FALL
2021

viewpoints

in psychoanalysis

Psychoanalysis Art & Science

intersections & connections

Editor
Wilda Mesias, PhD

Design
Lucas Daniel Cuatrecasas

Contributors
Lucas Daniel Cuatrecasas
Flora DeGeorge, LCSW
Carla Gagliano, LCSW
Liz Gertner, PhD
Wilda Mesias, PhD
Burton Norman Seitler, PhD
Tammy Smith, LCSW

a publication of

NJI SINCE 1972
The New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis

Viewpoints in Psychoanalysis is a publication of
The New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis.

Viewpoints is a forum for sharing, debating, and analyzing the historical, academic, political, aesthetic, and experimental aspects of the psychoanalytic experience.

The views and opinions expressed in *Viewpoints* do not necessarily reflect those of The New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis or its faculty, staff, students, or affiliates.

Viewpoints's content is aimed at sparking discussion and reflection. It is committed to representing a diversity of perspectives, along various dimensions.

121 Cedar Lane, Suite 3-A, Teaneck, NJ 07666

info@njinstitute.com

njinstitute.com

viewpointsnji.wordpress.com

Viewpoints is published twice a year, in the fall and in the spring.

for inquiries about submissions: viewpointsnji@protonmail.com

A note from the editor

Wilda Mesias, PhD

The creative writer does the same as the child at play. He creates a world of phantasy which he takes very seriously—that is, which he invests with large amounts of emotion—while separating it sharply from reality. Language has preserved this relationship between children's play and poetic creation.
Sigmund Freud*

As I bring you the fall 2021 issue of *Viewpoints in Psychoanalysis*, I can't help but take a journey down memory lane and see myself almost 33 years ago when I started my training at the New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis (NJI).

At that time, NJI's home was 800 Catalpa Ave., Teaneck, New Jersey. It was Neil Wilson, PhD, NJI's co-founder and the former editor of *Viewpoints*, who interviewed me for admission to NJI. During my time as a candidate, Neil was one of my instructors and supervisors and is now an esteemed colleague and a friend. The spring 2021 issue was Neil's last, and he has now entrusted me with this magazine, NJI's flagship publication.

This fall 2021 issue of *Viewpoints in Psychoanalysis* has undergone an aesthetic shift—as one can appreciate from the last page of this issue, giving us a view of our past. It is proud to feature diverse voices in different areas of the field, from psychoanalysis and the arts to the value of psychoanalytic research and Freud's enduring relevance. Each article reflects the "poetic creation" of its contributor.

I extend my gratitude to all the authors who have made this issue possible.

In this issue:

* Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming, in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, vol. 9, at 143, 144 (James Strachey trans. 1966).

Physics Envy:
A Review of Louise Bourgeois, Freud's Daughter

Lucas Daniel Cuatrecasas

Pain is the ransom of formalism.
Louise Bourgeois[1]

Before Louise Bourgeois became an artist, she was a mathematician.

Born in Paris in 1911, Bourgeois studied geometry and calculus at the Sorbonne in the early 1930s. It seems she enjoyed the structure of numbers. As she put it, "I loved geometry . . . because it gave me a sense of order."[2]

Louise Bourgeois, Insomnia (1996), MoMA, https://www.moma.org/collection/works/168982

After her mother's death in 1932, though, Bourgeois turned to art. There are countless, varied meanings we could attribute to this biographical pivot. More than I can explore here, in any case. But in the end, Bourgeois—ostensibly leaving math behind—went on to become one of the most celebrated and instantly recognizable artists of both the last century and this one. The Bourgeois trademark is an omnipresent sense of utter terror, a piercing reckoning with strife and pain, and an uncomfortably profound exploration of organic decay. Each of her works, in one way or another, brings these themes into relief.

And yet a deep formalist rigor also marks Bourgeois's oeuvre. Hers is a formalism in the truest sense: a desire that the material, outward presentation of a work express its intellectual content in a precise and consistent way. Almost everywhere in Bourgeois's art there is a commitment to developing a formal vocabulary for the expression of truth—a truth about identity, emotion, sensation. In her formalism, Bourgeois remained a mathematician. In this sense—and in many other ways—Bourgeois's art assumes or even requires a working knowledge of Bourgeois's life. The biographical lens is often the one closest at hand.

The Jewish Museum's recent exhibition, *Louise Bourgeois, Freud's Daughter*, takes this lens. Bourgeois was in psychoanalysis for over thirty years,[3] and at the core of the exhibition are

scores of writings Bourgeois produced during her treatment, which are variously tragic, disturbing, and mordant. Given its subject matter, the show mostly treats Bourgeois as the subject of a psychoanalytic inquiry. In other words: a patient. Indeed, the curator's essay in the exhibition catalogue is titled "The Case of LB."[4]

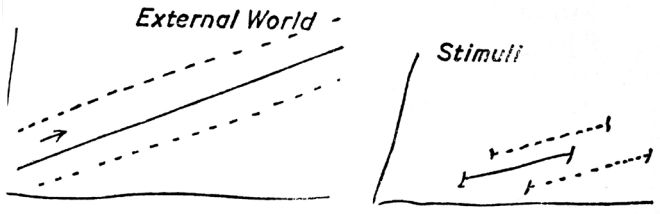
To be sure, the show also frames Bourgeois as an interlocutor with the field of psychoanalysis. Bourgeois's on-and-off hostility toward analysis and interest in physical action as opposed to words suggest an alternative mode of intrapsychic exploration. And as Jamieson Webster has observed, we can read Bourgeois's channeling of her psychological unrest into art as an argument for the theory of "sublimation," with which Sigmund Freud had an ambivalent relationship.[5] Nevertheless, the show's central preoccupation is with a vision of Bourgeois as analysand.[6]

Yet there is a different—and perhaps less played-out—overlap between Bourgeois's and Freud's intellectual projects. It's one that frames Bourgeois less as a target of psychoanalytic inquiry and more as an actor working, like Freud, to describe internal but observable phenomena—feelings, fears, wishes—in terms consistent with a broader framework. That is, both Bourgeois and Freud were formalists.

