

Child's Play: Psychoanalysis and the Politics of the Clinic

by

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Program in Literature
Duke University

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Literature
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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

In 1925, Sigmund Freud wrote a short preface for August Aichhorn's forthcoming book, *Wayward Youth*. There, Freud hailed the child as the future of psychoanalysis, declaring that "[o]f all the fields in which psychoanalysis has been applied none has aroused so much interest... as the theory and practice of child training. ...The child has become the main object of psychoanalysis research" (Freud, p. v). Freud's observation was prophetic as the figure of the child did indeed become the central focus of psychoanalysis in the decades that followed. Throughout the interwar and postwar periods in Western Europe, child analysis became the most innovative and influential strain of psychoanalysis as child analysts turned their gaze, clinically and socially, to the formative impact of the mother-child relation. As I show, psychoanalysts used the figure of the child to expand the political reach of their work by mobilizing the clinic as a site through which to theorize politics.

In my dissertation, I analyze the ascension of the child as a way into a broader consideration of the political life of psychoanalytic practice in the twentieth century. In the wake of World Wars, mass casualties, and the dramatic reorganization of Europe, child analysts like Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, D.W. Winnicott, and John Bowlby reinvented clinical practice for the child patient according to explicitly political idioms. The analytic exercise of paternal "authority," the cultivation of maternal "reparations,"

the maternal facilitation of an inherent “democratic tendency,” and the provision of maternal “security” were just some of the ways that these child analysts defined their clinical work. Tracing these techniques through the rise and fall of democracy in interwar, wartime, and postwar Europe, I argue that the clinic became a proto-political laboratory where psychoanalysts experimented with different formats of political action and relation. For these analysts, the clinic was anything but apolitical. In my analysis, I focus specifically on the *gendered* dimensions of these terms, revealing how concepts like authority, reparation, democracy, and security were reconfigured in the clinic according to the perimeters of maternity and paternity. As I contend throughout, the child analytic clinic provided a site for explicitly gendered forms of political theorizing.

In Chapter One, “On Good Authority: Anna Freud, Child Analysis, and the Politics of Authority,” I chart how Anna Freud postulated the clinical necessity of paternal authority, situating her work within interwar political debates about the relationship between democracy and authority. In Chapter Two, “Beyond Repair: War, Reparation, and Melanie Klein’s Clinical Play Technique,” I interrogate the ethical status of Klein’s clinical idealization of maternal reparations by contextualizing them within wartime Britain and the effects of German reparations. Chapter Three, “Mothering a Nation: D.W. Winnicott, Gender, and the Postcolonial British Welfare State,” reads Winnicott’s “Piggle” case study in order to elaborate how Winnicott establishes a link between good enough mothering and democracy as a way of grappling with the effects

of British decolonization. In chapter four, “States of Security: John Bowlby, Cold War Politics, and Infantile Attachment Theory,” I reveal how the language of maternal security that Bowlby promoted in his clinical work buttressed a growing Cold War emphasis on national security.

Child’s Play contributes to a growing body of scholarship by feminist theorists, historians, and political theorists like Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg (2011), Sally Alexander (2012), Michal Shapira (2013), Eli Zartesky (2015), Daniel Pick and Matt ffytche (2016), and Dagmar Herzog (2017) that showcases how psychoanalysis was influenced by—and, in turn, had a decisive influence on—the political climates it inhabited. My project adds to this work an explicit focus on the psychoanalytic clinic and the gendered scientific techniques developed therein. Although the psychoanalytic clinic has often dismissed for being either politically isolated or irredeemably normalizing, one of the overarching arguments that I make throughout this project is that a keen attention to clinical technique—to the unique scientific methods analysts developed to relate to and treat the psyche of the modern child—is an invaluable resource for understanding the political reach of psychoanalysis. Critically, these child psychoanalytic vocabularies and techniques developed together with the spread of liberal democracies following World War I and, as I discuss in the Conclusions, to the extent that they narrate modern political affiliations through psychological narratives of childhood, they are still at the forefront of fervent political contestations today.

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Acknowledgements

When I first entered graduate school, I joked with a friend that I was going to write my dissertation entirely on the acknowledgements sections of different books. While that project never came to fruition—all for the best, I’m sure—this dissertation *is* about acknowledgements of a different sort, both those that have enabled this writing and those that this writing strives to achieve for itself. Although I know this dissertation will never be able to do justice to the generous, incisive, and ingenious voices that have shaped it (and me) along the way, I nevertheless hope (perhaps wildly) that those who find themselves contained within these pages understand this inclusion as an acknowledgment, finally realized, in one form or another.

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Introduction: Conceiving the Child

*If the unconscious becomes more intelligible—a source of coherent narratives—it also begins to be usurped by a new figure called the child. For some psychoanalysts... describing the child replaced describing the unconscious, or the dream work. Or rather, in their view, describing the child **was** to describe the unconscious. The child was as it were the unconscious **live**: you could see it in action. ...With the advent of child analysis there was a growing sense that we could get closer to the source.*

—A. Phillips, *Promises, Promises*

In 1900—the same year that Sigmund Freud “invented” psychoanalysis in his magnum opus, *Die Traumdeutung*, or *The Interpretation of Dreams*—Swedish feminist, Ellen Key, published her own landmark work, *Barnets Århundrade*, or *Century of the Child*. Released on New Year’s Eve of the coming century, Key’s text was a liberal treatise on family life, education, and the “right to childhood” that she hoped would usher in a set of political transformations to improve the quality of childhood for the next hundred years. But while Key explicitly hailed “The Century of the Child” with her text, Sigmund Freud (less overtly) inaugurated “The Century of Psychoanalysis” with his. Together, the historical coincidence of this dual publication registered what would be a continuing impaction of psychoanalysis and the child throughout the twentieth century. Not insignificantly, Freud’s discovery of the unconscious in the dream life of the individual was coterminous with Key’s promulgation of the child as the frontispiece of the century and, as Adam Phillips notes in the epigraph above, a preoccupation with the child and childhood would come to dominate psychoanalytic theory and practice, especially in the decades after Sigmund Freud’s death in 1939.

As Phillips suggests in the epigraph—and as *Child's Play* maintains—the entanglement between the child and psychoanalysis was paramount to the way that psychoanalysis continually (re)invented itself throughout the twentieth century. For Phillips, this reinvention is best understood as a “usurpation”; where once the unconscious was, there the child had come to be. In this telling, the definitional unintelligibility of the unconscious was replaced by the clean, coherent teleology of childhood development; the surrealism of the dream-work was expropriated by realist narratives of growth and maturation. Phillips’ narration of this usurpation—this political takeover—belies a palpable discontent with the ascension of the child within psychoanalysis: Phillips implies that the proper object of psychoanalysis, the unconscious, was displaced only to be replaced by the child, about whom tidier narratives were spun. Phillips insinuates that psychoanalysis’s refusal to leave any child behind meant, ironically, that it forgot the unconscious.

To a large extent, I do not disagree with Phillips’ assessment. Indeed, *Child's Play* charts how it is only too true that an interest in the ego, in normative development, in psychological stability, and in a moralized discourse concerned with safeguarding individual “maturation” motors many of the psychoanalytic theories about the child that were advanced by the second and third generations of psychoanalysts. Yet my own aim throughout this dissertation is not to dismiss these adaptations of psychoanalysis as spurious in an effort to reclaim the unconscious as either the most legitimate or the most

radical object of psychoanalysis. Rather, I pursue precisely the transition Phillips notes in order to theorize the reasons for and effects of this discursive shift to the child within psychoanalysis. I take psychoanalytic theories as my object, treating them as historically contingent scientific and social discourses that construct variable “truths” about subjectivity according to available conceptual vocabularies. In other words, I provide a critical genealogy of the collaboration between psychoanalysis and the child, focusing especially on the way psychoanalysts developed theories about the child that collaborated with the anxieties and desires of their geopolitical climates.¹ While I am not uncritical of psychoanalysis’s turn to the child—indeed, far from it—my own theoretical itinerary tracks and elaborates the political stakes that this discursive shift pronounced.

In this way, *Child’s Play* participates in a decisively political turn within scholarship on psychoanalysis that, increasingly, does not focus on the recounting of biographical history or on the application of psychoanalytic methodologies to a pre-given field, but rather interrogates the complex geopolitics enabling specifically post-

¹ In implementing a genealogical approach, this dissertation takes many of its founding methodological choices from Michel Foucault, for whom “genealogy,” borrowing from Friedrich Nietzsche, is a particular kind of history of dominant discourse at any given time. Genealogy interrogates the conditions of possibility necessary for the construction and reification of the concepts that seem most naturalized. In contrast to a more linear or causal “history,” genealogy emphasizes the multiple and fragmentary nature of the historical construction of discourse. For further reading on Foucault’s method, see “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”; “On the Ways of Writing History”; “My Body, This Paper, This Fire”; and “Return to History,” all collected in *Michel Foucault: Aesthetics, Method, and Epistemology*. For foundational approaches to genealogy and critical histories specifically in the “psy” disciplines, see Nikolas Rose’s *The Psychological Complex: Psychology, Politics and Society in England, 1869-1939*; *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self*; *Inventing Ourselves: Psychology, Power, and Personhood*.

Freudian psychoanalysis. Recently, feminist theorists, historians, and political theorists alike have begun showcasing how psychoanalysis was influenced by — and, in turn, had a decisive influence on — the political environments it inhabited. For instance, Elizabeth Danto, in *Freud's Free Clinics* (2005), disrupts any origin story of psychoanalysis as originally apolitical by bringing to light an archive of forgotten Leftist engagement by early German and Austrian analysts for whom psychoanalysis was an unequivocally socialist exercise in (economic) freedom and liberation. Danto chronicles how the different kinds of free clinics and public health projects that these analysts founded and managed speak to their explicitly communist, socialist, and/or liberal political sensibilities. Similarly, Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg (2011) re-approaches Anna Freud's postwar institutional work with children in order to contend that her ego-psychology, although much lambasted by Lacanians and critical theorists, can be read as a nascent theory of democratic subjectivity. In turn, Gal Gerson (2005; 2017) and Sally Alexander (2012) both separately consider how D.W. Winnicott's theories about the mother-child relation collaborated with liberal democracy in the postwar British Welfare state. Noting the visibility and popularity of psychoanalysis in postwar Britain, Michal Shapira (2013) meticulously details how child analysts defined the child's mind during the exigencies of total war according to a marshal vocabulary (conflict, aggression, defenses, vulnerability) that justified the expansion of the welfare state into the management of individual psychological health. Taking their inspiration from foundational work by

Denise Riley (1984), Stephen Frosh (1987), and Jacqueline Rose (1993), these scholars reveal the political aspirations of psychoanalysis as it existed within and was shaped by the socialist and liberal contexts of newly democratized “Red Vienna” and Welfarist postwar Britain, respectively.

Yet, while many psychoanalysts considered themselves politically progressive and even subversive and remained committed to psychoanalysis as an inherently liberal or even socialist political practice, recent scholarship has also begun to address the conservative uses of psychoanalysis. Countering the longstanding belief that psychoanalysis could only flourish in conditions of political freedom, Daniel Pick and Matt ffytche (2016) have edited an excellent collection of essays that unravel psychoanalysis’s politically ambivalent—and often obscured—involvement with totalitarianism. Likewise, Joy Damousi’s editorial guidance in *Psychoanalysis and Politics: Histories of Psychoanalysis Under Conditions of Restricted Political Freedom* (2012) unpacks forgotten histories of how psychoanalysis morphed, and even thrived, under authoritarian regimes. Although often unstated, this work owes a tremendous debt to Geoffrey Cocks’ foundational *Psychotherapy in the Third Reich* (1997). There, Cocks challenges the presumption that psychoanalysis and psychotherapy had simply withered away or been co-opted in Nazi Germany by revealing how the Göring Institute, which catered to the psychological turmoil of Nazi officers, contributed substantially to the promotion and professionalization of psychotherapy throughout

Eastern Europe. More recently, Dagmar Herzog uses the backdrop of the Holocaust and the political transformations inaugurated by the end of World War II and the division of Germany in her *Cold War Freud* (2017) to consider how postwar psychoanalysts negotiated the changed political implications of their theories about (homo)sexuality, aggression, trauma, and the universalized Oedipus complex in the era of lesbian and gay rights, mass destruction, and (de)colonization. Together, these authors show how psychoanalytic theory and practice have been put to very diverse ends—some far more nefarious than others—and remain to this day thoroughly political.²

Significantly, this scholarship’s approach to “psycho-politics” considers how psychoanalysis both crafted, and was crafted by, the political climates in which it inevitably existed and, in doing so, challenges the popular (if ill-informed) dismissal of psychoanalysis on the grounds of its ostensible apoliticality. By chronicling psychoanalysis’s histories of inception, institutionalization, migration, transformation, complicity, and resistance, this scholarship offers an important reminder that psychoanalysis engaged with “the political” in multiple ways. Certainly, it collaborated directly with different official governments at different times. But politics hardly stops at

² For other political histories of psychoanalysis, see José Brunner’s *Freud and the Politics of Psychoanalysis*; George Makari’s magisterial *Revolution in Mind: The Creation of Psychoanalysis* (2008); Warwick Anderson, Deborah Jenson, and Richard C. Keller’s excellent edited collection, *Unconscious Dominions: Psychoanalysis, Colonial Trauma, and Global Sovereignties* (2011); John Burnham’s edited collection, *After Freud Left: A Century of Psychoanalysis in America* (2012); Daniel Pick’s monograph about Rudolf Hess and the history of the U.S.’s postwar fascination with the psychologization of Nazism, *In Pursuit of the Nazi Mind: Hitler, Hess, and the Analysts* (2012); and, finally, Eli Zartetsky’s recent *Political Freud: A History* (2017).

the water's edge of institutionalized governmental policy. Rather, together with recent scholarship, I maintain throughout this project that "the political" encompasses social movements as much as foreign policy; that it involves public debate as much as recorded elections; that it pervades culture and media as much as governmental propaganda; that it relies on the domestic sphere as much as foreign relations; that it necessarily collaborates with (or against) a particular mode of production; and that it is a pivotal force in the construction and organization of ostensibly private anxieties and desires. I adopt this approach from formative feminist and cultural studies scholarship of the 1980s that took the domestic sphere and the "merely cultural" to be indispensable objects of analysis for the work of deconstructing state-sponsored hetero-patriarchal capitalism. As with this work, I understand cultural and intellectual productions to be neither independent of the political economy, nor symptomatic of it; rather, I read the privatized scientific work of child psychoanalysts as *politically productive*, as enacting engagements with politics that uniquely support, extend, complicate, or resist broader institutionalized state discourses. In other words, I take an expansive view of politics, understanding it as a fractious composite of many intersecting (and often competing) discourses that weave through multiple sites of social life.

Through this understanding of politics, I approach the condensation of subjectivity as a field that creatively illuminates political conflict and struggle. As one of the "psy" disciplines, psychoanalysis was a tremendously influential discourse

informing the definition and dissemination of modern subjectivity. This public reputation was especially characteristic of the immediate prewar and postwar years in Europe. Theorizing the psychological import of individualism, autonomy, security, freedom, in/dependence, health, authority, governability, and moralism, psychoanalysts contributed substantially to the invention, implementation, and institutionalization of a particularly modern iteration of subjectivity. Concerned with self-government, health, and individual wellbeing, this modern psychological subject was (to borrow Michel Foucault's term) an exemplary agent of biopolitical self-management. To claim that psychoanalysis helped "invent" this subjectivity is not to suggest the inauthenticity or duplicitousness of the forms of subjectivity shaped by psychoanalysis's influence. Rather, it is to acknowledge the process of historical construction basic to any experience of consciousness in culture. As Nikolas Rose aptly puts it in *Inventing Our Selves*—a text to which this dissertation owes a tremendous debt—the psychological disciplines invented "a certain way of understanding and relating to ourselves and others, to making the human being intelligible and practicable under a certain description" (2). Far from benign or apolitical, psychoanalysis's descriptions of the human subject—especially as they were publicized after World War II—were apiece with a political redefinition of the modern human being.

Even while most popular cultural representations of psychoanalysis seriously miss the mark of its professional and conceptual nuances, casting psychoanalysis in a

light that undoubtedly frustrates practitioners and devotees, many of psychoanalysis's truisms about subjectivity and the practices it has designed to foster psychological health have nevertheless been metabolized by this millennial milieu and continue to inform everyday norms of self-narration and intersubjective relation. To some extent, psychoanalysis and modern government developed collaboratively: as Rose compellingly states, it is not simply that modern liberal government produced the "psy" disciplines, but that a particular psychological vernacular concerned with "self governance" was necessary for the most basic organization and operation of modern government, which sought to manage persons and populations, rather than lands or territories, as the proper object of political power (Rose, 68-70). As Rose illustrates, the political is as much a question of psychic organization as state power. Psychoanalysis, like many durable yet multivalent historical knowledges, has deep conceptual and practical correspondences with governing political discourses; the knowledges and techniques psychoanalysis developed to manage, regulate, and remedy the human subject, crucially, had multiplicitous and enduring political effects.

Like Rose, in *Child's Play* I am interested in pursuing these political collaborations and consequences, specifically as they relate to the different imperatives that developed as Europe began to democratize after World War I, was swept up by multiple forms of authoritarianism in the 1930s-40s, and then more frantically struggled to re-democratize and decolonize after World War II. I chart this itinerary through the

rise-and-fall of democracy by focusing very narrowly on a specific sub-specialty of psychoanalysis, child psychoanalysis, as it was developed in interwar Vienna, practiced largely by women, and enlarged exponentially in wartime and postwar Britain. From the 1920s-1970s, the child, far more than the adult, became the privileged subject of psychoanalytic theory and practice and, in this dissertation, I analyze the often contradictory but always politicized ways that child psychoanalysts theorized the child-subject, its health, and techniques for its repair in tandem with broader conversations about the government of nation-states.³

Although at the time of its publication Key's text had merely been a historical hypothesis, many historians and scholars of childhood studies have, in retrospect, testified to the veracity of Key's declaration. Hugh Cunningham culls the title of the final chapter of his *Children and Childhood in Western Society since 1500* (1995) from Key's text, asking "The Century of the Child?" as an entry point to survey the rise in professionalized, scientific knowledges about the child, which newly sought to calibrate childhood according to measurable and predictable norms, categories, and standards.

Harry Hendrick focuses more specifically on a British context, but similarly observes the

³ Throughout this project, I refer to the child with the gender-neutral pronominal "it." Child psychoanalysts were far from consistent in the way they referred to the child. Anna Freud, for example, always uses masculine pronouns while Melanie Klein most regularly uses "it." For my own part, I use "it" to indicate that when I speak of the child I am referring not to any particular gendered individual child but to a figure, a theoretical construction that each analyst differently elaborates. When I am addressing particular children, like those from case studies, I adopt the gendered pronouns particular to the child under consideration.

dual ascent of scientism and professionalism around the modern child in *Children, Childhood and English Society 1880-1990* (1997). As Hendrick rightly notes, in the production of specialized knowledge about childhood, this new cohort of child-focused professionals prioritized specific institutions and experiences (such as parent-child relationships, education, and leisure time), thereby (re)defining the child according to the grammar of modernity.⁴ Embodying what Lee Edelman (2004) has termed “reproductive futurity,”⁵ this twentieth-century child became a cynosure for political

⁴ This largely historical interest in scholarship on the child was perhaps first—and certainly most memorably—in inaugurated by Phillipe Ariès’s *Centuries of Childhood*, which gained notoriety because of the specious claims it made about the non-existence of the category of “the child” prior to the rise of modernity. Following the massive contention surrounding Ariès’s questionable historicism, many have attempted correctives or alternate histories. For general histories of “the child” and childhood, see Margaret Hewitt and Ivy Pinchbeck’s compendious *Children and English Society*; C. John Sommerville’s *The Rise and Fall of Childhood*; Lloyd deMause’s (admittedly more liberal) *The History of Childhood*; and Hugh Cunningham’s critical survey, *Children and Childhood in Western Society since 1500*. For more specific and local analyses, see Harry Hendrick’s *Children, Childhood, and English Society 1880-1990*; Sally Shuttleworth’s excellent *The Mind of the Child: Child Development in Literature, Science, and Medicine, 1840-1900*; Carolyn Steedman’s *Strange Dislocations: Childhood and the Idea of Human Interiority*; Claudia Castañeda’s *Figurations: Child, Bodies, Worlds*; Elliot West’s, *Growing Up in the Twentieth-Century America*; R. Danielle Egan and Gail Hawkes’s *Theorizing the Sexual Child in Modernity*; Amy F. Ogata’s *Designing the Creative Child: Playthings and Places in Midcentury America*; and Marta Gutman and Ning de Corninck-Smith’s *Designing Modern Childhoods*. For a psychoanalytically-focused comparative analysis of the different versions of childhood presented by Anna Freud and Melanie Klein, respective to Western modernity, see Shaul Bar-Haim’s “The Child’s Position: The Concept of Childhood in Interwar Psychoanalysis” in *Childhood, Literature, and Science: Fragile Subjects*.

⁵ While Edelman’s work is a touchstone text within queer theory, especially for the so-called theorists of negativity, many critics have rightly noted that (in addition to its relative disinterest in race and gender), *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* lacks an historical grounding for its diagnosis of how the figure of the child comes to represent the horizon of a heteronormative reproductive futurity. Although I think Edelman’s analysis is certainly salient for our own political present, I am skeptical of its utility for any thinking prior to the 1860s, given that it was

rhetoric, commercial appeal, professional social work, and scientific knowledge—and psychoanalysts, as much as many other social welfare professionals, were central actors in the swelling tide of knowledge produced about modern childhood.

These historical surveys do not focus on psychoanalysis per se, but they do pertinently establish the larger discursive shift that psychoanalysts were a part of as they adopted the child as the privileged object of their professional, scientific interest.

Importantly, in this dissertation my intention is not to furnish a historical account of cultural constructions of the child at a particular moment in history. Rather, what this project aims to recognize is the incredible—and often contradictory—diversity of competing conceptions of the child that occur even within a single local profession over no more than a few decades. While historical surveys like the ones mentioned above provide useful glosses and can even speak to a certain zeitgeist, they often reduce the substantial conflicts, dissonances, and disjunctions at work within more limited contexts and disciplines. Part of my suggestion is that it is precisely because the child became such an over-determined site of interest that any attempt to furnish a broad cohesive

the rise of Industrialism in the mid-nineteenth century (in Britain, at least) that brought widespread public interest and attention to the welfare of children. Thus, my caveat in using Edelman's work is that I mean it to refer to a modern child, specifically as constructed in the 1920s onward. For a more historically situated—albeit much more optimistic—theoretical account of the child vis-à-vis normativity, see Kathryn Bond Stockton's *The Queer Child, or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century*.

historical account of how “the century” defined this entity would inevitably reduce and elide the serious disagreements about the child that, even just within psychoanalysis itself, had monumental effects on the shape of the profession and its relation to and involvement with the scene of politics more generally. The historical construction and institution of any concept is far from a monolithic enterprise. Because of this, I am especially attentive to the range of intra-disciplinary interpretative disagreement about what the child was and how to treat it since I maintain these points of fracture are often the very places that best index the competing political agendas at work. Addressing these internal dissonances is central to narrating the persistence of psychoanalysis in its rapidly changing atmospheres as it negotiated international wars, new cultural contexts, decolonization, local and global racism, economic insecurity, and the tumultuous spread of democracy worldwide.

One of my most basic claims is thus that children in the psychoanalytic clinic became magnetized sites for politicized, scientific theorizing. Children have long been rhetorical figures employed to generate, justify, and expand different forms of power and child psychoanalysts, although understanding themselves as “scientists,” were implicitly extending a history of political thought in a historical moment in which truth claims became the territory of science and professionalism more than philosophy. The aspirations of child analysts, the vocabularies they used to describe the child subject, the clinical techniques they invented to foster its wellbeing, and the strategies they

employed to cultivate authority and expertise inside and outside of the clinic all speak to analysts' attempts to operate within precarious, but committedly liberal, contexts.⁶ Critically, these child psychoanalytic vocabularies and techniques developed together with the spread of liberal democracies following World War I and, to the extent that these democracies persist into our present (albeit significantly transformed by the consolidation of neoliberalism), they are still part of the way we think our "selves" in the political "now."

As I have already begun to suggest, part of how *Child's Play* approaches an analysis of the political implications of child psychoanalysis is by way of the psychoanalytic clinic. Throughout this dissertation, it is axiomatic that the clinic is one of the most politicized spaces for psychoanalysis—now, as then. Following Franz Fanon's early recognition of the inherent politicality of the (colonial) clinic, I read the clinic as a site of intense political contestation and action.⁷ The unique techniques developed in the

⁶ My use of "liberal" throughout this dissertation is not a reference to any analyst's particular political predilections (that is, "conservative" versus "liberal"). Instead, I mean it to mark the larger organization of government in modernity emerging from social contract theory that prioritizes liberty, equality, individualism, and private property in a secular nation-state. Key to my use of liberalism is my understanding of its alliance with capitalism since the individual's fundamental self-possession is the basis of all his extenuating rights. In this organization of political power, the rights of the individual are the limit point of the power of the state. In different ways, each chapter of this dissertation, from interwar Vienna to Cold War Britain, is dealing with some contestation over liberalism, particularly as it existed in relation to monarchy, fascism, colonial Empire, socialism, and communism.

⁷ When it comes to the inseparability of politics and the clinic for Fanon, I am thinking especially of his discussion in *Black Skin, White Masks* of the black man's dream of whiteness (79). From this

clinic, designed specifically to facilitate different analytic objectives, speak clearly to analysts' political aspirations and anxieties. Although the psychoanalytic clinic is often dismissed (as psychoanalysis itself has been) for being either politically isolated or irredeemably normalizing, one of the overarching arguments that I make throughout this project is that a keen attention to clinical technique—to the gendered scientific methods analysts developed to relate to and treat the modern psyche of the child—is an

dream, which Fanon reports in the context of his larger discussion of Octave Mannoni's theory of the colonial "dependency complex," Fanon arrives at what first seems like a tension between individual unconscious change and larger social transformation. Yet for Fanon this tension is not a disjunctive but actually the mandate for what he calls a "combined action," a dual clinical *and* political intervention. Or, perhaps more accurately, a decolonial intervention in and through the clinical situation: "What emerges is the need for a combined action on the individual and the group. As a psychoanalyst I must help my patient to 'consciousnessize' his unconscious, to no longer be tempted by a hallucinatory lactification, *but also* to act along the lines of a change in social structure. ... my objective will not be to dissuade him by advising him to 'keep his distance'; on the contrary, once his motives have been identified, my objective will be to enable him to *choose* action (or passivity) with respect to the real source of the conflict, i.e., the social structure" (emphasis mine, 80). It is important to recognize the critical work that Fanon's "but also" is performing here. Contrary to some critics who have represented Fanon's clinical work as prior to or a break from his political engagement with decolonization, this "but also" suggests that the clinic is a vital site for and means of political transformation. Indeed, Achille Mbembe puts this well in his *Critique of Black Reason* when he writes of Fanon's complex and much misunderstood conceptualization of violence that "Fanonian discourse on violence in general and on the violence of the colonized in particular emerges from the intersection of the clinic of the subject and the politics of the patient. For Fanon, in effect, politics and the clinic are both psychic sites par excellence. ... At times he sees politics as a form of the clinic, and the clinical as a form of politics" (162-3). In other words, the clinic is never left behind in Fanon's theorization of revolutionary politics. It is from this fundamental recognition that my own analysis emerges: my critique of the political investments of these child analysts is offered not to suggest that they should (or ever could) be more properly apolitical, but rather in the hopes of a dramatic re-politization of the clinic along more Fanonian lines. For an excellent reading of this politicization of the clinic as exemplary of a specifically Lacanian orientation, see Antonio Viego's chapter "The Clinical, the Speculative, and What Must be Made Up in the Space between Them" in *Dead Subjects*.

invaluable resource for understanding the multiple and fragmentary ways that the child subject was imagined, reimagined, and produced. When it comes to the particular second and third generations of child analysts that I discuss, the child and the clinic are inseparable.

One of the main reasons for this inseparability, and one of the main explanations for why child analysis as an adaptation of psychoanalysis was so formative for the whole field, was that the (supposedly) unique subjectivity of the child invited a substantive re-definition of clinical techniques. When it came to the question of the child, psychoanalysts held their disciplinary tendency to universalize in abeyance, frequently acknowledging that different clinical techniques were not just permissible but downright necessary to address the utterly particular mind of the child.⁸ Without any standards of orthodoxy, child analysis was therefore more or less continually re-invented throughout the interwar and postwar decades as it established its own professional norms and standards. As I argue, this reinvention was in constant conversation with political discourse throughout these decades.

⁸ With Fanon in mind, we might think of the clinic as similarly receptive to change as it circulated throughout different colonial and non-Western spaces. A focus on “travelling psychoanalysis” reveals that in other geopolitical environments the psychoanalytic clinic developed differently, responding to questions of race, exile, religion, and poverty in ways that likewise made the clinic a site for political practice. Therefore, to think the psychoanalytic clinic elsewhere, outside the metropole, would mean attending to the way that different concerns about the organization of power and different priorities for social reform manifested in clinical technique.

Prominent child analysts like Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, D.W. Winnicott, and John Bowlby rarely agreed on what kind of being "the child" was and, even though they lived and worked in close proximity to one another, their theoretical differences were often oceanic. Consequently, each analyst developed various analytic methods and techniques tailored to the particularity of the psychic life of the child, as they understood it. For instance, Anna Freud, daughter of Sigmund Freud, advocated a "pedagogical psychoanalysis," implicitly positing an immature and undeveloped child in need of the analyst's paternal authority and educational governance. In contrast, Melanie Klein, the London-based progenitor of Object Relations, proposed a strongly interpretive psychoanalysis for even non-verbal children, believing that clinical interpretation was an indispensable part of how the child riven by excessively sexual and aggressive phantasies made reparations to the besieged mother's body. Inspired by both, D.W. Winnicott theorized the importance of reproducing "good enough mothering" in the clinic since, in his opinion, this implicitly gendered environmental provision matched the child's inherent dependency and would facilitate what he called a latent "democratic tendency." John Bowlby, in turn, popularized the language of "attachment," orienting the analyst's presence to guarantee what he believed was the necessary "security" for the child as compensation for maternal deprivation.

Each of these different clinical methods carried with it a competing conception about what kind of being "the child" was—undeveloped and in need of authoritative

governance; instinctually aggressive but capable of making reparations; maternally dependent and naturally tending toward democracy; inherently vulnerable and in need of protectionist security—and about the best clinical technique for alleviating the child’s suffering. Through these different articulations of the child, each analyst participated in a broader, and thoroughly political, conversation about the utility and importance of concepts like “authority,” “reparation,” “democracy,” and “security” for the operation of government. Using these political discourses, analysts imaginatively theorized the child-subject and, in so doing, implemented idiosyncratic methodologies that explored different formats of political relation in the clinic, turning the clinic into a proto-political laboratory in which large-scale ideas of government and sociality were (re)imagined as individualized techniques designed to produce healthy, modern child psychologies.

By taking seriously the scientific methodology of these child psychoanalysts, *Child’s Play* considers how techniques developed within the clinic to address the mind of the child were metabolizing larger political discourses, often with unexpected effects. This shift in focus to the psychoanalytic clinic, I claim, illuminates how child analysts theorized different forms of political subjectivity and relationality in and through their clinical techniques. The topic of technique—of clinical practice—was one of the most significant realms of politicized psychoanalytic theorizing among child analysts who designed new and highly idiosyncratic strategies for child analysis, invariably drawing from the vocabularies prominent in their local contexts.

Gender and sexuality were of paramount importance to these clinical interventions.⁹ Analysts used gender to define—and politicize—their professional practice. Clinicians’ experimentation with deliberately gendered techniques was a strategy for making their privatized work relevant to a broader public audience. As I reveal, the clinical techniques of authority, reparation, good enough mothering, and security are all deliberately, and differently, gendered. In this way, analyst’s clinical work discloses not only how bound up any question of the child was with the framework of binary gender and the norms of heterosexual family life; it also indexes the centrality of negotiating and renegotiating conceptions of women, maternity and paternity, domesticity, reproductive labor, and patriarchal authority for twentieth-century Europe. As women’s access to education, right to vote, participation in the labor force, and involvement in public debate expanded (albeit haltingly), psychoanalysis registered the fluctuation in at least three ways. First, because of women’s increasing educational and professional opportunities, many child analysts (and psychoanalysts

⁹ While I recognize the anachronism of applying the term “gender” to pre-1970s psychological writings that themselves thought in terms of “sex” and “sexuality,” I have made the choice to use this term throughout the introduction for the sake of readerly clarity. In my use of gender, I mean to refer not to the dense nodes of object-oriented desire or anatomical sexual difference, but rather to the cultural norms attached to female and male that produce recognizable categories of feminine and masculine, woman and man, mother and father. This is a pragmatic choice far more than a theoretical claim since I fully recognize the impossibility of ever disarticulating gender from sex/uality and the difficulties introduced by welding the nomenclature of the present onto that of the past. However, each analyst’s conception of “sex” is quite complex so I leave this discussion to the chapters where I have more space to deal with the nuance of their psycho-sexual systems.

more generally) were women. Second, these second and third generations of psychoanalysts, women and men alike, developed psychoanalytic theories of psychic life that prioritized female sexuality, maternity, and sexual difference, deliberately supplementing or revising Sigmund Freud's patriarchal phallogentrism. And, third, analyst's work in the clinic took on specifically gendered valences as analysts participated in a social conversation about the changing nature of gender norms by bringing them into clinical practice.

While all the analysts I consider mobilized gender and sexuality in their clinic, embodying various gendered positionalities as a way of meeting the needs of their child-patients, not all of their political agendas in this regard were symmetrical or progressive. While some analysts' work had radical gendered aspirations, many were far from it. For instance, Klein's emphasis on the female child, aggressive phantasies, and maternal reparations had the seeds for a progressive recoding of female sexuality; in contrast, John Bowlby's figuration of attachment and security as the function of maternal care helped rehabilitate a narrative of mothers as guardians of the domestic, both the home and the homeland. Thus, analysts' reliance on gender in the clinic was often politically fraught. It testified both to desires for social stability and to attempts at radical change.

By attending to psychoanalysis's clinical engagement with gender, this dissertation offers an important intervention into the longstanding history of feminist

theory's use of psychoanalysis. Insofar as psychoanalysis has long been interested in questions of gender and sexuality as primary axes for understanding the inception and crystallization of modern subjectivity, it has historically been a formative vocabulary for feminist theory. In the 1970s and 1980s, feminist theorists like Juliet Mitchell (1974) and Gayle Rubin (1975) re-read the Freudian canon to mine it for its anti-patriarchal, anti-heteronormative insights, while others like Nancy Chodorow (1978; 1989) and Jessica Benjamin (1988; 1998) looked to Object Relations theorists for subjective schemas much more attentive to motherhood and sexual difference. For these feminist theorists, psychoanalysis offered indispensable resources for countering the pernicious hegemony of specifically patriarchal aspects of subjectivity—phallocentrism; rabid independence and autonomy; the gendering of (familial) care; the denigration of intersubjectivity and otherness—by theorizing ethically, politically, and socially preferable templates for subjective existence.¹⁰ Without framing it this way, many of these feminists interestingly drew their feminist psychologies from psychoanalysts who were not just Object Relations analysts but, importantly, child analysts. Child analysis was a vital

¹⁰ In this survey, I deliberately exclude French psychoanalytic theorists of sexual difference (mainly Luce Irigaray and Julie Kristeva) from my list of self-defined *feminist* theorists. Even though Irigaray and Kristeva write often about issues concerning femininity and sexual difference—and even though they are continually hailed as “psychoanalytic feminists” or “French feminists” by Anglophone scholarship—their relationship to feminist theory and practice (especially as it has been constituted in the US) is far more complicated than is often acknowledged. For this reason, I do not hold them in the same category as Anglophone feminist psychoanalytic theorists. For a recent analysis of the making of “French feminism” in the US and the pivotal role that psychoanalysis plays in *oeuvres* of these two thinkers, particularly, see Kate Costello's doctoral dissertation, *Inventing “French Feminism”: A Critical History*.

professional opportunity for early feminist analysts seeking careers within scientific communities dominated by men, and, since its inception, it has continued to be one of the most useful theoretical orientations for contemporary Anglophone psychoanalytic feminists in their attempts to diagnosis the patriarchal organization of gender and sexuality.

More than simply a theoretical vocabulary, however, these feminist interventions into psychoanalysis have also carried with them substantial redefinitions of clinical practice. Importantly, the early major psychoanalytic contributions to feminist theory were made by practitioners, by clinicians whose work typically brought Object Relations perspectives to bear on issues of mothering, femininity, heterosexuality, and care. Mitchell, Benjamin, Chodorow, and Carol Gilligan—some of the most well known second-wave British and American psychoanalytic feminists—all have clinical practices and their theoretical contributions bridge the divide between academic appropriations of psychoanalytic theory and their clinical implementation.¹¹ With a feminist political orientation in mind, these analysts typically shifted the clinical focus from a hierarchical organization of power between analyst and patient (meant to reproduce the Oedipal scenario and facilitate the transference) to more relation, intersubjective, egalitarian, and

¹¹ For other clinical psychoanalytic feminist work, see *Gender in the Psychoanalytic Space: Between Clinic and Culture*, Ed Muriel Dimen and Virginia Goldner; *Feminist Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*, Charlotte Krause Prozan; *The Technique of Feminist Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy*, Charlotte Krause Prozan; *Mothering and Psychoanalysis: Clinical, Sociological and Feminist Perspectives*, Ed Petra Bueskens.

care-based ethea. In other words, early feminist psychoanalysts were engaging with clinical psychoanalysis *as political practice*. Their work, no less than Wilhelm Reich, Siegfried Bernfeld, or Otto Fenichel, enlisted the clinic as a space through which to theorize, exercise, and realize gendered political ideals.

The primary purpose of my intervention in this history of psychoanalytic feminist theory and practice is not to either support or condemn any of the theories put forward by these thinkers. Rather, I am gesturing to this history of feminist clinical practice to indicate how ingrained political desires are in clinical practice. This is, I suggest, especially true for issues of gender and sexuality in the twentieth century. Although not formulated as explicitly “feminist” enterprises, the political projects that these child analysts embarked on in the clinic relied on different convictions about the ideal function of gendered and sexual relations in society. Gender was a privileged concept through which analysts practiced politics in the clinic. By putting feminist psychoanalysis into conversation with these histories of clinical practice, this dissertation contributes to a historical analysis of the political discourses that informed, and were transformed by, each analyst’s gendered construction of the child.

Insofar as my own method is genealogical, I also use the occasion of these child analysts’ (often still popular) insights to address present-tense political concerns. In the chapters that follow, I therefore acknowledge and expressly cultivate conceptual overlaps with the present political moment with the understanding that all history is a

history of the present. What mid-century child psychoanalysts had to say about, for example, the political implications of the eroticization of authority in private and public life; the latent aggression inherent in all reparative projects; the gendered relationship between maternity and liberal democracy; and the infantile experience of emotional security that enables the security state are all politically salient today. The clinic was a potent site of social and political experimentation for child psychoanalysts, and, as I discuss below, this dual focus on the psychological construction of the modern child and the political purchase of the psychoanalytic clinic brings recent political-historical scholarship on child psychoanalysis into conversation with recent queer and feminist theory in order to affirm that the psychoanalytic clinic is an important stage for both critiquing and (re)formulating a politics of gender, sexuality, and relationality.

Freudian Legacies: The Origins of Child Psychoanalysis

If Adam Phillips, in the epigraph for this introduction, opines that the child usurped the unconscious as the central object of psychoanalysis, then it seems worth wondering briefly about what psychoanalysis *was* prior to its reinvention under the sign of the child. What role did the child have in Sigmund Freud's original work? How was child analysis both apiece with, but also a departure from, inviolable psychoanalytic tenets? And how does the very topic of child analysis—or of any post-Freudian adaption of psychoanalysis, really—raise questions about the inevitable heterodoxy of the

Freudian canon that are as pressing now as they were during the first decades of child analysis? Retuning to some of Freud's most important work in this context will help parse the interpretive difficulties out of which child analysis emerged.

Despite the fact that Freud was not a "child analyst" — this professional moniker would not be coined until the early 1920s — he did write what many consider to be the first case study of a child analysis ever recorded. Published in 1909, Freud's first and only child analysis, *Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy* (or, more colloquially, "Little Hans"), narrates the phobias and anxieties of its titular protagonist, the five-year old boy, "Hans," whose real name was Herbert Graf. Hans' fears are many and when Freud first learns of his symptoms, Hans describes a great fear of leaving the house since he is convinced that if he were to go into the street he would encounter a number of threats, including horses that bite, clattering omnibuses, and persecutory boxcars. Throughout the case, Freud traces these fears back to Hans' sexual life and he homes in on the progression of Hans' Oedipus complex. According to Freud, Hans' panoply of animal and automotive fears derives from the (repressed) hostility he feels toward his father, who he experiences as a competitor for the sexual affection of his mother. This, combined with Hans' recent encounter with sexual difference, mires him in a set of phobias designed to ward off unpalatable truths. By allowing Hans to verbalize his many fantasies and fears — and by implementing a loosely educational approach — Freud steers him away from neurotic misery later on in adulthood.

Yet, although Freud publishes this case study under his own name, he is the first to admit that he did not conduct the analysis himself and actually only met Hans once throughout the course of the “analysis.” The bulk of the Hans’ “treatment” was carried out through an epistolary exchange between Freud and the boy’s father, Max Graf, which lasted for a number of months between 1907-1908. As such, the formal composition of this case is particularly unusual. Part narrative, part postal transcript, the case is more-or-less co-authored: it is a bricolage of Freud’s analysis, Graf’s observations, and Hans’ transcribed dialogue. The appeal of the case study, for Freud, is thus not strictly clinical. Hans’ case is a fascinating object because of how it documents the unfathomed psychic life of a child. Although Freud was still in the midst of inventing adult psychoanalysis at this early date—never mind child psychoanalysis—he was keenly interested in the psychosexual life of children, understanding the child to be the crux of his theoretical and clinical intervention. “I have for years,” writes Freud in the introductory remarks to Hans’ case,

encouraged my pupils and friends to collect observations on the sexual life of children, which is normally either skillfully overlooked or deliberately denied. Among the material which came into my hands as a result of this request, pride of place was soon taken by the continuing story of little Hans. (“Little Hans,” 4)

Freud frames this case as a set of “observations” about one particular child whose “story” he is quite clearly proud to have supervised and documented. According to Freud, the promise of “Little Hans” is that it might provide “more direct, more

immediate proof of these fundamental principles” of psychic life, especially as Freud had elaborated them just a few years earlier in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905) (4). Freud puts his faith in the empirical facticity of these visual “observations,” averring that they provide a type of evidence that is immediate and scientific rather than merely speculative. Hans was to be the direct evidence—the irrefutable proof, that is—to substantiate Freud’s sexual theories about the child, which detractors had decried as ludicrous, licentious, or both.

But while Freud is undoubtedly interested in what Hans’ anxieties can confirm for him about the psychosexual life of the child-subject, he also recognizes the oddity of his “clinical” procurement of this information and, early on, meditates on the implications of this unique technique. Even at this early date, a consideration of the child is followed by a consideration of clinical technique. Of special interest to Freud is the father/son relationship, a relationship that in this particular case also doubled as the analyst/patient dyad. Less than a decade away from when Freud will take his own daughter, Anna, into analysis, Freud remarks explicitly on what he believes to be the indispensable parental—indeed *paternal*—element of any child analysis.

The father’s contribution goes further than this [conducting the treatment], however; in my view, no one else could have persuaded the child to admit so freely to his feelings and nothing could replace the expertise with which the father was able to interpret the utterances of his 5-year-old son: the technical difficulties of carrying out the psychoanalysis of so young a patient would have been insurmountable. Only by uniting in one person the authority of the father and that of the doctor, only because affectionate interests coincided with scientific ones,

was it possible in this one case to apply a method that would normally have been quite unsuitable. ("Little Hans," 3)

Never shy about emphasizing the importance of fathers in the psychic dramas of adults and children alike, Freud makes a remarkable observation here. In his view, the fact that Hans' father was the sole "analyst" involved in this case does not (as a contemporary reader might expect) compromise the integrity of the analysis. Instead, Freud cites it as the analysis's very condition of possibility.¹² As with many of Freud's writings, although Hans' mother is an active part of the family, she only shows up occasionally in the paternal drama being acted out. She never authors her own perspective in the letters or the case study, and her typical role is as the object of Hans' sexual affections. What is interesting about the elision of the mother, though, is that because the "analysis" takes place in a situation that collapses the domestic with the clinical, Freud concludes that the father—the paternal element, the patriarchal structure—is indispensable not just within the bourgeois family, but also within the child analytic clinic. Although the domestic setting of the treatment would seem to put it within the purview of women, Freud instead insists that the father is imperative for the technical, *clinical* success of the case.

¹² In the early decades of psychoanalysis it was standard practice for analysts to take their own children into analysis. This was true for many major psychoanalysts, including Sigmund and Anna Freud and Melanie Klein. Freud would later comment on this phenomenon in a letter to Italian colleague, Edoardo Weiss, writing in 1935: "Concerning the analysis of your hopeful son, that is certainly a ticklish business. With a younger, promising brother it might be done more easily. With [my] own daughter I succeeded well. There are special difficulties and doubts with a son" (Cited in Coles, 7).

In a sense, what Freud suggests is that, in order to analyze a child, the analyst must not just fantasmatically recall the patient's parents through the transference, but must physically *be* them. Describing Hans' child analysis in a way that would become characteristic of his daughter, Anna's, own clinical technique with children, Freud affirms the importance of "uniting in one person the authority of the father and that of the doctor." In a single move, the father's authority solidifies a clinical psychoanalytic technique and defines the contours of the child's domestic needs and vulnerabilities.

