LOBEL, JUDITH C.

FEELING BAD, FEELING BADLY AND BEING BAD: AN EXAMINATION OF GUILT FEELINGS IN A BORDERLINE CHILD

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IN A BORDERLINE CHILD

by

JUDITH LOBEL

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October 1, 1981
date

Herbert D. Saltzstein
Executive Officer

Dr Anneliese Pitz

Dr Arthur Arkin

Supervisory Committee

The City University of New York

Abstract

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by

Judith Lobel

Advisor: Professor Irving H. Paul

This dissertation describes the treatment of a borderline latency age child who complained of and appeared to suffer from pervasive feelings of guilt.

Psychoanalytic concepts of guilt are examined. The Classical concept of guilt is constructed with other concepts within in the psychoanalytic framework. According to the Classical view, the term "guilt" is reserved for responses to intersystematic conflict. Guilt presupposes the presence of a consolidated superego. By contrast, other theorists maintain that feelings of guilt may arise in the context of a dyadic, proedipal mother-child relationship. For them guilt need not require a consolidated superego and need not lead to reaction-formations.

It is suggested that for borderline children guilt feelings may have their source in the ambivalence conflicts of the rapprochement period, which such children typically fail to negotiate.

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To my friends and to L. S.--thanks.

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Chapter I

THE CONTROVERSY AROUND THE CONCEPT OF GUILT

The role of guilt, the conflicts which give rise to it, and the defensive reactions it mobilizes, has always been central to psychoanalysis, both clinically and theoretically. At the same time, a certain amount of controversy has developed as to how to conceptualize guilt.

My interest in this area was stimulated by my work with a borderline child, whom I have seen in psychotherapy over the past two years. It seemed to me that this child showed a great deal of behavior which descriptively fell into the category of guilt. Yet in going through the psychoanalytic literature, it became evident that many of the classical theorists would not view these behaviors as manifestations of guilt, and would reserve this term for the intersystemic conflicts which follow the resolution of the oedipal complex and the structuralization of the superego.

This point of view has its roots in the evolution of Freud's thinking on the subject of guilt. I will briefly review his ideas here. Initially, Freud believed that feelings of guilt arise out of ambivalence conflicts. For example, in "Totem and Taboo" (1913), he examines the boy's conflict between hatred towards the father and love and admiration for him, and regards this conflict as a source of guilt. However, by 1930 Freud's ideas on the nature

of guilt had changed. In Civilization and Its Discontents, he replaces his early formulations and posits two stages of moral development and two types of guilt. The developmentally earlier type of guilt derives from fear of loss of the external object and is a form of "social anxiety"; the second type of guilt derives from an inner sense of wrongdoing. Freud now terms the feeling which arises in the first stage of moral development "remorse," while the terms "guilt" and "conscience" are applied to the second stage. It should be noted that in the early phase of his thinking, as well as in the later one, Freud is consistent in ascribing the appearance of guilt to the resolution of the oedipal conflicts.

The change in Freud's thinking on the nature of guilt, conscience, and remorse follows the evolution of his thinking about the nature of affects in general. He thought of affects as the ego's response to various situations with which it was confronted. For example, mourning was considered to be the ego's response to an experience of loss, while guilt, or moral anxiety, was the ego's response to a particular kind of danger situation, i.e., fear of the superego. The typical danger situations were arranged hierarchically, from the most primitive to those which reflected greater development. The earliest danger situation, fear of object loss, correlated with the oral phase, it was surplanted in the anal phase (with the achievement of object constancy) by fear of loss of love. The third danger situation, castration anxiety dominated the phallic oedipal phase; while the

fourth, fear of the superego appeared with the resolution of oedipal conflicts. Thus the question as to whether conflict was with an external source or had been internalized became crucial in distinguishing guilt from earlier forms of anxiety.

Grossman and Kaplan (1981) believe that Freud meant the term remorse, rather than the term guilt, to denote the ego's affective response. According to them the experience, or sense of guilt (the awareness of wrongdoing), generated the affective response of remorse. In support of this interpretation they quote Freud's statement that remorse "contains, in little altered form, the sensory material of the anxiety which is operating behind the sense of guilt" (1930, p. 137). However, they also point out that Freud's use of the phrases "guilt feelings" and "sense of guilt" is ambiguous, "inasmuch as these, like remorse, are affective phrases." They suggest that this ambiguity would be removed if the term guilt were used in conformity with the Oxford English Dictionary, which defines guilt as an actual state of affairs and remorse as an emotional state. To my mind, this definition of guilt does not seem useful in connection with psychological phenomena. It should be noted that Webster's includes an alternative definition of guilt: "The state of one who has committed an offense especially consciously; culpability especially for imagined offenses or from a sense of preoccupation with the moral correctness of one's behavior; self-accusation aggressive responses originating in inner guilt and uncertainty." The problem with which Freud was grappling seems to be that of distinguishing affects from cognitions or ideas

rather than objective states. In this regard, I would point out that recent papers have stressed the linkage and continuity between affects and cognitions, e.g., Pine (1980). Further, remorse does not adequately substitute for guilt as an affective response to the awareness of wrongdoing, since, as I hope to show, remorse is only one possible reaction to this awareness.

Freud also distinguished guilt from remose in that the latter relates to acts of aggression which have already been carried out, whereas the former is synonymous with conscience and results in permanent renunciations and reaction formations. Guilt acts as a signal to inhibit future acts of aggression, while remorse "is itself a punishment and can include the need for punishment" (1930, p. 137). Feelings of remorse can be assuaged by acts of confession or by the forgiveness of the object, whereas true guilt has been depersonalized and functions as though divested of antecedent ties to the object.

Those psychoanalytic writers who accept Freud's core premise that the emergence of guilt is coincident with the resolution of the oedipal conflict, maintain that ambivalence conflicts can only explain "guilt-like" feelings, or "precursors" of guilt in the child. According to this view, a pre-latency child, or an older child whose emotional problems preclude the resolution of the oedipal conflict, would not be expected to experience guilt. These writers stress the role of conflict in young or seriously disturbed children but dispute the possibility of guilt. For example, Anna Freud enumerates conflicts between opposite tendencies such as homosexuality and

heterosexuality, passivity and activity, which she considers to be intrasystemic rather than intersystemic; that is, they concern the ego's struggle with contradictory instinctual expressions of the id.

Consistent with this view, Meers (1979) states that borderline latency age children respond to warning signals of pain, fear, and unconscious rage rather than to guilt. And Beres (1958) describing children of latency age with what he calls "arrested psychic development," notes that these children almost universally "expressed a conscious concern about their 'badness'" (p. 347). However, Beres believed that this "concern about badness" along with the efforts to change and to control impulses, is "qualitatively different" from feelings of guilt. In observing numbers of these children, Beres found a variety of self-attitudes and behaviors which he believes attest to these children's sense of themselves as bad; among these are self-attacking behavior, low self-esteem, self-accusations, shame, self-distrust, remorse, humiliation, unhappiness, and fear. Beres maintains that the sense of being bad derives from disturbances in early object relationship that have resulted in "fixation at a primitive level of identification, as well as in a limited capacity for the neutralization of aggression." Guilt, on the other hand, is a later development, the product of the superego's attitude of watchful sensitivity to inner danger situations.

The Kleinian View of Guilt

The question of the origin and nature of guilt feelings is one of the major points of difference between the Freudian and

Kleinian schools of thought. Klein emphasizes the role of ambivalence conflicts as a source of guilt. Her belief, in brief, is that the capacity for guilt is the product of emotional development during the preoedipal period (i.e., during the first year of life); it involves fusing of good and bad images of the mother so that the child realizes that destructive aspects of its instinctual makeup are directed towards the same mother who is loved. This realization ushers in the depressive position (age 3 to 4 months); it leads to conflict, guilt, and efforts at restitution. As Winnicott states, "Guilt is the essential fear that hate will overcome love, aggression overcome reparation" (1958, p. 207). Winnicott points out that, according to Klein's formulations, guilt concerns a two-body relationship--that between the infant and the mother; whereas, according to Freud's formulations, guilt concerns a three-body relationship--the Oedipus complex.

Klein's views on superego development and the emergence of guilt are generally criticized by Freudian theorists in point of timing, i.e., does internalization and structuralization occur as early as she would indicate? In this aspect of her theory, as well as in her views that schizophrenics experience guilt (see Chapter II), she is thought to disregard metapsychological considerations. On the other hand, classical theorists tend to conceptualize guilt strictly in terms of theory, i.e., there must be intersystemic conflict. At times their thinking seems tautological. The problem is evident in the writing of Malmquist, for example, who suggests that when confronted with the need to determine whether a specific instance

of behavior reflects the influence of the superego, or the defensive functioning of the ego (guilt or guilt-like), one must first evaluate the "other superego functions" and "finally it must be determined whether the necessary sense of guilt is present" (1968, p. 325).

Within the Freudian framework, some theorists have suggested the role of ambivalence conflicts as a source of guilt, while distinguishing the early appearance of guilt from the establishment of moral controls and the consolidation of the superego. These theorists call attention to the type of conflicts which characterize the preoedipal period and which would frequently be found unresolved in borderline forms of pathology. Mahler's work in particular, while it does not deal at any length with the development of morality, does delineate the early ambitendencies and the ambivalence conflicts of the separation-individuation process.

Spitz, more specifically concerned with superego development, states that rudimentary forms of guilt arise during the second half of the second year of life. At the same time he stresses that these early manifestations of guilt do not represent the workings of a consolidated superego, but rather, an "ad hoc mode of functioning of the ego which is put into operation when the circumstances warrant it" (1958, p. 400). Asch, in his paper on "Negative Therapeutic Reactions and Problems of Technique" (1976), utilizes Mahler's description of the phases of separation-individuation and suggests that in certain instances (where an intense pathological tie exists

between mother and child) the emergence of guilt may be related to the ambivalence conflicts of the rapprochment crises.

Guilt in the Borderline

There is considerable divergence of opinion about whether guilt is experienced by seriously disturbed individuals. For example, in speaking of the adult borderline patient, Kernberg finds little capacity for guilt. He attributes this to a constitutionally (or otherwise) determined lack of anxiety tolerance, which in turn interferes with the integration of contradictory self and object images. In normal development, the result of this integration is that objects are no longer seen as all good or all bad; love and aggression can be acknowledged towards a whole object, motivating guilt and concern. In the borderline, integration fails, and instead splitting and related defenses are set in motion in order to protect positive introjections and insure against spreading of anxiety. Aggression is projected with the subsequent perception of the external object as bad. What looks like guilt in such patients is really fear of attack by a bad object. It should be noted that Kernberg's ideas regarding guilt draw heavily upon Klein's formulation of the depressive position (which will be further elaborated below).

Grinker and associates' observations of adult borderline patients (1968) appear to concur with Kernberg's. They found that anger and depression were the two most prominent affects in these patients, guilt is conspicuous by its absence. "Typically,

depression is not the guilt-laden, self-accusatory, remorseful 'end of the rope' type, but more of a loneliness as the subjects realize their predicament of being unable to commit themselves in a world of transacting individuals" (1968, p. 3).

Klein, while, on the one hand, viewing guilt as a developmental achievement, also maintained that very ill patients experience intense feelings of guilt and depression, but that these are hard to detect, and are subjectively felt to be out of reach, encapsulated in a split off part of the ego (1960).

In support of the position that guilt does occur in the borderline, a number of analysts who have worked with these patients have noted their cruel and all-encompassing superegos and pervasive feelings of guilt (Hoedemaker, 1955; Pious, 1949; Wexler, 1951).

Recently, Masterson, who acknowledges his debt to Mahler, has stated that borderline pathology is characterized by widespread guilt which operates as a fifth column" behind the patient's defenses. This guilt, which is the result of the introjection of the mother's attitude toward the patient, finally becomes the patient's attitude toward himself. Typically, the mothers of borderline patients regard expression of self-assertion and moves toward autonomy on the part of their children with disapproval and withdrawal. Consequently, the patient begins to feel guilty about strivings in the direction of separation and individuation. In order to avoid these guilt feelings, he abnegates these strivings and resorts to a "chronic state of clinging and demanding" (1972, p. 60).

Returning to the issue of guilt in children, it seems to me that the value of the classical position, equating guilt with the capacity for inner regulation of morality, is that it alerts us to the characteristics of the "high level" guilt which may be seen in children with normal development. According to Jacobson, guilt requires the formation of a "set of impersonal, ethical principles and regulations for human behavior." The criterion for guilt is that it should result in consistent change in attitude and action. According to Beres, guilt requires "understanding of adult evaluations, [the capacity for] secondary process thinking and reality testing, and the development of a sense of time." In addition, the child must be able to "conceptualize the conflict between inner demands and outer restrictions."

It would seem that children with a wide range of pathology fall short of this ideal development. In these children, infantile forms of morality carry over into latency and beyond. Seriously disturbed children frequently feel they are bad, at times they feel badly about their badness. Do these manifestations constitute guilt? I would like to point out here that similar questions have been raised in regard to mourning and depression, i.e., can children mourn (Furman, 1974 vs. Wolfenstein, 1966), do they experience depression (Joffe & Sandler, 1965 vs. Beres, 1953). What I hope to show in this dissertation is that children do experience guilt but they experience it differently from the way adults do, just as they experience everything differently. The borderline child also experiences guilt, but here again, differently from the way

normal children do.

