The manifest dream is the point of convergence for the multiple associative strands that radiate from it. It's structure, when understood, reveals the principle of organization for the associative material that accompanies the dream report.

—Stanley R. Palombo, M.D., *Deconstructing the Manifest Dream.*

I dreamed all this; never could my poor head have invented such a thing.


It is an accepted notion that we tend to dream at night of something that has strongly impressed us in the daytime, when we were awake. My observations are the opposite. I’ve noticed more than once that it is precisely things we have barely noticed in the daytime, thoughts not brought to clarity, words spoken without feeling and left without attention, that return at night clothed in flesh and blood, and become the subjects of dreams, as if in compensation for our neglect of them in the daytime.

—Boris Pasternak, *Dr. Zhivago.*
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Introduction

Monday, January 15, 1990. I turned 36 the previous month. I telephoned Stanley R. Palombo, M.D., a psychiatrist, to make an appointment. Dr. Palombo was also a psychoanalyst. I had been referred to Dr. Palombo by Albert Rothenberg, M.D., an authority on creativity. Dr. Rothenberg had given me the names of two psychiatrists. I chose Dr. Palombo because I recognized his name from a book about creativity I had read by the British psychiatrist, Anthony Storr, *Solitude: A Return to the Self*. Storr had quoted a passage about dreaming from a book Dr. Palombo had written titled, *Dreaming and Memory*. I had an interest in dream analysis, so the chance to see a psychoanalyst who had expertise in that area attracted me. I was off from work that day; January 15 happened to be Martin Luther King’s birthday. *I have a dream . . .*

During my one-year therapy work with Dr. Palombo I began to think seriously about the psychoanalytical significance of my dreams. I was inspired by the following observation in Dr. Palombo's book, *Dreaming and Memory*: “the dream compares the representation of an emotionally significant event of the past with the representation of an emotionally significant aspect of the previous day’s experience.” I began to employ Dr. Palombo's idea as a schema with which to understand my dreams by first thinking about what transpired the day before the dream and then thinking about correspondences between those recent experiences and associated feelings and the manifest content of the dream—then working backward to earlier recollections. The dream write-ups that follow in this text follow Dr. Palombo's basic blueprint for understanding the hidden meaning of dreams.

The text concludes with a creative piece I wrote in the year 2005, “Reflections of a Solitary on a Snowy Afternoon in January,” that points to parallels between my deliberative creative writing and the unconscious forces that drive my dreams and daydreams.
**The Dream of the London Hotel**

*Introduction*

In her novel about psychoanalysis, *August*, Judith Rossner writes about the fictional analyst, Lulu Shinefeld who treats a patient who purchased a copy of two books by Freud. During the analysis the patient lifted dreams out of Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* and presented them to Dr. Shinefeld as if the dreams were his own. After a time, Dr. Shinefeld came to see what the patient was doing but thought that the fact that the patient had chosen those dreams had analyzable meaning. Rossner writes: "During the time between his accepting Dr. Shinefeld and actually coming into the office (his third scheduled appointment), he purchased *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* and *The Interpretation of Dreams*. . . . He'd been with her for a few weeks before she was confirmed in her suspicion that material he was bringing in consisted of simple alterations of basic dreams he'd found in the book. When she said that there was probably still meaning in his selection of dreams, he stopped telling them to her at all."

I read *August* in 1984 when I was 30 years old, before I had developed a deeper appreciation of psychoanalysis. At the present time I can remember only one incident from the book, and it is the quoted passage above. I was deeply impressed and intrigued with the analytic view that everything is analyzable. Even the patient's evasion of the analytic work, as Rossner describes, or the patient's attempts to destroy meaning are analyzable issues.

At a therapy session on I reported a dream I had had the previous evening and I discussed my associations to the dream. At the conclusion of my dream report, I said: "I can't wait to get home and write up my thoughts. At this very moment I am trying to think of a title for the dream." My therapist appeared to become irritated. She viewed my independent self-analysis as self-defeating; that I was destroying the meaning of our therapy relationship. My therapist's comments had a critical tone.

But is it even possible for a patient to successfully obliterate meaning? Are not the very strategies that the patient uses to defeat the analytic work themselves
analyzable? Doesn't the principle of psychic determinism—namely, the view that everything a patient says and does in the analysis is related to everything else about the patient and that conscious thoughts and behaviors have unconscious determinants—also apply to a patient's self-defeating behaviors and attempts to destroy meaning? Once again, in analysis, isn't everything a patient says and does in the session simply analyzable—doesn't everything a patient says and does constitute communications that have unconscious determinants, communications that have meaning?

I would say that my statement, "I can't wait to get home and write up my thoughts" even if considered an attempt to evade the therapy work, is itself unconsciously determined and meaningful as well as related to everything else that I talked about at the session. Indeed, the very dream I related to my therapist at this session on January 30 contained the following thought: “I am truly lost, utterly lost, with no hope of getting back [home].” And didn't one of my previous significant dreams contain the thought, “How am I going to get home?” (See The Dream of Schubert's Final Piano Sonata). I note, incidentally, that in Homer's Odyssey, “the return home” is the overarching theme of a book about a journey: a metaphor for psychic exploration.

My therapist interpreted my statement “I can't wait to get home and write up my thoughts" as a concrete, literal reference to my physical absence from the therapy situation. Perhaps, a more sophisticated and psychoanalytically-attuned listener might think about the ways in which I was not talking about physical absence at all, but psychical absence: a retreat from the present moment to an inner, psychic world that was overfull with the traumatic experiences of past generations. I refer to the work of the analyst Haydée Faimberg, whose book, _The Telescoping of Generations_ attempts to "explain the [nonverbal] transmission of a history that at least partially does not belong to the patient's life and that is clinically revealed . . . as a constituent of the patient's psyche." Faimberg, H., _The Telescoping of Generations_. Faimberg demonstrates how narcissistic links that pass between generations can be unfolded in the intimacy of the session, through engagement with the patient’s private language. She describes the analyst’s narcissistic resistances to hearing what the patient does say, and what
the patient cannot say. Is my psychical preoccupation with “going home” a transference phenomenon, a narcissistic identification with my maternal grandmother who immigrated to the United States from Poland with her newlywed husband at age eighteen? She never saw her family again and did not acculturate to the United States. An analytic listener needs to be alive to all possible interpretations of the patient's material—both what he says and what he cannot say. I had previously talked with my therapist about my family's traumatic past, and even discussed Faimberg’s work with her.

It is my view that only an inexperienced or amateurish analyst would fail to see that the patient's evasion of the work of analysis is itself analyzable. Only an analyst who has no deep understanding of the underlying assumptions of an analytic view of the mind will divide a patient's narrative into two categories: namely, analyzable narrative and un-analyzable narrative. A fundamental principle that emerges from an analytic view of the mind is that all of a patient's narrative fits into only one category, namely, analyzable, unconsciously determined statements that are subject to psychic determinism. A patient in analysis might consciously try to evade the analytic work, but he cannot evade psychic determinism. Keep in mind, the statement "I can't wait to get home and write up my thoughts,” is not simply a statement of intent to engage in a future behavior that bypasses the therapy work, it is also an idea: an association to everything else I said at that session.

In my view my statement, "I can't wait to get home and write up my thoughts" carries important meaning about my transference and my resistance to the transference and is in fact analyzable. I attempt to demonstrate this proposition in the following discussion.

**Transference Issues Arising at a Therapy Session**

I discussed with my therapist a dream I had had the previous evening. I saw the dream as a transference dream that was an expression of the disappointment, I feel about our therapy work.

*I am in London, England. I am on vacation. I am walking around the city as a tourist. There are construction sites everywhere. Foundations are being dug. There is mud*
everywhere, on the streets. In the distance I see a central district with tall buildings, skyscrapers. I have a mix of anxious feelings. I think, “this is not the London I imagined. Where are the old quaint buildings? Where are the types of places you’d like to visit, things of interest to tourists? They are nowhere to be seen. All I see are sights that I would see in any other metropolis, say New York or Philadelphia. I wanted to see the old London, not a modern metropolis. This isn’t what I imagined.” I take videos of the construction sites with my iPod, which I plan to post on my Facebook page. The most severe anxiety concerns the following thought: I had strayed a distance from my hotel and no longer remembered the name of the hotel or the street on which it was located. I thought, “What will I tell a cabbie, how will I direct him to my hotel? I don’t remember the name of the hotel or where it’s located. I am truly lost, utterly lost, with no hope of getting back.”

EVENTS OF THE PREVIOUS DAY:

1. I had sent an email to the IPA (The International Psychoanalytical Association) in London. I attached a text I had written about my therapist, a trainee analyst:

   I am concerned about the competence of [redacted], MSW, MBA, LICSW, Washington, DC. [redacted] is a psychoanalyst but I see her in weekly psychodynamic psychotherapy.

   I have written a document about a recent therapy session, which, in my mind, raises substantial questions about her competency. Could you address my concerns? The text of the therapy write-up is in the attachment.

   Gary Freedman

   A brief time later, I received the following reply from the IPA:

   —–Original Message—–

   From: IPA General
   To: Gary Freedman
   Sent: Wed, Jan 29, 2020 5:46 am
   Subject: RE: analyst competence

   Dear Gary,
Thank you for your email,

Please note that per the IPA’s Procedural Code, you will need to contact the Ethics Department from the organization [redacted] is affiliated with directly. Per our records, [redacted] is currently an IPA Candidate in training via the Washington Baltimore Center for Psychoanalysis. The Chair of the Ethics Committee at the centre is Dr. Martha Dupecher, and the process for raising an ethics complaint at the centre can be found here.

Kind regards,

Lucila Riascos Weber

Membership Services Secretary

I then sent the following email to Martha Dupecher, Ph.D.

Dr. Dupecher:

I am in weekly psychotherapy with an analyst-in-training at the Washington Baltimore Center for Psychoanalysis. I am concerned that although my therapist is outstanding that she is not at a level of training that is suitable for my needs. I wrote some thoughts about our work together that suggests that my therapy relationship with her is not a good fit. I have maintained my therapist’s anonymity. May I interest you to take a look at what I wrote about a recent therapy session?

Gary Freedman

Washington, DC

Dr. Dupecher did not reply.

2. Later, in the evening, I watched an episode of the TV series *Upstairs, Downstairs*, from the 2010 production. The drama is about an upper-class family, the Holland family, that has purchased 165 Eaton Place in London in 1936, some years after the Bellamy family sold the premises in 1930. The Bellamy saga was the subject of previous Upstairs, Downstairs productions that were broadcast in the 1970s. I was a big fan of both the old series and the more recent shows from 2010 and 2012. I watched the opening episode that I had previously seen in the year 2010. In the beginning of the episode the former
Bellamy maid, Rose Buck, who now runs a domestic servant agency, returns to 165 Eaton Place as housekeeper to the new owners, the Hollands. I found the following scene early in the story emotionally powerful. Rose Buck enters the grand house. She is alone. The house is empty and in great disrepair. She walks around, apparently moved by returning to the house where she had worked for 40 years (“This isn’t what I imagined”). I projected onto the character Rose Buck painful feelings of nostalgia and loss.

3. Earlier in the day I learned via a Google search that my college English instructor, Ellen Furman had died at age 76 in 2018. It was Mrs. Furman who introduced me to *The Great Gatsby* by Fitzgerald and other works of literature by Hemingway and Faulkner (*As I Lay Dying*).

*Random Thoughts:*

I link the dream to anxious feelings I have about my therapist and our work. I had such high hopes about embarking on therapy with her last February 2019. I had idealized feelings about seeing a psychoanalyst (perhaps symbolized in the dream by my idealized notions about “quaint old London”). These idealized imaginings were never realized. I saw that my therapist was not fundamentally different from any therapist symbolized perhaps by the sense that the London I saw was just a generic metropolis like New York or Philadelphia. “I could have saved a trip to London and just gone to New York.” I could have seen any therapist, not a psychoanalyst.

I suspect that the hotel room to which I cannot return is the analyst’s office. One stays in a hotel room for a time-limited period, just as one stays in the analyst’s office for a time-limited period. One rents the hotel room; one rents the analyst’s time in a room. I think of the fact that my 1990 dream about my previous therapist, the psychoanalyst, Stanley R. Palombo, M.D. (*The Dream of the Birthday Cake*) took place at a hotel, once again, the analyst’s office. Dr. Palombo’s professional office was in an apartment building.

This London dream is related to the dream I had the night before my first session with my therapist on February 21, 2019 (*The Dream of the Borromean Islands*). I associated that dream to idealized feelings I had about a trip I had
made to Stresa, Italy in 1978. I associated those idealized feelings about Italy to my eager anticipation, mixed with anxiety, of seeing a psychoanalyst the next day. I took pictures in that dream also, just as I took videos in this dream. I suspect there are issues of phallic-urethral urgency in the London dream, as symbolized by the London skyscrapers. The skyscrapers symbolize the erect penis.

I suspect that the London construction sites in the London dream symbolized the process of psychoanalysis, that is, digging into the unconscious. I had positive feelings about the construction work; I took videos of the work and planned to post the videos on the Internet. (In this very letter, I am, figuratively speaking, taking “pictures” of my dug-up unconscious.)

I see the following themes in the London dream: Disappointed idealization and disillusion. I had expected so much from seeing quaint old London (seeing a psychoanalyst) and I was disappointed and disillusioned. London was just a generic metropolis (my therapist was like any other therapist, not a psychoanalyst).

The London dream symbolizes my desire for and anxieties about analysis (symbolized by the construction work, that is, digging up the unconscious and the fear of getting “soiled by the mud”).

I see symbolism in the London dream relating to possible phallic-urethral urgency (symbolized in the dream by the London skyscrapers) which Freud and Erikson linked to ambition (“I will email this document to the IPA and the IPA will think I am a psychoanalytic genius!”). Erikson writes in Insight and Responsibility: “At the end of Freud’s dream of Count Thun, there is also an unknown man seemingly a victim of the ambitious dreamer’s wish to escape infantile shame and to prove that he is ‘somebody.’” In contacting the IPA was I attempting to prove that I was “somebody?” Was I attempting to overcome feelings of shame I experience with my therapist? (“My therapist makes me feel worthless and castrated. I will show her. I will write to the IPA and prove my worth.”) Was I attempting to be “rescued from obscurity?”

We can see feelings of loss and nostalgia in the London dream (that I projected
onto the Upstairs, Downstairs character Rose Buck); I had expected that seeing a psychoanalyst in February 2019 would revive the positive feelings I had with Dr. Palombo in 1990, but that never materialized.

The day following the dream I discussed with my therapist my thoughts about the London dream as well as the fact that I had sent an email about my therapy to the IPA. My therapist’s comments were limited to the following: “You have a desire for power and control.” She thought the dream was about power and control. She saw issues of power and control in my contacting the IPA;

I saw grandiosity — “I will be famous! They will think I am a genius!” When I told my therapist that I was looking forward to going home to do a write-up of the London dream, she said that I was “destroying meaning.” She meant that the only valuable meaning of the dream would come from my therapy work with her, not my self-analysis. She thinks my self-analysis is a process of destroying the meaning of my actual therapy with her. As I see it, my therapist devalues any expression of my autonomy, which I see as promoting my engulfment fears (and also my feelings of shame).

One last thought. Freud lived his final year in London, an exile from Nazi-occupied Austria, and died there in 1939.

A portion of my autobiographical novel, Significant Moments describes Freud’s flight to England and his death by euthanasia in London in September 1939:

Here in this house . . .
H. Rider Haggard, *Montezuma’s Daughter*.
. . . in London, . . .
J. Moussaieff Masson, *Freud and the Seduction Theory*.
. . . Between one June and another September . . .
T.S. Eliot, *Excerpt from Marina*.
. . . Freud lived out the year he still had to live . . .
Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time*.
. . . extremely ill; . . .
Henry James, *The Chaperon*.
. . . an exile, . . .
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Excerpt from Evangeline*.
. . . alone in an alien culture.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Flight To Italy. Diary and Selected Letters*.
What images return

T.S. Eliot, *Excerpt from Marina*.

June

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Flight To Italy. Diary and Selected Letters*.
crossing the Channel

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*.
through the fog

T.S. Eliot, *Excerpt from Marina*.
by the night boat

Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time*.
the last outposts of France, sleeping under the stars

Alan Furst, *The World at Night quoting Arthur Koestler (1940).*
water lapping the bow

T.S. Eliot, *Excerpt from Marina*.
the still night

George Gordon, Lord Byron, *Manfred*.
Then, land!—then England!

Elizabeth Barret Browning, *Aurora Leigh*.
reaching the other shore

*Commentary on the Diamond Sutra*.
the first eight weeks of freedom

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Flight To Italy. Diary and Selected Letters*.
June, May . . . April . . . February . . . November

Simon Gray, *Butley*.
September

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *The Flight To Italy. Diary and Selected Letters*.
this long disease
Simon Gray, *Butley*.
his daughter Anna
Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time*.
Freud, Living and Dying
Max Schur, *Freud, Living and Dying*.
—his death and her sorrow—
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*.
the final summons
James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*.
‘What is it—what?’
Robert Frost, *Excerpt from Home Burial*.
My daughter.
T.S. Eliot, *Excerpt from Marina*.
“—and the doctor.”
his loyal and loving physician
Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time*.
the morphine
Freud’s end as a stoic suicide
Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time*.
syringes and needles
Alan Dershowitz, *Reversal of Fortune: Inside the von Bulow Case*.

(A syringe figures prominently in two other dreams in this book: The Dream of the Botanical Monograph and The Dream of the Intruding Doctor).

The scene in *Upstairs, Downstairs* in which the maid Rose Buck returns in 1936 to her old place of work, 165 Eaton place six years after she had left the Bellamy household in 1930 reminds me of the text at the end of my book, *Significant Moments*, which talks about Freud's former home at Berggasse 19 in Vienna. The *Upstairs, Downstairs* character, Rose Buck had lived nearly half a century at 165 Eaton Place, *but there was no scent of the past left—*:
For many years no sign existed on the house where Freud lived in Vienna. Taxi drivers who were asked by tourists to drive to the “Freud House” looked blank. In 1953 the house was finally rescued from obscurity. The World Federation of Mental Health, with permission from the Austrian government, attached a plaque to the building saying, “From 1891 to 1938, in this house, lived and worked Professor Sigmund Freud, creator and founder of Psychoanalysis.” The apartment, however, remained occupied by a tenant and was not accessible to the public. In November 1969 a “Sigmund Freud Gesellschaft” was founded in Vienna with the objective of restoring the Freud apartment and founding a museum. I went to Vienna right after the apartment had been vacated. It was thoroughly dilapidated and common looking.


Endless suites of rooms, here and there the parquet flooring still left. Boris Pasternak, *Dr. Zhivago.*

I walked through the badly abused premises; little sign of their former dignity remained. The beautiful tile stoves had disappeared and had been replaced by ugly heating devices. I did not notice any major structural changes. But I was overcome by the emptiness of the rooms I walked through.


Freud had lived here nearly half a century, but there was no scent of him left — Erica Jong, *Fear of Flying.*

Now, in this old familiar room, it is more like the sorrow of a dream . . .


I thought

Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams.*

. . . than an actual loss.


Mentally, I set all the pieces of furniture in their place. I looked at the wall where . . .

Edmund Engelman, *Berggasse 19: Sigmund Freud’s Home and Offices, Vienna, 1938.* . . . if I remembered right,
Sigmund Freud, 
*The Interpretation of Dreams.*

couch had been and noticed, on the wooden floor, the outline of the
couch . . . Edmund Engelman, *Berggasse 19: Sigmund Freud’s Home and
Offices, Vienna, 1938.*

. . . the famous couch in Dr. Freud’s office.
Harold Bloom, *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages.*

. . . A week later, before leaving Vienna, I went back to Berggasse 19 once again.
Workmen had already started to put the offices and apartment into shape. The
floor had been scraped and polished. The ghost of the couch had disappeared.
Edmund Engelman, *Berggasse 19: Sigmund Freud’s Home and Offices,
Vienna, 1938.*

Transference Issues

At the therapy session on the day following the dream I told my therapist that I
had sent an email about our work to the International Psychoanalytical
Association (IPA). I said to my therapist: “I’m looking forward to going home
and doing a write-up of the dream.” My therapist’s only comment was — “By
working on this material on your own rather than talk about it here you are
draining the meaning out of your material” and “you are concerned with
power and control.” My therapist did not address any of the transference issues
suggested by my behavior, which I will elaborate here.

1. Depressive Anxiety:

To what extent does my “self-analysis,” my longing to understand myself, relate
to my need to get in touch with an internalized good object? Klein writes: “The
longing to understand oneself is also bound up with the need to be
understood by the internalized good object. One expression of this longing is
the universal phantasy of having a twin . . . . This twin figure [] represents
those un-understood and split off parts which the individual is longing to
regain, in the hope of achieving wholeness and complete understanding; they
are sometimes felt to be the ideal parts. At other times the twin also represents

Does the “hotel” of the London dream, as well as my reference to “home” at the clinical session, represent for me the good object from which I am estranged? When I said at the session, “I can’t wait to get home and write up my thoughts” was I really saying “I can’t wait to regain my split off parts, the ideal parts, and thereby achieve wholeness and complete understanding?”

To what extent is my “self-analysis” a defense against depressive anxiety? One viewpoint is that Freud’s self-analysis was part of a defense against depressive anxiety: From a Kleinian viewpoint, the psychoanalyst Didier Anzieu considered Freud’s “elaboration of psychoanalytic theory . . . corresponded to a setting up of obsessional defenses against depressive anxiety” – emphasizing Freud’s need to “defend himself against it through such a degree of intellectualization.”

2. Revival of Feelings about my Mother:

To what extent is my reliance on self-analysis at the expense of my therapy relationship a revival of my early feelings about an unempathic mother, and my adaptive response of needing to moderate my self-states on my own in the face of a lack of maternal soothing? In childhood, I was forced to face my psychic pain on my own. I did not have a mother who would respond meaningfully to my self-states. My impaired ability to share myself in therapy might relate back to my response to an unempathic mother.

3. Response to Trauma:

To what extent is my inability to share myself in therapy a response to a traumatic childhood that promoted the development of a dismissive-avoidant attachment style that features a desire to be independent, strong, and self-sufficient? Robert T. Muller, Ph.D. writes: “Intrafamilial trauma is known to be associated with mental health-related challenges that place the individual at risk for the development of psychopathology. Yet, those trauma patients who are primarily dismissing (avoidant) of attachment also demonstrate significant defensiveness, along with a tendency to view themselves as independent,
strong, and self-sufficient. Paradoxically, such patients present as highly help rejecting, despite concurrent expressions of need for treatment and high levels of symptomatic distress. Consequently, working with such individuals in psychotherapy can present several challenges. Prior theory and research have suggested that therapeutic change may be facilitated through direct activation of the attachment system and challenging defensive avoidance. Muller, R.T., “Trauma and Dismissing (Avoidant) Attachment: Intervention Strategies in Individual Psychotherapy.”

At age two-and-a-half I suffered an accidental traumatic injury to my oral cavity. A doctor had to cauterize the wound. My mother later told me that there was a lot of bleeding. She later recalled she was afraid I would bleed to death before she could get me to the doctor. Perhaps part of the reason why this was traumatic for me is that I internalized my mother’s panic. I have no idea how my mother got me to the doctor’s office. My parents didn’t own a car. They didn’t drive. Maybe my mother took a cab. I don’t know. Is it possible my mother was in a panicked state the entire time on the way to the doctor’s office? I have no idea. Does my panic in the London dream relate back to an actual panicked ride in a taxi from childhood?

Was the anxiety in the dream about getting back to my hotel a dream representation of an actual event from childhood? Recall the words of the manifest dream: “I had strayed a distance from my hotel and no longer remembered the name of the hotel or the street on which it was located. I thought, ‘What will I tell a cabbie, how will I direct him to my hotel? I don’t remember the name of the hotel or where it’s located. I am lost, utterly lost, with no hope of getting back.’”

I had told my therapist about the childhood injury on two previous occasions but she failed to register the clear connection between the childhood anecdote about a possible panicked ride in a taxi at age two-and-a-half and the London dream. One wonders, as Faimberg would ask: does my therapist show narcissistic resistances to hearing what I say and what I am unable to say?

4. Feelings of Shame in Reaction to my Therapist:
In my dream write-up I suggested that my act of contacting the IPA was a defense against feelings of shame I experience in my therapy relationship: “I see symbolism relating to possible phallic-urethral urgency (symbolized in the dream by the London skyscrapers) which Freud and Erikson linked to ambition (“I will email this document to the IPA and the IPA will think I am a psychoanalytic genius!”). Erikson writes in Insight and Responsibility: “At the end of Freud’s dream of Count Thun, there is also an unknown man seemingly a victim of the ambitious dreamer’s wish to escape infantile shame and to prove that he is ‘somebody.’” In contacting the IPA was I attempting to prove that I was “somebody?” Was I attempting to overcome feelings of shame I experience with my therapist? (“My therapist makes me feel worthless and castrated. I will show her. I will write to the IPA and prove my worth.”) Was I attempting to be “rescued from obscurity?”