Of course, Freud's remarks here are not a definitive statement on the proper practice of child psychoanalysis—nor did he ever mean them to be. Freud, in fact, never gets directly involved in the debates about child analysis that simmer throughout the 1920s and 1930s. While the two most prominent child analysts—Anna Freud and Melanie Klein—both try to legitimate their clinical techniques by claiming "Freudian orthodoxy," Freud himself never explicitly backs either one. These competing claims to legitimacy are made more fraught by the fact that Freud was far from systematic in his psychoanalytic writings. To take the topic of the child as just one example, there are multiple possible interpretations and extensions of his work. From one perspective, for instance, readers can easily see in Freud's approach to childhood a thoroughgoing challenge to the kinds of developmental narratives that have come to dominate contemporary US psychology and psychoanalysis and which Anna Freud herself

promoted.¹³ From this vantage, the subject (child, or otherwise) is nothing like the narrative *Bildung* wherein a linear progress narrative confirms the steady establishment of selfhood, therefore affirming the possibility of—and *need for*—subjective closure. Indeed, given Freud’s emphasis on the atemporality of the unconscious, psychoanalysis insists that the residues of childhood always linger within the adult, enduring in an often-discomfiting way long past the arrival at so-called “maturity.” In this reading, childhood is not a sequence that is “grown out of” or “left behind” but rather a constant upset to the autonomous, adult individual who would otherwise like to imagine himself as fully conscious and self-determining.¹⁴ Through concepts like the unconscious, regression, disavowal, *nachträglichkeit*, and the very process of reconstructive analysis itself, Freud’s work offers a substantive critique of *any* narrative that attempts to chart “progress” according to the predictable, measured advancement of chronological age.

¹³ Throughout this dissertation, I refer often to both processes of psychic development and to broader developmental theoretics. In my most colloquial uses, I mean development to refer to a process of psychical maturation based on an understanding of the relationship between subjectivity and linear time. In this case, psychical norms and ideals are achieved in a largely progressive way, with the passing of time (typically marked by the conventions of age). Where I mean to refer to the specific school of developmental psychology and/or psychoanalysis, I say so. The latter is most often the case in my reading of Anna Freud and her legacy. In all cases, the psychoanalysts I analyze often define “development” in idiosyncratic ways; where at all possible, I mark these idiosyncrasies in the chapters themselves. For a very comprehensive overview of the importance of the concept of “development” in psychoanalytic theory, and of the genealogy of “developmental psychoanalysis” as a particular contemporary psychoanalytic orientation, see *Psychoanalysis: The Major Concepts*, edited by Burness E. Moore and Bernard D. Fine.

¹⁴ My masculine gendering of this “liberal individual” is deliberate. I intend it to recognize the fact that modern liberal individualism is, as Carol Pateman has lucidly argued, founded on a social contract between adult men. Equality is a condition of fraternity: the contract between men over women (and, I might add, children) is what solidifies the modern socio-political bond.

Here, one neither “matures” nor is “cured.” Childhood, in other words, is instrumental not as part of a teleology but as a way for Freud to name the intractability of adult suffering, the inexorability of childhood traumas that ceaselessly haunt the adult.

Melanie Klein would take this version of Freud’s theory to the limit, postulating that not only does the adult not “outgrow” childhood, but that children are themselves not fundamentally different from adults. Focusing on the universality of the unconscious, which (unlike the ego or the superego) is not developmentally consolidated through time, Klein proposes quite radically that even children as young as two or three can be riven by unconscious conflict, and can therefore benefit from interpretive psychoanalysis. For Klein, unconscious phantasies are inherited biologically, through the phylogenetic transmission of instincts across generational lines. If parts of Freud’s work absolutely resist developmentalism, it nevertheless remains the case that his privileging of childhood as the site where the subject is most vulnerable to trauma suggests something of a conviction about children’s exceptionalized status. Klein’s emphasis on the universality of unconscious phantasies and the transgenerational phantoms (to use Abraham and Torok’s term) possessing even the youngest child’s instinctual life effectively erases such distinctions.¹⁵

Yet, in spite of the aspects of Freud’s work that yield a trenchant critique of narratives of liberal selfhood and progress, if taken from a different angle, much of

¹⁵ See Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok’s *The Shell and the Kernel, Vol I.*

Freud's work can, equally, be read as a reification of a developmental hierarchy not dissimilar to the logic undergirding Herbert Spencer and other Social Darwinist interpreters of Charles Darwin's *The Descent of Man*. Freud's more radical concepts aside, he did often deploy developmental language, metaphors, and methods. Infamously, Freud schematized an epic pre-history of civilization by equating "primitives" with women and children, positing that all were developmentally inferior and *prior to* the civilizing effects of culture. The invocation of this temporal register is key since one of the metrics enabling this gendered, colonial hierarchy is that of a temporal comparison in which progress is guaranteed by overcoming an inferior and inadequate past. Laid out temporally rather than spatially, as in Melanie Klein's adaption, Freud's Oedipus complex is a template for this kind of hierarchical (and, ultimately, patriarchal and Western) rubric. The "success" of its "resolution" becomes a normative scale against which to judge psychological—as well as socio-political—maturity. Such evaluations return in D.W. Winnicott's work, which not only relies heavily on a developmental conception of the "self" (as he terms it) but also evaluates political institutions and governmental structures according to the normative language of individual, psychological maturation.

Many literary critics, feminist theorists, and post-colonial theorists have critiqued this current in Freud's work, often arguing (in an observation I do not disagree with) that other aspects of his thought provide an internal undoing of any moralized

developmental teleology that texts like *Totem and Taboo* would seem to affirm.¹⁶ Yet this critique is far more common in academic readings of Freud than in clinical ones, even for contemporary clinicians. As I will discuss in the following chapters, a developmental interpretation of Freud's work had (and still has) great cachet in many post-Freudian psychoanalytic circles.

As these two brief examples suggest, the child provided an occasion, within the history of psychoanalytic theory, for the specularization of the contradictions inherent in Freud's work. Instinct versus object, phantasy versus reality, ego versus unconscious, aggression versus creativity: these were just some of the primary disagreements in which child analysts engaged. Truly contentious among these, though, was the topic of clinical technique for children. Freud pursued this topic briefly in "Little Hans," but most of the more radical implications of child analysis for clinical practice were fodder for the second generation. Inconsistent as his ideas may have been, Freud published often on the key theoretical topics (like the drive, the ego, and the child) from which child analysts drew the bare bones of their optics. But when it came to matters of technique, even for adults, this was not so. Given the expansiveness of Freud's writings, he published only a few clinical case studies (six, counting his and Breuer's early case

¹⁶ For an excellent instance of this kind of reading, see Leo Bersani's *The Freudian Body: Psychoanalysis and Art*. There, Bersani dismantles Freud's arguments about normative sexuality, revealing their internal incoherence and arguing for a theory of masochism as the true core of Freudian sexuality.

studies in hysteria, but excluding his “case study” of Schreber’s memoirs) and only a smattering of papers on clinical technique, mostly from 1910-1915. In these papers, Freud hardly provided one standard clinical method; instead, he cultivated a number of different analytic techniques that ranged from his early hypnosis-based work with hysterics during his time with Charcot and Breuer, to his much-tempered surmise about the limited scope of the psychoanalytic cure in “Analysis Terminable and Interminable” (1937).

As I will discuss further in chapters one and two, a main point of technical conflict had to do with what clinical role the analyst was supposed to play with the child-patient. Was the analyst, in this unusual situation, a supplement to parental and pedagogical authority—an additional support whose primary function was to educate the undeveloped child? In this quasi-Enlightenment orientation, was (child) analysis about the assimilation of (self) knowledge? Or, in contrast, was the analyst’s job—irrespective of their child-patient’s age—to interpret the formations of the unconscious, verbalizing for the (perhaps preverbal) child the sticking points of unconscious life in order to catalyze the child’s process of working through? In this view, should the analyst be less supportive and more interpretive? Inimical as these technical imperatives might seem to be, Freud held both convictions throughout the course of his career. In the early years of psychoanalysis, Freud advocated a much more pedagogical view of psychoanalytic technique, positing that it was the analyst’s job to often quite physically

pull out repressed material (he spoke often of the need for physical contact in his 1895 *Case Studies in Hysteria*) and interpret, for the patient, its unconscious significance. In this model, not only was knowledge tantamount to transformation, but the patient did not even need to be an active participant in the process of producing it. The interpretation arrived at the patient like revelation and its reception, willing or otherwise, engendered change. This was a method that put tremendous faith in the transformative power of self-knowledge to induce unconscious change.

Over the years, Freud slowly began to doubt the utility of this educative approach and, by the time he wrote his major papers on technique from 1910-1914, he was much more skeptical about the psychic utility of knowledge in any form. The patient's unguided free-associations, which were only occasionally punctuated by the analyst's interpretations, replaced the more properly didactic model from Freud's early years of psychoanalytic-hypnosis. As Freud writes in a long reflection on technique in "On 'Wild' Analysis" (1910),

There is an outdated idea, based on superficial appearances, that a patient's sufferings result from a kind of ignorance, and that if only this ignorance could be overcome by effective communication (about the casual links between the illness and the patient's life, about his childhood experience, etc.), a recovery must follow. But the illness is not located in the ignorance itself, but in the foundation of the ignorance, the *inner resistances* that are the cause of the ignorance and continue to sustain it. Combating these resistances is the task of therapy. Explaining what the patient does not know, because he has repressed it, is only one of the steps necessary in preparation for therapy. If knowledge of the unconscious were as important as those inexperienced in psychoanalysis believe it to be, then all you would need for a cure would be for the

sufferer to listen to lectures or read books. However, that would have about as much impact on neurotic symptoms as distributing menus would have on hunger during a famine. The analogy is even more appropriate than it looks at first sight, because explaining what is unconscious for the patient generally results in exacerbating the conflict in him and making his suffering more acute. (7)

As Freud makes clear, correcting the patient's unconscious "ignorances" is no longer a certifiable psychoanalytic method. This, in spite of the fact that this very pedagogical method had been a defining feature in Little Hans' case just a year before. When it comes to what psychoanalysis is concerned with—the transformation of unconscious fixations and "resistances"—Freud insists here that education fails to address the causes of unconscious malaise. To teach one's patient about her suffering would be like "distributing menus [...] on hunger during a famine." In the same way that a menu is likened to only the most abstract and desiccated outline of food, so too the work of education has no real truck with psychological transformation. In short, Freud suggests that while education might list all the most tantalizing possibilities, it fails to give the patient anything substantive to chew on.

But, there is a latent irony at work in Freud's remarks since it is only by engaging in a pedagogical exercise—in teaching the reader—that Freud is able to disavow the pedagogical imperative in the clinic in the first place. Put another way: in this passage, Freud has to teach in order to show how not to. Adamant as Freud is that knowledge is not the objective of adult analysis and that clinical psychoanalytic technique should, instead, focus on a working through of the "resistances," part of what this paradox

speaks to is an impossibility that Freud will, decades later, claim as definitional to both the practice of both psychoanalysis and education. In 1937, toward the end of Freud's life, after the unparalleled destruction of World War I, the rise of multi-national racist fascisms, and the onset of yet another cataclysmic World War, Freud revised his comments on technique. In "Analysis Terminable and Interminable," Freud emphasized far more the importance of the ego and significantly curtailed his prior faith in the utopian potential of a psychoanalytic cure for human suffering. Comparing professional psychoanalysis to professional education and government, Freud suggests that these three fields (which are so burdened by hope) are in fact "'impossible' professions in which, even before you begin, you can be sure you will fall short of complete success" (203). A far cry from the almost magical power that Freud ascribed to analysis in the early years, Freud at this late date was more concerned with transformations to the ego. Not only was knowledge not the point anymore, but more than this Freud had come to doubt the potential for major unconscious transformations at all, setting up what he called the "bedrocks" of castration anxiety and penis envy as the foundational impasses of analytic work. By the late 1930s, Freud's clinical goal was not the psychoanalytic cure but the acceptance of ordinary, everyday neurotic misery whose universal existence seemed, to Freud, an intractable fact of being human.

It was from this methodological polyglot that child analysts drew their various clinical methods when trying to tailor a clinical technique specifically for children. To

educate, or not? To interpret, or not? To support, to hold, to play with, or to speak to? All were technical questions that child analysts had to define anew. Their welter of idiosyncratic methods for child analysis testify to the highly particular—and politically resonant—way that each analyst (re)imagined the child subject. Analysis imagined as pedagogical and authoritative, as reparative, as maternal and democratic, or as compensatory security bespoke the changing political climates that enabled analysts to elaborate different techniques for governmentality in the clinic.

Chapter Outline

Following the introduction, this dissertation is divided into four chapters and a coda. While each chapter takes a different analyst as its sole object in order to unpack their idiosyncratic approach to the child in the clinic, all of the chapters are centrally focused on the political implications of the unique clinical techniques developed by these interwar and postwar child psychoanalysts. These analysts include Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, D.W. Winnicott, and John Bowlby.

In Chapter One, “On Good Authority: Anna Freud, Child Analysis, and the Politics of Authority,” I read Anna Freud’s early work from the interwar period in Red Vienna to tease out how she understood the exercise of analytic authority as necessary to the child’s psychic development in the clinic. Tracking this preoccupation with authority across Anna Freud’s 1920s miscellany, I elaborate the persistence of her interest in

theorizing the hierarchical dynamics between adults and children. As I show, the relation between adults and children, especially as it spirals around the exercise of authority, not only structures Anna Freud's clinical method, but also characterizes her own erotic fantasy life. Keeping in mind the political context of the newly minted democracy in Austria that enabled Anna Freud's theoretical and clinical work, I argue that, insofar as she prioritizes the politically over-determined grammar of authority, Anna Freud's conviction about the importance of authority in the psychic life of children constitutes an eroticized attachment to the loss of empire. Although the course of Anna Freud's life would see the expansion of national democracies throughout the world, and although she often spoke favorably of democracy in the postwar decades, I contend that her clinical belief in the importance of authority for the correct psychic formation of the child constitutes a site of ambivalence about— and perhaps even a melancholic refusal of—the major transformations in European government.

Based in London, Melanie Klein virulently disagreed with Anna Freud's authoritative method and instead developed her own highly interpretive play-technique. In "Beyond Repair: War, Reparation, and Melanie Klein's Clinical Play Technique," I analyze Klein's clinical method with children as she developed it in her work throughout the 1930s and 1940s, specifically with regard to the importance she gave to the oscillation of aggression and reparation. I begin by elaborating Klein's unique play technique in the clinic, which she claimed facilitated incredible recovery for

her child-patients. For Klein, this unique technique, which put a high premium on the analyst's verbal interpretations, was thoroughly bound up with her understanding of the child as a being interminably at war with itself, riven by its life and death instincts and the unconscious phantasies that attend each. Although Klein herself never explicitly addressed social occurrences or political events, I turn to her compendious wartime case study of "Richard" in order to show how his anxieties about destruction, attack, and repair place Klein's theory of the child squarely within the geopolitics of wartime Europe. Focusing specifically on the operations of what Klein termed "reparation," I argue that Klein's clinical work, insofar as it tried to foster the child's impulse toward reparation, spoke back to the many claims to "reparation" bookending World Wars I and II. Through the language of reparation, Klein imagined the clinic as both a part of and a potential solution to socio-political aggressions of international wars. Through the war-torn child, Klein mobilized the clinic as a site through which to imagine an individualized form of socio-political justice.

Chapter Three, "Mothering a Nation: D.W. Winnicott, Gender, and the Postcolonial British Welfare State" continues to pursue the political implications of the psychoanalytic clinic by considering the relationship Winnicott proposes between a maternal holding environment in the clinic and the production of the healthy, developed, mature subjectivity that Winnicott believed to be consonant with the construction of a postwar liberal democracy. For Winnicott, liberal democracy was an

individual psychological state as much as a nation-wide political economy. While past scholarship on Winnicott has theorized how his role as a public child expert helped solidify the postwar British welfare state, my interest here is in elaborating how the decline of the British Empire and decolonization efforts materialized in the psychoanalytic clinic. To show this, I read Winnicott's 1964 case study of "The Piggie," which documents the psychoanalytic sessions of a two-year-old plagued by persecutory nightmares of a figure she called "black mummy." Winnicott never dealt openly with the racial and colonial tensions driving The Piggie's unconscious conflict; instead, he tried to cultivate a clinical experience of good enough mothering. I argue that, by locating mothering rather than race as the cause of political fracture, Winnicott was trying to make his clinical work relevant to and useful for the management of larger social and political fracture caused by the decline of empire. As I show, Winnicott's analytic role as a good enough mother in the clinic is, for better *and* for worse, an explicitly political attempt to mitigate the racial conflict splitting the entire postcolonial British "motherland."

Combining psychoanalytic theory with ethology, John Bowlby developed a theoretic of infantile attachment that posited that the child's experience of "security" in its relationship with its mother is paramount for psychological health and development. For Bowlby, this need for attachment and security is then repeated in the clinic, where the analyst functions as a mother-substitute. During the Cold War decades of the 1950s-

1970s, as the state discourse around “national security” emerged and thrived, Bowlby’s research on the necessity of the experience of emotional security was wildly influential. In my final chapter, “States of Security: John Bowlby, Cold War Politics, and Theories of Infantile Attachment,” I thus consider how Bowlby’s emphasis on a maternally guaranteed form of security worked to bolster and naturalize a larger emergent political discourse about the management and provision of national security in an increasingly globalized setting of international hostility. I argue that Bowlby’s idealization of infantile emotional security advanced a psycho-political discourse that relied on gendered labor and domestic maternity for the consolidation of national security. In this way, the domestic home worked co-extensively with the state; private scientific psychology legitimated and extended larger (inter)national claims. At the broadest level, this chapter considers what is at stake in defining the psychological wellbeing of the individual infantile citizen through the grammar of the state.

Together, these chapters all consider how analysts addressed their clinical work to meet the tumultuous political changes of the twentieth century. Although most of what I am tracing is how analysts in the West used psychoanalysis to buttress twentieth-century efforts at liberal democracy—and while my analysis often takes a critical tone—my purpose is not to offer a condemnation of clinical practice writ large. I have no desire for a hermetically sealed, perfectly apolitical clinic. Indeed, far from it. Instead, what I hope this work is moving toward is a broader and more critically-astute

acknowledgement of the inextricability of politics and the clinic, one that creates the potential for a more revolutionary clinic for the future. Many of the child clinicians I discuss throughout this dissertation were adamant that their clinical work was purely apolitical and I think that it is as a result of this that their clinical function had conservative political implications. The sites that claim apoliticality are all too often the ones where power is most intensified. By more carefully theorizing the extensions, correlates, and complicities of various psychological theories and techniques, I think a more politically sensitive and astute clinic might be born. If it remains true that psychic life is in constant conversation with politics, then my hope would be that this project would catalyze a revolutionary clinic of resistance.

1. On Good Authority: Anna Freud, Child Analysis, and the Politics of Authority¹

The technique of child analysis, insofar as it is special at all, derives from one very simple fact: that the adult is—at least to a considerable degree—a mature and independent being, while the child is immature and dependent. It is evident that to deal with such different subjects the method cannot remain the same.

—A. Freud, *Four Lectures on Child Analysis*

In the foreword to a 1925 text on juvenile delinquency by August Aichhorn titled *Wayward Youth*, Sigmund Freud introduces the importance of Aichhorn's work by hailing "the child" as the future of psychoanalysis. As Sigmund Freud writes,

Of all the fields in which psychoanalysis has been applied none has aroused so much interest, inspired so much hope, and accordingly attracted so many capable workers as the theory and practice of child training. ...The child has become the main object of psychoanalysis research and in this respect has replaced the neurotic with whom the work began. (S. Freud, v)

Noting the interest in and wide appeal of the "application" of psychoanalysis to pedagogy, Sigmund Freud concludes (almost a century before Phillips) that the child has in fact become the "main object of psychoanalysis" itself, effectively displacing—or replacing—the neurotic. In this foreword, Sigmund Freud famously refers to psychoanalysis as a "re-education," or translated more accurately an "after-education,"

¹ Portions of this chapter are forthcoming in *Psychoanalysis and History*. See: Laubender, Carolyn. "On Good Authority: Anna Freud and the Politics of Child Analysis." *Psychoanalysis and History*, Vol 19.3 (2017): 297-322.

suggesting that an adult analysis is the necessary supplement to the child's primary schooling (vii).² While these prefatory remarks are intended as a commentary on Aichhorn's work with "wayward youth," Sigmund Freud's observation about the growing importance of the child for psychoanalysis *writ large* registers his more general recognition of the emerging body of work produced by socially minded psychoanalytic reformers, such as Anna Freud, Siegfried Bernfeld, Willie Hoffer, and Hermine Hug-Hellmuth, all of whom put the child at the center of their psychoanalytic agendas. If the child had become the main object of psychoanalytic inquiry, then it seems hardly incidental that one of the most famous child psychoanalysts was in fact *Sigmund Freud's own child*, Anna Freud, who was born the same year as psychoanalysis and, from the first, counted herself as psychoanalysis's sibling, its "twin."

This chapter analyzes the political stakes of the child psychoanalysis that Sigmund Freud heralded by detailing Anna Freud's explicitly pedagogical clinical technique for children. If the child was to be psychoanalysis's future—the future of an international institution, profession, and (most importantly for this dissertation), *practice*—then this chapter wonders about the implications of Anna Freud's reinvention of this future through the over-determined grammar of authority, especially as it names

² The original German term, *Nacherziehung*, is first translated throughout Sigmund Freud's work as "re-education"; however, the editors of the Standard Edition note that this is a substantial mistranslation since "nachr" conveys a temporal element, an "after"-ness, rather than a repetition.

the clinical relation between adults and children. To pursue this question, I begin by situating Anna Freud's child analysis within the political climate of so-called Red Vienna. As I show, while Anna Freud had much common ground with her socialist colleagues, her emphasis on pedagogical authority in her analytic technique with children is a far cry from their more anti-authoritative ethos. But, for Anna Freud, the exercise of authority in the clinic has erotic as well as political connotations. By reading her clinical work next to her inaugural paper on beating fantasies between adults and children, I ask about what Anna Freud's erotics of authority can illuminate about the politics of her clinical technique, specifically as it corresponds with the institution of the newly minted democracy in inter-war Austria. Although the course of Anna Freud's life would see the expansion of national democracies throughout the world, and although she often spoke favorably of democracy, in the postwar decades, I contend that her erotic attachment to the importance of authority for the child in the clinic constitutes a site of ambivalence about the major political transformations in European government. Far from being removed from the socio-political order, Anna Freud's clinical writings affirm that the psychoanalytic clinic is always already in conversation with the historical context in which it is embedded. Through Anna Freud's work, I thus develop a sense of the clinic as a site of the collaboration between sexuality and politics.

Psycho-Politics: Child Analysis and Social Reform

Born in Vienna, Austria-Hungary on December 3, 1895, Anna Freud was the youngest of Sigmund Freud's six children. She was preceded by three older brothers—Jean-Martin, Oliver, and Ernst—and two older sisters—Mathilde and Sophie. The year of her birth was the very same year that her father (along with Josef Breuer) would give “birth” to the first iteration of psychoanalysis in the form of *Case Studies in Hysteria*, a speculative brain-child that would eventually become an international vocabulary, practice, and institution.³ Freud internalized this coincidence, describing herself as not just her father's child, but also as the sibling of psychoanalysis.⁴ Her biographer,

³ In addition to her birth year, Anna Freud was also to share her name with another. Young-Buehl records that she was named after “Anna Hammerschlag Lichtheim, the same Professor Hammerschlag's very intelligent but quite plain daughter, who had been widowed after only a year of marriage. She was a schoolteacher as well as a patient of Freud's” (46). The determining significance of this name is more than a little uncanny since Anna Freud was also considered very intelligent but quite plain, and would go on to become both a schoolteacher and one of her father's patients. We might also note that, in a feat of over-determination, Sigmund Freud's least favorite sister was also named Anna, as was one of Josef Breuer's “hysterical” female patients, the famous Anna O., whose analysis was detailed in *Case Studies in Hysteria* and published the same year as Anna Freud's birth. Much in the same way that scholars have drawn attention to the significance behind Sigmund Freud's naming of ‘Dora’ (after a housemaid), Anna Freud's name seems to be equally burdened by her father's ambivalence.

⁴ From this point on, all mentions of “Freud” in this chapter refer to Anna Freud. If I am referring to Sigmund Freud, or any other member of the Freud family, I will use their full name. This decision about nomination has to do with according Freud the same privilege granted to Klein, Winnicott, or Lacan, whose patronym serves as their sole identifier. Acknowledging that the politics of naming is an exercise of power, this nominative choice hopes to emphasize how this dissertation treats Freud not as a (less substantial) derivative of her father, but as an inventive, politically astute thinker in her own right. In situations where there might be potential confusions between many Freuds, I use the full proper names of all. In all subsequent chapters, I refer to both Sigmund and Anna Freud by their full name.

Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, chronicles this comparison by recalling how Freud thought of herself as psychoanalysis's "twin": sharing the same paternal lineage, she and psychoanalysis bore an indelible likeness to one another that rendered them close companions for life.⁵

Although she first trained as a teacher, Freud's professional trajectory eventually returned her to her psychoanalytic twin and, along with Melanie Klein and Hermine Hug-Hellmuth, she became one of the first practicing child psychoanalysts.⁶ By the time *Wayward Youth* was published in 1925, Freud had already been qualified as a psychoanalyst in the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society for three years and was hard at work developing a specific psychoanalytic technique for the analysis of children, a technique that she would publish a year later as *An Introduction to the Technique of Child*

⁵ For a detailed biography of Anna Freud's early life, see Elisabeth Young-Bruehl's study, *Anna Freud: A Biography*. For other studies on Anna Freud that provide substantial biographical detail, see *Anna Freud* by Robert Coles; *Techniques of Child Analysis: Discussions with Anna Freud* by Joseph Sandler et al; *Reading Anna Freud* by Nickolas Midgley; *Anna Freud: A View of Development, Disturbance and Therapeutic Techniques* by Rose Edgcombe; and *A History of Child Psychoanalysis* by Claudine and Pierre Geissmann.

⁶ Hug-Hellmuth was the first child psychoanalyst and her pedagogical aspirations were not dissimilar to Anna Freud's. However, Hug-Hellmuth's early death (she was murdered by her nephew in 1924) meant that most of her papers were destroyed per the specifications of her will. Consequently, much less has been written about her than has about Anna Freud and Melanie Klein. For further reading see: "Introduction" and "The Origins of Child Analysis" in *Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, and the Psychoanalysis of Children and Adolescents* by Alex Holder; and "Hermine Hug-Hellmuth: Pioneer and Most Obstinate of Freud's Disciples" in *A History of Child Psychoanalysis* by Claudine and Pierre Geissmann.

Analysis. Not insignificantly, 1925 was also the same year that child analyst Melanie Klein gave a weeklong series of lectures on child psychoanalysis to the British Psychoanalytic Society at the request of then-society-president, Ernest Jones. In other words, child analysis was already an active subspecialty the year Sigmund Freud wrote his forward to Aichhorn's work and it was being pioneered, importantly, by a coterie of rising women analysts who contributed to a growing interest in the analysis of female sexuality, maternity, and childhood. Woman-focused child analysis would only gain in popularity and importance in the decades to come (especially in England), a fact clearly evidenced when, in the years immediately after Sigmund Freud's death, the entire institutional future of psychoanalysis in Britain hinged on the heated debates between two child analysts, Freud and Klein, over the proper protocols for clinical technique.⁷

⁷ Although in many ways the professional conflict between Freud and Klein culminated in the so-called "Controversial Discussions" (1941-46) held by the British Psychoanalytic Society (BPS), their disagreements with one another spanned decades. As early as 1927, Klein and other notable British analysts were already leveling substantial (and often vitriolic) critiques of Freud's first book at a symposium organized by Ernest Jones. Freud responded with biting dismissals of her own, and the intractable differences between their interpretations of Freudian theory ("drive" versus "object relational") eventually resulted in an ironically named "gentleman's agreement" between the two women that split the BPS definitively into two different professional training tracks (with a third "Independent" stream pulling from both groups). While Freud and Klein were collegial professionally, they never arrived at anything like theoretical or personal resolution and the fundamental differences between their approaches still shape psychoanalytic institutes today. For further reading on this conflict, see *The Freud-Klein Controversies: 1941-45* edited by Pearl King and Riccardo Steiner. For an excellent social analysis, see Jacqueline Rose's chapter "The War in the Nursery" from her book *Why War?: Psychoanalysis, Politics, and the Return to Melanie Klein* and Adam Phillips' response essay "Bombs Away" in his *Promises, Promises: Essays on Psychoanalysis and Literature*. Deborah Britzman also has a relevant analysis of the central role that education played in these debates in her book, *After Education: Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, and Histories of Psychoanalytic Learning*.

While not active in political movements per se, Freud's clinical and institutional work with children put her in collaboration with many political liberals, leftists, and social(ist) reformers.⁸ In Vienna after World War I, progressives (both liberal and Marxist alike) increasingly turned their attention to the prophylactic protection of children through the liberalization of prior educational repression and lobbied for the reorganization of many social institutions, including primary schools, churches, prisons, universities, government regulations, sexual mores, and gender conventions. Many of these reformers, like Maria Montessori (who Freud greatly admired), looked to children's education as an exemplary site where the liberalization of oppressive strictures could facilitate large-scale political transformations and they often incorporated psychoanalytic insights into their social and political agendas. Reflecting retrospectively on the historical development of child psychoanalysis, Freud comments in an interview in 1970 on the importance of the interwar political situation for the advent of child analysis.

There is no doubt that child analysis began as a subspecialty of psychoanalysis, in the period after the First World War when several such subspecialties were initiated. What was later known under the slogan of the "widening scope of psychoanalysis" were the attempts made from the 1920s onward to apply the therapeutic technique devised for adult

⁸ For information about Anna Freud's political affiliations, see Young-Bruehl, 177-78.

neurotics to other ages or to other types of mental disorder. (“Child Analysis as a Subspecialty,” 209)

In response to the new kinds of trauma experienced by returning soldiers, and no doubt also to the dramatic political reorganization of Europe that followed the close of World War I, inter-bellum psychoanalysis entertained what Sigmund Freud famously called “a wider social stage” of engagement. Faced with the needs of not just individuals but entire populations, psychoanalysis modified and adapted its clinical techniques and theoretical insights to address various nodes of social welfare. “Our dream was the dream of psychoanalysis—all it had to offer,” reflected Anna Freud, “not only individuals, but schools and universities and hospitals and the courts and ‘reform schools’ that worked with ‘delinquents’, and social service agencies” (qtd. in Coles, 152). According to Freud, these newly developed “subspecialties” were “applications” of earlier psychoanalytic theories and techniques to larger groups of people, to different and broader social and political issues. She counted child analysis among these interwar subspecialties, contextualizing it as an attempt to expand psychoanalysis’s purview beyond the limited scope of neurosis.

Yet, many of these interwar offshoots of psychoanalysis—including child analysis—were more than just a simple “application” of psychoanalysis. Indeed, they often radically transformed the nature of previous psychoanalytic knowledge on which they were based, explicitly extending and modifying psychoanalytic orthodoxy in accordance with specific social and political ideals. Seeking to transform the social and

political landscape of Vienna, the 1920s witnessed a flowering of psychoanalytically informed reformers like August Aichhorn, who tried to liberalize juvenile delinquency homes, and Wilhelm Reich, who sought to undo the ill effects of capitalism's repression of sexuality with mobile clinics, free contraceptives, and different forms of touch therapy. The "psychologization" of politics had been a popular mode of political theorizing since the late nineteenth century—consider, for example, Gustave Le Bon's *Psychologie des Foules* (1895) or Gabriel Tarde's *Les Lois de l'Imitation* (1890)—and the advent of psychoanalysis and publication of some of Sigmund Freud's more explicitly political work during the interwar period (*Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921); *Civilizations and Its Discontents* (1930)) only strengthened a widespread understanding of socio-political life as thoroughly bound up with personal psychologies. As Eli Zaretsky confirms in his social and cultural history of psychoanalysis, *Secrets of the Soul*, "[i]n contrast to those that had propounded the classical liberal separation of public and private life, the thinkers of the 1930s recognized the unavoidably psychological and cultural character of modern politics, and thus the impossibility of separating the problems of democracy from those of personal autonomy, gender and sexuality, group identity, and the commodification of everyday life" (244). Unsurprisingly, this was the context that produced the first iterations of The Frankfurt School, whose members (like Theodor Adorno, Erich Fromm, and Herbert Marcuse) generated powerful critiques of capitalism, authoritarianism, and

(hetero)normative bourgeois family life. This style of psychoanalytically informed political theorizing gained traction in the decades following World War II, especially, but its origins lie in the same historical *mise-en-scène* as those of child analysis.

No less than her male colleagues, then, Freud pursued a definitively political project when she began her psychoanalytically informed work with children. Together with social reformers Willie Hoffer, August Aichhorn and Siegfried Bernfeld, Freud formed a weekly study group in the 1920s to discuss the relationship between psychoanalysis and pedagogy. In *Reading Anna Freud*, Nick Midgley observes that this express focus on education was part of a larger political movement to use psychoanalytic insights to illuminate not just subjectivity, but more specifically *the child's* subjectivity. Children were a cynosure for many social and political reformers in the left-leaning Red Vienna. Writes Midgley:

The radical reforms of education—understood as one aspect of a wider child welfare program—meant that many of the most idealistic and enthusiastic young people in Vienna chose to train as teachers. A significant proportion of these same young idealists were naturally attracted to psychoanalysis and wished to bring together their interest in educational reform with their enthusiasm for this new ‘science of the mind,’ which promised to revolutionize the way people thought about the psychology of the child. (35)

Put another way, what Midgley suggests here is that an interest in children's education was also an interest in the explicitly *political* potential of the child's mind. If, according to these reformers, individual psychology determined much of the shape of social and political organizations and institutions, then the careful curation of childhood

experiences (like education) held the promise of transforming the political attachments that solidified in adulthood. Attending to the wellbeing of the child was the first step in engineering a specific political future.

As historians of childhood have recorded, this was a time of general professional, scientific investment in the management and improvement of children's welfare. While scholarship on Anna Freud (like Suzanne Stewart-Steinberg's) has recognized the political responsiveness of Anna Freud's institutional work with children after World War II who had been displaced from their homes or separated from their families, I am interested in how her clinical technique, which she developed in the interwar period before the onset of genocidal fascism, was likewise using the child subject to grapple with questions of political futurity, nation, and government. The topic of technique was the subject of some of her first major papers in the 1920s and a recurring concern throughout her later, postwar writings. Throughout these interwar writings, Freud frets about the necessity of authority in the clinic, ultimately resolving that the child legitimately requires authoritative guidance since the dismantling of authority would only ever result in the loosing of murderous and sexual instincts, instincts that are antithetical to the reproduction of a stable and non-violent civil society. Contra socialist liberationist theorists like Wilhelm Reich or Herbert Marcuse who narrated the genesis of social malaise as a consequence of unnecessary repressions of the superego (classically represented by the patriarchal Oedipal father), Freud instead focuses her

clinical energies on the cultivation of precisely this psychic “institution,” imagining the child to be developmentally “immature” and “dependent” and therefore in need of external (analytic) authority.⁹

In what follows, I elaborate Freud’s interwar clinical writings, which I argue advance an erotics of paternal authority, specifically between adults and children. As I go on to suggest, this eroticization of authority is not separate from the political context of Red Vienna, as though the objects of sexuality are ever separable from politics. Rather I argue that by looking to this clinical erotics we can see that Freud’s relation to the ascent of globalized democracy was more ambivalent than her postwar writings imply. If Freud’s postwar institutional work with children in group homes testifies to her experimental production of horizontal, democratic power relations, then her interwar clinical technique reveals a distinctly eroticized attachment to the indispensability of hierarchical authority, especially as represented by the paternal and patriarchal internalization of the superego. By homing in on the way Freud’s early work theorizes the child and clinical technique, my aim is thus not to dismiss her clinical work as a somehow “inauthentic” or “failed” version of psychoanalysis, but rather to expand the

⁹ Whereas Sigmund Freud had referred to the three entities in his second topography—the id, the ego, and the superego—as “agencies” [*instanz*], Anna Freud interestingly refers to them as “institutions” throughout her writings, both in English and in German. This is an interesting modification of Sigmund Freud’s original nomenclature since it corresponds to Anna Freud’s principally institutional role in psychoanalysis: not only did she herself run a number of children’s institutes, but after Sigmund Freud’s death she was also responsible for much of the institutionalization of psychoanalysis itself, both in Britain and in the United States.

reach of historical and political readings of psychoanalysis by proposing that clinical methods, as much as public outreach, are enabled by and experimentally speak back to available political vocabularies. By a unique emphasis on authority, Freud's interwar work participates in a broader political ambivalence about the viability of democracy and gestures to a latent erotics of (patriarchal) authority.

Childhood Development: Between Dependence and Authority

In her clinic Freud advanced a generally developmental understanding of subjectivity that focused on the ego and the superego as the metric for childhood development. The child was essentially an "incomplete" version of the adult subject since, in her view, children lacked stable egos and solidified superegos, both of which were precipitated by the successful resolution of the Oedipus complex. Because Freud was working off of the general developmental stages that her father laid out through the Oedipus complex, the chronological age of a child was of great importance to her theories of psychic life. Age-based categories like "infant," "child," "adolescent," and "adult" were meaningful ways of marking both physical and psychic difference. She maintained that infants are primarily auto-erotic with little interest in or awareness of the specificity of the objects (like caretakers) in their world so long as their drives are satisfied. As a part of this developmental schema, then, as the child ages it slowly begins to incorporate its external world through a process of identification, building its ego and

superego from the composite images of the authorities around it. Freud affirms this in “Child Analysis and the Upbringing of Children,” an early essay from *Four Lectures on Child Analysis* (1926), in which she defines the child vis-à-vis the more “developed” adult.

[T]he superego of an adult individual has become the representative of the moral demands made by the society in which he lives. ...what was originally a personal obligation felt toward the parents becomes, in the course of development, an ego ideal that is independent of its prototypes in the external world.

In the case of a child, however, *there is as yet no such independence*. Detachment from the first love objects still lies in the future, and identification with them is accomplished only gradually and piecemeal. Even though the superego already exists and interacts with the ego at this early period much as it does in later times, *its dependence on the objects to which it owes its existence must not be overlooked*. (*emphasis added*, 54-55)

This passage, in which Freud explains the meta-psychological differences between children and adults, merits pause because of how it (unexpectedly) cites *object-dependence* as a hallmark of childhood. Here, Freud purports that the child’s psyche is different from the adult’s in key structural ways: the child lacks an independent, internalized superego, relying instead on the structural authority provided by the outside world (through figures like parents, teachers, and, as I shall discuss, analysts). For Freud, the superego crystalizes developmentally as the child passes through the sequences of the Oedipus complex and slowly internalizes “authorities” that had previously been only external. Because of this developmental rubric, Freud surmises

that the child lacks a consolidated internal authority and is thus fundamentally bound to and dependent upon external authorities.

Of pivotal importance here is the recognition that Freud measures the child's development—its maturity—according to the status of the superego, that internal representative of an explicitly paternal external authority. Continues Freud: "insofar as the childish superego has not yet become the impersonal representative of the demands taken over from the outer world, and is still organically connected with it—to that extent the relevant external objects play an important role in the analysis itself" (*Four Lectures*, 58). The inchoate nature of the child's superego means that the child itself is therefore dependent on its external objects, objects that (as I will discuss) she explicitly defines as representing "authority." Because Freud theorizes the child developmentally, imagining it as an unfinished or incomplete iteration of adult subjectivity precisely when it comes to the question of internalized authority, she arrives at the conclusion that the young child needs external objects for its successful self-development.

Part of the reason why I am highlighting this language of object-dependency within Freud's work, especially as it relates to the meta-psychological genesis of the superego, is because it productively disrupts the rote juxtaposition of Freud's "instinct theory" with Melanie Klein's "object relations." In the most reductive characterization of these two positions, Freud's emphasis on the drive and primary narcissism means that her theory of the child is rather insensible to the particularity of objects in the infant's

and child's psychic life; as the originator of Object Relations psychoanalysis, Klein, on the other hand, is said to downgrade the biological imperatives of the instincts and privilege instead the originary importance of external objects. Rough though this sketch certainly is, it captures something of how, as a result of the Controversial Discussions in the 1940s, "the instinct" is retrospectively counterpoised to "the object" as representatives of two diametrically opposed schools of thought. But, while this narrative does speak to certain differences of emphasis within Freud's and Klein's respective *oeuvres*, it dramatically reduces the complexity of each, foreclosing a recognition of the unusual role that object dependency plays in Freud's work, on the one hand, and the vast swaths of instinctual, biological phylogenesis that enable Klein's systematic thought, on the other. For both, "the instincts" and "the object" are much more intertwined than is often recognized.

I will return to a full discussion of the biological, instinctual aspects of Klein's thought in the next chapter, but for now I want to return to Freud's theory of superego development since her developmental approach has implications for understanding the sexualized status of authority in her work. Originally imagined as the internal representative of external, socio-political authority and morality, the superego for Sigmund Freud was explicitly paternal from its inception. Although Sigmund Freud did not officially propose the superego as a distinct psychic agency until the publication of the *Ego and the Id* in 1923, its ghostly outlines can be seen far earlier than this, in texts like

Totem and Taboo (1914) and “Mourning and Melancholia” (1917), which both describe the internalization of a self-critical agency. Yet, for Sigmund Freud, while the Oedipus complex absolutely carried with it implications of a developmental teleology in which its neat “resolution” through the introjection of the superego was one of the major benchmarks of individual maturation, it was perhaps more important as a narrative for the genesis of the psychic life of sexual difference. In the standard Oedipal drama—that is, the crucible through which the superego is formed—the child (typically assumed to be male) enters into a triangulated contestation with his father over sexual possession of his mother. This contestation is only ever resolved by the boy’s encounter with sexual difference—with woman’s “castration,” as Sigmund Freud blithely puts it—since this encounter gives weight to his father’s castration threats and galvanizes the child’s identification with the father. Through this process, the father’s prohibitions are introjected in the form of the superego. Founded on patriarchal prohibitions against incest, the superego has paternal antecedents. It is an internal representative of masculine authority, a social contract shared between men concerning their traffic in women. Sigmund Freud infamously hypothesized that, because girls were already “castrated,” their superegos are never fully reified, leaving them just slightly outside of culture, a touch pre-civilized. The superego thus marks out sexuality two ways: first, it is an internalization of masculine authority—of men’s sex-right—and, second, its full codification (or not) indexes a lived psychic difference between the sexes.

Anna Freud works on and through this paternal model for the genesis of the superego. What is interesting about her particular interpretation, though, is the way it spins out a reading of paternal authority that emphasizes not just the importance of patriarchal masculinity, but also of age and adulthood. In Sigmund Freud's narrative, the promise of Oedipal resolution offered to the male child is contingent on his recognition of his father's superior authority as an (un-castrated) man. But it is also, more subtly, contingent on the boy's recognition of his authority *as an adult*. The superego's paternal progenitor is defined, importantly, by *both gendered and generational difference*. The kinship role of "father" requires both masculine privilege and the authority of accumulated age. While Sigmund Freud put his weight behind the masculine, patriarchal element of paternal authority in the superego, Anna Freud interestingly picks up instead with the authority that accrues to age, emphasizing how adults in positions of authority are the necessary prototypes for the instantiation of the superego. By insisting on the child's need for external authority in the form of teachers, parents, and analysts, Anna Freud suggests how the Oedipal saga hinges on the authority of masculinity, to be sure, but on the authority of adulthood as well. In the superego, the authority of gender and generation combine.¹⁰

¹⁰ Thinking sexual difference and generational difference together, we might also note how these have been two privileged taboos within psychoanalytic theory. Sigmund Freud had no opposition to homosexuality, but generations of analysts following him (including Anna Freud and Melanie Klein) certainly did, citing it as a pathology insofar as it was understood symptomatically as a refusal of sexual difference (for a reading of homophobia in psychoanalysis,

The importance of generational difference for the genesis of the superego is not often recognized, but it is pivotal for understanding the logic behind Anna Freud's (re)invention of clinical technique. Because the child, according to Freud, is immature, undeveloped, and therefore dependent on external authority, it logically makes sense to propound a modification of psychoanalytic technique designed to meet the very different needs of children. Far from being neutral, permissive, and non-judgmental, the child analyst, insists Freud, must instead embody a kind of pedagogical authority designed to facilitate children's positive introjection of the right kind authority. This work begins from the very first moment the child enters analysis. Freud argues that at the inception of each new analysis the analyst needs to cultivate a specifically positive transference in the child patient early on. This is, she once wrote, an indispensable "period of preparation—a period of 'breaking the child in' for analysis..." (*Four Lectures*, 7). Because children never enter analysis of their own volition, Freud argues that engendering a positive attachment is a necessary prerequisite for any kind of analytic work with children since, only in this way, can the analyst overcome the child's

see Dagmar Herzog's recent chapter in *Cold War Freud*, "Homophobia's Durability and the Reinvention of Psychoanalysis." Although still viable in some corners, that reading of homosexuality as a primal pathology has fallen out of favor. However, a taboo against intergenerational sexual involvement has surfaced almost as if in its stead, wherein sexual relations across generational lines are read as signaling the failure of foundational Oedipal boundaries, and are thus treated as a pathology. Such a position is far more characteristic of work derived from American ego psychology and British Object Relations psychoanalysis than from French Lacanians.

initial hostility toward and suspicion of the analysis. Whereas a defining aspect of psychoanalytic technique with adult patients is the transference wherein patients transpose past desires and anxieties, loves and hates, onto the person of the analyst, Freud claims that, because the child is still very much *attached to* and *dependent on* the presence of the actual parents themselves, the possibilities for any full-bodied transference are strictly limited. Explaining this in “The Role of Transference in the Analysis of Children” in *Four Lectures on Child Analysis* (1926), Freud writes,

Unlike the adult, the child is not ready to produce a new edition of his love relationships, because, as one might say, the old edition is not yet exhausted. His original objects, the parents, are still real and present as love objects...there is no necessity for the child to put the analyst fully in the parents’ place, since compared to them he has not the same advantages which the adult finds when he can exchange his fantasy objects for a real person. (45)

Children, in other words, are creatures caught in the thrall of their everyday environments. Since the positive presence of the child’s original love object, the parents, are still present, Freud claims that the possibilities for transference are limited and that the analyst ought to strive to elicit the child’s positive attachment by occupying the same authoritative position as the parents. “I take great pains,” she writes,

to establish in the child a strong attachment to myself, and to bring him into *a relationship of dependence* on me. ...This affectionate attachment, i.e., the positive transference to the analyst, becomes the prerequisite for all later analytic work. (*emphasis added, Four Lectures, 40*)

These “great pains,” which the child analyst takes to secure the child’s dependence and attachment, recall Freud’s previous descriptions of the child’s necessary dependence on

its external authorities due to its unformed superego. Freud advises a clinical curation of this dependence through the analyst's active, supportive, authoritative, and pedagogical presence in the early stages of child analysis. The analyst ought to actively encourage certain kinds of positive, ego-syntonic affects in the child, who will then be all the more willing to internalize the analyst as a benevolent ego-ideal, or superego, in their process of subject formation. Put differently, the analyst's clinical project is to aid the child in the introjection of a superego by, in fact, *becoming the child's ego-ideal*—the child's ideal authority. For Freud, the child analyst ought to buttress the parents' authoritative position, courting the patient's positive transference feelings and encouraging the child to socially acceptable sublimations and repressions. In contrast to her father who theorized the superego—the psychic representative of social, and paternal, authority—as a precipitate of anxiety and guilt, Anna Freud here implicitly posits the possibility of a less conflicted superego, one founded on un-ambivalent love and presence rather than anxiety and loss. “The really fruitful work,” summarizes Freud, “always takes place in positive attachment” (*Four Lectures*, 41).¹¹

¹¹ Never a terribly popular analyst in London—she became well known as a “difficult” person and was described by Ernest Jones in a letter to Melanie Klein in 1942 as a “tough and indigestible morsel”—her advocacy of the child's positive transference garnered much criticism (Young-Bruehl, 259). Her position was attacked for a wide range of reasons: her adversaries contested everything from the “unpsychoanalytic” nature of her technique to the “unanalyzed” aspects of her own person in order to dismiss her theory. Freud would eventually come to revise this emphasis on a necessarily positive transference, claiming in the 1970s and 1980s that her early work had unduly privileged the child's affectionate (rather than hostile) feelings. However, even with this late-coming codicil, the cultivation of a positive transference is still a hallmark of

To elaborate this postulation about the positive transference, Freud narrates the case of a ten-year-old boy in which she actively encourages the boy's dependence, using her own formidable authority to secure his attachment to her. This boy, who presented clinically with "an obscure mixture of many anxieties, nervous states, insincerities, and infantile perverse habits," distrusted Freud from the outset and refused to disclose what she describes as his "sexual secrets" (*Four Lectures*, 11). In order to counter this suspicion, Freud embarks on a subtle process of one-upmanship, matching each of the boy's actions and behaviors with superior versions of her own.

