

# The Need for Critical Theory and Critical Practice

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Lecture at the International Forum of Psychoanalysis  
Mexico City  
Wednesday Oct 10, 2012

## Inseparable Bond between Cure and Research

- In psychoanalysis there has existed from the very first ***an inseparable bond between cure and research.***
- Knowledge brought therapeutic success. It was impossible to treat a patient without learning something new; it was impossible to gain fresh insight without perceiving its beneficent results.
- (Freud 1927a, p.256, emphasis added)

## Analytic Pastoral Work

- Our analytic procedure is the only one in which this precious conjunction is assured.
- It is only by carrying on our analytic **pastoral work** that we can deepen our dawning **comprehension** of the human mind.
- This prospect of scientific gain has been the proudest and happiest feature of analytic work.
- (Freud 1927a, p.256, emphasis added)

## The Task of a Scientist

- „In his day work it is necessary for a **scientist** to exercise a high degree of criticism and selfcriticism: and in the world he inhabits neither the data nor the theories of a leader, however admired personally he may be, are exempt from challenge and criticism. There is no place for authority.
- The same is not true in the **practice of a profession.**

- (Bowlby 1979, p. 4)

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## The Task of Practitioners

- If he is to be effective a **practitioner** must be prepared to act **as though** certain principles and certain theories were valid;
- and in deciding which to adopt he is likely to be guided by those with experience from whom he learns.
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- Bowlby J (1979) Psychoanalysis as art and science. Int. Rev. Psychoanal. 6: 3-14

## Failure of the Inseparable Bond - Thesis

- From the very beginning aetiologically oriented research and therapy oriented research have been inextricably linked.
- Together with many researchers I hold the rather strong opinion that **this venture has failed.**
- Too many questions about the cause of disorders (aetiology) remain unanswered by studying therapeutic processes.

## The Role of Memory Recovery

- The debate between Fonagy (1999) and Blum (1999) about the role of **memory recovery** as a therapeutic factor.
- Fonagy's rather over-stated remark that "the recovery of memory is incidental to the process of psychic change" has not been sufficiently resolved in my opinion.

## The Role of Autobiography

- As **clarifying the autobiographical background** can have a beneficial therapeutic effect.
- By taking the past into account, temporality is taken seriously without which there can be no concept of the present or the future.

## Process and Outcome

- Since the congress in Marienbad in 1936 the research of therapy has been about the differentiation between the process and the result and the relationship between the two (Bibring 1937).
- A **large number of factors** that do have an effect in the therapeutic process have been identified by researchers and have been integrated into a **generic model** which also incorporates elements which are crucial for psychoanalytic therapy (Orlinsky et al. 2004, p. 316).

## Short – and Long-Run Causality

- Freud's priority was the proof of **causality**;
- Yet he did not adequately differentiate between **short-run and long-run causality**.
- **Long**-run causality denotes the principle which psychoanalysis is based upon: unconscious conflicts based in the past.
- **Short**-run causality denotes their implementation in the here-and-now.
- *Freud's example of the Halsman process*

## Minding the Gap

- Today we live in two kinds of discourse:
- The world of rich, various **clinical convictions** and the world of **empirical findings**.
- Luyten P, Blatt SJ & Corveleyn J (2006) Minding the gap between positivism and hermeneutics in psychoanalytic research. J Am Psychoanal Ass 54 (2): 571-610

## Clinical Convictions

- The clinical universe of psychoanalysis is characterized by a multitude of dearly held convictions:
- Be it **setting rules**, f.e. 1-2-3-4-5 times a week; couch or face-to-face.
- Preferences for work with **free association** or **moment-to-moment transference**.
- Preferences for various conceptions of **countertransference**.
- *Etc clinical work is highly idiosyncratic*
- *No analyst works the same way*

## Clinical Convictions



- One way to characterize the field of.e.
- Freudian, Neo-Freudian, Contemporary Freudian, Kohutian, Kleinian, Bionian, Lacanian, Bowlbians, Fairbairnian, Sternian, Kernbergian