Blatt writes that “[l]ibidinal concerns [in introjective depression (dismissive avoidant attachment)] are primarily at the phallic-oedipal level and related to the development of the superego, the processes of sexual identification, and the beginning phases of the oedipal conflict. The parents' conscious and unconscious attitudes and feelings about themselves and their child [l] have important effects on the child's conscious and unconscious feelings about himself and his strivings [with all that implies about the child's propensity to introject parental anxieties, that is, intergenerational transmission of parents' and grandparents' anxieties].” Blatt, S.J., “Levels of Object Representation in Anaclitic and Introjective Depression.”

5. Transference Feelings Suggested by the Dream:

In my dream write-up I associated to feelings of being lost, my loss of contact with an idealized object or my inability to contact an idealizable object, and my disillusionment with my present situation. I am reminded of Bion’s patient whose inability to find an idealizable object (an object able to contain the patient’s feelings of awe) was associated with a hypercritical attitude toward his analyst, Wilfred Bion.

The analyst Judith Mitrani writes: “The psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion describes a patient whose attacks on him in analysis, which centered on the patient’s
feelings of disappointment and hostility, did not constitute an attack on the ‘good breast’ or the analyst’s good interpretations. Neither did Bion seem to see the patient’s fragmented presentation as the result of an envious attack on thinking or on the links that might have rendered his communications meaningful and relevant. Instead, Bion appears to conclude that his patient was attempting to have an experience of an object who might be able to understand and transform the inchoate experiences of the as-yet-unintegrated-baby-he and was therefore seeking the realization of his preconception of an object who could contain these experiences as well as his innate capacity for love, reverence, and awe.”

Were my thoughts in the London dream about my inability to gain contact with “quaint old London” as well as my anxiety about not being able to “get back to” my hotel expressions of anguish centering on my inability to find an object that I could idealize, that could contain my feelings of awe?

6. Revival of the early Mother-Father-Child Triad:

My psychology parallels Kohut’s patient Mr. U who, turning away from the unreliable empathy of his mother, tried to gain confirmation of his self through an idealizing relationship with his father. The self-absorbed father, however, unable to respond appropriately, rebuffed his son’s attempt to be close to him, depriving him of the needed merger with the idealized self-object and, hence, of the opportunity for gradually recognizing the self-object’s shortcomings. Kohut, H., The Restoration of the Self.

Does the IPA represent for me the idealized but unavailable father that I use as a defense against an inadequate mother (revived in the person of my therapist)?

7. Resistance and Resistance to Transference

Resistance is the phenomenon encountered in clinical practice in which patients either directly or indirectly exhibit paradoxical opposing behaviors in presumably a clinically initiated push and pull of a change process. It impedes the development of authentic, reciprocally nurturing experiences in a clinical setting. It is established that the common source of resistances and defenses is shame. Resistance is an automatic and unconscious process. It can be either
for a certain period (state resistance) but it can also be a manifestation of more longstanding traits or character (trait resistance).

Examples of psychological resistance may include perfectionism, criticizing, contemptuous attitude, being self-critical, preoccupation with appearance, social withdrawal, need to be independent and invulnerable, or an inability to accept compliments or constructive criticism.

Eve Caligor, M.D. states that in psychoanalysis the interventions of the analyst focus on the analysis of resistance and, particularly, on the resistance to transference.

Is my self-analysis an expression of resistance? Assuming my self-analysis is an expression of resistance and that my self-analysis, as proposed, is a defense against depressive anxiety, isn’t a productive area of inquiry to assess how depressive anxiety is a source of resistance for me?

A major issue in depressive anxiety is guilt. Assuming that depressive anxiety is a factor in my resistance might we label my resistance, in classical analytic terms, as primarily “guilt resistance?” According to Freud, “the guilt that is finding its satisfaction in the disorder refuses to leave the punishment of suffering.” The feeling of guilt (or in Kleinian terms, depressive anxiety) in these cases presents itself as a resistance to healing and is very difficult to overcome. In the London dream does my thought, “What will I tell a cabbie, how will I direct him to my hotel?” in fact concern the resistance? “What will I tell (what am I even able to tell) my therapist about my inner states, about my internal objects? Is this therapist even able to help me to get to my destination? Again: The analyst needs to be alive to all possible interpretations of the patient's material—both what he says and what he cannot say.

At a session in about four months earlier, I said to my therapist: “I feel like I am a customer in a taxicab and you’re the driver. I depend on you to get me where I need to go, but you depend on me for directions. I have feelings of desperation about this – as if I will never get to the destination, as if my life depended on my getting to the destination.” At the therapy session at which I discussed the London dream, my therapist failed to register the connection
between that earlier statement with the manifest content of the London dream. One wonders, as Faimberg would ask: does my therapist show narcissistic resistances to hearing what I say and what I am unable to say?

And what about the possible connection between the taxi ride in the London dream and my accidental childhood traumatic injury to the oral cavity at age two-and-a-half?

To paraphrase my former therapist, the psychoanalyst Stanley R. Palombo, M.D., perhaps we might surmise that in the dream I had substituted a metaphor about my current distressed mental state—my desperate concern that psychotherapy was not helping me arrive at my destination, “What will I tell a cabbie?”—for memories of a traumatic childhood injury of equal affective significance. Palombo proposes that by retracing the substitutions, one can see how a current conflict relates to childhood experience. See Palombo, S.R., “Day Residue and Screen Memory in Freud's Dream of the Botanical Monograph.”

8. The Possibility of Intergenerational Transmission

My therapist interpreted my statement “I can't wait to get home and write up my thoughts” as a concrete, literal reference to my physical absence from the therapy situation. Is it possible that I was not talking about physical absence at all, but psychical absence: a retreat from the present moment to an inner, psychic world that was overfull with the traumatic experiences of past generations? Haydee Faimberg's book, The Telescoping of Generations attempts to "explain the transmission of a history that at least partially does not belong to the patient's life and that is clinically revealed . . . as a constituent of the patient's psyche." Faimberg, H., The Telescoping of Generations.

Is my psychical preoccupation with “going home” a transference phenomenon, a narcissistic identification with my maternal grandmother? My grandmother emigrated from Poland to the United States at age eighteen and had no contact with her family again. She spoke broken English when I knew her and my father used to ask rhetorically, “how can a person live in a country for fifty years and never learn the language?” My grandmother’s husband, who brought
her to the United States, died when she was twenty-six, leaving her in poverty in the years before social welfare programs. I wonder if I have internalized my grandmother’s losses and her possible survivor guilt: whether her feelings were transmitted to me intergenerationally. I am intrigued by the fact that at a symbolic level all of the following issues can be seen to be related: my identification with my grandmother’s estrangement from her homeland; my narcissistic disturbance in which I feel estranged from ideal parts of myself with which I seek to re-unite like a foreigner who longs for her homeland; the sense of myself as an outsider in my family; and fantasies about finding myself in an unfamiliar place and longing, either covertly or implicitly, to go home. And then, also, there is the symbolic equivalence of these issues to primal scene fantasy, which can involve the child’s unconscious anxieties about his imagined intrusion into an unfamiliar and forbidden place and his witnessing a strange and disturbing scene, which, like the unassimilated immigrant in a foreign county, the child cannot comprehend.

The Issues of Power and Control

Following my dream report my therapist focused on the issues of “power and control” in the dream and my action of contacting the International Psychoanalytical Association.

I had said to my therapist, “I can’t wait to get home to write up my thoughts about the dream.” My therapist chastised me. She said that I needed to discuss my thoughts with her and not withhold material from her. She said to me, “You’re only hurting yourself.” She said that my behavior — namely, trying “to be my own analyst” — was about power and control.

I can’t disagree that an element in my relationship with my therapist was about “power and control” — though my therapist failed to see the transference aspect of my struggles with her as they relate to the issue of autonomy with respect to my early relationship with my mother. I am attracted to the possibility that Erik Erikson’s observations about autonomy are pertinent to understanding the power issues between my therapist and me. Erikson proposed a childhood developmental stage that centered on a conflict in the child and his mother relating to Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt. Autonomy versus shame and
doubt is the second stage of Erikson’s stages of psychosocial development. This stage occurs between the ages of 18 months to approximately 3 years. According to Erikson, children at this stage are focused on developing a sense of personal control over physical skills and a sense of independence.

Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of will. If children in this stage are encouraged and supported in their increased independence, they become more confident and secure in their own ability to survive in the world.

If children are criticized, overly controlled, or not given the opportunity to assert themselves, they begin to feel inadequate in their ability to survive, and may then become overly dependent upon others, lack self-esteem, and feel a sense of shame or doubt in their abilities.

It would have been useful for my therapist to see the transference implications of my struggles with her and how these struggles connected to my early conflicts with my mother – and power conflicts in the workplace.

But there’s another issue. And that issue is my therapist’s reaction to me, depicting me as “withholding” clinical material from her. There is a tie in with something basic to Kleinian theory. My therapist held herself out as a “Kleinian analyst.”

In Klein’s view, when the infant feels that his mother is withholding her breast from the child, the infant experiences envy:

The best way to understand envy is to see it as the angry feeling that another (person) possesses, and is withholding, or keeping to itself, something one desires for oneself. The other person is, at the same time, to be seen as the reliable source for what one desires, and seen as possessing and withholding and keeping for itself something that “I want.” Envy is the feeling of conflict that what one desires, and would normally be forthcoming, is being withheld. The envious impulse is to attach, or to spoil the very source that one originally relied upon. This impulse can become diabolically destructive and undermining, since it mobilizes such powerful defences – devaluation of the good object, or rigid idealization. The infant’s feeling of failed gratification is experienced as the breast withholding, or keeping for itself, the object of desire. Envy is therefore more basic than jealousy, and is one of the most primitive and fundamental of emotions. Hiles, D., “Envy, Jealousy, Greed: A Kleinian approach.”
Regardless of my own behaviors possibly rooted in power and control (autonomy) there is my therapist’s possible reaction of envy to my act of withholding clinical material at my session.

What I am setting up here is a transference/countertransference paradigm that has possible applicability beyond the clinical dyad. I have experienced serious difficulties in the workplace that appeared to be grounded in workplace mobbing. Mobbing means bullying of an individual by a group, in any context, such as a family, peer group, school, workplace, neighborhood, community, or online. It occurs as emotional abuse in the workplace, such as "ganging up" by co-workers, subordinates, or superiors, to force someone out of the workplace through rumor, innuendo, intimidation, humiliation, discrediting, and isolation. (Incidentally, perhaps we might extend the concept of mobbing to Freud’s experience of being forced from Vienna by the Nazis.) Mobbing targets in the workplace are often people who threaten the organizational stasis; and, the most common characteristics identified as reasons for being targeted are refusing to be subservient (note the issue of “power and control”), superior competence and skill, positive attitude and being liked, and honesty. It is believed that “envy inflames the abuser’s sense of inadequacy, especially if the victim refuses to be subservient.” O’Shea, J., Domestic Violence, Workplace and School Bullying.

Kernberg writes that persons at a high level autonomy in groups will be attacked vigorously by the group — and this is crucial -- the affect underlying the attacks will be group envy: envy of the autonomous persons’ “thinking, individuality, and rationality.” Are there parallels between the power dynamics between me and my therapist in the clinical setting and the power dynamics between me and coworkers in the workplace? Did my autonomy trigger my therapist’s envy?

My apparent refusal to be subservient to my therapist calls to mind a narcissistically inaccessible patient described by Modell who rejected any interpretation that his analyst made. Modell ultimately pieced together the following picture. The patient had been the precocious child of an inadequate and incompetent mother. The patient’s survival tactic had been to ignore his mother’s faulty counsel and work out life’s difficulties on his own independent of his mother’s input. The patient as an adult brought this mindset into his
work in analysis.
The Dream of the Blackjack Tournament

I was having lunch with my friend Craig at a food court. In fact, from time to time Craig and I used to eat lunch at The Shops at National Place in downtown Washington. I had the sensation that this would be our last lunch together, the last time I would see him. In the dream I was 30 years old. I told Craig that I had enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. I had the feeling that telling Craig that I had enlisted in the Air Force would make him envious of me, which I relished. Craig told me that he was going off to play in a blackjack tournament.

Random Thoughts:

The previous day I had been reading a book titled The Eichmann Trial by the historian, Deborah E. Lipstadt. The book concerned the capture by Israeli agents of the Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in Argentina in 1961 and his subsequent trial in Israel.

Craig’s wife, Alexandra Zapruder used to work at the Holocaust Museum. She wrote a book called Salvaged Pages: Young Writers’ Diaries of the Holocaust.

The previous week I had given a copy of a technical paper to my psychiatrist titled “Survivor Guilt and the Pathogenesis of Anorexia Nervosa.” The paper’s author proposes that unconscious survivor guilt, a phenomenon first observed in Holocaust survivors, is a factor in the etiology of anorexia nervosa.

My psychiatrist pointed out the orality of the dream, the fact that I was having lunch with a friend. I had no thoughts about that issue.

I mentioned that Craig’s grandfather had been a pilot in the German air force and that Craig himself had tried to enlist in the U.S. Air Force. He was rejected because his eyesight was not up to standards. I explained to my psychiatrist that it gave me pleasure in the dream to taunt Craig with the idea that I was accepted by the Air Force knowing that his own wish to enlist had been thwarted. It was an instance of Schadenfreude, if you will.

I pointed out to my psychiatrist that airplanes have a phallic quality. The airplane in flight calls to mind the erect penis, defying gravity. I later thought of the fact that Craig was a womanizer: handsome, intelligent, and manipulative. The interpretation occurred to me that I was envious of Craig’s feats with women and wanted to make him envious of me in a matter
(becoming a pilot) that had eluded him. \textit{(The Eichmann Trial} includes a detailed discussion of Eichmann’s airplane flight from Argentina to Israel as a captured fugitive.)

My psychiatrist talked about the psychoanalytic theorist, Jacques Lacan. He said that Lacan emphasized the importance of looking at the precise words a patient uses. My psychiatrist said perhaps we should look, for example, at the phrase “Air Force”; perhaps we should isolate the word “Force” and think about the possible double meanings of that word. I experienced in that moment a shock of recognition. I immediately thought of the anality associated with the word \textit{force} — the word’s relation to control, shame, and domination.

I mentioned to my psychiatrist that the author of \textit{The Eichmann Trial} related the following anecdote: Upon Eichmann’s capture in Buenos Aires he was taken by Israeli agents to a safe house for interrogation. During the interrogation, Eichmann asked to be allowed to go to the bathroom. From the bathroom Eichmann called out to the Israeli agents: “Darf ich anfangen?” — “May I begin.” I reported that the Israeli agents were stupefied: “How could someone so submissive have been the architect of the Holocaust?”

The painful sense of loss associated with losing Craig as a friend in the dream (“I had the sensation that this would be our last lunch together, the last time I would see him.”) may have disguised the narcissistic injury/loss associated with a bowel movement. Perhaps I thought unconsciously in devaluation, “He’s just a piece of shit. Flush and move on.” This points to the narcissistic aspect of my friendship with Craig – my investment in him was narcissistic in that he served as an object of twinship, idealization and mirroring; in other words, the relationship was not anaclitic. The loss of the stool is a narcissistic loss, a loss of a valued part of the self; its evacuation from the body arouses anxiety rooted in feelings of narcissistic loss; that which had previously been a valued part of the self is now devalued as worthless, something to be flushed down the toilet.

The word “anfangen” has importance to me as a devotee of the Wagner operas. There is a famous line in \textit{Die Meistersinger von Nurnberg}, “Fanget An!” “Now Begin!” The novice Walter is directed by the Master, Beckmesser to begin his trial song, “to show his stuff” to the assembled masters who will evaluate his abilities.
Walter is introduced to the assembled mastersingers as a candidate for admission into the mastersinger guild. Questioned (“interrogated?”) about his background, Walther presents his credentials. Reluctantly the masters agree to admit him, provided he can perform a master-song of his own composition. Walter chooses love as the topic for his song and is told that he will be judged by the jealous Beckmesser alone, the “Marker” of the guild for worldly matters. At the signal to begin (Fanget an!), Walter – seated in a chair (think of a toilet) – launches into a novel free-form tune, breaking all the mastersingers’ rules, and his song is constantly interrupted by the scratch of Beckmesser’s chalk on his chalkboard, maliciously noting one violation after another. When Beckmesser has completely covered the slate with symbols of Walter’s errors, he interrupts the song and argues that there is no point in finishing it. Walter’s mentor, Hans Sachs tries to convince the masters to let Walter continue, but Beckmesser sarcastically tells Sachs to stop trying to set policy. Raising his voice over the masters’ argument, Walter finishes his song, but the masters reject him and he rushes out.

Once again the salient issues in the opera Die Meistersinger are, as in my dream, jealousy, an attempt to enlist, and rejection. Walther seeks to enlist in the mastersinger guild, but his ambitions are thwarted by Beckmesser’s jealous nit-picking. He is rejected.

Does my association to the war criminal Adolf Eichmann point to my own sadistic trend and dominating impulses? I am reminded of the testimony of the concentration camp survivor, Yehiel Dinur at the Eichmann trial. During his testimony, as he looked at Eichmann in the courtroom, Dinur fainted after several minutes of examination by the prosecutor. He was later asked why he fainted: Was Dinur overcome by hatred? Fear? Horrid memories? No; it was none of these. Rather, as Dinur explained, all at once he realized Eichmann was not the god-like army officer who had sent so many to their deaths. This Eichmann was an ordinary man. "I was afraid about myself," said Dinur. "... I saw that I am capable to do this. I am ... exactly like he." May we say that Dinur recognized that his personality contained elements of Big Brother even as it contained elements of Winston Smith? I am reminded also of an observation of Erich Fromm's: "I heard a sentence from Dr. Buber recently about Adolf Eichmann, that he could not have any particular sympathy with
him although he was against the trial, because he found nothing of Eichmann in him. Now, that I find an impossible statement. I find the Eichmann in myself, I find everything in myself; I find also the saint in myself, if you please." Erich Fromm, *The Art of Listening*.

I later had thoughts about the sexual implications of Craig saying he was going off to play in a blackjack tournament. Freud said that gambling was symbolic of masturbation. In early March 1991, while I was working as a paralegal at the law firm Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld, I telephoned Craig on a Saturday morning at his home. We chatted for a while. (I had the paranoid perception at the time that Craig tape-recorded the conversation, delivered the tape to Akin Gump (my employer), and that the tape was played for Bob Strauss, founder of the firm. There seemed to be a hubbub at the firm the following week; Bob Strauss saw me and he couldn’t hold back a smile. Why, I thought at the time, would Bob Strauss smile at me in that way? Bob Strauss was a poker player, by the way.) I asked Craig during the telephone call, “What do you do? (That is, how do you spend your time?)” Craig said: “Nothing. I work and I masturbate. I work all day. I come home, and I masturbate.” (Note the flippant arrogance so typical of phallic narcissists.)

I note that the word *flush* has a double meaning. It refers to the mechanics of a toilet as well as to the card game, poker. A *flush* is a poker hand containing five cards all of the same suit, not all of sequential rank, such as K♣ 10♣ 7♣ 6♣ 4♣ (a "king-high flush" or a "king-ten-high flush"). When we worked together I pointed out to Craig that his name Craig Dye is an anagram of the phrase “gray dice,” which connotes gambling.

One of my previous dream interpretations refers to the issue of gambling and masturbation in connection with Craig.

I mentioned to my psychiatrist that the previous summer I had spent two weeks at a hotel casino in Atlantic City, The Tropicana Hotel (an allusion to South America? Eichmann was captured in Argentina.) There was a food court at the Tropicana Hotel. One of my earlier dream interpretations took place at a hotel.

The psychiatrist, Dr. Shreiba, offered no interpretations.
A Kleinian Dream: The Dream of the Ardent Zionist

In May 1991 I had three consultations with Lawrence C. Sack, M.D., a psychiatrist/psychoanalyst (now deceased) whom I idealized. Dr. Sack had served as President of the Washington Psychiatric Society. He died in 2003, and I felt the loss deeply.

Upon retiring on the evening of Tuesday November 6, 2012 (a presidential election night) I had the following dream:

The Dream of the Ardent Zionist

I am alone with Dr. Sack. I tell him that I have a collection of eight books that form a series concerning the history of the Jewish people and Zionism. The books are old. I tell Dr. Sack that one of the books in the series has several papers promoting Zionism written by a “Lawrence C. Sack.” I ask Dr. Sack if he is the author of the papers. He acknowledges that he is the same Lawrence C. Sack. He tells me that in his youth he was an ardent Zionist who lived in Israel and that he wrote numerous papers promoting the Zionist cause. I show Dr. Sack a photograph in the book depicting a young man dressed casually in short pants and a short-sleeved shirt. I think he looks like a Zionist pioneer, an agricultural worker, perhaps. Dr. Sack says that is in fact a photo of him that was taken in his youth while he lived in Israel. I think: “He looks so young, so unlike the man in his sixties standing before me.” When I look closely at the face I see that the photo is indeed one of Dr. Sack. I think: “How strange! What an odyssey: from Zionist pioneer living in Israel to a psychiatrist/psychoanalyst living in the United States.”

The thought occurs to me that the photograph of the young Dr. Sack in the manifest dream represents an image of my mother that I had internalized when I was a young boy, and when my mother, too, was young. I believe the dream work disguised what was in reality a mother transference into a father transference; that is, what appears to be a dream about a displaced image of my father (Dr. Sack) is, in reality, a displaced image of my mother. The manifest dream presented a deception, or misdirection: an act of dream censorship. But why would that be? The dream perhaps concealed my feeling that my real mother, as I came to know her in later childhood, was wholly inadequate. The manifest dream is noisy in its proclamation that it concerns my father: the
male figure (Dr. Sack); Zionism (my father was Jewish, my mother Polish-Catholic); reading and books (my mother hated books; it was my father who was a reader). The theme of the agricultural worker might relate to my mother; my mother had a vegetable garden in the back yard of our house, which she doted on each summer. She grew tomatoes, cucumbers, green peppers and other vegetables. What painful feelings about my mother did the dream censor? What psychic turmoil did the dream conceal?

Reference to Melanie Klein’s writing about so-called unconscious depressive anxiety provides an orientation to understanding the possible meaning of the dream, that is, the unconscious anxieties about my mother that fueled the dream work, Freud’s term for the unconscious ciphering that transforms the dream’s latent content into the manifest content. Is it possible that the photographs of the young Dr. Sack referenced in the dream symbolize a beautiful picture of my mother that I early internalized, but one which I feel to be a picture of her only, not her real self? In adulthood, perhaps, I feel my mother to be unattractive—really an injured, incurable and therefore dreaded person.

In a paper titled “A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic-Depressive States” (1935), Klein writes:

“I have tried to show that the difficulties which the ego experiences when it passes on to the incorporation of whole objects proceed from its as yet imperfect capacity for mastering, by means of its new defense-mechanisms, the fresh anxiety-contents arising out of this advance in its development. I am aware how difficult it is to draw a sharp line between the anxiety-contents and feelings of the paranoiac and those of the depressive, since they are so closely linked up with each other. But they can be distinguished one from the other if, as a criterion of differentiation, one considers whether the persecution-anxiety is mainly related to the preservation of the ego—in which case it is paranoiac—or to the preservation of the good internalized objects with whom the ego is identified as a whole. In the latter case—which is the case of the depressive—the anxiety and feelings of suffering are of a much more complex nature. The anxiety lest the good objects and with them the ego should be destroyed, or that they are in a state of disintegration, is interwoven with continuous and desperate efforts to save the good objects both internalized and external.
It seems to me that only when the infant’s ego has introjected the object as a whole and has established a better relationship to the external world and to real people is it able fully to realize the disaster created through its sadism and especially through its cannibalism, and to feel distressed about it. This distress is related not only to the past but to the present as well, since at this early stage of development the sadism is in full swing. It needs a fuller identification with the loved object, and a fuller recognition of its value, for the ego to become aware of the state of disintegration to which it has reduced and is continuing to reduce its loved object.

The ego finds itself confronted with the psychical fact that its loved objects are in a state of dissolution—in bits—and the despair, remorse and anxiety deriving from this recognition are at the bottom of numerous anxiety-situations. To quote only a few of them: There is anxiety how to put the bits together in the right way and at the right time; how to pick out the good bits and do away with the bad ones; how to bring the object to life when it has been put together; and there is the anxiety of being interfered with in this task by bad objects and by one’s own hatred, etc.