If he came with a string in his pocket, and began to show me remarkable knots and tricks, I would let him see that I could make more complicated knots and do more remarkable tricks. If he made faces, I pulled better ones; if he challenged me to trials of strength, I showed myself incomparably stronger. (*Four Lectures*, 12)

Freud's aim in performing this repertoire of herculean feats is to make herself "useful" to the boy precisely by establishing herself as an authority on the subjects that hold his interest. She endeavors to show herself "incomparably stronger" so as to gain his positive regard, bringing him to rely on her as an authority capable of shielding him from punishment and mitigating the destructiveness of his onslaughts. Freud continues:

Anna Freud's overall technique. For an example of this revised position, see the "Introduction" to Volume I of *The Writings of Anna Freud* (vii-xii).

Besides an interesting and useful companion I had become a very powerful person, without whose help he could no longer get along. [...] I had made myself indispensable to him and he had become dependent on me. But I had only waited for this moment to demand of him in return the most extensive cooperation, though not in words and not all at one stroke: I asked for the surrender, so necessary for analysis, of all his previously guarded secrets. (*Four Lectures*, 13-14)

For Freud, love and authority work together to produce the conditions that she believes to be the necessary groundwork for any further analytic work: dependence and positive affection for the child, and judicious authority for the analyst. “[T]he child analyst, who in any case is bigger and older than his little patient [...] becomes a person of unquestioned power when the child feels that his authority is accepted by the parents even above their own” (*Four Lectures*, 22-23). The yield of this positive transference to the analyst’s authority, according to Freud, is yet another layer in the hierarchal relation: if all goes as planned, the child is then willing to “surrender” to the analysis, giving over “all his previously guarded secrets” as the final *coup-de-grace* to the analyst’s superior authority.

While there is undoubtedly something sexual and erotic about Freud’s penetrative desire to have a young boy surrender to her greater authority—Freud’s own descriptions put the boy in the position of the supine, pliable female body whose secrets are finally penetrable—Freud famously did not take sexual difference and sexuality as primary interests, in this case as in the great majority of her work. Unlike other female colleagues (many of whom were also child analysts), Freud never focused principally on

the psychic experiences of maternity and sexual difference. For Freud, a positive relation to authority was imperative to any successful child analysis, but the erotics of these trans-generational encounters would get worked out elsewhere.

Schooling Psychoanalysis: Beating Fantasies, Daydreams, and the Erotics of Authority

In May of 1922, four years after the analysis with her father ended and four years before she would publish the case study of the boy with “sexual secrets” in her book on clinical technique, Freud delivered her very first psychoanalytic paper to the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. This paper, titled “Beating Fantasies and Daydreams,” is centrally concerned with the erotics of authority, specifically as it manifests between adults and children. It is not only Freud’s first authored contribution to psychoanalytic knowledge, but was also read as part of her application for official membership to the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. As Patrick J. Mahoney observes: “that paper served as [Anna Freud’s] *rite of passage*—it was a membership paper delivered to the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, which was presided over by none other than her own father and analyst” (49). Institutionally, its function was to secure Freud’s own analytic authority, as Sigmund Freud’s child, in what would become the field of child psychoanalysis. Responding to her father’s 1919 “A Child is Being Beaten” — a text laden with Oedipal significance — Anna Freud’s paper extends her father’s line of inquiry about sexualized

fantasies of adults beating children by attending to the psychic implications of daydreams that had developed in the wake of the sublimated beating fantasies.¹²

In this paper, Freud details the single case of a young girl who, at the age of five or six, had begun to repress a series of masturbatory beating fantasies that she had indulged in throughout her childhood, constructing in their place an elaborate edifice of moral daydreams that she called her “nice stories.” According to the girl, these daydreams were based on the plot of a “boy’s story book” and they stretched across her adolescence, repeating, with little variation, the same narrative again and again (“Beating Fantasies,” 144). According to Freud, the narrative of the daydreams goes thus:

A medieval knight has been engaged in a long feud with a number of nobles who are in league against him. In the course of the battle a fifteen-year-old noble youth (i.e. the age of the daydreamer) is captured by the knight’s henchmen. He is taken to the knight’s castle where he is held prisoner for a long time. Finally, he is released. (“Beating Fantasies,” 145)

¹² Although used interchangeably in colloquial conversation, here “fantasies” refers to psychic productions that are largely compulsive and sexual whereas “daydreams” refers to more consciously controllable thoughts and narratives. Both of these terms are then different from “dreams,” which are the nocturnal productions of the unconscious, less subject to repression because of the ego’s relaxed (sleeping) defenses. The scope of these terms, especially in relation to Melanie Klein’s “phantasies,” is something I will elaborate in greater detail in chapter two. It is important to note that while Sigmund Freud and subsequent thinkers like Klein developed complex metapsychologies around these terms, Freud never focused her work on the development of a metapsychology, preferring instead to focus on issues of technique and application. Thus, her use of these terms should not be understood to index a precise meta-psychological meaning. Whereas psychoanalysts like Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, Jacques Lacan, and D.W. Winnicott all have “Dictionaries” that elaborate their complex or idiosyncratic meta-psychological conceptions of human subjectivity, no such index of Anna Freud’s work exists.

Within this frame, the girl elaborated countless episodes, interludes, detours, and appendices, prolonging the congress between captive and captor: sometimes the youth would be caught in a transgression and the knight would threaten punishment; sometimes he would try to escape and the knight would catch him; other times the knight would threaten to torture the youth in order “to force him to betray his secrets” (*ibid*, 146). Although additional actors would enter into the scenes, playing minor parts, the main action was always around the knight and the captive youth, who the knight was holding hostage as leverage. In each episode, the story would resolve when the youth, on the brink of fatal harm, was suddenly rescued by the knight, who withdrew his threats of violence. Rather than masturbatory pleasure, the climax of each of these episodes resulted in the experience of peaceful resolution and harmonious happiness. According to Freud’s analysis, instinctual satisfaction is replaced by the less taboo—and less intense—experiences of social harmony and conflict resolution. In other words, the transition from sexual beating fantasies to moral daydreams narrates, for Freud, the condition of possibility for the emergence of political justice.

What Freud emphasizes as significant about these daydreams is the hierarchical power relation being acted out by the two male leads. Freud notes repeatedly that the “antagonism between a strong and a weak person” is a routine and constitutive part of the narrative drama (“Beating Fantasies,” 148). Writes Freud: “the whole setting was one of apparently irreconcilable antagonism between one who is strong and mighty and

another who is weak and in the power of the former" (*ibid*, 146). To the extent that hierarchal power relations centered around conflict and recognition are at stake, the daydreams are effectively a parable of lord and bondsman in which political subjection is the condition of possibility for harmonious hierarchical relations: lord and bondsman are caught in the violent tension of subjectification, only in the end to reach a harmony of intersubjective political recognition. The daydream offers a fantasy of the possibility of justice. Essentially, the daydreams constitute a pre-modern political parable about the forms of political justice and recognition possible in the dissemination of patriarchal authority; sexual gratification is sublimated in an ethico-political order surfaces in its stead.

Like the daydreams, the girl's childhood beating fantasies had focused explicitly on the corporal punishment of children by adults. From these exchanges between adults and children, the girl derived masturbatory satisfaction. Freud records that, in the mental construction of the beating fantasies,

The child invented complicated organizations and complete institutions, schools, and reformatories in which the beating scenes were to take place, and established definite rules and regulations which determined the conditions of gaining pleasure. At that time the persons administering the beatings were invariably teachers; only later and in exceptional cases the fathers of the boys were added—as spectators mostly. ("Beating Fantasies," 141)

Staged in "complete institutions, schools, and reformatories" where pleasure is allocated according to "strict rules and regulations," the erotic beatings in these fantasies are

administered by teachers, or in more exceptional cases, fathers. In this homoerotic pornographic imaginary, authoritarian teachers (implicitly gendered male) beat boys while their fathers voyeuristically watch from the sidelines. The sexual pleasure of the scene rests squarely on the back—or backside—of a child conceived of as needing to be taught a lesson. Pleasure is derived from the passive, prostrate posture of the male child's body as the receptacle of chastisement. This fantasy witnesses the easy slide from the pedagogical to the pederastic.

As with the “nice stories,” these erotic beating fantasies showcase how the sexual charge of this scene derives from the combination of a gendered and generational authority: the erotics of the narrative accrue to the domination of boys by men. At the center of both stories is an account of inter-generational violence between men, where patriarchal authority is established over a child by means of an erotic specularization of discipline. In her comparison of the two psychic phenomena, Freud recognizes this similarity outright, summarizing that: “[i]n the beating fantasy, too, the protagonists are strong and weak persons who in their clearest delineation oppose each other as adults and children” (“Beating Fantasies,” 149). There is something erotic, Freud seems to be suggesting, about the exercise of paternal authority over male children, whose weakness and vulnerability feminizes them at the same time as it secures, for the adult, the authority characteristic of masculinity. In the transition from beating fantasy to moral daydream, the modern, institutional scenes of masculine pedagogical discipline are

replaced by a pre-modern parable of patriarchal authority and punishment where instead of an erotics of paternal inequality there is the resolution of a struggle for recognition. In both sequences, a cast comprised exclusively of men and boys enacts a homosocial exchange of power through violence. To the extent that the transmission of power between men has long defined the realm of politics, both narratives engage in a political debate about the function and effects of patriarchal authority. In both scenes, the relationship between masculinity, authority, eroticism, and justice is acted out to different ends.

I cite Freud's early paper on a girl plagued by beating fantasies and daydreams not just because its interest in gendered and generational authority offers a curious addendum to what would become Freud's clinical method—although it does this, to be sure. The persistence of what looks at first like a theme across Freud's professional interest takes on a different gloss when combined with the knowledge that, as most scholars avow, Freud's first paper on beating fantasies was entirely autobiographical.¹³ Not only is Freud likely one of her father's anonymous patients in his "A Child if Being Beaten," but she is also "the girl" whose fantasies and daydreams spiral around the erotics of patriarchal authority over children. In other words, the young girl fascinated

¹³ As her biographer Elisabeth Young-Bruehl writes, "...it is at least clear from her various correspondences that 'Beating Fantasies and Daydreams' was modeled—in general, if not in complete detail—on her own case, and her essay's descriptive framework is identical with the one that applies to two of the female cases in [Sigmund] Freud's essay" (104).

by the erotics of paternal authority—the “patient” who found sexual satisfaction in the paternal subjection of children to pedagogical discipline—is none other than the progenitor of a clinical technique of child analysis that promotes the generational exercise of pedagogical authority as its most defining feature. If the knight in Freud’s eroticized daydream intends to torture the youth for his guarded secrets, then what are readers to make of Freud’s clinical desire to use her own authority to extract sexual secrets from her own child-patients? Is the moral of Freud’s “nice stories” perhaps that the exercise of authority over children might always be tainted with immorality, with erotic satisfaction?

Freud never fully exorcised these daydreams about men and boys. Indeed, although she insists that she managed to sublimate them into her work, she also acknowledges that they still crop up, especially at the most inconvenient (if not wholly unexpected) moments. In a letter to friend and mentor Lou Andreas-Salomé in 1924, Freud describes the resurgence of these “nice stories,” confessing that their reappearance in her adult life was anything but nice.

In the last week my “nice stories” all the sudden surfaced again and rampaged for days as they have not for a long while. Now they are asleep again, but I was impressed by how unchangeable and forceful and alluring such a daydream is, even if it has been—like my poor one—pulled apart, analyzed, published, and in every way mishandled and mistreated. I know that it is really shameful—especially when I do it between patients—but it was again very beautiful and gave me great pleasure. (qtd. In Young-Breuhl, 121)

“Forceful and alluring,” these “nice stories” “rampaged for days.” Despite being “pulled apart, analyzed, published, and in every way mishandled and mistreated” they still produced a “great pleasure” that (like sex itself) Freud experienced as “really shameful.” Chronicling the shame associated with the resurgence of her “nice stories,” Freud makes a point of remarking on the fact that their elicit pleasure is both qualified and amplified by how they punctuate her *clinical work*. Importantly, her patriarchal, pederastic daydreams make their appearance sandwiched in between her child patients. If one of the things Freud’s clinical method shares with her daydreams is an interest in authority exercised over children, then the fact that the daydreams would interrupt her clinical work — would give “great pleasure” in between her authoritative work with children — seems a hardly coincidental commentary on the libidinal investment in Freud’s clinical work. In a quite literal way, Freud’s clinical method is traversed by erotic fantasies about the dissemination of political authority from adults to children.

“Allowing Her Devil to Speak”: Pedagogical Child Analysis and Authority in the Clinic

Freud explicitly frames her child analysis as a pedagogical exercise. As I have already suggested in the previous case studies, for Freud the analyst must be a pedagogical authority for the child-patient. Freud imagines the child analyst’s function to be quite different from the passive “mirror” that Sigmund Freud had proposed for analysts working with adults. “The child analyst must be anything but a shadow,” she

cautions (*Four Lectures*, 45).¹⁴ According to her advice, analysts should not simply act as passive reflectors of unconscious material since the young child suffers not from reminiscences, but from current events. Given the fact that the child is actively negotiating the often-conflicted process of turning an external authority into an internal structure, Freud avers that the analyst ought to provide “support” throughout this process, helping the child to *construct* stable psychic structures through the authority of her presence rather than prompting them to deconstruct solidified ones through transference and interpretation. Like a teacher or parent, the child analyst must mete out freedom with due discipline.

To give but another brief example of this, Freud explains her analytic technique in “Child Analysis and the Upbringing of Children” by recounting her clinical work with a six-year old girl who was brought to analysis because of an obsessional neurosis, which resulted in an overly inhibited demeanor. Freud interprets this inhibition as indicating a repression of the girl’s hostile and sadistic feelings against her mother,

¹⁴ Freud’s reference to the analyst as “shadow” calls to mind Sigmund Freud’s use of the same term in “Mourning and Melancholia” (1917). In describing the psychic effects of loss for the melancholic, Sigmund Freud writes enigmatically that the “shadow of the object fell upon the ego” leaving its trace upon the ego’s structure. While shadows, like mirrors, are in some sense doubles— they are a derivative outline of a primary, “authentic” object—they differently connote concepts of light and obstruction. Whereas mirrors are the surface onto which reflections of the object are cast, representing the object in ostensibly perfect detail, shadows are the result of the object’s obstruction of light. They are the “dark side,” so to speak, produced by an object’s embodied placement in relation to a light source. Rather than a doubled presence, they index an absence. Freud’s use of this term thus already speaks to how she understands the child analyst in terms of presence and absence rather than doubled reflection.

which the girl had split off into another part of her personality, calling this her “devil.” By initially allowing the child to express these feelings without censure in the clinic, Freud “brought [her] young obsessional patient to the point of allowing her ‘devil’ to speak,” a change that transformed not only the way the child behaved in the analytic hour, but also her personality at home (*Four Lectures*, 61). However, the tentative license that Freud gave her young patient did not at all go as she had planned. Having lifted the girl’s external prohibitions and restrictions, Freud summarizes the results:

In the absence of external condemnation, the child lost all moderation, carried over into her home all the ideas previously expressed only during analysis, and completely reveled, as she had with me, in her anal preoccupations, comparisons, and expressions... My little patient had behaved like a pervert or a mentally ill adult, and thereby put herself beyond the pale of society. Since she was not removed from the company of others, they removed themselves from her. During this period she abandoned all restraints in other respects as well. In a few days she had become transformed into a cheerful, insolent, and disobedient child, by no means dissatisfied with herself. (*Four Lectures*, 62)

In spite of Freud’s recognition that the child was “cheerful” and “by no means dissatisfied with herself” because of the lifted restrictions, she interprets this unbinding of libidinal energy as a failure of her clinical intervention. Using morally weighted language—the “pervert” is made tantamount to the “mentally ill”—Freud reflects that she “had changed an inhibited, obsessional child into one whose ‘perverse’ tendencies were liberated,” casting her “beyond the pale of society” (*Four Lectures*, 63). Freud interprets the little girl’s abandonment of all social decorum as a proof that children do not possess stable, self-regulating superegos and thus require the exercise of external

authority if they are going to become other than a Hobbesian subject in the state of nature. For Freud, this was a revelatory moment in the development of her analytic technique and it solidified her conviction that children need not only to be treated by different methods than adults, but that authority particularly is a critical element for any successful child analysis.

I had to acknowledge that I had made a mistake, in crediting the child's superego with an independent inhibitory strength which it did not possess. As soon as the important people in the external world had relaxed their demands, the child's superego, previously strict and strong enough to bring forth a whole series of obsessional symptoms, suddenly turned compliant. ...I had changed an inhibited, obsessional child into one whose "perverse" tendencies were liberated. But, in doing so, I had also ruined the situation for my work. This liberated child now had her "rest hour" all day long, lost her enthusiasm for our joint work to a considerable degree. (A. Freud, *Four Lectures*, 63)

As a corrective to what she considered this early misstep in the analysis, Freud subsequently assumes a much more authoritative relation to the child and reinstates many of the original expressive prohibitions, especially those that related to the child's behavior outside of the clinic. Notes Freud: "I fulfilled her apparent desire to have authoritative demands imposed on her" (*Four Lectures*, 19). Freud justifies her superegoic, authoritative intervention by (re)turning to an explicitly pedagogical idiom, emphasizing the importance of analytic "guid[ance]" and children's "learn[ing]," especially in this case where the child seemed to be craving such discipline. She opines further, in the same lecture:

The analyst must claim for himself the liberty to guide the child at this important point, in order to secure, to some extent, the achievements of analysis. Under his influence the child must learn how to deal with his instinctual life; the analyst's views must in the end determine what part of the infantile sexual impulses must be suppressed or rejected as unsuitable in civilized society. (*Four Lectures*, 60)

Here, it is the analyst's job to "civilize" the (presumably "savage") child, taking what liberties she must in order to "guide" and "influence" the child toward the proper sublimations of sexual life. Placing the analyst's authority on the side of civilization, Freud likens the child analyst to a teacher or leader, whose ability to produce civil society is conditional on their authoritative suppression of unruly masses. Freud thus uses the case, which itself raises the question of the analyst's potentially pedagogical and disciplinary function, as a pedagogical object lesson for the reader, showcasing the moral failures of an undisciplined heroine—both the child given too free reign, and Freud herself as an initially too-lenient analyst.

This case occupies an important place within Freud's early lectures since, through it, she justifies the implementation of the preparatory period in child analysis, which she (as much as her many critics) acknowledges to be thoroughly *unanalytic*. She returns to the case frequently throughout her writings and uses it to argue that pedagogical measures are not just necessary in this one particular case, but are also a vital component in *all* child analyses. As Freud continually makes explicit, because of the undeveloped nature of the child's mind, it is incumbent on the child analyst to be simultaneously psychoanalytic *and* pedagogical, mantling an unwieldy combination of

the exercise of authority and its critique. As she states a few pages later in the same lecture,

I would not have enlarged upon this example if it did not serve to illustrate all the characteristics of the analysis of children put forward in this last section: the fact that a child's superego is weak; that his superego demands and consequently his neurosis are dependent upon the external world; that the child himself is incapable of controlling the instincts that have been freed; and that *for this reason the analyst must take charge and guide them*. The analyst accordingly combines in his own person two difficult and diametrically opposed functions: he has to analyze and educate, that is to say, in the same breath he must allow and forbid, loosen and bind again. If the analyst does not succeed in this, analysis may become the child's charter for all the ill conduct prohibited in society. (A. Freud, *emphasis mine*, *Four Lectures*, 65)

Because of the child's immature superego—its underdeveloped paternal identification—is not strong enough to marshal such raucous instincts, the analyst must fulfill that authoritative superego function; she must “take charge and guide them,” combining in her person an analytic permissiveness and a pedagogical authoritativeness. Not unlike what Sigmund Freud recommends in Little Hans' case, Anna Freud here suggests that the analyst adopt a combined function in the child clinic. Avowing the oppositional nature of these two pursuits—education and psychoanalysis—Freud nevertheless frames the technical uniqueness of child psychoanalysis as its almost impossible combination of them. The child's willingness and ability to conform to social expectations (primarily those having to do with sexuality and aggression) is a key part of how Freud narrates the “normal development” — that is, the “healthy development” — of the child, whose instinctual self-satisfactions must be tempered by cultural

restrictions that are imposed as much by the authority of the analyst as by that of the forbidding teacher. In the pedagogical exercise of authority, the analyst, like the teacher, is a “real” person for the child, an external authority on which the child’s superego can crutch: “[t]he educational implications which, as you will hear, are involved in the analysis, result in the child knowing very well just what seems desirable or undesirable to the analyst, and what he sanctions or disapproves of” (1926, 46). In short, Freud puts this case to work to prove the exceptional and unorthodox authority that the child analyst *must* assume with children in order to avoid the collapse of culture altogether.

Although this appreciation of authority has much in common with Sigmund Freud’s *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* and his later *Civilization and Its Discontents*, it is important to recall that Anna Freud (unlike her father) is advancing this ethics of authority, guidance, and external support specifically in relation to the child *in the clinic*. While Sigmund Freud, in *Group Psychology*, had attempted to *describe* the social organization of groups and leaders through his theory of identification, which he argues is the means by which the child introjects his father as his first authority, Anna Freud adopted this social hypothesis as her clinical premise, *prescribing* it to the children she analyzed—and doing so in a subtly eroticized way. In a letter to family friend Max Eitingon the same year that she delivered these lectures (1926), Anna Freud confessed her personal attachment to *Group Psychology*, telling Eitingon: “...everything was in there, my old daydreams and all I wanted” (qtd. in Young-Bruehl, 215). *Group Psychology*

functioned for Freud as the authoritative text about authority, one in which, not insignificantly, she found her old eroticized daydreams. Her project, as she articulates it, is not one of speculative social theorization but of clinical construction and creation. In other words, Freud took her father's proto-political theory with its emphasis on the need for social authority and suggested that the subjects most in need of this particular kind of governance were children in analysis.¹⁵ Their unruly sexual instincts need to be damped down by precisely that measure of paternal, superegoic authority that Freud herself found so sexually compelling. In her own terms, Freud argues that the child analyst's function ought to be the (necessarily prescriptive) production of subjectivity through the careful orchestration of the analyst's own authority.

We may say in short: the analyst must succeed in putting himself in the place of the child's ego ideal for that duration of the analysis; he ought not to begin his analytic work of *liberation* until he has made sure that *the child is eager to follow his lead*. For this purpose, it is essential that the analyst have the *position of authority* about which we spoke at the

¹⁵ Read from a wider historical angle, *Group Psychology* is a rather politically over-determined text. Ironically, while Anna Freud's clinical method borrowed from this text, so too, according to Mark Edmundson, may have an up-and-coming Adolf Hitler, who apparently turned to Freud's 1921 treatise as a manual on group authority. Edmundson records that "Hitler's biographer, John Toland, speculates that Hitler may have read *Group Psychology* and used it to guide his [political] performances" and public speeches (56). Whether or not we take this historical conjecture as an accurate representation of Hitler's literary habits is hardly the point since Toland's inclination to even speculate on this possibility registers the text's strong conceptual resonance with the dynamics of political authority, in this case, authoritarianism. This, at the same time as socialist radical Wilhelm Reich used Freud's writing on mass psychology as the premise for *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (1933). Unlike Reich, Anna Freud did not mobilize the premises offered in *Group Psychology* for a social diagnosis, but adopted them as the *prescripts* for her own professional undertaking, imagining her democratic subjectivity on and through the reproduction of (patriarchal) authority.

beginning. Before the child can give the *highest place in his emotional life*, that of the ego ideal, to this new love objects which ranks with the parents, he needs to feel that *analyst's authority is even greater than theirs*. (*emphasis mine, Four Lectures, 60*).

Insofar as the child analyst is dealing with an inchoate subjectivity, she advocates an approach that pays heed to the importance of superego formation in the child. Knowing how the psychic life of an adult *ought* to be structured in order to minimize suffering, Freud propounds a technique that seeks to lead children toward specific ends. For her, the analyst must embody an ideal authority, must achieve the “highest place in [the child’s] emotional life.” Only by securing this “position of authority” is the child analyst, according to Freud, able to undertake the “analytic work of liberation,” ensuring that “the child is eager to follow his lead.” The implication here is that Freud has no qualms with using her authority in the clinic to lead the child on.

To this end, Freud maintains that psychoanalysis—and psychoanalysts—ought to encourage children as much as possible to bring their instinctual needs under the guiding authority of the ego and superego; the analyst’s work is to use her authority to transform socially unacceptable instinctual urges into what she understands to be socially useful and gratifiable ones, thereby reproducing stable, “civilized” society. Freud says as much in the late decades of her career, after the human and material destructions of World War II, in the lecture series she gave in Boston for Harvard and Radcliffe students. In a talk titled “The Unconscious” (1952), she advised that

to change the environment of the child so that it fits the nature of the child ...is all wrong. It does not work out well for the child, and for the adult community it means a loss in cultural values. It is the child who should go forward into the community. (Sandler *et al.*, 6)

According to Freud, radical social transformation is not the purview of psychoanalysis.¹⁶

The already-consolidated norms of culture and community set the limits for the different kinds of society that Freud imagines. Freud's theories about clinical technique suggest the productive significance of the wider, socio-political order for the organization of individual psychic life inasmuch as the socio-political order both provides the conceptual idioms through which analysts theorize subjectivity and inasmuch as it sets the perimeters of the social world to which the patient will be asked to conform.

Follow the Leader: On Authority Lost and Regained

In the psychoanalytic consulting room, child analysts like Freud were actively (re)creating and implementing new clinical techniques to manage the child-subject.

¹⁶ While Freud did seek, throughout her postwar career, to accommodate displaced children, these group homes were never organized with the conscious intention of transforming family structures. Rather, they sought to reduce, as much as possible, the psychological impact of the devastation incurred during total war and the damage wrought by genocidal National Socialism. Their project was compensatory far more than it was progressive; what Freud sought was stability, not revolution. Indeed, these homes very often tried to reproduce internally the same conditions of liberal (heteronormative) family life that Freud imagined the child would have experienced in her own family by creating institutional "mothers" and "fathers" and Freud frequently went out of her way to ensure biologically male authorities were present. For further reading, See *Infants Without Families: Reports on the Hampstead Nurseries*, especially "Introduction of the Mother Relationship Into Nursery Life" and "The Role of the Father in the Residential Nursery" in Part II.

These techniques, and indeed the very narratives they used to define “the child” as a particular kind of subjectivity, often pulled from the explicitly political vocabularies available to them. Terms like “authority,” “liberation,” “leadership,” “attack,” “defense,” “tyranny,” and “reparation” (to mention but a few) were a regular part of the rhetoric analysts used to theorize the child-subject’s metapsychology and legitimate a clinical technique. Take, for instance, Freud’s brief description of the ego from her landmark 1936 *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense* in which she mobilizes politicized rhetoric to elaborate psychic structures:

our proper field for observation is always the ego. It is, so to speak, the medium through which we try to get a picture of the other two institutions. When the relations between the two neighboring powers—ego and id—are peaceful, the former fulfills to administration its role of observing the latter. (6)

Using language that registers the institutional, administrative, and even bureaucratic social structures that were the condition of possibility for Freud’s conception of the ego, readers might also note the clearly political idioms informing her conception of the (international) “relations” between these “neighboring powers.” Poised on the brink of World War II, Freud argues in 1936 that the goal of analysis is negotiating “peace” between these conflicted institutions, the ego and the id, whose personification as nation-states begs the question of their respective political signification. The geopolitical underpinnings of this metapsychology are far from novel, though, given that Sigmund Freud had been marshaling war imagery in his psychoanalytic papers from the very

start. Indeed, the fact that Anna Freud's most enduring clinical legacy has been an unrelenting focus on the analysis of ego "defenses" already speaks to a lifetime spent caught between two world wars, a career embroiled in a major inter-institutional struggle for political power, and a subjectivity entrenched in racialized and gendered limitations. Psychoanalysts, as much as many other human scientists, were developing their conception of the child subject in the midst of a larger political discourse that was, newly, thinking about government and (inter)national conflict on global scales.

As I have been arguing, what is interesting about Freud's early work is the extent to which the clinical technique she develops turns to the operation of authority as the solution for the problems introduced by the "undeveloped" and "immature" child-mind. For the child, unlike for the adult, the liberatory potential of psychoanalysis is to be found precisely in the judicious embodiment and exercise of authority. This treatment of authority represented a significant break with the thought of her various socialist colleagues who, largely, wanted to de-emphasize the censures of the paternal superego, since this rigid and repressive internal authority was understood to be the root of much unnecessary psychical conflict, an atavistic representation of patriarchal norms that many socialist and feminist psychoanalysts were struggling to undo. As the sweeping political appeal of authoritarianism was made more and more evident throughout the 1930s and into the 1940s, thinkers like Marcuse, Fromm, and Adorno grew increasingly wary of the psychic effects of authority and, as a tactical response to this zealotry, they

theorized authoritarianism as the political correlate of the psychic introjection of authority. Citing Fromm specifically, Frank Furedi observes in his comprehensive survey of social theories of authority that there was an increasing tendency (throughout the interwar period, but during the rise of European fascism, especially) “to lose sight of the distinction between authority and power, and between terms like ‘authority’ and ‘authoritarian’” (362). In many interwar social and political discourses, authority and authoritarianism became synonymous; an emphasis on the former translated into a natural affinity for the latter.¹⁷ As the threat of multiple authoritarian regimes mounted in the 1930s, psychoanalytic rubrics that detailed the individual internalization of authority became powerful narratives for diagnosing the appeal of authoritarianism as a form of governance and for strategizing different kinds of social eugenics to stymie its recurrence.¹⁸

In contrast to these thinkers, who equated authority with authoritarianism and sought to retrench the hold of the superego as the internal representative of oppressive patriarchal-political authority, Freud interestingly propounded a clinical technique in

¹⁷ See *The Authoritarian Personality* by T.W. Adorno *et al.* for an exemplary instance of how psychoanalysis provided a vocabulary for linking domestic and familial authority to the rise of national authoritarianism.

¹⁸ As I will elaborate more in chapter three, this point speaks to the many postwar BBC public broadcasts that D.W. Winnicott gave in which he counseled mothers on the best techniques for infant management, making explicit that successful childcare was the unequivocal foundation for a democratic polis. For an example of this tendency in Winnicott’s work, see “The Mother’s Contribution to Society” in *Home Is Where We Start From*.

which children's "liberation" (as she put it) was *contingent on* the successful internalization precisely of this internal authority—the superego. She emphasized the importance of the formation of the ego and superego through the instantiation of analytic authority, looking to the extant social order for the perimeters of the child's future instinctual gratification. By combining pedagogical with psychoanalytic methods in the clinic, Freud argues emphatically for the necessity of restrictive authority in the upbringing—and analysis—of the child. When it comes to the child in the clinic, specifically, freedom paradoxically comes from obedience, authority, and analytic leadership. As Midgley confirms, "[i]n contrast to the dominant view of psychoanalysis at the time, which many people understood to be promoting unfettered freedom of expression, Freud emphasized that 'lack of restraint' can be as harmful to children as 'the injurious effect of too great repression'" (48). Put simply, Freud's primary concern in these early papers, during the socialist golden age of Red Vienna, was not with mitigating the injurious effects of too strong an authority but with curtailing those begat by too great a freedom.

Yet Freud was not alone in her conceptual turn to authority as a strategic solution for the problems incurred by excessive ungoverned liberty. While socialist anti-authoritarians on the cusp of World War II were highly critical of authority, emblazing it as the antithesis of (democratic) freedom, there was a large sect of interwar pundits and intellectuals who were wary of democratic tenets and embraced instead a concept of

authority as a potential solution to the problems inherent in pure democracies. After World War I ended and the Austro-Hungarian Empire was dismantled and partitioned into smaller, ethnic nation-states, the newly minted Austrian democracy struggled to articulate the legitimacy of its constitutional foundations.¹⁹ In the abrupt transition from Empire to democratic republic, many were ambivalent about not only the republic's legitimacy, but also about its desirability. All three of the largest political parties at the time—The Christian Socials, The Social Democrats, and The Greater German Nationals—had doubts about a liberal Austrian democracy: the conservative Christian Socials would have preferred a return to monarchy; the Social Democrats were amenable to democracy, but lobbied for a more fully socialist economy; and the German Nationals avidly vied for official unification with Germany (Jelavich, 170). Many in Austria (as in Germany) prior to World War II were thus skeptical of democratic republicanism, and there was much public ambivalence about the Allies' ideological project of enforced democratization. For many interwar Austrians and Germans, the imperative to democracy had the strong smell of cultural imperialism and its premises

¹⁹ Peter C. Caldwell puts this paradox undergirding the authority of constitutional democracies well when he notes the logical fractures in the Austrian Constitution, which made its claim to legitimacy always a bit spurious. "The 1920 Austrian Constitution, for example, was created according to the norm regulating the formation of a constitutive national assembly in 1918. When a legal scientist followed the rule for creating a new constitution back to the rules creating those rules, eventually a break appeared in the continuity of legal development. Viewed in terms of legal norms, the Austro-Hungarian emperor's agreement in 1918 to recognize any decision by the National Council on the state's form was illegal according to existing law, since it was not approved by the Austro-Hungarian Imperial Council (*Reichsrat*). That revolutionary break in legal continuity raised the question of how to explain why a constitution was valid" (92).

of majority rule often appeared as a threat rather than a promise. As Furedi speculates, it has perhaps only been retrospectively, after the disastrous realities of the twin authoritarian regimes of Stalinism and National Socialism, that democracy has come to be so idealized, enshrined as a broadly uncontested ethico-political virtue (351). However, prior to the psychic and material violence of genocidal fascist and socialist regimes, democracy was treated with much more dubiety, in large part because its relationship to authority was ambiguous.²⁰

Harkening back to the crowd psychologists of decades before, this negative suspicion about the lack of legitimate, regulatory authority in democratic governments frequently took form in a widespread anxiety about the irrational nature of “public opinion” and the deficiencies of the ungoverned “masses.” Political commentators distrusted the sound decision making of the public majority, likening them (significantly) to “children” and “primitives” in a developmental framework reminiscent of Sigmund Freud’s anthropological epic, *Totem and Taboo* (1914). Writes conservative American commentator Walter Lippmann in his 1922 critique of democracy, *Public Opinion*:

²⁰ In an interesting layer on the general skepticism about democracy, the rise of authoritarian governments throughout Europe was often cited as an additional proof of democracy’s failures. Hungarian sociologist Karl Mannheim elaborates this position in 1933 when he writes in “The Democratization of Culture” that “[d]ictatorships can only arise in democracies... Dictatorship is not the antithesis of democracy; it represents one of the possible ways in which a democratic society may try to resolve its problems” (qtd. in Furedi, 353). Democracy, ironically, suffered both from too little authority and from the tendency to generate too much authoritarianism.

The mass of absolutely illiterate, of feeble-minded, grossly neurotic, undernourished and frustrated individuals, is very considerable, much more considerable there is reason to think than we generally suppose. Thus a wide popular appeal is circulated among persons who are mentally children or barbarians, people whose lives are a morass of entanglements, people whose vitality is exhausted, shut-in people, and people whose experience has comprehended no factor in the problem under discussion. (Lippmann, 75)

Lippmann here interestingly compares the psychological sophistication of the masses, who he imagines are politically untrustworthy because of their susceptibility to uninformed public opinion, to children and “barbarians,” categories of subjectivity that he (like Freud) implicitly assumes are in need of authoritative guidance. For Lippmann, authority was far from a threat to democracy; rather, it was democracy’s solution, the necessary supplement to an internally flawed system.

In like kind — although with a less conservative bent — Max Weber’s interest in charismatic authority as an antidote to the deadening effects of routinized bureaucracy expresses a similar reinvestment in the political purchase of authority. Working against the hegemonic ascent of modernity, with its affinity for rationalism, secularism, capitalism, and professionalism — a historical movement Weber felicitously called “disenchantment” — Weber turned to a theory of charismatic authority. Although Weber did not argue for the appeal of authority in these terms, this interest in the importance of a “natural” leader capable of bestowing order and unity speaks to an anxiety about the tenability of mass democracy. Certainly, Weber argued strongly in favor of the democratization of Germany during World War I and after its resolution, but he

importantly defined democracy in terms of leadership, with an unvarnished emphasis on the extent to which the condition of possibility of any political state is force, violence, and authoritative domination. As Weber observes with a bleak realism in 1919: “the state is a relation of men dominating men, a relation supported by means of legitimate (i.e. considered to be legitimate) violence. If the state is to exist, the dominated must obey the authority claimed by the powers that be” (78). For Weber, the complimentary element of any constitutional democracy is a charismatic authority, a leader whose qualified authority ensures the productive curtailment of majority rule. Only through the local dissemination of charismatic authority could a true “leadership democracy” be established. Thus, during World War I and the interwar years, Weber (and others) looked increasingly to political fantasies of the ascension of righteous authority and the constructive recombination of authority and democracy as a potential solution to the problems raised by majority rule and the uncertain legitimacy of the constitution during the abrupt, multi-national transition from empire to democratic republic.

As someone who steered clear of overt political conversations generally, Freud never consciously or explicitly endorsed these political views. My point here is not to suggest otherwise. Rather, I am interested in marking out how these interwar appraisals of authority threw a decidedly political light onto Freud’s clinical technique with children. Freud’s interwar theories of child technique argue for the indispensability of a strong, paternal analytic authority for governing the child’s unruly instincts. To choose

authority as the key term around which her clinical technique was organized was a far from apolitical selection on Freud's part. Yet this is not to say that Freud was consciously (or even unconsciously) contesting a democratic national politics in her consultations with child patients in the clinic. Read from a certain vantage, the localization of authority within a site of professional expertise (rather than of more transparent political operation) was in lock step with the spread of modern liberal governmentality. From this angle, nothing could be more apiece with the democratization of Europe than the dissemination of authority from a public political center to multiple private sectors of scientific expertise. The fact of children, who have long been metaphorical tropes for the relationship of government to "her people" and empires to their colonies, simply clarifies the political implications of this discursive shift.

Freud's over-determined interest in authority—as both an erotics and a psychoanalytic technique—speaks to a broader discourse born out of the transition from the configuration of political power in empire to that of democracy. As both a professional practice and a personal erotics (and, as Freud's letter to Andreas-Salomé suggests, the line between these two was far from impermeable), the exercise of authority can be read as indexing an uncertainty about the transition from empire to democracy and about the efficacy of an entirely democratic government. Such a turn toward authority carries with it a critique of liberal democracy's futures, yes, but acts as

a supplement to rather than an a rejection of democracy. Thus, while it is my contention that Freud’s vocabulary of clinical leadership and authority speaks to a thoroughly political discourse underwriting her clinical project, I mean this argument to suggest a *complication* of her relation to democracy, one that was a keynote in the interwar anxieties about the rapidly transforming forms of government in Europe. If Freud’s interwar clinical techniques meditated on “good” authority, then this was as a supplement to rather than a wholesale dismissal of the uncertain political futures of democracy.

Anna Freud was far from the only interwar psychoanalyst—or citizen—grappling with the globalization of democracy in the interwar period and the new accounts of governance and justice that accompanied such transformations. As World War II took shape partially as a response to these very problematics and Eastern European analysts fled to the UK, London became the main site for psychoanalysis’s continued clinical and political engagement. As with Anna Freud, analysts like Melanie Klein, D.W. Winnicott, and John Bowlby used the British child analytic clinic as a privileged space for responding to the upheavals of twentieth-century world politics.

2. Beyond Repair: War, Reparation, and Melanie Klein's Clinical Play Technique¹

Play analysis leads to the same results as the adult technique, with only one difference, namely, that the technical procedure is adapted to the mind of the child.
—M. Klein, *The Psycho-Analysis of Children*

In 1920, just two years before Anna Freud delivered her qualifying paper on beating fantasies and daydreams to the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, Sigmund Freud published *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, a dark, complex, and meandering text that pushed the limits of his colleagues' support. Up until this point, Sigmund Freud had imagined that the mind was governed by two main interactive principles: on the one hand, the pleasure principle, which manages pleasure by reducing tension; and on the other, the reality principle, which checks the impracticalities of immediate gratification by heeding the demands of the external world. Together, these principles explained the human subject as an entity balanced between the long-term practicalities of species survival and the immediate pleasures of libidinal gratification. All experiences of suffering and pleasure, frustration and enjoyment, could be accounted for by these two tendencies. But, in the years after World War I, this harmonious balance was thrown into crisis. Faced with the repetitive dreams of traumatized soldiers returning from war,

¹ Portions of this chapter are forthcoming in *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*. See: Laubender, Carolyn. "Beyond Repair: Interpretation, Reparation, and Melanie Klein's Clinical Play Technique." *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, Forthcoming (2018).

Sigmund Freud was led to speculate about a principle “beyond” the pleasure principle, one that seeks not gratification but a final and complete return to absolute and total stasis, to the inorganic. He named this principle the death drive.

Sandwiched between the catastrophic destruction of World War I and the impending outbreak of World War II, it is a curious fact that this otherwise bleak text, which highlights war, trauma, and the impulsion toward death, should also feature one of the most famous scenes of children’s play in the annals of psychoanalytic literature. In his provision of evidence for the death drive, Sigmund Freud predictably details the trauma of war veterans whose recurring dreams defied psychological explanation. Less predictable, however, is his narration of a game that he witnessed his infant grandson playing with a cotton-reel.² As Sigmund Freud narrates it to readers, the game in question involves two main episodes: in the first episode, the child hurls a cotton-reel over the side of his crib with great satisfaction, exclaiming a drawn out ‘ooooo’ sound with each new projectile; in the second episode, the child reels the toy back into his crib and shouts ‘da!’ upon its successful retrieval. Perplexed by the intense satisfaction that this game produced, Sigmund Freud interprets it as his grandson’s omnipotent reenactment of the departure and arrival of his mother and thus translates his

² The infant in question, Ernst, was the son of Sigmund Freud’s favorite daughter, Sophie, who died the year *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* was published from the wartime influenza epidemic. While all of Sigmund Freud’s deployed sons returned home from the war alive, the pestilence and malnutrition brought about by wartime rationing claimed the eldest of his three daughters.

verbalizations as “fort” (gone) and “da” (here). For the child, the cotton-reel was a handy stand-in for the mother, whose inexplicable presence and absence the child experienced as traumatic. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Sigmund Freud reads the repetitiveness of the child’s game together with the soldiers’ dreams, suggesting that both the dreams and the game express the urge to ceaselessly repeat (and master) a devastating trauma. In other words, Sigmund Freud found in his infantile grandson’s crib-bound play a striking example of the same death drive that plagued traumatized soldiers recently returned from the war. For Sigmund Freud, there seemed a natural affinity between war dreams and children’s games. Children’s play was dead serious.