I will examine this problem by looking at clinical material from the treatment of the child I referred to at the beginning of this introduction. Gray was 6 when he was brought to the Psychological Center of CUNY, where he was seen for psychotherapy on a twice-weekly basis over a period of 2 years.*

In order to understand the nature of the child's experience, I would like to describe his behavior during the early stages of treatment. In these sessions Gray was highly aggressive and would lash out at the therapist and the playfroom, often with sudden jabbing movements. He would fling objects, spit, and kick, at times appearing totally out of control. He rarely did any serious damage, but it became apparent that the small nicks and marks he did manage to make on walls and furniture took on enormous size for him. "Remember when I did that?" he would say. It seemed as though, for him, the room had become a mass of wounds which he had himself inflicted.

Sometimes he would remark sadly on these dents and scribbles. At other times the sight of them seemed to rekindle his anger, and he would lash out again, seemingly mindless of the consequences. The discovery of anything damaged (even when he had not caused it) could precipitate the most uncontrolled, destructive attacks. On finding that the lid of a wooden box was cracked, he seized a hammer and would have totally demolished the box if he had not been stopped. While he recognized every mark he had made,

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*Therapy sessions took place at the office of the supervisor, Mrs. A. Bergman.

when he came across things which were already damaged or worn, he seemed to be unsure and anxious about how they had gotten that way. At times it was clear, from the context, that he believed he was responsible (see below). At other times he clearly believed that I was. "Did you take a piece off the chair?" He then seemed to interpret these minor disfigurations as evidence of malevolence, hostility, or neglect on my part, or on the part of other children who used the room.

Aggressive outbursts and fantasies were often followed by an almost automatic backlash of self-punishment. For example, the thought that someone (himself?) would steal father's car, would be followed by the idea that he would not have a car to go home in. "I'm gonna look out of the window and see if someone is stealing father's car. I know someone is. If it's stolen I won't have a car to go home in."

After he had expressed hostile wishes he seemed to feel shut out--nothing offered him comfort. "Even the rocking chair isn't comfortable," he would complain. There were also fears that the therapy room was not safe. "Is this a safe block? Someone might rob it . . . take the toys, the clay and everything. Dangerous street."

While at some points he seemed unable to consider the consequences of his aggression, it was often evident that he did struggle with his impulses. For example, he noticed a letter "T" that had been drawn on the table. He said he thought maybe it had been put there for "a reason." "It means 'Take,' so no one

would steal . . . like 'Don't take.'"

He seemed at one moment afraid he would break things or make a mess or do something bad: "Is this a chair to stand on? Would I break this chair?" At another moment he might boast about breaking or messing or being bad: "I went to Jack's birthday party. Jack and I acted real crazy. We wrecked the place. We both threw up. I love him." Sometimes the boasting would be thinly disguised by means of projection: "I know somebody named Jack. He put shaving cream all over the street. He did it to our house. In our home he put egg all over the stove. Ooh, he had to clean it all up . . . he slipped in it."

At times it was clear that he anticipated his angry outbursts with anxiety. He would then attempt to get himself removed from the playroom to which he had become very attached, or to have specially prized possessions taken away from him. At least one motive for this behavior seemed to be a wish to protect something valuable from his destructive impulses. For example, in one session he began to speculate anxiously about whether he would harm the swing which he especially loved, or the toys: "Am I heavy 'cause the swing is down? I think I'm too heavy. If a big kid sat on this it would break. If you sat on this it would break. . . . The books [could get] tore up, the toys all broken. The kids stay home that come to play. I would be one of them. I better not or else I won't be able to play. Is the time almost up?" Therapist: "Are you worried about what you'll do here?" "You don't want me to rip up all the books, do you?"

There were instances where he seemed to want to protect others from himself by pushing them away from him. On one occasion he described how he had gotten into trouble at school: "In school I write on the desk; I like to do it, I don't get into trouble. I wash it off." The therapist suggested that she might be able to help him stop himself from getting into trouble in school. Gray then responded, "You can't! How could you? Watch out, you'll get hurt." Warning the therapist to keep a respectful distance, seemingly out of some concern that she protect herself from him.

In an early session the therapist explained that she was a person children can tell their worrites to, and Gray responded: "Do all your children feel guilty? Charley Brown feels guilty for everything he does," and a while later he added, "I don't want to feel guilty for everything Charley Brown does. He gets a bag of stones for Halloween." Noticing a box on which someone had crayoned, he asked anxiously, "Who did that?" Thus, the problem he identified was guilt. How can we conceptualize his experience? Before exploring the clinical material further, I would like to look at the way the subject of guilt has been dealt with in psychoanalytic literature. This will be dealt with in Chapter II. Chapter III will review the characteristics of normal latency. Chapter IV will deal with diagnostic issues. Chapter V will be an evaluation of Gray's superego functioning. Chapter VI will explore clinical material in depth. Chapter VII includes a summary of the foregoing ideas.

Chapter II

THE LITERATURE ON GUILT AND THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

Among both Freudian and Kleinian theorists one can find conceptualizations of primitive forms of guilt which involve little or no recognition of the object as separate from the self, as well as other conceptualizations which stress the importance of concern for the object and idealizations of the object rather than fear of punishment. In this chapter, I will examine several writers' views of guilt, beginning with those which intentionally portray guilt as a primitive, egocentric, punishment-oriented response.

One of the most primitive conceptualizations of guilt has been set forth by Isaacs in her paper, "Privation and Guilt" (1929). Isaacs proposes an essentially objectless form of guilt. She believes that guilt feelings originate at a time when the child has only a dawning awareness of the object. The awareness of separateness is heightened by frustrations encountered during weaning and toilet training, and this awareness, in turn, contributes to feelings of psychic helplessness and rage toward the object. However, it is the very vagueness of the distinction between self and object which intensifies the young child's guilt feelings. Since the child experiences the world referentially, i.e., in terms of personal agency, internal libidinal tension is understood in terms of external danger, and projected rage leads to fear of

retaliation from the external object.

For Isaacs this fear of retaliation corresponds to guilt because the child understands frustrations as justified instances of retaliation, i.e., justified by his own greedy, sadistic desires. The child's feeling of guilt amounts to a belief that he has harmed the object with his greedy, sadistic desires, and that because of this he has lost the object. Thus far Isaacs is merely reiterating Klein's description of persecutory anxiety, except that she equates this anxiety with guilt, and attributes the emergence of guilt to the paranoid schizoid position (whereas Klein believes that persecutory anxiety may act as a defense against guilt which occurs in the paranoid schizoid position in spite of the prevalance of persecutory anxiety).

However, Isaacs carries her speculations on the nature of guilt a step further; taking off from a paper of Jones (1919), she suggests that the sense of guilt, and with it the superego, is "artificially built up" in order to help the child restrict and damp down instinctual wishes that are not destined to be gratified. Evidence of disapproval from external objects, augmented by the child's projected rage, is "exploited" by the child and used to defend against the real danger, which is not external but internal, i.e., the child fears he will be overwhelmed by instinctual tensions and experience annihilation or, as Isaacs terms it, "aphanisis."

Egocentric attribution of responsibility to the self, rather than empathy, determines the child's understanding of its effects on the object. Concern, depression, and reparation, which

play so great a part in Klein's and Winnicott's formulations of guilt, are irrelevant in Isaacs's formulation. The concept of guilt seems to dissolve, even as the object does. Even fear of the object reduces to fear of internal drives.

An almost equally primitive concept of guilt is suggested by Alexander. According to Alexander ("Inferiority Feelings and Guilt Feelings," 1939), guilt responses and the psychology of conscience can be reduced to an emotional syllogism expressed by Ferenzi's "principle of talion" (1925). This principle is defined as the expectation of retaliation in kind, provoked by one's own aggression. All shadings of guilt differ only quantitatively; all belong to the category of anxiety and have in common an unpleasant tension in expectation of punishment. Guilt, or the fear of conscience, is nothing more than the "intrapsychic reduplication" of the fear of retribution from external sources.

In this formulation guilt does not arise from ambivalence conflicts. In fact, Alexander seems to rule out the possibility of guilt coexisting with ambivalence. He maintains that genuine guilt feelings require a "sense of justice" and the belief in one's culpability. Conversely, the object of one's aggression must be blameless and undeserving of aggression. He reasons that if the object of one's aggression is seen as deserving of aggression, guilt feelings disappear. Those instances where the loved, needed person is also the source of frustration are not considered.

The attribution of blame to the self and the expectation of punishment are prominent ingredients in this formulation.

Empathic distress is limited to a perceptual recognition of the effect of one's aggression on the object. The affective aspects of empathy are de-emphasized. The external object is not fully experienced in the sense that it must be seen as "all good," while at the same time there need be no identification with the object's standards. As long as fear of punishment is primary, the issue of internality remains ambiguous. Morality may be based on magical thinking and may reflect a confusion between moral principles and physical laws, such as Piaget has described in morality of "imminent justice." The punishing agent is not fully a part of the self; it is not conscience but an introject which is automatically mobilized in response to one's misdeeds.

Isaacs is describing what she considers an "early component" of guilt, belonging to the "least differentiated and graded levels of experience." Alexander, too, has intentionally set out to present guilt as a rudimentary response. However, other theorists --of whom Sandler (1960) will be taken as representative--stress that guilt is a developmental achievement and attempt to make the distinction between "precursors" of guilt and true guilt on the basis of whether conflict is "intersystemic," or between the ego and the outside world.

Sandler takes the point of view that true guilt emerges with the construction of an "introject" of the parents, following the resolution of the oedipus complex. Through introjection the relationship to the parents is maintained internally, and their authority takes on permanence in the form of the superego.

There is, concurrently, a relative diminution in the child's dependence on the actual parents.

Prior to introjection, behavior is self-regulated by what Sandler calls a "pre-autonomous superego schema." The scheme provides warning signals of impending punishment or loss of love. However, these signals do not deserve to be called guilt since the major source of self-esteem is still the approval of the actual parents. Sandler believes that the affective experience produced by these signals is probably the same as that produced by the warning signals of guilt: both result in a drop in self-esteem.*

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*In fact, this point is confusing in Sandler's work. On the other hand, they state that the affective experience produced by the warning signals of the pre-autonomous superego schema is the same as that produced by the warning signals of guilt, both resulting in a drop in self-esteem. On the other hand, he attempts to distinguish the warning signals of guilt from the earlier ones on the basis of the former's link with depression: "What was previously experienced as the threat of parental disapproval becomes guilt, though the affective experience is probably the same in both; and an essential component of this affective state is the drop in self-esteem. This differentiates guilt from anxiety, and links it with feelings of inferiority and inadequacy as well as with the affect which is experienced in pathological states of depression" (1960, p. 154). The issue is further complicated by the inconsistency between his treatment of guilt and depression. In "Notes on Pain, Depression and Individuation" (1965), Joffe and Sandler stress that depression occurs with greater frequency in children than is commonly recognized and provide descriptive and behavioral criteria for childhood "equivalents" of depression. Disguised or unconscious expressions of depression, such as passivity or boredom, are accepted as depression proper, whereas, in the case of guilt these childhood equivalents and disguised or unconscious forms are not considered to be true guilt. I would speculate that Sandler's conceptualization of depression is at least partially determined by a wish to distinguish his usage of the term from Klein's formulation of the depressive position; a basically non-descriptive, "psychodynamic" and theoretical term. It should be noted that other theorists are consistent with respect to guilt and depression in childhood. Beres (1958), for example, maintains that neither guilt nor depression are commonly found in childhood and can only be defined in terms of intersystemic conflict.

Early self-regulation is based on (ego) identification representing the child's perception of admired and feared qualities of the parents. Sandler defines identification as "changing the shape of one's self-representation on the basis of another representation as a model." Early identifications take place without introjection; and introjection, once it has been achieved, may take place without identification. The child need not accept the parental standards in order to feel guilt when he disobeys them. Guilt may arise solely on the basis of disobedience of the introjects (conscience can oppose the ego).

Sandler does stress that the greatest feeling of well-being is achieved when the child identifies with the dictates of the introjects as well as complying with them. Nevertheless, his emphasis on the introjection of authority without identification means that, like Alexander, he is really proposing that guilt is an "intrapsychic reduplication" of fear of external danger. According to his formulation, guilt does not indicate concern for the object; rather, it seems closely associated with the attribution of responsibility to the self and the imagery of punishment, and is only minimally removed from parental reactions. In fact, Sandler et al. resort to a behavior criterion for determining guilt, just as Alexander does. "It is only when the child acts in the absence of the parental authority figure as if the parent were actually present that it is possible to say that introjection has taken place" (Sandler et al., 1963, p. 152). My criticism of this position has already been made.

Thus, while Sandler emphasizes the capacity of the superego to reward compliance with the introjects, stating that such compliance leads to a state of well-being they call "euphany" (the opposite of guilt), he does not recognize the necessity of identification and concern for the object.