Anxiety-situations of this kind I have found to be at the bottom not only of depression, but of all inhibitions of work. The attempts to save the loved object, to repair and restore it, attempts which in the state of depression are coupled with despair, since the ego doubts its capacity to achieve this restoration, are determining factors for all sublimations and the whole of the ego-development. In this connection I shall only mention the specific importance for sublimation of the bits to which the loved object has been reduced and the effort to put them together. It is a ‘perfect’ object which is in pieces; thus the effort to undo the state of disintegration to which it has been reduced presupposes the necessity to make it beautiful and ‘perfect’. The idea of perfection is, moreover, so compelling because it disproves the idea of disintegration.”

And here is the crucial portion of the Klein’s text.

“In some patients who had turned away from their mother in dislike or hate, or used other mechanisms to get away from her, I have found that there existed in their minds nevertheless a beautiful picture of the mother, but one which was felt to be a picture of her only, not her real self. The real object was felt to
be unattractive—really an injured, incurable and therefore dreaded person. The beautiful picture had been dislocated from the real object but had never been given up, and played a great part in the specific ways of their sublimation.”

**Note about the Jews, Zionism and Depressive Anxiety**

I did not grow up in a Jewish home or have a Jewish education. My father had an Orthodox Jewish background, while my mother was Polish Catholic. My parents had chauvinistic attitudes toward their respective cultures, and religion was a common source of my parents’ discord. My mother’s family — her mother and older sister — were either overtly or covertly antagonistic toward my father; I suspect their attitudes toward my father were antisemitic in origin. From early childhood I identified as a Jew and, beginning in my teens, became preoccupied and fascinated with all things Jewish. I have a near obsession with the struggles of the Jewish people, their survival, antisemitism, and the precariousness of the State of Israel.

Might we see my Jewish concerns as rooted in Kleinian depressive anxiety? Perhaps, for me, the Jews represent the internalized good object with which my ego is identified as a whole. My anxiety lest the good object, with which my ego is identified, should be destroyed, or that it is in a state of disintegration, is interwoven with continuous and desperate concern for its welfare and survival. I fear for the good object and the disaster created through my own sadism and especially through its cannibalism, which is externalized in anxieties about antisemitism and Jewish survival. With my identification with the Jews came a fuller sense that their survival was linked to the survival of the good within me, and I developed a fuller recognition of the value of Jewish culture, which made me all the more aware of the state of disintegration to which the Jewish people are threatened.

Thinking about the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 following the Holocaust I am reminded of Hanna Segal’s exquisite quote: “It is when the world within us is destroyed, when it is dead and loveless, when our loved ones are in fragments, and we ourselves in helpless despair — it is then that we must recreate our world anew, reassemble the pieces, infuse life into dead fragments, recreate life.” An insistent concern for the survival of the goodness in the world haunts my thinking in so many facets of my mental life, a concern that seems grounded in my sense that my own internal goodness is in perpetual
peril from my sadism.

These ideas seem related to Leonard Shengold’s observation about George Orwell: “I feel that he used his strong will and persistent determination to force himself away from some hated and feared part of his nature – probably these were primarily his sadistic and dominating impulses.”
The Dream of Schubert’s Final Piano Sonata

Franz Schubert wrote the Piano Sonata No. 21 in B flat major in the last year of his life, when he probably knew he was dying. It was his final piano sonata. The sonata opens with a serene theme that is interrupted by a menacing trill in a low register. Commentators have compared these opening measures with a pastoral setting whose calmness is interrupted by a meteorological event, namely, a roll of distant thunder. Then too, it has been said that from wherever the theme may come, the trill comes from somewhere else, the trill evinces a “separate identity from the surrounding music,” an identity that is bound up with its introducing a “foreign tonal region.” Musicologists have interpreted the sonata’s tonal peregrinations and final tonal resolution in metaphysical terms, namely, as Schubert's return, or “homecoming,” to the tonal dominant key. In the end, Schubert “returns home” to the key of B flat major after “wanderings of a long and dramatic development” into distant or “foreign” keys: “a weary return to the beginning of the journey.” Horton, J., Schubert. About a year ago I downloaded a recording of the sonata on my iPod, a version performed by the great Chilean pianist, Claudio Arrau. I had seen Arrau perform the Brahms First Piano Concerto in person at the Robin Hood Dell (in a program that included the Beethoven Seventh Symphony) in the summer of about the year 1972, when I would have been 18 years old.

On the evening of May 21, 2018 I had the following dream: I am watching the movie Dr. Zhivago on television. I am experiencing feelings of confusion because the movie seems to include scenes I have never seen before. I think: “How can this be? I have seen this movie so many times; how can it be that I can’t remember these scenes? Did I forget seeing these scenes, or is this a different version of the movie?” I keep hearing Schubert’s final piano sonata. I am entranced by the music. I am overcome with feelings of wistfulness and nostalgia – commingled with the aforementioned feelings of confusion.

The following are my associations to the dream:

1. In the hours before the dream, I wrote a blog post about my impoverished sense of identity. I have the sense that I have no access to my feelings and important mental states, and can only talk about analogous things I read about with which I identify. It’s as if the texts I read and identify with are a mirror reflection of my inner mental states: photographic images of my
inner self. The text of the blog post is as follows:

On Mirrors and Intellectualization

Imagine the following fanciful image: A man is invisible to himself. He cannot see himself. When he turns his head down toward his body he sees nothing. People say to him: “Describe your appearance. What do you think you look like?” He answers: “I have no idea what I look like. I have never seen myself. I am invisible.” One day he passes by a mirror and sees his reflection for the first time. He gets an idea of what he looks like. Now when people say, “Talk about your physical appearance,” he describes the reflected image he saw in the mirror. He still can’t see himself. He can only describe the reflected image. Psychologically I am invisible to myself. I can’t talk about my feelings. I can talk about my thoughts and notions I have about myself, but I can’t talk about how I feel or what motivates my behavior. I read things that I identify with — novels, biographies, history, any text. I talk about these texts with my therapists. They say I intellectualize. I need to talk in my own words and describe my feelings. But I am invisible to myself. I can only see my reflected image in the texts that I read with which I identify. I read about Freud and I can talk about aspects of Freud that I identify with.

There are defects in my sense of self, gaps in my self-awareness. My only access to myself – the only way I have of understanding and describing myself – is through my identification with the themes in my readings. I used to bring books to Dr. Palombo all the time and read passages to him. If he had been a Kohutian he might have had an insight: “It’s as if this patient is bringing his own mirror into the consult with him. He is presenting me week after week with his reflected image in the mirror. But his real self is obscure to him.”

I am reminded of the work of the forensic sketch artist who might work with a crime victim who struggles to precisely describe a suspect. The sketch artist presents to the crime victim photographic exemplars of different facial features – sets of eyes, noses, mouths, hairlines, facial contours, etc. The crime victim identifies from the photographic exemplars a representation of eyes, nose, mouth, etc. that most resemble those of the suspect. The sketch artist pieces together the crime victim’s fragmented identifications into a cohesive portrait of an individual that resembles the suspect. Similarly, I struggle to describe my feelings, experiences, and relationships with particularity. But I am able to piece together a cohesive psychological portrait of myself through the things I read and identify with.
2. In the past few days I had been thinking of my law professor, Claudio Grossman, an individual I admired a great deal and with whom I identified. Grossman was originally from Chile, like the pianist Claudio Arrau. A few days ago I wrote a blog post about Grossman’s complex background, and issues of his personal identity. Grossman was an immigrant, someone who had left his homeland: an alien in a strange land.

3. In high school I had a French teacher named Linda Schubert Miller. She got married in the spring of 1968 when I was in the ninth grade and I always thought of her as “Miss Schubert.” A few days ago I posted an image of Miller from a 1969 high school yearbook on my sister’s Facebook page. I asked my sister, “Does it look like her?” My sister replied, “Yes, it does.” About 10 years ago, my sister and Miller were neighbors in Cherry Hill, NJ. My sister knew Miller. Miller’s husband was a musician.

4. Sunday, May 18, 1980. I was a 26-year-old first year law student attending school in Spokane, Washington. It was a beautiful day. I didn’t listen to the radio that morning and I didn’t own a television. Around noon I took a leisurely walk downtown, which was perhaps two miles away. I sat on a bench in Riverside Park, site of the 1974 World’s Fair. It could have been any sunny, Sunday afternoon in the park on the banks of the Spokane River rendered by an Impressionist painter. I noticed the sky looked peculiar. My attention was drawn to a huge greenish-gray cloud. I thought it was a storm cloud. I decided to see a movie. *Dr. Zhivago* was playing at a nearby theater and I bought a ticket. I had seen the film several times before. It was one of my favorites. I remembered one scene in which Zhivago deserts a troop of revolutionary partisans and trudges alone through the deep snow in the barren hinterland. A *desperate journey*. It was early afternoon when the movie started. The film is about three-and-a-half hours long. I got out of the theater at around 4:30 PM. I was not prepared for what I saw. What I did not know was that Mount St. Helens, hundreds of miles away in Western Washington State, had erupted at 8:32 that morning, spewing tons of volcanic ash into the atmosphere. The odd cloud I saw earlier was in fact a cloud of volcanic ash. Visibility in Spokane was extremely poor as a fine mist of volcanic ash descended on the city. It was worse than a blizzard and more like a dark and viscous fog. I think of lines from the novel *Dr. Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak on which the movie was based:
Not the sun we are accustomed to on earth but a dim ball of some substitute sun hung in the sky. From it, strainerly and slowly, as in a dream or fairy tale, rays of muted gray light, thick as honey, spread and on their way congealed in the air and froze before him. I thought, “How am I going to get home?” as I began my two-mile trek back to my apartment through a dense haze. (Think of that as a symbolic thought: “How am I going to get home?”). I didn’t get far. A kindly motorist seeing my plight pulled over. He picked me up and drove me to my front door.

At the present moment (late May 2018), the state of Hawaii is coping with a volcano emergency. My mother died in January 1980. Psychoanalytically, perhaps a volcanic eruption is symbolic of an orgasm. According to Freud and others sex is the polar opposite of death.

5. In the year 2012 I had a dream about Laurence C. Sack, M.D., a psychiatrist I consulted in 1991; he had died in 2003 at age 69. I admired Dr. Sack a great deal. He was a brilliant man. That dream concerned wistful feelings I had about Dr. Sack’s lost youth and his growing old. In the dream I imagined that Dr. Sack was an immigrant: someone who had left the United States to live in Israel. The dream seemed to be triggered by a photograph I had seen earlier in the day of the composer, Johannes Brahms in his youth.

6. My grandmother died in September 1972, when I was 18 years old. In about the year 2007 I saw an episode of the TV series Six Feet Under. A young man asks a young female photographer friend to take his photograph nude. She mentions that she is 18 years old and he replies: “What you don’t know when you’re 18 is that you’ll be 18 for the rest of your life.” I think of that line often. “What you don’t know when you’re is that you’ll be 18 for the rest of your life.” Incidentally, my grandmother emigrated from Poland to the United States in 1910 at age 18. She was an immigrant who left her homeland; she never acculturated to the United States—she was forever an alien intruder in a strange land. Were there times when my grandmother wanted to return home? Did she think: “How am I going to get home?” I lost my grandmother when I was 18, the same age my grandmother was when she lost her entire family in 1910 upon moving to the United States. I am intrigued by the fact that at a symbolic level all of the following issues can be seen as related: my identification with my grandmother’s estrangement from her homeland; my narcissistic disturbance in which I feel estranged from ideal parts of myself with which I seek to re-unite
like a foreigner who longs for her homeland; the sense of myself as an outsider in my family; and fantasies about finding myself in an unfamiliar place and longing, either covertly or implicitly, to go home. (Recall that I associated the dream to the year I lived in Spokane, Washington, three thousand miles from my hometown of Philadelphia.) And then, also, there is the symbolic equivalence of these issues to primal scene fantasy, which can involve the child’s unconscious anxieties about his imagined intrusion into an unfamiliar and forbidden place and his witnessing a strange and disturbing scene, which, like the unassimilated immigrant in a foreign county, the child cannot comprehend.

There is a line from the opening of the movie Dr. Zhivago. Zhivago’s half-brother, Evgraf is talking to Zhivago’s daughter. “You see, he lost his mother at about the same age you were when your mother lost you. And, in the same part of the world.”

Did the dream-work combine recollections of viewing the movie, Dr. Zhivago on the afternoon of May 18, 1980 with unconscious thoughts about my immigrant Polish grandmother, specifically the death in 1918 of her husband, my maternal grandfather, Stanley?

The subject matter of the movie Dr. Zhivago concerns the Russian Revolution. In reviewing my associations to the dream I thought: How was Poland affected by the Russian Revolution? I discovered something striking about Soviet-Polish relations in that time period. The Soviet Union under Lenin went to war with Poland in February 1919. Months after my maternal grandfather died, in 1918, Poland became engulfed in political turmoil – which might relate to possible anxieties my grandmother had about her homeland, and possibly returning to Poland after her husband’s death. How was she going to get home?

Were these possible anxieties encoded in my unconscious through a process of intergenerational transmission? One wonders.

Attachment theory research raises tantalizing questions about the significance of my mother’s loss of her father at age 3 (in the great flu epidemic of 1918) – leaving my mother, her two-year older sister (age 5), and mother (my grandmother, age 26) in dire poverty – as well as my grandmother's loss of her entire family, earlier, in 1910, at age 18, upon emigrating to the United States.
Research findings indicate that loss can undergo intergenerational transmission. “[There is] preliminary evidence that a mother’s own attachment experience in childhood may influence the development of reward and affiliation circuits in the brain that promote contingent and sensitive responses to her own infant’s cues. That is, a mother’s attachment experiences from her own childhood may shape neural circuits which influence how she perceives and responds to her infant’s cues one generation later.” Shah, P.E.; Fonagy, P.; and Strathearn, L. “Is Attachment Transmitted Across Generations? The Plot Thickens,” Clin Child Psychol Psychiatry, 2010 Jul; 15(3): 329–345 (July 2010). Additional attachment-theory models indicate the possibility that transmission of specific traumatic ideas across generations may be mediated by a vulnerability to dissociative states established in the infant by frightened or frightening caregiving, which, in its turn, is trauma-related. Disorganized attachment behavior in infancy may indicate an absence of self-organization, or a dissociative core self. This leaves the child susceptible to the internalization of sets of trauma-related ideation from the attachment figure, which remain unintegrated in the self-structure and cannot be reflected on or thought about. The disturbing effect of these ideas may be relatively easily addressed by a psychotherapeutic treatment approach that emphasizes the importance of mentalization and the role of playful engagement with feelings and beliefs rather than a classical insight-oriented, interpretive approach. Fonagy, P. “The transgenerational transmission of holocaust trauma.” Attachment & Human Development, 1(1): 92-114 (April 1999).

From my birth till about age six months my mother shared maternal caretaking with her mother, my grandmother. My mother said that it was frequently my grandmother who fed and changed me. My grandmother, mother and I lived temporarily in my grandmother’s house. What was the nature of my possible early psychological attachment to my grandmother? When my mother moved out of my grandmother’s house when I was six months old, thereby ending my close contact with my grandmother, did I experience attendant loss and mourning? See Bowlby, J. “Grief and Mourning in Infancy and Early Childhood.”

Issues of personal identity and narcissistic mirroring are raised by my association to the following dialogue from an episode of the TV series, Six Feet Under.
BILLY: Come on in. All right, let me show you. [Billy shows Claire the camera on a tripod.] You can put your purse down if you like. Here it is. This is your focus, and this is your zoom. That’s pretty much it. So here you go. You’ll get a feel for it.

CLAIRE: Okay, what do you want me to do?

BILLY [pulls off his robe with his naked back to Claire]: Just, you know, follow your instincts. Relax. Don’t think about yourself at all. I know that’s impossible for a 17-year-old.

CLAIRE: Eighteen.

BILLY [his back to Claire:] What you don’t know is you’re going to be 18 for the rest of your life. I’ve tried to do self-portraits before but they always turn out so contrived, like I’m trying to be some version of myself. So f----g juvenile. And I really want to see it, you know? [referring to a scar on his back.] I want to. I need to see what I’ve done. And I think it really is impossible for somebody to see themselves. You need someone else’s eyes. I need somebody else to see me. Somebody who isn’t Brenda [Billy’s sister]. She sees things a little too darkly. I mean, I don’t need any help going there. Besides, I’ve looked through her eyes enough for one lifetime, you know. What are you seeing?

CLAIRE: I’m on your scar, really close up. [Billy has a scar on his back from a wound he inflicted on himself during a psychotic manic attack.]

BILLY: What does it look like?

CLAIRE: Like the surface of the moon.

BILLY: That’s good. That’s the thing about Narcissus. It’s not that he’s so f----g in love with himself, because he isn’t at all. F----g hates himself. It’s that without that reflection looking back at him he doesn’t exist. [Billy cries.] CLAIRE: Billy, are you okay?

BILLY: Yeah. Don’t be freaked out. This is good. This is exactly what I needed to happen. I’m f----g crying. Oh, God, I’m sorry, this is intense.

[Billy turns around, exposing himself to Claire. She is extremely embarrassed. She averts her gaze and walks out.]

BILLY: You can go.

Think of the line, “It’s that without that reflection looking back at him he
doesn’t exist.” May we paraphrase and say, “It's that without my books (my reflected image), I don't exist?”

7. Excerpt from my book Significant Moments (May 22 is Wagner’s birthday):
Three nights before his death, . . .

Almost poetically, . . .

Peter Gay, Freud: A Life for Our Time.
. . . he dreamed of meeting . . .

. . . his mother . . .

Richard Wagner, Parsifal.
. . . looking young and attractive and altogether unlike his early recollections of her.

Yet again the occasion for the dream was a real event. The day before . . .

Sigmund Freud, The Interpretation of Dreams.
. . . he had received . . .

Charles Dickens, The Old Curiosity Shop.
. . . a photograph of his mother as a young woman. He looked at it, long and closely, remarking in a scarcely audible tone: “Fantastic!” Was this the bond of trust and the sense of “I” connecting mother and newborn, old man and “Ultimate Other”?


8. The musical score for the movie Dr. Zhivago was written by Maurice Jarre, a French composer.

9. Both the book and the movie Dr. Zhivago open with the funeral of the boy Zhivago’s mother:

“On they went, singing ‘Eternal Memory’, and whenever they stopped, the sound of their feet, the horses and the gusts of wind seemed to carry on their singing. Passers-by
made way for the procession, counted the wreaths and crossed themselves. Some joined in out of curiosity and asked: ‘Who is being buried? – ‘Zhivago,’ they were told. ‘Oh, I see. That explains it.’ – ‘It isn’t him. It’s his wife.’ – ‘Well, it comes to the same thing. May she rest in peace. It’s a fine funeral.’”

Additional Thoughts about The-Movie-Theater as Metaphor

At a therapy session I had on September 26, 2019 I related the following:

I spend a frightening amount of time in a semi-psychotic haze, sitting on a park bench listening to music. I just watch people pass by. I watch the world go by as the world moves on. It reminds me of Freud’s analogy for free association. He talked about a person on a moving train, describing everything he sees in the terrain to a companion. I guess I’m talking about therapy when I talk about sitting on the park bench. I’m talking about the frightening amount of time I have spent in a chair in a therapist’s office over the past 27 years. It never goes anywhere.

I think about how my life is so empty but I have this constant swirl of thoughts in my mind. I told you how I feel I have a civil war in my head. That’s constantly going on. But I am not a part of the real world. I am detached from the world. I think about how in my adult life I have recreated the world of the infant in his crib. So his mother has gone off and the infant is alone in his bedroom. But he has this imagination. And he imagines the world of experience, but he is at the same time detached from real experience. And he has a flood of imaginings, of thoughts both satisfying and distressing. But it’s all in his imagination. I feel like that in life. I have this inner movie theater in my mind. I spend my life inside that movie theater and the world goes by outside. But I am in the theater, engrossed in the movie. And in the movie there is a procession of characters, and some of them I like and some of them I don’t like.

It reminds me of that dream I had [The Dream of Schubert’s Final Piano Sonata]. I told you about that experience I had back in May 1980. I was living in Spokane, Washington. And I went to the movie theater, and there was a volcanic eruption outside, but I had no idea what was happening outside in the real world. I was inside the movie theater, engrossed in the movie. My life is like that. I am in my private inner movie theater, while life passes by outside and I am oblivious to that world outside.

Is it possible that this therapy narrative is an expression of the struggles of the artist: a split between my creative self (as symbolized by the “inner movie
theater” – the private world where the reality sense is held in temporary abeyance until it is reinstated) and my ordinary world of social stereotype (the world outside the “movie theater”)? Does the therapy narrative express a split in my sense of identity?

Marshall Alcorn writes: “The work of Greenacre suggests that the ‘identity of the artist may be more fluid or multiple than the identity of others. Gilbert Rose summarizes: ‘The intensity of all experience of the child of potentially great talent means that all the early libidinal phases tend to remain more lively, to overlap and communicate with each other more readily. The unconscious mechanism of splitting has in part become developed as a conscious ego device. The gifted person, while knowing the conventional sense of reality is thus also able to hold it in abeyance in order to explore and concentrate full powers of integration on imaginative possibilities. The artist’s selfhood is not unitary: there are two or more selves. There is a lively if often adversarial two-way conscious communication between the self-organizations—both between the conventional and creative identity as well as within the private world where the reality sense is held in temporary abeyance until it is reinstated.” Alcorn, M. Narcissism and the Literary Libido: Rhetoric, Text, and Subjectivity.

In The Dream of Schubert’s Final Piano Sonata did my association to the movie theater express a split or struggle between my creative self and the ordinary world outside? Is this struggle between the conventional or social self and the creative self a cause of another kind of split: a split in my sense of identity?
The Dream of the Intruding Doctor

On August 9, 2014, Michael Brown Jr., an 18-year-old African American man, was fatally shot by a police officer, 28-year-old Darren Wilson, in the city of Ferguson, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis. Brown was accompanied by his friend Dorian Johnson who was 22. Wilson said that an altercation ensued when Brown attacked Wilson in his police vehicle for control of Wilson’s gun until it was fired. Brown and Johnson then fled, with Wilson in pursuit of Brown. Wilson stated that Brown stopped and charged him after a short pursuit. In the entire altercation, Wilson fired a total of twelve bullets, including twice during the struggle in the car; the last was probably the fatal shot. Brown was hit a total of 6 times from the front.

On the evening of September 29, 2015 I had a striking dream: full of feelings of nostalgia and loss, a dream that I experienced as deeply affecting. I was wandering alone and lost in an unfamiliar city in the state of Missouri with what I would describe as an insatiable yearning for something that would allow me to feel centered, whole and complete. Just today, as I was recording these thoughts, an interpretation emerged out of a remote association. Is it possible that the word Missouri is a play on words? We can imagine breaking Missouri into two parts: “miss” and “our I.” Might we interpret the word miss as relating to feelings of loss and nostalgia? Might we interpret the phrase, “our I” as relating to the notion of a shared identity: the self and a mirror image? Also, might we imagine that the sense of loss in the dream was overdetermined? I was both physically lost in a place I had never visited before and I was also mourning the loss of something from my past: fragments of Self and Other. (I told my then treating psychiatrist, Alice E. Stone, M.D., about this dream in 2015. I remember telling her: “The only thing I can associate to is the killing of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014.”)

Throughout the dream I kept hearing a song by Gustav Mahler, “I am lost to the world.” The theme of being lost is an important theme of the dream.

The following is the text of Mahler’s song, “I am lost to the world,” which figured in my dream:

I am lost to the world

with which I used to waste so much time,
It has heard nothing from me for so long that it may very well believe that I am dead!

It is of no consequence to me
Whether it thinks me dead;
I cannot deny it,
for I really am dead to the world.
I am dead to the world’s tumult,
And I rest in a quiet realm!
I live alone in my heaven,
In my love and in my song!

According to psychoanalyst Adam Phillips, fantasies or dreams about “being lost” can relate to the primal scene. In psychoanalysis the expression “primal scene” refers to the sight of sexual relations between the parents, as observed, constructed, or fantasized by a child and interpreted by the child as a scene of violence. The scene is not understood by the child, remaining enigmatic but at the same time provoking sexual excitement. Phillips says that fantasies or dreams about “being lost” (though a painful state) can be the lesser of two evils, where the alternative to being lost is being an intruder in a place where one is not supposed to be and risking punishment (such as, being in the parents’ bedroom).

Is there any reason why I would identify with Michael Brown, the young black man fatally shot by the police in Ferguson, Missouri, based on any shared experience? In fact, there is a point of correspondence between us based on something I experienced in the year 2002. The following is a contemporaneous report I wrote that features the theme of intrusion:

6-28-02 A strange and distressing incident happened yesterday afternoon (6/27) at about 3:55 PM – 4:00 PM at the Georgia Avenue/Petworth Metro Station. A Metro transit cop (white male) stopped me near the kiosk on the mezzanine above the track level. He asked me where I was coming from, where I was headed, whether I had anything on me he should know about – drugs, needles – He asked to see my arms to check for injection marks, asked if I use drugs or ever used drugs. I told him I was in the neighborhood to visit the mental health center (I had a consult with my psychologist, Dr.
Shaffer). He asked me the address (I said 1125 Spring Road). He stated that there was a lot of drug trafficking in the neighborhood. His manner was mildly intimidating, and not at all friendly. The only reason I can see for the stop was that I was white in an overwhelmingly black/Hispanic neighborhood. I think it was racial profiling. What was his probable cause for the stop? At no time did he initiate physical contact. He declined to see my ID, which I offered.

