbolic reference in aesthetics has important relevance to psychoanalysis. It requires that we actively attend to the symbol in

specific modes, modes requiring active cognitive activities and abilities. Hence, the view that aesthetic experience requires of its beholder a freeing of the mind, a disavowal of preconception so as to have the work wash its essential meaning over its patron is gainsaid. Goodman calls this view the

Tingle-Immersion theory, which tells us that the proper behavior on encountering a work of art is to strip ourselves of all vestments of knowledge and experience ... then submerge ourselves completely and gauge the aesthetic potency of the work by the intensity and duration of the resulting tingle (Goodman, 1976, p. 112).

There is a clear parallel with a naive conceptualization of evenly hovering attention to Goodman's presentation here. Artistic experience occurs when we take a symbol in certain ways, ways which require active and particular forms of interpretive participation on our part. I propose that the same is true for psychoanalytic interpretation, and that the very qualities of symbolic representation and active attention to them that make for artistic reference inhere in psychoanalytic interpretation.

Schafer puts forward a similar view in holding that there is no real difference between clinical and applied analysis²⁰. Analytic interpretation of art is much like analytic interpretation of analysands for Schafer, because in each, active application of an analytic frame of reference brings to bear new understanding. The assertion that in clinical analysis the analyst has an analysand to "talk back," either through verbal endorsements or rejections of individual interpretations or through improving or not, is empty to Schafer because these are only phenomena that are again interpreted as part of the analysis.

Schafer and Goodman disagree, however, on what constitutes the identity of an art work. For Schafer, the identity of the poem is not syntactically determined. There is, for Schafer, no determinate text of the poem. In following sections I shall propose an alternative view based on Goodman's investigation into the identity of art works. I will

also include a consideration regarding the improvisational nature of clinical psychoanalysis to further my argument regarding the singularity of identity of a clinical analysis.

Implications of the Analysand as Artistic Symbol: The Blank Screen Revisited

I have proposed that exemplification in analysis is bi-directional. The analyst's interpretations are exemplificational in that they assert a quality of the analysand's actions possesses and refers to an adopted psychoanalytic proposition. At the same time, the analysand is 'interpreting' the analyst's actions, deciding which qualities the analyst's actions exemplify. These two directions are included in Schafer's narrative psychoanalysis in the thoughts that, in the first instance, the analyst decides what the facts are, and in the second, the analytic dialogue is co-authored and cohabited.

Hence, as I have said, analysts do not declare their caring, kindness, understanding, nor deny their judgementalness, criticism, or aloofness, to any therapeutic effect. Instead these must be exemplified in clinical interaction. On this view interpreting transference may be understood as interpreting the patient's interpretations of the analyst, understanding what the analysand takes the analyst's actions to exemplify.

It follows that a case can be made that *unconsidered* attempts to enact a blank screen are misguided. The principle of transference asserts that the patient will bring with him certain of his own organizing principles - his own ideographic "ways of worldmaking" which will be exemplified in his interactions with, and interpretations of, the analyst. If this principle is right, then the patient will interpret characteristically, no matter what analysts do. The degree to which the analyst is astute, sensitive to the patient's interpretation of him, and able to relate this to the analysand in a therapeutic way, is the measure of the therapeutic power of transference interpretation.

In fact, a strong case can be made for a non-neutral analytic stance. That is, the more non-neutrally the analyst acts, the more potently must the transference assert itself. Forays into non-neutral interaction with the analysand might act as tests of strength of transference hypotheses. The analysand who insists that the analyst is cold, uncaring, and aloof, cites the analyst's refusal to alter the boundaries of the analytic stance. He cannot, he claims, go further in his self-revelation without some concrete sign that the analyst cares personally for him. The analyst understands these protests as a transference resistance; the analysand recreates his relationship with his withdrawn, uncaring father. Interpretations to this end fail, however, to further the analysis which gets bogged down and stalemates in a power struggle - such struggle, too, understood in terms of transference, but to no therapeutic effect.

Suppose at this point the analyst makes a considered change in his approach to the analysand; he begins to directly reveal personal responses of frustration at the stalemate; he reflects that he experiences the analysand's depressed withdrawal from him, or his quick agreement with interpretations as aggressive. Does the analysand's insistence on the analyst's impersonal detachment continue? If so, the transference hypothesis gains in coherence and scope. A further clinical advantage is that the analysand may begin to respond differently, to actually experience the analyst differently. This could lead to reconsideration of the aptness of the transference hypothesis.

There is no *necessary* connection between a neutral stance by the analyst and characteristic interpretation by the analysand. Theoretically, analysands should interpret the interaction with the analyst characteristically given whatever material they have to interpret. Clinically, it may make sense to begin to approach analysands carefully, but it would not appear to be always clinically wise to dogmatically maintain such a stance. On

this view whether the screen is blank or not is relatively less important than the analyst's organizing principle and ongoing interpretive skill.

Thus, one analyst's blank screen may be another's psychological black hole. One of the mainstays of projective testing, would seem to endorse this view. The Thematic Apperception Test challenges subjects to tell stories using very specific pictures as stimuli. It also uses the "blank card". Both kinds of data are useful and interesting, those that "pull for" specific anxieties and solutions to thematic conflicts, and the blank card which requires the superimposition of structure where there is virtually none. With some patients the one will be more evocative than the other. The same may be the case regarding transference.

This discussion, however, is not a radical recommendation for an anything goes liberation from technique. Rather it is an epistemological approach to the clinical theory of transference, and a recommendation for a more considered, less dogmatic prescription regarding analytic neutrality.

Clinical Psychoanalysis as Autographic Artform

Having shown the affinity of a view of the nature of symbolic reference in artistic expression with psychoanalytic clinical work, I now propose that another of Goodman's explorations into aesthetics is useful in clarifying the nature of the analytic enterprise. Goodman has proposed a classification for the various forms of art and their works as a solution to problems concerning the nature of work identity and forgery²¹. I believe that this classification can inform debate around issues of validity and replication in psychoanalysis, as well as reframe some of the questions raised by the differing views of Spence, Schafer, Hoffman, and Stern.