Consider Freud's *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, an early work dating from before Freud's articulation of psychoanalysis proper. Here, Freud takes an explicitly formalist tack, perhaps more so than in any other of his works. The *Project* is largely an attempt to explain the mechanics of memory and, in doing so, put forward a general model of psychology. This model flows from Freud's division of the world into two types of stimuli: those internal to the body and those external to it. Internal stimuli, produced by the body's own energy, are the source of our "major needs" (e.g., hunger). External stimuli leave traces on the body, which we can think of here as memories.[7] In some cases, the interaction between the body's own energy and these traces can result in what Freud terms "*excessively intense* ideas," the painful preoccupations of those struggling with poor mental health.[8]

So began Freud's development of an "economics of nervous force."[9] Throughout his writings, Freud aptly uses the word "economics" or "economic" to refer to a distribution of mental resources under scarcity. But the *Project* is perhaps the clearest illustration of Freud's interest in identifying laws of the mind that operate with the near-mechanical inevitability of the law of supply and demand.[10]

Tellingly, though, this use of "economic" persists in Freud's later work. We come across it even after Freud had given the theory of psychoanalysis a more robust exposition (e.g., we see it in *Civilization and its Discontents*).[11] The term, denoting a discipline that is surely closer than psychoanalysis to the exactitude of physics, reveals Freud's continuing formalist sensibility: a preoccupation with closed systems that have parameters one can define and optimize.



[Fig. 12]

Sigmund Freud, Project for a Scientific Psychology (1895), Fig. 12, SE 1 at 313.

Contrast, however, some of Freud's later thinking. In *Analysis Terminable and Interminable*, written almost half a century after the *Project*, Freud famously looks to the question of when analysis ought to end. Notably, the question prompts him to consider that the intellectual framework he had built might—at least initially—have imposed a definite, final quality on events within the mind that are, in actuality, tentative or ambiguous. He writes:

> We know that the first step towards attaining intellectual mastery of our environment is to discover generalizations, rules and laws which bring order into chaos. In doing this we simplify the world of phenomena; but we cannot avoid falsifying it, especially if we are dealing with processes of development and change. What we are concerned with is discerning a *qualitative* alteration, and as a rule in doing so we neglect, at any rate to begin with, a *quantitative* factor. In the real world, transitions and intermediate stages are far more common than sharply differentiated opposite states.[12]

In other words, the project for a scientific psychology survives, but its hard-edged categories have become softer, and its contrasts more muted. Experience with the nuances of mental life has prompted Freud to qualify earlier, more economic predictions. Indeed, we can already see Freud moving in this direction in the 1920s. Consider his insistence, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, on the "uncertainty" that attended his formulation of the death drive.[13]

In some ways, Louise Bourgeois's work conveys a similar formalist ennui. As with the *Project*, the two pillars of Bourgeois's art are memory and the tension between inside and outside. From these two basic elements—which are really just one: the unbridgeable gap between the lives we live inside our minds and the lives we live in relation to others—Bourgeois then creates endless variations on a formal theme. Yet she returns, always, to the same "ur-geometry problem, the existential triangle" that cast a three-pronged shadow over her life and work: her mother, her father, and herself.[14]

Perhaps the most well-known examples of such variations are Bourgeois's *Cells*, a set of large-scale sculptural works consisting of a closed space of one kind or another. The *Cell* featured in the Jewish Museum's show, *Passage Dangereux*, fills a room and evokes profound anxiety. Although the *Cells*' content varies, they are all meditations on the indelible marks external reality leaves on interior life.

Indeed, countless features of Bourgeois's art on display at the Jewish Museum's show—knives cutting into stuffed fabric, strips of quasi-skin turned inside out—do something similar, evoking an unseemly exposure of the internal to the external. Conversely, the other large installation on display at the show, *The Destruction of the Father*, riffs on a story relating to cannibalism,[15] perhaps the ultimate transgression committed by the internal self against the external other.

Bourgeois's writings draw these themes into starker relief. Consider a few lines of a transcription appearing in the exhibition:

> *In the mathematical world and in the world*
>
> *of Morals (Pascal) the impossible is possible.*

and also in the world of logic – the premise is <u>your</u> choice

A world where bereavement does not exist because

there is nothing which one can mourn. it is a world

that is not going to disappoint me because I am building it

myself. I am the author of my own world

with its internal logic and with its value that no one

can deny.[16]

It's Bourgeois's "*internal logic*" that gives her writings their unique force and brilliance. Despite their frequently offhand quality ("3 15. AM. . . . I would like to eat some anchovies/ or something salty"),[17] they gesture at the vast world she was building for herself. They show us its architecture by segmenting it into chunks of meaning to be combined and recombined—akin to the *Cells*' repeated use of a single, organizing idea and similar yet varying materials.