The officer asked me: “Is there anything in your pants I need to know about.” I felt like giving him a sarcastic response: “Yeah, officer, my penis.” I decided it wouldn’t be a good idea to joke with the officer.

What were the events of the day September 29, 2015 that preceded my dream that evening?

I had had a consult with my primary care doctor, Dr. P—, who practiced at a clinic that provides healthcare services to the underserved community. This was my first consult with him. My previous primary care doctor, Reggie Elliott, M.D. – who I had seen for about two years – had been transferred to another clinic. Dr. Elliott was a black physician. I liked Dr. Elliott and, at some level, I may have viewed Dr. P— as an interloper or intruder. I asked Dr. P— if he would prescribe testosterone. Three months earlier, in July 2015, I had asked Dr. Elliott in an email to consider prescribing testosterone. Apparently, this was something I had on my mind for some time. At my consult with Dr. P— I was curious about whether testosterone was administered orally or by injection. Dr. P— refused to prescribe testosterone or even test my testosterone level. He explained that testosterone therapy posed significant risk, including heart attack, and that he never prescribed testosterone to any of his patients. Did I feel thwarted or frustrated by Dr. P—’s refusal; did I feel he was failing to give me what I wanted? It is possible that I got a flu shot during this clinic visit – an injection – though I don’t recall now.

After meeting Dr. P— on September 29, 2015, I was curious about him. That evening I Googled him and learned that he was a native of New Orleans, that he had graduated with honors from medical school, and that he had earned a master’s degree in public health. There was an element of the uncanny in what I learned. At that time I was working on a novel that I called The Emerald Archive. In my notes for the novel dated February 17, 2015 – written seven
months before I met Dr. P— — I had conceived a fictional character, a young medical doctor who grew up in the south, had graduated with honors from medical school, and who had an interest in public health (“infectious diseases and epidemiology”).

After my first consult with Dr. P— I regressed to a state of intense, primitive idealization of him. I felt as if I had found in Dr. P— a psychological twin.

_The Theme of the Injection_

When I was three years old I contracted scarlet fever, an infectious disease. My pediatrician, Joseph Bloom, M.D., diagnosed the illness during a house call. The doctor was “directly aware, too, of the origin of the infection,” which he attributed to my drinking spoiled milk from a baby bottle; my mother had indulged my taste for spoiled milk. Dr. Bloom scolded my parents: “Why is a three-year-old still drinking from a bottle? A three-year-old should not be drinking from a bottle.” The doctor told my mother to throw away the bottle and force me to drink from a cup. I surmise that Dr. Bloom gave me an injection of penicillin with a syringe.

I can recall the scene in my bedroom (one of my earliest memories): my embarrassment, nay, narcissistic mortification that the intruding doctor had discovered my secret attachment to my bottle – and my father, aroused to anger with my mother, using the doctor’s statements as ammunition to attack my mother’s parenting. To some degree, my illness took second stage at this moment to ongoing conflicts between my parents. Dr. Bloom explained that he was required to report my scarlet fever, deemed a serious public health concern, to the Philadelphia Department of Health. Thereafter, the Health Department quarantined our house, posting a notice on the front door: “No one other than family members may enter this premises.” The affair – the involvement of government authorities – was a cause of serious embarrassment to my parents.

Of psychoanalytic interest is the possibility that my baby bottle had served as a transitional object for me that I had invested with psychic importance. If so, I might have experienced loss of the bottle as traumatic, namely, the loss of a psychic fragment of myself. Then too, the doctor’s censure of me provoked a confrontation with reality – namely, forcing me to recognize that my
pleasurable (and fantasy-laden) activity was actually life-threatening – that undermined my illusions and may have caused an early injury to the self (narcissistic mortification). Like Goethe’s Faust, my “beautiful world was destroyed” in an instant.

Note the issue of injection. I surmise that Dr. Bloom gave me an injection of penicillin by syringe to treat the scarlet fever infection. The police incident from June 2002 involved the issues of wrongdoing and injections. The police officer questioned me about my possible illegal drug use and he looked for evidence of drug injections in my arm. When I contracted scarlet fever at age three, the issues were “wrongdoing” (drinking from a baby bottle) and possible penicillin injection.

Also, I probably experienced Dr. Bloom in my bedroom as an intrusion on my private space—my bedroom. Dr. Bloom was the intruding doctor. Perhaps I thought: “Who is this intruder? What right does he have to invade my closeted realm and cause me this distress, embarrassing me in front of my parents and ordering me to give up my bottle (my transitional object)?”

Perhaps I projected a paternal (Oedipal) image onto Dr. Bloom. In my three-year-old mind, was Dr. Bloom not the intruder who violated my inner sanctum and exposed my secret attachment to my bottle and, further, interfered with my internal world of fantasy (by denying me my transitional object), just as my father was the intruder who violated my relationship with my mother? But then, was I not also the intruder on my parents’ primal scene, at least in fantasy? Was I not the intruder who violated my parents’ private (secret) relationship?

“Multiple and shifting identificatory positions can be discerned in primal scene configurations. Primal scene experiences and fantasies are viewed as a blueprint for internalized object relationships.” Knafo, D. and Feiner, K. “The Primal Scene: Variations on a Theme.” We see the possibility at age three of multiple and shifting identifications as proposed by Knafo and Feiner: Dr. Bloom (intruder) = Oedipal Father (intruder) = self (intruder). (At my first consult with Dr. P— on September 29, 2015, did I view him at some level as the intruder who replaced my previous doctor, Reggie Elliott?).
An issue for inquiry is the extent to which my lifelong feelings of alienation—my sense of being lost in the world and of being an alien intruder in social situations—is invested with affect whose origins lie in primal scene fantasy. Naomi Morgenstern has spoken of “the anxiety and sense of alienation associated with primal scene.” See, Morgenstern, N., “The Primal Scene in the Public Domain: E.L. Doctorow's 'The Book of Daniel.”’

If my sense of alienation is invested with primal scene fantasy, is it not also possible, by extension, that my tendency to regress to intense primitive idealization of certain persons might also be related to primal scene fantasy in some way? That is a wild thought. But I associate to Toni Morrison's novel, The Bluest Eye. Keep in mind that primal scene fantasy is invested with violence and trauma. In Morrison's novel the traumatized protagonist, Pecola—who struggles with a shattered identity—“embodies the black individual’s history of oppression and exclusion [like the child in primal scene fantasy who is excluded from the parents' bedroom?]. She suffers prolonged exposure to domestic and communal violence, which produces what Kai Erikson calls ‘psychic erosion’. ” Ramirez, M.L., “The Theme of the Shattered Self in Toni Morrison’s The Bluest Eye and A Mercy.” Pecola creates an idealized “alter ego, Twin, to cope with trauma[,]” . . . “to defend [herself] against the dangers to [her] being that are the consequences of [her] failure to achieve a secure sense of [her] own identity.” Id., quoting R.D. Laing. Pecola's sense of "I" is impaired and her fantasied, idealized double—a second "I," which became for her, "our I"—propitiates her psychological struggles. I note, incidentally, that Narendra Keval "propose[s] that thwarting the other links the racist scene to the psychoanalytic notion of the "primal scene, in which complex psychic issues are being worked out. Like fantasies of the primal scene, racist scenes also involve an intermingling of benign and malignant elements that contain racial and racist fantasies respectively, oscillating between a sense of curiosity and concern that accommodates the ethnic other and descent into a spiral of hatred and revenge." Keval, N., "Racist States of Mind: Understanding the Perversion of Curiosity and Concern."

There is an intimate connection between idealization and the sense of alienation: one can imagine that the alienated individual might idealize those few persons who mirror him, that is, those persons who, by virtue of their perceived selfsameness, do not arouse a sense of the alien in him, or, at a
fantasy level, create an idealized twin that is capable of perfect empathy. *You and I are identical. My “I” is identical to your “I.” Our “I’s” are the same: fused and inalienable.* Twinlike representation of another person provides the illusion of being able to impersonate or transform oneself into the other and the other into the self. Coen, S.J. and Bradlow, P.A. “Twin Transference as a Compromise Formation.” Finding oneself in another person obviates feelings of alienation. See Kottler, A. “Feeling at Home, Belonging, and Being Human: Kohut, Self Psychology, Twinship, and Alienation.”

Melanie Klein considered twin fantasy to be ubiquitous, but especially intense in illness. Significantly, as it relates to me, Klein associated twin fantasy with the need for self-understanding and, by implication, to self-analysis. “The longing to understand oneself is also bound up with the need to be understood by the internalized good object. One expression of this longing is the universal phantasy of having a twin . . . . This twin figure [] represents those un-understood and split off parts which the individual is longing to regain, in the hope of achieving wholeness and complete understanding; they are sometimes felt to be the ideal parts. At other times the twin also represents an entirely reliable, in fact, idealized internal object.” Klein, M., “On the Sense of Loneliness.” Didier Anziu, too, linked the longing for self-understanding with the creation of an imaginary other (perhaps, a twin): "A self-analysis that is curative and creative requires at least two persons, one of whom is imaginary." Anziu, D., “Beckett: Self-Analysis and Creativity.”

Be that as it may.

Permit me to revisit a dream I had in November 1992, days before Thanksgiving: a dream I called “The Dream of Greensboro.

**The Dream of Greensboro**

I had the following dream following the evening of November 24, 1992:

*I find myself in Greensboro, North Carolina. I am in a residential section that appears to be deserted. The houses appear to be built on sand. There are sand dunes everywhere. Feelings of isolation and anxiety. Am aware that this is place where Jesse Raben, a former co-worker, is from. (Jesse Raben’s father is a professor of Radiology at the University of North Carolina). I see a building that appears to be a school. The building’s cornerstone has the inscription “1954.” I note that the building’s design*
suggests that the school was built much earlier than 1954; this strikes me as peculiar. The building has a tower.

[My birthday is December 23, 1953. When I calculate my age I always subtract “1954” from the current year. Apparently, the dream image of the school represents me.]

I am filled with feelings of awe, and imagine that Jesse Raben must have attended this school. I want to leave the town. I am afraid to ask anyone where the train station is located lest I reveal that I am desperate to leave. I fear that questions will be raised concerning what I am doing in the town; I have the feeling that I am not supposed to be here and fear that others will discover my “transgression.” Instead of asking where the train station is located, I ask where the business district is located, reasoning that the train station must be located somewhere in the business district. I think that if I can be directed to the business district, I will be able to find the train station on my own. The locale begins to resemble the business district in Moorestown, New Jersey, where my sister lives.

An event from earlier in the day appears to have been the proximate instigating event of the dream. As I wrote in my contemporaneous dream interpretation: “On the morning of Tuesday November 24, 1992, before a session with Dr. Suzanne M. Pitts, my then-treating psychiatrist at GW, I had walked out into the corridor adjacent to the office of Jerry M. Wiener, M.D. Dr. Wiener was at that time chairman of GW’s psychiatry department and a nationally-prominent psychiatrist who I admired. I had a feeling of awe when I saw him, but thought, ‘I’m intruding, I’m not supposed to be in this corridor; I have committed a transgression.’"

In this event I experienced conscious feelings of idealization mixed with a sense of wrongdoing – of having intruded on Dr. Wiener’s private space. I had had a contentious relationship with my psychiatrist, Dr. Pitts; my feelings about her were invested with fears of maternal engulfment. Perhaps, in my mind, Dr. Wiener was the distant but idealized father who, in my fantasy, offered rescue from the engulfing mother (Dr. Pitts). I had often spoken with Dr. Pitts about my preference for a male psychiatrist. I told her of my jealousy of Jeffrey Akman, M.D., a young male psychiatrist in the psychiatry department who appeared to be Dr. Wiener’s protégé. Jesse Raben, the coworker I dreamed about, was also a distant but idealized figure (who seems
to have been invested with my rescue fantasy; when we worked together I associated the name Raben with the rescuer of the Biblical Joseph (the famous dream interpreter), Reuben, Joseph’s older brother).

Note that as a small child, I might have viewed my going off to school as offering freedom or rescue from my engulfing mother. Here, I would be the passive party in need of rescue from mother. In the Greensboro dream, perhaps, Raben = idealized father as rescue figure = school (with the phallic tower) as idealized (male) rescue figure = me.

Then again, the theme of rescue is related to the primal scene, where the child feels the need to rescue mother. In the primal scene fantasy, I would be the active party, rescuing mother. Salman Akhtar writes: “While children of both sexes feel it, the sense that one’s mother has been co-opted, indeed invaded, by the father is especially intense in the case of a boy. Exposure to the primal scene (in actuality or imagination), in the setting of immature ego-functions, and anger at the parents for such ‘betrayal’ further fuels the child’s rage. By the mechanism of compartmentalization, mother’s active sexual participation is negated and the father is seen as a violent invader of the mother’s pristine body. The need to rescue mother is powerfully felt.” Akhtar, S. Mind, Culture, and Global Unrest: Psychoanalytic Reflections.

I note parenthetically that, indeed, in another dream that dates from June 15, 1993 I imagined that I was Raben’s rescuer, possibly suggesting an aspect of twinship: the transformation of self into other and other into self. In the Greensboro dream perhaps I viewed Raben as my rescuer; while in the dream below I was Raben’s rescuer. See Coen and Bradlow, above:

**The Dream of Murder in the Lobby**

I am in the lobby of an unidentified building. The lobby is crowded with people, all milling about. Present in the lobby is a former co-worker at [the law firm where I worked with] Raben. An unidentified individual enters the room, pulls out a gun, and shoots Raben, then walks out. Raben falls to the floor; he lies prostate, unconscious, and bleeding profusely. I have the feeling that everyone in the room knows Raben, but does nothing. They seem to ignore what has just occurred. I feel I have a special mission to save Raben. I telephone an ambulance. I am overcome with a feeling of futility. I think that even if a doctor arrives in a very brief time, Raben will have bled to death before he
can be treated.

Let us remember that the role of the early father, according to psychoanalyst Peter Blos, is that of a rescuer or savior at the time when the small child normally makes his determined effort to gain independence from the first and exclusive care-taking person, usually the mother. At this juncture the father attachment offers an indispensable and irreplaceable help to the infant’s effort to resist the regressive pull to total maternal dependency, thus enabling the child to give free rein to the innate strivings of physiological and psychological progression, i.e., maturation. Blos, P. “Freud and the Father Complex.”

This takes us back to Kohut’s psychoanalytic case of Mr. U. My psychology parallels Kohut’s patient Mr. U who, turning away from the unreliable empathy of his mother, tried to gain confirmation of his self through an idealizing relationship with his father. The self-absorbed father, however, unable to respond appropriately, rebuffed his son’s attempt to be close to him, depriving him of the needed merger with the idealized self-object and, hence, of the opportunity for gradually recognizing the self-object’s shortcomings. Kohut, H., The Restoration of the Self.

A recurring pattern in my adult interpersonal relations is my need for an idealized male – or other object – as a defense against fears of maternal engulfment. The Greensboro dream might relate back to my childhood sense that elementary school attendance represented freedom from my mother. My mother used to tell a story about my first day of kindergarten. She walked me to school, and when we arrived at the threshold of the schoolyard, I turned to her and said (at age 4 1/2): “Go home, mommy, I don’t need you anymore!”

Significant in the present context is the extent to which my imagined intrusion into the city of Greensboro in the dream was invested with primal scene fantasy: In the dream I had intruded on an idealized figure’s private space.

An association: When I was thirty-three years old I was employed as a paralegal in the computer department at a law firm where I was assigned for a brief time to a special project for an attorney. I was allowed to work temporarily in my supervisor’s office suite in an office adjacent to hers. At one point my supervisor, Sheryl Ferguson, had an angry confrontation with said attorney outside my office door: “How long is this project going to go on? There’s
already been a security breach because of him (meaning me). I want him out of here!” I had stolen confidential information: the computer password of the department’s consultant, Bob Ferguson. I was the intruder who had come into possession of confidential information, like the child who fantasizes spying on his parents in their bedroom, that is, the primal scene fantasy. The name Ferguson is identical to the name of the city in Missouri where Michael Brown was killed in a confrontation with police, Ferguson, Missouri.

The Dream of the Intruding Doctor, in my interpretation, concerns self-estrangement. I am estranged from, or miss, idealized fragments of myself: that is, myself in another guise. But the dream also concerns my estrangement from home. I find myself lost in an unfamiliar city in Missouri. The manifest dream is thus a concrete representation of nostalgia: literally, nostos (Greek for return home) and algos (Greek for pain). In the manifest dream I find myself in a strange place; I have a scary sense of the unfamiliar. But then, Freud believed that what we find the most eerie or scary originates not from the exotic or foreign, but from what was originally familiar then repressed and subsequently remanifested in an uncanny (unheimlich) guise.

In the previously reported Dream of Schubert’s Final Piano Sonata I associated to the intergenerational transmission of trauma. My grandmother emigrated from Poland to the United States at age eighteen and had no contact with her family again. She spoke broken English when I knew her and my father used to ask rhetorically, “how can a person live in a country for fifty years and never learn the language?” My grandmother’s Polish husband, who brought her to the United States, died when she was twenty-six, leaving her in poverty. I wonder if I have internalized my grandmother’s losses and her possible survivor guilt: whether her feelings were transmitted to me intergenerationally. I am intrigued by the fact that at a symbolic level all of the following issues can be seen as related: my identification with my grandmother’s estrangement from her homeland; my narcissistic disturbance in which I feel estranged from ideal parts of myself with which I seek to re-unite like a foreigner who longs for her homeland; the sense of myself as an outsider in my family; and fantasies about finding myself in an unfamiliar place and longing, either covertly or implicitly, to go home. And then, also, there is the symbolic equivalence of these issues to primal scene fantasy, which can involve the child’s unconscious anxieties about
his imagined intrusion into an unfamiliar and forbidden place and his witnessing a strange and disturbing scene, which, like the unassimilated immigrant in a foreign county, the child cannot comprehend.

I associated The Dream of the Intruding Doctor with my former primary care doctor, Dr. P—, though he was not present in the manifest dream. Circumstantial evidence that the dream was in fact related to my repressed thoughts about Dr. P— comes from the following later dream, from March 8, 2019, in which Dr. P— is a central figure:

**Homecoming: The Dream of the Family Gathering**

I am at the house where I grew up. There is a large family gathering at which my parents are present. Dr. P— is there. I am happy to see him, but I don’t want to look too excited. My family treats him like a beloved son. My family ignores me; they appear to shun me. All their attention is focused on Dr. P—. Dr. P— ignores me also; he won’t make eye contact. He seems happy and profoundly content. I have strong feelings of sadness and distress about Dr. P— ignoring me and my family ignoring me. I feel that Dr. P— has usurped me. I feel like an outsider in my own family. The family leads him into the kitchen, while I gaze on.

Thoughts:

My view of Dr. P— as my usurper in this dream seems connected to my role as an intruder in the earlier Dream of the Intruding Doctor, someone who did not belong in Missouri: the outsider, alien, or interloper. In The Dream of the Family Gathering, Dr. P— is a “welcome outsider” to my parents while to me he is an intruder, which parallels the biographical incident from age three, discussed earlier, when I came down with scarlet fever. My pediatrician (Dr. Bloom) was a “welcome outsider” to my parents and to me, perhaps, an intruder.

The dream suggests that I see Dr. P— as the successful son my parents never had. He is my father's “best-loved, ideal son.” See, Blos, P. “The Genealogy of the Ego Ideal.” I suppose I am deeply envious of him; I feel he has the accomplishments and traits that rightly belong to me, but that in fact belong to him.

The figure of Dr. P— in this dream reminds me of the so-called “happy mortal” described by Goethe in his novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*: “We often feel that we lack something, and seem to see that very quality in someone else,
promptly attributing all our own qualities to him too, and a kind of ideal contentment as well. And so the happy mortal is a model of complete perfection—which we have ourselves created.”

I see superego issues. Dr. P— is my ego ideal. The distress I feel in the dream is the disparity between my ego and my own ego ideal. We might say that my feelings in this dream relate to a state of “self-estrangement” in which I sense a discrepancy between my ideal self and my actual self-image. See, TenHouten, W., Alienation and Affect.

I think about a biographical incident from Sunday May 18, 1969. The recollection concerns a homecoming: a family gathering that took place when I was 15 years old. My sister and brother-in-law got married the previous Sunday, on May 11. On the night of their wedding, they flew to Miami Beach, Florida for their honeymoon. A week later, on the 18th, when they returned home to Philadelphia, my parents and I picked them up at the airport. They returned to my parents’ house. My uncle Louie and his wife Reggie were there. My mother happened to have a bottle of champagne. We drank a glass of champagne. My sister and brother-in-law had purchased a gift for me, a men's jewelry box. In retrospect, the jewelry box reminds me of the theme of the three caskets from Shakespeare's play, The Merchant of Venice. In that play the fair and wise Portia is bound at her father's bidding to take as her husband only that one of her suitors who chooses the right casket from among the three before him. The three caskets are of gold, silver and lead: the right casket is the one that contains her portrait. Two suitors have already departed unsuccessful: they have chosen gold and silver. Bassanio, the third decides in favor of lead; thereby he wins the bride, whose affection was already his before the trial of fortune. The suitor's choice in The Merchant of Venice parallels my dream in that my parents appear to have chosen Dr. P— over me. It’s as if my parents were thinking, “Now that we have Dr. P—, we don’t need Gary anymore.” In some sense I was the loser in a competition, which suggests an oedipal theme. (Incidentally, note the curious parallel to my earlier anecdote: “My mother used to tell a story about my first day of kindergarten. She walked me to school, and when we arrived at the threshold of the schoolyard, I turned to her and said (at age 4½): ‘Go home, mommy, I don’t need you anymore!’” For me, perhaps attainment of the idealized object, whether Dr. P— in the dream or
school in childhood, obviated the need for the devalued object, namely, me in the dream or my mother in childhood.)

As I see it, The Dream of the Family Gathering relates to introjective concerns, not anaclitic concerns. People say about me, “He’s very lonely and he wants a friend. That’s why he is obsessed with his former primary care doctor.” No. Those are interpersonal, anaclitic concerns. In this dream I am failing to live up to my parents’ (and my own) expectations: Patients with introjective disorders are plagued by feelings of guilt, self-criticism, inferiority, and worthlessness. They tend to be more perfectionistic, duty-bound, and competitive individuals, who often feel like they have to compensate for failing to live up to their own and the perceived expectations of others. The basic wish is to be acknowledged, respected, and admired. That’s exactly what my parents are doing in the dream; they are giving Dr. P— acknowledgement, respect and admiration – all the things being denied me in the dream. Individuals with a self-critical personality style may be more vulnerable to depressive states in response to disruptions in self-definition and personal achievement.

These individuals may experience “introjective” depressive states around feelings of failure and guilt centered on self-worth.

A biographical incident comes to mind. When I was 32 years old I worked as a paralegal at a large law firm. A new employee named Craig Dye began employment. I had formed a strong dislike of him before I met him, though we later became friends. Another employee had said to me weeks before, “They’re hiring a new guy. He’s really good. They might just decide they don’t need you anymore.” When I met Craig I thought, “So you’re the guy who’s going to take my job.” During the following months my working relationship with Craig was one of rivalry. Craig and I had many similar characteristics. When there was competition for a particular assignment, or if I had to submit work in competition with that of peers, I confidently assumed I would win. Craig and I were both intelligent and gifted, and that helped us to live up even to overweening pretensions. Although generally good-natured and even “humble” in manner, we both had many arrogant traits. Compounding the hostility between Craig and me was the fact that our supervisor was an attractive young woman. That is, the relationship between Craig and me vis-à-vis a female authority carried an implicit plea, not unlike the plea of the three suitors to Portia in The Merchant of Venice: “Choose
one of us. Is it to be he or I?"

**Additional Thoughts about Homecomings:**

I woke up on the morning of Saturday April 6, 2019 thinking of events that had transpired exactly thirty years earlier, on Thursday April 6, 1989. At that time I worked as a paralegal at the law firm of Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld, which was founded by the eminent attorney, Robert S. Strauss. The firm had arranged a “Breakfast with Bob Strauss.” About sixty of the firm’s paralegals gathered to hear Strauss speak and answer questions. Strauss and others sat at the head table at the front of the large fifth floor conference room. Another paralegal, Jesse Raben was seated at the head table, which sparked my jealousy. I thought, “How did Raben get to sit at the head table with Strauss and the important people like law partner, Earl Segal? How did Raben get to be so important — he’s just a paralegal like me!” I saw Raben as my usurper, perhaps – or my rival.