*Autographic art*²² depends for its authenticity on the history of its production. A given work of art is autographic "if and only if even the most exact duplication of it does

not thereby count as genuine” (Goodman, 1976, p. 113.). Autographic works are subject to forgery. The obvious example of an autographic artform is painting. Compare painting, where no duplication, no matter how accurate a copy of the original, constitutes the work itself, with music. In music any performance that conforms to the score constitutes a performance of the work. Goodman terms such art *allographic*.

Allographic art²³ does not depend on its history of production for its authenticity and, as such, is not subject to forgery. Rather, authenticity in allographic works is determined by the “... semantics and/or the syntax of the symbol system to which the work belongs” (Elgin, 1983, p. 119). Allographic arts have *notations*²⁴ which determine their authenticity.

Notations are symbol systems that prescribe syntactic and semantic qualifications that eliminate ambiguity, redundancy, and density. The requirements for a referential system to be a notation are severe. A notation provides a system in which “each mark belongs to exactly one identifiable character [syntactic requirements], and each compliant belongs to exactly one identifiable compliance class [semantic requirements]” (Elgin, 1983, p. 113). The existence of a notation depends not on some qualities given or preexisting in the realm symbolized, but rather on the purpose to which we want to put the system, the order we impose on the realm. The standard system of musical symbolic representation is a notation. Tonal sound is a dense and continuous realm upon which diatonic tonality imposes such order that there shall be no tone between C and C#, and only one such class of compliants for each instance of middle C. Discursive language fills the qualifications for the syntactic but not the semantic requirements of a notation.²⁵

The difference between autographic and allographic art may appear to be covariant with whether single or multiple instances of works are possible. There can be only one instance of (the authentic) *Mona Lisa*, but any number of (authentic) instances of

Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Nonetheless, the distinction between single and multiple art forms does not coincide with autography and allography. Lithography is autographic and multiple; only instances made from the original plate are authentic, though there may be many instances of authentic prints.

A third classification does not help either. We might think of painting as one-stage and lithography or music as two-stage²⁶. In the latter two, prints and performances represent a second stage of production. The distinction between one-stage and two-stage artforms, however, does not coincide with the autographic and allographic classification. Again, lithography is autographic and two-stage; only prints made from the original plate are instances of the work. Musical composition is allographic and two-stage. The score defines authentic performances of the work, and the performance does not depend on anything but adherence to the score.

Consider now the nature of clinical psychoanalysis in terms of autography and allography.

A central tenet of all the constructionalist psychoanalytic theorists I have thus far investigated can be generally stated: Subjective experience is the singular construction of its author. If this is so, subjective experience depends for its authenticity on its history of production. Hence, experience is itself autographic. This is a restatement of Schafer's position in his rules for Action Language that any reconstruction of an experience itself constructs a new experience. Clinical psychoanalysis is autographic precisely because its realm is subjective experience. Behaviorism disallows subjective meaning for precisely the problems that result for a scientific approach to human action when human action is seen as autographic. Just as there is nothing between C and C# in diatonic harmony, there is nothing between stimulus and response in behaviorism. The denial of ontological status

for subjective meaning in behavioristic world versions is an attempt to eliminate the problem of autography that results when subjective meaning is allowed.

Clinical psychoanalysis is the ongoing co-construction of experience within a particular analytic dyad. As such, any given analysis depends for its authenticity on its history of production. Psychoanalytic authenticity demands as a first order requirement the presence of two people, at least one of whom is a psychoanalyst.²⁷

Elgin has extended Goodman's concept of autography to consider realms other than art, one of which has particular relevance here²⁸. Elgin points out that certain social roles are subject to imposture, and hence, are autographic. Whether one is or is not a farmer will be a function of whether or not one farms. Whether one is or is not authentically a psychoanalyst depends not on doing what psychoanalysts do, but on having been trained as an analyst - on the analyst's history of production. Being a psychoanalyst is an autographic social role.

I propose that the fundamental requirement for an authentic analysis, then, is the presence in dialogue of two people, one of whom is a psychoanalyst who asserts he is doing psychoanalysis. I have proposed that being an analysand is a function of the analyst's considering the person psychoanalytically in ways that follow what Goodman has offered as qualities that characterize aesthetic experience. It follows that a particular instance of clinical psychoanalysis is a product of the actions, experiences, and enactments between a specific psychoanalyst and analysand. Each clinical psychoanalysis is then a singular, one-stage, autographic phenomenon.

The notion of autography is in harmony with many of the ideas of theorists I have investigated in this dissertation. Stern states that the analytic relationship must be created by the two participants through the development of "a shared 'tradition' to which to refer" (1991, p. 65). Such a tradition will be autographic. The attempt by Hoffman to make the

analyst's subjective experience the primary frame of reference for analytic clinical epistemology is nothing short of an assertion of the inescapability of the autographic nature of the analyst's experience:

In the social-constructivist model the analyst can take the position that no matter how others respond, his or her own particular, individual response has its place in the process. Displacing objectivity as the ideal to which the analyst aspires is a special kind of authenticity. ... In the social-constructivist view the analyst can take a position based upon his or her experience without 'pulling rank' by claiming the position of the objective scientist (Hoffman, 1992, pp. 295-296).

Autography also informs Schafer's recognition that there will be individual interpretations of psychoanalytic master narratives even within particular schools of analysis: "Conventional Freudian texts vary to some extent from one analyst to the next. Conventional analysts develop more or less different versions of the basic Freudian storylines" (Schafer, 1992, 179). Hence, the belief that analysts are engaged in objective empiricism, removed from their own interpretations, both on the level of what they take their theories to be organizing and on the level of their own subjective experience, falls by the wayside. Autography enters on both levels of discourse.