After the publication of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, many of Sigmund Freud’s colleagues broke with him over the suggestion that something in the subject sought its own undoing. Even Anna Freud, committed to her father’s work though she undoubtedly was, disagreed with the revision of instinct theory that this text proposed. Yet, for all its unpopularity, this was one of the most important of Sigmund Freud’s texts for Melanie Klein and she made the death instinct the centerpiece of her work with children.³ Projection, aggression, anxiety, destruction, and restitution were key terms for Klein’s definition of the child and, as with Sigmund Freud and his grandson, she

³ My idiomatic shift from “drive” to “instinct” here is intentional. While post-structuralist interpretations of Sigmund Freud’s use of the German “trieb” as “drive” rather than “instinct” have made a compelling case for a non-biological reading of his work, it remains the case that in both German and English both Anna Freud and Melanie Klein most often refer to “instincts” or “instinct.” I discuss the importance of this biological language in Klein’s work in greater detail later in this chapter.

advocated for the “direct observation” of children’s play in her unique clinical technique. The scene of fort-da that Freud narrated set the stage for Klein’s bold theory of aggression and reparation in child psychology.

In this chapter, I analyze Klein’s clinical technique with children as she developed it throughout the 1930s and 1940s and pay special attention to the importance she gave to the oscillation of aggression and reparation. I begin by elaborating Klein’s unique play technique in the clinic, which she believed facilitated incredible recovery for her child-patients. For Klein, this unique technique, which put a high premium on the analyst’s verbal interpretations, was thoroughly bound up with her understanding of the child as a being interminably at war with itself, riven by its life and death instincts and the unconscious phantasies that attend each. Although Klein herself never explicitly addressed social occurrences or political events, I turn to her compendious wartime case study, *Narrative of a Child Analysis*, in order to show how “Richard’s” anxieties about destruction, attack, and repair place Klein’s theory of the child squarely within the geopolitics of wartime Europe. Focusing specifically on the operations of what Klein termed “reparation,” I argue that Klein’s clinical work, insofar as it tried to foster the child’s impulse toward reparation, was grappling with the many claims to “reparation” bookending World Wars I and II. As part of the fraught language of justice that emerged in connection to modern World Wars, Klein’s formulation of psychic reparations as a clinical ideal raises important questions about the particular ways that the clinic works

to address geopolitical problems. Through the language of reparation, Klein mobilized in the clinic an investment in reparative justice that was, increasingly, seeming untenable as an ethico-political ideal in global politics as an adequate solution to the aggressions of international wars. As I argue in this chapter, Klein's child analytic clinic, with its ethical aspiration to reparations, constituted a site through which she struggled to realize an individualized form of socio-political justice.

Child's Play: Melanie Klein's Controversial Clinical Technique

Melanie Klein (née Reizes) was born in Vienna in 1882 to Jewish parents, the youngest of four children. Her early life was strained by her family's intermittent insolvency and by her elder brother's chronic illness, from which he died in 1902. Klein would not become a recognized figure in the psychoanalytic community until over 20 years later when, with the support of her analyst Karl Abraham and the help of Ernest Jones, she emigrated to London permanently and became not only one of the founders of child psychoanalysis and the first European member of the British Psychoanalytic Society (BPS) but also one of the most significant authorities on psychoanalytic theory and practice after Sigmund Freud's death in 1939.⁴ Her work with children throughout

⁴ For a comprehensive biography of Melanie Klein's life and work, see Phyllis Grosskurth's *Melanie Klein: Her World and Her Work*. For other biographical writings, see *Introduction to the Work of Melanie Klein* by Hannah Segal; *Melanie Klein* by Julia Segal; *Mothering Psychoanalysis* by Janet Sayers; "Melanie Klein: Early Object Relationships" in *A History of Child Psychoanalysis* by

the 1930s, 40s, and 50s established the field of “Object Relations” and inaugurated one of the most significant post-Freudian psychoanalytic orientations to date.⁵

Influential though Klein’s work undoubtedly was, her rise to prominence was dogged by constant criticism about the questionable orthodoxy of her interpretations of Sigmund Freud’s work. These contestations were perhaps best exemplified by the “Controversial Discussions,” a series of debates held by the BPS from 1941–46 in which Anna Freud and “the Viennese” contested many aspects of Klein’s thinking, not the least of which was Klein’s highly interpretive clinical technique with children. Disagreeing vehemently with Anna Freud, Klein maintained that the clinical treatment of children should adhere strictly to the classical method that Sigmund Freud laid out. Whereas Anna Freud defined the child developmentally and organized a set of clinical

Claudine and Pierre Geissmann; *Melanie Klein* by Julia Kristeva; and *Melanie Klein: Early Analysis, Play, and the Question of Freedom* by Deborah Britzman.

⁵ I specify the 1930s-50s because although Klein certainly published in the 1920s, her approach to child analysis was often much educative in nature and often emphasized the importance of sexual enlightenment (see, for example, “The Development of a Child” (1921); “The Role of School in the Libidinal Development of a Child” (1922)). This analytic approach began to change toward the end of the 1920s. Not insignificantly, this quite radical change occurred at almost exactly the same time as Anna Freud popularized her own pedagogical analytic technique. By 1932, with the publication of her first monograph, *The Psycho-Analysis of Children*, Klein had thoroughly established her analytic “play-technique” as a stark contrast to Anna Freud’s more pedagogical model. Her work would shift substantially again in the 1940s as she turned more toward mourning, reparation, and the depressive position, but the foundation of her clinical technique remained the same.

modifications based on the child's psychic "immaturity," Klein insisted no such compromises were necessary. As J.-B. Pontalis summarizes the dispute,

The technical debate opposing Melanie Klein to Anna Freud reflects the confrontation of two ethics: For Anna Freud, in the end, it was a question of making the child find the adult's alleged autonomy; for Melanie Klein, it was a matter of coming to meet the child's psychic reality and measuring adult knowledge against it. ("The Question Child," *Reading Melanie Klein*, 83)

While Anna Freud judged the child according to the standard of the adult, Klein in turn judged the adult according to the experiences of the child. The analyst's job, in Klein's paradigm, was to create conditions that best facilitated the child's transference, which the analyst would then verbally interpret in order to lessen the child's resistance and alleviate its anxiety. Since this technique gave priority to interpretation and transference, both hallmarks of Sigmund Freud's original method, Klein fervently defended her approach on the ground of its technical "orthodoxy" — a claim that, given Sigmund Freud's own penchant for heterodoxy, spoke more to Klein's own desire for legitimacy than to any universally accepted Freudian doctrine.

Yet, in spite of her adamant assertion about the fundamental similarity between child analysis and adult analysis, Klein did have to implement one noteworthy modification for the analysis of child patients: Klein's most frequent interpretations were not of words but of actions. Given that Klein often worked with children either too young to speak or whose speech was strongly inhibited, most of her clinical interpretations relied on what children did with their hands rather than with their

mouths. Instead of listening to the (adult) patient's speech, Klein observed the (child) patient's play, rendering her verbal interpretations from their physical manipulation of objects. "Children," argues Klein, "substitute actions (which were the original precursors of thoughts) for words: with children, *acting* plays a prominent part" ("Early Analysis," 135). According to Klein, acting not only plays a prominent part, but playing acts as a due substitution for speech. Klein's conviction about the unimpeachable orthodoxy of her method rests on her belief in the fundamental substitutability of words for actions, of word play for child's play, a conviction that raises interesting questions about exactly what kind of "act" speech is to being with.⁶ Both word play and child's play, Klein argues, are forms of free association.

Klein ensured this ostensible "freeness" by furnishing her child patients with a panoply of toys consciously cultivated to match what she understood to be their unconscious needs:

Their smallness, their number and their great variety give the child a wide range of representational play, while their very simplicity enables them to be put to the most varied uses. Thus toys like these are well

⁶ Although she did not theorize her technique through Austinian speech act theory—indeed, J.L. Austin would not publish *How to do Things with Words* until two years after Klein's death—one way to read Klein's conviction about the substitutability of play for speech is to understand speech as always already a form of action. A rough contemporary of Klein's, the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan would offer a somewhat similar suggestion, proposing that the particularity of the "talking cure" derived from the fact that speech sat at the intersection of two "orders": the real (and the materiality of the body) and the symbolic (language as a structural system). For a compelling pairing of Austin and Lacan on the matter of speech, see Shoshana Felman's *The Scandal of the Speaking Body*.

suites for the expression of phantasies and experiences in all kinds of ways and in great detail. (Klein, *The Psycho-Analysis of Children*, 32–33)

Although children were allowed to bring their own toys, Klein also provided a curated selection of objects for the child. Her consulting room was outfitted with cubbies where each of her patients could store their toys for future sessions. The array of small, simple toys that she provided included figures of cars, people, houses, animals, trees, and carts. To the extent that play operates as symbolic language in Klein's play technique, the provision of toys is roughly equivalent to the provision of the words the child can use throughout the sessions. Klein's choice of objects—small or large, geometric or organic, neutral or brightly colored, damaged or fully-functioning—already determines the symbolic capacity of the child's play. For instance, driven by her sense of which phantasies predominate in the child's mind, Klein repeatedly asserts that the child should also have access to running water specifically because many oral and urethral phantasies are represented through this medium.⁷

Reflecting on the clinical modifications that she implemented for these child patients, Klein nevertheless defends her play-technique as entirely consistent with the fundamentals of a "classical" method.

⁷ Throughout her work, Klein spells her "unconscious *phantasy*" with a "ph" to distinguish it from more conscious fantasies, such as those detailed in Sigmund Freud's writings on beating fantasies and Anna Freud's writings on daydreams. Klein emphasizes that while these phantasies populate every human subject's unconscious, they are often entirely obscured from consciousness. I will discuss this term and its place in Klein's metapsychology at greater length in the next section.

Just as children's means of expression differ from those of adults so the analytic situation in the analysis of children appears to be entirely different. It is, however, in both cases essentially the same. Consistent interpretations, gradual solving of resistances and persistent tracing of the transference to earlier situations—these constitute in children as in adults the correct analytic situation. (Klein, "Early Analysis," 137)

What Klein suggests here is that the clinical substitution of objects for words is, if not unimportant, then a matter of only—and literally—*technical* difference: "[i]t is a question *only of a different technique*, not of the principles of treatment," she continues (*ibid*, *emphasis added*, 138). Klein insists that any differences manifested by her play technique are mere technicalities: issues of negligible importance that do not disrupt the more fundamental "principles of treatment."

The criteria of the psycho-analytic method proposed by Freud, namely, that we should use as our starting-point the facts of transference and resistance, that we should take into account infantile impulses, repression and its effects, amnesia and the compulsion to repetition and, further, that we should discover the primal scene, as he requires in the 'History of an Infantile Neurosis'—all these criteria are maintained in their entirety in the play-technique. The method of play preserves all the principles of psychoanalysis and leads to the same results as the classic technique. Only it is adapted to the minds of children in the technical means employed. (*Ibid*, *emphasis added*, 138)

This is a strategic separation of method from content on Klein's part. Her purpose here is to justify her own work specifically by positing a legitimate version of psychoanalysis and then claiming her technique's conformity to it. As with any truth claim, though, this assertion is an exercise of power, one designed to subtly undermine the credibility of Anna Freud and her other detractors (one of whom was, infamously, her own daughter,

Melitta Schmideberg). Klein's citation of the 'Wolfman' case as the litmus test of "true analysis" already speaks to the political agenda subtending her defense: while Klein could easily have cited "Little Hans," Sigmund Freud's only case of a child analysis, as a justification for her clinical work with children, such a move would have actually jeopardized her own claims to orthodoxy since "Little Hans" narrates the palliative effects of sexual enlightenment and paternal analytic authority and is therefore much more akin to Anna Freud's method than Klein's own. By claiming the "Wolfman" case, with its emphasis on retrospective interpretation and the primal scene, as the example of true Freudian technique, Klein makes a deliberate bid to authorize her own clinical protocols. In this single rhetorical move, she both defines a standard of "legitimate" psychoanalytic practice and shows herself to be its truest practitioner.

Yet how exactly does Klein intend the "Wolfman" case, in which an adult man reconstructs past experiences from his childhood, to apply to a child? How does Klein's play analysis preserve the fundamental elements of such a technique while simultaneously applying them "to the minds of children"? In other words, what does a reconstructive analysis look like when the child is bereft of two staples of psychoanalytic practice: speech and a repressed past? To give but one example of how Klein's technique functioned in the clinic—and it is one among many given how frequently Klein employs clinical vignettes—Klein describes her patient, Peter, "an extremely timid, plaintive and unboyish child" of three years and nine months old who came to Klein for a

prophylactic analysis (*The Psychoanalysis of Children*, 16). This passage is from Klein's first monograph, *The Psychoanalysis of Children*, in which she lays out the bare bones of her psychoanalytic technique. In this narrative, Peter plays with Klein's toys and in the course of one of his games Klein offers the following interpretation:

Once, when he had put the motor-cars, which symbolized his father's penis, in a row side by side and had made them run along, he lost his temper and threw them all about the room, saying: 'We always smash our Christmas presents straight away; we don't want any.' Smashing his toys thus stood in his unconscious for smashing his father's genitals. This pleasure in destruction and inhibition in play, which he brought into his analysis, were gradually overcome and disappeared together with his other difficulties during the course of it. (*Ibid*, 20–21)

Here, Klein reads Peter's fit of rage as a destructive attack aimed not at the toys themselves, but at his father's penis and offers an apparently transformative interpretation. Peter's physical manipulation of the toys symbolizes his unconscious phantasies and Klein provides verbal interpretations of the phantasies in the hopes of transforming unconscious fixations. Children's play, Klein suggests, is a symptomatic expression of deeper unconscious conflict that the proper analytic work of interpretation can resolve.

But, if the equation of motorcars with Peter's father's penis seems pellucid to Klein, it likely raises more than a few questions for readers who are not given any explanations for this abrupt comparison. How, for instance, did Klein establish the symbolic capacity of the toy car? How much does Peter know about his father's genitals? What are the perimeters of the analyst's interpretations and according to what criteria

would their accuracy be validated? These questions are all the more pressing given Klein's capacity to push interpretation to its limits, testing the threshold of the plausible when it came to even the most quotidian actions.

Anna Freud, in her own critique of Klein's technique, raises these concerns in a not-inaccurate pantomime of Klein's interpretations. "If the child overturns a lamppost or a toy figure," hypothesizes Freud,

she [Klein] interprets this action, e.g., as an aggressive impulse against the father; a deliberate collision between two cars as evidence of an observation of sexual union between the parents. Her procedure consists in accompanying the child's activities with translations and interpretations, which themselves—like the interpretations of the adult's free associations—exert a further influence on the patient. (A. Freud, *Four Lectures*, 37)

While Klein accused Anna Freud of embodying an undue pedagogical authority that bullied the patient into compliance, Anna Freud shoots back that Klein's "classical" interpretations are no less coercive. In the end, Anna Freud's point is not simply that Klein gets her interpretations "wrong," (although there is a tacit accusation of "wild analysis" at work in Anna Freud's remarks), but rather that Klein's interpretive method is not nearly as neutral and benign as she might suggest. Through baroque interpretation, Klein "exert[s] a further influence on the patient," crossing the line from interpretation to out-and-out suggestion.

Many joined Anna Freud in criticizing Klein's clinical technique, disparaging both legitimate and spurious inconsistencies within Klein's *oeuvre*. When it came to Klein

and Anna Freud themselves, however, in many ways it was as though their different perspectives were talking past each other. For Anna Freud, the external environment (which she uncritically dubs “reality”) is the major determinate of the child’s psychic life. To her, Klein’s very sexual and symbolic interpretations of play made little sense because they took no account of the child’s actual environ. But Klein was not operating according to the same template of psychic life as Anna Freud and, to Klein, her interpretations were the natural consequence of the child’s unconscious phantasies. In contrast to Anna Freud’s developmentalism, Klein constructed a unique theory of the child’s psychic life that privileged the body’s instincts and their vicissitudes.

Killer Instincts: Phantasy, Aggression, and the Superego

Although Klein was, with Anna Freud, one of the first and most significant founders of child analysis, her theories about the child’s subjectivity were worlds apart from Anna Freud’s. While Anna Freud focused on the *particularity* of children, marking out how developmentally different they are from adults, Klein focused on what was *universal* to both adults and children, highlighting their qualitative similarity.⁸ The child,

⁸ Because Klein’s primary approach to subjectivity is not developmental, I will not use the terms “infant” or “child” in clearly distinct or particular ways; nor will I mark out “latency” or “adolescence” as its own discrete period. This is in keeping with Klein’s own use of these terms since there is often little intended difference between infants and children in her own writings. As I will discuss later, these kinds of age-based developmental categorizations are precisely what

for Klein, was not a developmentally arrested version of the adult (who would be, by extension, “developed” and “mature”), but rather was structured by unconscious forces universal to the species. The same conflict between unconscious phantasies and superegoic strictures that cause adults’ neurotic misery likewise cause children’s malaise. Both are governed by aggressive, often murderous unconscious phantasies that, by virtue of their violent content, come into conflict with the superego’s moral prohibitions. As with adults, then, children suffer from internal conflicts and primary repressions. Clarifying this point in her response to Anna Freud’s book on technique, Klein argues that

She [Anna Freud] departs in so many respects from the proved analytic rules, because she thinks that children are such *different* beings from adults. Yet the sole purpose of all these [Anna Freud’s] elaborate measures is to make the child like the adult in his attitude to analysis. This seems contradictory and I think is to be explained by the fact that in her comparisons Anna Freud puts the Cs and the ego of the child and the adult in the foreground, while we (though we give all necessary consideration to the ego) surely have to work first and foremost with the Ucs. But in the Ucs ... the former are by no means so fundamentally different from the latter. It is only that in children the ego has not yet attained to its full development, and therefore they are very much more under the sway of their Ucs. (“Symposium on Child-Analysis,” 143)

Klein’s conception of constantly oscillating diachronic “positions” (rather than the chronically progressive Freudian “stages”) resists.

Whereas Anna Freud zooms in on the child's ego, Klein instead has her eye trained on the unconscious. Because the unconscious is universal—it does not “develop,” nor does it need to—Klein suggests that children and adults are not fundamentally different from one another. Putting the unconscious at the center of her definition of the child, Klein downgrades the relative importance of any age-based developmental differences, those egoic distinctions that Anna Freud privileged and on which she founded her modifications of clinical technique. But, by thinking in terms of the unconscious, Klein loosens the hold of linear chronicity. According to Klein, when it comes to the clinic, the only really noteworthy difference between children and adults is that children are, if anything, *more* subject to their unconscious than adults—that they are, as Adam Phillips notes in the epigraph, the closest thing to the unconscious “live” available.

However, the challenge to developmentalism that Klein offers in this passage is deceptively complex. Her claim that even the youngest child is possessed by unconscious phantasies—phantasies that are not qualitatively dissimilar from those of the adult—begs the question of the origin of these phantasies. Given that the children in question are so young, from where (and from when) do these phantasies come? The answer to this question tracks back to the (much disputed) place of biological instinctualism in Klein's conception of unconscious phantasy. Working against developmental models of mind, Klein considers even the smallest infant to be a temporally complex organism, (d)riven by conflicted phylogenetically inherent

biological instincts that motor the child's unconscious phantasies. Although it is often overlooked in scholarship on Klein that pits "object relations" squarely against "instinct" (or "drive") theory, Klein's work is actually deeply invested in the interaction of the life and death instincts. While Sigmund Freud who often used '*trieb*' (drive) instead of '*instinkt*' (instinct), Klein relies heavily on the latter term both in German and in English (although almost all of her post-1920s writing was in English). As Juliet Mitchell writes in her "Introduction" to *The Selected Melanie Klein*,

[f]or Klein, what is unconscious is the biological and affectual condition of the human being. In essence, by the time of her later writings, the unconscious is equivalent to the instincts: to the life drive and death drive and their affects. ...The Kleinian unconscious is a container full of contents; it is not another system of thought. (24)

The unconscious for Klein is neither a system nor a process; it is pure content—phantasies—that have been transmitted through a process of biological inheritance. Unconscious phantasy is thoroughly instinctual and draws much of its representational material—its symbols and signifiers—from phylogenetic transmissions. While Klein was adamant that children are object-relational, Klein understands the unconscious phantasies of the child (and/or the adult) according to the instinctual inheritance of the past. Although she does not speak often about phylogenesis, it is fundamental to how she conceptualizes instincts and therefore the whole of unconscious phantasies. Therefore, while Klein was certainly "object-relational," attending specifically to the primary importance of the mother, the exact meaning of this term, "object," derives as

much from the child's instincts as from any "real" experience of the external world, including the child's actual mother. If Sigmund Freud's work had constantly upended developmental temporality by emphasizing the determinative importance of childhood experiences in the psychic life of the adult, Klein's child analysis flipped this equation, highlighting the incredible (almost unbelievable) psychical sophistication of an infant no more than six months old.⁹

When prompted to account for how a child of two- or three-years-old could be made ill by unconscious phantasies about specific sexual acts or body parts with which it has had little individual experience (such as its father's penis, its mother's vagina, the "combined parent" figure copulating, and its own internal children), Klein replies that these phantasies are the product of an instinctual species inheritance, which (in)forms the child's unconscious. "Even the quite small child," writes Klein, "which seemingly knows nothing about birth, has a very distinct *unconscious* knowledge of the fact that children grow in the mother's womb" ("Criminal Tendencies," 173). Endowed with this unconscious, instinctual knowledge, children "represent symbolically phantasies, wishes and experiences [in their play]. Here they are employing the same phylogenetically acquired mode of expression as we are familiar with from dreams" (Klein, "Early Analysis," 134). The child comes into the world with an unconscious,

⁹ For a further elaboration of the role of the instincts and phylogenesis in Klein's theory of phantasy, see R.D. Hinshelwood's entry for "unconscious phantasy" in *A Dictionary of Kleinian Thought*.

instinctual world of its own. Phylogenetic phantasies, presumably occurring in the form of mental images, organize its earliest experience of psychic reality. Its mind is prepopulated by phantasies that stem from somatic origins and instinctual inheritances, which the child then acts out in the symbolic realm of play.

Susan Isaacs, one of Klein's most adamant supporters, affirms the somatic and biological grounding of Klein's thinking in 1943 when she delivered her defense of Klein's concept of unconscious phantasy, "The Nature and Function of Unconscious Phantasy," to the British Psychoanalytic Society in the middle of the Controversial Discussions.

It has sometimes been suggested that the unconscious phantasies such as that of "tearing to bits" would not arise in the child's mind before he had gained the conscious knowledge that tearing a person to bits would mean killing him or her. Such a view does not meet the case. It overlooks the fact that such knowledge is *inherent* in bodily impulses as a vehicle of instinct, in the aim of instinct, in the excitation of the organ, i.e. in this case, the mouth. (Isaacs, 93-94)

Although delivered by Isaacs, Klein was a determinative editor and interlocutor for this essay. In the years around the Controversial Discussions, especially, she read and edited all her coteries' papers numerous times before they saw public light in an attempt to craft a united front. In fact, many consider this paper to be the most reliable and thoroughgoing definition of Klein's view of unconscious phantasy, a fact well demonstrated by R.D. Hinshelwood's use of it to define Klein's theory of phantasy in his *A Dictionary of Kleinian Thought* (34). In short, Klein's account of unconscious phantasy—

a concept central to her unique theory of subjectivity—is bound to the body’s instincts and their vicissitudes. These instincts (which Klein also calls “impulses”) are biological and somatic, registering not just the individual body’s specificity, but also a whole species history of symbolic knowledge and instinctual impulse. Unconscious phantasies are not so much “timeless” as they are almost mythic. Not unlike the creation myth proposed in *Totem and Taboo*, Klein’s infant enters the world with a literally epic historical inheritance.

Klein’s biologism prompted many to criticize her work as reductive. This was especially true among early feminists for whom the biological was tantamount to sexual conservatism. Influentially, this was the position that Nancy Chodorow forwarded in *The Reproduction of Mothering*. As Chodorow reads Klein, anatomic sexual difference determines much of psychic life and the experience of maternity and mothering is inextricably bound up with female embodiment. Since Chodorow’s aim in that text is to disarticulate reproductive labor from gendered polarities in the hopes of radically redistributing historically gendered emotional experiences (like autonomy versus dependence) across the whole subjective field, she finds Klein’s reliance on the language of instinct and sexual difference politically problematic.

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, the tide of this opinion was changing, though, and there was a flowering of critical recuperations of Klein's work.¹⁰ Julia Kristeva and Jacqueline Rose are perhaps two of the most recognizable names associated with a "return to Klein." While Kristeva (re)read Klein through Lacan in a way that implicitly made her work far more semiotic than biological, Rose tackled previous dismissals head on, stating in no uncertain terms that past rejections of Klein on the basis of her biologism (particularly around the function of the death instinct) had misapprehended her work entirely. While I share Rose's interest in not renouncing Klein's work outright on the basis of potentially undesirable aspects, I think Rose's own reading of Klein (although compelling and innovative) too categorically repudiates the place of the biological and instinctual in Klein's work without due attention to the difficulty introduced by Klein's unusual materialism. In an attempt to interpret her work as more consonant with an academic climate whose political calculus equated the symbolic and the cultural with the progressive and the biological and instinctual with the conservative, Rose disregards some of the more interesting—and outlandish—aspects of

¹⁰ For some instances of this kind of work, see Juliet Mitchell's *The Selected Melanie Klein* (1986); Elizabeth Bott Spillius's edited collection *Melanie Klein Today—Developments in Theory and Practice* (Vols. 1 & 2) (1988); Elizabeth Abel's *Virginia Woolf and the Fictions of Psychoanalysis* (1989); the special edition of the journal *Women—a Cultural Review* 1, no. 2 (1990) (titled "Positioning Klein"); Janet Sayers' *Mothering Psychoanalysis: Helene Deutsch, Karen Horney, Anna Freud, and Melanie Klein* (1991); Janice Doane and Devon Hodges's *From Klein to Kristeva: Psychoanalytic Feminism and the Search for the "Good Enough" Mother* (1992); Jacqueline Rose's *Why War? Psychoanalysis, Politics, and the Return to Melanie Klein* (1993); Mary Jacobus's *First Things: Maternal Imagery in Literature, Art, and Psychoanalysis* (1996); not to mention Nicholas Wright's play *Mrs. Klein* (1988), which was a major West End and Broadway success through 1990.

Klein's thought. She re-names Klein's death instinct the "the death drive" and overlays a semiotic and structuralist gloss onto Klein's thinking. Elizabeth A. Wilson argues this point trenchantly in her recent *Gut Feminism*. Analyzing the general erasure of materiality and biology from the annals of feminist theory, Wilson includes Klein's work, along with Rose's cultural-symbolic re-interpretation of it, as a case study of this phenomenon. Wilson's point—and a good one, at that—is that post-structuralist feminist theory's desire for a more politically progressive future effectively elides any critical consideration of the biological and of the multiple and dynamic permutations of material life. Although Rose and Kristeva may assert the legitimacy of their more symbolic interpretations of Klein, it remains the case that, for both better *and* worse, much of Klein's thinking is saturated in instinctual biology. Her work, as much as Sigmund Freud's, has both symbolic and biological dimensions.

Yet many critics have taken less issue with this biologism than with Klein's more general embrace of the death instinct as one of the principle forces in the human being, child and adult alike.¹¹ Klein paints a harrowing picture of the child as a being always

¹¹ Ester Sanchez-Pardo has also rightfully noted the centrality of the death instinct for Klein's thinking in her volume on Klein and modernist sexualities, *Cultures of the Death Drive: Melanie Klein and Modernist Melancholia* (2003). Usefully explaining its relationship to aggression and anxiety, she writes: "Sadism and destruction are indissolubly linked from the beginning. The destructive instinct is directed against the organism itself and must therefore be regarded by the ego as a danger. This danger is experienced by the individual as anxiety. Klein concludes: "Therefore anxiety would originate from aggression" (126)." (58). The death instinct (which Klein, like Sanchez-Pardo, often refers to as a "destructive instinct") finds expression against objects through sadism and aggression, but this same aggression always doubles back on the

operating under the sign of death. Klein narrates the child's earliest struggle as a dire attempt to mitigate the persecutory force of a death instinct bent on self-disintegration. The death instinct pervades Klein's thinking about the early psychic life of the child and is linked to her understanding of the child's early sadism, aggression, and anxiety. The child's only recourse, according to Klein, for managing the "persecutory" onslaughts of the death instinct is expulsion: while the death instinct is still internally focused the child suffers implacable anxiety about self-dissolution; constantly under siege, the child is forced to project it outward onto objects in the external world as a strategy for survival.

In order to escape from being destroyed by its own death instinct, the organism employs its narcissistic, or self-regarding libido to force the former outward, and direct it against its objects...

This apparently earliest measure of defence on the part of the ego constitutes, I think, the foundation of the development of the superego, whose excessive violence at this early stage would thus be accounted for by the fact that it is an offshoot of very intense destructive instincts. (Klein, "Conscience in the Child," 250)

Fearing its own destruction, the child mobilizes the life instincts against the death instincts and projects the latter onto external objects. This defensive process safeguards the child from the aggressions of the death instinct, but it also galvanizes the earliest iterations of the superego, an excessively violent internal object installed as an

child's own ego, producing anxiety in the child who fears annihilating retribution. For other accounts of the literary correspondence between Klein and modernist fiction, particularly, see Leo Bersani's chapter "Death and Literary Authority: Marcel Proust and Melanie Klein" in *Reading Melanie Klein* and Lyndsey Stonebridge's *The Destructive Element: British Psychoanalysis and Modernism*.

“offshoot” of the death instinct. Especially in her later writings, Klein linked the origins of the superego to the death instinct, which, she argued, fueled the superego’s aggressive, persecutory fury. If the child is born into the world riven by life and death instincts that determine much of the content of its early phantasy life, it is also, Klein suggests, tormented early on by the aggressions of an unrelenting superego. While for Anna Freud the secure establishment of the superego was to be the child’s maturational feat, for Klein the superego heralded a much more hazardous, and potentially fatal, future.

Klein’s narrative of the superego as a consequence of the death instinct had major implications for her metapsychology. Departing from both Sigmund and Anna Freud who held that the superego was a precipitate of the Oedipus complex and solidified in the child somewhere around the fifth year of life, Klein argues that the superego is introjected much earlier in the child’s life, at the beginning of Oedipalization, when the child’s unbridled oral-sadistic instincts are at their height. Klein dramatically predated the Oedipal scenario, imagining children as young as one in the thick of an Oedipal crisis. Consequently, the formation of the superego also happened in the early months of the child’s life and was bound up much more with instinctual conflict than with the child’s actual perception of its parents. As Claudine and Pierre Geissmann remark in their *A History of Child Psychoanalysis*, “[f]or Klein, the child’s superego is more marked by the child’s instincts than by its real parents” (129). In

the process of expurgating the death instinct, the child introjects a superego. Because of this, the child (especially the girl child) internalizes an overly strong superego that wreaks havoc on the child's relatively weak and defenseless ego.¹² Explains Klein: "[s]ince the first imagos it [the child] thus forms are endowed with all the attributes of the intense sadism belonging to this stage of its development... the small child becomes dominated by the fear of suffering unimaginable cruel attacks, both from its real objects and from its super-ego" ("Conscious in the Child," 251). Summarizing the work she carried out in *The Psycho-Analysis of Children*, Klein writes that

There could be no doubt that a super-ego had been in full operation for some time in my small patients of between two and three-quarters and four years of age, whereas according to the accepted view the super-ego would not begin to be activated until the Oedipus complex had died down—*i.e.* until about the fifth year of life. Furthermore, my data showed that this early super-ego was immeasurably harsher and more cruel than that of the older child or adult, and that it literally crushed down the feeble ego of the small child. ("Conscience in the Child," 248)

¹² Unlike both Sigmund and Anna Freud who emphasized the paternal element at work in the introjection of the superego and its patriarchal transmission from father to son, Klein maintained a steady focus on the child's relation to the mother, one that was not truly "pre-Oedipal" since unconscious Oedipal phantasies are present from infancy. For Klein, it is actually on the basis of the *mother's* imago that the persecuting superego comes into being. Klein posited an early, overbearing *maternal superego* whose chastisement was most poignantly felt by girls, not boys. While Klein's attention to the psycho-sexual dynamics of the mother-daughter relation appear at first glance to offer the resources for a feminist corrective to Freud's patriarchal phallo-centricism, their stark characterization of women's relations through the language of "aggression," "sadism," "envy" and the "death instinct" is a far cry from a feminist utopia. For Klein's account of the psychosexual development of girls, see "The Effects of Early Anxiety Situations on the Sexual Development of the Girl" in *The Psycho-Analysis of Children*.

Convinced that the extreme guilt, anxiety, and self-criticism that Klein witnessed in her young patients (like “Rita” and “Erna”) was a consequence of an early (and ruthless) superego, Klein dramatically revises Sigmund Freud’s original Oedipal timeline, dating the emergence of the superego to the earliest inklings of the Oedipus complex and the desperate extrusion of the death instinct. For Klein, this revision adequately accounts for why the superego in her child-patients was so merciless: “immeasurably harsher and more cruel,” the superego of young children “literally crushed down” the child’s ego. Personified much like an oppressive tyrant—a politically salient comparison given that Klein’s major work took place just before, during, and after the rise of multiple national authoritarian regimes—Klein routinely describes the superego throughout her work as cruel, harsh, tormenting, persecutory, and oppressive. Far from a model for legitimate authority, the superego in Klein’s psychic world has the flavor of an authoritarian dictator. As John Phillips states in his contribution to *Reading Melanie Klein*, “authority for Klein takes the role of an originating violence”; the external world, including parents and analysts, ought to downgrade the concerted exercise of authority primarily because excessive and unyielding authority is already at work internally (162). For Klein, the purpose of child analysis is therefore not to invest in the reification of this internal overlord; rather, it is to mitigate the severity of the superego’s uncompromising authority by helping the child integrate its life and death instincts.

Klein's skepticism about authority colluded with the general zeitgeist of a democratic Britain engaged in political conflicts with multiple authoritarian regimes (Zartesky, *Reading Melanie Klein*, 35-36). While Anna Freud had expressed a faith in necessary authority that sat in tension with the rising tide of European democracy, Klein personified superegoic authority as an immoral dictator victimizing the child's vulnerable ego. In so doing, she not only troped on a prevalent British mid-century anxiety about Britain's own vulnerability to oppressive authoritarians, but also depicted the analyst as the defender of the child's democratic inclinations. This implicit political bent in Klein's work is something that, as I discuss in the next chapter, D.W. Winnicott would elaborate in much greater detail, arguing in no uncertain terms that the clinic ought to foster the child's innate democratic tendencies since these tendencies were consonant with psychological health. Caught between the twin threats of European fascism, on the one hand, and Soviet communism on the other, Klein's critique of internal authority jived with Britain's larger critique of authoritarianism.

Yet this complementarity was hardly incidental. Read in connection with the geopolitics of Europe at the time (and of Britain, more specifically) Klein's child seems to be constructed on the very idioms of national and international politics. During a time of total war in which discourses of conflict, aggression, attack, invasion, anxiety, and repair were the bread of daily life, Klein theorized a specifically beleaguered, embattled child whose primary instincts and anxieties coincided with those of a British citizenry under

constant attack. The child, like the British nation itself, was constantly vigilant about the permeability of its boundaries; it had to ward off attack and expel death if it was going to survive. As Adam Phillips discerningly observes in the same essay from which the epigraph for this dissertation is taken, “Bombs Away,” “[i]f we cannot imagine psychoanalysis without the notion of war—psychoanalysis was partly made out of the materials of war, its casualties and its language—then the immediate experience of the Second World War seemed to put the finishing touches to a new description of the child that analysts had been struggling to articulate since before the First World War” (41). Klein mobilized the narratives of war, and specifically of total war, to develop her account of the child’s subjectivity. Routinely, she spoke of the tyranny in the superego, the child’s bombings of the mother’s body, paranoia as the child’s earliest affective disposition, death as inextricably bound up with life, and the fact of attack—everywhere. Speaking specifically of Klein, Michal Shapira shrewdly notes that

War was something she both recognized and denied; she incorporated violence into her work while mostly disavowing the reality of aerial bombardment. It was the war inside that was of interest to her. Her ideas stressed depth instead of surface; truth about violence could be found inside her patients, not in the newspaper reports on the war which they tried to read to her. (90)

From one angle, Klein never explicitly addressed social or political issues in her work. Yet, from another, she did nothing else. Far more than most of her colleagues, Klein used the geopolitics of wartime Europe to theorize child subjectivity. Shapira makes the astute observation that this extension of marshal vocabulary into the realm of human

subjectivity helped justify the expansion of state management of psychological “welfare” in the coming postwar British welfare state. Such a move revitalized the professional utility of psychoanalysts whose personal and professional survival was jeopardized by the dramatically changed socio-political conditions that World War II had caused. To the extent that the child became the new privileged subject of psychoanalysis, this seems dually due to the fact that total war made children newly vulnerable as potential military casualties *and* to the fact that the relatively uncharted mind of the child in psychoanalysis provided a needed template for psychoanalysts to reinvent their professional practice in more politically salient and socially useful ways.

This political vocabulary likewise found its way into the major institutional crisis that would absorb so much of Klein’s energy during the exact years of World War II. The Controversial Discussions were a kind of psychoanalytic shadow war in which analysts vied for political power often using the exact vernacular of the larger military conflict. Terms like “fascist,” “authoritarian,” “democratic,” “freedom,” “allegiance,” and “attack” were common rhetorical moves that analysts used to negotiate institutional differences and leverage power. In a particularly scathing letter to Edward Glover on April 23rd 1940, James Strachey rants about the difficulties for psychoanalytic training created by the Viennese’s relocation to Britain and their integration into the BPS: “The trouble seems to me to be extremism, on both sides. ... In fact I feel like Mercutio about it. Why should these wretched fascists and (bloody foreigners) communists invade our

peaceful compromising island?" (qtd in King and Steiner, 33). This is but one example of the way political idioms and party affiliations were used to strategically redistribute power in the BPS. Throughout, there was much idealization of a "democratic" organization of power in the society and frequent accusations (directed mostly at Klein and her followers) of "authoritarianism," "autocracy," and "Nazism."¹³ By calling Klein's coterie "authoritarian" or making a seemingly benign plea for a more "democratic" arrangement of institutional positions, analysts mobilized politically laden language to further their own institutional agendas. As with many British citizens during World War II, analysts' use of the grammar of government doubled as a moral grammar par excellence. Many analysts were so absorbed by their internal institutional "war" (Klein perhaps most of all) that, famously, even as an air raid shook the foundation of a BPS meeting, they took so little notice that D.W. Winnicott felt it necessary to stand and announce that a bombing was in progress before calmly resuming his seat. The meeting continued, and little notice was taken of Winnicott's matter-of-fact interruption. If Klein did not address politics directly it was perhaps because, for her, the clinic and the psychoanalytic institute were already so thoroughly political, were already saturated by war. For Klein, institutional and clinical

¹³ For more instances of this in just the First and Second Extraordinary Business Meetings, see pgs. 45; 47-48; 53; 61; 80-82; 95; 98; and 104-105 in King and Steiner's *The Freud-Klein Controversies, 1941-45*.

psychoanalysis were coextensive with, rather than separate from, the discourses of government, nation, and war.

Hence, when Klein began to steer her clinical psychoanalytic practice toward a reparative ethics at the onset of World War II, she made a clearly political bid. The British scientific tradition that Klein participated in was explicitly meliorist at its core, and Klein's investment in the reparative potential of clinical psychological work dovetailed with the broader cultural interest in improving the lives of children.¹⁴ If Klein's descriptions of her child-patients reveal many of her own theoretical suppositions, then one of the most common is her rhetorical emphasis on the salubrious effects of analysis. According to Klein's case studies, her verbal interpretations had an almost magical ability to eliminate inhibitions and transform symptoms. Klein was anything but shy when stressing the favorable effects of analysis. For Klein, like many in the British medical community, the function of analysis was absolutely to promote what she understood to be the psychological health of her child-patients. The purpose of clinical psychoanalysis—and of Klein's interpretive method, by extension—was to assist the child-patient in resolving unconscious conflict by interpreting repressed,

¹⁴ Although originally Viennese, Klein's work reflected a much more characteristically British sentiment throughout, a fact that is perhaps best reflected in the wide collegial support she garnered from specifically British analysts in the BPS. This was reflected in the particular way she developed her clinical psychoanalytic technique as a science. For a reading of the way Klein's work corresponded with a British meliorist science, see Eli Zaretsky's "Melanie Klein and the Emergence of Modern Personal Life" in *Reading Melanie Klein*.

unconscious phantasies. This would facilitate a more complete integration of the life and death instincts. For Klein, the mark of clinical success was an increase in the child's "reparative" capacities. In this way, the clinic functioned as a progressive institution that promoted socially useful reparative capacities in its patients. Klein's insistence on the psychological benefits of clinical psychoanalysis put her clinic squarely in the territory of progressive reforms in Britain aimed at expanding professional support for children's wellbeing, even while her promotion of a reparative ethics raised questions about the ultimate tenability of these reforms.

In what follows, I interrogate the politicality of Klein's specifically clinical work with children during the years of World War II. The exclusiveness of Klein's clinical work during the war, and the extent to which patients brought detailed political concerns into the clinic via fantasies and anxieties, speaks to how Klein's clinic was a site of not just personal but also socio-political redress. I attend specifically to how Klein theorized the ultimate goal of clinical analysis as the facilitation of the patient's impulse toward "reparation" by reading her wartime case study of a child named "Richard." Richard was obsessed with tracking and reenacting World War II and his play—his clinical "war games"—were formative for Klein's conception of the depressive position and the attendant process of reparation. If the child subject was constituted according to the terms of total war political conflict, then Klein explicitly described her clinical function as the cultivation of the patient's reparative capacities. Reparation was the

child's solution to the excesses of aggression directed internally at itself and externally at its (m)other, and it was pivotal to how Klein defined clinical success. Klein originally defined the child's mind according to attack and aggression in a way that both explained the intrusions of fascist violence and justified British resistance; as such, to what political necessities does her turn to reparation answer? How does the political status of fiscal wartime reparations speak to the clinical ethic of psychic reparations that Klein theorized?

Mrs. K, Richard, and "The Bad Hitler–Penis"

At the height of World War II, Melanie Klein escaped the daily London *blitzkrieg* by fleeing to the safety of Pitlochry, a town in the Scottish countryside where she resided for most of 1941. Many British analysts (and naturalized citizens, like Klein) sought refuge in this way since a local relocation allowed them to maintain small practices away from the most dangerous incursions of the war. Unlike the British, the Viennese and other European refugees could not obtain the travel permits necessary to leave London and so were forced to remain in the city throughout the air raids. Holed up in Scotland, Klein saw a limited number of patients and devoted her spare time to making copious notes on one ten year old boy in particular. She intended these notes to come together in the form of a book on clinical technique, an aspiration that was not realized until fifteen years later when she returned to her notes, edited them, and compiled a complete case

history for a single child patient named “Richard.” Remarking on this process, Klein wrote to fellow child analyst, D.W. Winnicott on May 30th 1941: “I have started the analysis of a very unusual boy of ten a month ago & keep full notes including my interpretations from this case. It takes me 1 ½ –2 hours a day to make these notes, –a drag but well worth while. ...It really gives me pleasure to think what a good paper this should make” (qtd. Grosskurth, 262). Klein worked on this “good paper” from 1956 until her death in 1960 and *Narrative of a Child Analysis* was published posthumously a year later. At just shy of 500 pages it is the longest case history ever recorded. It details the almost daily sessions (the text includes 93 sessions, but Klein’s diary lists 96) that Klein conducted with Richard over the course of four months. Each session narrates Richard’s speech, mood, actions, and play, followed by Klein’s own interpretations as she spoke them, live time, to Richard. Composed more like a 93 act play than a scientific treatise, poet Henry Reed aptly remarked that *Narrative of a Child Analysis* stood beside *War and Peace* on his bookshelf, a fitting location given its martial drama.

According to Klein’s introduction, when Richard first came for treatment he had been struggling with severe anxieties and phobias for two years, since the outbreak of the war in 1939. He was terrified of other children, unable to attend school, hypochondrical, inhibited in learning, and frequently subject to depression (*Narrative*, 15). In his family life, he was the younger of two children. He still lived with his father and mother, but his older brother had enlisted in the war and was only home on

temporary leave. Although Klein observed that he had “precocious” artistic sensibilities and a great love of nature and music, these interests were often stifled by his anxious concern for his mother’s well being, his paranoid fear of other children, and his obsessive interest in the daily developments of the war. Everyday he read four newspapers, listened to the radio for progressive updates about the war, and fervently tracked Hitler’s advance across the continent. When, at the outset of their first session, Klein asked Richard to discuss some of the “difficulties” that caused him to be brought in for analysis, what Richard gave by way of explanation was an expansive description of national conflicts:

He also thought much about the war. Of course he knew that the Allies were going to win and was not particularly worried, but was it not awful what Hitler did to people, particularly the terrible things he did to the Poles? Did he mean to do the same over here? But he, Richard, felt confident that Hitler would be beaten. (When speaking about Hitler he went to have a look at the large map hanging on the wall.) ... Mrs. K was Austrian, wasn’t she? Hitler had been awful to the Austrians though he was Austrian himself. (*Narrative*, 19–20)

Throughout the course of the analysis, Richard would continue to bring the political events occurring throughout Europe into his daily psychoanalytic sessions. In his drawings, in his play, and in his speech, he detailed the progression of the war and acted out everything from The Battle of Crete and the naval expeditions of the warships *Bismarck* and *Nelson* to Switzerland’s precarious neutrality and Germany’s gluttonous expansion. He brought his own set of toy battleships with him to most sessions and used the art supplies that Klein provided to create dozens of drawings that depicted air, sea,

and railway attack as well as the constantly shifting national borders and alliances of what he ominously called “The Empire.” World War II, particularly as it was epitomized by the conflict between Hitler’s Germany as a singular “bad” and the British as a collective “good,” was the subject of almost all of Richard’s concerns throughout his treatment.