Strauss said he had just returned home from a business trip to Paris. “People rave about Paris,” he said. “But I think Washington is the most exciting city in the world. The whole time I was in Paris, I couldn’t wait to get back home to Washington.”

It may be that at some level I registered an association to my sister’s wedding when I was 15 years old, when I sat at the head table of the wedding ballroom as best man together with other members of my family. At my sister’s wedding I remember feeling ignored by my family; all their attention was focused on my sister. I remember that when we had completed our meal, I was still sitting alone at the head table, smoking a cigar. My family had left the head table by that time and had started mingling with the guests. As I sat alone, the wedding photographer approached me. He said: “There are a lot of girls here. Why don’t you talk to them instead of sitting alone smoking a cigar?” I took his advice and proceeded to chat with my sister’s female friends. A week later, when my sister and brother-in-law returned from their honeymoon in Miami Beach, we had a small family gathering where my mother opened a bottle of champagne she had on hand.

Later in the morning of April 6, 2019 I listened to the second act of Strauss’s *Arabella*. The second act of the opera is one of my favorite Strauss pieces. I
never listen to Acts 1 or 3; I find them tedious. I have always loved Act 2. The action takes place in a ballroom at a hotel in Vienna in the 1860s. Early in the act Mandryka proposes marriage to Arabella, who accepts. Mandryka orders champagne for the guests at the ball, “Moët et Chandon, medium dry.”

In a pivotal moment in the opera, Arabella accepts Mandryka’s marriage proposal, and pledges her eternal love — “You will be my lord” . . . “from here to eternity” (“auf zeit und ewigkeit”).

Later in the act Arabella meets up with her three suitors Elemer, Dominick, and Lamoral, and discards them, telling them she will never see them again. These events parallel the theme of the three caskets in The Merchant of Venice, where Portia rejects two of her suitors in favor of Bassanio. Arabella’s father, Mr. Waldner, sits at a table at the ball playing cards with his friends — like Bob Strauss playing cards with his poker buddies, who, incidentally, included the late Chief Justice William Rehnquist, appeals court Judge David Sentelle, and the late Martin Feinstein, onetime director of the Washington National Opera.

These associations highlight the themes of jealousy, rivalry, usurpation, losing in competition, and feelings of contemptible anonymity at a gathering. These are oedipal themes, or introjective concerns.

I am reminded of the observations of British sociologist Yiannis Gabriel who points out the biological imperative of what we might term oedipal aggrandizement: the male's efforts to distinguish himself from amorous rivals in order to win the ideal mate. "Like collectivism, individualism can be traced to the dissolution of the Oedipus complex and the institution of the superego. Both collectivism and individualism are attempts to placate the superego, the former through submission to the social order, the latter through distinction, excellence and achievement. Conformity alone cannot satisfy the superego — after all it is not by being one of the crowd that the boy will win the ultimate prize, the woman of his dreams; nor does being part of the crowd win for the girl the ‘happy-ever-after’ life of her dreams. One looks in vain for fairy tales about lemmings working together to accomplish collective tasks. Achievement, distinction and excellence are what grip the child's imagination, which idealizes the heroes and heroines of fairy tales and casts him or herself in the starring role. It is by slaying dragons, answering riddles, and accomplishing the impossible that the child achieves the fulfillment of the promise which
concluded his or her oedipal drama." Organizations in Depth: The Psychoanalysis of Organizations.

At the workplace “Breakfast with Bob Strauss” I must have felt I had been cast with the lemmings — I was part of a collective of equals, just one of the crowd, without distinction, a humiliated state of contemptible anonymity, seated with fellow paralegals at indistinguishable tables. Raben had achieved distinction with an envied seated position next to firm founder, Bob Strauss — the all-powerful father figure of the organization. Raben had assured his identification with the primal father. Raben had set himself apart from fellow paralegals, the “band of brothers,” sons of the primal father.

I associate Raben with another homecoming. On the evening of Thursday September 28, 1989 I telephoned Raben at home. I said, “Do you want to get together for lunch tomorrow?”

He said, “I can’t. I’m flying [from Washington, D.C.] to North Carolina tomorrow. If you want to go to the airport tomorrow, we could have lunch together—I’d be glad to have lunch with you at the airport—but otherwise we can’t have lunch.”

Raben was talking about a “homecoming.” He was talking about “a Family Gathering.” His family lived in North Carolina and he was joining them for the Jewish New Year, Rosh Hashanah.

In the Dream of the Family Gathering, Dr. P— was cast in the starring role, as he had been at his own wedding where he had won the girl of his dreams. On the evening of the day I met Dr. P— (September 29, 2015) (hours before I dreamed about finding myself in Missouri) I had discovered on the Internet a lengthy newspaper article about him and his wife; the couple had gotten married the previous year in an extravagant wedding in the Caribbean.
I am looking at a man's shirt; it is blue with a buttoned-down collar. I know intuitively that the shirt belongs to my friend Craig. There is no objective evidence that the shirt belongs to Craig, however. I look at a tag affixed to the shirt that indicates its size. I see that the collar measures 15-1/2" and the sleeve measures 33", which is my shirt size. I feel a great deal of satisfaction to learn that Craig and I wear the same size shirt. I have an impulse to smell the shirt. At that moment I think: "Only a queer would smell another guy's shirt." I examine the collar of the shirt and notice that it is frayed in one location.

EVENTS OF THE PREVIOUS DAY, July 1, 1994: I watch the televised preliminary hearing in the O.J. Simpson murder case. On this day of the hearing the prosecution attempts to establish the approximate time of death of the victims, who were killed in a knife attack.

EVENTS OF JULY 1, 1976: My father dies one day after having undergone a coronary artery bypass, a surgical procedure. On the evening of July 1, 1976 my mother gathers together a suit, necktie and shirt for my father's burial. She wants to bury him in a white shirt, but my father does not own a suitable white shirt. My mother asks me if I will give her a white shirt that I own, which I do. I had worn the shirt on only one previous occasion. Thus, my father was laid to rest attired in my white shirt.

The manifest dream can be interpreted as an expression of my twinship or alter ego needs using terms from Kohut’s self psychology in that the dream imagines that Craig and I are physically similar; we wear the same size shirt. Our physical likeness symbolizes my sense of selfsameness with him.

In Kohut’s framework, selfobjects are external objects that function as part of the “self machinery” – “i.e., objects which are not experienced as separate and independent from the self.” They are persons, objects or activities that “complete” the self, and which are necessary for normal functioning. Kohut describes early interactions between the infant and his caretakers as involving the infant’s “self” and the infant’s “selfobjects.” In thinking about the psychic meaning of the dream I associated to the court testimony of a witness in the O.J. Simpson murder case.

The witness, Steven Schwab testified that he found a stray dog one night while
walking his own dog. The agitated lost dog had no identifying tag (“no identity”) and seemed to frantically want to communicate something. The dog might be said to need a “translator” who would understand its panicked state. Such a “translator” would be an intermediate object or “courier” between the dog and potential rescuers. Perhaps we may say that Schwab served as that intermediate object who, over the course of the following hours, unraveled the dog’s secret; Schwab interpreted the dog’s seeming need to communicate a message.

In a second association I thought about Jan Karski, a Polish World War II resistance-movement soldier who served as a “courier” or intermediate object between the Warsaw ghetto’s Jewish inhabitants during World War II and the Polish government-in-exile in London. It was Karski’s role as courier or intermediate object to communicate the desperate plight of the Warsaw ghetto Jews to the outside world, paralleling the role of Schwab in the O.J. Simpson case who brought the stray dog’s desperate message to the attention of the authorities.

How do my associations to Schwab and Karski, two individuals who served as intermediate objects who communicated a message from mute victims to the outside world, correspond to the manifest dream image of a shirt owned by my alter ego friend? Might we say that Schwab and Karski symbolized a transitional space between my silent inner world (the unconscious) and the world of external objects: an intermediary between the inner world of fantasy and the outer world of sensory impingement? Note that Winnicott attaches importance to the smell and texture of the transitional object. Remember the following thought in the manifest dream: I have an impulse to smell the shirt.

“The child sucks their thumb and takes an external object such as a blanket, part of a sheet, a handkerchief or napkin (diaper or nappy) into the mouth using the other hand. The child then sucks the cloth or smells it or rubs it against the cheek. The texture and smell are important.” The teddy bear (as a transitional object) as well as the shirt of the manifest dream are cloth objects — objects in which texture is important.

First Association: Steven Schwab Testimony
The following is a partial transcript of the testimony of Steven Schwab, called as a witness in the O.J. Simpson preliminary hearing on July 1, 1994. The witness is wearing a white suit, dark tie—and a blue shirt with a buttoned-down collar.

[Clerk]: State and spell your name for the record.

[Witness]: My name is Steven Schwab. S-T-E-V-E-N S-C-H-W-A-B.

[The issue of identity is overdetermined in the text. Schwab is called to identify himself in court, that is, state his name. Schwab thereafter describes an unidentified dog that has no tags: no name. With transitional phenomena, a concrete object transitions into abstraction: the teddy bear assumes the identity of self and mother perceived as non-self. This is an interim region between fantasy and reality. This potential space is what Winnicott viewed as play, an infinite intermediate area where external and internal reality are amalgamated. Correspondingly, this is a territory in which the subject can take on the identity of a fictional character interlaced with his own identity without fear or retaliatory consequences. It is through this play that one can explore and perceive self and his relation to others. Perhaps, we might venture to say that the unidentified dog symbolizes the infant, who has no autonomous self. The unidentified dog exists in a merged state with the owner, just as in the infant's subjective world it is one with the mother. The nameless dog symbolizes the infant who has no sense of “I.” At the earliest stage of development, the infant does not distinguish between self and non-self, between “I” and “she.” It is in the transitional stage, or intermediate stage, that the infant begins to develop a sense of self as an autonomous “I.”]

[Court]: You may inquire.

[Prosecutor]: Thank you, your honor. Good morning, Mr. Schwab.

[Witness]: Good morning.

[Prosecutor]: Directing your attention, sir, to the date of June 12th, 1994, Sunday, as of that date, sir, can you tell us where you lived?

[Witness]: I live on Montana Avenue. Do I need to give the address?

[Prosecutor]: No, sir, you don't. Was that on Montana near to Bundy?

[Witness]: Yes. That's on Montana between Bundy and San Vicente.
[Prosecutor]: How far from the intersection of Bundy and San Vicente did you live at that date?

[ Witness]: It's about half a block.

[Prosecutor]: Do you own any pets, sir?

[Witness]: Yes, I have two pets. I own a dog and a cat.

[Prosecutor]: Do you ever walk the dog in that neighborhood?

[Witness]: Yes, I walk the dog in that neighborhood, in the morning and at night.

[In drive theory, a group of daydreams, the animal fantasies of the latency period, originate as a result of the same emotional conditions that are the basis for the so-called twin fantasies. Burlingham, D. "The Fantasy of Having a Twin." The child takes an imaginary animal as his intimate and beloved companion; subsequently he is never separated from his animal friend, and in this way he overcomes loneliness. This daydream is constructed in much the same way as the twin fantasy, with this difference: the child chooses a new animal companion who can understand him in his loneliness, unhappiness, and need to be comforted. In drive theory, animal fantasies and the fantasy of having a twin sibling are related fantasies, oedipal in origin, of the latency period.]

[Prosecutor]: With regard to at nights, is that a habit that you have, sir, of doing that every night?

[Witness]: Yes. I walk the dog every night after watching television.

[Prosecutor]: Is there a particular time that you always walk the dog at nights?

[Witness]: There . . . It varies from day to day, because of the different shows that are on, generally, during the week I walk at a different hour than on the weekends.

[Prosecutor]: During the week, what time do you usually walk the dog at night?

[Witness]: I usually leave the house at 11:30. That's during the week. I generally watch the Dick Van Dyke Show, and then walk my dog, and that's during the week. That's on between 11:00 and 11:30.
[Prosecutor]: And on Sunday nights?

[Witness]: Well, the Dick Van Dyke Show is also on, but it's on an hour earlier. So, I watch the Dick Van Dyke Show on Sunday night—I watch it between 10:00 and 10:30. And then I go to walk my dog.

[Prosecutor]: Now, June the 12th was a Sunday, sir?

[Witness]: Yes, it was.

[Prosecutor]: Did you watch the Dick Van Dyke Show that night?

[Witness]: Yes, I did.

[Prosecutor]: And that was at what time you watched that show?

[Witness]: I watch the show between 10:00 and 10:30.

[Prosecutor]: Did you watch the entire show, sir?

[Witness]: Yes, I did.

[Prosecutor]: And what time did that show end?

[Witness]: That ends just prior to 10:30.

[Prosecutor]: Did you walk your dog that night after you watched the show?

[Witness]: Yes, as soon as the show was over, I got my dog, put her leash on, and took her for a walk.

[Prosecutor]: So, on the night of June the 12th, that Sunday night, about what time did you leave your apartment to walk your dog?


[Prosecutor]: Can you tell us what route you took when you walked her?

[Witness]: Yes, I walked down Montana, and I continued along Montana, I crossed the street at the intersection of Montana and Bundy and continued along Montana until I got to a street called Gretna Green. At Gretna Green I made a left and walked up one block, made a right on a street called Gorham, I then walked down one block, made a left on Amherst, walked up one block to Amherst and Dorothy, made a left at Amherst and Dorothy, and continued along Dorothy until I came to Bundy.
[Prosecutor]: Now, if you can tell us. You walked along Montana past Bundy, and you went left on Gretna Green?

[Witness]: Yes.

[Prosecutor]: How long did it take you to get to Gretna Green?

[Witness]: Well, I looked at my watch, when I turned to go down Gretna Green and that was 10:37. I remember that my dog had taken care of its business. I was deciding whether to return home or continue walking. And it was a nice night, so I decided to continue walking.

[Prosecutor]: Sir, what time was it about when you got to Gretna Green?

[Witness]: 10:37.

[Prosecutor]: 10:37 – You know that exactly?

[Witness]: Well, between 10:35 and 10:40. Obviously, it's not exact because I don't have a digital watch. But it was between 10:35 and 10:40.

[Prosecutor]: Were you wearing a watch at all?

[Witness]: Yes, I was wearing a watch.

[Prosecutor]: A regular watch, not the digital kind?

[Witness]: Not the digital. In fact, I'm wearing it now. It's a regular watch.

[Prosecutor]: Can you tell us what kind of watch that is?

[Witness]: Sure. [Witness displays watch.] It's a regular watch. It doesn't have numbers on the face. It's not a digital watch.

[Prosecutor]: For the record, the witness is indicating a watch that has dots where the hours would be . . .

[Court]: All right.

[Prosecutor]: An analog watch.

[Prosecutor]: So, at what street did you decide to turn around and go back home?

[Witness]: Well, that was when I came to Amherst and Dorothy. At Amherst and Dorothy I made a left, which would take me back home. I use this route . . . This takes me, generally, half an hour to do because I get home and then
another show begins at 11:00 and 11:30. So, that's the route I use.

[Prosecutor]: So, you turned around at Amherst and Dorothy and decided to go back home.

[Witness]: Correct.

[Prosecutor]: What happened next?

[Witness]: Well, I was walking down Dorothy and as I approached the corner of Dorothy and Bundy, I saw that there was a dog at the corner of Dorothy and Bundy, I saw that there was dog at the corner. It was a large Akita, very white, and as I approached further I saw that it wasn't with anyone. There was no one walking the dog. The dog was just there. And, the dog... It was unusual for a dog to just be wandering the neighborhood by itself. And the dog seemed agitated. It was barking at the house on the corner.

[Prosecutor]: On the corner of what?

[Witness]: On the corner of Dorothy and Bundy. There's a house on the corner that has a driveway that... a path to the door—that comes right to the corner. And it was unusual for a dog to be barking at a home that way. But that's what it was doing. And...

[Prosecutor]: Can you describe the way the dog looked?

[Witness]: Yes. It was a white Akita. Beautiful dog. It had a collar on, what looked like a very expensive embroidered collar—red and blue.

[Schwab’s discussion of the dog's collar seems to parallel the dream thought concerning the frayed collar: "I examine the collar of the shirt and notice that it is frayed in one location."]

[Witness]: Um, and it smelled my dog and my dog smelled it.

[Note the issue of smell and its possible relation to the role of smell in transitional objects.]

[Witness]: And I looked... I checked the collar to see if there was an address or a tag on it. But there wasn't.

[Schwab’s statement regarding a possible dog tag or other identifier seems to parallel the following dream thought: "I look at a tag affixed to the shirt that
indicates the size of the shirt. I see that the collar measures 15-1/2" and the sleeve measures 33", which is my shirt size. I feel a great deal of satisfaction to learn that Craig and I wear the same size shirt."

It is significant that the theme of inquiry into identity recurs in the hearing transcript. The witness's inquiry into the identity and origin of the dog ("I checked the collar to see if there was an address or a tag on it") parallels the later courtroom examination of the witness himself, who was asked pro forma by the Court to state his name, and, by the prosecutor, to state his address. The witness's later description of his discovery of blood on the dog's paws points to some unidentified victim. An issue of personal identity attaches to three figures in the hearing transcript: the witness (Schwab), the unidentified dog, and the unknown putative victim. Thus, the theme of personal identity emerges in various guises in the testimony.]

[Witness]: So, I didn't know where the dog was from. And as I examined the dog further, I noticed that there was blood on the paws.

[Prosecutor]: Blood on all four paws?

[Witness]: There seemed to be blood on all of the paws in different amounts. There was more on some than on others. But there was blood on the paws. I specially, I noticed some blood on one of the back paws. That was the one I noticed first.

[Prosecutor]: Now, what time was it when you first saw that dog?

[Witness]: Well, I didn't look at my watch the moment that this occurred. But based on the path and how long it generally takes me, I would say that that was approximately 10:55.

[Prosecutor]: And that was at the corner of Dorothy and Bundy?

[Witness]: Yes, it was.

[Prosecutor]: Did the dog wear a leash?

[Witness]: No, there was no leash. There was just the collar.

[Prosecutor]: The blood that you saw on the dog's paws, did it appear to be wet, fresh or dry?

[Witness]: I didn't touch the blood, so I don't really know. The dog was also
dirty, and there seemed to be mud on the dog. But, um, I didn't get like any blood on my hands or anything like that, so I don't know whether it was wet or dry.

[Prosecutor]: After those two dogs met each other, what happened next?

[Witness]: Well, my dog doesn't like other dogs very much. They barked at each other for a little bit. And then I noticed by that time that no one had come that wasn't like a block or two behind that, you know, in front of its owner or anything. So, I crossed the street at that point. I crossed the street from one side of Bundy to the other. And the dog stayed with us. The dog followed us, and, ah, so knowing that this was a lost dog I allowed it to stay with us. And I continued. . . I made a left at that point on Bundy heading back towards my house.

[Prosecutor]: During the time that the dog walked with you, did it continue to bark?

[Witness]: Yes, it was very strange. It would bark at each house as we passed. It would bark at. . . When we got to the entrance to the house, the path leading to the door of the houses, it would bark at the house. I had never seen anything like that before. But it would stop at each house and bark.

[Prosecutor]: So, as you walked down the sidewalk, you and your dog. The other one was following you. And every time you got to a place where a path leading up to a residence met the sidewalk, the dog would stop, look at the house, and bark.

[Witness]: Yes, absolutely. But the dog also didn't want to get very far from myself and my dog. It stayed very, very close to us.

[Witness]: Well, I continued to walk down Bundy and at that point, ah, a police car came, going in the other direction. And so I flagged the police car down to tell him that I had found this dog. And I did. I told the officer that I had found this dog that's obviously lost, and that maybe he could, you know, call someone, find out if someone had reported a missing dog. And he said he would take care of it. And so I continued on, but the dog continued to follow me. And it followed me down Bundy past Gorham, again, and then, all the way to Montana. So, I turned the corner on Montana. I made a right on Montana heading home, and the cop pulled into a driveway on Montana
heading home, and the cop pulled into a driveway on Montana and we spoke again because obviously the dog wasn't going to leave my side. So, at that point I gave him my address and the phone number and said that I would take the dog home and that he would call the animal control people, and that they would contact me with regard to the dog. So, I left the police officer at that time, continued home, and the dog followed me into the courtyard of my building, which has a pool, and up the stairs—I live on the second floor—up the stairs into my apartment. I mean, it stayed right with me. At that point I went into the house, leaving the dog outside because my wife was inside, and I also have a cat. And I didn't want to freak either of them out. So I closed the door and told my wife that this big Akita followed me home.

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[Witness]: At that point while we were discussing the various options my neighbors came home. And . . .

[Prosecutor]: Can you tell us what their names were?

[Witness]: Yes. His name is Sukru and her name is Bettina. And they live.

[Prosecutor]: What time was it when you saw them?

[Witness]: That would have been, oh, about 11:40.

[Prosecutor]: At the time that they came into the apartment building, were you outside still?

[Witness]: Yes, we were out in the courtyard. And we were discussing whether it would be OK if maybe we could tie the dog up in the courtyard overnight 'cause my plan was to tie the dog up or keep the dog with us overnight and then print up some posters on my computer, go back to the location, put up lost dog signs, and try to find the owner.

[Prosecutor]: So, you were outside in the courtyard with your wife and the dog. . .

[Witness]: And the dog, absolutely.

[Prosecutor]: . . . when Sukru and Bettina came up.

[Witness]: That's exactly what happened. And Sukru and Bettina take care of my dog when I'm away, either on vacation or if I'm out of town for the
weekend, they take care of my animals. And, um, so, at that point Sukru offered to take care of the dog overnight and to leave it out in the courtyard in the morning so that in the morning I could deal with trying to find the owner once again.

[Prosecutor]: And, did you give him the dog?

[Witness]: At that point I gave him the dog. And, I said, "fine." And at that point he took the leash that I had put on the dog—it was still on the dog—he took the dog for a walk. My wife and I spoke to his wife, Bettina, for a few more minutes and then went to bed.

[Prosecutor]: And did you ever see the dog again after that?

[Witness]: I have not seen the dog again since then. That was the last that I saw of the dog.

[Prosecutor]: Thank you. I have nothing further.

Second Association: Jan Karski Testimony

According to psychoanalyst Stanley Greenspan "every dynamic drama must take place in the context of a particular structure or set of structures. In addition, when focusing on structural perspectives it's [important to recognize] that structures provide the foundation—the housing, so to speak—for different dynamic dramas, each with its own content or meanings." "A Conversation with Stanley Greenspan." The American Psychoanalyst, 28(3): 25-27, 26 (1994).

I have identified a text the structure of which is identical to that of the earlier Schwab text.

The text is a portion of the transcript of the 1985 French film Shoah. The film, produced by Claude Lanzmann, comprises a collection of interviews of Nazi holocaust survivors, Nazi officials, and other eyewitnesses of the holocaust. The text in question is a transcript of an interview of Jan Karski, a former courier of the Polish government-in-exile in London who was enlisted by underground Jewish leaders in Poland to inspect the Warsaw ghetto and report his observations to the Allied governments. See Lanzmann, C. Shoah: Transcription of English Subtitles to 1985 French Film Shoah at 167-175 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985).
The key figures in the text are (1) the interviewer (an intellectualized, or affectively neutral, figure), (2) Jan Karski (an intermediate object), (3) the underground Jewish leaders (frantic witness-participants), and (4) inhabitants of the ghetto (mute victims).

These key figures parallel the central figures of the Schwab testimony, who comprise (1) the prosecutor (an intellectualized, or affectively neutral, figure) who examines (2) Steven Schwab (an intermediate object), (3) the dog Kato (a frantic witness-participant), and (4) the mute victims.

I am intrigued by the possibility that it was not the content of the Schwab testimony alone that instigated the dream, but also the housing of that content: namely, the structure of the Schwab testimony. That structure may be interpreted to symbolize the differentiated or contradictory mental states of a single individual: integrated representations of thought and feeling of a single individual as projected onto a "gallery of characters" – in such a figurative sense, Schwab and Karski would each respectively represent the “I” of a single person, while the other figures in the text would assume the role of “he,” a situation that would prevail in the vertical splitting of a single person.

"The existence of the complicated split mental representations of self and parents does not automatically make for pathology," explains Shengold. "That depends on how the splits are used. The crucial questions are whether the contradictory mental representations can be integrated if necessary, and whether they can be brought together and taken apart again so that they can be worked with in a flow of thought and feeling." See Shengold, L. Soul Murder at 280-281 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

The structure of the Schwab testimony (and that of the Shoah narrative) may be interpreted to symbolize aspects of ego structure and functioning:

—a split between observing and experiencing egos (vertical splitting);

—a differentiated ego structure that houses, or accommodates, valences of thought and feeling arrayed in layered gradations;

—an ego that has developed the capacity to permit inquiry (as denoted in the judge’s opening direction in the Schwab testimony, “You may inquire”). “This, in Kleinian theory, would be the equivalent of the movement into the depressive position, where there is a loss of omnipotent phantasy and the relinquishment of omniscience in favor of
curiosity, and a capacity for inquiry as well as a capacity to live in time and endure the contradictory and opposing experiences of hatred and love.” Zeavin, L., "Bion Today" (Book Review).