We can see this in little details. The equals sign is a favorite of Bourgeois, who sometimes deploys it to transition between a nod to the outer world, on the one hand, and introspection, on the other ("in the morning = to leave is difficult for me – To / detach myself from what I am doing is always difficult").[18] Or consider how time punctuates many of the writings. One might read this as a diaristic element (thus: "2:30 in the night I have not been / able to go to sleep; up since 7 AM. I consider this a very / long day").[19] But Bourgeois's integration of time into her writings also subjects this element of external, mundane reality to the writings' own logic. Take the ninth and final entry in an enumerated list of a "Cicle [sic] of worries": "will never adjust.withdrawl [sic] for good.3 PM.suicide."[20]

In lines like these, timestamps become linguistic elements with immediate, visceral meaning. Here, "3 PM"—the time of death, not the time of day—seems to signify inescapable, torturous pain, ticking away on the psychological horizon.

Consider also the theme of emptiness. A stunning piece made of woven fabric, *I Am Afraid*, hangs near the entrance to the exhibition. Part of it reads "EMPTY STOMACH EMPTY HOUSE EMPTY BOTTLE." In her writings, Bourgeois hinted that we might view the sack-like forms that she sculpted in her later career as "empty house[s]."[21] The phrase—and, more broadly, the figure of the empty house—appears throughout her work.[22] But emptiness itself has a deeper meaning for Bourgeois. She writes:

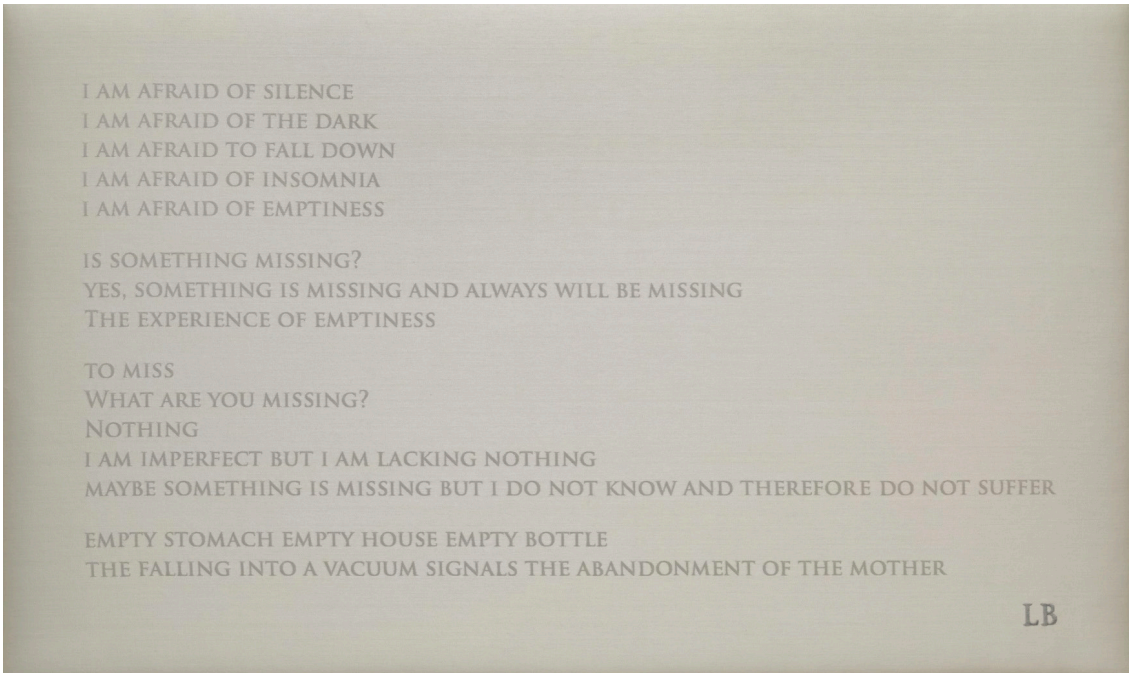
I do not have to live in an empty world . . .

I have to control space because I cannot

stand emptiness

emptiness is a space the edge of which you do

not know and you are not sure of – like falling



Louise Bourgeois, I Am Afraid (2009), MoMA, https://www.moma.org/collection/works/155774

into space or like being dizzy.[23]

Emptiness, then, is not only a figure in Bourgeois's work but a symbol undergirding it. Emptiness is that which is not under Bourgeois's control—the hostile other, the "disappoint[ing]" outside world. Crucially, the next line in *I Am Afraid* reads: "THE FALLING INTO A VACUUM SIGNALS THE ABANDONMENT OF THE MOTHER." In coining these linguistic motifs, Bourgeois was perfecting the vocabulary in which to express her world's internal logic.

In this, Bourgeois and Freud's projects bear some resemblance to one another. The subject of their inquiry was the human psyche, and their tools were associative thinking and a geometric knack for the ways symbols and meanings interlocked. And yet, at the same time, their projects both gesture toward the impossibility of their own realization.

This is perhaps easiest to see in Freud. The external reality of patients' experiences chastened his scientific pretensions significantly, and his "economics of nervous force" appears in his later work only as the residue of an outsized ambition. Bourgeois's reckoning with formalism is different. For Bourgeois, the emptiness of the world outside her art haunts her work like an omen. It is an ever-encroaching threat, an infinite source of anxiety. The vacuum left by the mother who is no longer there.

Like Freud, then, Bourgeois perhaps sensed that the world she built could not capture, could not absorb, everything it set out to. But her work captured more than enough for us to glimpse a powerful "sense of order": the promise of formalism, shimmering beautifully inside an empty world.

endnotes

[1] Louise Bourgeois, Cell I (1994), Davos Collection, Switzerland, http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/features/lowery/louise-

bourgeois6-15-10_detail.asp?picnum=10; see also Jerry Gorovoy & Pandora Tabatabai Asbaghi, Louise Bourgeois: Blue Days and Pink Days 196 (1997).