If my characterization of clinical analysis as an autographic exercise is right, the notion of replicability as a standard to measure the validity of analytic therapy is incoherent. On this view, replicability has as much relevance to standards of validity in psychoanalysis as it does in painting or literature. What use can it be in terms of validity to say that we have replicated the *Mona Lisa* or Eliot's *The Wasteland*? Does this make the originals any more valid, right, beautiful, informative?

Even more damaging to the application of replicability to psychoanalysis is the realization that once we accept the clinical psychoanalysis as autographic, it is not possible to replicate a psychoanalysis in any meaningful way. The same two people are never again available to replicate their experience; and any attempt to reconstruct an

experience will result in a new experience. As evidence that this is the case, analysts, or more accurately, analysands, may undergo a number of analyses.²⁹

Psychoanalysis: Text, Literature, Drama

Recall my earlier discussion of Schafer's use of text interpretation as a complete representation of analysis. If we consider an analysis to be adequately captured by a transcript of what is said, a given psychoanalysis is an allographic form. It would be right then, to say that the identity of the analysis is given by such a transcript. I have asserted that a transcript of what is said, a notational representation of the analytic dialogue, cannot be considered an adequate account of an analysis. A more detailed examination of the nature of text, literature, and drama will deepen our understanding of the nature of clinical psychoanalysis.

Literature is one-stage, multiple, and allographic. Any correctly rendered copy of the author's text constitutes an instance of the work. In this case, although discursive language does not constitute a thoroughgoing notation (because it fulfills the syntactic but not the semantic requirements for a notation), we can depend on the syntactic identity of the text to verify whether a linguistic sample is an authentic instance of a work. On this view, a literary work is given its identity as an inscription in a language, a text³⁰.

Consider that clinical analysis is more closely related to drama than literature. In drama, as in analysis, much, but not all of what is significant is delivered through dialogue. Therefore, not only the syntax of language, but also stage direction, scenery instructions and descriptions, lighting cues, etc. are a part of the dramatic work, and these can be easily paralleled with other than verbal actions in clinical analysis. These aspects are not notational. Calling for a character to "exit stage left," requiring a "garden setting" and recommending a "dimly lit" stage all allow for many compliance classes. Whereas

the dialogue of a play, like a literary work, is identified by its text, other constitutive elements are outside its text.

In practice, however, dialogue does appear to carry the essential requirement for identity in dramatic works (Elgin, 1983). A recent production of *Our Town* at New York's Lincoln Center, for example, was produced on a bare stage with no scenery at all. Whether critics praised or devalued the production, none claimed it was not an instance of the play.

Can the same be said for clinical analysis? Does dialogue identify analysis? Spence appears to hold the view that a transcript can be considered to constitute an analysis, but with certain important qualifications. In his call for the publication of such transcripts, Spence asserts that the session transcript can count as a full report only when it has been "unpacked,"³¹ such that the analyst will provide not only the transcript, but the underlying context in which his listening occurred.

According to Spence, not "unpacking" a transcript results in a number of works equal to the number of analysts who read it and interpret it from their own perspective³². Hence, Spence contradicts Goodman and Elgin. His thesis here appears to me confused. He proposes that multiple interpretations of transcripts constitute multiple works, and hopes to solve this problem by requiring the analyst to provide a commentary on his experience. But an annotated transcript is no less open to multiple interpretation than a transcript of dialogue alone. Spence's call amounts to holding that an author's intentions are the final arbiter for the meaning of a text.

Not surprisingly, Stern has objected to Spence's concept of unpacking session transcripts. As we have seen, Stern views the analytic interaction as a coming into being of unformulated experience in both the analyst and the patient. In an inquiry into the nature of the process of the analyst's attempts to arrive at interpretations, Stern asserts "...

it very often turns out that the sequence of cognitive events that led up to the observation cannot be recreated” (Stern, 1990, p. 457). In reporting a clinical case to demonstrate the analyst’s interpretive experience, Stern questions whether he, or any analyst, could report the complete account of his experience Spence requires³³. Another way of stating Stern’s objection to Spence is to hold that the unpacking of a session by the analyst is a request for a report of historical truth. Spence is appealing to narrative, in this case the analyst’s narrative reconstruction of his experience, claiming that the analyst’s narrative report de-narrativizes the transcript.

To review, a given analysis might be held as allographic and multiple in the sense of a performance of a dramatic script. But fundamentally a psychoanalysis is autographic, singular, and one-stage, in that it is an ideographic construction of experience in the context of an interaction which requires that at least one of its participants, by virtue of his history, is a psychoanalyst. The replicability that science requires is not this limited dramatic reenactment. The conduct of analysis is in any scientific sense then, not replicable, and in fact, replication is a misguided and irrelevant measure of the validity of analysis.

Improvisation in Psychoanalysis

There is one more feature of artistic performance that can serve to clarify my investigation into the nature of clinical psychoanalysis. Clinical analysis can be profitably compared with improvisational performance. It is more accurate to describe analysis as a work that is simultaneously performed and created, than as a reading of an already created piece. Clinical analysis is spontaneously enacted in the immediacy of the moment to moment dialogue of analytic interaction, an enactment and dialogue, both of which are being simultaneously created and performed. Hence, in Schafer’s metaphor of clinical analysis as text analysis, he consistently reminds us that the very text that is the focus of

interpretation is being co-authored even as it is being interpreted: “The text, in other words, is never fully delivered to the analyst; rather it evolves out of the analysand’s and the analyst’s interpenetrating contributions” (Schafer, 1992, p. 177).

Hence, not only is psychoanalytic dialogue co-authored, it is co-authored spontaneously. No reenactment of the dialogue can therefore constitute a reenactment of the analysis. The improvisational nature of clinical analysis further solidifies its autographic nature.