I had seen the eight-hour movie Shoah in a television broadcast in about 1987 or 1988. In my recollection the many interviews presented in the film merged into a vague sameness, except for one (which apparently held some special meaning for me), the interview of –

Jan Karski, university professor (USA), former courier of the Polish government in exile:
Now . . . now I go back thirty-five years. No, I don't go back . . . I come back. I am ready.

In the middle of 1942, I was thinking to take up again my position as a courier between the Polish underground and the Polish government in exile in London.

[The reference to the "government-in-exile" may be interpreted, psychoanalytically, to relate to the Family Romance fantasy, with the Nazi occupiers of Poland representing a debased parental image, and the Polish government-in-exile in London representing an idealized parental image, endowed in fantasy with a rescuer role. In drive theory, the latency age child’s animal fantasies as well as the fantasy of having a twin sibling originate as a result of the same emotional conditions (oedipal conflicts) that are the basis for the so-called family romance wherein the child develops fantasies of having a better and worthier family than his own, which has so bitterly disappointed and disillusioned him. Burlingham, D.T. "The Fantasy of Having a Twin." Perhaps, we may say that in the family romance the child imagines that his biological parents are non-self (“These people are not my real, biological parents. They are illegitimate imposters.”), while the child’s imagined ideal parents assume the status of self (“I must be the child of ideal, special parents. These special people of my imagination are my legitimate parents.”) The Polish resistance during world War II viewed the Polish Government-in-Exile in London as the legitimate government, while the government apparatus in Poland was viewed as illegitimate.]
The Jewish leaders in Warsaw learned about it. A meeting was arranged, outside the ghetto. There were two gentlemen. They did not live in the ghetto. They introduced themselves—leader of Bund, Zionist leader.

Now, what transpired, what happened in our conversation? First, I was not prepared for it. I was relatively isolated in my work in Poland. I did not see many things. In thirty-five years after the war I do not go back. I have been a teacher for twenty-six years. I never mention the Jewish problem to my students. I understand this film is for historical record, so I will try to do it.

They described to me what is happening to the Jews. Did I know about it? No, I didn't. They described to me first that the Jewish problem is unprecedented, cannot be compared with the Polish problem, or Russian, or any other problem. Hitler will lose this war, but he will exterminate all the Jewish population. Do I understand it? The Allies fight for their people—they fight for humanity. The Allies cannot forget that the Jews will be exterminated totally in Poland—Polish and European Jews. They were breaking down. They paced the room. They were whispering. They were hissing. It was a nightmare for me.

Did they look completely despairing?

Yes. Yes. At various stages of the conversation they lost control of themselves. I just sat in my chair. I just listened. I did not even react. I didn't ask them questions. I was just listening.

They wanted to convince you?

They realized, I think. . . . they realized from the beginning that I don't know, that I don't understand this problem. Once I said I will take messages from them, they wanted to inform me what is happening to the Jews. I didn't know this. I was never in a ghetto. I never dealt with the Jewish matters.

Did you know yourself at the time that most of the Jews of Warsaw had already been killed?

I did know. But I didn't see anything. I never heard any description of what was happening and I was never there. It is one thing to know statistics. There were hundreds of thousands of Poles also killed—of Russians, Serbs, Greeks. We knew about it. But it was a question of statistics.

Did they insist on the complete uniqueness . . . ?
Yes. This was their problem: to impress upon me—and that was my mission—to impress upon all people whom I am going to see that the Jewish situation is unprecedented in history. Egyptian pharaohs did not do it. The Babylonians did not do it. Now for the first time in history actually, they came to the conclusion: unless the Allies take some unprecedented steps, regardless of the outcome of the war, the Jews will be totally exterminated. And they cannot accept it.

This means that they asked for very specific measures?

Yes. Interchangeably. At a certain point the Bund leader, then at a certain point the Zionist leader—then what do they want? What message am I supposed to take? Then they gave me messages, various messages, to the Allied governments as such—I was to see as many government officials as I could, of course. Then to the Polish government, then to the President of the Polish republic, then to the international Jewish leaders. And to individual political leaders, leading intellectuals—approach as many people as possible. And then they gave me segments—to whom do I report what. So now, in these nightmarish meetings—two meetings—two meetings I had with them—well, then they presented their demands. Separate demands. The message was: Hitler cannot be allowed to continue extermination. Every day counts. The Allies cannot treat this war only from a purely military strategic standpoint. They will win the war if they take such an attitude, but what good will it do to us? We will not survive this war. The Allied governments cannot take such a stand. We contributed to humanity—we gave scientists for thousands of years. We originated great religions. We are humans. Do you understand it? Do you understand it? Never happened before in history, what is happening to our people now. Perhaps it will shake the conscience of the world.

We understand we have no country of our own, we have no government, we have no voice in the Allied councils. So we have to use services, little people like you are. Will you do it? Will you approach them? Will you fulfill your mission? Approach the Allied leaders? We want an official declaration of the Allied nations that in addition to the military strategy which aims at securing victory, military victory in this war, extermination of the Jews forms a separate chapter, and the Allied nations formally, publicly, announce that they will deal with this problem, that it becomes a part of their overall strategy in this war.
Not only defeat of Germany but also saving the remaining Jewish population.

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Between those two Jewish leaders—somehow this belongs to human relations—I took, so to say, to the Bund leader, probably because of his behavior—he looked like a Polish nobleman, a gentleman, with straight, beautiful gestures, dignified. I believe that he liked me also, personally. Now at a certain point, he said: "Mr. Vitold, I know the Western world. You are going to deal with the English. Now you will give them your oral reports. I am sure it will strengthen your report if you will be able to say 'I saw it myself.' We can organize for you to visit the Jewish ghetto. Would you do it? If you do, I will go with you to the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw so I will be sure you will be as safe as possible."

A few days later we established contact. By that time the Jewish ghetto as it existed in 1942 until July 1942 did not exist anymore. Out of approximately four hundred thousand Jews, some three hundred thousand were already deported from the ghetto. So within the outside walls, practically there were some four units. The most important was the so-called central ghetto. They were separated by some areas inhabited by Aryans and already some areas not inhabited by anybody. There was a building. This building was constructed in such a way that the wall which separated the ghetto from the outside world was a part of the back of the building, so the front was facing the Aryan area. There was a tunnel. We went through this tunnel without any kind of difficulty. What struck me was that now he was a completely different man—the Bund leader, the Polish nobleman. I go with him. He is broken down, like a Jew from the ghetto, as if he had lived there all the time. Apparently, this was his nature. This was his world. So we walked the streets. He was on my left. We didn't talk very much. He led me. [Compare Steven Schwab's description of his interaction with the dog Kato.] Well, so what? So now comes the description of it, yes? Well... naked bodies on the street. I ask him: "Why are they here?"

*The corpses, you mean?*

Corpses. He says: "Well, they have a problem. If a Jew dies and the family wants a burial, they have to pay tax on it. So they just throw them in the street."

*Because they cannot pay the tax?*
Yes. They cannot afford it. So then he says: "Every rag counts. So they take their clothing. And then once the body, the corpse, is on the street, the Judenrat [i.e., the Jewish Council] has to take care of it." Women with their babies, publicly feeding their babies, but they have no . . . no breast, just flat. Babies with crazed eyes, looking . . .

[The phrases "If a Jew dies and the family wants a burial" and "Every rag counts —so they take their clothing" seem related to both the dream's manifest content (the blue shirt with the buttoned-down collar) and the key event from my past.

"On the evening of July 1, 1976 my mother gathers a suit, necktie and shirt for my father's burial. She wants to bury him in a white shirt. My mother asks me if I will give her a white shirt that I own, which I do. I had worn the shirt on only one previous occasion. Thus, my father was laid to rest attired in my white shirt.]"

Next day we went again [to the ghetto]. The same house, the same way. So then again I was more conditioned, so I felt other things. Stench, stench, dirt, stench—everywhere, suffocating. Dirty streets, nervousness, tension. Bedlam. This was Platz Muranowski. In a corner of it some children were playing something with some rags—throwing the rags to one another. He says: "They are playing, you see. Life goes on. Life goes on." So then I said: "they are simulating play. They don't play."

*It was a special place for playing?*

In the corner of Platz Muranowski—no, no, no, open. So I say: "They are . . ."

*There are trees?*

There were a few trees, rickety. So then we just walked the streets; we didn't talk to anybody. We walked probably one hour. Sometimes he would tell me: "Look at this Jew"—a Jew standing, without moving. I said: "Is he dead?" He says: "No, no, no, he is alive. Mr. Vitold, remember—he's dying, he's dying. Look at him. Tell them over there. You saw it. Don't forget." We walk again. It's macabre. Only from time to time he would whisper: "Remember this, remember this." Or he would tell me: "Look at her." Very many cases. I would say: "What are they doing here?" His answer: "They are dying, that's all. They are dying." And always: "But remember, remember."
We spent more time, perhaps one hour. We left the ghetto. Frankly, I couldn't take it anymore. "Get me out of it." And then I never saw him again. I was sick. Even now I don't go back in my memory. I couldn't tell any more.

But I reported what I saw. It was not a world. It was not a part of humanity. I was not part of it. I did not belong there. I never saw such things, I never . . . nobody wrote about this kind of reality. I never saw any theater, I never saw any movie . . . this was not the world. I was told that these were human beings—they didn't look like human beings. Then we left. He embraced me then. "Good luck, good luck." I never saw him again.

[It is noteworthy that Karski's statement "I never saw him again" is virtually identical to Steven Schwab's concluding statement (in the O.J. Simpson-Schwab text):

[Prosecutor]: And did you ever see the dog again after that?

[Witness]: I have not seen the dog again since then. That was the last that I saw of the dog.]
The Dream of Eggs and Lox

Upon retiring on the evening of April 22, 2019 I had the following dream:

I am in Atlantic City on vacation with my father. It is a Friday morning. I am very hungry. My father and I go to a restaurant in the inlet. The waitress says: “It’s the end of the week. We have no food. We are waiting for a food shipment. I can serve you, but only one meal. One of you will have to go to another restaurant.” My father and I sit at a table. My father is served an order of eggs and lox. I am angry with my father. I think: “Any other father would let his son eat the one meal and make the sacrifice of going hungry. Because I have a selfish father, I will have to go hungry.” I think, “I have to have my blood drawn later, so at least, I will not have had a high fatty breakfast.” I leave the restaurant and my father and take a walk alone on the boardwalk. I come to Vermont Avenue. My family used to stay at Vermont & Oriental Avenues every summer with friends of my father. The Vermont Avenue Apartments, which I recalled from childhood, have been torn down and I have pangs of nostalgia. In their place have been built a large, modern apartment house. It is pleasing, but it just isn’t the way I remembered Vermont Avenue. There are shops on the first floor. There are many tourists there. I said to one of the tourists, a woman: “The Vermont Avenue Apartments used to be located here.” She said, “I didn’t know that. I never saw that building.” I said, “Did you see the movie Atlantic City? It starred Burt Lancaster. There was a shot of the Vermont Avenue Apartments in that movie.” She said, “I never saw that movie.” I walk on down Vermont Avenue, hoping to come to Oriental Avenue, to see the house where we used to stay. Everything has changed. All the buildings have been torn down. There are sand dunes everywhere with pine trees planted everywhere. I get lost.

Events of the Previous Day:

1. I mailed a copy of a book I had written, The Dinner Party to a former coworker, Jesse Raben. This was the first time in thirty years that I had any contact with Raben. That was odd. Was it related to the fact that the following day (April 23) was Shakespeare’s birthday? The book is a short story that reads like the script of a play; the book contains several brief quotes from Shakespeare. The young Dr. Sigmund Freud is one of the characters in the book; he is a guest at a dinner party.

Note the theme of the book — The Dinner Party. The book is about a fictional dinner party at the home of the composer, Richard Wagner and his wife,
The main course at the dinner is Newcastle Salmon, described as “pink and moist” (like a vagina): “The principal dish at dinner had been an entree of Newcastle salmon, pink and moist, and spinach Farfalle (emphasis added).” May I offer the thought that the following predicate thinking applies: salmon, “pink and moist,” vagina, lox, locks.

A fictionalized Raben is a central character; he is a young composer who pursues Richard Wagner to obtain the old master’s appraisal of his compositions. That is, Raben seeks the approval of an idealized father-figure; he attempts to attach himself to a man of importance. Might we say, psychoanalytically, that Raben exhibits a “passive surrender to [an] idealized object[],” a striving that can be associated with ego ideal pathology? Blos, P. “The Genealogy of the Ego Ideal.”

I had envisioned the character Raben as an extremely intelligent and talented individual, who early made his brilliance evident. He had experienced substantial pressures to succeed and early had instilled in him expectations of success; he absorbed the impression that he was special and destined for greatness. He had a knack for drawing attention to himself and tried to attach himself as a “bright young man” to an older and experienced man of considerable stature who was attracted by his brilliance and flair.

2. I was scheduled to have a semi-annual check up with my primary care doctor, Richard J. Simons, M.D. the following day, on April 23, and probably had anxieties about the appointment. Dr. Simons serves as Senior Associate Dean for M.D. Programs at a major teaching hospital. I had sent Dr. Simons a copy of my book *Psychotherapy Reflections* the previous October, apparently trying to impress him with my brilliance.

3. At about 6:20 PM on the afternoon of April 22 I was standing in the mail room in my apartment building in front of the mail boxes. I was reading a piece of mail I had received — it was a letter from Penn State, my college alma mater, soliciting donations for the Penn State library. Someone walked into the mail room and said “excuse me” to me. I was blocking access to his mail box. His statement, “Excuse me” startled me. That person was none other than Dr. Martin A. Ceaser, M.D., a psychoanalyst whose professional office is located in my apartment building.
4. On April 21 I had posted the following jesting post on my Facebook page, referring to my former primary care doctor, Dr. P—: “Why don’t you and your wife invite me over to your place sometime. I’d love to sample your wife’s delicious kreplach and her amazing liver knishes!!” Then, on April 22, I posted on my Facebook page another jesting post, again referring to Dr. P—: “FREEDMAN: Well? DR. P—: Forget about it. You’re not coming to my house. Find yourself a kosher deli.”

5. On April 22 I revised my book Psychotherapy Reflections to include the following statement about Shakespeare’s play, Henry IV (“The two men [Falstaff and Prince Hal] jest with one another and tease one another.”). I wrote:

   It is hardly coincidental that my only misdeed, as alleged by Dr. P—, was that I had created imaginary humorous conversations between him and me and published them on Twitter, like Shakespeare writing dialogue for his plays— . . . Were my Tweets guided by my unconscious sense of Dr. P— and me as Shakespearean characters; perhaps I was the buffoonish Falstaff and Dr. P— was the young Prince Hal [Henry V]. The two men jest with one another and tease one another. Were my Tweets in fact a transitional phenomenon in which I created an in-between space that bridged my internal world of fantasy with the objective and real, namely, the person of Dr. P—.

6. April 23, the following day, was Shakespeare’s birthday.

ASSOCIATIONS:

1. Atlantic City. The happiest times of my childhood were spent in Atlantic City, New Jersey. When I was a child we spent two weeks Atlantic City every year in the beginning of July at the home of friends of my father who lived at the corner of Vermont and Oriental Avenues. My father and I continued to go to Atlantic City alone together when I was 11-14 years of age. My parents’ marriage was contentious; marital discord was common. My father often had a depressed mood at home. But my father showed a different side of himself in Atlantic City – he was sociable, care-free, and clearly enjoyed the weeks we spent there. It was as if my father were a different person in Atlantic City. He became the father I wanted to have. I wonder whether my early salutary experiences with my father in Atlantic City were instrumental in facilitating a partial resolution of my Oedipal conflicts. It was in our annual trips to Atlantic City that I came to see my formerly fearsome “Oedipal father” as harmless or beneficial. This might have been
quite a striking unconscious realization for me in early childhood.

2. There is a possible overdetermination of the theme of vacation:
   a. The dream manifestly refers to Atlantic City.
   b. While I worked with Raben, he took a ski vacation to the State of Vermont. I kept the postcard he sent to a workplace supervisor, Constance Brown. Raben wrote on the postcard: “All I do is sleep, ski and eat.”
   c. On one occasion Constance Brown mentioned to me that she took a vacation to Lancaster, Pennsylvania to visit Amish country. (The dream reference to Burt Lancaster might symbolically refer to the city of Lancaster). (I note that Burt Lancaster also starred in the movie, From Here to Eternity, which contains a famous beach scene. See ¶9, below.)

3. I speculate that the weekly food shipments in the dream symbolize weekly psychotherapy sessions. In the year 1990 I was in weekly consult with Stanley R. Palombo, M.D., a psychoanalyst. I saw him on Friday afternoons, the day mentioned in the dream. Perhaps I equate the consumption of food with the acquisition of self-knowledge. The hunger expressed in the dream might symbolize a hunger for self-knowledge gained through psychoanalysis.

4. Knishes and Kreplach. When we stayed in Atlantic City when I was a child, Ethel Blum, the widowed, immigrant matriarch of the family, used to cook an extravagant, traditional Jewish-style meal one night of our stay — The Dinner Party. I loved the knishes. My father said that Mrs. Blum, who opened a grocery store located in the ground floor of her house, had started her food career by baking and selling knishes to the predominantly Jewish beach-going crowd, blocks away. Mrs. Blum, who was widowed in 1936 (her husband’s name was Henry, by the way), rented rooms in her large three-story house to summer boarders. It was as a paying guest in the 1930s that my father, then in his late twenties to early thirties, first encountered the Blum family. In important ways, my father’s affiliation with the Blums in Atlantic City paralleled his relationship in the same time period with another family, the Rossmans, who lived in his North Philadelphia neighborhood, also a largely Jewish-immigrant enclave. During the Depression years, my unmarried and carefree father, was a close pal of Benny Rossman, and spent a lot of time at the Rossman home. Margaret Brenman-Gibson, in a biography of the
playwright, Clifford Odets (Odets and Rossman were near-age cousins) recounts: “Unlike the Odets family, where Yiddish was rarely spoken and a Jewish newspaper was never seen, the Rossman household was a free-wheeling, lively place filled with Yiddish talk and Yiddish newspapers . . . Freda [Rossman] recalled ‘lots of people always dropping in, some living with us for a few months if they had no work . . . always good food. [Clifford’s father used to come] in for fried matzoth and to hear my prost [common] father sing songs in Hebrew and Yiddish.” My father was one of those “people always dropping in” at the Rossman house for Jewish-style food and friendly banter. In the years before World War II, my happy-go-lucky father, evading the responsibilities associated with his age, was a Jewish Falstaff (or Prince Hal) in perennial pursuit of a Garter Inn. My father did not marry till age 40. The wife of my father’s older brother once confided in me: “Lew said your father should never have gotten married. He wasn’t marriage material. His whole life before he got married centered on hanging out with friends and playing cards.”

Like Shakespeare’s Garter Inn, a sometime haunt for petty criminals, there was a shady side to the Blum house on Oriental Avenue. Ethel Blum’s younger brother, who lived at the Blum house, spent years in prison in connection with what I now recall was a robbery that resulted in a homicide. In the 1960s Sylvia Lischin — Mrs. Blum’s daughter, who lived at Oriental Avenue with her husband and 4 sons — began to waitress in the evening to help pay off the gambling debts of one of her sons, whose indebtedness to professional gamblers while in college risked a vendetta killing.

The unidentified waitress in the manifest dream might symbolize Sylvia Lischin. One wonders how perhaps the benign manifest image of the waitress censors dark thoughts relating to corruption, seaminess, sacrifice and — oedipal crime.

Years ago I got into a discussion with my sister about the heart and the coronary arteries, part of which I memorialized:

Tuesday November 24, 1992

Telephone call to sister: Sister discusses her plans for Thanksgiving, explaining plans to go to friends' house for dinner. Says she saw on television a film of a coronary artery bypass procedure. My father had undergone such a procedure on June 30, 1976 (he died
following the operation, on July 1, 1976). I mentioned that the name of the surgeon who performed the procedure was Dr. Michael Strong, and noted that Dr. Strong is now a professor of cardiothoracic surgery at Hahnemann. (Dr. Strong is a native of North Carolina.) (Note that the issues of loneliness at Thanksgiving and sclerotic heart disease can be related at a basic symbolic level, with the loneliness symbolizing oral frustration and sclerotic heart disease symbolizing myocardial "frustration," or ischemia. Prolonged oral frustration leads to death by starvation just as prolonged ischemia leads to death by infarction.)

I mentioned to my sister in that 1992 telephone conversation that the coronary arteries supply blood to the heart muscle. My sister interjected: "But I thought arteries take blood away from the heart. Veins bring blood to the heart." I explained to my sister that the heart is a muscle, it is living tissue. As such the heart needs blood just like any other tissue in the body. I said that the coronary arteries are the heart muscle's private source of blood. Then I offered the following analogy: "Do you remember the Blum Delicatessen in Atlantic City? The store provided food to the people in the neighborhood. But do you remember the stairway in the Lischin kitchen that led directly down to the store? The Lischins used the food in the store - which they sold to customers - for themselves also, to feed themselves. So the store was doing two things. It supplied food to the neighborhood, but it also supplied food to the Lischins themselves. That private back stairway from the Lischin kitchen down to the store is analogous to the coronary arteries, which is the heart muscle's own private blood supply. The front door of the store, which allowed access of neighborhood customers to the store, is analogous to the arteries that carry blood away from the heart."

5. Eggs and Lox. This is an obvious reference to eggs and sausages, which I associate with Dr. P—. In my Twitter posts about Dr. P— I frequently jested about a breakfast of "eggs and sausages." At my first consult with Dr. P— on September 29, 2015 he asked: “Did you ever have a heart attack?” I replied: “No. I never had heart disease of any kind.” He said: “I want to get a lipid profile. You’ll need to have your blood drawn.” I said: “But I had breakfast this morning.” Dr. P— responded: “That doesn’t matter as long as you didn’t have a high fatty breakfast, like eggs and sausages.”

But doesn’t the word “lox” suggest another possible meaning? Lox also relates
to “locks.” I suspect that the lox in the dream is a symbolic reference to Dr. Ceaser who wanted to “unlock” his mailbox. I frustrated Dr. Ceaser’s goal by standing in front of his mailbox. Might there be something sexual here (mailbox = the female genitalia)? Is there a relationship to my father frustrating me in the dream? In the dream I wanted to eat the eggs and lox but my father took the meal for himself.

We might say that in the dream my father frustrated me; in the event of the previous day involving Dr. Ceaser, I had frustrated Dr. Ceaser.

In my therapy session on October 22, 2018, which I reproduce later in this book, I talked with my therapist about a “locked box” that I viewed as symbolic of my unconscious. My mind had created the following symbolism: A man gaining access to a locked box is analogous to a psychoanalyst and his patient working together to unlock the contents of the patient’s unconscious (the “mail box”). When I saw Dr. Ceaser (a psychoanalyst) in the mail room of my apartment building about to retrieve his mail from his locked mail box on the afternoon of April 22, it must have had an uncanny and startling effect on me; it was a reality representation of my pre-existing metaphor (locked box = the unconscious).

In the letter about my therapy session on October 22, 2018 I wrote: PATIENT: I feel like there’s a buried self within me. Another self that is outside of my awareness. I seem in a desperate plight to get in touch with that buried self. It’s as if I have a kind of treasure within me that’s buried and in a locked box. And I don’t have access to it. But I desperately want to get to the locked box and open it. And I’m struck by the fact that psychoanalysis – the technical aims of psychoanalysis – merges with my fantasy system. In psychoanalysis the idea is to get in touch with the unconscious: the world of unconscious feelings and experience. The thing in psychoanalysis is to get in touch with the part of the self that is warded off from consciousness. And in my fantasy system there is this locked box that is buried inside me – like a treasure, it’s as if I feel I have a treasure buried inside me. [Again, as at the outset of the session, I express a struggle between a conscious, observing “I” that seeks access to a mute “he” (a locked box) that lies beyond conscious awareness.

Possible Oedipal Meaning. My mother used to cook eggs and lox on Sunday mornings. I loved that. I associate eggs and lox with my mother. Also “eggs” is a female symbol. My father got to have the “female” of the house (my mother) who was denied to me; in the dream my father got to eat the eggs, which were
denied to me. As a child, did I view my father’s matrimonial prerogatives (possession of his wife) as an act of “selfishness” on my father’s part? Did I want exclusive possession of my mother in place of my father? Recall my earlier observation “that the following predicate thinking [might apply]: salmon, ‘pink and moist,’ vagina, lox, locks.”