**All are ind-ians**

## Why Do We Need Ind-ians

- ‚Tradition‘ and ‚school‘ are used to refer to phenomena in social life or in history ...
- **Tradition** emphasizes the historical dimension.
- **School** normally implies contemporaneity (Radnitzky 1973, S. 8).
- **Schools provide an identity in the face of complexity**

## Tradition and School

- (I) handing down of an **attitude**
- (II) the handing down of a **body of knowledge**
- Both are objectivated by means of world-picture hypotheses, ideals of X-ology
- Other objectivations are the social institutions created by and for use in the tradition, such as research centers, periodicals, learned societies

## Psychoanalytic Monotheism

- After decades in which the construction of psychoanalytic theory appeared to be dominated by the assumption that there existed only **one psychoanalytic truth**,
- we celebrate with enthusiasm the confirmation that this monistic approach is an illusion, and that theoretical and technical **diversity** is the rule of the day
- (Wallerstein, 1988; 1990).



## Psychoanalytic Monotheism

- This monistic epistemological stance was sustained by an authoritarian environment in our institutions, and each psychoanalytic school believed that it was the possessor of the 'true' Freudian legacy.

## The New Look in Psychoanalysis

- Giving up the **isolationism** of psychoanalysis from allied disciplines, and recognizing the diversity of schools of thought and the fragmentation of psychoanalytic knowledge,
- many authors suggests the need to adopt **principles of correspondence** or **external coherence** along with those of hermeneutic coherence to validate psychoanalytic hypotheses (f.e. Jiménez 2003).

## Narrative Coherence

- Although it can be argued that the hermeneutic criteria of narrative coherence serve to guide the process of **validation in daily clinical work**,
- this is not sufficient as a criterion of truth for the purpose of validating psychoanalytical theory as nomothetic knowledge
- Rubovits-Seitz PFD (1992) Interpretive methodology: some problems, limitations, and remedial strategies. J Am Psychoanal Ass 40: 139-168

## Narrative Coherence

- As Strenger (1991) states, as well as being coherent, theoretical propositions must be consistent with a **generally accepted body of knowledge** incorporated in related disciplines and must be akin to it.
- From the point of view of epistemological common sense, this is a standard requisite for any scientific theory.
- Strenger C (1991) Between hermeneutics and science. An essay on the epistemology of psychoanalysis. Madison, International Universities Press

## External Validation

- Some strategies for the external validation of the psychoanalytic method:

**‘strengthening of the evidence base of psychoanalysis’** (Fonagy et al. 1999, p.43), in psychoanalysis ‘should ... develop closer links with alternative data gathering methods available in modern social and biological science.’

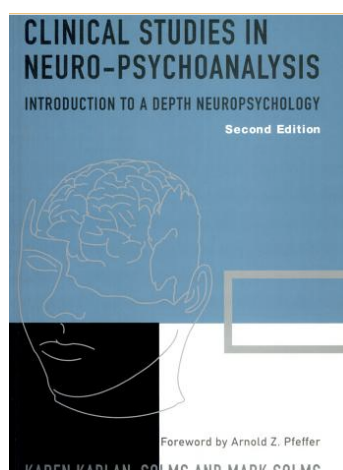
## External Validation

- In this way, ‘the convergence of evidence from several data sources ... will provide the best support for the theories of mind proposed by psychoanalysis’
- (Fonagy et al. 1999, p. 45).

## A New Paradigm for the Theory of Mind

- Recent developments in diverse fields of science have come to the aid of psychoanalysis in this period of crisis,
- resulting in the proposition to form a new paradigm for the construction of the theory of the mind.

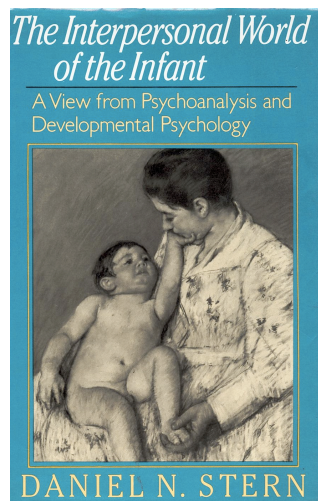
## Neurocognitive Science



### Dreaming and Dreams

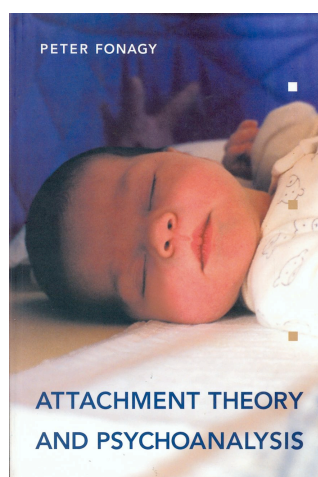
Solms, M., & Turnbull, O. (2002). *The brain and the inner world. An introduction to the neuroscience of subjective experience.* London: H Karnacs Books.