Although it might seem hardly surprising that a child in 1941 whose brother was enlisted in the British Army and whose house in London had already been bombed would be preoccupied by world events, for Klein this persistent interest in conflict, destruction, attack, and Hitler himself bespoke the internal—rather than external—dynamics of attack and repair. Klein interpreted Richard’s keen interest in international political conflict as a symptomatic projection of a deeper and more fundamental psychic conflict. In her efforts to alleviate Richard’s anxiety and reach his unconscious phantasies, Klein’s interpretations throughout these sessions ceaselessly returned to what she read as the organizing figures of Richard’s psychic life. When Richard talked about battleships, Hitler, and national alliance, Klein rejoined with the threats posed by Daddy’s “bad Hitler-penis,” Mummy’s positioned body, and the copulating “combined parent” figure. According to Klein, the events of World War II merely provided the stage dressing for Richard’s deeper unconscious phantasies.

Although Richard often disagreed with Klein’s interpretations and responded with strong anxiety, Klein persisted. Klein’s interpretive panache is dramatized in

Richard's third session when he returns to the map on the wall (which he had noticed in the first session) and speculates about national conflict and alliance.

He soon turned to the map and expressed his fears about the British battleships being blockaded in the Mediterranean if Gibraltar were taken by the Germans. They could not get through Suez. He also spoke of injured soldiers and showed some anxiety about their fate. He wondered how the British troops could be rescued from Greece. What would Hitler do to the Greeks; would he enslave them? Looking at the map, he said with concern that Portugal was a very small country compared with big Germany, and would be overcome by Hitler. He mentioned Norway, about whose attitude he was doubtful, though it might not prove to be a bad ally after all.

Mrs K. interpreted that he also worried unconsciously about what might happen to Daddy when he put his genital into Mummy. Daddy might not be able to get out of Mummy's inside and would be caught there, like the ships in the Mediterranean. This also applied to the troops which had to be retrieved from Greece. (*Narrative*, 28)

Richard's anxieties, as he expresses them, have to do with the political topography of Europe: ships stranded in the Mediterranean might not be able to get their wounded soldiers to allied soil in time to save their lives; Greek citizens recently conquered in The Battle of Greece might be enslaved—or worse—by advancing Nazi soldiers under Hitler's command; Portugal, relatively small and neighboring fascist Spain, could easily be "overcome." But for Klein the realistic purchase of these concerns has little appeal and she interprets Richard's worries as traces of his unconscious phantasies, which are projected outward, onto external events. As Klein routinely states, an anxiety about external events is always symptomatic of a deeper, internal anxiety, which analysis can help resolve. For instance, Richard's fear of Hitler as an aggressive and subjugating force

represents his anxiety about his “Daddy’s” alternately helpful and harmful penis.

“Mummy,” here figured as the vast expanse of earth and ocean on which this military drama was being literally mapped out, could engulf and capture the “good” father-penis, represented by the British warships. The idioms of ‘father of a nation’ and ‘Mother Earth’ are taken quite literally in Klein’s interpretation, which proposes that familial and (hetero)sexual symbols are the deepest and most determinative objects for the child psyche.¹⁵ Put another way, Richard’s interest in war indexes his *internal* conflict, *the war inside*.

In the 1980s, Phyllis Grosskurth, Klein’s biographer, interviewed Richard about his recollections of the analysis he had with Klein and, while he had little awareness that his case had become a case study (let alone such a influential and substantial one), what he remembered most about his analysis were Klein’s sexual, symbolic interpretations of his play. “The only toys I can remember were the battleships,” recalls Richard.

I remember going on about the fact that we [the British] were going to bomb the Germans, seize Berlin, and so on and so on and then Brest.

15 Throughout Klein’s *oeuvre*, she maintains that “mental health” is demonstrated by genital heterosexuality. While she acknowledges the homosexual energies and attachments constantly present in every individual’s mental life, she argues that the “unsuccessful” sublimation of these libidinal investments can itself be a cause for psychoanalytic intervention. Ramon E. Soto-Crespo argues creatively and persuasively for a reading of Klein’s work that challenges her heteronormativity and her understanding of an anatomically grounded sexual difference by focusing on the life-worlds of the child’s unconscious phantasies. However, at the level of Klein’s interpretive presence in the clinic, she consistently privileges genital heterosexuality. For examples of this, see cases like “Mr. B,” “Erna,” “Rita,” “Little Dick” and “Richard.” For Soto-Crespo’s re-reading, see “Heterosexuality Terminable or Interminable? Kleinian Fantasies of Reparation and Mourning” in *Homosexuality and Psychoanalysis*.

Melanie seized on b-r-e-a-s-t, which of course was very much her angle. She would often talk about the 'big Mummy genital' and the 'big Daddy genital' or the 'good Mummy genital' and the 'bad Daddy genital.' I can't remember what other things she had to say. It was very much a strong interest in genitalia. (qtd. in Grosskurth, 273)

Seizing on "the breast" was indeed very much "Klein's angle." Sparse though Richard's recollections of his analysis were when Grosskurth interviewed him, his memory of Klein's interpretive style is actually a fairly accurate summary of her theoretical approach to object relations. For Klein, the child's most important objects, both internal and external, are sexual ones: breast, penis, vagina, and internal children. In contrast to some of her more modest, relationally-focused colleagues like D.W. Winnicott, Klein did in fact have a very strong interest in genitalia.

Given Richard's description, it would appear that Klein is, time and again, ahistorically returning his political anxieties to an ever-present "Mommy-Daddy-Me" triangulation that universalizes the European middleclass nuclear family as the seat of all psychic life. But in this very gesture she actually remobilizes much of the historically specific war vocabulary that saturated 1940s discourse in Britain. Watching Richard play with the toy battleships he often brought to his sessions, "Mrs. K." routes the grammar of war that animated Richard's manipulation of the ships from his external world to his internal one. Plagued by the wish to "kill," "blow up," "ambush," "bomb" and "attack" the "hostile" persecutors who appear allied against him, the relations that characterize Richard's unconscious phantasies have much in common with international relations

during World War II. Klein does not date each of the sessions in the text of *Narrative*, but her pocket book records that Richard's analysis lasted from April 28th to August 23rd of 1941, a time span that witnessed the continued bombing of Northern Ireland, the fall of Greece, the sinking of the Bismarck, the invasion of the Soviet Union, and perhaps most notably the bizarre arrival of Rudolf Hess, Hitler's second in command, who fled Germany in the middle of the night and bailed out over Glasgow, less than 100 miles from Klein, seeking asylum.¹⁶ From a historical perspective, then, Klein constructs her instinctual, phylogenetic unconscious on and through modern European political conflict narratives, emblemized in the swing between aggressive "attack" and conciliatory "reparation." During a time of attacks, bombings, and invasions, followed by monetary reparations, Klein's interest is not in the purchase of these phenomena in the external world but rather in the way they organize the internal, psychic life of children. Essentially, Klein takes the political discourse of World War II and maps it onto—and into—the mind of the child. Her technique of analyzing children's play implicitly emphasizes the similarity between play and war. For Klein, children's play is nothing more or less than international war games.

16 For a fascinating historical account of Rudolf Hess's role in the wartime psychoanalytic work that sought to understand "Nazi psychology," see *The Pursuit of the Nazi Mind* by Daniel Pick. Pick does not explore the coincidence of "asylum" that was motoring Hess's escape, but his desire for political refuge through an appeal to psychological malady is certainly noteworthy.

Although Klein, as I have elaborated above, spent the early decades of her career preoccupied with the infant's aggressive, paranoid-schizoid orientation to the world, it was not until her watershed 1935 paper, "A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic Depressive States," that she hypothesized a second "depressive" position and proposed "reparation" (which she had also previously called "restoration") as its primary process. Klein interpreted Richard's case as a demonstration of the two psychic positions that she had just begun to theorize a few years before. In the paranoid-schizoid position, which Klein imagined organizes the child earliest experiences of postnatal life, the child negotiates the excess of physical stimulation and instinctual need through processes of "splitting" and "projection." Since the child is confronted by complex sensations that it does not yet have the psychological sophistication to process, the child *splits* the experiences into monolithic units—"good" and "bad"—and *projects* them into the external world. Its experience of being fed when hungry, for example, is projected onto the "good" external breast, which it loves, whereas its experience of being left hungry is projected onto the "bad" external breast, which the child phantasizes as hostile and aggressive, literally attacking the child and causing the pain of hunger. Hence, "projection" and "splitting" allow the child to cope with its own conflicted instincts and environment by reducing their affective complexity and expelling them to safe distances. Working in tandem, these processes define the child's first relations to the social world, which it perceives as dangerous and persecutory.

Although Richard was undoubtedly fascinated by attack, Klein's real interest in his case had much more to do with his intermittent depressive anxiety about damage and reparation. She interprets his case as the most compelling demonstration of the reparative impulses characteristic to the depressive position. Writing to colleague Clifford Scott on Aug 29th 1941 about Richard's case, Klein stresses how Richard adds to psychoanalytic knowledge about the depressive position and reparation. "It is surprising and gratifying to see how much the knowledge of the depressive position has advanced technique and theoretical and practical understanding" (qtd. in Grosskurth, 262). What Klein calls attention to here is the connection between clinical technique and the dynamics of the depressive position. This link is perhaps no better exemplified than by the fact that Klein's longest contribution to clinical technique was the case of a boy suffering from depressive anxieties. As the depressive position comes into focus for Klein, so does her insistence that the purpose of clinical technique is to bring about greater reparative capacities.

A long passage from Richard's twenty-fourth session demonstrates the constant oscillation between the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions that Klein describes.

Richard had in the meantime been all round the room, exploring, looking into books, and finding things on the shelves. He repeatedly touched *Mrs K.*'s bag, obviously wishing to open and examine it. He squeezed a little ball between his feet and then began to do the goose-step, saying what a silly way of marching it was.

Mrs K. interpreted that the little ball represented the world; Mummy and *Mrs K.*, squeezed by German boots—the goose-step. In doing this Richard expressed his feeling that he not only contained the

good Mummy but also the Hitler-father, and was destroying Mummy as the bad father did.

Richard strongly objected, saying that he was not like Hitler, but he seemed to understand that the goose-stepping and the squeezing feet represented this. It was nearly time to go and Richard became very friendly and affectionate. ...He asked her [Mrs K] to be silent, held his breath, and said, 'Poor old room, so silent.' Then he asked *Mrs K.* what she was going to do over the weekend.

Mrs K. interpreted his fear that she might die at the weekend—the poor old silent room. That was why he had to make sure about her bringing the drawings; this also expressed his wish to help in the analysis, and thus to put *Mrs K.* right and preserve her. This was why he wished for *Mrs K.*—the poor old radiator—to have a rest, not to be exhausted by her patients, particularly by him. (*Narrative*, 114)

In the first half of this passage, Richard plays at the military goose-step while Klein interprets (much to Richard's dismay) his aggressive identification with the bad Hitler father bent on destroying the good Mummy-world. This aggressive attack is then followed by Richard's reparative concern in the second half of the passage for the consulting room, which represents Klein and registers his worry that she might "die at the weekend" because of his goose-stepping assaults. After trying to squash "Mrs K." under his heel, Richard's feels guilty about his attempted murder and grows concerned for the survival of the room, the analysis, and Klein herself.

According to Klein's interpretations here, the depressive position follows on the coattails of the paranoid-schizoid position and involves the child's experience of guilt, love, creativity, and the impulse to repair. Whereas in the paranoid-schizoid position the child attacked unadulterated "good" and "bad" part objects (the archetype of which is the breast), in the depressive position the infant becomes aware that the attacked breast

is the same as the “good” feeding breast that provides warmth and comfort and therefore that its destructive onslaught aimed also at a loved and cherished object necessary to the infant’s survival. Prior to the recognition of these “whole objects,” the infant perceives the world according to “part objects”: the infant, because of its limited cognitive and sensory palate, understands the mother as a series of part objects (breast, skin, smell, gaze) that either satisfy or frustrate its instincts. These part objects allow the infant to split its otherwise ambivalent feelings between separate entities instead of having to tolerate the ambivalence involved in recognizing a whole object; “part object-relationships entail the freeing of the ego from ambivalence” (Hinshelwood, 378).

Only as the infant develops will it be able to bring these good and bad part objects together to form a whole object—the mother, for instance—who arouses a complexity of emotions. As Klein explains this transition:

[h]and in hand with this development goes a change of the highest importance, namely, from a partial object relation to the relation to a complete object. Through this step the ego arrives at a new position, which forms the foundation of that situation called the loss of the loved object. Not until the object is lived *as a whole* can its loss be felt as a whole. (“Manic Depressive States,” 118)

Only when part objects are acknowledged as whole can they truly take on an existence separate from the subject and thus be lost and mourned. Rather than being attacked (the experience characteristic of the paranoid-schizoid position), whole objects are mourned and repaired; they are approached with guilt and love for the paranoiac attacks that the infant had previously directed at the part objects. The infant, phantasizing its paranoid

attacks to be the cause of damage to the now-loved whole object, identifies with the object and attempts repair. "If the baby has, in his aggressive phantasies, injured his mother by biting and tearing her up, he may soon build up phantasies that he is putting the bits together again and repairing her" (Klein, "Love, Guilt and Reparation," 308). The depressive position is thus marked by the infant's experience of ambivalent "whole objects," which it understands itself capable of injuring and even losing; reparations are how the child responds to this precarious object relation.

Using the language of spatialized "positions" rather than temporal "stages," Klein's theory of psychic life challenges a developmental view of subjectivity by arguing that the constant oscillation of these two positions is unceasing throughout life. According to Klein, the interaction between attack and repair structures the whole of unconscious life, for children as well as adults. The depressive position and the child's attempts at reparations are in constant interaction with the aggression and violence that catalyzes them. As Klein writes, "the apparent division implied [between hate and love, attack and reparation] by this mode of presentation does not actually exist in the human mind. ... feelings of love and tendencies to reparation develop in connection with aggressive impulses and in spite of them" ("Love, Guilt, and Reparation," 306). A prerequisite for the phantasy of reparations is the child's experience of guilt for the imagined injury done to the object by the child's sadistic, phantasized attacks. The infant tries to palliate the guilt induced by this recognition by making restitution to the object-

qua-breast, offering loving reparations for phantasized damage. “[I]n our unconscious phantasy we make good the injuries which we did in phantasy and for which we still unconsciously feel very guilty. This making reparation is, in my view, a fundamental element in love and in all human relationships” (*ibid*, 313). Bound up with the psychic experiences of love, empathy, guilt, loss, and mourning, the depressive position names what Klein understands to be the most ethical capacities of human relationality.¹⁷ Klein describes depressive reparation through morally weighted language, stressing its connection to love, goodness, and genuine concern for others. “The making of reparation—which is such an essential part of the ability to love—widens in scope, and the child’s capacity to accept love and, by various means, to take into himself goodness from the outer world steadily increases” (*ibid*, 117-118). In contrast to the paranoid-schizoid position, which is characterized by the dominance of the death instinct and sadism, Klein describes the depressive position as indexing the ascension of the life instinct and the greater security of the introjected good objects. Based in the experience of what Klein alternately describes as “true reparation,” “genuine sympathy,” or

¹⁷Klein’s reliance on the vocabulary of love and guilt is not dissimilar to a Christian, or even Catholic, nosology. Klein herself, as a child of eight or nine, felt “tortured” that she would suddenly turn Catholic (Grosskurth, 14). While there is not much scholarship on the religious resonances of Klein’s theories, Grosskurth does comment that Klein’s “later theories on constitutional envy, the primary importance of the mother, and reparation bear close parallels to the doctrines of original sin, the Immaculate Conception, and Christian atonement” (84). This similarity even led Edward Glover to comment that the internal phantasy world of Klein’s infant is a “matriarchal variant of the doctrine of Original Sin” (quoted in J. Phillips, 42).

“authentic sympathy,” the depressive position is a moral achievement in Klein’s theory of psychic life, one Klein intended her clinical play-technique to facilitate.¹⁸

Given how interested Klein was throughout Richard’s case in the operations of the depressive position, it is not surprising that one of the chief ways she marks his progress is by narrating how his play, increasingly, turned from destructive attack to solicitous reparation. Whereas Klein describes Richard’s play in the early sessions as dominated by paranoid attack, she gradually charts the emergence of reparative gestures as the analysis progresses. Klein interprets the increase in Richard’s reparative play as a sign of her technique’s beneficial effects. To be sure: Klein is the first to admit that Richard’s case was anything but complete when it concluded. Klein was forced to end the analysis early because she had to return to London to participate in the

¹⁸ Although not directly pertinent for the argument of this chapter, it is worth noting that the ethical purchase of Klein’s depressive position is far less unilateral than her own descriptions suggest. A little-discussed fact of reparativity in Klein’s work is that, as a form of psychic relationality, it is based on identification. In depressive reparation, the child casts itself into the place of the object under siege and becomes aware of the vulnerability of the other *precisely on and through the contours of the child’s own self*. In a public lecture Klein gave, she explicitly listed reparativity under the subheading “Identification and Making Reparation.” Klein is insistent that the depressive position and reparation derive from the child’s ability to *put itself* in the object’s place, scripting the object’s injury according to the perimeters of its own guilt. Put differently, reparativity is important in Klein’s psychodynamic theory not because it constitutes an ethical relation to the world *per se*—there is no guarantee that its intentions to “do good” translate in any way to material consequences, or that the objects of one’s reparative intentions are politically desirable—but because it gives the child *the feeling* of ethical action and thereby allows it to expiate its own guilt and reinvest the world of object relations. For a fuller discussion of the clinical ethics of reparation, particularly in relation to debates about reparative reading, see my forthcoming article “Beyond Repair: Interpretation, Reparation, and Melanie Klein’s Clinical Play Technique,” *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*, Forthcoming (2018).

controversial “war” simmering in the BPS. Short though the analysis was, Klein nevertheless averred that the analysis had helped Richard with his war anxiety, a claim she substantiates specifically through her repeated narrative emphasis on the progressive expansion of Richard’s reparative gestures in play. For instance, after session seventy-one when Richard had enacted a “disaster” with toy trains that were bombed on their way to London (where Klein herself was preparing to travel), Klein writes in her appended notes that

there was also, together with the facing and expression of these various anxieties, a diminution of the violence of his [Richard’s] destructive impulses. The cautious and anxious way in which he took the toys out of the bag and in which he decided that the damaged figures would have to go to hospital—asking me at the same time to mend the boy figure who represented himself—shows how both hope and the urge for reparation were operative side by side with his anxieties. ...When destructive impulses and their consequences come closer together with a revived capacity for love and are mitigated by it, they become less overwhelming and reparation becomes possible... (*Narrative*, 366–67)

Richard’s care with the toys, his assessment of their damage, and his investment in having them “mend[ed]” by Klein and the “hospital” indexes for Klein his “urge for reparation.” As Richard’s case progressed, Klein increasingly interpreted the reparative tendencies animating Richard’s play, concluding (as she does here) that Richard was in the process of integrating his life and death instincts, a vital step for Klein’s understanding of analytic success. Importantly, both Richard and Klein represent the clinical process itself as a reparative activity. Partitioned out in double dashes, Klein highlights how Richard reached out to Klein to repair the toy figure, which she states

symbolizes the reparative relation between Richard and herself. Later, in the same session, Klein interprets even further the link between Richard's reparative play and the effect that she imagined the analysis would have.

Hope was expressed in this session, for instance, by the little toy figure which was to remain in the hospital till I could mend it; this meant that the day would come when I would continue Richard's analysis and help him further. When destructive impulses and the consequences come close together with a revived capacity for love and are mitigated by it, they become less overwhelming and reparation becomes possible; in other words, the all-important process of integration takes place. (Klein, *Narrative*, 367)

When Richard sends his injured toys to the hospital to be mended, Klein interprets that not only is this an indication of the increase in Richard's reparative tendencies; it is also an indication that her clinical work was the agent of that repair. In interpreting Richard's play, Klein likens herself as an analyst and her clinical psychoanalytic work to a doctor in a hospital whose purpose is to "help" and "mend." In a later session, Richard would follow this comparison up, asking Klein directly "whether she was a doctor for the mind as others are doctors for the body?" To this, Klein responded in the affirmative, replying "yes, one could say so" (*Narrative*, 459). For Klein, the reparative work of the clinic is, interestingly, to bring about greater capacities for reparation in the child by facilitating the more thorough integration of the life and death instincts.

In her "Final Remarks" on the case, after all of Richard's sessions had concluded, Klein reflects on this integration of life and death instincts that she understood as a mark of Richard's progress.

I have already said that his envy, jealousy, and greed, which in my view are expressions of the death instinct, diminished because he became gradually able to face and integrate his destructive impulses. This was bound up with his capacity for love coming more fully into play, which made it possible for hate to be mitigated by love. ...His sense of guilt, which had existed side by side with his persecutory anxieties, had diminished and this implied a greater capacity to make reparation. (Klein, *Narrative*, 466)

The lessening of Richard's envy, greed, and guilt, the integration of his destructive impulses, and the intensification of his capacity to love and make reparation are all central to how Klein narrates the effects of analysis. For Klein, these transformations speak to the salutary work that her clinical technique had itself done. Yet, in this same penultimate meditation, Klein interestingly returns to the status of the political concerns that had so worried Richard and directly links them with Richard's amplified reparative capacity.

I have referred to the fact that Richard, who so strongly hated the enemies threatening Britain's existence at that time, became capable of feeling sympathy for the destroyed enemy. This was shown, for instance, when he regretted the damage done to Berlin and Munich and, at another occasion, when he became identified with the sunk *Prinz Eugen*. (*ibid*)

Although Klein means this précis to be a testament to Richard's increased reparativity, and thus to the benefits brought about by her clinical technique, the ethical yield of this clinical description is, significantly, complicated by its political content. According to this passage, Klein determines Richard's progress according to his ability to identify with—to sympathize with—the “destroyed enemy.” Klein downplays the political implications of this assessment by naming cities as the objects of Richard's sympathy

and by highlighting (from her editorial postwar position in the 1950s) that it was “the [fascist] enemy” who was “destroyed,” thereby lending Richard’s sympathy the air of magnanimity. Taken from a different angle, however, what Klein suggests here is nothing less than that Richard’s achievement of the depressive position and his impulse toward reparations is best exemplified by his identification with Nazi Germany at the height of a genocidal extermination. Richard’s clinical progress is signified by his ability to see himself in a fascist, anti-Semitic empire. When put into context with the political occurrences that were the subject of so much of Richard’s speech and play, the “reparations” — a term not unburdened by the history of international wars and genocidal logics — that Klein hails as the crowing achievement of analysis begin to look far from politically ideal. My concluding question is therefore a simple one: what picture of reparation do we get if we shift the focus from Klein’s narration of the child’s own good feeling to the fraught political history of reparations informing Klein’s wartime embrace of this concept?

Beyond Repair?: War, Reparation, and The Politics of the Clinic

While Klein’s treatment of the child’s reparative impulses privileges the psychological and affective dimension of the subjective urge to “make good,” there is also a none-too-veiled political dimension to reparations as they are imagined in mid-century Britain. If the language of aggression, death, and attack characterized the first

half of Klein's *oeuvre*, then it seems hardly politically insignificant that, as Klein moved through the interwar period into World War II, she would turn increasingly to thoughts of injury, guilt, and reparation. As British politician Sir Arthur Salter wrote in 1932, "[t]o tell the tale of Reparation, and the questions with which it is intertwined, would be to write the history of post-war Europe" (141). Prior to her move to London in 1926, Klein lived in Budapest and Berlin during and after World War I, respectively. From her interwar locations in Germany and Britain, she was geographically mantling the debate about reparations as it was rehearsed after both wars. Indeed, from a historical vantage the swing between externalized aggression and guilty reparation cannily describes, from an Allied perspective, the progression of Germany through World War I and in the years that followed. The question of the propriety and justness of material reparations was a key topic of political debate that occupied Britain especially in the interwar years. While opinions on this topic were variable and changed dramatically given national affiliation and historical location, what was clear was that the dominance of such a discourse was tied to the advancements of large-scale, international modern war.

Public, political discussion about reparations grew up in Britain after the publication of Norman Angell's influential *The Great Illusion* (first published in 1909 as *Europe's Optical Illusion*, and republished in 1910 under its new title). A general critique of war between industrialized countries, Angell presciently argued that major military excursions would never yield the material gain that they seemed to promise because of

the co-dependence of modern nations on one another through processes of circulation and exchange. As part of this point, Angell's text was sharply critical of monetary reparations as compensation for the losses of war. While Angell's work was disputed, historian Robert E. Brunsemeier states that "Angell's theory and the criticisms around it must nevertheless be considered the first origin of British thinking about reparation and indemnity" (63). Angell's work set the stage for a decades long conversation throughout Europe about reparative justice.

Public opinion about reparations during World War I was divided—as Brunsemeier notes, many shared an adamantly pro-reparations conviction that, in the event of an Allied victory, Germany should be obligated to pay indemnity to Belgium and France¹⁹—but in the years after the Treaty of Versailles, the bloodlust for German

¹⁹ To a lesser extent, some Britons also held that Britain was entitled to material compensation for violence against prisoners-of-war and for the sinking of the *Lusitania* (Brunsemeier, 63-64). These claims were both about material compensations for actual damage incurred during war and about a collective sense that Germany ought to be disciplined for its warmongering. Broadly, the British public viewed reparations during The Great War and in the years immediately following it as a panacea capable of both revitalizing Britain's own home economy and justly punishing Germany for its belligerence. This support for reparations was thus a combination of a punitive anti-German spirit and a strategic national interest aimed at defraying Britain's serious debts. Bruce Kent, in *The Spoils of War: Politics, Economics and the Diplomacy of Reparations 1918-1932*, even compellingly argues that the ultimate reason for the unwieldy sum required by the Versailles Treaty can be thought in terms of class anxiety on the part of the elite British treaty delegates who feared that, without remuneration of debts, more radical social solutions (like taxes on capital) would have to be implemented. From Kent's perspective, then, reparations were a strategic, material ploy "designed primarily to pre-empt any socially radical solution of the unprecedented and seemingly intractable post-war problems of national and international indebtedness" (8). Regardless of what motivated Allied delegates to ratify such severe reparations claims, though, the popular consensus among the British during the war and in its

reparations lost its glowing appeal. This shift in opinion was due in large part to economist John Maynard Keynes, who had been working at the British Treasury during the war and attended part of the Versailles Conference in 1919. Disagreeing strongly with the extreme reparations being imposed on Germany after World War I, Keynes quickly published *The Economic Consequences of Peace* (1919), which became an immediate, trans-Atlantic bestseller. In it, Keynes forcefully admonished the architects of The Treaty of Versailles and reprovved the Treaty's mandates about reparations on economic and political grounds. Calling the treaty a "Carthaginian Peace," Keynes argued that not only would the economic strictures disadvantage all of Europe, but that such exorbitant reparations claims were far from the just impartiality that the Allied Armistice with Germany had promised. What Keynes suggested—and not unfoundedly so—was that the reparations claims were a form of fiscal punishment meant to chasten Germany for its bellicosity: the Germans had taken their pound of flesh throughout the war and they were to pay it back afterward in pounds of gold. Keynes's text, perhaps more than any other single document, brought about the widespread public opinion that the Allies had mistreated Germany and that such unrealistic reparations were the primary seat of this ill-usage.

immediate aftermath was that Germany should at take least partial, if not total, financial responsibility.

The extreme popularity of Keynes's book, and the way it accurately predicted the downturn of the German economy, established his reputation as the economic mind of an age. By 1932, the Lausanne settlement effectively suspended reparations. It was largely through Keynes's work that the economic reparations levied on Germany were retrospectively connected to the rise of German nationalism and the ultimate ascent of Hitler and the National Socialist Party (although causal narratives that explain Hitler's rise to power are of course multiple). The way reparations were narrated as the cause of such dire consequences meant that, at the close of World War II, the political consideration of potential reparations claims was much more circumspect. Significantly, Keynes advised the British government throughout the Second World War. Thus, while there had been smatterings of public support for reparations prior to The Treaty of Versailles, after World War I they were largely linked with the expression of national self-interest that was both unethical and politically injudicious.

Given this anything but glowing political history, it is interesting that during the very years when this term carried the strongest political distaste Klein would mobilize it to name what she described as the most ethical position that the child was capable of. Regardless of whether or not Klein had either of these political uses of the term in mind when she theorized the way that attack and reparation structure the mind of the child, her ability to even think the subject along the lines of reparation testifies to the broader conception of postwar justice enabling her theory. Read in this context, the grammar of

individual psychological repair emerges in connection with what appear to be clear and identifiable aggressions at the international level. Far from exemplifying anything like “love” or “recognition,” reparations read in this context signify the disproportionate national debts owed for wartime violence. Operating under the cloak of justice, reparations ultimately look more like the expression of pure national interest.

With this political context in mind, I want to conclude by wondering how the political life of reparations opens up a far more ambivalent reading of reparation as both a psychic, and a clinical, orientation. This underside is materialized quite plainly in a public lecture that Klein delivered at Caxon Hall in London in 1936, one of her few public engagements. In this lecture, which she gave with Joan Riviere, Klein offers a rare social example intended to illustrate, for her audience, the clinical concept of reparation.

The child’s early aggression stimulated by the drive to restore and to make good, to put back into his mother the good things he had robbed from her in phantasy, and these wishes to make good merge into the later drive to explore, for by finding new land the explorer gives something to the world at large and to a number of people in particular. In his pursuit the explorer actually gives expression to both aggression and the drive to reparation. We know that in discovering a new country aggression is made use of in the struggle with the elements, and in over-coming difficulties of all kinds. But sometimes aggression is shown more openly; especially was this so in former times when ruthless cruelty against native populations was displayed by people who not only explored, but conquered and colonized. Some of the early phantasied attacks against the imaginary babies in the mother’s body, and actual hatred against new-born brothers and sisters, were here expressed in reality by the attitude towards the natives. The wished for restoration, however, found full expression in repopulating the country with people of their own nationality. (“Love, Guilt and Reparation,” 334)

Taking the scene of colonial conquest as her object—and making sure her 1936 British audience knows that all of this happened in “former times” rather than their own political present—Klein literally maps the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions onto the history of ostensibly Western colonial invasion, subjugation, and extermination. While the invasion of foreign lands and the slaughter of “native populations” is a clear display of the infant’s hostile attacks on its mother’s body (again figured as the world), Klein somewhat unbelievably argues that the “repopulate[ion]” of the ravaged country by the colonist’s own people constitutes reparation, the ethical ideal. Read from this vantage, colonial repopulation is a demonstration of the “creativity” of a conqueror’s response to his or her own decimation of indigenous peoples.

Read in this context, the vocabulary of reparative justice emerges in connection with (and seems inextricable from) histories of national *injustice* that propose the tidy closure of past aggressions by the state’s liberal promise of fiscal compensation for physical violence. As with reparations after World War I, the claim for reparation in this example of colonial conquest looks far from either ethically innocent or politically ideal. Indeed, it is illustrative that Klein chooses a scene of colonialism in particular to explain her psychological theory of reparations since this choice already speaks to the international politics informing her theorization of psychological life. If Klein suggests that we can see the urge toward reparation for the “native populations” massacred by the “ruthless cruelty” in imperial “repopulation,” then this political example puts

pressure on Klein's own clinical idealization of reparation by showing it to be yet another harmful extension of oppressive, colonial desires. Neither Richard's reparative sympathy for Nazi Germany nor the explorer's colonial "repopulation" take into account the particular political status of the object being offered reparation, nor are they able to consider whether or not such specific reparative actions actually work in the object's best interest.

Yet what is interesting is that Klein would never comment on the obvious political salience of her nominative choice. Read from one vantage, it was only by depoliticizing her clinical mobilization of reparativity that Klein able to render that position ethically ideal. Far from operating in the spirit of an interdependent generosity, a reparative orientation to objects enacts nothing other than a different form of self-interested command over them. If the paranoid-schizoid position sees objects dismembered into convenient parts that facilitate a guilt-free attack, then the depressive position with its imperative toward reparation sees the object (re)configured according to the subject's own imperial assignation of injury. Any figuration of damages—either in the clinic, or in a war—is never guaranteed to be anything other than an aggressive use of the object-qua-other according to the subject's own needs. When it comes to a reparative mindset, either in politics or in the clinic, I might just suggest that there is no guarantee that even the most well-intentioned object relations will be anything more than yet another colonization of the other according to the needs of the self.

But, from another vantage, Klein's appropriation of a reparative ethics in the clinic signals a resilient hope for a form of justice that had just been proven untenable in world politics. As World War II progressed and public faith in the viability of either political justice or human ethics reached a crisis point in European genocide, Klein interestingly looks to the clinic as a space for the very reparative closure that was in crisis everywhere else. Certainly this is not to say that through her clinical work Klein found an untroubled ethico-political ideal—indeed, this chapter has been arguing against this idealization quite deliberately. But by considering the bridge Klein herself did not draw—that is, between reparative politics and clinical reparations—Klein's clinical work comes to light as a fraught grappling with a crisis of European thinking about the possibility of justice. The psychoanalytic clinic offered a space for hope, albeit one that introduced many of the same problematics and impasses of the larger geopolitical scene. Through the language of reparations, Klein's child analytic clinic was, like Europe itself, processing a response to significant ethico-political questions raised by global war.

3. Mothering a Nation: D.W. Winnicott, Gender, and the Postcolonial British Welfare State

It has been to mothers that I have so deeply needed to speak
—D.W. Winnicott, *Home Is Where We Start From*

On February 3rd 1964, D.W. Winnicott held his first interview with a two-and-a-half year old little girl nicknamed “The Piggie.” In this interview, The Piggie described the nature of the persecutory dreams that had been keeping her awake at night, singling out the “babacar” and the “black mummy” as her nocturnal antagonists. According to Winnicott’s analysis throughout the case, these unsettling fantasies are the hieroglyphs of The Piggie’s tenuous relationship with her mother, which he surmises had not been “good enough” to ensure her healthy development. In the clinic, Winnicott aims to redress this maternal failure by creating and sustaining an analytic “holding environment,” a literal and emotional space of security meant to replicate primary maternal care and, through this specifically maternal provision, safeguard liberal democracy.

In his case study, Winnicott does not comment on the racial significance of the Piggie’s description of the nightmarish “black mummy.” But the import of this specifically *black* mummy is exactly what I intend to pursue throughout this chapter. The Piggie’s case is one of only two full case studies that Winnicott ever published and, for many critics, it ranks with Klein’s colossal *Narrative of a Child Analysis* for the way it

reveals Winnicott's clinical technique. Winnicott's wife and literary executioner, Clare, stated in a letter to Masud Khan in 1974 that this case in particular saw "D. W. W. at his best" (qtd. in Reeves, 159). What, I ask, are we to make of the way that race enters Winnicott's consulting room? How do the racial connotations of The Piggle's fantasies in the clinic speak to the larger political tensions of a nation, of an empire?

Significantly, "black mummy" becomes a fantasy object for the child at the height of Britain's decolonization efforts, when the decline of empire translated into massive increases in immigration that amplified racial tensions throughout the postwar British welfare State. In this chapter, I consider how Winnicott's psychological work corresponded with the political conditions of postwar Britain. While past scholarship on Winnicott has theorized how his role as a public child expert helped solidify gendered domestic labor in the postwar British welfare state, my interest here is in interrogating how, in the decades following decolonization, gender and race intersected in the figure of the mother as the representative of domestic and reproductive labor.

I begin by elaborating how Winnicott's iconoclastic psychoanalytic approach to the child collaborated, often quite explicitly, with Britain's postwar imperative to liberal democracy. Winnicott routinely linked the provision of "good enough" mothering with the production of democracy writ large and, in doing so, he suggested that his work in the clinic with children was concerned with the management of the political climate in postwar Britain. By reading The Piggle's case in connection with this work, I explore

how decolonization in postwar national rebuilding registered in the psychic lives of the British citizens and the clinical practices of the psychoanalysts treating them. I contend that Winnicott's emphasis on palliative effects of good enough maternal care in the clinic functioned as an explicitly political attempt to address nation-wide racial fractures caused by the decline of empire. I thus consider how Winnicott's analytic role as a "good enough" mother in the clinic is an explicitly political attempt to mitigate the racial conflict splitting the entire postcolonial British "motherland."

Home Is Where We Start From

Unlike both Anna Freud and Melanie Klein, Donald Woods Winnicott found his way to child psychoanalysis through medical pediatrics. Neither a mother nor a teacher, Winnicott was first and foremost a medical doctor. Born on April 7th 1896 in Plymouth, Devon, Winnicott's father was a notable British merchant twice elected mayor and his mother was a creative (if depressive) woman who Winnicott would later recall as the most dominating presence in his early life. In a way, the beginning of Winnicott's pediatric career began in his own adolescence when he broke his clavicle in a biking accident and was hospitalized. This experience galvanized his resolve to pursue a medical degree so that he could avoid, as much as possible, future occasions of dependence. "I could see that for the rest of my life I should have to depend on doctors if I damaged myself or became ill," recalls Winnicott, "and the only way out of this

position was to become a doctor myself, and from then on the idea as a real proposition was always on my mind..." (qtd A. Phillips, 31). Given the priority Winnicott would later accord to the role of dependence in human life—indeed, the intractability of dependence as the cornerstone of subjectivity—his childhood desire to be free of it by accumulated professional success is a telling origin story for his medical and psychoanalytic pursuits.¹

By 1923, had Winnicott begun his specialized pediatric work with children at Paddington Green Hospital, a position he would never relinquish even as his psychoanalytic career made him nationally and internationally famous. For Winnicott, there was an originary and undeniable importance to the physical body to which he felt his continued medical practice kept him attuned. Winnicott understood illness—psychic and physical alike—as an expression of the failure of the natural developmental processes, an environmental impingement on the physical body's inherent inclination to grow and develop in the direction of health. In contrast to Sigmund Freud's more pessimistic assessment in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Winnicott always maintained that the human being's natural, organic state—even in civilization, or what Winnicott would call "culture"—was one of primary health. Only situations of environmental

¹ For more about Winnicott's early life, see *Winnicott*, Adam Phillips; *D.W. Winnicott*, Michael Jacobs; *D.W. Winnicott: A Biographical Portrait*, Brett Kahr; *Winnicott: His Life and Work*, F. Robert Rodman; "Winnicott: Life and Work." Hartmann, L. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 160(12), (2003): 2255-2256.

inadequacy produced a pathogenic conflict between the individual and her cultural milieu. According to Winnicott, psychoanalysis was unequivocally a medico-scientific endeavor designed to restore health to an individual waylaid by an environmentally produced illness.²

The same year that he began his pediatric work in London, Winnicott also embarked on a ten-year personal analysis with James Strachey, a process that would eventually lead him to train and qualify as a psychoanalyst himself. During these early years of psychoanalytic work, Winnicott remained unaware of the burgeoning field of child psychoanalysis that Melanie Klein and Anna Freud had each, independently, been developing since the 1920s. Combining his work in pediatrics with his nascent interest in psychoanalysis, Winnicott started to experiment with different applications of psychoanalysis to children's ailments, increasingly approaching his pediatric cases by examining the *psychical* dimensions of children's physical complaints—treating the whole “psyche-soma,” as he would later call it.³ At this time, Winnicott understood

² Explains Winnicott: “Psychoanalysis is a term that refers specifically to a... theory that concerns the emotional development of the human individual. It is an applied science based on a science” (*Home is Where We Start From*, 13). In a letter to Ella Sharpe in 1946, Winnicott wrote: “As a matter of fact, I am not certain that I agree with you about psycho-analysis as an art... from my point of view I enjoy true psycho-analytic work more than other kinds, and the reason is to some extent bound up with the fact that in psycho-analysis the art is less and technique based on scientific considerations more” (*The Spontaneous Gesture*, 10).

³ Although I do not discuss this at length here, one of Winnicott's major theoretical insights has to do with what he called the individual's “psyche-soma,” or an understanding of the mental process as inextricable from the physical processes. If part of Winnicott's early reaction against

himself as a pioneer, an inventor, in the field of child-focused psychoanalysis and was thoroughly disappointed to learn, during one of his analytic sessions with Strachey, that Melanie Klein, a recent London transplant, was already a decade deep into the theoretical and clinical work with children that Winnicott had only just begun. According to Winnicott, the news of Klein's expansive theory and established professional position "was difficult for me because overnight I had changed from being a pioneer into being a student with a pioneer teacher" (*The Maturation Processes*, 173). As would often be the case in the decades to come, Winnicott's personal desire for self-determined creativity, individualism, and independence—keynote values in Britain's liberal postwar landscape—would always chafe against the social necessity for groups, governance, and organization.

Despite his disappointment at finding someone else (and a woman, no less) in the position he had imagined for himself, Winnicott nevertheless accepted his role as a

the pediatric community had been to throw light on the *psychic* work undergirding physical illness, then part of his later reaction against the psychoanalytic community was his adamant insistence that the soma—the body—is bound up with the mind and mental life. "Here is a body, and the psyche and the soma are not to be distinguished except according to the direction from which one is looking. One can look at the developing body or at the developing psyche. I suppose the word psyche here means the *imaginative elaboration of somatic parts, feelings, and functions*, that is, of physical aliveness. We know that this imaginative elaboration is dependent on the existence and the healthy functioning of the brain, especially certain parts of it. The psyche is not, however, felt by the individual to be localized in the brain, or indeed to be localized anywhere. Gradually the psyche and the soma aspects of the growing person become involved in a process of mutual interrelation. This interrelating of the psyche with the soma constitutes an early phase of individual development" (*Through Pediatrics to Psychoanalysis*, 244).

student and became an important member of Klein's coterie throughout the 1930s and 1940s. His relationship with Klein was a complex one involving both an insecure desire for her approval as well as a good deal of frustration with her professional authority. Since most of Klein's closest supporters were women, Winnicott always orbited the outskirts of Klein's inner circle. Although Winnicott had wanted an analysis with Klein herself, Klein refused, foisting him off onto her colleague, Joan Riviere, so that Winnicott would be free to analyze her son, Erich. In using Winnicott to serve her own needs, Klein essentially denied him a significant professional credential and fixed his place in the outer rungs of her professional affiliates. Over the years, this degree of remove (combined with what Winnicott experienced as Klein's too-autocratic style of social and professional management) slowly disintegrated his allegiance to her, leading him to gravitate more and more toward Anna Freud. Straddling the divide between these two dominating woman child analysts—the two symbolic mothers of his child-focused field—Winnicott would, unsurprisingly, come to be the leading member of the so-called “Middle Group” of British psychoanalysts (also fittingly referred to as the “Independents”) who refused to ally squarely with Klein or Anna Freud, seeking instead a peaceful resolution to their acerbic disputes and long-term institutional parity within the BPS.

Yet, even after Winnicott officially broke with Klein, her work continued to be the backdrop against which he theorized. For instance, one of Winnicott's most famous

and enduring contributions to psychoanalytic theory—the concept of the “transitional object”—is greatly indebted to Klein’s own work in Object Relations theory. Like Klein, Winnicott ascribed a tremendous importance to objects when considering how the psychic world of the individual is constructed and maintained. But, while Klein put a premium on the psychic *representation* of objects—the “phantasy” of them—Winnicott pursued the actual, physical object itself, focusing on the material detritus to which children passionately cling, calling these sacrosanct objects “transitional objects.” He proposed, according to his own idiosyncratic vocabulary, that the most significant object in the child’s early life is not a psychic representation symptomatic of instinctual aggression, but rather a creative “transitional” object that the child mobilizes to assist it in its inchoate process of individual self-formation. Through this transitional object, the child begins the necessary work of establishing itself as an independent unit in relation to its mother, with whom it had previously been merged.⁴ For Winnicott, one of the most significant divides constitutive of subjectivity is not between conscious and

⁴ From an original merger with the (maternal) environment, the infant slowly develops an awareness of at first subjective objects (like the transitional object) and then of “objective” objects. While Klein foregrounded the internal phantasy life of objects, when it came to infants, Winnicott insisted much more on their external facticity, on the “real” external environment that exists *outside* of the infant’s mind and can be apprehended as such. The infant’s psychological maturation is, in fact, measured partially by its growing appreciation of the “realness” of these external objects—a term that would have its own conceptual elaboration in Winnicott’s later work—which, in health, it becomes increasingly able to differentiate from its own highly personal and idiosyncratic experience of the world in fantasy. In many ways, Winnicott was a consummate realist, putting faith in the possibility of a shared external reality in which mature, healthy individuals could collaboratively participate.

unconscious (as for Sigmund Freud), or between internal and external (as for Melanie Klein), but rather between infant and mother, between self and other. As Winnicott explains,

[i]t is interesting to compare the transitional object concept with Melanie Klein's (1934) concept of the internal object. The transitional object is not an internal object (which is a mental concept)... Yet it is not (for the infant) an external object either. (*Playing and Reality*, 13)

In contrast to Klein who attributes a complex interchange between interior and exterior to the earliest days of an infant's life, Winnicott avers that the ability to delimit the perimeter's of one's self—and thereby to establish a sense of one's interior—is a developmental accomplishment reached only *after* the infant embarks on the process of disarticulating itself from its mother. Prior to the instantiation of these boundaries, the infant, according to Winnicott, could not be said to have a "self" at all since there would be no clear delineation between the infant and its environment. It exists only as an extension of the mother, as part of a "nursing couple." In famously exclaiming in the middle of a psychoanalytic meeting in 1942 that "there is no such thing as a baby," Winnicott meant to indicate that very young infants do not exist as autonomous beings, either physically or emotionally and are therefore always apiece with their caretaker.⁵

⁵ Winnicott believed that, ideally, the biological mother should be the infant's primary caretaker, although he does concede that a maternal substitute could suffice. As Abram notes in his entry for "Holding," "[g]enerally speaking he [Winnicott] believed that it is best if there is one main carer at the beginning of the baby's life, and in optimum circumstances this person should be the biological mother. However, Winnicott's contention through his work is that an adoptive mother who is able to go into a state of primary maternal preoccupation will also be able to offer the

He explicated this verdict a decade later, writing that “if you show me a baby you certainly show me someone caring for the baby, or at least a pram with someone’s eyes and ears glued to it. One sees a nursing couple...the unit is not the individual, the unit is the environment-individual set-up” (*Through Pediatrics to Psychoanalysis*, 99). The quintessential feature of the infant is that it is never alone; always, there is an environment, a (m)other working in concert with the infant’s needs. Describing the transitional object’s role in this process of maternal disarticulation, Winnicott states that “[t]he object represents the infant’s transition from a state of being merged with the mother to a state of being in relation to the mother as something outside and separate” from her (*Playing and Reality*, 20). By using—indeed, *by creating*—this object, the infant begins the important work of self-development. These objects are the means by and through which the infant establishes itself as an “individual” in the world, as a “self” separate and apart from the (m)other.

necessary ingredients of the holding environment” (*The Language of Winnicott*, 194-95). Regardless of whether this maternal figure is biologically related to the infant or adoptive, Winnicott nevertheless imagines a woman as the primary agent of this reproductive labor. His picture of maternal care is unequivocally gendered.