The improvisation of which I speak is a structured one. It is a variation on a theme structured by what Schafer calls the master narratives of psychoanalysis, played through the storyline of the analysand’s narrative account of his life.

Since music is the field I know best, I will draw my analogy to musical improvisation. The model I propose is that of jazz improvisation on previously composed songs. Since clinical analysis is dyadic I shall speak of improvisation between two musicians. The general affinity of the model would then be as follows: Two people come together to communicate in a specifically structured way, focused on particular kinds of material. Their interaction requires their careful attention to these structural requirements. There is an asymmetrical focus on the soloist, while the accompanist strives to both follow and further the improviser’s exploration of the material by listening carefully and structuring accompaniments that facilitate and challenge the soloist’s creation. The accompanist strives to provide as open a setting as possible to encourage the soloist’s free exploration of the material. However, at times the accompanist may have the conviction that he anticipates where a particular idea of the soloist is going and so structures a setting that encourages this idea.

The aptness of constructionalist rightness over truth presents itself immediately regarding the plurality of improvisational possibilities. Given a particular piece of

material there are unlimited improvisational possibilities. However, not everything works, and not everything that works presents itself as equally right. There are standards of rightness - playing in appropriate keys, using appropriate melodic and harmonic structures - and there are better instances of the use a given tool than others.

There are a number of ways that the participants can think about what they are doing. The two most obvious are to structure their participation around the melody or the harmony of the song. This is the “metapsychology” of the improviser. In this sense neither “metapsychology” is true or false. There is a rough parallel between the textual and contextual ways of knowing as informing the analyst’s contribution and the melodic and harmonic “metapsychologies,” respectively. One does not eliminate the other. A saxophonist playing on a tune by structuring his creation around the melody does not dismiss harmony; harmony is an ever-present “preconscious” subtext. For the pianist working from harmonic structure, melody serves a similar function.³⁴

Working with difficult patients may be thought of as playing a strange and unfamiliar tune. We are less sure of the ground on which we are standing, be it melody or harmony. We find strange harmonic structures, or cannot follow the melody. We cannot fit the improvisation of the analysand into a familiar melody or harmonic structure. We have the sense we are playing on a tune we don’t know very well. The metaphor of structure, that is psychological structure, is evoked here. When the patient is more “primitive,” less “structured,” we have greater trouble getting a grip on some known structure which can ground our interpretations.

I speak here of the sense of playing a familiar tune. Stern’s thoughts regarding familiarity can be well integrated into my metaphor. If we feel too comfortable, improvisation becomes stale. Though we have the sense of working with a familiar structure, we must always search for the new, strive to “hear” things in a new way.

Playing an unfamiliar or strange tune, while it brings a certain sense of insecurity and unsuredness, simultaneously can excite and challenge us.

To a larger extent the analysand is the improviser or soloist in analysis. This brings the asymmetry of the analytic relationship into the metaphor of musical improvisation. The analyst listens and tries to provide an apt, informative, can we say “beautiful”? harmonic/rhythmic context for the analysand’s solo. The analysand is playing the themes of his life. Analysts are trained as experts in hearing these themes in particular ways, and in resetting them into a therapeutic context, Schafer’s recontextualization.

But the analyst’s participation should be understood as improvisational as well. No two pianists will provide the same harmonic setting for the same song, nor for the same improviser. There is a singularity to each dyad, and therefore each instance of improvisation, even between the same two people playing the same song, is unique, that is, autographic. Stern endorses this view when he says that “Not all the contrasts that occur in interaction with one analyst can occur in interaction with another, and so that part of unformulated transference which can be spoken differs as well” (1985, p. 488).

It is helpful to consider how musicians learn to improvise in order to demonstrate the usefulness of transcripts of analyses. There are two basic areas of study. The first is a general theoretical and technical study of music. The student improviser studies the principles of harmony, the vocabulary of rhythmic style, and melodic construction. These provide a familiarity with general structural principles and functional applications. This is the equivalent of the student analyst’s study of metapsychology and technique. However, improvisational skill, to say nothing of a particular improvisation, cannot be held as validation of general theoretical principles or technical practices in terms of truthfulness.

A second area of study is to learn to play from transcriptions of improvisations of predecessors who have set the standards for the art form. The student studies the work of

masters before him as a learning tool, not in the hope of repeating or validating the master's creation, but rather as a way of developing his own abilities and finding his own voice. It is in this sense that transcripts of analyses are useful.

Conclusion

I have examined the nature of the epistemology of clinical psychoanalysis within a constructionalist "philosophy of the understanding." My investigation asserts that clinical psychoanalysis is more closely related to artistic endeavor than to scientific enterprise due to the nature of symbolic reference in which clinical analysis traffics. Further, clinical analysis, because it is a structured improvisation that cannot be replicated in any coherent sense, is an autographic, that is unique, event. The insistence of Hoffman and Stern regarding the inescapability of the analyst's subjective experience is best included in this context, rather than being the basis of an attack on other constructionalist accounts such as Schafer's. I have argued that Schafer's approach is the more coherent, in fact, more far ranging application of constructionalism to psychoanalysis.

¹See e. g. Loewald, 1980a; Issacharoff and Hunt, 1978.

²Protter, 1985, p. 224.

³Schafer, 1983, p. 249 and p. 276.

⁴Cheshire, 1974, p. 184, p. 185, and p. 195.

⁵ See e. g. Bruner, 1986, 93-105.

⁶Goodman and Elgin, 1988.

⁷Goodman, 1978, pp. 57-70.

⁸Goodman, 1976, pp. 252-255; 1978, pp. 67-70; 1983, pp. 135-138.

⁹Goodman, 1983.

¹⁰This is about as far as we can ever go towards any form of replication in analysis. See following discussion regarding autography.