[2] Gorovoy & Asbaghi, supra note 1, at 64.

[3] Philip Larratt-Smith & Juliet Mitchell, Louise Bourgeois: Freud's Daughter 105 (2021) [hereinafter Catalogue].

[4] Id. at 100.

[5] Jamieson Webster, A Dangerous Method, Artforum (July 28, 2021), https://www.artforum.com/slant/jamieson-webster-on-louise-bourgeois-and-psychoanalysis-86266.

[6] Cf. Nancy Princenthal, Is It Fair to Call Louise Bourgeois "Freud's Daughter"?, Hyperallergic (Aug. 14, 2021), https://hyperallergic.com/669396/is-it-fair-to-call-louise-bourgeois-freuds-daughter.

[7] The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, vol. 1 at 296–97, 299–303 (James Strachey trans. 1966) [hereinafter SE, followed by volume number].

[8] Id. at 347–52.

[9] The phrase is from a letter to Wilhelm Fliess written on May 25, 1895. Id. at 283.

[10] For a helpful critical account of Freud's transition to his later thinking, see Clark Glymour, How Freud Left Science, in Philosophical Problems of the Internal and External Worlds: Essays on the Philosophy of Adolf Grünbaum 461 (John Earman, Allen I. Janis, Gerald J. Massey & Nicholas Rescher eds. 1994).

[11] E.g., SE 21 at 83.

[12] SE 23 at 228.

[13] SE 18 at 59–60.

[14] Gary Indiana, Gary Indiana on the Psychoanalytic Writings of Louise Bourgeois, Hauser & Wirth (Fall 2019), https://www.hauserwirth.com/ursula/25821-gary-indiana-psychoanalytic-writings-louise-bourgeois.

[15] Catalogue at 114; see also Gorovoy & Asbaghi, supra note 1, at 142–43.

[16] LB-0043, 2 January 1961. Italics indicate a translation from the French; spelling and capitalization are as they appear the original.

[17] Catalogue at 21.

[18] Id. at 24.

[19] Id. at 28.

[20] Id. at 20.

[21] Kimberly Bradley, Louise Bourgeois's "The Empty House," art agenda (July 5, 2018), https://www.art-agenda.com/features/241723/louise-bourgeois-s-the-empty-house.

[22] E.g., Louise Bourgeois, Femme Maison (1947), MoMA, https://www.moma.org/collection/works/110614; Catalogue at 141 (quoting Bourgeois); Bradley, supra note 21; see also Louise Bourgeois, Cell (Choisy), 1990-3, https://www.culture24.org.uk/asset_arena/4/71/2174/v0_master.jpg.

[23] Catalogue at 108. Ellipsis indicates omission.

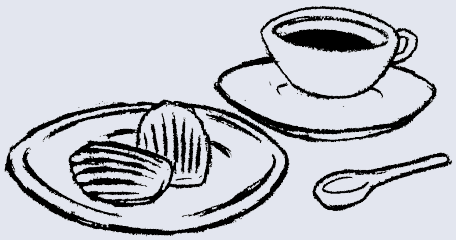
Also by Way of Music

Wilda Mesias, PhD

Freud has had and continues to have a powerful impact on the arts. The analysis of literary texts, as well as of visual media, remains heavily influenced by psychoanalytic themes—among them, the unconscious, the uncanny, and Eros and Thanatos.

As someone who grew up with a father who was an artist (a sculptor), musically inclined siblings, and a household that loved literature, I have always been drawn to the rich connections between art and psychoanalysis. The hermeneutic practice of dream interpretation; Freud's appreciation of condensation and displacement (or what Lacan would call metaphor and metonymy); his collection of archaeological items; his affinity for Rembrandt; and his writings on Leonardo da Vinci (among many other essays on art) have all contributed to my love for psychoanalysis beyond the couch.

Art is interwoven with both the study and the practice of psychoanalysis. In a recent session of a course I was teaching on countertransference at NJI, the conversation among my students featured a bevy of apt references: Proust's madeleine and the theme of memory, Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* and Thanatos, ballet and its echoes in the synchronous movement of the analytic encounter. Our discussion illuminated not only the theoretical and clinical course material but also the broader connections between psychoanalysis and creative work.



Yet, as that class ended, I was left thinking that, despite Freud's immense interest in art, he did not have a great affinity for music. In *The Moses of Michelangelo* (1914) he says:

> I am no connoisseur in art, but simply a layman . . . . Nevertheless, works of art do exercise a powerful effect on me, especially those of literature and sculpture, less often of painting. This has occasioned me, when I have been contemplating such things, to spend a long time before them trying to apprehend them in my own way . . . . Wherever I cannot do this, as for instance with music, I am almost incapable of obtaining any pleasure. Some rationalistic, or perhaps analytic, turn of mind in me rebels against being

moved by a thing without knowing why I am thus affected and what it is that affects me . . . . (Standard Edition [SE] vol. 13 at 211)

As someone who loves classical music—and particularly opera—I often have wondered what Freud's resistance was. Among different hypotheses, I recall reading that perhaps he suffered from melophobia. Interestingly enough, Freud met with Mahler in 1910 for a few sessions. But despite the psychoanalytic resonance of some of Mahler's works, this encounter doesn't seem to have changed Freud's relationship to music.