States of Liberalism: Winnicott's Postwar Political Psychology

As might already be clear from his account of the transitional object vis-à-vis the “individual” or “self,” Winnicott’s vocabulary differs significantly from much of the standard psychoanalytic vernacular. While other psychoanalytic theorists speak in terms of the “the subject,” “the ego,” “the unconscious,” or even just “the patient,” Winnicott uses a much more idiosyncratic nomenclature, referring most frequently to “the self” and “the individual” as his primary units of analysis. Although he also, less frequently, employs terms like “ego,” he never adheres to a precise terminological distinction, employing the terms interchangeably in a way that, as many critics have pointed out, effectively elides the prominence of the unconscious. Because of this, Winnicott’s work often appears more “psychological” than properly “psychoanalytic.”⁶

Although these nominal shifts might at first seem minor, they are actually significant choices that convey both the expansiveness of Winnicott’s original psychoanalytic theorizing and the seriousness of his breaks with psychoanalytic orthodoxy. By speaking and thinking always in terms of the “individual” and the “self,” Winnicott puts far more emphasis on the wholeness and unity of the patient, shifting the unconscious and its inexorable conflicts to the background for the sake of maintaining a commonsensical vocabulary. “Ordinary language” is key to Winnicott’s personal and

⁶ For further reading about the term “self” in Winnicott’s work, see Jan Abram’s entry, “Self,” in *The Language of Winnicott* (295-309).

professional ethos and he distanced himself from linguistic signs of so-called “intellectualization” and technical complexity. As he explains it in a letter to David Rapaport in 1953, “I am one of those people who feel compelled to work in my own way and to express myself in my own language first; by a struggle I sometimes come around to rewording what I am saying to bring it in line with other work, in which case I usually find that my own ‘original’ ideas were not so original” (*The Spontaneous Gesture*, 53-54). A few months later, in a much more self-effacing letter to Anna Freud, he follows this up by stating that “I have an irritating way of saying things in my own language instead of learning how to use the terms of psycho-analytic metapsychology” (*ibid*, 57-58). Working in a style of low-key pragmatism, Winnicott maintains that significant insights emerge from simple observations and facts; his is a characteristically mid-century British emphasis on the “ordinary” and the “everyday,” which translates into his modes of description.⁷

Leaving aside any personal resistances Winnicott may have had to ready-made psychoanalytic idioms, his particular use of “self” and “individual,” borrowed from a postwar culture eager to ensure the wellbeing of its citizenry through various human sciences and professions, bespeaks a deeper tendency toward political liberalism in

⁷ To this point, it is interesting to consider the resonances between Winnicott’s “plain spoken” psychoanalysis and the coincident developments of British Cultural Studies (which rejected “high art” and sweeping theoretical assertions for a more particularized focus on typically working-class objects and methodologies) and Wittgenstein’s Ordinary Language Philosophy (which prioritized an analysis of the use of language over metaphysical queries).

Winnicott's work. Whereas Sigmund Freud had unsettled the rationalism and unity inherent in ideals of the contracting liberal individual by placing the unconscious at the heart of his theories of subjectivity, Winnicott in many ways restored to psychoanalysis a modified theory of liberal individualism. In concert with the heyday of British Welfarism and liberal democracy in the 1940s-60s, Winnicott's psychoanalytic theories laud the achievement of individuation, mature autonomy, normative psychological health, privacy, and objective reality. For Winnicott, the healthy, self-authoring individual is the primary unit not only of psychoanalytic analysis but also of social and political existence. As Winnicott explains: "I shall study the concept of the health of the individual, because social health is dependent on individual health, society being but a massive reduplication of persons" (*Home is Where We Start From*, 21). In characteristically liberal fashion, Winnicott bases his social and political theory on the wellbeing of the individual citizen who, in the mid-century context, was increasingly approached through ideals of specifically *psychological* health and deviance. Like individuals, nation-states too could be "healthy" or "unhealthy," a pseudo-scientific judgment that provided a professionalized gloss to postwar political anxieties about the mass appeal of fascism and communism and the relativity of global political values.

This liberal social psychology was a popular and influential mindset and, as Sally Alexander argues, Winnicott's psychoanalytic theories about children, mothers, and the development of the individual contributed to the construction of the postwar British

welfare state. Reacting against the totalization of civic and personal life glorified by European fascist regimes and the enforced collectivization imposed by Stalin's USSR, Britain sought to secure its (inter)national moral authority by championing a socially liberal postwar agenda that prioritized the wellbeing of separate, free, and diverse individuals. As Alexander notes, "Winnicott was not a socialist but a liberal" to the extent that, fundamentally, he valued individuation over collectivization, often opposing social reforms that he thought would impinge on individual creative freedom by unnecessarily expanding the managerial function of the state (*History and Psyche*, 154). While he was in favor of the expansion of select social services (like the mother-child clinics that Alexander discusses), these welfare measures were only ever meant to supplement the individual, the nuclear family, and the capitalist economy; they were never intended to replace them outright. Winnicott cautions that

[i]f, however, by supplementation of those voluntary bodies by some Government department improved access to bad homes should involve the slightest degree of intrusion on the ordinary common good home, more harm than good will be done. (*The Spontaneous Gesture*, 21)

In such a case, welfare provisions would cross the line from just support to obtrusive "impingement." More than anything else, Winnicott insists that the state functions to support and safeguard *the individual* both in the development toward "true self" being and in the organic need for privacy. As Gal Gerson writes in his article on Winnicott, liberalism, and individualism, "Winnicott's psychology seems to reflect a regime that leaves the marketplace and the household alone, but surrounds them with regulations,

taxes, and professional supervision: a liberal welfare state" ("Individuality, Deliberation, and Welfare in Donald Winnicott," 120). According to Winnicott, it is incumbent on the state to make concessions that support the basic needs of all individual citizens. Unlike Frankfurt schools thinkers, Winnicott never imagines that economic revolution and radical political transformation are either politically necessary for or are natural to psychological health. As Gerson rightly points out, in contrast to Marxists or Foucauldian post-structuralists, Winnicott "neither condemns the marks of socialization that the person carries as oppressive branding, nor argues for dismantling individuality itself... Society's incomplete and occasionally frustrating character does not provide grounds for a radical overhaul" (*ibid*, 116). In other words, what Winnicott pursues is reform, not revolution.

If Winnicott's theories lean toward reformatory liberalism rather than out-and-out socialism, then one of the more interesting instances of this tendency is how Winnicott's psychological theories of the human individual implicated a distinctly capitalist mode of production based on property, possession, and exchange. Readers can see this subtly capitalist mindset perhaps best in Winnicott's theory of the transitional object, which articulates the psychological contours of the child's first commodity encounters in a capitalist political economy. Routinely, Winnicott describes the transitional object as the child's "first possession," its inaugural foray into a set of psychological relations with objects that accord commodities a privileged place in the

psychic landscape of the individual. Writes Winnicott: "I am not specifically studying the first object of object-relationships. I am concerned with *the first possession* and with the intermediate area between the subjective and that which is objectively perceived" (*emphasis mine, Playing and Reality*, 4). Because the creation and use of a transitional object is perhaps the most important part of the child's establishment of itself as an individual, what Winnicott essentially suggests here is that the process of individuation depends on specific relations of property and possession.

To be fair, Winnicott's account of the transitional object is not the same as Karl Marx's theory of commodity fetishism. Unlike Marx, Winnicott insists that the child creatively invents the transitional object, which never becomes subjectivized at the expense of the human subject's objectivization. Rather, the transitional object is subjectively animated, according to Winnicott, precisely as the means by which the child achieves her own full individuality. Winnicott is pointedly more optimistic about the health of subject-object relations under capitalism than Marx. But this optimism is arguably the very thing that makes Winnicott such a committedly liberal thinker. His narratives of psychological health implicitly rely on the child's immersion in a capitalistic, consumer economy, one not dissimilar to the booming consumerism of Britain's postwar 1940s and 1950s. If constructing narratives about "objects" and our relations to them became newly important for British psychoanalysts during this time, it seems hardly coincidental that these analysts were working at a time when mass-

producible commodities achieved a new level of penetration into the homes and lives of ordinary middle-class citizens. The transitional object, imagined distinctly as a “possession” that founds the elaboration of self, speaks to the privatized, capitalistic mindset underwriting Winnicott’s psychoanalytic theories about the individual and her relation to society.

Liberal though Winnicott’s work undoubtedly is, it is equally important to note that the version of liberalism that Winnicott advances is far from the classical doctrine espoused by the social contract theorists. In those models, the rational, autonomous individual has an (imaginary) *apriori* existence, a “universal” subjectivity that is not only male (as Carole Pateman has forcefully shown) and white (as Charles W. Mills has made clear) but also paradigmatically adult.⁸ Insofar as Winnicott’s work focuses on *the child*—and this is true of many of the child analysts following him—he re-imagines “the individual” as a developmental entity *in process* rather than as a static pre-given. The child, for Winnicott, is thus not an irrational being in need of (paternal) discipline and control; nor is it an economic agent expected to contribute to the household finances. Rather, the child is a *developing* individual: a political subject in the making. With this focal shift comes a re-articulation of the role that dependence and sociality play in the life of every adult individual. For Winnicott, although the healthy individual may

⁸ For a political theory analysis of the fiction of the “state of nature” independence underwriting much social contract theory (specifically Rousseau and Hobbes) see Matthew Bowker’s chapter in *D.W. Winnicott and Political Theory*.

eventually be able to achieve autonomy, selfhood, and a privatized “true self” interior, the bonds of childhood forever tie that same individual to her origins in dependence and sociality. Gerson elaborates this point compellingly in his analysis of the way Winnicott combines liberalism with select elements of social democracy, showing how, in concert with British Welfarism, Winnicott postulates a fundamentally *social* individual in his psychoanalytic accounts of subjectivity. Writes Gerson:

Winnicott’s explanation of sociability as a core motivation and his consequent call on society to respect this sociability fit into a universe where such thinking seemed logical and where it served the ideological ends formulated more explicitly and systematically by political theorists. (Gerson, *D.W. Winnicott and Political Theory*, 312)

Borrowing specific tenets from social democracy, Winnicott’s psychological theories integrate a focus on dependence and cooperative sociality into his governing appreciation of individual authenticity and free, creative self-expression.

This modification of liberalism extends to Winnicott’s thinking about possessions and privacy as well, which Winnicott recasts as dually private *and* social, communicative *and* non-communicating. While Winnicott unequivocally emphasizes the importance of the transitional object as a possession, the private “true self,” and an authentic “non-communicating element,” he also at the same time redefines the significance of these traditional liberal values. Transitional objects may be the means to the construction of self, but they are simultaneously a means of communication and connection with the (m)other; they exist in the intermediate space between two selves and facilitate

communication. In the same way, even though Winnicott absolutely insists on the importance of respecting the child's right to privacy and lauds the healthiness of a internalized, asocial element, this element only makes sense in the context of a larger, fundamentally *relational* self orientated toward dependence, identification, intersubjectivity, and sociality. Noting this, Gerson explains that "Winnicott values rights and property as communicative devices rather than as private enclosures held against society"; for Winnicott, "[p]rivacy is communication; owning is sharing" ("Individuality, Deliberation, and Welfare in Donald Winnicott," 107; 117). Rather than theorizing property and privacy as defensive self-containment, Winnicott revalues these traditional aspects of the capitalist political economy as the very mechanisms of sociality itself.

Psychologies of the Motherland: Developmentalism and the Decline of Empire

Winnicott's reforms to traditional liberal democratic theory did more than simply mirror the British government's postwar gestures toward welfare reform: working under the authority of "neutral" professional expertise, Winnicott's psychological theories about the individual actually helped legitimate the implementation of a wider welfare agenda throughout Britain. As I have been discussing, this legitimation was partially to do with the fact that Winnicott's psychological theories about selfhood generally corresponded with the governing

ideologies of the liberal-capitalistic political economy that Britain was in the process of revising and expanding. But another vital piece of understanding how Winnicott's work corresponded with the welfare State relates to the way that his work also spoke to the changing status of empire after World War II. If Winnicott's theories focused most explicitly on the mother-child relation, then these newly crafted psychological conceptions of motherhood were inextricable from the redefined status of the national motherland.

In the wake of British Empire, Winnicott's emphasis on individual psychological development carried with it a legacy of colonial philosophies about national development and destiny. As the British government and its citizens struggled to adjust to the newly de-colonized Commonwealth—a process that involved a seismic upswing in immigration from the former colonies—Winnicott (like many other professionals and experts in the human sciences) forwarded theories about psychological maturation and development that revamped previous ideologies about the progressive, imperial role that the British “Motherland” played in relation to her colonies. Such narratives, applied to the individual, were all the more important at this politically precarious time because postwar decolonization destabilized Britons' previous assumptions about historical progress and national superiority. In the decline of the British Empire, while certainties about a natural national developmental hierarchy foundered, those concerned with

individual and social psychology flourished.⁹ The end of empire was central to the way that the British welfare state and the culture of expertise that grew up within it was defined.

In his monograph on modernist fiction, *Unseasonable Youth: Modernism, Colonialism, and the Fiction of Development*, Jed Esty traces a preoccupation with these developmental rubrics as they are represented by modernist fiction, which Esty claims is metabolizing the decline of colonialism. Taking the twentieth-century torsions of the bildungsroman novel as his object, Esty proposes that what we witness in modernist novels about characters that resist or fail developmental teleology, remaining unseasonably young, is the eruption of the instability and asymmetries of global capitalism from more secure nineteenth century narratives of assured national development. Esty argues that, in the twentieth century, “the relatively stable temporal frames of national destiny gave way to a more consciously global, and therefore more uncertain frame of social reference” (6). Although his work primarily recognizes a trope of suspended youth in fiction, which he reads in terms of global capitalism’s effect on colonial narratives, Esty nevertheless registers the connection between developmental narratives and the geopolitics of (post) colonialism. Thought in terms of development and progress, both literary and scientific narratives about age, youth, and childhood

⁹ Such analysis should prompt us to rethink the ease with which certain psychological theories refer to “primitive” aspects of the mind, recognizing the extension of racially inflected colonial logic at work in this kind of designation.

become a metric for modern colonial values and ideologies, which were destabilized yet again by postwar gestures toward decolonization and the rampant globalization of capital.

Similarly, Jordanna Bailkin, in *The Afterlife of Empire*, examines the same links between developmental narratives and (de)colonization, reading an archive of public policy studies from Britain's postwar decades of decolonization to show how decolonization "transformed the social relationships in Britain that have constituted our relationship of what is conventionally known as the 'postwar,' and played a significant role in the reconstruction of community in 1950s and 1960s Britain" (2). Bailkin's argument throughout the book is that decolonization was not only a matter of official political and governmental agencies, but that it affected the lived realities and daily routines of everyday citizens who were not simply experiencing the "loss" of empire, but were living out creative practices and policies in its place. The rise of Welfarism and the decline of empire were mutually constituting; "[t]he afterlife of empire is imprinted in the archive of welfare" (15). Independent experts as much as governmental agencies participated in this process and, as Bailkin points out, "[e]xpertise offered new ways to mediate relations between individuals and states, as well as competing visions of Britain's changing role in the world" (9). Development was an especially salient category in this postwar reconstruction as the welfare state strategically used expert narratives about development and dependence to anticipate material needs—oftentimes with the

effect of barring the citizenship of former colonial subjects seeking immigration. What Bailkin traces, in other words, is how the British welfare state took shape through the process of decolonization, although often in ways that effectively reconfirmed a racialized nativism through the knowledge produced by ostensibly independent and unbiased experts. As Bailkin notes, many of these experts had optimistic aspirations even as the knowledges they produced had corrosive effects.

Like many other human scientists and public policy makers, Winnicott was deeply invested in the scientific developmentalism that gained traction after the war. At the beginning of life, claims Winnicott, the infant has no “self” to speak of since the very boundaries that divide self from other, outside from inside, are a developmental accomplishment. At that early moment, the infant lacks the cognitive and psychological traits necessary to anything like selfhood or subjectivity. “The baby at the beginning is the opposite of sophisticated. Many do not find it easy to ascribe anything that could be called ‘psychological’ to an infant until some weeks or even months have passed...”

(Winnicott, *Babies and Their Mothers*, 37). Indeed,

[f]or the baby there is not yet a conscious and an unconscious in the area that I wish to examine. What is there is [sic] an armful of anatomy and physiology, and added to this a potential for development into a human personality. (*Babies and Their Mothers*, 89)

Winnicott’s understanding of the human infant relies on a developmental perspective that interprets the infant’s “maturing” physical body as an index of its similarly

“maturing” mind.¹⁰ Like Anna Freud, but unlike Klein, Winnicott maintained that the psychological differences established between newborns, infants, children, adolescents, and adults are some of the most significant for understanding each life stage’s various capacities, for health as well as for illness.

Through his affirmation of the developmental teleology of the individual, Winnicott participated in a much broader postwar embrace of the so-called “cycle of life” discourse that partitioned the human being according to significant stages of normative, progressive development. Infancy, school and adolescence, early work and marriage, childbearing and rearing, and retirement and old age were all laid out not just according to chronological age but also according to one’s expected social (and economic) function.¹¹ According to Michael Anderson in “The Emergence of the Modern

¹⁰ The one important caveat to Winnicott’s equation of age with maturity is his conviction that psychic health was not universally and necessarily consonant with adult maturity. Although Winnicott would never suggest that psychic maturity was possible *without* the attainment of physiological maturity, he did routinely suggest that many individuals who would appear, externally, to be adults lacked key developmental accomplishments and were thus “arrested” at a stage of immaturity. In many ways, then, Winnicott viewed it as one of the tasks of his psychoanalytic practice to help the arrested individual—the childish mind—to develop more mature psychological capacities. For Winnicott, this process of maturation never stopped and, even for those who might be termed reasonably healthy (Winnicott often referred to himself here), the continuation of maturation proceeded throughout life. Thus, while his developmental model of mind was undoubtedly teleological—to be deemed psychologically mature was, unequivocally, to be more morally and intellectually advanced—it did not provide definitional closure for when the work of maturation was finished.

¹¹ For further reading on the “cycle of life” in Britain, see Michael Anderson’s “The Emergence of the Modern Life Cycle in Britain” in *Social History* or “Reflections on Age as a Category of Historical Analysis” in *The Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*.

Life Cycle in Britain,” this mode of thinking collaborated with the needs of the emergent welfare state, which had to anticipate and allocate state resources according to the changing needs of individuals. Since moral authority of Welfarism was based on its promise to meet the organic needs of individual citizens, it required human science professionals to define and describe these needs in clear and material terms.

If Winnicott was proposing a new theory of the developing child, then this theory’s core claim was that the most distinguishing feature of the infant—the quality that most particularized its life and affected its future—was that of dependence. Winnicott routinely insisted that the most important characteristic of newborns and infants is their total and complete dependence on their mother (or any other primary caregiver). Infantile dependence, says Winnicott, is one of the foundational facts of existence, a universal experienced by *every* human infant, regardless of nationality, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, or racialization. Winnicott argues that, after birth, the infant is totally and completely helpless, both in body and mind. Without the cognitive processes to make sense of the world or the physical capacity to satisfy basic needs, the infant is entirely dependent on its surrounding environment for survival and health. “It is valuable to recognize the *fact* of dependence,” Winnicott states.

Dependence is real. That babies and children cannot manage on their own is so obvious that the simple facts of dependence are easily lost. It can be said that the story of the growing child is a story of absolute dependence moving steadily through lessening degrees of dependence, and groping towards independence. (Winnicott, *Babies and Their Mothers*, 83)

According to Winnicott, and as Gerson has pointed out, the facts of dependence are never “overcome” in the steady march toward maturity, autonomy, and adulthood. However, he nevertheless asserts that a decent metric of the adult’s level of psychological development is the success with which she develops “non-defensive” and non-psychotic ways of dealing with her own infantile dependence. In other words, the successful management of dependence is one of the key determinants of individual health and independence.

Because of the utter precarity of the infant at this key phase of dependence and the high stakes riding on the infant’s successful negotiation of this dependence, Winnicott spends the majority of his career elaborating exactly what kind of economy of care is necessary to achieve the normative ideal that he thinks is integral to healthy mental states and nation states. As Shapira contends, by casting children as psychologically fragile and vulnerable to incursion, postwar British analysts made the wellbeing of the child’s mind a national concern. The infant’s dependence makes it extremely vulnerable to any number of damaging incursions (or “impingements,” to use Winnicott’s idiom) and thus the work of the mother is to regulate this “facilitating environment” as carefully as possible, consciously attending to everything from how to hold the baby and what to do about breastfeeding, to the best way to introduce new

siblings into the family, manage absences, and engage in play.¹² “[G]ood enough holding by the environment is responsible for the initiation of certain developmental processes” (Abram, 195). This is especially true in the first weeks of the infant’s life when the mother’s adaptation to the infant’s needs must be almost perfect, creating a state of deep identificatory involvement with the infant that Winnicott terms “primary maternal preoccupation”: a state of almost perfect attunement to the infant’s need, through identification, in which the mother meets the infant’s needs before they even become articulated as needs.¹³ Facilitating the infant’s development is the mother’s first and foremost task.

¹² Although Winnicott maintains that phylogenetically inherited traits do play a role in the psychic life of the individual, he believes that the tendency of these instincts toward health and development is inextricable from their (maternal) environment, which supports their line of development and “facilitates” growth. “Growth is not just a inherited tendency, it is also a matter of a highly complex interweaving with the facilitating environment,” with the mother’s care (*Playing and Reality*, 194).

¹³ Explaining the phase of maternal identificatory adaptation, Winnicott describes how “ordinarily a woman enters into a phase, a phase from which she ordinarily recovers in the weeks and months after the baby’s birth, in which to a large extent she is the baby and the baby is her. There is nothing mystical about this. After all, she was a baby once, and she has in her the memories of being a baby; she also has in her memories of being cared for, and these memories either help or hinder her in her own experiences as a mother. I think that by the time the baby is ripe for birth the mother, if properly cared for herself by her man or by the Welfare state or both, is ready for an experience in which she knows extremely well what are the baby’s needs” (*Babies and Their Mothers*, 6). The “phase” that the woman enters, as Winnicott imagines it, involves such a complete identification with her infant that she is able to know and match its every need. Winnicott insists that there is nothing “mystical” at work in this process and that this identification has to do with the mother’s ability to reach back into her own memory of infancy, retrieving recollections of both need and care. Assuming that “her man” and/or “the Welfare state” have sufficiently provided for her material upkeep in the moment (ostensibly, so that she can focus her attention exclusively on the care of the infant), the new mother extends her own

[T]he infant is held by the mother, and only understands love that is expressed in physical terms, that is to say, by live, human holding. Here is absolute dependence, and environmental failure at this very early stage cannot be defended against, except by a hold-up of the developmental process, and by infantile psychosis. (*The Family and Individual Development*, 216)

The environmental provision that Winnicott imagines includes almost everything in the child's surround, such as the social world, the state welfare system, the family home, and also (most importantly) the mother's body, handling, and psychosomatic care.

"[T]he prototype of all infant care is holding," Winnicott opines (*Babies and Their Mothers*, 38). The mother, along with the rest of the environment she exists within, has the task of handling, holding, feeding, and generally caring for the infant such that the majority of the infant's needs are met. "In an environment that holds the baby well enough, the baby is able to make personal development according to the inherited tendencies. The result is a continuity of existence that becomes a sense of existing, a sense of self, and eventually results in autonomy" (*Home is Where We Start From*, 28).

Like the welfare State for the individual, Winnicott proposes that the mother's primary

experience to the infant, reproducing not only human life but also her own sense of need, as she remembers it from her own infancy. Winnicott was skeptical of any form of child-care that *did not* have this affective empathy at its core, frequently employing the language of "technique" (which was associated with Anna Freud) to deride practices of care devoid of affective states or dispositions. Put another way, Winnicott argued that proper care of the infant did not just come from *doing* the right thing, but more so from *feeling* the right way: "the environmental provision is not mechanically reliable. It is reliable in a way that implies the mother's empathy" (*The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment*, 48). The mother's ability to meet the infant's needs is only ever possible if her own affective identification is complete.

task is holding and supporting the developing infant in a way that neither “drops” it nor “impinges” on its being. The mother must manage the child’s welfare. Managed correctly, Winnicott claims, the normal infant’s development is characterized by authentic continuity—a “going on being”—not conflict and fracture.

It perhaps goes without saying that Winnicott’s descriptions of the facilitating environment depart markedly from orthodox Freudian perspectives on the relationship between the subject and her environs, which spoke more often through the idioms of “conflict” and “competition” than through terms like “mutuality,” “cooperation,” “development,” and “dependence.”¹⁴ Contra Sigmund Freud, conflict is far from Winnicott’s primary lens for viewing the child: he emphasizes neither the conflict between the child and the external world, nor the conflict within the child’s own psychesoma. A key figure in the relational school (rather than instinct-based psychoanalysis), Winnicott downgrades earlier premises about the innate conflict between organic instincts and social gratification. Instead, Winnicott puts his weight behind the conceptual possibilities of mutuality, recognition, authenticity, integration, maturity, and complementarity, thinking especially about the way in which it was incumbent on *the environment* to adapt to the child’s needs, rather than vice-versa. Speaking to this

¹⁴ The caveat to this downgrading of negative affects and emotions is that Winnicott recognized the importance of what he called “hate” in both the mother’s experience of caring for her infant and in the analyst’s counter-transference response to patients, especially those who are psychotic or are in serious regressions to dependency. For more, see Winnicott’s paper “Hate in the Counter-Transference” in *Through Paediatrics to Psycho-Analysis*.

romanticized, conflict-free union between mother and infant, Thomas Ogden (a prominent contemporary Winnicottian) describes the ideal holding environment as follows:

The mother exists only in the form of the invisible holding environment in which there is a meeting of the infant's needs in a way that is so unobtrusive that the infant does not experience his needs as needs. As a result, there is not yet an infant. If there is a good-enough fit between mother and infant and such an illusion/delusion is created, there is no need for symbols, even of the most primitive type. (Ogden, *In One's Bones: The Clinical Genius of Winnicott*, 227)

Put another way, Winnicott identifies with and sentimentalizes the position of the infant, who he imagines ensconced in an idyllic post-partition union with the mother who, like the ideal welfare state, is "so unobtrusive that the infant does not experience his needs as needs." Winnicott theorizes the relational mother-infant "couple," highlighting the different ways that the mother enables (or disables) the developmental tendencies of the infant, whose behaviors are no longer cast as expressions of hostility, but rather as misunderstood attempts at communicating legitimate, recognizable, and non-aggressive needs. In an interesting reversal of postwar American psychoanalytic discourse (inspired by Anna Freud), which likewise heralded the importance of "adaption," Winnicott employs this same adaptive emphasis but applies it to *the environment* rather than to the individual child. Health derives not from the child's ability to adapt to a pre-given set of environmental circumstances—indeed, that would produce an enigmatic "false self"—but from the environment's ability to yield itself to

the child.¹⁵ In true welfarist thinking, the mother is there to meet the needs of her infant just as the state is there to meet the needs of its citizens.

Mothering a Nation: Of Women, Mothers, and Reproductive Labor

Insofar as Winnicott imagines the mother to be *the* central figure in the developmental saga of each and every individual, his writing enters into a well-established historical tradition that genders reproductive labor and naturalizes it as the specific purview of women. For Winnicott, the mother is unequivocally female and the labor she performs in the service of reproducing the next generation is tied to her biological capacities. In contrast to traditional patriarchal political thinkers that narrate the dissemination of political power through father-son relational circuits, Winnicott instead prioritizes the mother-child as the site of political subjectivization and defines a political landscape through more traditionally feminized experiences of care, recognition, mutuality, and dependence. For this reason, contemporary feminists have

¹⁵ As the infant develops, this stage of almost complete adaptation slowly wanes and, after the initial phase of primary maternal preoccupation, Winnicott's language shifts to emphasize a "good enough" environment so as to make clear that small, incremental environmental failures are both necessary and inevitable as the infant gradually develops and establishes a distinctive, individual self. However, this process of healthy self-development toward objective reality is only ever possible in a "good enough" facilitating environment that is responsive to the infant's dependence yet able to slowly accustom her to the limits of environmental provision. According to Winnicott, minor maternal letdowns are natural, non-traumatic, and necessary to the process of gradually disillusioning the infant's omnipotence. Such shortcomings are part of the process through which the infant establishes a self and begins to develop mature, objective, non-omnipotent object relations.

differed widely over the ultimate utility of Winnicott's work. On the one hand, feminists have founded an ethics of intersubjectivity based on Winnicott's theories, expropriating from his work resources to counter the longstanding patriarchal, phallogocentric virtues of authority, autonomy, self-sufficiency, and competition. In this vein, Winnicott's construction of a "good enough" maternal figure can be read as a progressive downgrading of the Madonna ideal of perfect, non-aggressive, loving maternity since it prioritized failures as both ordinary and necessary. But, on the other hand, feminists have also decried Winnicott's collaboration with a medical community that sought to normalize and manage women's bodies and minds under the auspices of "health" while depriving them of important material supports. Winnicott constructed a maternal archetype whose every action, feeling, and behavior could—and should—be registered, analyzed, and recorded for the sake of the production of a "healthy" child. Either way, what feminists have (implicitly) agreed on is that Winnicott's social and clinical psychoanalytic theories are thoroughly gendered in ways that speak to contemporary Western organizations of politics.

Jessica Benjamin has been one of those most notable proponents of Winnicott's work, and her attempts to democratize the clinical space by emphasizing non-hierarchical intersubjectivity, mutuality, and recognition mirror Winnicott's own interest in (re)imagining the familial sphere as more collaborative than antagonistic. For Benjamin, Winnicott's theory of maternal "holding" and his insistence on the

dependence at the core of human subjectivity provide important correctives for psychoanalysis's past tendency toward patriarchal authoritarianism and conflict. Likewise, Nancy Chodorow offered one first and most forceful feminist deployments of psychoanalysis in *The Reproduction of Mothering*. Throughout her work, Chodorow draws widely from British Object Relations psychoanalysis, but key to her thinking are the paradigmatically Winnicottian concepts of individuality and autonomy, mutualism and relatedness, intersubjectivity, and maternal differentiation. For Chodorow, the gendering of motherhood enables an explicitly sexist psychological dynamic wherein women develop psychologically fluid, connected, and intersubjective subjectivities because of their experience of being mothered by someone of the same gender whereas men (mothered by someone of the opposite gender) rabidly assert individuality and independence in order to defensively guarantee their own difference and autonomy. The solution to the oppression built into this psychic life of gender, Chodorow suggests, is to disarticulate cultural practices of maternal care from their explicit moorings in gendered norms of womanhood.

In spite of early feminist appropriations of Winnicott's work, many feminists, particularly of Marxist and historicist leanings, find his theories far less conducive to a progressive vision of gender politics. As critics of Winnicott's work have pointed out—and, in my opinion, importantly so—Winnicott's function as a public, avuncular advocate for children's health was anything but apolitical. As Denise Riley argues in her

landmark work, *The War in the Nursery*, one of the effects of Winnicott's constant maternal guidance was to construct and reify a gendered standard of motherhood that significantly retrenched the material liberties women had gained during World War II. While state-sponsored daycares had enabled women to be working mothers because of the exigencies of total war, postwar professional wisdom about children's psychological health (much of it from Winnicott and Bowlby) seriously compromised these social supports for single or working mothers by arguing that a mother's absence could do serious damage to a child's psyche. After the war, state support for working mothers significantly decreased while the ideal of the stay-at-home wife and mother grew as the most prominent template for middle and upper class women.

In *Feminism and Motherhood in Western Europe, 1890-1970: The Maternal Dilemma*, Ann Taylor Allen discusses the relationship between the rise of postwar Welfarism in Britain (as in many other European countries) and the coincident decline in racial feminist activity, which had been so prominent in the decades before and during World War II. She notes that many of the state's gestures to gender equality and to the support of working class women and mothers were actually much more concerned with the affirmation of liberal democracy (and its often superficial gestures toward legal, although not economic, "equality") than they were with a specifically feminist agenda.

Child Allowances payable to mothers, which activists such as Eleanor Rathbone had demanded since World War I, were part of the new postwar welfare-state legislation, but such measures had long since lost their connection with feminism. Social services such as day-care centers,

which were provided during the war, were discontinued in its aftermath. Although women in several countries received the right to vote in the wartime and postwar eras... this resulted more from a general commitment to democracy and postwar reconstruction than from specifically feminist activity. (Allen, 210)

By emphasizing universal human “welfare” rather than a specifically gendered socio-political agenda, Winnicott’s work participated in this retrenchment of radical feminist activity in the immediate postwar years.

Yet far from seeing these shifts in welfare support as a betrayal of the gendered fiscal autonomy that women had gained during the war, most women instead welcomed the transformations ushered in by the 1950s. They saw the new prioritization of domestic labor and commodified home life as an extension—rather than a reversal—of their work in the war. This was in large part because popular women’s magazines and public experts (like Winnicott) touted women’s domestic labor as precisely that: *labor*. Elizabeth Wilson in *Only Halfway to Paradise: Women in Postwar Britain 1945-1968* puts it well when she observes that “the theme of ‘the housewife’s home is her factory’ was *part* of a broader theme of ‘homemaking as a career’ so popular after the war”; by recognizing domestic work as work, “homemaking” became a legitimate career choice for women, one that seemed to make good on feminist desires for fiscal autonomy and access to the public sphere while, paradoxically, reinvesting them in unpaid, domestic labor (22). Although there was still an implicit naturalization of the fact that it was *women’s* job to stay home and raise children, increasingly the postwar discourse avowed

that “homemaking” was a job: a serious, skilled undertaking worthy of acknowledgement and respect (although not monetary compensation). Thus the immediate postwar period witnessed a very interesting combination of previously distinctly feminist values with many of the exact structures and practices that those earlier radical feminists had been trying to diagnose and eradicate. True to the dominant spirit of *liberal* feminism, most women (even those that avowed themselves feminists) were satisfied with reforms to extant personal and political structures and were less desirous of out-and-out revolution.

Winnicott was very much a part of this postwar liberalization of feminist values and one way to understand his incredible popularity among British women is to consider how his theories not only emphasized the importance of “women’s work,” but further made this work central to the stabilization and future expansion of the British democratic state. For Winnicott, the mother’s job is unequivocally a matter of state security: she is entrusted with nothing less than safeguarding the future of democracy by successfully rearing anti-fascist children. In one of his radio broadcasts, Winnicott makes the political dimension of women’s mothering explicit, narrating for women the importance of their maternal tasks.

We know something of the reasons why this long and exacting task, the parents’ job of seeing their children through, is a job worth doing; and, in fact, we believe that it provides the only real basis for society, and the only factory for the democratic tendency in a country’s social system. (Winnicott, *Home Is Where We Start From*, 124)

Referring to “women’s work” as precisely that—work, labor, “a job”—Winnicott suggests that women need not seek work outside the home since they already have a place of (unpaid) employment in the home with their children. The home is a “factory for the democratic tendency”—a metaphor that relocates the literal factory work women performed during the war to the domestic sphere—and it is the mother’s job to see that this domestic “factory” operates smoothly, churning out properly democratic individuals. Interestingly, Winnicott here suggests that liberal democracy has an inherent basis in maternity. Only through women’s “good enough” mothering can the elusive “democratic tendency” be produced within children. Put another way: democratic sentiment is of woman born.

That Winnicott imagines this domestic labor to be primarily a woman’s should not be confused: although he may refer to “the parent’s job” in this passage, the radio episode this is excerpted from makes clear that it is a *mother’s* contribution to society, as does the show’s title, “The Ordinary Devoted *Mother*.” “At the very beginning,” Winnicott writes, “everyone was *dependent* on a woman” (*Home Is Where We Start From*, 191). As Gerson has shown in his article “Winnicott, Participation, and Gender,” this specific articulation of women’s work was central to the way Winnicott defined and maintained a gendered binary. Gerson explains that “Winnicott perceives the distinction between men and women...through economic division of tasks as essential attributes of human society” (566). In spite of his superficial rhetorical gesture toward “the

parents” — the infant’s non-gendered caretakers— Winnicott always associated the labor of managing of the environment and the infant’s dependence with women and mothers.

The effect of this was to create a space for a sprawling apparatus of child-care expertise dedicated to the production of preventative “how-to” advice. Motherhood became a specialty, a form of expertise to professionalize and master not just for the sake of an individual or family, but also for the wellbeing of the nation. It was outsourced from intimate, informal, inter-generational networks to professional experts, many of whom collaborated with the state to maximize efficacy and minimize dependency.

Winnicott (along with his colleague, John Bowlby (chapter 4), and an avid follower, Benjamin Spock) were some of the most active and visible of these public figures, with Winnicott delivering over 600 BBC broadcasts in his segment “The Ordinary Devoted Mother and her Baby.” With the rise of a postwar generation of parents who had a keen eye on the political possibilities and pitfalls inherent in children’s psychic development, Winnicott filled a significant function as a professional authority for women to turn to on matters of family life and childrearing. While Sigmund Freud’s original psychoanalytic method had been exclusively reconstructive, exploring memories to create narratives about the past, Winnicott’s (like Anna Freud’s) was largely constructive, using a template of “good enough” maternal care to produce what he understood to be healthy, democratic subjectivities.

Through Winnicott's work, the choices women made as mothers were thus cast as inherently political choices about what form of government one wanted for the future. In tandem with this, children were re-imagined not as dangerous and recalcitrant instinctual beings requiring discipline and control, but as future democratic citizens in the making. Winnicott, as much as any expert on childcare, affirms the inviolable links between mothering and democracy, explaining that "[t]he theme of the facilitating environment enabling personal growth and the maturational process ...leads on to the whole build-up of democracy as a political extension of family facilitation" (*Home Is Where We Start From*, 119). In no uncertain terms, Winnicott set about trying to produce this democratic zeitgeist through his public talks and clinical counseling with mothers. Reaching back through centuries of political philosophy that equated governing a nation (and its colonies) with raising children, Winnicott likens democracy to individual development, naturalizing this form of government as a self-evident political good by relying on the scientific (and moral) language of psychological maturity. "[A] democratic society," explains Winnicott, "is 'mature', that is to say, that it has a quality that is allied to the quality of individual maturity which characterizes its healthy members. Democracy is here defined, therefore, as 'society adjusted to its healthy members'" (*Home Is Where We Start From*, 240). Given that, for Winnicott, the polis is founded on a psychological state within the individual (not, for instance, on economic flows, hierarchies of power and authority, transnational relations of domination and

subordination, or extra-individual discursive forces) he suggests not just that psychologist's role *can* be the construction and reification of a particular political economy, but that it *should* be. "If democracy is maturity, and maturity is health, and health is desirable, then we wish to see whether anything can be done to foster it" (Winnicott, *Home Is Where We Start From*, 246). Winnicott's work as an analyst and public intellectual is, for him, just as much about producing and fostering a widespread democratic welfare state as it is about ensuring individual wellbeing. Indeed, for Winnicott, states of individual welfare define the welfare state. But insofar as Britain's postwar welfare democracy bore the print of decolonization, Winnicott's clinical aspirations were responding to the changed status of race and empire, along with those of gender.

On "Black Mummy": Race and Gender in the Clinic

In an epistolary exchange reminiscent of Sigmund Freud's 1909 "Little Hans" case study, Winnicott is first introduced to "The Piggie" in a letter her parents write requesting a consultation. In their letter, The Piggie's parents express concern about the way that The Piggie responded to the recent birth of a new child. The Piggie had "worries," was easily bored and depressed, had bad dreams, and showed an acute concern with the status of her relationships and of her own identity (Winnicott, *The Piggie*, 6). The Piggie's nightmares were particularly concerning to her parents. They had

begun to creep into The Piggie's waking thoughts and they produced a disconcerting array of horror-like fantasies that she narrated to her parents. Her mother relays these fears to Winnicott, explaining that:

[The Piggie] has a black mummy and daddy. The black mummy comes in after her at night and says: "where are my yams?" (To yam=to eat. She pointed out her breasts, calling them yams, and pulling them to make them larger.) Sometimes she is put into the toilet by the black mummy. The black mummy, who lives in her tummy, and who can be talked to there on the telephone, is often ill, and difficult to make better.

The second strand of fantasy, which started earlier, is about the 'babacar.' Every night she calls, again and again: 'Tell me about the babacar, *all* about the babacar.' The black mummy and daddy are often in the babacar together... There is very occasionally a black Piggie in evidence... (*ibid*, 6-7)

With a litany of fears that might easily be mistaken for excerpts from *The Shining*, The Piggie's fantasies chronicle the unsavory machinations of a host of persecutory black characters. According to Winnicott, the Piggie's particular focus on a malevolent "black mummy" registers her split off hatred of her own white mother, who duplicitously produced another child with her father. Unable to tolerate her own ambivalence toward her mother, The Piggie splits her image into good and bad representations—white and black, respectively—and projects them into external characters who then act out all her own hostility. "Presumably," surmises Winnicott, "the 'black mummy' is a relic of her subjective preconceived notion about the mother" (*ibid*, 16-17). "[B]lack here meant that hate had come in" (*ibid*, 15).

Throughout the analysis, Winnicott does not pursue the political significance of this fantasy, but the question of why exactly The Piggie's fantasies take advantage of such a specific, racially inflected binary is extremely significant. The personification of The Piggie's fears through the figure of black mummy — that is, a racialized reproductive female body — indexes to the fraught racial politics of mid-century Britain. As I have already been discussing, in the postwar period Britain's long history of colonial imperialism presented a challenge to the country's new inclination toward liberalization and decolonization as England saw a tremendous influx of immigrants, many from the West Indies and South Asia.¹⁶ This surge in immigrant populations in the "motherland" dramatically intensified racial hostilities.¹⁷ Throughout the 1950s, juntas of far-right

¹⁶ In 1949, England affirmed the London Declaration, a piece of legislation intended to re-organize the structure of Empire by transforming the "British Commonwealth" into "The Commonwealth of Nations," a nominal shift meant to register the new "free and equal" status of "member states" that were, ostensibly, no longer colonial territories. Although included member states could have their own government, constitutions, and traditions, they still remained bound to England by ideological oaths of fealty to the "Head of the Commonwealth" (the monarch) and by material investments in the British economy. Thus, the extent to which this legislative shift put an end to "empire" (and the colonial imperative on which it is based) is, of course, debatable. For a more theoretical take on the new configurations of "empire" in the post-modern age of globalization, see Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire* (2000).

¹⁷ As James Hampshire records in *Citizenship and Belonging*, "In 1948 there were just a few thousand non-white people living in the country, mostly concentrated in sea ports, but by 1968 there were over a million" (10). As members of the commonwealth, citizens from any of Britain's former colonies were legally allowed to enter England. However, as Hampshire discusses, the strict legality of these mass immigrations was far from the issue since the lived reality of them among the white majority who considered themselves to be the rightful "natives" was anything but amicable. Melding nativist sentiment with centuries of white supremacy, the rapid increase in non-white immigrants stoked racial hostilities in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s.

white men, like The League of Empire Loyalists and The White Defense League, popularized slogans like “Keep Britain White” and encouraged racially motivated violence. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, tensions reached a boiling point with the Notting Hill and Nottingham race riots and the Bristol Bus Boycott. In response, the British government passed the Race Relations Acts of 1965 and 1968, which (nominally) made discrimination illegal.¹⁸ The topic of race in mid-century Britain, particularly as it was emblemized by a growing multi-ethnic black immigrant population, was particularly fraught and conflicted. National anxieties about the decline of the British Empire manifested as specifically racial conflicts as white Britons struggled to renegotiate their changed relationship to formerly colonized peoples.

Running parallel to Britain’s long history of material and ideological oppression of black peoples, The Piggie’s fantasies suggestively associate the “black mummy” with conflict, hate, envy, and violence, magnifying the racial anxieties of a nation. Part of what is so interesting about this case, though, is that these signifiers animate the psychic life of a two-year-old child whose fantasies register a sophisticated political unconscious far beyond her capacity for any articulate political consciousness. In an interview conducted in 2016 with the adult Piggie, now a psychotherapist herself, she comments on the latent racial aspect of her childhood fears: “The bit that felt increasingly

¹⁸ Both of the Race Relations Acts were later revoked in 1976.

uncomfortable is something no one has picked up, that is, that there is a massively racist discourse going on. I don't think I meant 'black' as a racial term, but I [as the Piggle] do associate it with everything bad and frightening" (Luepniez, 98). Whether intentional or not, The Piggle's childhood fears and fantasies testify to how blackness, in the mid-century white British imaginary, was associated with a malign presence, an ill-intentioned agency full of persecutory hatred and envy. For the Piggle, race was an only too convenient tableau for the elaboration of psychic conflict.

Metaphorizing the nativist rhetoric that infused mid-century anti-black sentiment, The Piggle's fantasies depict blackness as a kind of disease capable of jeopardizing the purity and health of the white mother(land). This becomes clear in the letter The Piggle's mother writes to Winnicott after The Piggle's first session:

When she is angry, ... [she] says urgently: 'The babacar is 'taking blackness from me to you, and then I am frightened of you.' ...She is frightened of the black mummy and the black Pigga; she says: 'Because they make me black.'