## Early Mother–Infant Relationship



D. Stern's monograph added the observed infant to the images of the reconstructed infant of the various theories.

## Developmental Psychopathology



- Does attachment theory enrich psychoanalysis - at least it is one of the best researched lines of normal and pathological development.

## A New Paradigm for the Theory of Mind

- This **emerging paradigm** tries to integrate clinical knowledge with findings from
- neurocognitive science
- research into the early mother–infant relationship,
- developmental psychopathology

## A New Paradigm for the Theory of Treatment

- This **emerging paradigm** tries to integrate clinical knowledge with findings from
- Discourse – conversational analysis
- Non-verbal behavioral pattern (Ekman's FACS)
- Guided clinical inference studies on core concepts like insight, transference, countertransference, resistance etc

## Clinical Knowledge

- The task of collecting, summarizing and integrating clinical knowledge requires collaborative efforts.
- Study groups have to be formed synthesizing the information provided by clinicians on selected areas.
- Data bases for **single case reports** are necessary:
- PSYCHOANALYTIC SINGLE CASE STUDIES PUBLISHED IN ISI-RANKED JOURNALS: A REVIEW OF BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PATIENT, THERAPIST, THERAPY AND RESEARCH METHOD (Desmet et al. 2012)

## Process Studies of Psychoanalysis

- Process studies on tape-recorded treatments comparing psychoanalytic and psychodynamic therapies for similarities and differences f.e. using the Psychotherapy Process Q-Set
- Ablon, J. S., & Jones, E. E. (2005). On analytic process. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 53, 541-568.
- Levy R, Ablon S, Ackerman J, Thomä H & Kächele H (2012) A specimen session of psychoanalytic therapy under the lens of the Psychotherapy Process Q-set. in Levy R, Ablon S & Kächele H (Eds) *Evidence Based Psychodynamic Psychotherapy*, pp 509-528

## Outcome Studies of Psychoanalysis

- Compilations of outcome studies across countries and disorders
- Huber D, Henrich G, Gastner J & Klug G (2012) The Munich Psychotherapy Study: Must All Have Prizes? in Levy R, Ablon S & Kächele H (Ed) Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Research. New York, Humana Press 51-69
- De Maat, S., De Jonghe, F., Schoevers, R., & Dekker, J. (2009). The effectiveness of long-term psychoanalytic therapy: A systematic review of empirical studies. *Harvard Review of Psychiatry*, 17, 1-23.
- Sandell, R. (2012). Research on outcomes of psychoanalysis and psychoanalysis-derived psychotherapies. In G. O. Gabbard, B. E. Litowitz & W. H. Kracke (Eds.), *Textbook of Psychoanalysis* (pp. 385-404). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press.

## Neuroscience and Treatment Evaluation

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 PLOS one

### Changes in Prefrontal-Limbic Function in Major Depression after 15 Months of Long-Term Psychotherapy

Anna Buchheim<sup>1\*</sup>, Roberto Viviani<sup>1,2</sup>, Henrik Kessler<sup>3,4,5</sup>, Horst Kächele<sup>4,6</sup>, Manfred Cierpka<sup>7</sup>, Gerhard Roth<sup>8</sup>, Carol George<sup>9</sup>, Otto F. Kernberg<sup>10</sup>, Georg Bruns<sup>11</sup>, Svenja Taubner<sup>12,6,3</sup>



## Creating Two Paradigmatic Models

- **Theory of mind**
- and
- **Theory of treatment**
- Are interdependent, yet also independent
- To find out the degree of overlap will be a task for the future!!!!