¹¹Daniel Stern (1985) has incorporated expression as a critical form of communication in the development of what he calls “affect attunement” especially regarding “vitality affects.” Stern hypothesizes that the relative fluency of cross-modal translation of affect in the infant-caretaker dyad is crucial to establishing quality of attachment. Such translation depends on the expressiveness, that is the metaphorical possession and communicability, of affects in other than verbal modes.

¹²Shapiro, 1989, pp. 57-61.

¹³Schafer, 1992.

¹⁴See Schafer 1983, p. 214.

¹⁵Goodman, 1983, 1978, 1976.

¹⁶Schafer, 1983.

¹⁷Stern, 1990.

¹⁸Stern, 1989.

¹⁹Hoffman, 1987.

²⁰Schafer, 1992c.

²¹Goodman 1976.

²²ibid.

²³ibid.

²⁴ibid.

²⁵For a more thorough discussion of notation see Appendix.

²⁶Goodman, 1976.

²⁷ I do not wish to present arguments regarding other specific requirements, as these can vary, and are less fundamental - issues over couch or no couch, how many sessions per

week, theoretical overviews, etc. Given this first order requirement, any form that is enacted qualifies as an authentic analysis; a wide range of practice is authentic Whether it is “good” analysis is another matter.

²⁸Elgin, 1983.

²⁹See Schafer, 1992, pp. 303-304 for a similar assessment of validity and psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

³⁰Elgin, 1983; Goodman and Elgin, 1988a.

³¹Spence, 1987, 1982.

³²Spence, 1982.

³³Stern, 1992, p. 350.

³⁴Spence makes a similar comparison to listening “vertically” and “horizontally” in the analytic hour. See Spence, 1987, p. 147.

APPENDIX A

This appendix provides a summary of the conceptual and technical aspects of Goodman's reference theory thorough enough to understand its application to psychoanalysis. The major sources of this appendix are Goodman's Languages of Art (1976) and Of Mind and Other Matters (1984), and Elgin's With Reference to Reference (1983).

Goodman uses "reference" to include "all cases of *standing for*" (Goodman, 1984, p.55). There are two major aspects to the reference theory: an examination of referential species and their combinations, and an investigation into the structure of referential systems. The theory's focus is the relationship between symbols and that to which they refer. The ways in which symbols develop and the intentions of their users are not included in the theory.

Species of Reference

The two most basic modes of reference are denotation and exemplification.

Denotation

Goodman defines denotation as "the application of a word or picture or other label to one or many things" (Goodman, 1984, p.55.) Elgin's' definition is more technical: "Denotation is a two-place semantic relation between a symbol and the objects to which it applies (Elgin, 1983, p. 19).

Literal Denotation

Pictures as well as verbal descriptions denote. Pictorial denotation includes instances of "depiction or representation by a drawing, painting, sculpture, photograph,

film, and so on” (Goodman, 1984, p. 7). Goodman’s first comprehensive investigation into the nature of denotation in Languages of Art examines the nature of both representational and descriptive forms, both of which he later classifies as “elementary literal reference” (Goodman, 1984, p. 55). The Languages of Art discussion represents a formulation that is both central to his larger philosophical perspective and characteristic of the innovation of his thinking regarding reference.

The idea that representation (representation here refers to pictorial forms of reference) requires or must involve resemblance in any degree is misguided. The critical relationship in representation is reference; for something to represent something else it must stand as a symbol for it (Goodman, 1976, p. 5). Since anything may stand for anything else, resemblance is not even a necessary condition for representation. What is critical is denotation. Both pictures that represent and passages that describe, denote, and denotation is independent of resemblance. This aspect of reference theory is central to the larger constructionalist thesis; for a constructionalist any copy theory of representation must fail from the outset for there is no given external real world to copy. Our symbol systems actively participate in the world versions we create.

Fictive and Figurative Denotation

Whereas the pictorial and verbal denotation described above are species of elementary literal reference, fictional and figurative denotation are species of “elementary nonliteral reference” (Goodman, 1984, p. 60). The constructionalist view of the nature of fictional reference is particularly relevant to psychoanalysis. A favorite form of the problem for Goodman is the question, what does a picture of a unicorn denote? Since there are no unicorns, the denotation of such a picture must be the null class. Thus, where some pictures or descriptions denote a single object, and others denote multiple members of the class to which they refer, still others denote nothing. If all references to fictions

denote the null class, however, the result is all fictional references have identical denotation. This leads to the conclusion that there is no difference between pictures of different fictions. “Yet surely to be a picture of Pickwick and to be a picture of a unicorn are not at all the same” (Goodman, 1976, p. 21).

Goodman’s solution is to characterize the two as different kinds of pictures, a Pickwick-picture and a unicorn-picture. “Saying that a picture represents a soandso is thus highly ambiguous as between saying what the picture denotes and saying what kind of picture it is” (Goodman, 1976, p. 22). Rather than refer to ‘a picture of x’ we call representations with null denotations by the one-place predicate ‘x-picture.’ Thereby we avoid being misled by conventional language into the inference that there is an actual something the picture denotes. “From the fact that *P* is a picture of or represents a unicorn we cannot infer that there is something that *P* is a picture of or represents” (Goodman, 1976, p. 22). By speaking of an x-picture rather than a picture of x Goodman would have us avoid the problem of having a picture appear to both represent x and nothing at the same time.

In the same way that pictures may be picture-kinds or pictures of, verbal descriptions can be description-kinds or descriptions of. Thus “ ‘Pickwick,’ ‘the Duke of Wellington,’ ‘the man who conquered Napoleon,’ ‘a man,’ ‘a fat man,’ ‘the man with three heads,’ are all man-descriptions, but not all describe a man. Some denote a particular man, some denote each of many men, and some denote nothing” (Goodman, 1976, p. 23).