Yesterday she told me that the black mummy scratched my [the mother's] face, pulled off my yams, made me all dirty and killed me with 'brrrrr.' I said she must be longing to have a nice clean mummy again. She told me she had one when she was a little baby. (Winnicott, *The Piggle*, 21)

In contrast to the negative affective register of blackness, whiteness represents The Piggle's more conscious love for her mother, the purity of her affection unclouded by her ambivalent aggression. As Winnicott records later: "Black now becomes the negation of the luminous or white or idealized mummy of the preambivalent era, of the mother as

a subjective object" (*ibid*, 118). Cleanliness, luminousness, and idealization stand on the side of whiteness, while blackness is associated with fear, dirt, aggression, and contagion. "Her chief complaint about the black mummy is that she makes The Piggie black, and then The Piggie makes everyone, even the daddy, black" (*ibid*, 34). Read in connection with the racially inflected nativist discourse in Britain, The Piggie's description of blackness as a kind of contagious pollution that works through the mother's (reproductive) body takes on a larger political significance: it speaks to a racialized phobia of the contagious "pollution" of a "clean" white Britain by the black woman's reproductive labors. Here, the contaminating black mother can be read as symbolic of the unconscious fear of an entire nation, a motherland, corrupted by the reproduction of dangerous blackness. Analyzing the racialized phobia implicit in postwar Britain's anti-immigration legislation, James Hampshire remarks in *Citizenship and Belonging* that "[i]mmigration was perceived as a 'problem' to be 'controlled', while immigrants themselves were often associated with social disorder and malady" (10). Blackness was likened to a racialized illness infecting a formerly pure nation. By reproducing blackness around her, the "black mummy" — the black maternal body — poses a threat to white security, one that is lived out as much in the nightmares of a two year old girl as in the most virulent nativist rhetoric.

Plagued by these myriad fears, The Piggie was eager for Winnicott's help. Winnicott, for his part, responded by trying to foster what he described throughout his

career as a “good enough” maternal holding environment in the consulting room. This environment was one of Winnicott’s most significant technical modifications to child analysis. Taken symbolically, the “holding environment” includes all parts of the analytic setting, such as the physical space and décor, the analyst’s reliable presence, his or her individual personality, mood and liveliness. “In the analytic situation, it is the analyst’s attention—in combination with the physicality of the environment, the couch, the warmth, the color of the room, and so on—that mirrors the mother’s primary maternal preoccupation” (Abram, 197). Part of the analyst’s function is the provision of a supportive, adaptive maternal care that had been either entirely lacking or simply not “good enough” throughout the patient’s own childhood. Originally, Winnicott developed the concept of “good enough” maternal care to describe the work performed by mothers for their infants, but, as his work progressed, he increasingly used the term to describe what he imagined to be the ideal function of the psychoanalyst. Writes

Abram in *The Language of Winnicott*:

[b]y the 1950s, Winnicott’s use of the good-enough mother-infant paradigm as a way of understanding what could be provided in the analytic relationship had become the foundation of his theory of holding, and his focus was on the emotional holding-the-baby-in-mind in combination with the physical feeding, bathing and dressing. (194)

“Mothers, like analysts,” Winnicott quips, “can be good or not good enough” (*Playing and Reality*, 119).

More than perhaps any other analyst, then, Winnicott embraced a clinical comparison between the analyst and the mother, one that he claimed the patient experienced as not merely symbolic but as actual mothering throughout sessions.¹⁹ What mothers and analysts share is the maintenance of a good enough holding environment that enables the child's development. For the most part Winnicott intended this "holding" — an extension of the original situation of maternal care — to be metaphorical, yet on more than one occasion he did quite literally engage in acts of physical contact and holding, using his own body as an anchoring environment for a patient that he understood to be regressed to infancy.²⁰

Working in the postwar context, Winnicott's clinical emphasis on this gendered, maternal holding environment translated a socio-political desire for a relatively conflict-free liberal democracy into the clinic. Winnicott imagined the patient, like the social democratic subject, to be primarily dependent yet participatory, reliant on the analyst yet orientated toward authentic communication. Rather than think of the patient as resistant or obscured from herself, Winnicott instead thought of her as trying to creatively communicate something genuine about her own subjective experience of the

¹⁹ Winnicott believed this to be true for children in analysis just as much as it was for adults since his approach to the temporality of age suggested that adult patients ultimately "all become babies and children in the course of treatment" anyway (*Home Is Where We Start From*, 147).

²⁰ See Winnicott's 1969 paper "The Mother-Infant Experience of Mutuality" which Winnicott gives a short case study detailing his physical contact with a patient (Margaret Little). Also see Margaret Little's own separate account of her analysis with Winnicott, which included different forms of touching or holding: Little, *Psychotic Anxieties and Containment*.

world in a way that would facilitate the analyst's work with her. "Winnicott saw patients as more communicative than evasive, more collaborative than antagonistic" (Goldman, xxv). The child patient, like the subject of welfare, needed and sought to cooperate with the analyst-qua-welfare state. In addition to aligning democracy with health and striving to produce democratic subjectivities, Winnicott's theories about clinical method worked to democratize the space of the clinic itself by re-theorizing the analyst-patient dynamic in terms of a cooperative, participatory relationship that downgraded the importance of authority, conflict, and resistance. Put another way, Winnicott's work not only helped bolster the actual welfare state, but also extended this more "benign" political relationship between governed and governing political subjects into the clinic.

Given this clinical ethos, one of Winnicott's primary goals throughout The Piggie's analysis is to create an *environment* in which The Piggie can freely and securely play, acting out her fantasies through her physical use, and abuse, of objects. Winnicott himself participates in this play, joining The Piggie in her imaginative games. In doing so, Winnicott's means to encourage The Piggie's regression back to experiences in her infancy when her mother had not been "good enough," thereby alleviating her internal conflict and facilitating her self development. Winnicott's maternal function in the clinic becomes quite literal when, in a game with The Piggie during the second session of the analysis, she reenacts her own birth. Winnicott narrates the scene thus:

I told the father to come into the room now, and the Piggie came in with him. He sat in the blue chair. She knew what must be done. She got on his lap and said: "I am shy."

...

While performing acrobatics on her father's lap she told him all the details [about her Winnicott baby]. Then she started a new and very deliberate chapter in the game. "I'm a baby too," she announced, as she came out head first onto the floor between her father's legs.

...

Every time she was the baby being born between her father's legs and onto the floor. She called this 'being born.' (Winnicott, *The Piggie*, 28-29)

Winnicott describes this game of "being born" as The Piggie's regression to an earlier, infantile stage of dependency. According to Winnicott, she is simultaneously acting out an identification with her newborn sister and using her father to stage a more perfect birth. Winnicott offers very few comments as this game progresses, believing that the play itself is salutary.²¹

For Winnicott, the fact of his own identity as a white man did not disrupt his conviction that, through the transference, he became a maternal substitute for his patients. In this dramaturgical play, two white men stand in as substitutes for the absent mother. Although Winnicott was adamant about the maternal function of the clinic, he rarely commented on the complications introduced by his own male embodiment. What

²¹ This unorthodox clinical technique prompted Masud Khan to reject The Piggie case from publication in the International Psychoanalytic Library he was editing. While Clare Winnicott saw Winnicott's work in this case as the most representative of his psychoanalytic contributions, Khan thought it lacked the key elements that would even make it "psychoanalytic" in the first place. What Khan implied though this posthumous rejection was that Winnicott's "good enough" mothering with children in the clinic was not a legitimate psychoanalytic technique. For more background on the publication history of this case study, see Christopher Reeves, "Reappraising Winnicott's *The Piggie*: A Critical Commentary, Parts 1 & 2." *British Journal of Psychotherapy* (2015).

was important, for Winnicott, was that the analytic space as a whole should provide a secure holding environment for the child, which Winnicott understood as definitionally maternal. In other words, Winnicott's technique in this case aims to alleviate fears about a "black mummy" by providing (white) paternal templates onto which The Piggie can script her desires for a satisfactory mother figure. His clinical technique proposed a solution to racialized psychic conflict through a trans-gendered, cross-racial form of maternal care. By identifying with the "good enough" mother, Winnicott purports to free The Piggie from the racial conflict that plagued her dreams.

Thus, just as Winnicott had a complex effect on the interconnected relationship between gender and class, valorizing the ordinary practices of working- and middle-class mothers while contributing to a state-wide economic climate that retracted social supports for them, so also was his response to race and decolonization intersectional and double-edged. He both implicitly tried to remedy racial conflict, but did so in problematic ways. In one of Winnicott's only other discussions of race, blackness, and maternity in *Playing and Reality*, which Winnicott published in 1971, he demonstrates this multi-layered logic, stating that

It might turn out that the difference between the white citizen of the United States and the black-skinned citizen of that country is not so much a matter of skin color as of breast-feeding. Incalculable is the envy of the white bottle-fed population of the black people who are mostly, I believe, breast-fed. (192)

In this fascinating passage, Winnicott begins by declaiming the importance of skin-color as the key determinant of racial difference—a move that could either be read as a radical recognition of the incoherence of visually determined racial taxonomies, or as a somewhat facile gesture toward a “post-racial” reasoning that gainsays the importance of the visual for structuring hierarchies of power and privilege through identity. Yet, Winnicott does not deny racial difference altogether but instead makes it “a matter...of breast feeding”—that is to say, yet again a matter of maternal care. Although this claim about breast-feeding seems more like a figment of Winnicott’s own fetishized racial fantasy life than an empirical reality in the 1960s in either the US or Britain—indeed, that Winnicott would idealize the nurturing capacity of black breasts seems hardly separable from sentimentalized US histories of slavery and wet-nursing—it is interesting that in explaining this racial difference Winnicott finds fault not with black circuits of care but with the relative paucity of them among white people, that anemic “bottle-fed population.” What Winnicott pathologizes, in other words, is the racial aggression of whiteness, its affective envy, which Winnicott implies constitutes the primary node of racial difference. In a critical reversal of standard racial narratives, whiteness (not blackness) is the site of racialized otherness.

Keeping in mind Winnicott’s work as a public sage on maternal care, readers can see that one of the effects of this kind of statement is the idealization of breastfeeding. By locating “incalculable” envy with those deprived white children raised on bottles not

breasts, Winnicott implicitly disciplines white mothers into breastfeeding. This task, as Winnicott outlines it here, ought to be undertaken not just because bottle-fed children will feel individually envious, but because this seemingly small decision about maternal care is actually the foundation of larger the social existence of race and racism. Racism, in other words, is built not on political and economic structures of disadvantage born of histories of slavery and colonialism, but on the individual disadvantages of racialized maternal care. It is a matter of personal envy, not systemic inequality. As with The Piggie's fears of "black mummy," Winnicott here returns racialized fears and aggressions back to the individual mother-child relationship. The problem of racism is not structural or systemic, he implies. Rather, it is individual, lived at the level of the mother-child relation.

Although a short passage, this commentary is revealing for the absence it pronounces in Winnicott's thinking about democracy. What does it mean that Winnicott does not theorize race as a primary psychic difference, as a key social phenomenon constitutive of subjectivity? What is at stake in his affirmation of mothering as the key to social democracy? If Winnicott insisted on the importance of British democracy, linking it to mothering, then he did so during the very decades when some of Britain's most *undemocratic* historical strategies were, quite literally, coming home to roost. By focusing on a gendered form of care as the lynchpin of a larger political system, Winnicott allayed anxieties about the very real injustices and exclusions that the British

democracy was founded on and continued to perpetuate. As race and (post)colonialism fractured a nation, Winnicott focused on how good enough maternal care could stabilize an individual. Importantly, this mother-child oriented care was exactly what Winnicott's clinic was designed to redress. Unable to heal the psychic fractures caused by centuries of colonialism and white supremacy, Winnicott transformed the paradoxes of democracy and the history of empire into a matter of maternal care, that is to say a matter of individual rather than national responsibility. Through the clinic, Winnicott aimed to provide maternal care "good enough" to remedy the conflicts of a nation.

4. States of Security: John Bowlby, Cold War Politics, and Infantile Attachment Theory

It is a characteristic of a mother whose infant will develop securely that she is continuously monitoring her infant's state and, as and when he signals wanting attention, she registers his signals and acts accordingly.

—J. Bowlby, *A Secure Base*

On May 11th 1954, D.W. Winnicott wrote a letter to his friend and colleague, John Bowlby, expressing in his characteristically matter-of-fact way his concern that Bowlby's work was being put to far more politically nefarious uses than Bowlby had originally intended. "In my contacts," begins Winnicott,

I come up against quite a lot of people who are worried about the way your work has been used by those who want to close down day nurseries. ... I feel that you would like to know what is going on. ... You will probably agree with me, and I would very much like to be able to say in public discussion that you agree, that there is a deplorable shortage of Day Nurseries accommodation. ... This is a vital problem and I am afraid that at the moment your having been quoted in connection with the closing down of the Day Nurseries is doing harm to the very valuable tendency of your argument. I wonder if there is anything you can do about this. (*The Spontaneous Gesture*, 65-66)

Never one to mince words, Winnicott refers to Bowlby's immensely popular 1951 Report for the World Health Organization, *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, which he was commissioned to write after World War II on the state of homeless children's mental health and emotional wellbeing. After the massive city air raids throughout the war and the consequent exodus of children to the countryside, many children were left either orphaned or permanently separated from their families. New children's institutions like

the Tavistock Clinic and the Bull Dogs Bank Home run by Anna Freud cropped up throughout the UK to answer this need. Throughout the 1940s, Bowlby worked in these institutions as he honed his interest in developmental psychology and children's "delinquency." Yet, his appraisal of them was far from favorable. The report that Bowlby produced for the WHO announced in no uncertain terms that it was maternal care that was pivotal to children's mental health. Neither state welfare nor group homes were sufficient. In Bowlby's opinion, even the best group home was a meager substitute for the incomparable effects of a mother's love.

Winnicott's letter echoes a much broader concern among British psychoanalysts (and later feminists) that Bowlby's insistence on the irreplaceability of the mother effectively curtailed state-provided social supports designed to help working mothers manage their child-care obligations. While Winnicott could easily be seen as pawning off onto Bowlby an accusation that had also been leveled at him, Bowlby's *oeuvre*, far more even than Winnicott's, testifies to the far-reaching public effects of postwar psychological research on children. If Winnicott entered the homes of ordinary citizens through the BBC airwaves, Bowlby arrived on bookshelves and coffee tables. As a childcare advice book, *Maternal Care and Mental Health* (republished two years later by Penguin as *Child Care and the Growth of Love*) sold over 450,000 copies in English alone and was translated into six different languages in Bowlby's lifetime. It was a staple for experts and lay-people alike and inspired countless self-help parenting books in the

decades to come.¹ It contributed hugely to the growing conviction that not only was the psychological development of children the most important component for determining their future political predilections; but also that it was the woman-qua-mother who, through the correct or incorrect forms of care, was responsible for constructing and managing these vulnerable citizens-in-the-making. Through his best selling books, Bowlby had a transatlantic influence on Cold War maternal practices, especially as they functioned as an ideological extension of state policy.

In this chapter, I focus specifically on Bowlby's claims about maternal care, infantile attachment, and emotional security. Situating Bowlby's work in the climate of Cold War Europe, I contend that Bowlby's idealization of infantile emotional "security" participated in a parenting discourse that made gendered reproductive labor vital to the ideology of securing Western capitalism and liberal democracy. To argue this, I begin by unpacking the highly gendered nature of Bowlby's theory of infantile attachment and security. For Bowlby, the provision of emotional security for the child was the paramount function of both the woman-as-mother and the psychoanalytic clinician. By making domestic security the purview of women and mothers, Bowlby returned women to the home and implicitly nationalized their reproductive labors.

¹ For instance, the popular style of "attachment parenting" promoted by multi-million copy best-sellers like *The Baby Book: Everything You Need to Know About Your Baby from Birth to Age Two* (by parenting/authorial team, Dr. William Sears and Martha Sears, 1993) and Dr. Spock's earlier *The Commonsense Book of Baby and Childcare*. For a recent analysis of the rise of "attachment parenting" and its development from Bowlby's attachment theory in *Time Magazine*, see "The Man Who Remade Motherhood" (May 21, 2012).

Recognizing that this psychological theory corresponded with new state discourses that promoted the attainment of “national security,” I then consider how Bowlby’s emphasis on a maternally guaranteed form of security worked to bolster and naturalize a larger emergent political discourse about the management and provision of national security in an increasingly globalized setting of international hostility. Combining ethology and psychoanalysis, Bowlby’s work provided a scientific, psychological grounding for fomenting Cold War anxieties about the (in)security of the Western capitalistic nation-state. Psychoanalysis found broad public appeal by promising a specifically gendered kind of psychological security for the individual at the precise moment when it could not be fully guaranteed by and for the state. Bowlby’s work not only described the psychoanalytic clinic as a space designed to produce this experience of security in the patient, but also nationalized and naturalized this security *through the mother’s gendered reproductive labor*, arguing that every mother, if sufficiently attentive, could successfully produce the same security for the child in the private, domestic home. In this way, the domestic home worked co-extensively with the state; private scientific psychology legitimated and extended larger (inter)national claims. At the broadest level, then, this chapter considers what is at stake in defining the psychological wellbeing of the individual infantile citizen through the grammar of the state.

Domestic Security: Maternal Care and Mental Health

Born in 1907, John Bowlby was the son of a notable British surgeon and one of six children in an Edwardian, upper-middle class family. Like his father, Bowlby originally pursued a career in medicine. But his interest in the medical sciences waned as he progressed through Cambridge and, increasingly, he gravitated to the inchoate field of developmental psychology. This interest led him to take a position as a temporary instructor at Priory Gates, a school for “delinquent” children. Although Bowlby did not remain at that school for long, this early experience working with children with behavioral problems shaped his later contributions to psychoanalysis and informed his lifelong insistence that observable behavior was the most significant realm for researching the operation of the child-mind.²

When Bowlby first began his work in psychoanalysis, doing his clinical residency at the Institute of Psychoanalysis, he (like Winnicott) trained in a specifically Kleinian tradition. Joan Riviere served as both Winnicott’s and Bowlby’s supervisor, overseeing their early clinical work with patients. But as Bowlby would later acknowledge, this early alignment with the Kleinians hardly matched his own conceptual leanings. “At

² For instance, Bowlby’s first published book, *Forty-Four Juvenile Thieves* (first published in 1944), was interested in the case studies of delinquent children he worked with in the child psychiatry unit of Canonbury clinic. For biographies of Bowlby’s life, see Jeremy Holmes, *John Bowlby and Attachment Theory*; Frank C. P. van der Horst, *John Bowlby—From Psychoanalysis to Ethology: Unraveling the Roots of Attachment Theory*; and Suzan Van Dijken, *John Bowlby: His Early Life: A Biographical Journey into the Roots of Attachment Theory*.

that time," reflects Bowlby "I had not realized that my interest in real-life experiences and situations was so alien to the Kleinian outlook; on the contrary, I believed my ideals were compatible with theirs" (qtd in Grosskurth, 402). While Klein and her colleagues stressed phantasy, part objects, the death instinct, and clinical interpretation, Bowlby increasingly emphasized the importance of reality, maternal care, attachment instincts, and direct behavioral observation. Although Bowlby spent many years throughout the 1940s and 1950s trying to establish the compatibility of his views and Klein's, as time passed he increasingly positioned the two systems as fundamentally incompatible.³ From the 1960s until his death in 1990, Bowlby would become a vocal critic of Object Relations psychoanalysis, calling it not only unscientific but also cultish. From Bowlby's mid-century perspective, the Kleinian orientation more than any other was a testament to the dangerous cult of personality that can develop in psychoanalytic settings *not* based on scientific research and direct observation.

To be sure, Bowlby's wholesale dismissal of Object Relations was a deliberately uncharitable reduction of an incredibly complex and varied set of theories. But his acrimony nevertheless captured a certain zeitgeist in that work. Taken on conceptual grounds, what Bowlby found objectionable was the almost exclusive attention that Klein and her colleagues gave to the convolutions of the child's psychic life, its elaborate and

³ For an example of Bowlby's early work in the Kleinian vein, see his 1958 paper, "The Nature of the Child's Tie to His Mother." *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, Vol 39 (1958): 350-373.

archaic unconscious phantasies. According to Bowlby, the arabesque and aggressive phantasies that Klein attributed to the child's mind were both surreal and unsubstantiated. In stark contrast, Bowlby positioned himself as the progenitor of a saner, and scientifically sounder, theory of the infant-mind. If Klein was a phantasiist, then Bowlby was a stark realist. Breaking from much psychoanalytic orthodoxy, Bowlby postulated that the infant is an almost mimetic recorder of the external experiences it encounters throughout its first months and years of life. The infant's internal world is a more or less faithful representation of its experiences in the external world, what Bowlby was apt to call "reality." Bowlby imagined that these experiences act almost like imprints on the infant's mind: set early, infantile experiences persist relatively unchanged throughout childhood and well into adulthood. The way the infant is treated, handled, fed, talked to, and cared for would be reproduced throughout childhood and adulthood as a more-or-less codified set of behavioral patterns. If Klein insisted, again and again, on the primary significance of phantasy, Bowlby responded by drumming up the thoroughgoing, irreducible effects of "real events." While Klein routinely parsed a child's feelings about its parents from the parents' actual treatment of the child, Bowlby countered that the child's feelings and behavior are actually largely accurate indices of its past environs. "My view is this," Bowlby states:

most of what goes on in the internal world is a more or less accurate reflection of what an individual has experienced recently or long ago in the external world. ... If a child sees his mother as a very loving person, the chances are that his mother is a loving person. If he sees her as a very

rejecting person, the chances are she is a very rejecting person. (Figli and Young, "An Interview with John Bowlby," 43)

Bowlby's gesture to the "external world" in his opening sentence is perhaps a bit misleading because what his work actually focuses on—what he most prioritizes in his assessment of formative childhood experiences—is the mother. As Bowlby indicates later, what he really means when he writes about the "external world" is the behavior and emotional state of the mother. While Klein and Winnicott both made the mother the central figure in the child's psychic drama, Bowlby went a step further by bluntly stating that the mother's role in the child's life was not simply significant but was utterly determinative of future emotional health. According to Bowlby's summation, "mother-love in infancy and childhood is as important for mental health as are vitamins and proteins for physical health" (*Maternal Care and Mental Health*, 158). Without sufficient "mother-love," the child's mind would be weak, insecure, and feeble. Bowlby argued that, if managed successfully, the mother-child relationship had the potential to be an entirely complementary one. The language of conflict, aggression, and hostility disappears in the majority of Bowlby accounts of maternal care; instead of universal phenomena of psychic life, these experiences become marks of pathology. On the whole, he paints a relatively sentimental picture of a natural, healthy, continuous, and unified mother-child dyad.

[W]hat is believed to be essential for mental health is that the infant and young child should experience a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with his mother (or mother-substitute), in which both find

satisfaction and enjoyment. The child needs to feel he is an object of pleasure and pride to his mother; the mother needs to feel an expansion of her own personality in the personality of her child: each needs to feel closely identified with the other. ... The provision of proper diet calls for more than calories and vitamins: we need to enjoy our food if it is to do us good. In the same way the provision of mothering cannot be considered in terms of hours per day but only in terms of the enjoyment of each other's company which mother and child obtain. (Bowlby, *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, 67)

Understanding Bowlby's appeal to the naturalness of the mother-child relationship is pivotal. As in the earlier passage I quoted where Bowlby compared "mother-love" to vitamins and protein, he makes yet another metabolic comparison here. This gesture to the physiological is a common move throughout Bowlby's work. Like all scientists who construct their conclusions through narrative, Bowlby relies heavily on both poetic language and metaphor to convey the force of his argument. Bowlby justifies the "satisfaction" and "enjoyment" of the almost seamless relationship between mother and child by a metaphorical comparison to food and diet. The claim subtending this comparison is that emotional health is, like physical health, a matter of body and biology. Through the language of health, Bowlby translates psychic life into physiological terms. In this narrative, the mother becomes an indispensable and non-negotiable figure in domestic care routines the same way that nutrients like calcium and vitamin D are crucial to physical growth.

But the irony of this *particular* comparison is that, more than neatly proving the objective requirements of "health," this passage actually reveals the messy and entirely

subjective entanglement of the psychic and the physiological. Bowlby's reliance on the vocabulary of "enjoyment" throws into crisis his claims to objective physiology. If part of metabolic health involves enjoying one's food, and dietary preferences are perhaps some of *the most* culturally, socially, and individually variable aspects of experience, then Bowlby's implication is, ironically, that the infant's experience of mothering is entirely—and unpredictably—variable. What is important is not simply that the child experiences certain kinds of care, but that the child qualitatively values them. The language of enjoyment, applied both to the mother-child relation and to dietary sustenance, throws into question the very claim to universalism that Bowlby is trying to substantiate. Bowlby's rhetorical metaphor, meant to prove his point, actually begins to unravel it. Although the majority of Bowlby's corpus is dedicated to detailing the behaviors required for mothers to rear happy, healthy, emotionally secure children, the irony of this passage is that it does not recognize that there is no accounting for the child's utterly particular tastes.

Yet this tension was hardly something Bowlby recognized or discussed in his work. Much of Bowlby's contribution to psychoanalytic theories of the mother-child relation rests on his conviction that infants and children have *universal* needs that proper mothering can and should meet. Indeed, part of what made Bowlby's combination of psychoanalysis and ethology (and, later, evolutionary biology) so seamless was his tendency to think in terms of biological and genetic *species* needs—that is, the universal

claims of the human being as a specific type of biological animal. Bowlby asserted that, as a species, human infants all had roughly the same requirements for healthy development; these included things like the mother's continuous physical proximity, the timing and responsiveness of her attention, and her own emotional disposition to the infant. In one of the most often-cited passages from his WHO report, Bowlby writes:

The provision of constant attention day and night, seven days a weeks and 365 days in the year, is possible only for a woman who derives profound satisfaction from seeing her child grow from babyhood, through the many phases of childhood, to become an independent man or woman, and knows that it is her care which has made this possible. (*Maternal Care and Mental Health*, 67)

This is an (in)famous passage in Bowlby's work, in large part because of the way it rather unforgivingly positions the mother as the infant's full-time servant. The infant's every mood, its every need and desire, can—and should—be the mother's highest priority. The frustrations, ambitions, obligations, and desires of the mother herself are routinely elided in service of the production of healthy, secure child-citizens. Mothers with careers, sexual desires, anxieties, or emotional distance from their children are often, for Bowlby, symptomatic of a pathological psychology—and as I will discuss later even political subversion. Not only must the mother be on the clock 24/7 satisfying the infant's every need and desire, but she must also get "profound satisfaction" from tasks that are both often physically arduous and emotionally attenuating. On more than one occasion Bowlby even goes so far as to describe the mother as a "slave" to the infant, or as "enslaved" by the infant's various charms and guiles. "It is fortunate for their

survival,” surmises Bowlby in 1958, “that babies are so designed by Nature that they beguile and enslave mothers” (“The Child’s Tie to His Mother,” 367). Ultimately, Mother Nature, Bowlby argues, is the one responsible for the mother’s subjugated nature. While Sigmund Freud rather darkly joked about “His Majesty the Baby” in theorizing narcissism, Bowlby can be seen to take this interestingly political metaphor at face value. In a world where the male infant is king, there is always an accompanying fantasy that enslaved women perform their reproductive labors for pleasure alone.

Unsurprisingly, Bowlby’s work has been the object of more or less constant feminist censure, both in his own lifetime and in the decades since his death. Activist and academic feminists alike, from multiple disciplinary backgrounds, have taken issue with the conservative implications of Bowlby’s scientific theories. Scholars from Margaret Mead to Denise Riley, Ann Oakley to Donna Haraway have leveled important critiques at Bowlby’s reduction of woman to mother; at his curtailment of the mother to the domestic sphere; at his naturalization of femininity and “maternal instincts;” at his biological universalization of infant need and maternal behavior; and at his glorification of heterosexual reproduction as tantamount to psychological health.⁴ While feminist

⁴ See, for instance, Margaret Mead, “Some Theoretical Considerations of the Problem of Mother-Child Separation.” *Personal Character and Cultural Milieu* (1954); Denise Riley, *War in the Nursery* (1984); Ann Oakley, *Subject Women* (1981); Susan H. Franzblau, “Historicizing Attachment Theory: Binding the Ties that Bind” *Feminism & Psychology* (1999); Susan Contratto’s chapter “A Feminist Critique of Attachment Theory and Evolutionary Psychology” in *Rethinking Mental Health and Disorder: Feminist Perspectives* (2002). Related—though less directly critical—are Donna Haraway’s *Primate Visions: Gender, Race and Nature in the World of Modern Science*, in which she

psychoanalysts like Helene Deutsch, Karen Horney, and Melanie Klein likewise recognized that that psychological claims to health harbored gendered politics and thus, from the 1930s on, re-articulated psychoanalytic theories of mind with a more female- and woman-centric orientation, most feminist responses to Bowlby have been categorical rejections. Indeed, the almost universal appraisal of Bowlby's work today is that it embodies a pernicious conservatism, one born especially of psychoanalysis's mid-century transatlantic congress with the United States.

To understand the sweeping nature of this feminist reception (and rejection), it is important to keep in mind the historical climate in which Bowlby's works were being published. His first significant works were published in the 1950s, and his landmark trilogy (*Attachment, Loss, and Separation*) came out in English in 1969, 1972, and 1980 respectively. Bowlby's embrace of maternal domesticity arrived at the height of the US and UK feminist movements, which took specific aim at the very postwar conventions of motherhood and domesticity that Bowlby had been instrumental in reifying. Indeed, Bowlby's work, coming just a few years after Betty Friedan's 1963 bestseller, *The Feminine Mystique*, seemed nothing if not a picture perfect confirmation of the

interrogates the masculine bias in scientific primate research, making reference to primatologist Robert Hinde's collaboration with Bowlby and use of Bowlby's theories in his scientific experiments with monkeys and Juliet Mitchell's chapter "Attachment and Maternal Deprivation: How did John Bowlby Miss the Siblings" in *Siblings: Sex and Violence* (2003).

psychological landscape that Friedan diagnosed and decried. As second-wave feminist movements were gaining traction in the US and UK, Bowlby's work functioned as a well-known and rhetorically useful touchstone for feminists to substantiate their critiques.

For his own part, Bowlby was well aware of the vocal feminist resistance to his research. In an interview with Bowlby published in 1986, interviewers Karl Figlio and R.M. Young asked Bowlby explicitly to speculate on why he thought there was what they called an "antipathy" between feminists and his work (Figlio and Young, 50). Bowlby's answer was anything but progressive. Showing no small measure of his own antipathy, Bowlby stated that it was only "extreme feminists" who took issue with his work and that these women were the ones who "are very averse to believing that the way they treat their children has an enormous effect on the way those children develop" (*ibid*, 51). Doubling down on the stereotype of uncaring feminist mothers, Bowlby added that these "extreme feminists" were not, in fact, the same women lobbying for progressive reforms for children's welfare. Rather, they were calculating careerists who deliberately "put their own careers first and the children third or fourth" (*ibid*, 51). In other words, Bowlby presented "extreme feminism" as emblemizing an either/or logic between women and children rather than as a progressive (and diverse) set of movements aimed at reconfiguring social and ideological norms injurious to many minoritized and domesticated subjects, children among them. When R.M. Young

pushed back on Bowlby's reduction of feminism to child-averse careerism, calling it an unfair "caricature" of feminism and pointing out the limitations of traditional gendered child care arrangements, Bowlby rejoined that he referred only to "extreme feminists" and it was actually these feminists who actually caricatured *his* position more than the other way round (*ibid*, 51-52). Yet Bowlby never added political texture to any kind of feminism, extreme or otherwise; for him, feminism was defined solely by a greater or lesser degree of child neglect. By speaking always on the side of the scientific needs of children, Bowlby categorically dismissed the political implications of the claims he advanced about motherhood.

Because of this political insensitivity, many feminists have not returned to Bowlby's work since the initial censures of it. While psychoanalysis as a whole has been both critiqued and reclaimed by feminists as a problematic but valuable resource in the struggle against multiple intersecting forms of white, hetero-patriarchal, capitalistic dominance, Bowlby has not been recuperated the same way. For this reason, his work is far less well known and carefully read by feminist and academic audiences in the humanities than figures like Melanie Klein, D.W. Winnicott or even Anna Freud.⁵ Thus, the question of why return to Bowlby at all is an important one. While there have been

⁵ I specify feminist and humanities audiences because while Bowlby is not read in these fields, his work enjoys an incredible vogue in developmental, abnormal, and childhood psychology. Indeed, one of the most influential clinical psychologists today, Peter Fonagy, emerged out of a tradition of developmental psychology that owes much to Bowlby's work. For Fonagy's writings on Bowlby, see the following footnote.

some few attempts in recent years to cull from Bowlby's work the germs of a progressive politics,⁶ my own interest pursues his theories and their effects *precisely because* of the way they suture white, middle-class women's gender labor to the domestic home and the reproduction of the heterosexual family. I think a return to Bowlby is useful not because of a potential for reparative reading in a climate where the process of global migration, displacement, and technological distancing have attenuated many forms of "attachment," but more because I think his psychological work helps articulate a historical shift to the very neoliberal security logics that have come to dominate contemporary Western state policies and political discourses. If (as I will discuss in the conclusion of this chapter) part of the language of securitization is based on a vigilante mobilization of the private citizen for the production of state security—the post-9/11 injunctive to surveil family, friends, and neighbors for latent terrorist elements—then Bowlby's work constitutes an invaluable piece of a genealogy that charts the emergence of the collaboration between domestic and national security, between psychology and the state. Indeed, the historical positioning of Bowlby's work even goes to suggest that, in an climate of ascendant neoliberalism, state policy is apiece with and responsive to

⁶ For appreciations of the psychological merit of attachment theory, see Fonagy and M. Target, "The Rooting of the Mind in the Body: New Links Between Attachment Theory and Psychoanalytic Thought" (2007); Fonagy, "Points of Contact and Divergence Between Psychoanalytic and Attachment Theories" (1999); and Fonagy et. al., "Why are We Interested in Attachment," in *The Routledge Handbook of Attachment* (2014). For a reading of Bowlby's claims about attachment through a Deleuzian Theory, see Duschinsky et. al. "The Politics of Attachment: Lines of Flight with Bowlby, Deleuze and Guittari" (2015).

scientific knowledge. In other words, part of my argument here is that Bowlby's work was not just metabolizing a preexisting state discourse but was actively contributing to the construction and reification of national policies and discourses that would only increase in prominence under late Cold War Reagan-Thatcher neoliberalism. For Bowlby, the postwar child was a central figure in organizing this political discourse.

Creature Comforts: Cold War Britain, Ethology, and Maternal Security

Although the Cold War is typically framed as a bipolar conflict between two national superpowers—the US and the USSR—promoting two different political economies—capitalism and communism—importantly it was a global standoff that engaged many parts of the world, Britain not least of all. At the close of World War II, Britain was allied with the US in its growing perception that, after the defeat of fascism, so-called “Eastern” communisms were the major threat to liberal, capitalistic democracy. Since the US was armed with the nuclear (and monetary) capacity to pose the greatest threat to the USSR, Britain was forced to occupy a more ancillary position as the US stepped forward as the most forceful global actor, a position it would retain for decades to come. Yet Britain remained a key player in the production of Cold War politics, providing discursive support like global BBC broadcasts that promoted the liberal West and material support through its Commonwealth imperial ties and worldwide trade

connections.⁷ The Cold War pervaded all aspects of UK policymaking and was catalyzed as much by the nation's material interests as by anti-communist ideology.⁸ Britain, like the US, felt acutely that Eastern European and Asian communisms introduced a "national security" crisis, one that posed as significant a threat to the West's global capitalistic expansion as it did to military peace. "Security," after all, has the dual connotation of freedom from the threat of violence *and* monetary surety, a proof of investment capital. The discourse of "security," in other words, is as much about military threat as it is about the spread of global capitalism. Linking these forms of material "security," a UK Foreign Office Planning Staff paper from 1959-60 reports in no uncertain terms that

[t]he ultimate aim of any Government in the United Kingdom must always remain the security of these islands from foreign domination and attack, the prosperity of the British people and the protection of our individual freedom and liberty... (qtd in *Cold War Britain, 1945-1964*, 1)

Britain's national security was thus an intertwining of martial, economic, and ideological agendas.⁹ While a concern with security has been a part of political discourse going back

⁷ For further reading on these elements of Britain's participation in the Cold War, see Alban Webb, *London Calling: Britain, The BBC World Service, and the Cold War* and Wayne M. Reynolds' "Whatever Happened to the Fourth British Empire? The Cold War, Empire Defence and the USA, 1943-1957" in *Cold War Britain, 1945-64: New Perspectives* (2003).

⁸ For the multiple ways the Cold War shaped British policy internally, see Hopkins et al. (eds) *Cold War Britain, 1945-64: New Perspectives*.

⁹ Michael D. Kandiah makes the compelling case in his chapter "The Conservative Party in the Early Cold War: The Construction of the 'New Conservatism'" in *Cold War Britain, 1945-64* that

at least to Thomas Hobbes, its particular configuration as a preventative policy of the modern nation-state emerged in the postwar stalemate between NATO allies and the Communist Bloc.¹⁰ Only during the Cold War with its dual military and political economic crises did the discourse of “national security” truly find its footing.¹¹

It was in this crucible of unstable claims to global economic dominance that Bowlby’s work on individual, infantile emotional security emerged and found an audience. Because the threat of a turn from “Cold” to “Hot” war was tantamount not just to individual military deaths but to nuclear species extinction—a situation of

the Cold War had a vital role in the construction of the British Welfare State and the rise of a “new conservatism” in the postwar years. Kandiah argues that the conservative party’s support of the Welfare State—organized as it was within a strict capitalistic framework—was part of a Cold War electoral strategy to retain power by becoming a populist party organized around basic capitalist values: individual freedom, commerce, private ownership, enterprise, and profit. In order to safeguard the appeal of capitalism at home, this new conservative party simply extended its benefits to more citizens through a Welfare state model.

¹⁰ For a long-view conceptual genealogy of some political philosophies of “security” prior to the Cold War, see “The Value of Security: Hobbes, Marx, Nietzsche, and Baudrillard” by James Der Derian. For a sense of how “national security,” even in its contemporary neoliberal configurations, is tied to a specifically Cold War state policy, see “On Security” by Ronnie D. Lipschutz. Both essays are collected in *On Security*.

¹¹ Importantly, the US National Security Act of 1947 not only constellated and codified the discourse of national security that would come to drive American foreign policy for decades to come, but also inaugurated what many consider to be the first official year of the Cold War. In other words, from a Western perspective Cold War politics *is* the policy of national security. For an account of the antecedents of the rise of national security discourse, see Douglas T. Stuart’s *Creating the National Security State: A History of the Law that Transformed America*. For an analysis of the status of global security discourses since the Cold War, see the edited collection *On Security* edited by Ronnie D. Lipschutz.

“mutually assured destruction” — there were catastrophic stakes attached to any perceived bellicosity or aggression. Moreover, technological advancements made it possible for global destruction to be effected immediately, by one individual with the click of a few buttons, without military strategy, (inter)national consensus, or even a hierarchy of approval. Such intensified unpredictability made the psychological impulses and neurosis of the individual tremendously important for narrating politics since even a rogue scientist could potentially have the ability to start a nuclear war. Psychologists like Bowlby responded by soldering psychologies of mind to the emergent concerns of global geopolitics. For Bowlby, social and political events, including war, fascism, democracy, communism, and revolution were best understood in individual psychological terms, through concepts like aggression or affection. Some of Bowlby’s first psychological publications addressed the psychic status of world events, including his co-authored book with E.F.M. Durbin *Personal Aggressiveness and War* (1939) and his later article “Psychology and Democracy” (1946). Explicitly citing the proliferation of nuclear weapons as the justification for a more rigorous scientific psychology, Bowlby writes in “Psychology and Democracy,” that

with the advent of the atomic bomb ...the hope for the future lies in a far more profound understanding of the nature of the emotional forces involved and the development of scientific social techniques for modifying them. (76)

Writing in the immediate wake of the evisceration of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Bowlby makes the ultimate argument for the importance of psychology by suggesting that the

survival of the human species would only be possible with the help of more sophisticated psychological knowledges. The best way to understand and regulate technological advancements and weapons of mass destruction was not through world councils (like the newly-formed United Nations (1945) or North Atlantic Treaty Organization (1949)); nor was it through international accords and treaties (like the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons); rather, Bowlby argues that a deeper understanding of the dynamics of individual psychology was the best avenue for safeguarding humanity. The individual's political psychology – whether it be the political leader, the gunman, or the nuclear scientist – becomes the key to ensuring geopolitical security.

But how best to understand those elusive “emotional forces” that have such a direct correspondence with nuclear annihilation? From where do they come, and how might they be prevented? In answer to these questions, psychologists and psychoanalysts turned back to childhood and specifically the mother-child relation as the primary origin of social and political life. In this Cold War climate of global insecurity, the mother became both the fundamental guarantor of political security and, as part of this, its biggest potential threat. For better and for worse, the woman-qua-mother emerged as the most important subject of political action, the most powerful agent of national (in)security. In her capacity to reproduce the next generation of citizens and to raise them as psychologically healthy – this is, democratic – subjectivities,

motherhood accrued a tremendous political agency and responsibility. As Winnicott likewise made clear, mothering was explicitly a project of nation (re)building. Certainly this was a double-edged sword since the greater social interest in motherhood produced increased pressure, discipline, surveillance, and limitation for all women, regardless of their reproductive desires or capacities. But it was through the mother—a figure typically relegated to apolitical domesticity—that Cold War psychologists like Bowlby theorized politics.

Thus, when Bowlby described the maternal care he understood as central to the child's psychological health, he was doing so with the understanding that the way mothers treated children yielded very particular kinds of political futures. The quality of mothering a child received had, for Bowlby, a direct and proportional effect on the kind of political subject the child would become. If a child's mind accurately reflected the care it received—that "external world"—then (through a kind of social eugenics logic) it only follows that secure, democratic mothering would produce secure, democratic children. Mothering, in other words, had global as much as individual effects. Bowlby explains this logic of reproduction thusly:

The proper care of children deprived of a normal home life can now be seen to be not merely an act of common humanity, but to be essential for the mental and social welfare of a community. For, when their care is neglected, as happens in every country in the Western world today, they grow up to reproduce themselves. Deprived children, whether in their own homes or out of them, are a source of social infection as real and serious as are carriers of diphtheria and typhoid. And just as preventative measures have reduced these diseases to negligible proportions, so can

determined action greatly reduce the number of deprived children in our midst and the growth of adults liable to produce more of them. (*Maternal Care and Mental Health*, 157)

Returning to the metaphor of bodily health and disease, Bowlby substantiates his claims about the indispensability of maternal care by saying that those deprived of adequate homes and care are a source of “social infection.” Such an infectant jeopardizes the welfare of the entire community. According to one of his biographers, Suzan van Dijken,

Bowlby realized that his research had a social impact. He saw the problem of deprived children as a social problem; deprived children could become delinquent or become a burden to society in another way. Bowlby perceived that, without help, the circle of deprivation would remain the same... By breaking this vicious circle, Bowlby believed society would become better. (152)

It is incumbent on mothers, therefore, to either prevent or allow for the transmission of a deadly epidemic. Far from passive domestic props, mothers were responsible for the welfare of a whole community, of a whole world. The domestic home and the stable nuclear family were integral parts of Britain’s Cold War security endeavor.

Because Bowlby imagines the child as a mimetic reproduction of the care it received, he essentially creates a deterministic scenario in which bad mothering produces the same kinds of bad mothering in the future. Explains Bowlby: “the grown-up’s capacity for parenthood is dependent in high degree on the parental care which he received in his childhood. If this proves true, with its corollary that neglected children grow up to become neglectful parents, understanding the problem will be far advanced” (*Maternal Care and Mental Health*, 154). The imaginary proposed here is one of unending

cyclical reproductions of what Bowlby alternately calls “insecure,” “deprived,” “delinquent,” or “anti-social” individuals. Trapped within this cycle of repetition, Bowlby presents the work of psychological experts like himself as the only solution to patterns of social deterioration and destabilization. By intervening on behalf of the children of what he understood to be neglectful mothers, Bowlby saw his work as a justified answer to a humanitarian crisis. For Bowlby, psychological experts were the agents of change in an otherwise mechanistic reproduction of an epidemic—a plague—that could have global as much as local effects.

Yet Bowlby’s claims about the salutary effects of “normal homes” do not simply describe an extant psychological reality but rather inscribe and proscribe a moral and political hierarchy. By framing an oscillation between normality and pathology—between those children raised in “normal homes” and ones turned “delinquent” from “deprivation”—Bowlby exercises the power to constitute those categories, giving obvious moral preference to the successful realization of health and normality. “[S]tudy after study,” surmises Bowlby, “attest that healthy, happy, and self-reliant adolescents and young adults are the products of stable homes in which both parents give a great deal of time and attention to the children” (*A Secure Base*, 2). Linking happiness with health and self-reliance as keynote virtues in the Cold War, Bowlby refers to the concept of health as though it was a stable category rather than a field of constantly shifting political conflict and negotiation. By not acknowledging that “health,” like “normality,”

is a matter of disagreement and debate—that it is not only historically and culturally specific, but also hardly a coherent concept even within his own field—Bowlby lends authority to his claim about the causal connection between stable, attentive homes and psychological health. This elision effectively presents health as a matter of objective agreement and, consequently, it downplays the political and ethical contestations that contribute to the establishment of any scientific norm.

Bowlby's creation of a scientific system entrenched in the vocabulary of health, pathology, and biological imperative applied to mothers as well as to children. If children were insecure, antisocial, and delinquent, it is only because mothers had failed to effectively embody a form of care that Bowlby believed to be utterly natural and instinctual. Bowlby explains that "[p]arenting behavior, as I see it, has strong biological roots..."; "like attachment behavior, [it] is in some degree preprogrammed and therefore ready to develop along certain lines when conditions elicit it" (*A Secure Base*, 4-5). Assessing Bowlby's appropriation of scientific ethology, Marga Vicedo incisively argues that one of the results of Bowlby's naturalization maternal behavior was that it tethered women to domestic and reproductive labor while simultaneously devaluating that labor by assigning it the status of an instinct. Vicedo observes that "[a]ttachment theorists claimed maternal love plays a key role in a child's development. Yet by turning mother love into an evolutionary programmed behavior and emotion, proponents of attachment theory left maternal sentiments outside the realm of moral value and praise" (810). In

other words, Bowlby's embrace of scientific empiricism shifted debate about behaviors in any given community away from their ethical or political merits and effects by positing their *apriori*, natural, and universal existence.