Jacobson's work (1964) differs in this respect from Sandler's. She lays stress on the "acceptance and internalization of moral codes and standards conveyed by the parents" (p. 119); that is, on identification, where Sandler stresses introjection For Jacobson the ego ideal (made up of identification) is part of the superego and its moral guide. Idealized self and object images and imagery derived from the child's narcissistic, omnipotent goals are eventually amalgamated into the moral perfectionistic strivings of the ego ideal. According to her, guilt is normally an effective way of dealing with conflict because, "through identifications, punishing and prohibiting images are combined with guiding, directional images which offer the child positive course of action which will prevent punishment and disapproval" (p. 122).

At some points in her writing Jacobson specifically recognizes the contribution of ambivalence conflicts to guilt feelings. Anxiety is clearly associated with castration fears rather than with ambivalence conflicts. Castration anxiety has to do with talion law, while guilt feelings "have their roots in the child's hostile and anxious as well as loving relationship with the parents."

As previously stated, Klein's ideas on guilt take off from Freud's abandoned interest in ambivalence conflicts as a source of

guilt feelings. In contrast with Isaacs, Klein (1948) carefully distinguishes guilt from persecutory anxiety, linking guilt with depressive anxiety and impulses to make reparation. The basic fear involved in persecutory anxiety is of annihilation, whereas the fear in depressive anxiety is that destructive impulses have "done harm to the internal and external love objects" (p. 34). According to Klein, during the paranoid-schizoid position, persecutory anxiety interferes with experiences of depression and guilt. Destructive and loving feelings toward the same object are kept apart by extensive splitting processes. Klein conceives of these processes as defensive or active in nature, whereas later writers stress the inability of the immature ego to synthesize disparate aspects of self and object (Kernberg, 1972, 1976; Mahler, 1975; Stolorow & Lachmann, 1978, among others). In her later writing, Klein (1960) modifies the above views and observes that depressive anxiety and guilt are, in some measure, already operative in the infant's earliest object relationship, occurring at first during transitory moments, when splitting processes are not fully effective.

Winnicott's ideas on guilt represent a refinement of Klein's. He truly conceptualizes guilt feelings as rooted in ambivalence conflicts, emphasizing the complexity of the young child's love for the mother. His interest is in the subtly contrasting images of the mother (the object mother or the mother of excited instinctual love, and the caring, environment mother) which must be integrated by the child before it sees the mother as a whole person.

In most of his writing Winnicott follows Klein's ideas, linking guilt with reparation and clarifying the relationship between anxiety and guilt. He begins by describing a hypothetical stage (corresponding to Klein's paranoid-schizoid position) which precedes the emergence of guilt. During this primitive stage instinct-driven fantasies are directed toward the object without regard for their effect. In the next stage the baby forms an integrated image of the mother, and the imagined attack on mother can no longer be enjoyed ruthlessly. The baby now feels that the mother is not the same after the feed as before. "He feels he made a hole where previously there was a full body of richness" (1954, p. 268). He feels "apprehension" about the hole and a "natural wish to replenish mother" (p. 268). The baby's anxiety about his effect on the mother is gradually replaced and "altered in quality and becomes a sense of guilt" (p. 268) as the child's confidence in his ability to give to the mother grows. Winnicott refers to the healthy child's wish to replenish mother as a "personal sense of guilt."

In "The Capacity for Concern" (1958), Winnicott makes an important further distinction: that between guilt and concern. Here guilt becomes associated with anxiety and the term "concern" is used as the term "guilt" was in the earlier papers:

> The word "concern" is used to cover in a positive way a phenomenon that is covered in a negative way by the word "guilt." . . . Concern implies further integration and relates in a positive way to the individual's sense of responsibility, especially in respect to relationships into which the instinctual drives have entered. (p. 73)

Manifestations of guilt are now evidence that something has gone wrong in the mother-child relationship:

> When the environmental mother is reliably present and the infant has the opportunity to make reparation, the guilt is not felt as such, but lies dormant, or potential, and appears (as sadness or a depressed mood) only if the opportunity for reparation fails to turn up. (p. 77)

At points in this paper, the rift between guilt and concern widens. The two can no longer be viewed as aspects of the same phenomenon; they are antithetical, guilt precluding concern:

> In the initial stage of development, if there is no reliable mother-figure to receive the reparation-gesture, the guilt becomes intolerable, and concern cannot be felt. Failure of reparation leads to a losing of the capacity for concern, and to its replacement by primitive forms of guilt and anxiety. (p. 78)

I believe that the change in usage of the word "guilt" from the early papers to the later one reflects Winnicott's gradual recognition of the two aspects of guilt: the attribution of blame to the self and empathic distress and the possible relationship and incompatibility between these two aspects.

Furer's (1964) consideration of guilt as a form of empathy has special relevance for this dissertation. He stipulates that in order for empathy to occur, the child must have established a firm sense of its separateness so that, against this separateness, temporary merging or partial identification with another person may occur. Furer suggests that the experience of separation itself is responsible for setting off the empathic response. That is, empathy is one possible way of responding to the realization of separatness. A more rudimentary response, which Furer calls "contagion," may

also occur.* This response involves the child's simply taking over the object's mood without preserving self-object differentiation or concern for the object as a separate feeling being. The realization of separatness inevitably produces not only a longing for reunion with the loved object, but also an aggressive component. In terms of the drive economics involved, this aggression must be neutralized and certain reaction formations must take place before the empathic response can appear.

Since confrontation with the fact of the object's separateness is necessary for empathy, the implication is that the rapprochement struggles of the second year of life would be the likely ground from which this response would emerge and, in fact, Furer does provide illustration of the empathic response in children of this age.

As a further prerequisite for the development of empathy, the child must perceive the difference between the mother's position of strength and his own, and he must identify with the mother as consoler. He will then attempt to console the mother on the model of her consolation of him.

While Furer conceives of guilt as a form of empathy, his approach to the guilt response is somewhat different from his approach to empathy. In conformity with classical formulations, he defines guilt in terms of inetrsystemic conflict (between ego and full-fledged superego). He maintains that guilt does not appear at the same time as empathy but awaits the consolidation of the

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*Term used by Sullivan to mean nonverbal communication of mood between mother and infant.

superego and the resolution of the oedipus complex. According to Furer, when empathy is connected to superego forerunners the child experiences remorse rather than guilt proper. The crucial distinction between behavioral manifestations of remorse and guilt, for Furer, is that the former relates to fear of loss of the love of the object, rather than to inner sanctions, and does not result in stable, dependable renunciations--the sense that "I will never do that again," which Furer considers the essence of guilt. Feelings of remorse arise from the positive libidinal aspects of ambivalence and are expressed when the child uses the phrase "I'm sorry," a communication which betrays the child's omnipotent expectations that his wishes can "make it all better."

While I do not agree that stable reaction formations are an adequate criterion for guilt, I do believe that Furer's linking of guilt and empathy is most important in describing qualitative differences among guilt phenomena. Failures in self-object differentiation, or in identification with the mother as consoler, would tend to be reflected in a relative unavailability of empathic distress (though not necessarily in its absence). Thus guilt responses would appear skewed in favor of the component related to attribution of responsibility to the self, a condition which I believe we see in a child such as Gray.

To extrapolate from Furer's consideration of empathy and extend his ideas to include guilt: if guilt is viewed as a form of empathy or if, as Hoffman (1979) posits, empathy is an essential ingredient of guilt, and if the emergence of guilt, like

that of empathy, is placed at the time of the realization of separateness, we come up with an object-related and ambivalence-rooted concept of guilt.*

Although Furer defines guilt in terms of interpsychic conflict necessitating the consolidation of the superego, it seems to me that his ideas fit closely with those of Spitz (1960), whose views on the origins and nature of guilt represent something of a synthesis of Freudian and Kleinian positions. Where Furer posits that self-object differentiation is necessary for the development of empathy, Spitz maintains that it is necessary for the development of guilt. Furer's idea that the child must identify with the parent as consoler in order for the capacity for empathy to develop echoes Spitz's postulation, described below, that identification with the aggressor is a necessary step in the development of the capacity

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*Furer defines empathy as the experiencing of a painful quality of affect in another person, leading to the expression of sympathy or concern. He further states that empathy involves consciousness that one's self or someone or something has done harm to the person in pain. It should be noted that one can empathize with pleasurable affects as well as painful ones. In the literature, empathy is generally distinguished from sympathy, which denotes feeling <u>for</u> the object, in the sense of agreement or approval. Empathy, on the other hand, refers to an involuntary experiencing <u>with</u> another person, i.e., a feeling of one's self into the object, while maintaining an awareness of the object as separate from the self. Thus defined, empathy does not necessarily lead to sympathy or concern, but may arouse various aversive reactions or lead to critical assessments. The consciousness that one's self, or someone or something has done harm to the object is not necessarily an ingredient of empathy. I prefer to view self-blame as an independent factor which may join with empathic distress to produce guilt feelings. I am concurring here with Martin Hoffman's (1979) use of the terms empathy, empathic distress, and guilt. However, Furer's somewhat different usage of these terms does not detract from the importance of his ideas for an understanding of the relationship between empathy and guilt.

for guilt feelings.

Spitz believes that these early manifestations of guilt do not represent the working of a consolidated superego, but rather an ad hoc mode of functioning of the ego, which is put into operation when the circumstances warrant it (1960). Based on observational data, he carefully specifies that guilt feelings emerge during the second year of life as a result of ambivalence conflicts which arise at this time.

Spitz suggests that between 9 and 15 months the child is very much involved in mastery through imitation and identification with the parental gestures. Of all the parental actions, the prohibiting gesture has a particular power to stimulate imitative efforts because it is invariably experienced by the child as a frustration, and therefore creates a strong need for mastery. Through identification the "no" gesture itself is taken over by the child, and directed against the prohibiting adult, carrying with it all the aggression which the child has come to associate with the experience of prohibition. Spitz stresses that the turning of the "no" gesture against the adult is conflictual for the child, who is also libidinally attached to the object (p. 383). He suggests that although the manifest conflict takes place between the external object and the ego, the fact that the child identifies with the aggressor leads to an internalization of the conflict, i.e., to a conflict between two drives with the ego as a mediator.

A further step is taken in the emergence of the "primordia" which will later make up the superego when the toddler begins to

turn the "no" against himself. This development has often been observed to occur in the context of role-playing games.

Spitz believes that the turning of the "no" gesture against the self, in identification with the aggressor, is a necessary precondition for the development of guilt feelings, but he is careful to point out that in itself it is not sufficient to account for guilt feelings. He states that at 15 months guilt has not been differentiated out from other feelings; rather, it is part of a global experience which includes shame, embarrassment, mortification, and fear, as well as other shades of feelings. What looks to the adult like a decidedly guilty facial expression corresponds to this more global feeling. He suggests that this global feeling deserves the creation of a special name; however, he does not propose one. His reservation about using the term guilt at this point stems from the child's lack of language and the consequent impossibility of knowing how so young a child feels. According to Spitz, it is only later in the second year, when the child is caught up in severe ambivalence conflicts, that the capacity to identify with the adult, internalizing the adult's prohibition and sanctioning the self, may give rise to feelings of guilt. The "no" gesture is the third organizer following the specific smiling response and the 9 months stranger anxiety. It is the most "psychological" of these in that its development is most open to the influence of environmental factors. (The earlier two organizers are more maturational.) In its association with the emergence of self and drive-object relations of the anal phase it overlaps with Mahler's findings on the rapprochement subphase.

Mahler's description of the phases of separation-individuation forms the basis of Asch's (1976) idea that the emergence of guilt may be related to the ambivalence conflicts of the rapprochement crises. Asch suggests that in those relationships where the mother maintains an intense attachment to the child, she tends to promise, explicitly or implicitly, through her seductive behavior, that the child is her chosen one. This inevitably results in disappointment for the child when he becomes aware of his separateness from mother. Such children cannot tolerate that the mother no longer functions as a part of them, perfectly intuiting their every wish. The realization of psychological separateness is a source of rage and vengeful fantasies. If, in this state of mind, the child discovers the mother's "wound," i.e., her castrated state, he experiences not only vengeful fantasies, but fantasies that he was wounded mother and intense feelings of guilt. There is also frequently a tendency to identify with the victim.

According to Asch, this guilt develops at a time when self-object images have not yet been completely consolidated. The accumulation of aggression and guilt towards the mother impedes the process of separation-individuation. "Reliable self-object representations do not develop, and impending separations tend to arouse old anxieties" (p. 393).

In an unpublished paper (1979), Hoffman approaches the subject of guilt and empathy from the framework of developmental psychology. He conceives of guilt as a composite of empathy for the object in distress (empathic distress) plus the idea of one's

own culpability (the attribution of blame to the self). Hoffman considers empathic distress an automatic, involuntary, vicarious experience of distress, perceived in another. He reasons that the child may be capable of guilt feelings long before moral controls have been firmly established since the coalescence of empathic distress and self-blame are sufficient to produce a response which has the affective and cognitive properties of guilt.