In order to address the problem of what it means to use a fictive term without its ‘-description’ or ‘-picture’ extension, Elgin (1983, pp. 47-52) cites Israel Scheffler’s concept, “mention-selection”: “In a mention-selective application, a term is applied not to

what it denotes, but to what it mentions” (Elgin, 1983, p. 47). I have proposed that the use of the term “id”, for example, refers to id-mentions - that is, to id-descriptions.

Goodman points out that here again the copy theory of representation is weakened. Whereas “a picture must denote a man to represent him, [it] need not denote anything to be a man-representation” (Goodman, 1976, p. 25). If a man-representation does not denote anything, it cannot be said to resemble anything.

Representations with null denotations are more common than we might expect. It is often difficult to decide whether a representation or description has a particular denotation or not. In such cases we default to the null. “Thus, cases of indeterminate denotation are related in the same way as cases of null denotation” (Goodman, 1976, p. 26.). Again, this consideration is clearly applicable to metapsychological terms such as “id,” “ego,” “drive,” etc.

Metaphor

Denotation is also accomplished through metaphor. “Literal and metaphorical denotation are alike denotation: simple application of a label to one or more things” (Goodman, 1984, p. 61). Metaphorical denotation involves the transfer of one realm’s sorting scheme onto another realm: “... a metaphor is an affair between a predicate with a past and an object that yields while protesting” (Goodman, 1976, p. 69). In metaphor there must be “a combination of novelty with fit.....The good metaphor satisfies while it startles” (Goodman, 1976, p. 79).

If metaphoric denotation is as actual as is literal denotation, it follows that metaphoric denotation, as a verbal form of reference, can also be judged in terms of truth, in the limited constructionalist extension of truth. “Metaphorical truth and falsity are as distinct from - and as opposite to - each other as are literal truth and falsity” (Goodman, 1984, p. 72). Metaphorical denotation contributes to the growth of understanding as much

as does literal denotation. Metaphorical denotation is “as genuine, as ‘factual,’ ” (Goodman, 1984, p. 61), as literal denotation, just different.

It is often pointed out that the force of metaphor wanes as its use becomes common. In such cases the metaphor becomes merely an ambiguity as its metaphoric denotation fades into another literal denotation - “What was novel becomes commonplace, its past is forgotten, and metaphor fades into mere truth” (Goodman, 1976, p. 80). For this to occur, metaphoric possession must have some usefulness, some truth, for it to become a common literal usage.

Exemplification

Exemplification is the other major mode of reference in constructionalist reference theory. It is defined as “reference by a sample to a feature of the sample” (Goodman, 1984, p. 59). In denotation the direction is from a label to that to which it applies. Exemplification runs in the opposite direction, from a certain feature of a sample back to its label. Whereas “red” denotes a color, an apple (may) exemplify redness.

Exemplificational reference has two requirements: possession of, and reference to, the features that are held to be exemplified. “Something serves as a sample when it functions as a symbol for a label it instantiates” (Elgin, 1983, p. 72). The tailor’s swatch possesses and refers to its color, pattern, texture, and weave, but its size and shape, although possessed, are not generally referred to (Goodman, 1976, p. 53).

Thus, exemplification involves selectivity and an understanding of the context in which it is embedded. Critical to the nature of exemplificational reference is the fact that it is by no means given or obvious how and why particular selections are made. “Understanding how (and whether) something functions as a sample requires knowing something about the system in effect, and the role that object plays in the system” (Elgin, 1983, p. 73). A given object may be a sample in one context but not another;

alternatively, the same object may serve as a sample of different of the features it possesses in different contexts.

Expression

Expression is a variety of exemplification. Here what is exemplified is a metaphorical property of the sample. Metaphorical transfer enables expression: "...a thing can express only what belongs but did not originally belong to it" (Goodman, 1976, p. 89). The sadness of a poem, the stateliness of a musical piece are both examples of expression.

Elgin (1983) restricts expression to those instances of exemplification of metaphorical labels that are aesthetic. This limits the range of selection inherent in expression: "The same sculpture metaphorically exemplifies 'frenzied' as a work of art, 'a gold mine' as an investment, and 'a bomb' as a contribution to the decor. The sculpture then functions metaphorically in several different symbol systems at once" (Elgin, 1983, p. 81). For Elgin it is only the first of these qualities that qualifies for expression, for only here is the symbolic function in the context of a work of art.

Restricting expression to aesthetic metaphor limits problems of selection, but forces entry into the controversy in the philosophy of the arts over how to define "aesthetic." Goodman offers what he calls "symptoms of the aesthetic" (Goodman, 1976, pp. 252-255; 1978, pp. 67-70; 1983, pp. 135-138). In using the term "symptom", Goodman recommends them as neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for a symbol to qualify as functioning aesthetically. He does suggest that they might be "disjointly necessary and conjointly sufficient" (Elgin, 1983, p. 83). Goodman's five symptoms of the aesthetic are syntactic density, semantic density, relative repleteness, exemplification, and multiple and complex reference. I take up complex reference next, and examine the remaining three qualities when I outline referential systems later in this appendix.

Complex Reference

Complex reference is a string of species of reference that goes from symbol to symbolized. In complex reference there are various combinations and interactions of denotation and exemplification.

One form of complex reference is what Goodman (1976) calls “representation-as”. Just as the kind of picture or description does not determine what said picture or description denotes, so too their denotation does not determine their kind. “Not every man-picture represents a man, and conversely not every picture that represents a man is a man-picture. And in the difference between being and not being a man-picture lies the difference, among pictures that represent a man, between those that do and those that do not represent him as a man” (Goodman, 1976, p. 26). As an example, suppose we describe David as a Don Juan. Such denotes David at the same time it exemplifies ‘Don Juan description.’ Caricatures are pictorial forms of representation which denote the subject of the caricature while they exemplify the caricatured qualities.