By contrast, Freud loved the intellectual challenge of literary works. He also once likened psychoanalysis to sculpture:

> [S]culpture, however, proceeds *per via di levare*, since it takes away from the block of stone all that hides the surface of the statue contained in it. In a similar way, the technique of suggestion aims at proceeding *per via di porre*; it is not concerned with the origin, strength and meaning of the morbid symptoms, but instead, it superimposes something—a suggestion—in the expectation that it will be strong enough to restrain the pathogenic idea from coming to expression. Analytic therapy, on the other hand, does not seek to add or to introduce anything new, but to take away something, to bring out something . . . . (Freud, 1905, SE vol. 7 at 260)

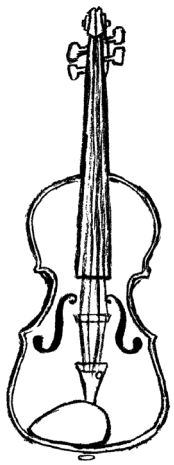
But music was left out. Music creates a mood, awakens feelings; in dance, it guides the movement that responds to a beat. In the analytic encounter, each patient has a tempo and a rhythm. And as the analyst listens with evenly hovering attention, attunement follows. In this space there is a form, a mood, a resolution—perhaps a rupture or a disruption. A continuous flow or an ending. Staccatos, allegros, tenutos, fermatas, and the like.

Brahms once wrote the following about the last movement of Bach's second partita for violin in D minor (known as the chaconne): "On a single stave and for a small instrument, the man creates a whole world of the deepest thoughts and the most powerful feelings . . . ."*

And as Cecilia Bartoli sings in her recording of one of Vivaldi's arias:

> Quell'augellin, che canta / felice in mezzo al faggio / canta la libertà / che grato il ciel gli diè. / Ma se prigion ei sta, / sospira in suo linguaggio / e a la diletta pianta / sempre rivolge il piè.
>
> [That little bird, chirruping happily / and hidden within his beech tree, / is singing for the freedom / a grateful heaven has granted him. / But if he is locked in a cage, / he sighs in his own language, / and yearns endlessly to fly back / to his beloved tree.] (La Silvia, act II, scene 1; Antonio Vivaldi (composer), Enrico Bissari (librettist))

I can't help think that analytic therapy, besides proceeding *per via di levare*, also moves *per via di musica*.



drawings by LDC

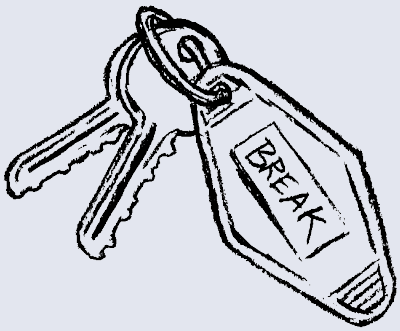
* Quoted in A.J. Goldmann, Making Room for Bach in Mozart's Hometown, N.Y. Times (Aug. 13, 2021), https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/13/arts/music/bach-salzburg-festival.html.

Mastering Vulnerable Positions

Tammy Smith, LCSW
NJI Candidate

A psychotherapist is not usually compared to a ballerina—unless the practitioner has a history of ballet training—yet the similarities between dedication to dance and commitment to dyadic connections seem striking. Both art forms employ classical techniques requiring years of arduous study. An aspiring dancer must do more than don a leotard and a pair of toe shoes to execute flawless jumps across the stage. Likewise, an aspiring therapist cannot merely hang a shingle and buy a couch to create a safe, authentic, and attuned professional relationship. Acquiring specific yet subtle skills will take years of practice.

Dancers and therapists willing to be vulnerable, receive constructive criticism, and admit to making mistakes will flourish more easily. Showing up and willing to be seen is half the battle. Mirroring doesn't always feel kind. Surfaces are slippery. Watch out for wet floors. Be kind to the folks waiting in the wings, especially those in charge of handing out extra keys to the restrooms and breakrooms. Safety and privacy are essential components to quality performances.



Warm up first. Dress in layers. Stand in awe of the courage it takes to stretch and twist bodies and minds to unimaginable lengths reaching far beyond comfort zones. Muscle memory is painfully soul-searching, like those cramped and sweaty spots dancers occupy standing on bleeding, blistered tiptoes. Tight as hell. Blustery. Raw. The tempo changes. The music is in the steps the artists go by. All the athletic tape in the world cannot cover up the gaping holes performers trip over like wounded geography. Every scar is a story searching for the way back home.

Such an emphasis on technical prowess—including the inevitable fallback on technique when the analyst/dancer/artist feels anxious—if explored, can serve as both a safeguard and an inquiry to delve deeper. Vulnerability is often just beyond the edge of what cannot be seen or felt. Does the illusion of space and time influence the parameters of safety and frames? What is an ambitious creative to do in the face of all this uncertainty?

Breathe deeply to settle into the discomfort of endeavoring to balance on one foot to develop a more substantial turnout. Beware of posturing. Demonstrate the difficulty of being fallible and unavoidably human. Positionality is shaped through personal experiences.

Intersubjective realities. Master the fifth position.

Precision is discipline inverted times three. Stretch. Bend. Repeat. Sigmund Freud compared analysis to surgery. Count the beats. Heart thumping. Pulse racing. Why is this mad business of leaping into the air and spinning roundabout to the point of no return so enticing? The taste of sweat is tantalizing. Dancing as fast as one can at the edge of possibility feels exhilarating until the legs turn wobbly and the body crumples to the ground, badly bruised. The thud of defeat is deafening.