Hoffman outlines stages which apply to the development of empathy and guilt. The earliest of these stages, during the first year, involves global experiences. At this time the child still fuses self and other and is unclear as to who is experiencing the distress which he witnesses. Transition to the second level occurs once the child can retain the mental image of a person in their absence (Piaget's person permanence). At this level, usually achieved by 1 year, the child experiences egocentric forms of empathy and guilt. These forms are limited because the child cannot as yet distinguish between his own and other people's inner states. According to Hoffman, at this stage, primitive guilt feelings occur because of the temporal and geographical association between the child's action and another's distress. (I believe that here Hoffman's formulations leave out the role of the child's hostility in contributing to and limiting feelings of guilt, a limitation of his nondynamic approach.) According to Hoffman, even when the child is confused about who is the causal agent, he may, nevertheless, feel something vaguely like guilt. He states that one cannot be sure of the origins of such an early sense of responsibility

but it may reflect the infantile sense of omnipotence--a primitive, nonviridical sense of being the causal agent may combine with empathic distress to produce a rudimentary feeling of guilt. The third stage, "empathy for another's feelings," is established when the child becomes capable of role-taking (around 3 to 4 years). From this point on there may be mature forms of guilt and empathy, involving clear awareness of the other's separateness.

Hoffman suggests that empathic distress is especially difficult to maintain when the empathizer is aware of contributing to the other's distress. Intense empathic distress leads to feelings of helplessness and becomes so aversive that attention may be shifted from the object to the self.

Hoffman points out that the "internality" of guilt feelings cannot be judged on the basis of conformity, as conformity may merely reflect irrational fears of ubiquitous authority figures. He suggests that the term "internalization" makes most sense if it refers to freedom form subjective concern about external sanctions.

Nunberg's two papers on the subject of guilt--"The Sense of Guilt and the Need for Punishment" (1926) and "The Feeling of Guilt" (1934)--are contemporaneous with Freud's early conception of guilt as the product of ambivalence conflicts as enunciated in "Totem and Taboo" (1913). They are discussed here because of his focus on phenomenological aspects of guilt. Nunberg follows Freud in connecting guilt with the oedipal situation, and in viewing the murder and ingestion of the father as the prototypical guilt-inducing act, repeated in fantasy in the normal process of identification.

Like Freud, Nunberg believes that identification results in a loss of the object. He further suggests that the loss gives rise to anxiety which is mastered by the development of two types of guilt. The first is closely linked with feelings of loneliness and longing for the object, it is directed toward outer authority figures and experienced as a "dread of the community." This type of guilt commonly finds expression in somatic changes centered around the intestinal tract. It is involved in efforts to make up for and undo the crime.

The second type of guilt, which Nunberg terms "the need for punishment," involves a repetition on the ego of the murderous act towards the father. It motivates atonement through suffering and diminution of guilt through expulsion of the hostile object. Nunberg stresses that since the investment in the object is libidinal as well as hostile, the sequence of murder and ingestion is repeated endlessly, in fantasy because the ego longs for and enjoys the superego's punishment and wishes to repeat the crime rather than undo it. Nunberg maintains that the second type of guilt differs from the first in that it is directed toward inner authority figures and pangs of conscience. However, the emphasis on the enjoyment and repetition of punishment, rather than the establishment of reaction formations, and the highly personified nature of the authority figures, both inner and outer, reveals that both types of guilt are roughly approximate to the classical conception of remorse.

Nunberg does not deal with the metapsychological issues which were to concern Freud and later writers. He focuses on body linked as well as psychological experiences, which I believe contribute to unconscious, irrational guilt as well as to feelings of remorse.

Nunberg suggests that feelings of guilt involve regression to the anal phase, restoring the early situation of toilet training. He seems to suggest a second theory of origination of guilt: "The earliest onset of guilt feelings occurs when, out of fear of loss of love, the child renounces the pleasure of retaining his feces and gives them up to please the parent."

Later classical theorists would consider these fears to precede true guilt feelings. Furer, for example, makes the point that early fears may produce attempts at restitution and that bodily symptoms, such as withholding feces, may represent fear of loss of an object undifferentiated from the self, and restitutive efforts, but he does not consider that these are indications of guilt. These theorists then go a step further, distinguishing all feelings which include fear of object loss from full-fledged guilt feelings, on the grounds that guilt must be purely autonomous and intersystemic.

In contrast to this point of view, there is an increasing literature on the subject of guilt and separation. Arnold Modell (1980), in a discussion of character structure and analyzability, suggests that certain guilt feelings arise as a consequence of pathological factors in the separation-individuation process. These guilt feelings are expressed in the belief that "to obtain some good for oneself means that someone else has been deprived," and that

"having one's own separate life will damage the other" ultimately; "in order to be born, someone else must die" (p. 102).

Modell believes that unconscious guilt has been overlooked as a factor in narcissistic disorder because of the tenet of psychoanalytic theory that the superego is heir to the oedipus complex: "This position would ignore the fact that the superego has a prehistory that is unrelated to the oedipus complex and that, furthermore, unconscious guilt in a certain sense may precede the development of the superego itself" (p. 103).

There are, in fact, contemporary theorists who reject the role of guilt in separation anxiety. This point of view has espoused in a recent paper by Leo Speigle, "Moral Masochism, Unconscious Guilt, Success, Superego Implications" (1979). Speigle argues that interpretations of unconscious guilt were "inefficatious" and "heuristically sterile" in the treatment of negative therapeutic reactions. He attributes the negative therapeutic reaction to the fear of change rather than to unconscious guilt, reasoning that success changes the internal and external milieu and strains the ego's adaptive capacities. He does not actually identify the fear of change as a form of separation anxiety, although in his clinical material he describes a patient's inability to give up a dependent role for a competitive one, by way of illustrating the fear of change. It is perhaps this failure to recognize fear of change as a form of separation fear which obfuscates the possibility of interaction with feelings of guilt.

It is my belief that there is an interaction between guilt feelings and fears of separation, clearly verbalized in many adult borderline and narcissistic patients but also discernible in children. This view will be amplified in my conclusions.

Chapter III

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF NORMAL LATENCY

Normal latency has traditionally been characterized as a period of quiescence in regard to the instinctual drives. Anna Freud notes that compared to the oedipal child, the latency child seems definitely less beset by problems (1936). Other writers have observed that the instinctual attitude toward the parents undergoes a change. The openly incestuous and competitive strivings of the oedipal phase are largely replaced by aim-inhibited relationships. Interest is transferred from the parental figures to peers and other adult authority figures.

According to Anna Freud, latency is characterized by the ability to plan, to learn and to work with a minimum of regard for immediate reward, and a maximum regard for pleasure in the ultimate outcome. The pleasure principle gives way to the reality principle; primitive instinctual pleasures to sublimated ones. Miss Freud attributes these changes to the dimunition of the sexual drive, in accordance with Freud's view that sexuality has a biphasic course of development, with spurts in early childhood and at puberty.

In recent literature, several writers have advanced the view that the drives do not actually diminish during latency, rather they are more adequately controlled due to the maturation of cognitive functions and the development of more efficient defenses.

Shapiro and Perry, in "Latency Revisited" (1976), have culled data from various sciences which indicate that the major changes in the mental life take place at the age of 7, plus or minus 2 years. These changes reflect biological, including neurobiological, perceptual and cognitive developments, as well as environmental factors. The effect of these multifaceted changes is to make possible a more extensive and effective use of repression and facilitate a shift from primary to secondary modes of thinking. The authors consider that repression, which involves the reorganization of thinking in such a way that archaic and more integrated forms of thought may be simultaneously present in different organizational frames within the same psychic apparatus, is a major acquisition, contributing to the inhibition and control of the drives.

Sarnoff, in his book Latency (1976), likewise stresses the importance of repression in the normal development of the latency child. He maintains that cognitive and maturational changes underlie the child's increased ability to think in verbal abstractions and consensually agreed upon symbols. The use of consensually agreed upon symbols enables the child to de-emphasize drive related and conflictual ideas connected with his objects and facilitates distortion and repression.

Moral Development during Latency

The emergence of the sense of morality is held by clinical psychoanalysts to be the most prominent post-oedipal achievement. Anna Freud calls our attention to the very gradual nature of this

achievement, even after the passing of the oedipal phase superego functioning is only relatively independent from the vicissitudes of the child's relationship with the actual parents. Changes in real object relationships influence superego development until well into adolescence. Through her work with children, Anna Freud (1936) found that 5 year olds tend to internalize parental values in identification with the aggressor, but are not capable of self-criticism:

> They dissociate from their own transgressions, externalizing their fault and projecting their guilt. Vehement indignation at someone else's wrong-doing is the precursor of and substitute for guilty feelings on its own account. (p. 128)

Later, criticism is directed toward the self, and the standards of the superego coincide with the ego's perception of its own fault. Once the capacity for internalized criticism has been established, the severity of the superego is turned inwards, instead of outwards, and the child becomes more tolerant of other people.

She describes a precursor of mature superego functioning which she terms "objective anxiety" or "forepain." These terms refer to the anticipation of suffering that may be inflicted, in the form of punishment by outside agents. She believes that forepain which governs the ego's behavior is at first connected with reality and gradually comes under the influence of fantasy play--through which it is internalized.

She speculates that in certain individuals moral development remains at an intermediate stage. The critical process is never fully internalized:

> Although perceiving their own guilt [these individuals] continue to be peculiarly aggressive in their attitude to other people. In such cases the behavior of the superego towards others is as ruthless as that of the superego towards the patient's own ego in melancholic states. (p. 129)

Bornstein's observations on the development of the moral sense during latency support those of Miss Freud. She divides latency into two major periods: early latency (5½ to 8 years) and a second period (8 to 10 years). Superego formation and the earliest appearance of guilt take place in the first phase of latency. The first feelings of guilt are often intolerably painful for the child because the newly formed superego is extremely harsh and rigid, experienced as a threatening foreign body. The child characteristically deals with the feelings of guilt by instituting two defensive measures: "He identifies with the aggressor, and he projects the guilt." During the first phase of latency the ego is still "buffeted by surging impulses"; reaction formations are pervasive, but unreliable. By 8 years, defenses have stabilized and there is increased ability to take distance from the conscience, to own up to superego transgressions and tolerate guilt.

Piaget's contribution to our understanding of the cognitive changes which underlie the development of the moral sense during latency has been widely influential. According to him, the moral judgments of children (up to 6 or 7 years) are limited by their cognitive immaturity. Young children are guided by moral realism and egocentrism, which lead them to view rules as unchangable, eternal and absolute. They are unable to distinguish between subjective and objective aspects of experience and confuse their

own perspective with that of others.

They determine the rightness or wrongness of an act on the basis of the magnitude of its consequences ("transgression defined by punishment") whereas older children judge an act as bad on the basis of intent to do harm. Younger children believe in "imminent justice," i.e., that the violation of social norms and established rules will be automatically and magically followed by punishments. Physical accidents and misfortunes are seen in relation to misdeeds, as punishments willed by God. The child's earliest morality is oriented toward obedience, punishment and impersonal forces. Later, (8 years and up) the child develops a critical and autonomous moral judgment. This evolves particularly through interaction with peers and is characterized by voluntary mutuality, collaborative equality and fair play.

Features of Moral Development under Ideal Conditions

Keeping in mind the findings of Anna Freud and Berta Bornstein regarding the gradual consolidation of the superego and its relative immaturity during latency, it still seems possible to describe certain features which we would expect to see in their moral thinking of the normal latency child. From a psychoanalytic point of view, ideal superego development at latency should reflect a marked concern with right and wrong and a tendency to synthesize these concerns into a moral code. Moral prohibitions should begin to operate with some consistency. Sarnoff (1976) speaks of the child's achievement of "behavioral constancy" the "moral equivalent of object constancy."

He maintains that this achievement enables the child to understand subtle ethical concepts and replaces moral absolutism with a recognition of the possible diversity of views of right and wrong.

Images related to prohibition and punishment should be balanced by those related to reward and idealization, and the various aspects of moral functioning should be sufficiently amalgamated so that they are no longer individually visible. Prohibitions should be in the service of idealizations and the rationale for behavior should be based on identification with the standards and values of the parents, rather than on fear of punishment.

Peculiarities of Superego Development in the Borderline Child

Questions of right and wrong in the abstract, and the working out of a moral code, seem to be beyond the capacity of the borderline child. In these children we often see in place of concern with the abstractness, impartiality and symbolization of moral issues a preoccupation with self-blame for past, present and future real and imagined misdeeds.

The inadequacies of the superego are, as Pine (1974) reminds us, not readily separable from failures of judgment and affectional attachment. The neurotic picture differs from the borderline in that in the former, conflict arises "in the context of more or less normal development of the several sides of the personality" (p. 344). Anna Freud (1966) believes that the uneven development of drives as compared to ego and superego is frequently responsible for atypical

clinical pictures and borderline manifestations. Retarded ego and superego development coupled with normal or precocious progress of the drives is reflected in the inability to neutralize pregenital trends and establish reaction formations and sublimations.

Impairment of ego and superego functions must be understood in the context of prior developmental failures. The failures insure that the child will be fixated in the rapprochement struggle--unable to resolve the oedipal conflict--which requires clearer self-object differentiation. The picture of fixation is never pure--whether or not the child has resolved the conflicts associated with earlier stages, he is "drive by an inner thrust," an "unalterable timetable of biological maturation" (Stewart, 1979, p. 27) to confront the tensions of the oedipal situation. However, the borderline child is only superficially able to grapple with these tensions. He is primarily dominated by issues related to separation and individuation. His goal is to coerce the object to function as a part of him, as was possible in the symbiotic period. For the borderline child, closeness is never perfect enough, and on the other hand, threatens him with re-engulfment. Ambitendencies, annihilation fears and fears of loss of personal identity, tend to infiltrate the conflicts of the oedipal triangle, heightening the otherwise relatively attenuated and circumscribed castration anxiety.