Allusion is a particularly relevant form of complex reference to psychoanalysis, because it refers from a distance. Elgin (1983, p.142) explains allusion diagrammatically: “*a* alludes to *b* by denoting something *c* that exemplifies *b*; and *a* alludes to *b* by exemplifying something *c* that denotes *b*.” These are the simplest forms, but longer chains are often involved. Elgin offers the example of calling a philosophical work Hegelian. The term denotes Hegel’s works which exemplify complex and enormous in scope.

Metaphorical likening is a form of complex reference which involves allusion as well. Metaphor “denotes the objects in its metaphorical extension and alludes to those in its literal extension” (Elgin, 1983, p. 146). Here a term denotes its literal extension which extension exemplifies certain qualities which in turn exemplify the metaphorical

extension. Elgin's example is to characterize Hume's treatise a gold mine. The literal extension gold mine exemplifies 'source of wealth' which exemplifies and is exemplified by 'very rewarding' which is a metaphorical extension exemplified by Hume's treatise.

This very dense and brief review of complex reference gives a taste of the interface between constructionalist reference theory and the kinds of processes that psychoanalysts engage in interpretations of analysand's associations and dream symbols. The amity of constructionalist analysis of metaphor and allusion with psychoanalytic interpretation is further instantiated in its concordance with the analytic assertions of ambiguity and multiple meaning.

...although a chain of referents can explain a particular likening of the metaphorical and literal extensions of a term, no chain or group of chains can be considered to constitute a literal paraphrase of the metaphor. For we are never in a position to maintain that the chains we have identified exhaust the metaphor (Elgin, 1983, p. 149).

Referential Systems

"A symbol system consists of a symbol scheme correlated with a field of reference" (Goodman, 1976, p. 143). There are two general aspects of symbol systems which determine the functional capabilities of the system and of the symbols which it uses. Syntactic structure defines how a symbol is to be identified. Semantic structure defines how a symbol's referents are to be determined (Elgin, 1983).

Syntactic Considerations

For Goodman, *characters* are the special class of utterances or marks for which a symbol scheme provides defining characteristics and combination rules. Marks are the most general class, in which are included inscriptions and utterances (Goodman, 1976, p. 131).

A symbolic system is said to *syntactically disjoint* if a mark cannot belong to more than one character of the system (Elgin, 1983, p. 98). Goodman originally referred to this quality as “*character-indifference*” (Goodman, 1976, p. 132). In a system that is syntactically disjoint a given character can be exchanged for any duplicate without syntactical effect (Goodman, 1976, p. 131). For example, it requires that all inscriptions of *a* in our alphabet count only as the first letter of our alphabet. If the alphabet is syntactically disjoint, all inscriptions of *a* “can be correctly judged to be joint members [of the character that is the first letter of the alphabet] and will always be true copies of one another” (Goodman, 1976, p. 134).

A second syntactic characteristic is that of *finite differentiation*. For a system to be finitely differentiated it must be possible to determine that a given mark belongs to one rather than another character of the system (Elgin, 1983, p. 99). Syntactic finite differentiation requires the elimination of any syntactic ambiguity for the characters included within the system. “For every two characters *K* and *K'*, and every mark *m* that does not actually belong to both, determination that *m* does not belong to *K* or that *m* does not belong to *K'* must be theoretically possible” (Goodman, 1976, p. 135-36).

These two characteristics are independent. Elgin (1983, p. 100) suggests we consider a system which consists of two characters. One character includes all marks exactly 3 cm. in length and the second all other marks. The system is syntactically disjoint but not finitely differentiated. The alternative, a system which is not syntactically disjoint but is finitely differentiated is offered by the system which consists of our alphabet with the addition of the character /\- which belongs to both the first and the eight letter of the alphabet.

These two characteristics perform different functions. Syntactic disjointedness provides that mutual exchange of two marks of the same character have no syntactic

effect. Finite differentiation provides that any mark can be correctly judged as to which character of the system it belongs (Elgin, 1983, p. 100).

The requirement of finite differentiation is not met by systems that Goodman calls *syntactically dense*. In such systems the ordering of characters is such that there is always a third character between any two given characters. Thus, it is impossible in some cases to decide to which of two characters a given mark belongs. Simply providing the generation of an infinite number of characters does not exclude a given system from being syntactically disjoint. The system of Arabic fractional notation is an example of a system that is both syntactically disjoint and dense (Elgin, 1983, p. 99).

These requirements are not met by systems that are representational, systems such as painting, drawing, and sculpture. In such systems there is no way to determine which of the characteristics of a given mark have syntactic significance. There is no way to tell one instance of a line, say, from another, or whether the two instantiate the same character. Marks can neither be judged to be syntactic replicas of one another, nor can they be substituted for one another. Discursive languages and Arabic numerical notation, on the other hand, meet these requirements.

This difference in the features of the characters between such systems points out the difference between the constitutive and the contingent features of characters, those that have syntactic significance and those that do not. Goodman asks that we “compare a momentary electrocardiogram with a Hokusai drawing of Mt. Fujiyama. The black squiggly lines on white backgrounds may be exactly the same in the two cases” (Goodman, 1976, p. 229). The difference between these two must inhere in some characteristic of the system in which the two marks function. Such difference is to be found in the syntax of the symbol system. The features that are constitutive in the cardiogram are “expressly and narrowly restricted” (loc. cit.) compared with the drawing.

The only features of the cardiogram that have syntactic relevance are the distances from the axes. In the drawing this is not the case; “Any thickening or thinning of the line, its color, its contrast to the background, its size, even the qualities of the paper - none of these can be ruled out, none can be ignored” (loc. cit.). Thus although both systems, the diagrammatic and the pictorial, are not syntactically disjoint, features that are constitutive in the one are not in the other. For Goodman the drawing is relatively more *replete*, the diagram relatively more *attenuated*. The distinction is not absolute, but one of degree, and a continuum from the diagrammatic to the pictorial runs along the dimension from the attenuated to the replete.