After an injury, the dancer must recalibrate to recover. Align their healing fractures back to their original state to overcome the fear of not performing complicated steps like before. Similarly, trained clinicians, after sustaining a rupture in therapy, seek to realign with their patients. Words matter more or less than they used to. Silence, a unique language, is extended as a pantomime of palms and long fingers curving upward as if in prayer or blowing kisses to a sacred sky. A fluid conversion of syllabic energy.

Practice the pause. Timing matters. Gracefully submit to the urgency of need or the absence of desire. Pay attention to rules but memorize shortcuts. Start with the basics. Ready, set, go! Plunge, dip, suck in deep breaths just long enough to stir the senses to a dizzying height. Hold on before letting go. Object cathexis. Admissions become the discharges no one saw coming. The consent to release is standard practice.

drawings by LDC

The Value of Psychoanalytic Research: Bucci's Endorsement

Burton Norman Seitler, PhD

It is no secret that psychoanalytic ideas and practices have been under fire for a number of years. One criticism that has been leveled at them is that psychoanalytic work has no empirical backing. Another is that its ideas are unprovable (i.e., Popper's notion of "falsifiability"). However, instead of bulwarking its tenets against such attacks by producing and widely disseminating solid research which demonstrates the efficacy of the psychoanalytic endeavor, some have dug in their collective heels and maintained that it is an art form that cannot be studied. I wrote about this recently (2021) in *The International Journal of Controversial Discussions* (*IJCD*) with the appropriately controversial (yet lengthy) title, "Do Analytic Institutes Eat Their Young? Psychoanalysis/Art, Physics, Psycho-Physics, and a Parable: A Response to Arnold Richards, M.D."

Regrettably, when some analysts think research can't be done: it (1) negates the fact that even art can be studied and (2) also overlooks the fact that psychoanalytic conceptualizations and praxis can be, have long been, and continue to be studied.

It wasn't until Shedler (2010) published his research in a mainstream (translated as, non-psychoanalytic) journal that others began to take notice that there really was empirical support for analytic positions. As it turns out, there **is** considerable backing, in spite of a segment of analysts who also didn't believe the work could be examined scientifically and thus were unaware that such research does, in fact, exist (see *JASPER*,[1] 2018, pp. 63–103). Of late, a new reckoning has emerged and there is much wider recognition of the previous existence of analytic studies and of the need for further investigations.

Despite lamenting the fact that—until recently—there had been a turn away from psychoanalytic process research, Bucci (2021) combined her Multiple Code Theory and the Referential Process with new and improved computerized assessment techniques and reached back in time to codify and analyze in-session verbatim comments that were made decades ago in the classic case of Mrs. C.'s experience in psychoanalysis.

The value of having research centers on the fundamental dual questions of why psychodynamic and/or psychoanalytic psychotherapy needs research at all and whether it can be studied quantitatively. Bucci believes that the "battle to show the special value of the psychodynamic approach can't be won on the outcome field alone" (p. 57).

There has been substantially less funding for psychodynamic studies and, correspondingly, whatever research we have produced (much more than most of us would have ever guessed—see Seitler, 2018, published in *JASPER*) has received very little attention and even less recognition. Accordingly, the public, as well as professionals in related fields, myopically continue to view cognitive-behavioral approaches as the most efficacious treatment modality. This perception is inherently flawed, as Shedler (2010) amply demonstrated.

Fittingly, Bucci contends that what we need to do is demonstrate that psychoanalytic approaches do something that other approaches do not do, that our methods are different in a special way. She properly points out that one of the special qualities of our approach is that we help the patient to see herself/himself/themselves differently, and commensurate with this, to see the world differently with respect to herself/himself/themselves.

In the latter respect, Bucci recommends that we develop comparative outcome studies that uncover underlying processes and mechanisms in order to specify—where possible—the ways in which (and the basis by which) these approaches are similar, and to detail how they are different. This will necessitate the inclusion of a systematic process component. Finally, she wonders what conclusions would have been drawn or what techniques might have been modified if that had been done in the case of Mrs. C. by her analyst (and his supervisor), as well as by the "cohorts of researchers and analysts working at the time" (p. 57).

references

Bucci, W. (2021). The research itch: Looking within the psychotherapy process. *DIVISION/Review: A Quarterly Psychoanalytic Forum*, (24), 48–57.

Seitler, B.N. (2021). Do analytic institutes eat their young? Psychoanalysis/art, physics, psycho-physics, and a parable: A response to Arnold Richards, M.D. *International Journal of Controversial Discussions*, (4), 20–40.

Seitler, B.N. (2018). Who sez psychoanalysis ain't got no empirical research to back up its claims: An extensive bibliographic compendium of studies. *JASPER*, *2*(1), 63–103.

Shedler, J. (2010). The efficacy of psychodynamic psychotherapy. *American Psychologist*, *65*(2), 98–109.

endnotes

[1] *JASPER* was the winner of the prestigious Gradiva Award for 2019.

READING FREUD IN THE SUMMER

Reflections from:

Wilda Mesias, PhD
Flora DeGeorge, LCSW
Carla Gagliano, LCSW
Liz Gertner, PhD

NJI

I began teaching a course on Freud and ego psychology at the Center for Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis of New Jersey (CPPNJ) in the spring of 2018. In 2019 the course's name changed to "The Relevance of Freud and Ego Psychology for Psychotherapists Today." For the past three years, at the class's first session each semester, I asked students for the spontaneous associations Freud evoked for them. The range of reactions has included "genius," "the first object relationist," "misogynistic," "father of psychoanalysis," "irrelevant," "outdated," and "dense."