Not only the issues which confront the borderline child, but the defenses available to him, differ from those which we see in the neurotic. Tendencies toward merging with the object, and primary identification, are beyond the scope of neurotic defenses and

demand stronger measures. Among these we see splitting and the maintenance of attitudes of omnipotence and devaluation of the object. Even where the borderline child appears to use the same defenses as his neurotic counterpart, i.e., identification with the aggressor, projection, externalization and denial, upon closer examination there are differences and distortions in the way these defenses operate.

For example, when Spitz speaks of the normal child's identification with the aggressor, he is referring to the child's experience of the parent's limit setting as an aggressive act. In normal situations the child begins also to trust that parental limitations are largely imposed in his best interests. Limitations become increasingly comprehensible and predictable to the child; while they may frustrate immediate instinctual demands they are ego-supportive. In contrast, we see that the mother of the borderline child is frequently unable to set limits. In her unpredictability and frequent need to resort to punishment, she actually <u>is</u> an aggressor, and it is this quality with which the child often identifies. There is little opportunity to identify with the consoling, protective functions of the mother, in Furer's sense, and this lack would seem to be reflected in an inability to tolerate those aspects of guilt which involve empathy for the object. Instead, identification with the aggressor serves to fortify omnipotence.

Internalization of rules and parental standards and the acquisition of the ability to delay impulse, does not take place. Parental communication of rules may be confusing, as for instance

when prohibitions represent covert permission. In a sense, the child's wild destructive behavior lives up to parental demands and represents an acting out of the parent's unacceptable impulses. This has the effect of seriously undermining the child's reality-testing as well as his moral development.

The normal child's defenses enable him to feel that the problem is "out there"; the others are the bad guys; it is the teacher's fault; all the other kids do it. Most of the time the normal child experiences himself as good. In fact, their success in externalizing and their reluctance to look at their conflicts is one of the problems in working with normal latency age children. What I hope to show in the clinical material to follow is that for the borderline child none of the defenses available seem to work.

Chapter IV

ISSUES RELATED TO THE DIAGNOSIS OF GRAY AS A BORDERLINE CHILD

Formal testing was initiated with Gray through the Psychological Center of CUNY at the onset of treatment, but the attempt had to be abandoned as he became totally out of control in the test situation. After a year of treatment, his parents requested testing through the Committee on the Handicapped of New York City Board of Education. He was diagnosed as a childhood schizophrenic, based on the examiner's findings that he was "inappropriate, showed poor reality testing," and was "apparently experiencing auditory hallucinations." This last finding was based on his claim that he could talk to God. In fact, not a spontaneous remark but a response to the examiner's question, whether he ever heard voices or saw people who weren't there. Verbal ability was found to be average, nonverbal functioning was within the low-normal range, and there were suggestions of an organic component.

My diagnosis of borderline was arrived at in the course of treatment. Within the borderline category he seemed to fit into the group of children Pine (1974) calls "ego devaint" (see also Weil, 1953, 1956). His functioning was uneven and, at times, showed evidence of better integration and capacity for object relationships. However, even at these times of relatively good functioning his

deficits were "always silently present--shaping reactions to experience."

He also seemed to fit into a group of children described by Pine (1974) and Ekstein (1954) whose development is less mixed and whose functioning in all areas seems to shift between a relatively high level and a more regressed one. Pine stresses that the distinction between these two groups of children is not hard and fast and that there may be a considerable overlap of features between these groups. The distinctive quality about the second group of children is that while they have "developed the capacity for object relatinoship to a person experienced as 'out there' and 'other'--this seems neither to bind together the ('good' and 'bad') object in one tempered whole, nor to replace fully a symbiotic undifferentiatedness, nor to guarantee against profound withdrawal" (p. 352).

Functioning at the Onset of Treatment

Relationships within the Family Setting

Difficulties in Gray's relationship with mother became evident in his second year. Until this time, mother and he had been "inseparable." He did not walk until 14 months and she "literally carried him everywhere." Father had been depressed and withdrawn. Mother described herself as clinging to Gray who "made me happy" (see history). In the second half of the second year there was a marked change in his temperament. According to mother, from being a contented toddler he became a petulant one. When he did not get his way there were temper tantrums which went on for hours.

"Rebellious" provocative behavior became worse around the time of mother's second pregnancy (Gray just 2 years) and the birth of his brother. While mother reports no actual regression in terms of toilet training, there were many equivalents. He would fling talcum powder and smeer vaseline. He also began to curse and to destroy mother's possessions. He would call mother's attention to what he was doing and then, while she watched, he would destroy a plant she specially liked. Mother would retaliate with spankings, withdrawal, and statements of dislike for him. Then would follow tender scenes in which she would embrace him with protestations of love and promises of gifts if he would behave. Sometimes, in the face of his calculated provocation, she would break down in tears, whereupon he would attempt to comfort her and tell her he was sorry. Mother would chide him for making her feel "sad and scared."

By the time he came for therapy, his attacks on mother had become frequent and daring. He would hold out longer before capitulating to mother and their reconciliations were quickly disrupted by anger. Although it was evident that he felt alone and frightened, he insisted he did not care. At times he seemed bent on destroying the precious links between himself and mother, the things for which he had received love and approval. For example, mother related how he had made a teddy bear which she had been very pleased with and which he had treasured. Following a falling out between them, he destroyed this teddy bear. His scatalogical clowning and destructive behavior seemed to confirm mother's belief that all her worst fears about herself had been realized in this child. She felt people

would see him and criticize her. She spoke of him as her "secret."

Father also saw many of his own vulnerabilities in this child but he was less involved in the rapprochement struggle and able to be gentler with him. However, as a passive, depressed man, he despaired that Gray would ever change and retreated from involvement with him in favor of his younger son. Mother also had an easier time with this younger son. Gray was very aggressive with his brother who was described as adoring Gray.

Father's unavailability and mother's possessiveness seemed to have contributed to Gray's difficulty in accomplishing the task of disidnetifying with mother and identifying with father, a shift which, according to Greenson (1968) should take place in the second year. Instead of making this shift, he remained locked in a painful rapprochement-like, anal-sadistic struggle with mother. While he was not disturbed enough to be considered a symbiotic psychotic child (in Mahler's sense) his failure to negotiate the rapprochement period is common--almost pathonomic--for borderline children.

Functioning at School

It was not actually on account of his difficulties at home that his parents finally brought him for treatment; rather, it was the fact that three successive teachers had voiced concern about him, describing him as spending much of the day staring at the floor, not participating in activities, and as far as they knew, not learning.

During the first year of treatment the nature of the complaints from school changed: he became disruptive, calling

attention to himself by clowning, pulling down his pants and soiling the other children's belongings with the pickings from his nose. It seemed that his inability to share an adult with other children characterized his adjustment at school as it did at home and in therapy.

Relationships with Peers

It seemed a positive sign prognostically that Gray was drawn to other children and able to maintain relationships with them, albeit of a very troubled nature. He tended to relate to children, who like himself, had experienced rejection, and whose anger toward parental figures was expressed openly and often. He had particularly strong feelings for a boy I will call Jake--whom he had known since babyhood. This boy had actually been deserted by his mother who left him to be brought up by father. Gray spoke of Jake as "the worst fighter--even crazier than me." With his friend he could share and act out hateful feelings towards his own mother. Although he could sometimes play contentedly with girls--frequent aggressive outbursts would result in the friend's departure--leaving Gray feeling desperately unhappy.

The Capacity for Trust

Pine (1974) considers that children who are unable to trust form a subgroup in the borderline category, since the failure is related to poorly developed boundaries and self-object differentiation. Gray showed tendencies, which according to Pine are the childhood forerunners of the "mistrustful personality" or "paranoid

character." According to Pine, this personality pattern does not stabilize until preadolescence. The latent form of these remote effects are expressed during childhood in "tendencies toward intellectualization, omnipotence, projection, and splitting" (p. 362).

In his relationship with me, trusting and loving attitudes alternated with fear of disappointment, betrayal and attack. At one moment I would be viewed as an important, protective figure, then the vulnerability of this position would lead to aggressive thoughts.

For example, he began a session demanding to know whether I had kept his things safe: "Are my animals safe in my box. . . . I told you to put them in my box." (I showed him his box with his toy pets.) "I still have your phone number, even though I lost the paper. I think about it in my head. I know it by heart." ("It helps you feel safe to know it by heart?") "I wanna break hearts!" ("Whose?") "Yours, mine."

He reacted to any signs that I did not belong to him as to a betrayal. His questions about other children using the playroom, or about my attachments outside the playroom, were stated like accusations and followed by outbursts of aggression.

> Charley Brown break your nose off. Charley Brown is bad. How come the Tyger [his term for me] doesn't wanna listen? When I tell you something [i.e., when I ask you] "Do other people come here to play?" you don't say "yes." You say something different. I'm gonna get that lady. Do you like when I do that? [He strikes out again.]

The wish for exclusive possession of me and the playroom had taken on oedipal coloring. However, oedipal issues got their intensity

from needs related to earlier, unresolved symbiotic relationships.

It was characteristic of him to respond to disappointment without any modulation or sense of proportion. Even minor occurrences seemed to tap into early disillusionment in the mother and deflation of self-esteem.

He was particularly sensitive to being forgotten. He experienced the slightest omission as proof of neglect, which overshadowed all else. For example, he became fond of a rope swing in the playroom. If he found that this swing had a knot in it he would guess that I had neglected to take it out after another child had used the swing. Even when the knot was undone, he would continue to fret, insisting there was "a knot you can't take out," as though emphasizing the unalterable fact of his hurt feelings.

He seemed convinced that these omissions were intentional and, in fact, through the history and in the course of treatment it became clear that mother's hostility toward this child would frequently be expressed by forgetting or giving away things related to him.

Splitting

One of the ways in which he dealt with disappointment in me was by attempting to assign mistrustful thoughts to an object external to himself and separate from me. He invented a character called Anni Burgler. This name was a play on the name of the woman whose office playroom we used, and whom I spoke of several times, generally in connection with restrictions on the use of the room. In this role of owner-restrictor she was an ideal figure to embody the disturbing

qualities he found in me. Fantasies relating to this character would surface in connection with me as unpredictable, deceptive, and withholding. For example, when, at one point, we could not find a little wooden airplane he had made he thought maybe Anni had thrown it out. She was also endowed with his own unacceptable impulses. She was "a thief . . . a person from another house who might come and rob everything. They'd take the toys, clay and everthing." Her connection to me was clear; in the earliest sessions she emerged as my sister, as fantasies about her unfolded, the relationship between us was envisaged as even closer. She was my twin. He defined twins as "a brother or a sister, same face, all dressed alike, different names."

Other Pathological Defensive Reactions

Other responses to disappointment included outbursts of aggression, masochistic provocation of attack and attempts to control loss by actively making it happen. These responses will be illustrated with clinical material to follow.

Masochistic Features

Self-directed aggression seemed to have the object of pleasing or appealing to me. When, early in therapy, he was told he would be coming twice a week he said, "You like me, do you want me to eat clay? Would that be funny?" and he proceeded to put clay in his mouth. When I asked how he thought this would make me feel, he answered, "Sad and scared," echoing mother's response to his provocations.

He continually tried to get me to attack him: "What kinda word you want? Coki? Shit? You don't even get mad when I say . . . "

Fluidity of Boundaries

Gray had the task of identifying with a mother in whom he had experienced traumatic disappointment. He tended to see her as "bad," in the dual sense of being powerful, hostile and punishing, as well as in the denigrated sense of being low, defiled, empty and castrated, and he tended toward a primary identification with her in both these aspects. Fusion of self and object in images which convey damage and weakness may be seen in the following material.

At one point he was looking forward to visiting an amusement park and recalled that on his previous visit there he had seen a woman faint while she was waiting on the refreshment line. "She fell down, she had a concussion." On the way home from the amusement park, he heard on the car radio that she had gotten better. Going over this story he guessed that someone had pushed the woman on line. He mused, "She wasn't old, she was young, like mommy." The woman reminded him of a dead baby bird he and mother had seen not long before. "How could the woman look like a bird . . . she didn't have a beak? But her head was like this." (He bent his head to one side to show me.) "The dead bird had broke its wing. The mother bird didn't realize because she was too busy feeding the other babies and feeding herself. She didn't see him. It wasn't her fault, she didn't know and he died." He went on to talk about a boy with a broken leg and an old man he and mother had seen at the hospital, "It's not funny, it's very sad . . . all those people."

Other Aspects of Ego Functioning

Ego functioning was characterized by poor judgment and by difficulties in accepting the reality principle. Stressful situations seemed to facilitate a degree of dedifferentiation. Gray demonstrated a "failure to respond to anxiety as a signal," a trait which Rosenfeld and Sprince (1963) and Weil (1953) consider typical of the borderline child--and one which has clear implications for the capacity to tolerate guilt. For him anxiety and guilt tended to be so massive that they were unusable. There was unusual access to primary process thinking, invasion of primitive, violent fantasies into consciousness and a tendency to put these fantasies into action.