When I was about nine or ten years old I witnessed a traumatic scene that took place in the kitchen of my parent’s house proximal to the Christmas holiday. It was a Sunday morning. My six-years older sister and I were seated at the table with my parents eating Sunday breakfast. My mother often prepared eggs and lox for Sunday breakfast, but I don’t recall what we were eating. My mother was baiting my father about a marital grievance. Her persistence rattled my father. He became enraged, stood up, walked behind my mother’s chair and began to strangle her. After a few moments my sister screamed and my father backed off. My mother later said she was afraid she was going to die. She said she couldn’t breathe. I found the event shocking but I sympathized with my father. I viewed him as the victim of my mother’s taunting.

Analytically, this scene of violence might have meshed in my child’s mind with unconscious primal scene fantasy. In psychoanalysis, the primal scene is the initial witnessing by a child of a sex act, usually between the parents, that traumatizes the psychosexual development of that child. The expression "primal scene" refers to the sight of sexual relations between the parents, as observed, constructed, or fantasized by the child and interpreted by the child as a scene of violence. The scene is not understood by the child, remaining enigmatic but at the same time provoking sexual excitement.

There is a link to another one of my dream write-ups, The Dream of the Intruding Doctor, in which I discussed my childhood scarlet fever. At age three I contracted scarlet fever, which my pediatrician attributed to my drinking spoiled milk from a baby bottle. The doctor ordered my parents to confiscate the bottle and force me to drink from a cup. In the dream write-up I offered oedipal speculation that connected my possible anger with my pediatrician for ordering my parents to confiscate my beloved baby bottle with oedipal anger at my father for “confiscating” my mother.

I had surmised that the baby bottle may have been a transitional object for me that was invested with fantasy: an object that was part me and part non-me. I see
parallels between my probable anger at my father (and the pediatrician) at age three in confiscating my transitional object and my anger in the dream about my father in the present dream for “confiscating” the one meal of eggs and lox in the restaurant. Note the following symmetry: The baby bottle, as transitional object, was a derivative of mother or mother's breast. The dream image of the meal of eggs and lox (“vagina”) apparently symbolized mother. In the dream, my father confiscated the meal of eggs and lox. At age three my father (at the doctor’s direction) confiscated my baby bottle (a transitional object); and in the Oedipal situation my father “confiscated” my mother.

“Guilt was for Freud, and remains for much of psychoanalytic theory, the fear of an inner policeman, formed by one's experience with a threatening parent, representing, in however distorted a form, the threats of that parent, and fueled by one's own hate.” Friedman, M.I., “Toward a Reconceptualization of Guilt.” This guilt, Freud said, “is derived from the Oedipus complex and was a reaction to the two great criminal intentions of killing the father and having sexual relations with the mother.” This sense of guilt is derived from the tension between the harsh superego and the ego.

Contemporary conceptualizations recognize that unconscious guilt may have various sources. Arnold Modell proposed that there is "in mental life something that might be termed an unconscious bookkeeping system, i.e., a system that takes account of the distribution of the available “good” within a given nuclear family so that the current fate of other family members will determine how much ‘good’ one possesses. If fate has dealt harshly with other members of the family the survivor may experience guilt.” Modell also wrote about "separation guilt" which is guilt based on a belief that growing up and separating from the parents will damage or even destroy them. More generally, separation guilt is guilt based on a belief that evolving one's own autonomy, having a separate existence, a life of one's own, is damaging to others. See, Friedman.

Modell attempted to explain the phenomena of survivor and separation guilt by placing them in a biological context. Invoking the evolutionary biological model of group selection Modell suggested that these forms of guilt are metaphorical extensions of an inherited altruistic impulse to share food with other members of one's group. “The altruistic impulse to share food promotes
the survival of the group. The alternative would be survival of a few of the stronger individuals who would greedily hoard the available food supply, but, as has been observed, there is a survival value in maintaining the group rather than the isolated individual. It is reasonable to suppose that evolution might favor the survival of those individuals who experience guilt when they behave greedily and that the guilt leads to the prohibition of the wish to have everything for oneself. This form of guilt, which in man's earlier history contributed to the survival of the group, continues to be inherited and continues to exert its influence upon modern man, although its original function may no longer be relevant. However, due to man's capacity for metaphorical thinking, the experience of guilt did not remain limited to its original objects, i.e., the obtaining of food, because food can be symbolically elaborated as the acquisition of that which is 'good'.” Modell, A. H. “The Origin of Certain Forms of Pre-oedipal Guilt and the Implications for a Psychoanalytic Theory of Affects.”

In some sense the dream can be seen as a conflict between two hoarders of food. In the dream I saw my father as hoarding the one breakfast of eggs and lox; yet, I too, had the selfish impulse to hoard the breakfast and deny my father the meal. This conflict raises issues of survivor (and separation) guilt as distinguished from Oedipal guilt.

6. Both Henry IV and his son Henry V, two Shakespeareean characters, were English kings of the House of Lancaster. Burt Lancaster might symbolize the House of Lancaster.

7. Perhaps the pine trees are phallic-sexual imagery.

8. The dream image of the Vermont Avenue Apartments relates to the event of the previous day: my encounter with Dr. Ceaser in the mail room of my apartment building (which is located on Connecticut Avenue). The now-demolished Vermont Avenue Apartments, which I recalled from childhood, might symbolize coworker Raben and Dr. P—, two persons from my past whom I valued but who were now lost to me. The fact that I seemed pleased in the dream by the new apartment building that replaced the Vermont Avenue Apartments suggests my satisfaction with my current primary care doctor, Dr. Simons, who replaced Dr. P—. In fact, I like Dr. Simons. Also, I note that Vermont translates as “Green Mountain,” which also relates to Greensboro,
North Carolina, where Raben grew up.

9. The eldest of the four Lischin brothers (Henry Lischin), grandsons of Mrs. Blum, drowned in 1978. He had been disabled by his Korean War service. I am reminded of the famous line from Henry V’s St. Crispin’s Day speech exhorting his brothers-in-arms to battle at Agincourt: “From this day to the ending of the world [i.e., From Here to Eternity], But we in it shall be remembered— We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.” See ¶2(c), above.

In early August 1989 I had dinner with Jesse Raben and his roommate at a Chinese restaurant. At the end of the evening, I said to Raben, “We’re friends, now, right, Jesse?” He said, “Always, Gar, always (From Here to Eternity).” In self psychological terms, Raben was a restitutive selfobject who satisfied my narcissistic needs for mirroring, idealization and twinship (“blood brotherhood”). Did I unconsciously view Raben and me as members of a brotherhood, a “band of brothers?”

10. One of the Lischin brothers, Roy, worked as a mail carrier. Does this relate to Dr. Ceaser and the mail boxes in my apartment building?

A memory from age eleven is crucial. I recall that in early July 1965 my father and I went to Atlantic City together. My mother and sister stayed home. On the first evening in Atlantic City my father and I walked to Louis Tussaud's Wax Museum on the boardwalk. The facade of the wax museum was Tudor in style — reminiscent of the Elizabethan period in English history, the age of Shakespeare. Quaint Old London. The Tudor facade of the wax museum calls to mind Shakespeare’s Globe Theater in London. Roy Lischin walked with us on the boardwalk. He kept singing the following song: “I'm Henery the Eighth, I Am,” a popular song from 1965. The wax museum featured a wax statue of Henry VIII; a photograph of the wax statue of Henry VIII adorned the cover of a brochure distributed by museum. I loved the wax museum, which I visited every year.

Also, an event from the week of July 5, 1965, when I was 11 years old, causes me to associate Roy Lischin with Freud. My father and I were spending the week in Atlantic City with the Lischin family. Roy Lischin and I were sitting on the outside front porch at the Oriental Avenue house. He was starting Rutgers University in the fall, and had purchased some books that had been assigned
in the freshman courses he’d be taking. He wanted to be ahead of the game when he started college. Roy was reading a book by Freud. I don’t remember which book it was, but it may have been The Future of an Illusion, which contained Freud’s speculations about religion. I asked to see the book and I started to read the first page. I said to Roy, “I understand this.” Roy said: “You don’t understand that. You may understand the words, but you don’t know what he’s talking about.” Ethel Blum, Roy’s grandmother, came out onto the porch. Something we were talking about clued Mrs. Blum into the fact that we were talking about Freud. She mentioned that Freud was Jewish. Roy said he didn’t know that. Or he pretended not to know that.

11. Association of Atlantic City with Shakespeare. I suspect that I unconsciously associate the figures I saw in the Atlantic City wax museum as a child – wax statues of historical persons attired in period costumes – with the gallery of characters of a Shakespeare play. This points to the possible importance of the theme of death. Wax figures resemble embalmed corpses. Perhaps the following issues are related in the dream:

(1) my anxiety about seeing my primary care doctor the following day, April 23 (Shakespeare’s birthday) for the treatment of heart-related concerns; thoughts about the coronary arteries (my father died of coronary artery disease); and the corpse-like wax figures of the Atlantic City wax museum. Recall also the yahrzeit candle: a memorial wax candle that is lit in memory of the dead in the Jewish religion.

The following brief excerpt from my book, Significant Moments apparently parallels several issues in The Dream of Eggs and Lox, and may point to an important subtext of the dream that is blocked out in the manifest content, but might be hinted at in my dream associations to the Shakespeare characters, Prince Hal (Henry V) and his father, Henry IV: namely, introjective concerns in their manifold expression relating to depressive states associated with disruptions in self-definition and personal achievement; a sense of guilt and loss of self-esteem during the Oedipal stage; perfectionism, competition and the need to compensate for failing to live up to the perceived expectations of others or inner standards of excellence; and in which the paramount concern is to establish an acceptable identity – an entity separate from and different than another, with a sense of autonomy and control of one’s mind and body,
and with feelings of self-worth and integrity, a self that is acknowledged, respected and admired by others.

The following text from Significant Moments, a book I completed in about the year 2004, presents an emotionally distressed individual having a conversation with an imaginary friend (think of Dr. P–, whom I met in 2015) on the beach (think of Atlantic City) about his career failures. Compare the Dream of the Family Gathering that seems to concern two parents’ admiration for a successful son. This excerpt from Significant Moments raises issues of thwarted ambition and the failure to make a place for oneself in the world, and might amplify a latent introjective content of the dream. According to Sigmund Freud, the latent content of a dream, as disclosed in the dreamer’s associations, is the hidden psychological meaning of the dream.

Might my dream associations to Prince Hal (Henry V) point to underlying issues of ambition and career strivings? Might the manifest dream perhaps defend against unconscious anxiety surrounding my failure to fulfill the ambitions of my father (as symbolized by the father figure, Henry IV); or my neurotic inhibitions about surpassing my father; or, then too, possible anxieties about the subordination of my life’s work, ambition, dedication, and achievement to the libidinized expectations of my father which I might experience as an ego-dystonic submissive and passive adaptation? See, Blos, P. “Freud and the Father Complex.”

Permit me a digression at this moment. Peter Blos observed: “I shall cite a male student whose vocational ambitions were the same as those which his father had set for his son. Failure had to prevent success because of a four-pronged conflict: as a success he was either offering himself as a love object to the father (castration wish), or he was annihilating him by usurping his position (parricide); on the other hand, as a failure he was renouncing his ambitions and thereby induced the father to treat him like a contemptible woman; yet, in failure he also established his autonomy, even if a negative one, by repulsing the father’s seductiveness, by not becoming his best-loved, ideal son. The complexity of this constellation is due to the fact that both the positive and negative Oedipus complex come into play again at the terminal phase of adolescence.” Blos, P. “The Genealogy of the Ego Ideal.”

Similarly, Erik Erikson describes the interesting mechanism of the choice of a
negative identity, an identity perversely based on all those identifications and roles which, at critical stages of development, had been presented to the individual as most undesirable or dangerous and yet also as most real. For Erikson the choice of a “negative identity” represents “a desperate attempt at regaining some mastery in a situation in which the available positive identity elements cancel each other out. The history of such a choice reveals a set of conditions in which it is easier to derive a sense of identity out of a total identification with that which one is least supposed to be than to struggle for a feeling of reality in acceptable roles . . . .” Erikson, E., *Identity and the Life Cycle*.

Let us revisit “The Dream of the Family Gathering” that I set out at another point in this book.

*I am at the house where I grew up. There is a large family gathering at which my parents are present. Dr. P– is there. I am happy to see him, but I don’t want to look too excited. My family treats him like a beloved son. My family ignores me; they appear to shun me. All their attention is focused on Dr. P–. Dr. P– ignores me also; he won’t make eye contact. He seems happy and profoundly content. I have strong feelings of sadness and distress about Dr. P– ignoring me and my family ignoring me. I feel that Dr. P– has usurped me. I feel like an outsider in my own family. The family leads him into the kitchen, while I gaze on.*

In that dream, Dr. P– was my father’s best-loved, ideal son. I stood off to the side. I had feelings of dejection and sadness – but I also established my autonomy. These thoughts reveal a possible hidden aspect of the dream. It’s as if in the dream I am saying, “You, Dr. P–, are a homosexual. Unlike me, you were unable to repulse your father’s seductiveness. (“The family leads him into the kitchen” – the place for women.) Am I not saying, “Dr. P., unlike you, I am a failure, but at least I warded off castration. Have fun in the kitchen.”

I am reminded of a central conflict in Miller’s *Death of a Salesman*: The father, Willy Loman both loves and hates his ne’er-do-well son, Biff because Biff was Willy’s hope for a vicarious success in life, but Biff let him down. A dramatic parallel might be seen in Shakespeare’s *Henry IV*, Act IV, Scene 4: Learning that Prince Hal is spending the evening in London with his rascally friends – Falstaff and company – Hal’s father, Henry IV laments his son’s waywardness. One might say that Prince Hal in *Henry IV* repulsed the ambitions which his father had imposed on his son, setting himself up for possible failure, but at
the same time establishing his autonomy. Cf., Blos, P., “The Genealogy of the Ego Ideal,” citing Kris, E., “Prince Hal's Conflict.” Blos, referring to “Prince Hal's flight from royal dignity at the court to the carousel at the tavern[,]” points out “that through the peer relationship the 'tie of dependence is broken' and a 'recathexis of the ego ideal for which the father stood' is made possible. [One author] calls this the 'renewal' of the ego ideal and defines it 'as the rescue and reaffirmation of the ego ideal — a sublimation of the love for the father.' . . . Falstaff, a split-off father imago, with the peer world, his drinking companions, reconstitute a proxy family which — by a grand detour — assists the troubled youth in the formation of the mature ego ideal and the assumption of his princely identity.” Blos, P. “The Genealogy of the Ego Ideal.” “All along his bewildering actions, Prince Hal never loses touch with his inner struggle. The consolidation of the ego ideal lies at the center of this struggle, in which he first fails, but finally succeeds by reconciling the idealized father imago he loves with the imperfect, if not downright evil, father person he hates.” Id. Intense ambivalent feelings toward his father lie at the heart of Prince Hal's conflict.

I also wonder about the possible Kleinian depressive anxiety underlying this dream. The manifest dream expresses my feelings of sadness and distress. Does this manifest “sadness and distress” disclose remorse for my unconscious aggressive impulses directed against Dr. P–, namely, my unconscious feelings of hatred and jealousy of him as a young medical doctor with a successful career and happy home life? For Klein, the Oedipus complex and the depressive position are closely linked.

Be that as it may.

Returning to my novel Significant Moments, what follows is a passage of the text that talks about career strivings, career failure, autonomy — and features an interaction with an idealized, imaginary friend:

What does paramita mean? It is rendered into Chinese by "reaching the other shore." Reaching the other shore means detachment from birth and death. Just because people of the world lack stability of nature, they find appearances of birth and death in all things, flow in the waves of various
courses of existence, and have not arrived at the ground of reality as is: all of this is "this shore." It is necessary to have great insightful wisdom, complete in respect to all things, detached from appearances of birth and death—this is "reaching the other shore."

It is also said that when the mind is confused, it is "this shore." When the mind is enlightened, it is "the other shore." When the mind is distorted, it is "this shore." When the mind is sound, it is "the other shore." If you speak of it and carry it out mentally, then your own reality body is imbued with paramita. If you speak of it but do not carry it out mentally, then there is no paramita.

Commentary on the Diamond Sutra.

“. . . I have had many thoughts, but it would be difficult for me to tell you about them. But this is one thought that has impressed me, . . .

Hermann Hesse, Siddhartha.

. . . my friend.
William Shakespeare, Two Gentlemen of Verona.

Wisdom is not communicable. The wisdom which a wise man tries to communicate always sounds foolish.”

“Are you jesting?”
Hermann Hesse, Siddhartha.

. . . his friend asked.
Henry James, The Lesson of the Master.

“No, I am telling you what I have discovered. Knowledge can be communicated, but not wisdom. One can find it, live it, be fortified by it, do
wonders through it, but one cannot communicate and teach it. . . .”

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*.

He sank into a reverie and became lost within himself.

Hermann Hesse, *Demian*.

He hesitated, and then . . .

Neville Shute, *On The Beach*.

. . . he continued, assuming the role of a mentor.

Arthur Rubinstein, *My Young Years*.

King Janaka, the legendary ruler of the Kingdom of Mithila in India, was once conversing on top of a hill overlooking his city with a wise Buddhist monk. The monk said, "King, look down and across the valley. Do you see those flames? Your city burns." Janaka was not perturbed. He watched quietly for a few minutes, then turned to the monk and said these words, which have been handed down for centuries in India as the quintessence of wisdom: "Mithilayam pradiptayam, na me dahyte kincana (In the conflagration of Mithila, nothing of mine is burned)." The story is told to demonstrate detachment, and the transcendence of any sense of ownership. What was truly Janaka's (love, for example) could not be burned.


Where is now my wisdom in this confusion?

Richard Wagner, *Götterdämmerung*.

—In truth, . . .


I feel a little bit like Janaka without the wisdom.

As I look back over my development and survey what I have achieved so far, . . .

Franz Kafka, *A Report to an Academy.*

. . . both in the university and in the professional world of psychoanalysis, I see flames, and the consumption of my life's work. My bridges are truly burned. But while I feel any kind of sadness and a nostalgia for what might have been, I cannot truly say that I am sorry for the loss.


He paused.

Bram Stoker, *The Man.*

What might have been is an abstraction
Remaining a perpetual possibility
Only in a world of speculation.

What might have been and what has been Point to one end, which is always present.
T.S. Eliot, Excerpt from “Burnt Norton.”

He begins to read, then lets it slip from his fingers, leans back, picks reflectively at . . .

Simon Grey, *Butley.*
... particles of sand...
Charles Darwin, *The Voyage of the Beagle*.

... On the Beach.
Neville Shute, *On the Beach*.

There was another place...
Richard Wilbur, Excerpt from “Someone Talking to Himself.”

... I have forgotten
And remember.
T.S. Eliot, Excerpt from “Marina.”

He paused again, dreaming, lost in a reverie, then just above a whisper, murmured:

Frank Norris, *The Octopus*.

some other place—

fuck... Where?
Simon Grey, *Butley*.

By the hallowed...
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust* (Part II) (Final Scene).

... inner sanctum, ...
Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Lost World.*

... at the portal...

O. Henry, *The Headhunter.*

... to that...


... last of meeting places...


... in a world of time beyond me;

T.S. Eliot, Excerpt from “Marina.”

By the mystic arm immortal
Warning me to go my way;
By my forty years’...

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust* (Part II) (Final Scene).

... material existence...

Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Devil in Manuscript.*

... in this strange and savage world,...

Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Tarzan the Terrible.*

May I be excused for saying that I was forty years old?
Jules Verne, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*.

In the waste and desert land,
By the words of . . .

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust* (Part II) (Final Scene).

. . . my banishment, . . .

E. Phillips Oppenheim, *The Great Impersonation*.

. . . the sentence,
Traced in parting, on the sand—

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust* (Part II) (Final Scene).

(after a pause).

Simon Gray, *Butley*.

So long ago!

Frances Hodgson Burnett, *T. Tembarom*.

*There is a silence.*

Simon Grey, *Butley*.

Since you . . .

Lucy Maud Montgomery, *The Golden Road*.

. . . miscall'd the Morning Star, Nor man nor fiend hath fallen so far.

George Gordon, Lord Byron, Excerpt from “*Ode to Napoleon*
“I suppose you might say that . . . .”
P.G. Wodehouse, *Right Ho, Jeeves*.

You played . . .
Thomas Hardy, *A Pair of Blue Eyes*.

. . . an intellectual game for high stakes, . . .
Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Times*.

. . . And you lost
Bret Harte, *The Three Partners*.

That my friend, . . .
Jeffrey Farnol, *The Broad Highway*.

. . . was your fate, and that your daring.—

‘I—suppose so.’
Thomas Hardy, *A Pair of Blue Eyes*.

Two parts of himself were having a conversation. You were probably meant to think of yourself as ‘I’ when talking to yourself.

Jack Grimwood, *Moskva*.

I was an experiment on the part of Nature, a gamble within the unknown, perhaps for a new purpose, perhaps for nothing, and my only task
was to allow this game on the part of primeval depths to take its course, to feel its will within me and make it wholly mine.

Hermann Hesse, *Demian*.

(Pause.) Perhaps my best years are gone. When there was a chance of happiness. But I wouldn’t want them back. Not with the fire in me now. No, I wouldn’t want them back.

Samuel Beckett, *Krapp’s Last Tape*.

As I look back now, it seems to me I must have had at least an inkling that I had to find a way out or die, but that my way out could not be reached through flight.

Franz Kafka, *A Report to an Academy*.

I could see he was talking about things he had brooded on for a long time and felt very strongly about.


He paused for a moment, then continued:

Arthur Rubinstein, *My Young Years*.

Many complain that the words of the wise are always merely parables and of no use in daily life, which is the only life we have. When the sage says: "Go over," he does not mean that we should cross to some actual place, which we could do anyhow if the labor were worth it; he means some fabulous yonder, something unknown to us, something too that he cannot designate more precisely, and therefore cannot help us here in the very least. All these parables really set out to say merely that the incomprehensible is incomprehensible, and we know that already. But the cares we have to struggle with every day: that is a different matter.

Concerning this a man once said: Why such reluctance? If you only followed
the parables you yourselves would become parables and with that rid of all your daily cares.

Another said: I bet that is also a parable.
The first said: You have won.
The second said: But unfortunately only in parable.
The first said: No, in reality: in parable you have lost.

Franz Kafka, *On Parables*.

When he finished talking, . . .

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha*.

. . . his companion, . . .

Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*.

. . . an imaginary companion . . .

Virginia Woolf, *Night and Day*.

. . . to be sure, . . .

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*.

. . . both ideal self and . . .

Eleanor Stump, *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering*.

. . . fantasized “Other” . . .
Nihan Yelutas, *Otherness Doubled: Being a Migrant and “Oriental” at the Same Time.*

... but no less...

Thomas Hardy, *A Pair of Blue Eyes.*

... his intimate and beloved companion...


... directed his somewhat weakened glance at him.

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha.*

It was very quiet then.

David Evanier, *The Man Who Refused to Watch the Academy Awards.*

A volley of the sun...

Richard Wilber, Excerpt from “Someone Talking to Himself.”

... shone down on them out of a cloudless sky, warm and comforting;

Neville Shute, *On The Beach.*

... Siddhartha sat absorbed, his...

Hermann Hesse, *Siddhartha.*

... clouded mind in a flash of illumination became an open mind: vast like the ocean and the sky.

Yes, the eyes...


... his eyes far away yet gleaming like stars, ...

Cosima Wagner’s Diaries (Tuesday, October 31, 1882).

... staring as if directed at a distant goal, the tip of his tongue
showing a little between his teeth. He did not seem to be breathing. He sat thus, lost in meditation, thinking Om, his soul as arrow directed at Brahman.

**Hermann Hesse, Siddhartha.**

Then, quite unheralded, came the following cry from the heart:

**Martin Gregor-Dellin, Richard Wagner: His Life, His Work, His Century.**

"Why is it that you have not done great things in this world? With the power that is yours you might have risen to any height. Unpossessed of conscience or moral instinct, you might have mastered the world, broken it to your hand. And yet here you are, at the top of your life, where diminishing and dying begin, living an obscure and sordid existence, . . . reveling in a piggishness, to use your own words, which is anything and everything except splendid. Why, with all that wonderful strength, have you not done something? There was nothing to stop you, nothing that could stop you. What was wrong? Did you lack ambition? Did you fall under temptation? What was the matter? What was the matter?"

**Jack London, The Sea Wolf.**

He found it difficult to think; he really had no desire to, but he forced himself.

**Hermann Hesse, Siddhartha.**

He lifted his eyes to me at the commencement of my outburst, and followed me complacently until I had done and stood before him breathless and dismayed. He waited a moment as though seeking where to begin, and then said, "[Friend], do you know the parable of the sower who went forth to sow? If you will remember, some of the seed fell upon stony places, where there was not much earth, and forthwith they sprung up because they had no deepness of earth. And when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprung up and choked them."

"Well?" I said.