In this course, we move historically, tracing the development of psychoanalysis from its very inception. Beginning with hypnosis, we proceed to abreaction, to free association, and then to everything that lies beyond it. Reading Freud's works, we follow his discoveries, struggles, contemplations, and innovations.

I have always had a love and respect for Freud—his mind, his curiosity, his foresight. This is something my students know from the get-go. However, in class, we create a space for them to find their own relationship to Freud—the man, the academic, the analyst. Readings are variously found dense, fascinating, indecipherable, timely. And when the class comes to an end, usually a bit more time with Freud and his ideas is desired. One year, to gratify this wish, we met an extra month, read cases from other writers' work, such as that of McDougall and Lindner, and unpacked their application of classical psychoanalysis. Another year, we added some readings and discussions. This year, taking full advantage of the flexibility that remote meetings offer, we decided to read more Freud.

In this manner the Freud Reading Group was born with six members. We met six times during the summer, and, in addition to reading Freud's papers on technique, we read *Some Character-Types Met with in Psycho-Analytic Work*, *On Transience*, *Negation*, *Constructions in Analysis*, *The Uncanny*, *A Child Is Being Beaten*, and *Analysis Terminable and Interminable*.

Each of the members drew from the readings and discussions their own insights:

"I signed up for the summer reading group to find out how Freud's work could be relevant to my own. So, this summer, I read Freud everywhere: on the Cape, at the Jersey Shore, in the Catskills, and even at our town pool. Our readings have helped me to think about finding derivatives from the unconscious, about mechanisms of defense, and about much more. Most importantly, I have learned that Freud's work should not be ignored."

Flora DeGeorge, LCSW

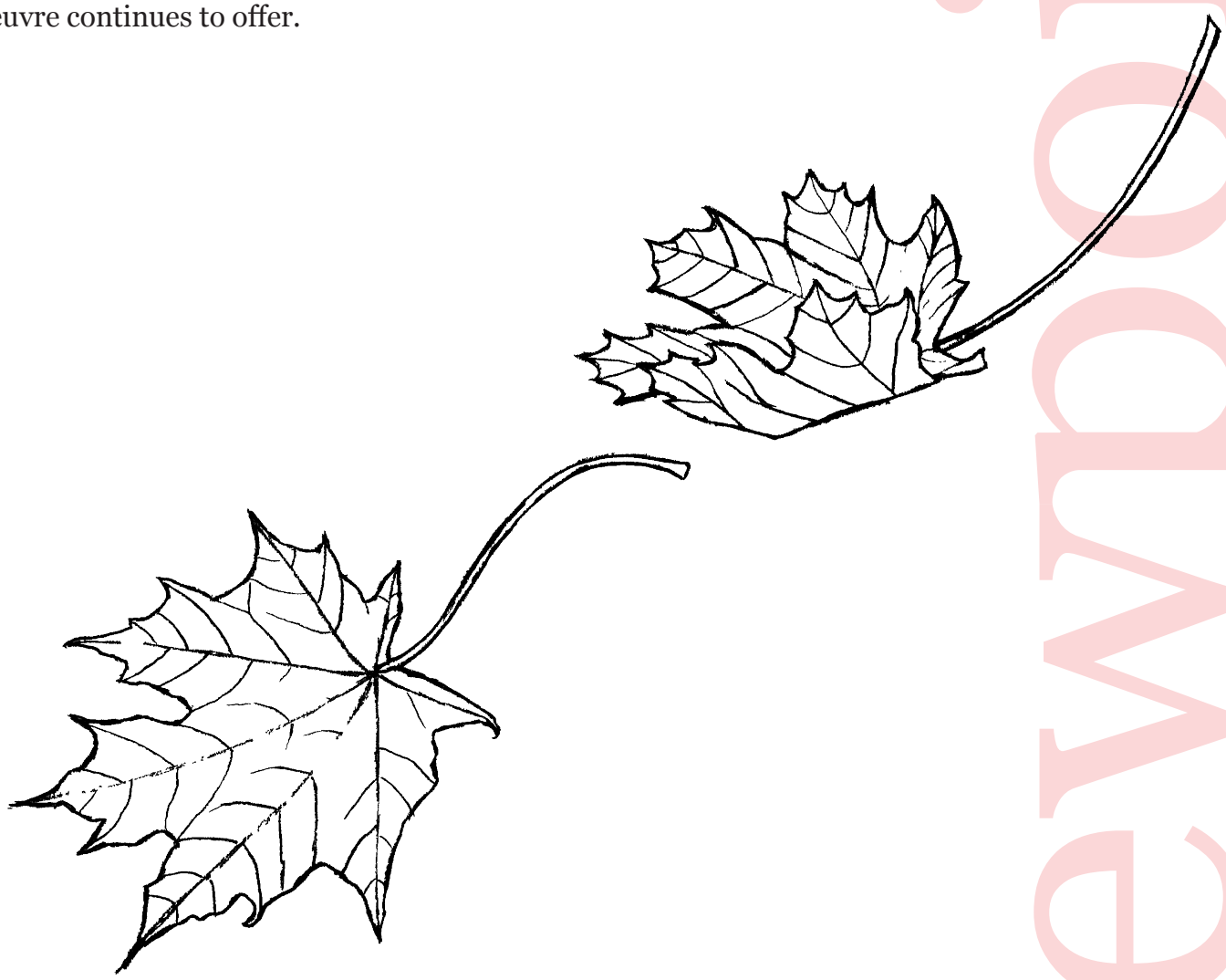
"Our six weeks reviewing Freud's technique papers were incredible. It all began with Freud; he is alive and well and present in everyday life. He began his work by developing a relationship with his patients and sought to understand their symptoms by uncovering unconscious material, allowing hidden conflicts to emerge. Freud's techniques have endured the test of time: free association and dream interpretation remain valuable today. The reading group has aided me in my work with my patients."