This dimension is especially relevant to psychoanalytic inquiry. Psychoanalytic interpretation is interpretation of a replete symbol system. Interpretation considers not simply what is said, but when, to whom, to what purpose, with what tone of voice, gesture of the hand, and any other number of variables. Although the currency of psychoanalytic interpretation is discursive language, and discursive language is syntactically disjoint and differentiated, it celebrates the whole range of affective expression. Affective expression is perhaps the most primarily replete system of expression.

Science strives for relatively attenuated symbol systems. This aspect of the constructionalist examination of symbolic reference reveals an essential dissonance between analysis and science.

Semantic Considerations

Ambiguity and redundancy are both semantic features of a referential system. Ambiguity provides that two syntactic replicas may differ in extension. Alternatively, one symbol may have more than one referent. Redundancy provides that a given referent has

multiple expressions that refer to it. In such a system a given term does not determine a unique class of compliants, nor does a given compliance class demand only one term.

A system which allows for redundancy is semantically nondisjoint. *Semantic disjointness* requires that “each object complies with at most one character of the system” (Elgin, 1983, p. 104) or that “no two characters have any compliant in common” (Goodman, 1976, p. 151). A system that uses Arabic fractional notation to measure weight in fractions of an ounce is unambiguous; only things that belong to the weight class $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. comprise that compliance class. At the same time the system is redundant; there are many terms that refer to the members of the same compliance class - $\frac{3}{4}$ oz., $\frac{6}{8}$ oz., $\frac{9}{12}$ oz., etc. The system is therefore not semantically disjoint. Were we to allow only fully reduced fractions as characters of the system, it would qualify as semantically disjoint.

The concept of density can be applied semantically as well. A *semantically dense* system provides that for any two compliance classes within the system a third may be inserted. Such a system will provide for levels of semantic discrimination beyond our means to decide to which class a given object might belong. “There will inevitably be cases in which we have no basis for saying with which of a number of mutually exclusive predicates a given object complies” (Elgin, 1983, p. 102). The systems described above are semantically dense throughout because they provide for infinitely many ever more fine compliance classes.

The problem of semantic density is not technological but structural. No matter how refined our technological skills of measurement become, these systems provide for ever more refined semantic classes, such that technology cannot keep up. If, however, we provide that differences of less than $\frac{1}{1000}$ of an ounce shall not be admitted as a new compliance class, we change the semantic nature of the system. Technological problems

will remain for deciding borderline cases, but the system is such that it provides a theoretical scheme in which a given object belongs to only one compliance class. The semantic structure of such a system is *finitely differentiated*: “for every two characters K and K’ such that their compliance-classes are not identical, and every object h that does not comply with both, determination either that h does not comply with K or that h does not comply with K’ must be theoretically possible” (Goodman, 1976, p. 152).

Art Revisited

These qualities of referential systems were defined by Goodman within his theory of notation (Goodman, 1976), proposed while investigating problems concerning the nature of work identity and forgery in the arts. In an attempt to enlighten the debate around these issues, Goodman proposed a classification for the various forms of art and their works.

A given work of art, and its parent art form, are said to be *autographic* “if and only if even the most exact duplication of it does not thereby count as genuine” (Goodman, 1976, p. 113.) The obvious example of an autographic art form is painting. Compare painting, where no duplication, no matter how accurate a copy of the original, constitutes the work itself, with music. In music any performance that conforms to the score constitutes a performance of the work. Goodman terms such art *allographic*.

At first blush the difference between autographic and allographic arts may appear to be due to the potential for multiplicity of instances of their works. There can be only one instance of (the authentic) *Mona Lisa*, but any number of (authentic) instances of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. This distinction, between *one-stage* and *two-stage* art forms (Goodman, 1976), however, does not coincide with the autographic and allographic classification. Literature, although it is one-stage, is not autographic; any correctly rendered copy of the author’s text constitutes an instance of the work. Printmaking is

autographic, even if two-stage, for any, and only, prints made from the original plate are an instance of the work.

Autographic art depends for its authenticity on the history of its production; autographic arts are subject to forgery. Allographic art does not depend on its history of production for its authenticity and, as such, is not subject to forgery. Rather, authenticity in allographic works is determined by the "... semantics and/or the syntax of the symbol system to which the work belongs" (Elgin, 1983, p. 119).

Notational systems provide for work identity in allographic art forms. The most obvious example of a notational system is the musical score¹. The relationship of score to performance is such that "...in every chain where each step is either from score to compliant performance or from performance to covering score all performances belong to the same work and all copies of scores define the same class of performances" (Goodman, 1976, p. 129). The authority provided by a notation for work identity from performance to performance has no function regarding aesthetic value (Goodman, 1976, p. 119). The score provides that a given performance is an instantiation of a musical work, but says nothing about that particular performance's aesthetic merit (Elgin, 1983, p. 110). The purpose of such a system is the "preservation of work-identity in every chain of correct steps from score to performance and performance to score.... A notational system preserves work-identity irrespective of quality of performance" (Goodman, 1984, p. 57).

The requirements for a referential system to be a notation are severe. Notations must be unambiguous, syntactically and semantically disjoint and finitely differentiated.

The 'data' of analysis, discursive language, satisfies the syntactic requirements but fails to satisfy the semantic requirements. "...a discursive language is syntactically disjoint and finitely differentiated. It is semantically nondisjoint, dense throughout, and ambiguous" (Elgin, 1983, p. 102).

The implications of these considerations have been discussed in the body of this work.

¹In fact, there are problems that challenge the notationality of the musical score. Interesting as these are, they do not concern the present discussion. For Goodman's considerations regarding these problems see Languages of Art, pp. 179-187, Elgin's review of his position in With Reference to Reference, pp. 105-109, and Cheshire's critique in The Nature of Psychodynamic Interpretation, pp. 184-185.

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