In this way, Bowlby's research crutched on a Social Darwinist assessment of natural biology that not only took "Nature" as the most significant and determinative aspect of the human being, but also valued its hierarchies as outlining a desirable moral order.¹² Nature, for Bowlby, was another way of constituting a moral imperative. In this regard, Bowlby's work broke not only with psychoanalytic orthodoxy but with much of the postwar scientific community as well. Because Germany's National Socialism had relied, with so much success, on the eugenicist rhetoric of natural racial superiority, postwar scientists and civilians alike recoiled from this kind of logic. Indeed, the largely destructive role that science played throughout the war—alternately as genocidal justification, as the means to human experimentation and mass extermination, and as the motor of nuclear extinction—produced a general unease about the recognition that scientific "advancement" was anything *but* politically innocent. This discomfort was

¹² Bowlby always said he bore more similarity to Charles Darwin than Sigmund Freud. He explains this in a letter to his wife, Urusla, on May 19, 1958: "It pleases me to believe I have some of Darwin's characteristics, tho[ugh] by no means all! He was a tremendously good observer [and] of course a full time research worker all his life. I'm not that good an observer [and] very far from full time. However I believe I have some of his capacity... So however good a scientist I may or may not be, I think I'm the same sort of a scientist as Darwin—[and] not the least like Freud" (qtd. in van der Horst, 159)

certainly palliated by the growing hostilities of the Cold War, which reignited the zeal for technological development, but in notably *non*-eugenicist ways.

One of the ways to understand why Bowlby's scientific approach to psychoanalysis departed so distinctly from the more cultural-constructivist trends of the postwar 1950s-1980s is to situate his work in the ethological tradition from which he drew so heavily.¹³ Bowlby narrates how his work evolved out of this tradition and describes what he found useful about it:

a few years ago I came across the work of the ethologists. I was at once excited. Here was a body of biologists studying the behavior of wild animals who were not only using concepts, such as instinct, conflict, and defense mechanism, extraordinarily like those which are used in one's day-to-day clinical work, but who made beautifully detailed descriptions of behavior and had devised an experimental technique to subject their hypotheses to test. ...In so far as it studies the development of social behavior, and especially the development of family relationships in lower species, I believe it to be studying behavior analogous, and perhaps sometimes even homologous, with much of what concerns us clinically; in so far as it is using field description, hypotheses with operationally defined concepts and experiment, it is using a rigorous scientific method. (*Affectional Bonds*, 36)

Bowlby believed that psychoanalysis's lack of coherent scientific methodology was one of its biggest shortcomings and thus in his own work he brought modern biology and ethology together with psychoanalysis in order to produce what he believed was a truly *scientific* psychology. Bowlby's theories about the instinctual life of parenting (and, in

¹³ For a comprehensive history of the ethological work in Cold War America, and how it contributed to Bowlby's psychological construction of Attachment Theory, see Marga Vicedo's recent *The Nature and Nurture of Love: From Imprinting to Attachment in Cold War America*.

particular, mothering) were thus partially extrapolated from the research of leading ethnologists like Konrad Lorenz and Harry Harlow. Always keeping in mind a Darwinist perspective on species life, Bowlby was convinced that these scientists' work on imprinting and maternal deprivation in animals from the "lower species" provided empirical data that could be used to substantiate claims about human beings. Bowlby thus determined his major claims about the objective norms and needs of human infants—and about the organic instincts of mothers—from the research of natural biologists recording the behavior of geese and monkeys. According to Bowlby who describes the evolution of his "application" of ethological ideas,

I set about trying to master the basic principles [of Lorenz's work with ducklings and goslings] and to apply them to our problems, starting with the nature of the child's tie to his mother. Here Lorenz's work on the following response of ducklings and goslings (Lorenz 1935) was of special interest. It showed that in some animal species a strong bond to an individual mother-figure could develop without the intermediary of food: for these young birds are not fed by parents but feed themselves by catching insects. Here then was an alternative model to the traditional one, and one that had a number of features that seemed possibly to fit the human case. Thereafter, as my grasp of ethological principles increased and I applied them to one clinical problem after another, I became increasingly confident that this was a promising approach. (*A Secure Base*, 25)

Working from ethological data that recorded the relationship that different infant animals (including goslings and Rhesus monkeys) established with their mothers, Bowlby proposed that maternal behavior is instinctually programmed. Because he was "applying" theories from ethology, Bowlby's concept of instinct was derived not from

psychoanalysis (with its own complex theory of biological life) but from ethology.¹⁴ As Bowlby indicates here, the dominant view in mid-century British psychoanalysis was that infants develop object-ties to their mothers because their mothers feed them. In that framework, object-ties would follow along the lines of instinctual satisfaction. But, for Bowlby, the appeal of Lorenz's work was that the concept of "imprinting" gave him the grounds for a theory of attachment that was *not* fundamentally derivative, that is to say that was itself a primary instinctual need rather than a secondary development.¹⁵ The fact that, even from the most flexible evolutionary perspective, goslings are a far cry from human infants—indeed, importantly a human being is born and has to contend with, as Hannah Arendt has eloquently put it, "the fact of natality"—did not disrupt Bowlby's conviction about the instinctual similarity of all animals. "[D]espite the introduction of new features," notes Bowlby in regards to his extrapolation from what he calls the "lower species," "there are all the signs of an evolutionary continuum" (*Affectional Bonds*, 40).

¹⁴ Vicedo explains these differences in her own text in greater detail than I have space for here. But generally she affirms that "Bowlby adopted an ethological, and specifically Lorenzian, conception of instinct... [he] emphasized that he was using instinct in the ethological sense, not the psychoanalytic" (86).

¹⁵ Here is Bowlby's account of how his work differed from established psychoanalytic thinking on instinct and attachment: "At that time it was widely held that the reason a child develops a close tie to his mother is that she feeds him. Two kinds of drive are postulated, primary and secondary. Food is thought of as primary; the personal relationship, referred to as 'dependency', as secondary. This theory did not seem to me to fit the facts" (*A Secure Base*, 24).

Perhaps the most significant thing Bowlby borrowed from ethology, though, was methodological rather than conceptual. A major part of the impact of Bowlby's work was due to the unique way that he reinvented standard psychoanalytic methodology. Combining ethology and psychoanalysis, Bowlby promoted what he understood to be a strictly scientific method for the production of knowledge about infantile need and illness. Although Bowlby was adamant about the importance of clinical work for psychological knowledge production, the clinical technique he promoted was a dramatic departure from that of his other psychoanalytic colleagues: for Bowlby, the most useful clinical technique was a form of direct observation. By directly observing infants with their mothers, Bowlby believed that the truth about infant's inherent need for attachment and security became visible.

My reasons for giving so much attention to these observations of young children will, I am sure, be apparent. They show with unmistakable clarity how early in life certain characteristic patterns of social behavior—some hopeful for the future, others ominous—become established. (Bowlby, *A Secure Base*, 91)

As ethologists observed the behavior of animals, so Bowlby observed the behavior of infants and children. Bowlby proposed that behaviors, rather than dreams, phantasies, memories, or the transference, were the most significant demonstration of human needs and trauma. As Jeremy Holmes writes, Bowlby is, "for the most part, concerned with observable behavior rather than the inner world" (127). Because of this focus on the visible, Bowlby put stock in the ability of observation to deliver indisputable scientific

evidence. According to Bowlby, behavioral observations, unlike psychoanalytic interpretations, did not involve an element of subjective judgment; they therefore answered Bowlby's desire for a more rigorous, verifiable methodology. While Bowlby thought psychoanalytic theory proffered an innovative set of hypothesis, ultimately its insights were only valuable to him insofar as they could be tested and proven. "The clinician is rarely in a position, however, or scientifically qualified to test the hypotheses he has advanced: the next step must be done in more-controlled conditions by those with other skills" (Bowlby, *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, 62). For Bowlby, these controlled clinical conditions often took different forms, including clinical observations of families, social work, group observations, and (most famously) a form of infant observation called the "Strange Situation" test.

Although Bowlby published much of the clinical research outcomes as proof of his own hypotheses, the Strange Situation test was actually an observational experiment practiced and recorded by Bowlby's longtime collaborator and co-author, Mary Ainsworth.¹⁶ Ainsworth set up laboratories in Baltimore, Maryland (she was a US based

¹⁶ This appropriation of other researchers' findings was far from unusual for Bowlby. In fact, in the majority of his writings Bowlby refers to empirical research derived from experiments that he did not conduct himself; rather he mostly commonly draws from the data collected by other scientists. Despite his routine mention of the scientific method as the justification of the authority of his claims, he did very little of his own "research." His colleague and some-time co-author, Mary Ainsworth, was perhaps most important in this regard since her clinical work with children in Baltimore, and anthropological work with children Uganda, provided the necessary clinical evidence from work with human children for Bowlby to substantiate his theories. But, as Vicedo importantly notes, this appropriation of other scientists work meant that Bowlby sometimes

anthropologist) in the late 1960s and early 1970s that were designed to measure the attachment styles of infants between one and two years old. In this test, regulated environments were constructed where observers could watch an infant's behavioral responses to the comings-and-goings of its caretakers. For pre-determined periods of time, the infant's caretaker would leave the infant in a room, sometimes alone and sometimes with a stranger. Observers recorded the way the infant behaved both during the absences and upon the caretaker's return. Watching for different sets of behavioral responses, Ainsworth and her colleagues categorized the infant's behavior as one of three different "attachment types." "Securely Attached" infants were calm when the caretaker was present, using her as a "secure base" from which to explore the new room. When the caretaker left, however, these infants became visibly upset and withdrew their exploratory interest in the room and toys. Upon the caretaker's return, the infant became visibly happy and relieved. Infants who demonstrated "Anxious-Avoidant

(very seriously) misinterpreted the implications of the findings he was working with, as was the case for his reading of Harlow's experiments with maternal deprivation in Rhesus monkeys. While Harlow's work had suggested that many forms of social deprivation had effects on the development of the infantile Rhesus monkeys he was working with, he also suggested that different forms of care could compensate for particular losses. For instance, Harlow found multiple siblings and peers proved adequate sociality when a mother figure was removed. However, Bowlby largely ignored these suggestions of social compensation and substitutability, arguing instead that Harlow's work backed his postulation that maternal deprivation (and maternal deprivation *alone*) had monumental effects on the development of sociality. For further reading on this misinterpretation, see Vicedo's chapter on Harry Harlow, "Primate Love: Harry Harlow's Work on Mothers and Peers" in *The Nature and Nurture of Love* (146-179).

Attachments” were relatively disinterested in their caretaker’s presence and showed little interest in exploring the room. When their caretaker left, they displayed little concern or anxiety, and were indifferent upon her return. Infants in this category were understood to be defending against a history of insufficient maternal care and frequent rejection. Finally, those demonstrating “Anxious-Resistant Attachment” were anxious and clingy even while their caretaker was present, were extremely distressed by her absence, but displayed resentment and hostility upon her return. This anger was a function of what Ainsworth and her colleagues understood to be a pattern of inconsistent and unpredictable maternal care. Uncertain of whether or not its needs would be answered, the infant metabolized its instability as frustration and anger as a strategy for managing its own precarious dependence and the contingency of its existence.

These three attachment styles were derived from some fifty infants that Ainsworth originally observed. Of these fifty-some observations, only twenty-three were included in Bowlby’s publications because those were the only cases where Ainsworth also observed the infants at home with their mothers, in what she understood to be a “control” situation. The sample of infants observed included middle-class white American mothers with their one-year-old infants. To a certain extent, Ainsworth designed this experiment specifically to test Bowlby’s theories about attachment and security in human infants. Organized around the language of a “secure base,” essentially

what was being played out in these experiments is a spatial hypothesis about attachment. For Bowlby, attachment and security are phenomena of the quality of a mother's care, yes, but also of her physical availability. Patterns of attachment are recorded by engineering the mother's presence and absence, her physical proximity to the child.

Bowlby and Ainsworth made no secret about the fact that the patterns of "attachment security" that they described exist within a hierarchy. According to their typology, "secure attachment" is the mark of stable, happy subjectivities while "anxious resistant" and "anxious avoidant" styles of attachment indicate some form of maladaptation. Bowlby narrates these clear valuations, making reference to what he considered corroborating evidence found in a set of nursery school children also under observation at school:

Those children who showed a secure pattern with mother at 12 months are likely to be described by nursery staff as co-operative, popular with other children, resilient, and resourceful. Those who showed an anxious avoidant pattern are likely to be described as emotionally insulated, hostile and anti-social and, paradoxically, as unduly seeking of attention. Those who showed an anxious resistant pattern are likely to be described as also unduly seeking of attention and as either tense, impulsive, and easily frustrated or else as passive and helpless (Sroufe 1983). (*A Secure Base*, 127)

Importantly, Bowlby uses the language of "security" to name what he understands as psychological normalcy. In its Cold War context, this choice registers a symmetry with the British national agenda and the larger imperative in the West for the expansion and

intensification of capitalism. Secure attachments, like secure states, are the objects of desire in a historical landscape where insecurity and instability is the growing theme of (geo)political narration. Bowlby's scientific psychology helped articulate and legitimate larger political-economic agendas. In this way, it is hardly accidental that Bowlby describes the "secure" child as an ideal political subject—cooperative, popular, resilient, and resourceful—whereas less securely attached children are described as insulated, hostile, impulsive, or helpless. Bowlby's theories about infant's emotional health helped consolidate and implement Cold War national desires.

Remembering the spatial imaginary attached to Bowlby's theory of security is pivotal here since the way emotional security is understood to operate, both for children and for adults, links it to questions of territorial expansion. According to Bowlby, all humans regardless of age or geographical location negotiate the world in relation to a "secure base." At first, the "secure base" names an infant's ideal relationship with its mother, which can be best understood in terms of ever expanding territorial comfort. Securely attached infants feel emboldened to explore their environments, to venture farther and farther out from the domestic protection afforded by the mother's body. This model of ever expanding "comfort zones" becomes the psychological paradigm according to which all healthy human beings operate.

When an individual (of any age) is feeling secure he is likely to explore away from his attachment figure. When alarmed, anxious, tired, or unwell he feels an urge towards proximity. Thus we see the typical

pattern of interaction between child and parent known as exploration from a secure base. (Bowlby, *A Secure Base*, 122)

Bowlby explains that this spatial security dynamic with the mother changes as the infant develops. The feeling of security is not just an aspect of children's attachments to their mothers but rather radiates out into the way that all adults negotiate the relationship between the familiar and the foreign, the local and the global, home and the wider world. Because of the spatial imaginary that attends this theory of security, what Bowlby essentially proposes here is a narrative of psychological development that mirrors the discourse "exploration" that not only fueled centuries of Western colonialism but, newly, was bolstering Cold War space exploration. In other words, infantile mental health is thought, at least partially, through past histories of global exploration (and, implicitly, colonial conquest) and present desires for space travel.

While Bowlby was adamant that this kind of infantile security was the purview of the mother who, ideally, should be "continuously monitoring her infant's state," he also extended the provision of this kind of security to clinicians (*A Secure Base*, 131). In Bowlby's view of the psychoanalytic clinic, "the concept of a secure base is a central feature of the theory of psychotherapy proposed" (*ibid*, 122). One of the main functions of the clinician, therefore, was to act as a provisional mother, standing in as a "secure base" to provide the patient with the experience of security when it had not been given by the mother in the past.

In providing his patient a secure base from which to explore and express his thoughts and feelings the therapist's role is analogous to that of a mother who provides her child with a secure base from which to explore the world. The therapist strives to be reliable, attentive, and sympathetically responsive to his patient's explorations and, so far as he can, to see and feel the world through the patient's eyes, namely to be empathetic. (*ibid*, 140)

Like the mother, the analyst's main task in fostering emotional and mental health for the patient is the consolidation of security. In this way, the psychoanalytic clinic becomes legitimate and desirable because of how it participates in a national project, privately providing one of the paramount virtues of Cold War foreign policy. As with Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, and D.W. Winnicott, Bowlby's clinic was likewise participating in a political conversation through its organization of patient-analyst relationships and its development of techniques designed to engender health. Yet unlike his three predecessor child analysts whose work in some way either questioned or supplemented extant political desires, Bowlby's wholesale promotion of individual emotional security was squarely aligned with Britain's and the US's official position in the Cold War. Bowlby's clinic bolstered state ideology. For Bowlby, the infant was not dissimilar from a nation-state caught in a Cold War crisis. The psychology of the child-subject and the foreign policies of state were thus defined together, symmetrically. And, as I will discuss below, it was through this complicity that Bowlby contributed to the entry of gendered norms in state security discourses.

Communists, Astronauts, and Professional Women: Gender and the Politics of Cold War Psychology

Bowlby was adamant that the scientific work he drew from was empirically superior to the psychoanalytic theories elaborated by clinicians, who relied primarily on interpretations and case studies. With no small measure of condescension, he reflected in 1986 that “unfortunately some of the leading people in psychoanalysis have had no scientific training. Neither Melanie Klein nor Anna Freud knew the first thing about scientific method. They were totally ignorant” (Figlio and Young, 45). For Bowlby, this charge of ascientificity was tantamount to the suggestion that their work was methodologically unfounded and therefore theoretically bankrupt. “I’ve read all the [psychoanalytic] literature but I’m unimpressed,” Bowlby appends. “I’m very unimpressed by the way in which the evidence is recorded, or rather isn’t recorded” (*ibid*, 43).

Yet, his work (as much as any other analyst’s) reflected a specific set of social and political preferences, which determined the meaning he made from data and extended value judgments through the language he used to describe it. Scholars in feminist science studies like Sandra Harding, Donna Haraway, Evelyn Fox Keller, and Elizabeth A. Wilson have importantly drawn attention to the social systems that science relies on to compose its various epistemological claims. Although often announced under the banner of objective truths, science relies on, and is only able to constitute truth through, social, cultural, linguistic, and historical systems. Its methods and conclusions thus bear

the mark of certain epistemological and ethical preconceptions. This is not to say that these methods and conclusions are invalid because of their contingency; more simply, it is an important reminder that scientific claims, like all epistemology, are inherently local and contingent, depending on a complex context for their truth-value. With science, as with any other epistemology, what counts as truth is always determined by a host of geopolitically variable theoretical premises.

As a human scientist—indeed as one of *the first* psychoanalysts who deliberately tried to update psychoanalysis according to the methodological standards of modern science—one of the assumptions Bowlby made at the outset of his work was that there was a qualitative standard for mental health. Forgoing psychoanalysis’s adherence to terms like the unconscious, conflict, primary narcissism, and sexuality, Bowlby instead prized the language of psychological stability, comfort, alliance, security, and cooperation. A child’s (or, for that matter, an adult’s) ability to experience these psychological states was a good measure of his or her psychological health. Bowlby rarely interrogated why these qualities should be desirable, but he unfailingly linked qualities he found less socially useful (like “anti-sociality” or “delinquency”) with illegal or stigmatized practices, like crime, prostitution, and single motherhood. In Bowlby’s work, there is a highly permeable line between social mores and the natural order. Speaking about previous ethnographic studies performed on the mothers of “illegitimate” children, Bowlby writes that

Studies carried out in America make clear, however, that the girl who has a socially unacceptable illegitimate baby often comes from an unsatisfactory family background and has developed a neurotic character, the illegitimate baby being born in the nature of a symptom of her neurosis. ... Though it is impossible to know how typical Young's findings are, it is the opinion of many social workers with psychiatric knowledge and experience of this problem that with many girls becoming an unmarried mother is neurotic and not just accidental. In other cases the girls are psychopathic or defective. (*Maternal Care and Mental Health*, 93-94)

Tying single motherhood to neurosis, psychopathy, moral defectiveness—and, at one point, insanity and promiscuity—Bowlby suggests that the social threat to the institution of heterosexual marriage in the 1950s US and UK is inseparable from the standards of mental health. Bowlby was a strong advocate for the importance of married, heterosexual family units, even if only for the fact that he thought the father a vital material and economic support of the mother, who he imagined at home with the infant. While infants were emotionally dependent on mothers, mothers were in turn materially dependent on fathers. Although Bowlby acknowledged that fathers become important in the child's life later—he most often mentions the importance of the “activities” they do with the child—he remained convinced that mothers are the ones who can *and should* have primary attachment bonds with the child.¹⁷ While Winnicott presented a gender

¹⁷ Take, for instance, Bowlby's remarks delivered at a lecture and directed specifically at the women in the audience: “In times gone by, when higher education was closed to them [women], there was less conflict between the claims of family and career, though the frustration to able and ambitious women was none the less great. ... Yet this progress, like all growth and development, has brought its tensions, and many of you here tonight will know first hand the problem of regulating the conflicting demands of family and career. The solution is not easy and it ill

transitory theory of motherhood in which men (like himself) could be “good enough” mothers too, Bowlby insisted on primary biological differences between men and women, male and female. Unlike contemporary psychologists such as Robert Stoller who were beginning to disarticulate “sex” from “gender” by the late 1960s and early 1970s, Bowlby maintained a fundamentally binary, anatomical understanding of sexual attitudes and behaviors.¹⁸ He argued that women are naturally more suited for the role of primary infant caretaker. In the same interview with Bowlby that I cited earlier, Bowlby states unequivocally that the difference between maternal and paternal care is biologically determined. This justified Bowlby’s conviction that, contra “extreme feminists,” it was women who ought to be the primary caretakers of children in the home, not men. According to Bowlby,

mothers treat children differently from the way fathers do; they [men and women] are complementary. There’s a big overlap but there’s a good deal of difference. The differences make perfectly good biological sense and to suppose that they are interchangeable is probably just wrong. (Figlio and Young, 52)

becomes those of us fortunate enough not to be faced with the problem to lay down the law to the other sex how they should resolve it” (*Affectional Bonds*, 16). Although Bowlby makes superficial gestures here to gender parity—he means not to “lay down the law” about how women ought to balance career and family—he never shies from the conviction that it is women, unequivocally, who have to negotiate the difficulties introduced by reproductive labor. Men like Bowlby are not “faced with the problem” since (presumably) their sole domain is the public, rather than the private, sphere.

¹⁸ For a fascinating account of the less than radical origins of the disarticulation of “gender” from “sex” within the psychological community, see Jemima Repo’s *The Biopolitics of Gender* (2015).

Again, the interviewer pushed on Bowlby's argument, agreeing that gender is currently differentiated, but pointing out that if one accepts the importance of the environment in individual development (as Bowlby was wont to), then such differentiation would be neither necessary nor universal. Bowlby nevertheless remained committed to the importance of biologically determined sexual differences, which he maintained served important evolutionary functions. If Bowlby was known for digging in on two major gripes with psychoanalysis—the first about its lack of scientivism and the second about its relative indifference to the formative effects of environmental experience—then his position on sexual relations and reproductive labor reveals how his affirmation of the importance of the environment was, if nothing else, highly selective.

For Bowlby, any criticism of his work, especially as it has to do with the implications of his gender politics, was not just scientifically unsound, but emerged from what he called “vested interests.” While Bowlby meant this term to substantiate the objectivity of his own position and the biased, political nature of his detractors' critiques, the effect actively speaks far more to Bowlby's own political convictions about gender. Writes Bowlby:

Whenever I hear the issue of maternal deprivation being discussed, I find two groups with a vested interest in shooting down the theory. The Communists are one, for the obvious reason that they need their women at work and thus their children must be cared for by others. The professional women are the second group. They have, in fact, neglected their families. But it's the last thing they want to admit. (qtd. in Vicedo, 225)

At the height of the Cold War, the proximity Bowlby establishes between “The Communists” and “professional women” is extremely effective: by placing “professional women” so close to the much-maligned communists who in the 1960s represented perhaps the greatest threat to Britain’s humming capitalistic democracy, Bowlby effectively discredits feminist claims to gender parity and women’s role in public life. These, he suggests, are the fodder of dangerous political radicals. In fact, at a time when Britain was actively looking for “red” infiltration within the Motherland itself, such rhetoric even implies that all professional women might be latent communists. Like communists, they too want to be at work, neglecting their families with the full sanction of the state. Subtle claims like this participated in a cultural rhetoric that persuaded women to stay at home, if not just because the psychological health of their children was at stake, then also because a certain level of gender non-conformity was used as an index of communist sympathy. Bad mothers—professional women, extreme feminists—blurred into communist sympathizers. For Bowlby, mothering—and mothering well—was a display of patriotism for the British motherland.

Bowlby therefore pawned off the implication that his own work was advancing a political agenda by suggesting that, instead, it was his detractors who were the political zealots, the communists and fascists, the radicals and revolutionaries. His work was based in cold, hard science, not in the Cold War fervor of political fanaticism. Part of what this passage raises is the question of how tied Bowlby’s gender politics were to the

national hostilities brewing between Western and Eastern Europe. To be sure: the familial arrangement Bowlby equated with health cordoned women off in the domestic sphere, returning them to privatized spaces, under men's economic control, while men (re)claimed the public sphere after World War II. Feminists have rightfully taken issue with this, pointing out how claims to objectivity and (psychological) health often conspire with patriarchal or misogynistic ideologies. But by pairing communists and professional women together, Bowlby reminds the reader how important the domestic sphere is to the production of foreign policy. As Amy Kaplan has crucially argued in an American context, domestic ideology structures both the home and the homeland, significantly informing imperial agendas and so-called "foreign" relations.¹⁹ In this way, women in the domestic sphere are key players in the construction and maintenance of an (inter)national imaginary that determines the always-unstable categories of domestic and foreign, home and abroad.

In this context, women's relegation to motherhood and the domestic sphere can be read as part of the way that Britain constructed its national identity in and through its contrast with the Soviet Union. Although gendered relations under Soviet rule were anything but idyllic, the USSR promoted itself as the bastion of sexual equality; it made

¹⁹ See Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity." While Kaplan's article deals with the complicity of manifest destiny and maternal domesticity in the antebellum US, I think its insights apply more broadly to the way 19th and 20th century Western nations negotiate foreign ties in the service of imperial agendas. This is especially true in the Cold War context I am discussing where outer space becomes the new uncharted territory to be conquered as the "manifest destiny" of the human race.

gendered equality central to its mission of a more equitable, communal lifestyle based around ability and need rather than competition and accumulation.²⁰ Even as Stalin-era pro-natalist policies scaled back women's access to abortion and retrenched the more radical anti-nuclear family dictates of the Bolshevik October Revolution, women's education and professional labor were nevertheless central to the USSR's ideological project. The Stalinist Soviet Union glorified the stalwart mother *as* worker.²¹ Thus, Bowlby's anxiety about the potential proximity between professional women and communist sympathizers was a testament to the central role that the question of women's work and the construction of the "domestic" played in the UK's understanding of its "foreign" relations with the USSR. Like many others during these postwar years, Bowlby's support of a maternal domestic ideal was at least in part a defense against a communist lifestyle by and through the reification of specific gendered practices. The

²⁰ Admittedly, the nature of gendered relations in the USSR is a field of active debate. Scholars differ on their understanding of the feminist implications of the Soviet project. While some (like Kristen Ghodsee) find potential for radical, non-Western, non-liberal versions of feminism in women's existence in the USSR, others (like Nanette Funk) see it as a gross impingement on women's freedom. For a fairly even-handed introductory overview of USSR gender policies, as well as their serious material limitations, see chapter six, "Too Emancipated?: Women in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, 1945-1989," in Ann Taylor Allen's *Women in Twentieth Century Europe*. For a more detailed analysis, see the recent edited collection *Gender in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe and the USSR* edited by Catherine Baker.

²¹ Further reading on the changes in maternalist ideology and policy from the Bolshevik revolution to the post-Socialist era can be found in Jenny Kaminer's "Mothers of a New World: Maternity and Culture in the Soviet Period" in *Gender in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe and the USSR* edited by Catherine Baker.

British nation is confirmed as much by those who are relegated outside the bounds of “politics” as by those within.

It should come as no surprise, then, that in contrast to these skulking communists and heartless careerists, what Bowlby presents as the psychic ideal is British motherland. As Bowlby narrates the ideal mother-child relationship—what he calls “healthy development”—he searches for an example through which to best understand the theory of individual psychic life he is proposing. What he lands on is nothing other than the national mother, the Queen-mother herself:

For in healthy development it is towards her [the mother] that each of the several responses becomes directed, much as each of the subjects of the realm comes to direct his loyalty towards the Queen; and it is in relation to the mother that the several responses become integrated into the complex behavior which I have termed ‘attachment behavior’, much as it is in relation to the Sovereign that the components of our constitution become integrated into a working whole.

We may extend the analogy. It is in the nature of our constitution, as of all others, that sovereignty is vested in a single person. A hierarchy of substitutes is permissible but at the head stands a particular individual. The same is true of the infant. Quite early, by a process of learning, he comes to center his instinctual responses not only on a human figure but on a particular human figure. (“The Child’s Tie to His Mother,” 370)

Here, Bowlby unequivocally links monarchal Britain to psychological health. As with the individual mother and her infant, so with the Queen-mother and her national subjects. This fascinating passage has a double effect. In the first instance, as with the nod toward communism, it gives a deliberate moral shape to the ideal of mothering Bowlby is proposing. Mirrored by the British democratic monarchy, the stay-at-home-

mom stands on the “right” side of politics. But, at the same time, by using the vocabulary of psychological health to talk about the organization of political power and government, it simultaneously naturalizes the Commonwealth of Nations and makes clear that UK liberal democracy is allied with psychological welfare. Women’s reproductive labor is central to the security of the state; Britain’s national security relies on and is defined through a mother’s attentive love. Although tautological, such a proposition, coming in a political climate that witnessed the first return of a monarchical queen since Victoria, effectively demonstrates how mothering (and, consequently the psychological welfare of children) is part of the discourse of national security for an entire nation.

Yet this is far from the only time that Bowlby used the political climate of the Cold War to help him substantiate his scientific arguments. If the queen is the natural representative of responsible mothering, then what kinds of subjectivities reflect the security of her maternal ministrations? While immature and unstable persons—delinquents and criminals, prostitutes and anti-socials—are born of bad mothers, what kinds of citizens are born of good mothers? In a lecture in the US in 1970, Bowlby gives a telling example of how exactly he imagines these paragons of emotional security, these well-mothered *men*:

Astronauts rank high as self-reliant men capable of living and working effectively in conditions of great potential danger and stress. ... Despite a high degree of self-reliance and a clear preference for independent action, all the men are reported to be ‘comfortable when

dependence on others is required' and to have a 'capacity to maintain trust, in what might seem conditions of distrust.' The performance of the crew of Apollo 13, which met with a mishap en route to the moon, is testimony to their capacity in this respect. Not only did they maintain their own efficiency in conditions of great danger but they continued to cooperate trustingly and efficiently with their companions at the base on earth.

Turning to their life histories we find that these men 'grew up in relatively small well-organized communities, with considerable family solidarity and strong identification with the father... [They showed] a relatively smooth growth pattern in which they could meet available challenges, increase levels of aspiration, succeed and gain further confidence, and in this way grow in competence. (*Affectional Bonds*, 129-30)

With Apollo 13's technological crisis fresh in the minds and hearts of millions of Americans, Bowlby praises US astronauts not just for their bravery, patriotism, and skill—that is, not just for their willingness to advance the West's standing in the Cold War—but interestingly for their psychological stability and emotional maturity. It comes as no surprise perhaps that, for Cold War psychologists, national heroes also became psychological exemplars. According to Bowlby, these men had what he called "secure" attachment relationships with their mothers and strong, solid identifications with their fathers. They were independent, self-reliant, and efficient, yet trusting and capable of dependence. The fact that Bowlby turns here to discuss a group of men in a profession that, still today, disproportionately privileges men as the paradigmatic "explorers" and masculinity as the natural complement of scientific discovery is hardly insignificant. Clearly, the astronauts on Apollo 13 possess the stuff of truly secure attachments. Tracing the behavior in space back to a family narrative—that is, the alien back to the

familiar and familial—Bowlby notes the solidity and strength of their family groups and paternal identifications. Their professional success was further testament to their psychological health.

What all of these illustrations—from suspect communist women to hale and hearty US astronauts—make clear is that the “security” of one’s emotional attachments is anything but separable from a global climate of insecurity throughout the Cold War. The prized aspects of psychological health in Bowlby’s rubric are also the prized qualities of the nation-state permanently on the brink of nuclear war. Thus, the emotionally secure astronauts likewise serve a double function: they provide an example of psychological security at the same time as, through their professional activities, they simultaneously safeguard national security in a “space race” that became emblematic of the Cold War itself. The language of security begins to make its appearance in psychology and psychoanalysis at the same time as Britain and the US become hyper-concerned about their own national (in)security in postwar global politics.

(In)Secure: Neoliberalism, Gender, and the Security State Today

Importantly, Bowlby’s work (which spanned the 1940s through the 1980s) mantled the transition from a liberal welfare state to neoliberalism in Britain. While it is not within the purview of this dissertation to chart in detail how psychoanalysis has

adapted in response to—and often in accordance with—the ascent of neoliberalism,²²

Bowlby's work does presage something of the consolidation of security discourses and gender in the present moment, especially in a transatlantic US-UK setting.

In her forthcoming book, *Saving the Security State: Exceptional Citizens in Twenty-First Century America* (2017), Inderpal Grewal traces the emergence of what she terms "exceptional citizens," or typically white American men who, individually, take up the call to security in the context of the US's ever-worsening economic instability and its loss of geopolitical power in advanced neoliberalism. Toward the end of the text, in a chapter called "'Security Moms' and 'Security Feminists': Securitizing the Family and State," Grewal considers how this vigilante commitment to security has also been dually taken up by mothers and feminists. As she puts it,

these two female figures, the security mom and the security feminist, the one protecting the home and the other protecting the security state, are important in their attempts to maintain the division between public and private even while transgressing the boundaries of civilian and military, home and work, domestic and international. Their work in securitizing the security state makes them exceptional citizens, even as their sovereignty is more insecure than that of their male counterparts. (Unpublished Proofs, 215)

While men might seem to have the monopoly on national security concerns, Grewal shows how women, organized dually around claims to liberal feminism and conservative domesticity, likewise advance security projects. As Grewal argues, the co-

²² For such an analysis of contemporary psychoanalysis, see *Loaded Subjects: Psychoanalysis, Money and the Global Financial Crisis*.

extensiveness of the domestic sphere with the state is central to the unique position from which women position themselves as security actors. Indeed, it is primarily through their position *as mothers* that “security moms” and “security feminists” alike insert their contribution to national security. By cultivating security in their children, and by managing their children with the same kind of doubled security-and-surveillance techniques key to the state’s domestic policies, security moms and feminists use women’s relegation to domesticity precisely as a means to enact foreign policy.

Certainly, Bowlby was not dealing with a security climate as nebulous, technologized, or global as the post-Thatcher/Reagan neoliberal moment. As many scholars have documented, after the Soviet Union ended the nature of national security discourse had to change profoundly to address and specularize different kinds of enemy “threats.”²³ Yet the contemporary US obsession with guaranteeing national security at seemingly any cost has its roots in the dawning Cold War recognition that, in the wake of any possibility of national isolationism, the likelihood of nuclear extinction is wedded to the strength of a political economy other than capitalistic democracy. Observing the transformation of Cold War security discourse into the contemporary American crisis of global security politics, Ronnie D. Lipschutz aptly gathers that

²³ For further reading on how Cold War national security discourse has been retooled, see Ole Wæver’s “Securitization and Desecuritization,” Barry Buzan’s “Security, the State, and the ‘New World Order,’” and Ronnie D. Lipschutz’s “Negotiating the Boundaries of Difference and Security at Millennium’s End” in *On Security*.

efforts to reproduce some version of American Society abroad, in order to make the world more secure for Americans, came to threaten the cultures and societies of the countries being transformed, making their citizens less secure. The process thereby transformed them into the very enemies we feared so greatly. (*On Security*, 15)

The discourse of national security became paramount precisely when—*and exactly because*—the twentieth-century processes of globalization and technological weapons advancement made the future of the coherent ethnic nation-state profoundly *insecure*. “As distance, oceans and borders became less of a protective barrier to alien identities, and a new international economy required penetration into other worlds, *national interest* became too weak a semantic guide. We found a stronger one in *national security...*” (Der Derian, *On Security*, 42). Although substantially re-tooled within the current climate of American neoliberalism and post-modern globalization, national desires for security are embroiled with Cold War agendas of capitalistic expansion.

This postwar concern with security persists in the present moment, both in a continuing interest in psychological experiences of (in)security and in broader concerns about the security of the boundaries of the nation-state in a thoroughly interconnected, permeated, and globalized world. Thus, part of what Bowlby’s work is useful for is drawing broad connections across borders and times: his interest in emotional security in 1950s-1970s British liberalism anticipates something of the configuration of contemporary American neoliberalism, to the extent that the technologization of capital and the continuing efforts of Western imperialism have brought ever more states and

territories under the dominion of the US. Bowlby's work thus raises important questions about how the psychological knowledges and practices of the past have been transformed and disseminated in new kinds of global knowledge circuits in the present. Far from remaining the cornerstones of psychoanalytic practice and technique in the clinic—though this is certainly true—these ways of thinking the self, especially the childish self, inform and reify the purchase of politics globally.

Conclusions, Or How to Bring Your Kids Up Democratic in a Time of Political Crisis

In July 2017, The New Press published what promises to be a best-selling book of parenting advice titled, *How Do I Explain This to My Kids?: Parenting in the Age of Trump*. Under the editorial guidance of Sarah Swong and Diane Wachtell, eighteen different artists, activists, writers, commentators, editors, and professors contribute short meditations on the new difficulties of parenting after the election of Donald J. Trump as the 45th President of the United States of America. These vignettes are bookended by introductory and concluding self-help advice offered by Dr. Ava Siegler, a clinical child psychologist who practices in New York City and has gained wide readership through her recurring advice column in *Child* magazine, “Ask Dr. Ava,” and her bestselling book of self help parenting advice, *What Should I tell the Kids? A Parent’s Guide to Real Problems in the Real World* (1993). Each of the contributors takes a different tack in their writing: while some offer personal narratives from their own families, others theorize strategies for resistance. But what all the contributors share is the conviction that the relationship between children and politics is something that warrants deliberate consideration. For these authors, Trump’s inauguration redefined the stakes of and the techniques for raising politically progressive children.

Much of what the authors in this collection discuss as parenting crisis points are the predictable keynotes in Trump-governed America. Race, immigration, religion,

gender non-conformity, ethnicity, Women's and Civil Rights, and language are all taken up as newly intensified sites of conflict, danger, and vulnerability. Children are warned about their own subjective position in relation to these categories and are given different narrative tools for making sense of what, for most of the families, seems to be an exceptionalized moment of failure in the history of US democracy.

By way of conclusion to these parables of politicized parenting, child psychologist Ava Siegler provides some expertise commentary on child rearing, refocusing the lens from parents' relationship with their children to the psychological experts' relationship to parents and children alike. In sections like "Raising Civilized Children in an Uncivilized World" and "Protecting Your Children in the Trump Era," Siegler elaborates on what she calls the "civilizing emotions," highlighting the importance of cultivating guilt, shame, conscience, empathy, self-control, and self-esteem in children. These are the very psychological traits that, she suggests, are not just absent in Trump but that he deliberately derides and devalues. Since these forms of moral and psychological authority are demeaned by the leader of the nation, Siegler argues that it is all the more important for parents to curate them at home in order to ensure that Trump's "uncivilized" psychology does not set a dangerous example for children across America. Blending the language of psychological scientivism and moral authority, Siegler dispenses various at home strategies for curbing behaviors like lying, boasting, bullying, and blaming; she advises parents to instill in their stead a sense of

truth, personal responsibility, civic engagement, and compassion. As is perhaps expected in a book of self-help advice, Siegler approaches the problem of Trump psychologically and tries to cultivate tactics for parents to manage the relationship between Trump and their children.

To a reader of mid-century child psychoanalysis, the tactics that Siegler suggests for combating Trump's infantile authoritarianism are anything but unfamiliar. Indeed, these parenting strategies draw explicitly from the psychological vocabulary invented and popularized by child analysts like Anna Freud, Melanie Klein, and John Bowlby. At one point, in relation to the problem of bullying, Siegler encourages parents to be on the lookout to an "identification with the aggressor" in which children victimized by bullying aggression cope with their vulnerability by adopting the role of aggressor themselves. Given Trump's persona as the bully of a nation, Siegler advises parents that this behavioral response might be newly mobilized on a national rather than simply individual scale. The parents role in such a situation is to authoritatively set limits for the child, embodying a counter-instance of what just authority looks like. For readers of Anna Freud's work, such advice seems familiar. The term "identification with the aggressor" is one Anna Freud coined and is perhaps her most well-known contribution to psychoanalytic theory while an emphasis on parental authority mirrors her own clinical convictions about childhood development.

In this same vein, Siegler borrows implicitly from Melanie Klein when she proposes to parents a strategy for processing disruptive experiences, which she calls “reparative narratives.” According to Siegler, these are “stories that help children to master upsetting events,” a process not unlike that undertaken by Sigmund Freud’s grandson as he sought to “master” his mother’s inexplicable absence by throwing and retrieving his cotton-reel (160-61). Adopting Klein’s language of the reparative, Siegler implies that this psychic process is important for children’s ability to understand the anomaly of Trump—or perhaps even to more effectively narrate him *as an anomaly*, as an American exception rather than representative truth. Klein’s theory of psychic reparations, mobilized in a contemporary setting, does not just name a psychic process but becomes a utilizable self-help strategy for enabling parents and children alike reinvest in the possibility of justice at a time of political crisis.

Part of what is interesting about Siegler’s dialogue, though, is that it represents the relationship between Trump and the child as a two-way street. It is not just that Trump exerts an undue magnetism on children’s minds, but that he too is best understood through psychological paradigms like “child,” “infant,” and “adolescent.” Throughout her writing, Siegler gestures to this reciprocal relation, suggesting that Trump embodies a pathologically childish psychology, one she calls “primitive” and says “displays some of the worst aspects adolescent behavior” (131; 159). Siegler is far from the only commentator to use this language. Recent articles from *The New York*

Times (May 15, 2017), to *The Washington Post* (June 19, 2016), to Salon.com (May 13, 2017) offer analyses of Trump and his behavior specifically under the banner of the child, printing headlines like “When the World Is Led by a Child” and “Mr. Trump’s Childish Behavior.” News Anchors and pundits mock his teenage antics on twitter, critics rebuke his childish tantrums, and reporters and journalists routinely note his narcissistic and infantile egoism. The psychologized language of childhood has been an important narrative tool for making sense of the problems of political injustice that Trump’s presence in the White House raises.

It is hardly a novel revelation to say that these narratives about Trump’s psychology shift the weight of systemic problems of misogyny, racism, class entitlement, and xenophobia (to name only a few) onto an exceptionalized individual whose damaged psychology is the author of such disconcerting actions, attitudes, and opinions. To say that Trump is childish is to remove him from a circuit of political responsibility and agency; it casts him as a schoolyard bully (albeit a dangerous one) rather than a finely distilled example of the many *undemocratic* injustices that the United States was founded on and continues to uphold and encourage daily. Part of the logic of Siegler’s advice book, then, is that through proactive parenting strategies that consciously help children overcome these characteristically childish behaviors parents can have a hand in producing a generation of sane, sound, and (most importantly) properly democratic children. “You must teach your children to respect the institution of democracy,” Siegler

cautions, “even while you many not approve of our democracy’s current elected head or the specifics of the system that was used to elect him” (135-36). In a recent *Jacobin* article about progressive parenting, “Room to Grow,” author Steve Early cites Siegler’s text as a useful resource for parents who want to cultivate a progressive political attitude in their children that lasts for life. Although neither of these texts frame their interventions in this language, essentially what both are doing is trying to consolidate psychological knowledges about childhood and children into practicable strategies for engineering liberal and/or leftist subjectivities. Confronted with the horrifying yet sensational image of childhood-gone-wrong in Trump, parents are enjoined, with new intensity, to safeguard US democracy first and foremost in their children’s minds.

In this way, the mid-century clinical project that child analysts undertook has been disseminated more broadly as an ethic for living, especially in times of political crisis. As expertise advice by psychologists has become more accessible through mass publishing and digital media, previously elite clinical techniques and tactics have been deployed in different contexts and put to new uses. Klein, for instance, may have been grappling with a specific wartime problematic about the relationship between ethics and reparation, but her theory of psychic reparations lives on as much in twenty-first-century self-help advice aimed at US audiences under the shadow of Trump’s neo-authoritarianism as it does in recent feminist and queer academic debates about reading and interpretation. The effects of psychoanalytic practice extend well beyond the walls

of the clinic, informing not just the way we think the child, but also generating many of the conceptual tools we use in the everyday practice of thinking our selves.

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Biography

Carolyn Laubender was born in Los Angeles, California on March 9th 1989. After 18 years in the stifling suburbs of Ventura County, she matriculated to Lehigh University where she was a member of *South Mountain College* (SMC), a residential liberal arts college within Lehigh University based on the legacy of Black Mountain College. In 2010 she graduated *cum laude* with a Bachelors of the Arts in Gender Studies in Literature and a minor in Philosophy. At Duke, her research and teaching have focused on the intersection of literature, gender and sexuality, and psychoanalysis. She has published widely in peer-reviewed journals, including *International Journal of Women's Studies*, *Feminist Theory*, *Psychoanalysis and History*, *Harts & Minds: A Journal of the Arts and Humanities*, and *Studies in Gender and Sexuality*. Since coming to Duke, she has been pleased to be the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards, including: The Anne McDougall Memorial Award (2013), The Pope Family and Robert K. Steel Summer Research Fellowships (2015; 2016), Domestic and Internal Dissertation Research Fellowships (2015; 2016), The Women's Studies Dissertation Fellowship (2016-17), and The Bass Instructional Fellowship (2017), all awarded by Duke University. In her free time, she is a competitive dressage rider and, in the coming year, she hopes to earn her USDF Bronze Medal.