Carla Gagliano, LCSW

"In studying some of Freud's writings in depth, I was struck by how much of what I have learned about conducting therapy—the importance of following the patient's lead and of attending to issues around the frame such as time and fee, for example—goes back to Freud. I was also moved by the compassion and poetry in his writings."

Liz Gertner, PhD

Having witnessed the Freud Wars, Mitchell's notion of the "paradigm shift" in the 1980s, the different views of Freud and psychoanalysis that are prevalent in other regions of the United States and in other countries, and the many criticisms—along with the enduring appreciation—of classical psychoanalysis, I continue to discover nuances in Freud's remarkable legacy and clinical insight. When we give time to Freud's work by reading *Freud*—as opposed to *reading about Freud*—a new generation of psychoanalysts can learn to appreciate his foresight, the relevance of his ideas, and the immense richness that his oeuvre continues to offer.



drawings by LDC

Viewpoints
in psychoanalysis

Vol. 1 No. 3 Fall 1992

NJI for Training in Psychoanalysis

Viewpoints is a publication of the N.J. Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis; a forum for sharing, debating and analyzing the historical, academic, political, and experimental aspects of the psychoanalytic experience.

800 Catalpa Avenue
Teaneck, N.J. 07666

Early on Freud studied religion in the context of psychoanalytic theory. In this spirit we include two articles regarding aspects of religion. Dr. Chernick's book review presents a scholarly approach to the understanding of the influence of Freud's Jewish background upon his writings.

Natalie Gannon, a graduate of the New Jersey Institute, offers an honest, courageous paper which yields insight into her work with the religious. More articles on the general topic of psychoanalysis and religion are planned.

Zorida Mohammed, our resident poetess, received a New Jersey State Council on the Arts 1991-1992 Fellowship Grant for Poetry.

Neil Wilson, Editor

FREUD AND MOSES: THE LONG JOURNEY HOME

Written By Emanuel Rice, M.D.
(1990: State Univ. of N.Y. Press)
Reviewed By Prof. Michael Chernick

Emanuel Rice, Associate Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at The Mount Sinai School of Medicine and a practicing psychiatrist, has written a provocative volume titled Freud and Moses: The Long Journey Home. Freud and Moses is a psycho-history. Its subject is Freud, his family, society, disciples and his emotional struggles with them and himself. This history's documents are inscriptions written byJacob Freud, Sigmund Freud's father, in the family Bible; Freud's writings, especially Moses and Monotheism; reports and documents from Freud's extended family; and reports and documents by both his loyal and his rebellious disciples. Much of this material is new, or at least newly interpreted, and Rice's presentation of these records alone would make his book worthwhile reading for those who are interested in the life and times of one of modernity's creators.

Beyond new Freudiana, the book presents a thesis which runs counter to current assessments of religion's role in Freud's life. In short, Peter Gay's choice of title for his 1987 work on Freud, A Godless Jew, sums up the majority view: Freud, though proud of his Jewishness, was the assimilated son of assimilated parents. In Gay's and other's view it is exactly this godlessness and freedom from religion which allowed Freud, the freethinker, to develop his psychological theories and the psychotherapeutic methods which flow from them.

Rice demurs. For him Freud is the product of a traditional Jewish household, one quite distant from assimilation. Judaism, no less than Jewishness, is an important intellectual and emotional issue for Freud. Its palpability in Freud's surroundings added a significant dimension to Freud's relation with his father, Jacob, and, that, according to Rice, greatly influenced his life, work and writings. Moses and Monotheism, written toward the end of Freud's life, represents Freud's final resolution of his Oedipal and religious conflicts and his return home to Judaism on his own terms. Supported by the documents mentioned above, the thesis has a degree of merit and plausibility.

What are the sources of this plausibility and merit? First, Rice traces the Freuds back one generation. They are Galician Jews who moved from Tysmenitz, a small, typically Eastern European Jewish village, to Freiberg, and finally, to Vienna. Austria had only recently emancipated its Jews (c. 1865), by giving them citizenship and residential rights in Austrian cities. Thus, the Freuds arrival from Galicia was in many respects similar to the arrival of Eastern European Jewry in America. The pressure to conform to the dominant culture's mores and to shed particularly Jewish ways was strong. Further, anti-semitism was somewhat sharpened by emancipation and functioned as another goal to effacing one's Jewish identity and adherence to Judaism. At the very least, a Jew, especially a second generation emancipated one, was bound to feel ambivalence about Jewish religion, life, and culture in its Eastern European garb. As often occurs to victims of other forms of racism and religious prejudice, victims of anti-semitism often identify with their oppressors and internalize the negative attitudes, stereotypes, and pejorative view projected on them. Indeed, a letter by the adolescent Freud describing a chasidic family travelling with him to Freiberg is filled with anti-Semitic caricatures (Freud and Moses, p. 22). In short, Freud is a second generation Jew trying to undo the disaster of being the son of two Eastern European immigrants.

Beyond this, Freud married Martha

*Special thanks to Neil Wilson for providing this view of our past from his iPhone.