In considering Gray a borderline child, rather than a psychotic one, I take into account Pine's (1974) and Ekstein and Wallerstein's (1954) criterion that borderline children always seem to retain "a slight degree of control." In fact, Grey often did appear to be deterred from totally unbridled destructive behavior. It seems significant that even in his wildest tantrums he never caused serious injury or damage to property.

His consciousness of and ability to verbalize conflict, and his active appeal for help seemed, to some extent, to balance mistrustful feelings and low frustration tolerance.

In the course of therapy, his capacity for sublimation, as well as his enormous wish to be good and loveable and to make reparations, also became evident and seemed to speak for a less serious diagnosis.

Chapter V

EVALUATION OF GRAY'S SUPEREGO FUNCTIONING

The Idealization of Being Bad

In order to defend against disappointment, Gray strove to establish himself as powerful and invulnerable. Being bad in the sense of "macho" seemed to insure his strength. He often chose his friends for their badness and wildness:

> I have crazy friends--why do people call them crazy? But my friends could be crazy if they want to be. Then I could copy them if I want to. Adam--he's crazier than Jake. He moved into an old house. He peed on the toilet and on the floor.

Jake (whose mother actually left him) is the embodiment of badness; admired by Gray because he does not seem to need a mother. Jake also appears strong because he does not seem to struggle with guilt feelings. With Jake, he would engage in symbolic sadistic and erotic attacks on mother. He reported that he and Jake found an abandoned car that looked like Jake's mother's car:

> We found firecrackers and put them down the gas tank. . . . When the gas men comes the car will blow up. We broke the lights and completely wrecked the car . . . dumb sexy car. I hate it too.

(This primal scene fantasy surfaced again 2 years later, during this time he had ruminated over his fear that somebody really had gotten hurt, even though the firecrackers had been used ones.)

On the other hand, he pitied Jake who was even worse off than he. He identified with Jake in his rejected state, as can be seen in the following description of Jake's birthday (without his mother):

> He didn't like any of his presents. We both cried and were crazy about everything for a whole hour. And our stomachs kept on hurting. Only the grownups liked the cake. Jake wanted a cherry cake.

While being bad protected Gray against caring and being vulnerable, it also increased his sense of being responsible for his own plight and being worthless. The connection between being bad and loss of love is clear in his observations of Jake:

> No one likes Jake. His mother left him because he was wild. Know what he gets for his birthday? Nothing. No one gives him anything. I'll give him a car.

He wanted me to love Jake and himself in spite of their badness. Towards this end he drew Jake's picture for me:

> I know you're gonna love Jake . . . orange hair . . . green suit . . . his nose is an upside down heart. [What would I love about him? I don't know, but I love him.] He says curses and he's wild.

Lampl de Groot (1962), who sees the ego ideal as developing separately from the superego, suggests that in the borderline child, the ego ideal still reflects the primitive ideals, fantasies of grandeur and omnipotence, which are normally seen much earlier. That is, it remains primarily a wish-fulfilling agency, and fails to provide real and adequate goals and satisfactions. I believe we see this in Gray's admiration of badness.

Gray also wishes to be good. In the same session where he admires Jake for his badness he wants to be seen as cute and good,

a little gentleman. He suggests we play school. "Wanna play school? Were you ever a teacher? I'll finish this pumpkin for you . . . is it cute?"

Gray's identification with Jake and participation in Jake's attack on mother figures, is followed by fears of retaliation and loss of self-esteem, for example, by the idea that he will be flushed down the toilet:

> I got all naked and peed all over the place. Shit and stepped in it. My friend Jake made doodie on the sky. It fell down on a girl's head. I'm gonna suck milk from your tit. [He bares his own chest.] Fuckin' tits. [He tries to pull down two hanging lamps.] I want to break it. [Then he goes to the toilet very anxious.] It could overflow. I could go down? [Therapist: "You think you're such a bad boy."] I <u>am</u> bad.

His fear of being flushed away expresses his view of himself as totally bad--a piece of shit. At one point, ideas of being flushed away consolidated into a phobic fear of using toilets outside his home which persisted for several months. During this time he had nightmares about being flushed down the toilet and dying. The phobia appeared after he had been sent home from school for cursing and father punished him by washing his mouth out with soap. This incident illustrates the extent to which his parents shared his view of himself as an evil mess. It seemed to bring home to him an equation between anus and mouth, and the idea that badness came from every orifice.

He identified with all sorts of cast out, dirty, weak and victimized creatures. He had heard that pigeons were dirty and carried disease, yet they were little and needed to be loved. They couldn't help it if they were bad for people. In the midst of his

happiest moments, concerns related to pigeons would come up. For example, he loved making fires in the wood-burning stove when suddenly the thought would come to him that "perhaps a pigeon is stuck in the fire, burning up."

At one point, when his mother and father were having difficulties with each other, Gray felt sure he was the bad one whom mother would send away. He became extremely destructive and provocative in an effort to force mother to send him away. He expressed the fantasy that if only he could be perfectly good, mother would give up all her other involvements and devote herself to him, in symbiotic union.

Inadequacy of Impulse Control and Reaction Formation

Gray was often successful in containing his impulses; however, he had clearly not achieved "behavioral constancy." Aggressive thoughts and lapses in impulse control created castration anxiety and fears of hurting others.

In an early session, apparently stimulated by the many tempting things in the playroom, Gray verbalized his conflict over "taking." He noticed a "T" written on the table. "Maybe it is there for a reason.... Take. So no one would steal.... Like, don't take."

In the same session he related a dream: "I chased a dog. I tired to steal a dog. A bee came after me and I stepped on it." He offered this dream as an explanation of his hesitancy to use the rope swing. The control is produced within the dream and represented

by the bee. His stepping on the bee may involve the anticipation that he will be punished by being stung. His fear of using the swing in connection with the dream suggests castration anxiety.

Later, he worked with clay. He talked about poking wire into eyes and mouth he had made in the clay. Mother sat beside him and he came close to poking her with the wire. In the following session, he reveals his preoccupation with this incident, announcing spontaneously that he won't bring any wire home with him because "You could poke an eyeball out."

Guilt as a Disinhibiting Factor

Gray had also failed to achieve constancy in his responses to evidence of his aggression. There were times when it seemed clear that the recognition that he was to blame would result in an escalation of aggression. The sight of the dents and marks he had previously made on walls and furniture would impel him to renew his attack. He would kick the marks he had already made. There are several examples of increased aggression in response to self-blame in the clinical sessions which will be presented later in this chapter. However, I would like to include an illustrative incident here.

On one occasion I suggested he could take home a story book to read to his new kitten after I had previously told him that things were not to be borrowed from the playroom. He was at first thrilled with his suggestion. He talked enthusiastically about the kitten and how the kitten would enjoy being read to:

> He likes me . . . sleeps with me at night. He snores. It's called purring. It means he's happy. He tickles me with his paws till I wake up. Know what I do then? I tell him stories. The cat listens till he goes to sleep. I know the cat's gonna like this book.

But a moment later he remembered that I had once told him that things were not to be taken home from the playroom; he began to ask anxiously, "The people here won't mind?" I tried to reassure him that in this case they would not mind, but he began throwing blocks onto the floor, repeating the words "Break, break" nervously, and looking at me all the while. "You got a doughnut baker, a brown shit," he said. Of course, he was angry with me and frightened by me for trying to seduce him into something he is not supposed to do. But it would also seem that he suddenly found himself in the position of wanting to do something which he felt guilty about. This would be a painful position, even for a more intact latency age child, but Gray's response seemed unusual. He seemed to take on the role of being bad. I had the distinct sense that if I had reinforced his feeling of being in the wrong, by scolding him, his destructive gesture would have spiralled into a full fledged tantrum.

At these times, his behavior seemed to be at the "intermediate" stage Anna Freud speaks of, when critical processes are not fully internalized and children perceive their own aggression but still remain aggressive towards others.

However, at other times, he would turn aggression towards himself, or try to get me to turn on him or reject him. Self-

directed aggression could have a highly purposeful and object-related quality, suggesting feelings of guilt and worthlessness, as well as masochism. The damages he had inflicted on the room seemed to have a cumulative effect on him, amounting to a sense of irreparable damage; and he would remark very sadly, "Remember when I did those?" The lack of constancy in his ability to contain aggression would argue against the influence of a structured superego.

As he became attached to me and to the therapy room, his struggle with impulses became more comprehensible. The main source of conflict seemed to be his growing attachment itself and the wish it aroused for exclusive possession. As he began to play out his relationship with mother and brother, anger towards me and towards imagined rivals for frustrating his wishes, and intense guilt feelings, became apparent. I would like to illustrate this by examining material from four consecutive sessions which took place about 4 months into treatment. (At this time sessions were still on a once-weekly basis.)

Session: 11/1/78

Gray burst into the therapy room and looked around. He grasped a sturdy wooden chair. "Is this a chair to stand on?" he asked. Then he continued talking about his friend Jake, "I know somebody named Jake, put shaving cream all over the street on Halloween. He did it to our Jack-o-lantern and our house. He had egg all over the stove. Ooh, he had to clean it up. He slipped in it."

"Mother has a VW car, someone stole it. When I was a baby, somebody stole mother's car."

Gray, up on the rope swing: "I'm in the ocean drowning. I'll fall in the quicksand. Would you like that?"

"Does Anni live here? I colored on my shoes. Who lives up here? I wish I lived up here and Anni lived downstairs, then we'd each have a house."

Gray, down from the swing, threw it quite close to me. I said he wished he could stay all the time, then perhaps he felt angry with me that he couldn't. At this point he "accidentally" knocked over the chair he had asked about earlier. "If it broke, I'd have to pay for it," he said. He ran downstairs to mother, who sat in the waiting room. "Mommy, I love you," he said, and then ran up to the therapy room.

To me he said, "I don't wanna hurt you" (denial). A moment later, he again threw the swing at me. "Remember, I said I love mother . . . I love you too."

A little later he asked, "Wanna play school? Were you ever a teacher? I'll make a pumpkin for you" (making up for preceding aggression). He drew a pumpkin and colored it in with magic marker. "Is it cute?" While he drew I explained that I wasn't a teacher, that my job was to help children with their worries.

"Let's play school," he said. But instead he climbed onto the swing and swayed back and forth thoughtfully. "Do all your children feel guilty? Charley Brown feels guilty for everything he does. He gets a bag of stones for Halloween." I said I wondered how

this Charley Brown could be helped. "I'd give him a licorice . . . I don't wanna feel guilty for everything Charley Brown does." A moment later, down from the swing, he noticed a box on which another child had crayoned.

Gray: "Who took the box out . . . who wrote on it?" I said, "Sometimes you're not sure whether you do things or not. You feel guilty for things you don't even do.

Comment. In this session he is first anxious about whether the chair can hold him. This concern sounds a note which will be repeated in later sessions. The idea which followed this, about someone stealing mother's car is also one that he often returned to. Cars frequently seemed to represent the mother whom he assaults sexually but here, the fact that the theft is placed back in babyhood, suggests the wish to be carried, as he was "literally carried everywhere" by mother until he was 14 months old. The meaning seems to be that somebody stole mother's car when he was a baby, and now he is worried, either about his own wishes to steal the car back for himself; or that someone else will again steal it from him. There is a sense that the only way to get mother is to steal her. Neither he, nor anyone else has a right to her. He was highly anxious after this and his talk of drowning in the quicksand seems to reflect a fear of retaliation for stealing, or a repetition of the loss of mother.

He then expresses a wish to live in and thereby possess the therapy room and the therapist. This is the first time he has put this wish into words. The idea seems to upset him and in a burst

of disorganized falliling around, he knocks over the very chair he had earlier thought might not hold him. He then envisions the consequences of this accident. The chair could break and he would have to pay for it.

On the face of it, this seems to be an example of Anna Freud's "objective anxiety," the province of the ego. However, it becomes increasingly clear that anger and ideas of his own wrong-dealing relate only partially to the present. The retaliation that he fears relates to his anger at the failure of this holding environment.

When he is told that the purpose of coming to therapy is to get help with worries, he is finally able to tell me his version of what is bothering him, i.e., his guilt feelings. He does this by inventing a kind of alternate self--Charley Brown--who takes on painful unacceptable aspects of himself, as the brown burglar lady takes on my bad qualities.

It seems clear that he is not sure he did not crayon on the box. Intense feelings of guilt lead him to distort reality, and, conversely, poor reality-testing feeds into his feeling of guilt. It also seems noteworthy that the first verbalization of his fantasy of living in the therapy room coincides with his statement about his problem with guilt feelings. It would seem that the hope for closeness allows him to feel guilt feelings along with the appropriate affect--remorse.

Session: 11/4/78

In the following session he entered the playroom, looked around and observed accusingly that a knot had been left in the rope swing. He continued: "Nice house . . . do you live in this room? Do other kids? . . . No one lives here . . . kids can't and grownups can't . . . not big kids like me, not anyone. . . . I have a friend named Stevie. Sometimes he steals money from his mother, Penny. After I leave, does another kid come to play with you? Do they play just like me?" I attempted to answer these questions, but he said, "I don't want to talk about that no more. I tell you hard questions every day." A moment later he began to get very wild. "What's that song? Anni Burgler, you got mud on your face. Watch out," he cried, as he swung a heavy piece of wood near me. Toward the end of the session he again asked, "Am I heavy? 'Cause the swing is down. I think I'm too heavy. If a big kid, like me, sat on this swing, it would break." He went on, almost to himself. "Books tore up . . . toys all broken. Kids stay home and cry that come to play. I would be one of them." I asked, "Did you really do this?" "Not here. I better not, or else I won't be able to play." A short time later he was wild again and threw the swing at me. "Is our time almost up? . . . You don't want me to rip up all the books, do you?" I said, "Are you protecting the room from your angry feelings?" Gray picked up a glass: "I like this glass. It has flowers. Do you like it?" He seemed afraid that he might also break it, and put it down hurriedly. "Is this the last day I'm coming here?"

We see how hard it is for him to maintain a feeling of closeness which was built up in the last session. The least disorder in his surroundings may be taken as a sign of neglect on my part. He seems to anticipate that his wish to live in the therapy room will be rejected, and this leads, as in the last session, to ideas of stealing from mother. Here it seems clear that he is the one who has the wish to steal which he projects onto his friend, Stevie. He attempts to control his wishes and his demanding "hard" questions, but, in fact, he becomes angry with me and suddenly sees me as the bad "Anni Burgler," with blood on my face. This image may reflect a projection of his wish to steal, that is, he is the burgler and, while it is not, strictly speaking, an example of splitting, as he does not separate me from Anni Burgler, it does suggest that I easily change for him and that I can be devalued.

A moment later he again expresses the fear that he will be too heavy for the swing. What is unusual is that his fantasy of possessing the room and being held generates guilt feelings. Healthy children can have these fantasies without guilt feelings. His fear of being too heavy for the swing echoes his concern about the chair in the first session. He seems afraid that I will not be able to hold him in the therapy session and will repeat mother's failure to hold him when he was little. The crayoned box and the beautiful glass which he cannot hold for fear of breaking, again seem to remind him of mother's failure. He seems here to express his wish and fear that he has soiled or broken her. Ideas of having hurt mother constitute a major source of unconscious guilt. As

Freud (1916) points out, intense pervasive guilt, for which the source is unknown or unconscious, may lead to antisocial behavior in an unconscious effort to attach the guilt to something, thus rendering it comprehensible.

Session: 11/8/78

This session began with a series of disappointments in me--I broke my promise and forgot to bring clay for him. My neglect fits in with his increasing mistrust.

He asked about the clay the moment he came to the door. When he heard that I did not yet have it, he ran past me up the three flights of stairs to the therapy room, banging on all the doors as he went. In the therapy room he ran to the swing. "You were late," he said accusingly. I pointed out that I was not late, but that he must be disappointed about the clay. He denied this.

He began to talk about a "brown grownup" he had seen coming up the stairs. It became evident that he thought that this person was his Anni Burgler.

Then he went on: "My brother got hurt bad today . . . hit by a car . . . a motorcycle. He's in the hospital right now being operated on." I asked, "Is that true?" "Yes, I don't know. I'm going to wrench your nose."

He proceeded to take off his shirt and scribble on it. "Look, Judith Lobel!" he said, and continued taking off the rest of his clothes until he stood in his underpants. Then he went on the rope swing. "I'm big up to your neck. You're going to take my

clothes home and rip them, cut them up with a scissors and throw them in the garbage. You got an electric mark! Jabber jaws! Yenta! I'm in the ocean drowning." I said, "It must be very scary to think that I would hurt your clothes." Gray: "I'd be happy." At this point he wanted to go downstairs and "show mommy what I did to myself."

When he came upstairs again he said, "I'm not going to be here tomorrow, it's Saturday." He lay down on two large bean-bag chairs under the swing. "This is my porch, my eating porch," he said. He tried to open the chair and pull the stuffing out. When I stopped him he said, "Take the pillow away, take it away before I make you take it away. That's my magic. Okay, leave it here, but you know I could always make you take it away." I said perhaps he wanted me to take the pillow away so he wouldn't hurt it, now that he was so upset. Perhaps also he wanted to make the bad thing happen. G: "Want me to tell you hello, goodbye?" He said, "You say hello, I say goodbye ... your name is Anni Burgler."

"I'm the riddler," he said, "a bad guy, who tells a riddle. I'm not telling you this one. [That is, he wasn't telling me the answer.] You're supposed to guess . . . the bad guy ruined Porky Pig's birthday party. Do I have a disgusting mouth?"

He ended the session saying, "Did I do something you didn't like? I'm sorry. I'll get dressed now, for you."

Comment. Disappointment in me seems to sweep away his compunctions. It is as though when something goes wrong he cannot keep the good object inside--and becomes bad himself. He does not

complain of feeling guilty and he does not appear to feel remorse. It seems that he narcissistic insult is so great, and he is so threatened by it, that he cannot afford to care about what he does to himself or others. It is as though he were saying, "I'm invulnerable and everybody else is invulnerable." He feels omnipotent in the sense that he can control the loss.

While he does not seem to consider the real chaos he causes, he feels bad and powerful in his claim that his hostile wishes are realized. For example, he thinks of himself as "the bad guy" and "the riddler" who "ruined Porky Pig's birthday party." He seems to allude here to the birth of his younger brother and to a fantasy of what he did to his brother.

We see frank splitting here in his identification of the black housekeeper as Anni Burgler. Self-directed aggression is so purposeful and object-related that it strongly suggests underlying feelings of guilt, and feelings of worthlessness. Sadistic elements are evident in his wish to display the evidence of his self-aggression to mother, thereby attacking her visually.

Session: 11/11/78

Gray began this session by again asking if I had brought his clay. I told him that I had and asked how he had felt last time when I had not. G: "It's okay, you just forget." However, a few minutes later he again spoke of Anni Burgler: "She'll get you. She likes too. Know what she likes? . . . to eat you up like a bird . . . Where's my plane? Maybe Anni threw it out."

He swung. "King Kong over the ocean . . . no, it's a pond." "You got a car, a Nova. Popele like you got Novas--twins like you and twins like me have Novas. Do you like a Nova?" (I wasn't sure what "Novas" were, and asked. I also asked him what he meant by twins.) G: "You don't know what they're like . . . that's okay. When you see it you're gonna be excited. Will you buy that kind? I hope so." (I asked again about twins.) G: "A brother or a sister--same face--all dressed alike--different names. You could be adopted by your twin. I got a twin brother at my house named M—, who likes guns." I said, "I guess you think it's bad to like guns." G: Time to go home, I could tell." Me: "You feel you're so bad?" G: "Yes, time to go home." Me: "Is it safer to leave?" G: "Yes." Me: "I become Anni Burgler and it's safer to leave?"

He became agitated: "Are you gonna rob this house! You are! You don't know where I live. I live on _____. You'd bring flowers instead. I wish you were my mommy." I said I could help him but I couldn't be his mommy. "My mommy said I'm allowed to switch mommies." He threw a piece of clay at me.

G: "I'm gonna take a rest. This is my resting place." He lay down on the bean-bag chairs. "I'm gonna open the pillow and take the stuffing out--I'll take out a hundred." I said I guessed he felt so bad that he thinks things he likes should be taken away from him, to keep them safe. G: "2, 9, 8, 0, blast off." He tried to hit two wall lamps. "Take them away," he said. I said if he would make me take them away, then at least he'd have that kind of magic.

After a moment he curled up among the bean-bag chairs. He wanted a flashlight, and I covered him so that he had a sort of cave with a light in it. Then he wanted to take the flashlight home. I told him he could borrow it until the next session. G: "When I leave here for good, I'll take it with me. This time I'll bring it back."

Comment. Gray again begins by asking for his clay, confirming how important my lapse of memory had been to him. Again, he tries to deny his hurt, angry feelings and be very grown up, but his attempt is brittle. Angry feelings are not tolerated at home, as mother takes them as criticism, and he feels he is bad when he is angry. He continues, as in the previous session, to see me as rejecting and untrustworthy. Feelings of remorse or concern are barely in evidence. Splitting fantasies are elaborated. One moment I am a bad but exciting figure who likes fast cards; the next moment I am good; he wants me for his mommy. Trusting feelings toward me are briefly matched by a caring attitude toward himself: "I'll take my time driving." By the end of the session he has regained enough trust in me so that he can think he will take something valuable away with him at the end of therapy.

Session: 11/15/78

He began by complaining that the flashlight doesn't work. It had been "wasted"--I allowed the batteries to run out between sessions. From his perch on the swing he began to kick at me and at books on the shelf.

G: "How come the tiger doesn't listen when I tell you something [i.e., when he asks questions]. Do other people come to play here? You don't say "yes," you say something different. . . . Charley Brown is bad. . . . He rips paper."

I said he must be upset because the batteries had run out. "You have an idea that other children used these things--and you want so much to be the only one who comes here." G: "I want to and I will be!"

G: "I'd like to make a sleeping place with the flashlights--that's my favorite thing to do--I like it more than anything and the batteries got all used up."

He climbed sulkily onto the swing. "Nobody likes to sleep in the bathroom." He screwed the flashlight and peered inside. "I see some light. I feel like hitting you . . . shoot you in the face . . . you married? . . . I'm gonna get that lady. Do you like it when I do that? How do you like it if I throw the flashlight at you? . . . Here, eat it for lunch."

He attempted to throw it at me, and then pushed it into his own mouth.

He rested for a while on the swing while I empathized with his disappointment at finding the batteries had run out. Then he said: "When I was two years old I lived at 59. When I was one year old I lived here . . . downstairs. I saw this room a couple of times when I lived downstairs." After a pause he said, "I'm not gonna jump and be wild because there are people who live downstairs--they might hear all the jumping and falling. But maybe they did hear me."

Comment. He is again disappointed. I have wasted his supplies, given them to other children, or to my husband. He sees me as a tiger, bad and powerful, while he becomes Charley Brown. Not a remorseful Charley, but a ruthlessly vengeful one. He defends against his disappointment by becoming bad. "I want to be and I will be."

He is deadly sarcastic, pretending to see some light in the dead flashlight. Finally, my persistent empathy allows him to return to the fantasy of nostalgic closeness--once, when he was little, he lived downstairs. This fantasy seems to make it possible for him to feel concern about others (the people downstairs), and to attempt reaction formations. However, there seems to be a lot of anxiety in his resolve not to make noise. He is not at all sure he can do this. Past aggression--jealousy of those who live downstairs--crops up, just when he begins to imagine he could be good. In other words, he feels guilt, not in the sense of the classical theorists, i.e., as a useful signal. Rather, he feels guilt in the sense Freud (1916) used the term as follows:

> The sense of guilt was present before the misdeed . . . it did not arise from it, but conversely, the misdeed arose from the sense of guilt. The pre-existence of the guilty feeling had of course been demonstrated by a whole set of other manifestations and effects. (p. 335)

In the sessions which followed, he sought increasingly to share guilt feelings with me. He did this partially as he always had--by calling attention to himself through destructive behavior, confessing his badness, and provoking punishment. However, the therapy situation also facilitated a second type of sharing of guilt

feelings, i.e., describing the experience of feeling badly--what Freud called "the sensory material of the anxiety which is operating behind the sense of guilt" (1930, p. 332). Gradually he began to use the therapy situation to share guilt feelings in a third way: he would explore the events and conflicts which had given rise to the feelings. These three types of sharing may be seen in the following material.

He began one session (1/3/79) by cutting up paper and throwing the pieces at me and on the floor in a provocative way. When I tried to stop him he continued defiantly for a moment and then said, "I spit and you don't know where it is." I said maybe he was telling me he had done something he thought was wrong, something I don't know about.

He continued: "There was once a no-good, horrible, very bad day. The boy sleeps with gum in his mouth, wakes up with gum in his hair, trips over a skateboard." I said, "I guess that's how you feel when you feel badly about something." G: "I love Sundays. I don't like them. My brother is cute . . . a Sunday book. Once he was in jail and I got him out of jail. . . . You know what I did to my brother in the dark? . . . I scared him away . . . scared him in the dark . . . made doodie on him . . . dropped doodie on him from the sky."

Comment. He seems to feel oppressed by the secretness of his misdeed, and by an inability to sort out rational from irrational guilt. His need to make known his guilt seems primarily motivated by a wish to undo the secretness and to achieve closeness and acceptance.

However, it also gives him an opportunity to reduce irrational aspects of guilt, such as the fantasy that he made doodie on this brother.

In order for him to achieve closeness we see that a high degree of closeness and acceptance must already be present. The object must be perfectly in tune and uncritical of him. This is illustrated again in the following material.

Session: 7/11/79

During much of this session he had been very wild, threatening to break toys and other children's productions. Finally, he related that he had stayed home from school that day (his mother's way of making up to him for the fact that his brother had stayed home the day before). He wasn't able to enjoy the time with mother (probably because he was still angry with her for giving herself to brother).

He described how he spent the whole day trying to get mother to leave him alone in the house. To me he insisted, "I don't care if she goes . . . I'll sneak out and buy candy . . . I'll go by myself and I won't give my brother any." I maintained that he would have felt lonely without mother, and he felt lonely even with her since they were angry with each other. He responded by poking me with a scissors.

I continued that he had spent the whole day with mommy and had not known how to make up with her. G: "I want to give her something . . . I'll make a car, she'll like that." He began working

on a wooden car and we talked further about how the bad time with mother had started. He hadn't wanted to put his clothes on in the morning. G: "When I woke up I saw a lollipop on the floor. My brother put it there . . . it got all over the room . . . no one cleaned it up . . . no one knew."

I said that he must have felt no one cared about him--then he didn't want to get dressed all by himself.

G: "I'm angry that my brother did that. Once I messed up his room. Winter [the dog] and Spot [the cat] saw me. They knew I did it." I said it was clear he felt so sorry about it.

After a long pause he continued: "It wasn't my brother who left the lollipop; maybe I did it myself." I said, "You really couldn't blame your brother. You knew you did it."

G: "No one likes Jake [his friend]. His mother left him because he was wild. Know what he gets for his birthday? Nothing. Nobody gives him anything. . . . I'll give him a car." I reminded him that he had also tried to make mother leave because he feels so bad.

G: "Jake's father was sad. He didn't want her to leave. Jake's wild. I'm wild. I want to be."

Comment. At first Gray complains that his brother messed up his room; however, later it is questionable that this actually happened. Brother's mess appears to be figurative, a projection of his wishes to mess--a statement of his belief that when he is angry or jealous he is a mess. As in the previous session, when "the boy goes to sleep with gum in his mouth, wakes up with gum in his hair," the lollipop which eventually covers the room with its stickiness is

an image which expresses the tenacity of his guilt feelings. Try as will, he cannot avoid them. He returns invariably to ideas of guilt; they pervade the session like a mood.

In the course of the session, guilt feelings are alleviated as his sense of having been uncared for and angry is clarified. He is then able to acknowledge his aggression towards brother: "Once I messed up his room." Typically for a latency age child, he sees criticism as coming from without: Winter and Spot saw him. Finally, and unusually, for a child of this age, he is able to take full responsibility for the aggressive act: "Maybe I did it myself." However, this moment is quickly followed by ideas of loss of love and of the love object. The quality of regret and feeling badly about his act cannot be maintained. Instead, he reverts to grandiose, remorseless self-blame: "I'm wild. I want to be." He feels excessively bad and identifies with the cast-out Jake.

In this session we also see the extent to which his normal strivings for autonomy are impeded by guilt. He wants to go out by himself, but feels he is so bad that mother will leave him. Strivings for autonomy are complicated by a need to master desertion by making it happen.

In limited areas, largely growing out of his experience in therapy, Gray has developed subliminatory skills. His productions are clearly conceived of as reparative moves. They are a means of undoing guilt and the loss of the object. The same car is meant to be given to mother, and later to Jake; it is meant to bring mother and rejected son together.

It was not until the second year of therapy, when Gray was 7, that signs of concern with right and wrong in the abstract and the ability to act on principles began to evident. On one occasion (9/8/79), Gray and his younger brother were left for a day with a babysitter who took them shopping at a supermarket. In the session following this, Gray reported that the babysitter had done something "bad." She had opened a package of cookies before they had been paid for and had given some to Gray's brother and offered some to Gray, but Gray had refused to take any "because it was wrong." The fact that this instance of self-restraint appears in mother's absence suggests that Gray was striving to be good for her in order to maintain the tie between them. He was a child who generally found it easier to be good and to do loving things for mother in her absence than when she was with him.

Chapter VI

DISCUSSION

It does not seem possible to examine the phenomenon of guilt in a way which is free of theoretical bias. Each theoretical position shapes and limits formulations and contributes to our understanding of qualitatively varied states of mind. Differences of opinion as to what guilt is, who experiences it, and when in the developmental sequence it emerges, exist among Freudian thinkers, although these often remain latent.

It does not seem to me to be valid or useful to restrict the meaning of the term guilt to an objective state of affairs, as Grossman and Kaplan (1981) would suggest. Guilt has too long been familiar as a subjective cognition and affect, i.e., consciousness of guilt, and it is this application which must concern us as psychologists and clinicians. This restricted definition does not seem, in fact, to follow the direction of Freud's later thinking concerning the nature of guilt, or to correspond to the thinking of most classical theorists. To reiterate the classical view here: guilt refers to both ideas and affects related to wrongdoing. These are of a specially internal nature, concerned with the violations of ideals and principles, which have to a large degree been accepted as one's own. (I am here excluding Joffe and Sandler's [1965] view that guilt relates to violation of introjected authority, with which

there is not necessarily an identification.) Fear of object loss, loss of love, or other externally oriented punishment have been subsumed and replaced by fear of the superego. Genuine guilt does not afford masochistic gratification; it functions as a signal to promote renunciations and reaction formations.

In the classical sense, we see little guilt in Gray, although towards his eighth year there are some instances which would qualify. Nevertheless, I have tried to show that, contrary to the strictly classical position, one can observe luxuriating guilt feelings in this borderline child. Clearly, I am suggesting a somewhat different application to the word guilt, one that includes ideas and affects related to self-blame which reflects varying levels of ego development and object relations. These ideas may be realistic or irrational and grandiose; affective and behavioral responses may include empathy and concern, dissociation, cruelty, masochistic gratification, and attempts at reparation. The term remose does not seem adequate to cover all these ideas and responses since, particularly in cases of severe pathology such as we see in Gray, feelings of remorse occur, at first only in moments of intunement with the object, and are generally overshadowed by defensive grandiose self-blame. Perhaps a combination of remorse (feeling badly), grandiose self-blame (feeling bad), and a tendency to accept the view of himself as bad (being bad) would describe guilt responses in Gray.

If ambivalence conflicts are admitted as a source of guilt, i.e., concern for the object versus aggressive feelings, then clearly

there are frequent moments when Gray is flooded with guilt. It seems to me that ambivalence conflicts may also reflect varying levels of ego development and object relations. Fear of loss of the object, or of loss of love, may be paramount, or the conflict may involve recognition of the object's feelings and concern for the object, independent from one's own needs, in which case the ambivalence conflict acts very much like the classical criterion of guilt about internalized ideals and principles.

Gray has great difficulty maintaining concern for the object, since his sense of the object as severely damaged, and his sense of self-blame, drag him back to fears of object loss and fears of loss of love.

For Gray, object relations were both sought after but painful, because they could not be sustained as perfectly as he wished. The defenses used to cope with disappointment, splitting, identification with the aggressor and the turning of passive into active, all tended to support omnipotence and the unchecked expression of aggression. The aim of these defenses was to establish himself as invulnerable; however, a secondary effect was to increase his sense of being unworthy of love and responsible for his own plight. These feelings, in turn, would mobilize other defenses, such as projection and denial of guilt, in an attempt to avoid self-blame, but doubt always remained. The view of himself as bad tended to be total, and while in its sway other aspects of guilt, such as remorse or empathy, seemed to be experientially unavailable.

Kernberg's (1975) argument that borderlines fear attack by a bad object, rather than guilt, also does not appear to tell the whole story. In Gray's case we see that fear of attack is often seen in conjunction with ideas of culpability. Fear of attack seemed to be related to Gray's tendency towards primary identification. Attack takes the form of becoming weak, castrated like the object. But this fear is increased by the belief that he is responsible for the object's condition. Gray appeared to be an unusually sensitive child who had to fend off empathy (bordering on contagion) in order to preserve his sense of intactness. His capacity for remorse and concern were inhibited by the need to dissociate from an object perceived as highly vulnerable.

Escalation of aggression when confronted with evidence of his own past destructive attacks can be seen, for example, when he kicks the marks he had already made; aggression towards things broken can be seen when he tries to demolish the already broken box (see Chapter I).

In the treatment situation Gray clearly feared that I would be weak and unable to contain him. He seemed to prefer that I be assaultive and dangerous rather than weak. Toward this end he would try to provoke me to be a "tiger." Jacobson (1946) has observed that children can tolerate frustration, deprivation, even aggression and narcissistic hurt better than mother's weakness, and she suggests that the bad, persecutory image may be an attempt to defensively reanimate and reintegrate, in the form of an ego-ideal, the omnipotent idealized parental images, and defend against devalued ones.

Wiegert (1962) states, similarly, that "persecutory anxiety is a negative form of a positive ideal" (p. 270).

Object relations are also colored by sadomasochism related to anal power struggles as well as to the unresolved conflicts of the rapprochement period, i.e., the effort to coerce the object to function as a part of the self; to control the object in order to prevent engulfment or abandonment. Gray sees the world in terms of rapprochement and anal issues: victory and defeat, control and submission, helplessness and omnipotence. The strength of the sadistic drives contributes to guilt feelings.

The diffuse, irrational, and grandiose quality of guilt feelings we see in Gray must be understood in terms of incomplete self-object differentiation. This facilitates turning of blame of the other into self-blame. Self-blame, of course, serves Gray's great need to preserve the image of the good object. Gray suffers from what could be called existential guilt--his misdeed is growing up, growing bigger.

Several writers have emphasized the awareness of separateness as an important factor in the appearance of guilt feelings. Isaacs (1929), in stressing separateness, psychic helplessness, and rage as a source of guilt feelings, does much to translate the Kleinian concept of the depressive position into separation-individuation terms. Spitz (1960) associates the appearance of guilt with the assertion of self-hood, the internalization of conflict through identification with the aggressor, and the ambivalence conflicts of the second half of the second year. Asch (1976) specifically

points to the rapprochment crisis as the background against which feelings of disappointment, rage, and the earliest findings of guilt appear. Generalizing his ideas, it would seem that when the rapprochement child perceives the mother as vulnerable or damaged, and at the same time feels vengeful towards her, he may also feel in some way responsible for her emotional or physical condition. The child's sense of responsibility may be engendered by the mother through direct or indirect accusations, reproaches and retaliatory rejections, or it may reflect the child's distorted perception of the mother due to projection of his own vulnerability and neediness onto her. Separation-related guilt feelings may later take the form Modell (1965) speaks of: the thought that having one's own life will damage the other. I would suggest that Gray's guilt feelings were largely related to unresolved rapprochment conflicts, and that they are better described as ambivalence, conflicts, going back to Freud's early ideas, as Klein and Nunberg do. Gray's unusual need to identify with aggressors may be traced to fixation at early stages of defense formation.

Intunement with the object permits concern for both object and self. This observation supports Anna Freud's finding that the functioning of the superego in the latency age child is subject to the vicissitudes of relationships with important figures in the child's life. In Gray's case, the sense of intunement and non-critical acceptance, had to be pretty nearly perfect for him to feel he was good and act good. Disappointment led to loss of the image of the good object and a parallel loss of the good self-image.

Responses to failure on the part of the object were more extreme, since failure was tantamount to annihilation.

In fact, there was considerable evidence that Gray did strive to regulate his own behavior, but his ability to do so was dependent on harmony with the external object. The opportunity to communicate guilt feelings in the therapy sessions also seemed to have been very important in the development of the capacity for inner controls. Treatment involved repeated revelations of ideas of self-blame, and incidents about which he felt badly.

On the most primitive level, revelation took the form of calling attention to himself and his culpability through disruptive and destructive behavior. On a somewhat higher level, Gray would describe guilt feelings in the course of the session, e.g., "The boy went to sleep with gum in his mouth. Woke up with gum in his hair" (1/3/79). On a still more advanced level, Gray could briefly take realistic responsibility for aggressive acts, e.g., "It wasn't my brother who left the lollipop. Maybe I did it myself" (7/11/79). In these situations relief from feelings of guilt and worthlessness seemed to occur basically because the feelings of rejection, which gave rise to anger and guilt, were made understandable, rather than intrinsically bad. Interpretations addressed Gray's need to control rejections by making them happen, a need which at bottom expressed his belief in his own badness. Gray's wishes to be good and lovable, to make up with mother, were also pointed out and he was helped to find ways to make this come about. Thus, the focus of the therapy was on bringing about reunion and reconciliation.

Impulse control and reaction formation were fostered as a means to this end.

According to the classical viewpoint, feelings of discomfort over the perception of one's fault which can be dispelled through confession or obtaining forgiveness fall into the category of remorse and not guilt. But Gray's efforts did not stop at confession. In the course of treatment, he could increasingly identify with caretaking aspects of the adults around him. For instance, he acquired a variety of pet animals towards which he was intensely protective and tender. Through caring for these animals he could rescue both his outcast self and his mother whom he also saw as an outcast. Activities connected with his pets appeared to enhance self-esteem, and were increasingly age-appropriate in tone. He was also able to make direct restitutive efforts towards mother, although their relationship remained a difficult one.

Does this mean that in metapsychological terms Gray sought fusion with an ego ideal, rather than the dissolution of an over-strict superego? I do not believe the two goals are exclusive.

Gray's guilt feelings and restitutide attempts can be described by the word atonement, which includes not only the meaning of payment, punishment and extripation of sin, but also the meaning of reunion, "at-one-ment" with the lost object.*

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*The double meaning of the word "atonement" has been pointed out by Theodore Thass Thienemann in his book, The Subconscious Language (1967). I thank Dr. Arkin for calling my attention to Thienemann's exploration of this word.

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