"Well?" he queried, half petulantly. "It was not well. I was one of those seeds."

**Jack London, The Sea Wolf.**
Prefatory Comments:

Arnold Zweig (10 November 1887 – 26 November 1968) was a German writer and anti-war and antifascist activist. Zweig had written a book about antisemitism titled *Caliban* which he dedicated to Freud. Arnold Zweig was an associate of Freud’s.

Stefan Zweig was a writer who collaborated with the composer Richard Strauss on the opera, *Die Schweigsame Frau* (*The Silent Woman*). Perhaps Strauss’s most famous opera is *Der Rosenkavalier* which features a silver rose (*a token of love*) — the opera takes place in Vienna. Because Zweig was a Jew, the opera was banned by the Nazis.

In January 1991 I was in a car accident and suffered a fractured wrist and head concussion that caused a 2-hour coma (*brain issue*); I was hospitalized at GW. The doctor was John White, M.D. It was the beginning of the Gulf War in the Middle East. At the firm where I worked (Akin Gump Strauss) someone sent me a plant or flowers — the sender was not identified. Later that year I was terminated by the firm under cloudy circumstances.

In January 1977 I worked at The Franklin Institute in Philadelphia. In about January 1977 I had given two white roses to a coworker named Sharon White at The Franklin Institute where I was employed, together with a poem I had written. At that time I worked in an office with Silba Cunningham-Dunlop (she once mentioned that she was born on April 23, “Shakespeare’s birthday,” she said). Her Jewish father (Paul Frischauer), a writer, lived in Vienna (the city of his birth) at that time and had emigrated to Brazil during World War II to escape the Nazis. Silba’s father died four months later, in May 1977 of a brain tumor (*astrocytoma — astoria?*). He was a terminal cancer patient.

In the spring of 1983 I helped Silba move from her apartment. She had her belongings packed in boxes. One small cardboard box contained a collection of numerous books. They were books that had been authored by her father, who wrote historical novels, including *Beaumarchais: Adventurer in the Century of Women*. I was astounded at the collection – the prolificity of his work. I suppose I was envious of Silba’s father. Cf. Palombo, S.R. “Day Residue and Screen Memory in Freud's Dream of the Botanical Monograph” (Freud's
dream recapitulated a series of Freud’s earlier conflicts concerning his father and the power of books).


In 1938 *Freud* wrote to Zweig from Vienna: “Everything is growing ever darker, more threatening, and the awareness of one’s own helplessness ever more importunate.” (I quoted this in my book, *Significant Moments.*) On Saturday June 4, 1938, Freud, his wife, Martha, and their daughter Anna left Vienna forever. On the same day, Freud sent a note to his friend, Arnold Zweig. In it he wrote, briefly, “Leaving today for 39 Elsworthy Road, London NW3 . . . ”

In 1977 Silba Cunningham-Dunlop and I worked on a *monograph* on the carcinogenic properties of ionizing and nonionizing radiation.

June 11 was the birthday of composer, Richard Strauss. That evening, June 11, 2017, I had the following dream:

*I am in the living room of the house where I grew up. Although it is daytime, the room is dimly lit. (In fact the room was always dark; the living room had only one small window). Someone has left a floral arrangement on a table. They are deep red astorias. In fact, there is no such flower. Someone has left a note attached to the flowers. It says, “Dark forces have overtaken Vienna, but the forces of light will someday return. Farewell, my beloved Vienna.” The note is signed Arnold Zweig. I sense that the note refers to the Nazi takeover of Austria in March 1938. I have the sense that sad events are happening elsewhere, but that I am safe in the living room of the house.*

Every student of Freud’s will be familiar with the following dream:

Freud’s Dream of the Botanical Monograph is a short and sweet little ditty that goes a little something like this:

*I had written a monograph on a certain plant. The book lay before me and I was at the moment turning over a folded colored plate. Bound up in each copy there was a dried specimen of the plant, as though it had been taken from a herbarium.*

Freud’s interpretation of this dream is complex, and he returns to it multiple times throughout *The Interpretation of Dreams*. The most important symbolic significance that he teases out of it relates to the meaning of the “certain plant”
that he studies in the dream.

Because Freud “really had written something in the nature of a monograph on a plant,” the monograph in the dream reminds him of his work on the coca-plant. So, the “certain plant” in the dream becomes a symbol of Freud’s work on the medicinal properties of cocaine—as well as a symbol of his mixed feelings about that work.

Freud viewed his work on the coca-plant with both positive and negative associations: positive, because he prided himself on having made important contributions to anesthesiology; and negative, because his recommended use of cocaine as a painkiller led to the death of his friend and colleague Ernst Fleischl von Marxow. With this in mind, the symbolic significance of the “certain plant” in the dream doesn’t just relate to the coca-plant itself, but to a whole slew of Freud’s professional ambitions and anxieties as well.

The important fact for me about Freud and cocaine was that Freud had experimented on himself with the substance. The following associations come to mind:

**ASSOCIATIONS TO THE GIFT OF RED FLOWERS:**

*Poison Ivy – The Red Rash*

In the spring of 1965, when I was 11, the following events transpired. I had the idea that I wanted to be a world famous scientist. I wanted to win a Nobel Prize in medicine. My first recollection of the Nobel was in the fall of 1964 (age 10), months earlier. Martin Luther King, Jr. had won the Peace Prize and my mother was incensed: “So now a convict gets a Nobel Prize!” My mother had strong racist convictions.

I had the idea that I would infect myself with poison ivy, a flowering plant, and then find a cure for the resulting rash. I stripped off the leaves (a twig? The German word *Zweig* means twig) of a poison ivy plant and rubbed them all over my face. I came down with a horrible rash and suffered terribly. When I went to school my sixth grade teacher (Olga Kaempfer), fearing that I had an infectious disease, sent me to see the school nurse (Rose Heckman). Mrs. Heckman said I had a poison ivy infection and told me to apply calamine lotion. Thus, my hopes of a brilliant future as a research scientist were dashed! I would be forced to find another road to world historical glory! That road
would turn out to involve my fantasies about my relationship with Bob Strauss at the law firm where I worked. I imagined in fantasy that my writings had come to Strauss’s attention and that he developed a special interest in me; my paranoid fantasy about Strauss gratified my need to come to the attention of a powerful figure (just as the concentration camp prisoner, Bruno Bettelheim had come to General Eisenhower’s attention through his writings).

Freud’s dream of the botanical monograph related, in Freud’s analysis, to his earlier work on cocaine, derived from the coca plant. Like me, Freud had experimented on himself with cocaine. Like me, Freud had a lifelong desire to win a Nobel Prize; he was nominated for 12 years, but the nominations ceased forever when the Nobel committee engaged an expert who said that Freud’s work was of no proven scientific worth.

So my dream seems to relate to my narcissistic need for fame and my idea of experimenting on myself. These issues seem to be at play in my letter writing in which I record and analyze my therapeutic sessions – as if I were doing important scientific work.

There is an aspect of dissociation here, or ego splitting, in which I am both the patient suffering from a mental disorder as well as the scientific researcher investigating that very disorder. In my therapy sessions it is as if I have taken on the role of both the patient undergoing treatment as well as the psychoanalyst analyzing a patient.

**Scarlet Fever**

At age 3 I came down with scarlet fever. My mother had indulged my taste for spoiled milk that I drank from a baby bottle. Scarlet fever causes a deep red rash, comparable, I suppose, to a poison ivy rash. When my pediatrician (Joseph Bloom, M.D.) diagnosed scarlet fever, he attributed the infection to the spoiled milk I had been drinking. Dr. Bloom scolded my parents in my presence in my bedroom: “Why is a three-year-old still drinking from a baby bottle? A three-year-old should not be drinking from a baby bottle.” I remember laying in my crib, mortified and severely embarrassed. My secret was out! On top of that I was forced to relinquish my bottle (which may have been a transitional object for me); I experienced the loss of the bottle as notably distressing.
Our house had to be quarantined by the Philadelphia Department of Health (scarlet fever = deep red astorias = Dr. Bloom = poison ivy rash). Dr. Bloom explained to my parents that he was required to report my scarlet fever to the Health Department because it was considered a serious public health concern. (One wonders whether there was a connection in my mind between Dr. Bloom (“flower”) communicating with the Health Department and Freud writing to Zweig (“twig”)). This was a major emotional event from my childhood; the illness, which was blamed on my mother, caused a lot of tumult centering on my mother's parenting and the embarrassment to my family caused by the Health Department quarantine. The Health Department posted a notice on the front door of our house – a kind of scarlet letter. “You may not enter this premises.”

Undoubtedly, at age three, I could not have processed the tumult in the household concerning the “Philadelphia Health Department.” At the very least, I suppose, these events might have contributed to my sense that I was impactful – that my private affairs (my oral gratifications and associated fantasies) could influence the wider environment. These events might have confirmed my sense of omnipotence and my conviction in the power of my magical thinking: the notion that my mere thoughts or sensations could arouse a response by remote objects (such as the Health Department).

I see a parallel between, on the one hand, my childhood illness (scarlet fever) and my transitional object (the baby bottle) coming to the attention of the Governmental authorities (The Philadelphia Health Department) under traumatic circumstances at age 3 and, on the other hand, my adult fantasy that my writings (a creative transitional object) had come to the attention of Bob Strauss (a friend of Presidents) who thereafter took a special interest in me. There is a further parallel with my fantasy at age 12 that a poison ivy rash I had caused – or my fantasied cure of that rash – would bring me to the attention of important people (The Nobel Prize Committee) who would recognize me as a great scientific researcher.

**Additional Thought:**

At a previous session (June 6, 2018) I talked with the therapist about a neighbor of mine, a young doctor I admired, who was doing a residency in obstetrics and gynecology. I reported that I was drawn to the fact that the
doctor’s published medical research had come to the attention of important people in his field – a fact that resonated with my fantasy world:

So, anyway, this goes back 15 years to the year 2003. There was a new guy in my building. His name was Brad Dolinsky. I didn’t know anything about him. But I was curious about him. He wore Army fatigues sometimes. Once he gave some cookies to the guy at the front desk. In my mind, I thought of him as “the cookie guy.” He was somebody I would be interested in talking to. I asked the front desk manager who he was. She said, “That’s Brad Dolinsky. He’s a doctor. He’s doing his residency at Walter Reed. He’s very smart.

There are people high up in his field who have their eye on him.”

I thought, “I knew it! I could tell there was something different about that guy.” So I researched the guy on the Internet. And I learned that there were several technical papers that he had co-authored – and he was still only a resident. This confirmed for me that I can read people.
The Dream of Beethoven

After I retired on the evening of Thursday December 12, 2013—some years ago—I had the following dream about the composer, Ludwig van Beethoven. During the period July 2013 to June 2015 I was in out-patient psychotherapy with a psychiatrist named Mohammed Schreiba, M.D. (St. Elizabeths Psychiatry Residency Training Program, Earle Baughman, M.D., supervisor). Dr. Shreiba was an older gentleman in his late 60s. He was perhaps ten years older than I. He was originally from Syria, but had lived and practiced psychiatry in Vienna, Austria for many years. He was a literate individual; he said that he had read Faulkner’s novel, *The Sound and the Fury* in Arabic. He mentioned that he had worked at the Allgemeines Krankenhaus, the same hospital in Vienna where Freud had worked. He was a kindly individual with whom I got on well. I had peculiar transference feelings for him. I projected onto him the qualities of pain, suffering, vulnerability, loss, death and mourning. I suspect these projections were based to some degree on the fact that I knew Dr. Shreiba was Syrian, and I imagined that he was affected by the Syrian civil war. But that could not be; I’m sure Dr. Shreiba had left Syria many years earlier, before the war. The following dream seems to be symbolic of a psychotherapy session: two individuals of different status, alone in a room, talking to each other.

Years earlier, in 1990, I had a psychotherapy session with Stanley R. Palombo, M.D. in which I had brought along a book: a biography of the playwright Clifford Odets written by the psychoanalyst Margaret Brenman-Gibson. Odets wrote the play *Paradise Lost*, a particular favorite of mine. Dr. Palombo was twenty years older than I. I read to Dr. Palombo from the preface of the book that described Odets’ premature death in a hospital room in Hollywood, California from colon cancer at age 56. The material I read described Odets on his deathbed. (Recall that the fantasy I reported at the therapy session on February 5 involved Beethoven on his deathbed.) The text I read aloud described Odets’ final days. Coincidentally, both Beethoven and Odets died at age 56. Odets had idolized Beethoven throughout his life and considered writing a play about the composer. While I was reading aloud to Dr. Palombo the reference to Odets’ death at age 56, I interrupted myself and said, in a shock of recognition: “That’s the same age as you! You’re fifty-six years old!”
The Dream of Beethoven

Beethoven and I are alone in a room. We talk about music. I feel awe, enthrallment and narcissistic elation talking to Beethoven. I ask him what he plans to write after the series of string quartets he’s working on. I feel sadness because I know that in fact Beethoven died after he completed his late string quartets. I know that he will not write any more music. He tells me that he has not decided what he will write after he completes his series of quartets. He tells me that he will never write another symphony, piano sonata, or string quartet. I suggest that maybe he will write something in variation form. He says, “perhaps.” He then launches into a long technical discussion about the variation form. I don’t understand anything that he says but I listen with keen interest. I then say, “People say that every musical form you tackle, you seem to exhaust. Your compositions are such a comprehensive statement in every form you write that you leave nothing for the composers who will follow you. You say everything there is to say.” Beethoven responds, “I have heard that. I don’t believe it. Composers who come after me will write symphonies, piano sonatas and string quartets.” (Beethoven was deaf from about the age of 35 onward; he couldn’t hear anything).

EVENTS OF THE PREVIOUS DAY:

1. I had a session with my psychiatrist, Dr. Shreiba in the late afternoon of December 12, 2013. I attempted to say something about Beethoven (“Sunday is Beethoven’s birthday”), but Dr. Shreiba cut me off, “Maybe we’ll get to that later.” Perhaps my feeling of being cut off by the psychiatrist corresponded to Beethoven dying relatively young at the age of 56. Beethoven’s life was cut short before he completed his life’s work, while he still had something to say. In this sense Beethoven symbolized my ideal self.

But we can show that Beethoven was also the hated father. Does the dream figure of Beethoven not provide a key to understanding the transference? Beethoven was deaf. Am I not saying that Dr. Shreiba was deaf to me, just as my parents were deaf to me? I suffered from not being “heard” by my parents. The dream represents my parents, perhaps especially my father, both as the wielder of powerful and inscrutable words — words that have a tremendous effect on me but are beyond my understanding at times — and also as one who is deaf to me. Beethoven as well as my parents are non-listeners, non-
comprehenders: they filtered anything I said through an ideal image that they imposed on me, blocking out my actual self. My parents had self-serving expectations of me that they demanded to see fulfilled, at my expense. See, Martens, L., “Framing an Accusation in Dialogue: Kafka’s Letter to His Father and Sarraute’s Childhood.”

In transforming my therapist, Dr. Shreiba into an idealized object, that is, Beethoven, was I not in fact disguising (or censoring) a bitter accusation against him that was occasioned by his act, earlier in the day, of cutting off my comment about Beethoven’s birthday? Was I not saying in the dream: “Talking to you is like talking to a deaf person! You don’t hear a thing I tell you!” Perhaps the strategy of the dream work was comparable to the rhetorical device of disguising a harsh criticism though imaginary dialogue. Cf. Martens, L., “Framing an Accusation in Dialogue: Kafka’s Letter to His Father and Sarraute’s Childhood.”

I spent the therapy session on December 12, 2013 talking about the topic of narcissistic elation. “Narcissistic elation” was a term used by Béla Grunberger to highlight ‘the narcissistic situation of the primal self in narcissistic union with the mother’. The term was coined to describe the state of prenatal beatitude, which according to Grunberger characterizes the life of the fetus: a state of megalomaniacal happiness amounting to a perfect homeostasis, devoid of needs or desires. The ideal here is bliss experienced in absolute withdrawal from the object and from the outside world. Narcissistic elation is at once the memory of this unique and privileged state of elation; a sense of well-being of completeness and omnipotence linked to that memory, and pride in having experienced this state, pride in its (illusory) oneness. Narcissistic elation is characteristic of an object relationship that is played out, in its negative version, as a state of splendid isolation, and, in its positive version, as a desperate quest for fusion with the other, for a mirror-image relationship (i.e., a relationship with an idealized other). It involves a return to paradise lost and all that is attached to this idea: fusion, self-love, megalomania, omnipotence, immortality, and invulnerability. Narcissistic elation may subsequently be reactivated within a therapeutic context. Edmund Bergler wrote of ‘the narcissistic elation that comes from self-understanding’ (i.e., as through psychoanalysis); while Herbert Rosenfeld described what he called the re-
emergence of “narcissistic omnipotent object relations” in the clinical situation’.

2. Dr. Shreiba had practiced psychiatry in Vienna, Austria for twenty years. Beethoven’s funeral was held in Vienna in March 1827.

3. Earlier in the day I had an appointment with the nurse practitioner who prescribes my psychiatric medications. At the consult she said to me, “You have no friends.” At Beethoven’s funeral, the composer’s friend Franz Grillparzer gave a funeral oration which contains an observation that I have long identified with: “He fled the world because he did not find, in the whole compass of his loving nature, a weapon with which to resist it. He withdrew from his fellow men after he had given them everything and had received nothing in return. He remained alone because he found no second self (i.e., a ‘mirror-image object.’)” The quest for such a mirror-image object is an aspect of narcissistic elation. It is estimated that from 20,000 to 30,000 people attended Beethoven’s memorial service. Beethoven had achieved fame.

4. On December 10, 2013, I had posted the following quote from President Obama’s speech at the memorial service in South Africa for Nelson Mandela. The memorial service was held in a sports stadium; thousands attended:

“Mandela showed us the power of action; of taking risks on behalf of our ideals. Perhaps Madiba was right that he inherited, ‘a proud rebelliousness, a stubborn sense of fairness’ from his father. Certainly he shared with millions of black and colored South Africans the anger born of ‘a thousand slights, a thousand indignities, a thousand unremembered moments . . . a desire to fight the system that imprisoned my people.” The quotation highlights Mandela’s stubbornness and rebelliousness.

5. On December 12, 2013 I learned that the sign language interpreter assigned to interpret the public speakers at Nelson Mandela’s memorial service was a fake. He was an alleged schizophrenic whose signing, according to those knowledgeable about signing, was gibberish. Perhaps the “deaf” schizophrenic at Mandela’s memorial service reminded me of the deaf Beethoven.

6. In the evening of December 12, 2013 I posted a biographical YouTube video about Beethoven on my blog. The video is titled, “The Rebel,” and talks about Beethoven’s social isolation, his rebelliousness, his desire for fame, and his
stubbornness. That evening I also did some research on the Internet and discovered that according to the Meyers-Briggs Personality classification system, Beethoven would be classified as INTJ. This created a sense of identification for me since I have taken the Meyers-Briggs test and also scored INTJ. I may have registered the notion that Beethoven and I were mirror-image objects.

In many ways the INTJ personality is similar to the introjective depressive. The INTJ’s primary mode of living is focused internally, where he takes things in primarily via intuition. His secondary mode is external, where he deals with things rationally and logically. INTJs live in the world of ideas. They value intelligence, knowledge, and competence, and typically have high standards in these regards, which they continuously strive to fulfill. To a somewhat lesser extent, they have similar expectations of others. INTJs focus their energy on observing the world, and generating ideas and possibilities. Their mind constantly gathers information and makes associations about it. INTJs are driven to come to conclusions about ideas. INTJs spend a lot of time inside their own minds, and may have little interest in the other people’s thoughts or feelings. They may have problems giving other people the level of intimacy that is needed. Incidentally, the Meyers-Briggs personality test is used by 80% of Fortune 500 companies in making personnel decisions.

**Additional Thoughts about My Sense of Awe**

Awe is the feeling of wonder and astonishment experienced in the presence of something novel and difficult to grasp—a stimulus that cannot be accounted for by one’s current understanding of the world.

Prototypical elicitors of awe include panoramic views, works of great art, and others’ remarkable accomplishments. This positive emotion serves to facilitate new schema formation in unexpected, information-rich environments. Griskevicius, V. “Influence of Different Positive Emotions on Persuasion Processing: A Functional Evolutionary Approach.”

The Dream of Beethoven expresses feelings of awe: “Beethoven and I are alone in a room. We talk about music. I feel awe, enthrallment and narcissistic elation talking to Beethoven.” In the dream I find myself in the presence of something that is novel and difficult to grasp: “He then launches into a long technical discussion about the variation form. I don’t understand anything
that he says but I listen with keen interest.”

Might we understand these feelings better? Might we look for the antecedents of these feelings in my early relationship with my mother? And, quite intriguingly, might there be a relationship between, on the one hand, my search in adulthood for a person who can serve as the object of my feelings of awe, and, on the other, my severe criticisms of, or “attacks on,” my therapist?

The following is an excerpt from a paper by Judith L. Mitrani, Ph.D.: “Unbearable Ecstasy, Reverence and Awe, and the Perpetuation of an ‘Aesthetic Conflict’.” Dr. Mitrani is Training and Supervising analyst of The Psychoanalytic Center of California in Los Angeles.

The psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion describes a patient whose attacks on him in analysis, which centered on the patient’s feelings of disappointment and hostility, did not constitute an attack on the “good breast” or the analyst’s good interpretations. Neither did Bion seem to see the patient’s fragmented presentation as the result of an envious attack on thinking or on the links that might have rendered his communications meaningful and relevant. Instead, Bion appears to conclude that his patient was attempting to have an experience of an object who might be able to understand and transform the inchoate experiences of the as-yet-unintegrated-baby-he and was therefore seeking the realization of his preconception of an object who could contain these experiences as well as his innate capacity for love, reverence, and awe.

_Did the Dream of Beethoven express my struggle to find the realization of my preconception of an object who could contain my experiences of ecstasy, reverence, and awe?_

Dr. Mitrani writes: “**Reverence and Awe versus Idealization.** In a paper read at a scientific meeting of the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society in 1967, Bion described an encounter with one patient who came to him after a previous analysis from which he had benefited, but with which he was nonetheless dissatisfied. At first Bion expected to find greed at the bottom of this patient’s distress, but it soon became clear to him that there was something else going on.

Bion described his patient’s outpourings, which were so fragmented “that they would have required an omniscient analyst to sort out and make sense of.”
Bion’s interpretations were either labeled ‘brilliant’ or they were met with extreme disappointment and hostility to the point of depression. He finally concluded that:

There is a great difference between idealization of a parent because the child is in despair, and idealization because the child is in search of an outlet for feelings of reverence and awe. In the latter instance the problem centers on frustration and the inability to tolerate frustration of a fundamental part of a particular patient’s make-up. This is likely to happen if the patient is capable of love and admiration to an outstanding degree; in the former instance the patient may have no particular capacity for affection but a great greed to be its recipient. The answer to the question — which is it? — will not be found in any textbook but only in the process of psycho-analysis itself.

In his customary style, Bion avoids saturating his concepts, leaving them somewhat ambiguous, and thus allowing us the freedom to use our own capacity for ‘imaginative conjecture’ to fill in the blanks, so to speak. I will yield to the temptation to do so with the understanding that the reader may draw his or her own conclusions, which may very well differ from my own.

I think Bion seems to be saying that, in this instance, he had met with a patient for whom Melanie Klein’s theory of envy did not apply. Indeed he seems to be making it clear that he did not see his patient’s disappointment and hostility as constituting an attack on the good breast or the analyst’s good interpretations. Neither did he seem to see the patient’s fragmented presentation as the result of an envious attack on thinking or on the links that might have rendered his communications meaningful and relevant. Instead, Bion appears to conclude that his patient was attempting to have an experience of an object who might be able to understand and transform the inchoate experiences of the as-yet-unintegrated-baby-he and was therefore seeking the realization of his preconception of an object who can contain these experiences as well as his innate capacity for love, reverence, and awe.

I would put forward here that the containing capacity, initially found and felt to be located in this type of external object — when introjected — leads to the development of an internal object capable of sustaining and bearing feelings of ecstasy and love; an object that might form the basis of the patient’s own self-esteem. This aim certainly calls for an analyst who truly thinks well enough of
himself and his own goodness that he is not dependent upon the goodness
and cooperativeness of the patient in order for such a positive self-perception
to be confirmed, and in order for him to continue to function analytically.”

Now, I acknowledge that this book contains numerous speculations about my
innate greed. But Bion’s observations offer an avenue of thought regarding my
dispositional awe and its possible connection to my idealization of some
people.
The Birthday Cake: A Transference Dream

March 16, 1990 was my niece’s 15th birthday. I remember the Sunday she was born, in 1975. I was a senior in college, working on a degree in journalism at Penn State. In the afternoon, when the telephone rang, I put down the book I was reading. My mother was calling to tell me my sister had delivered a baby girl. I had been engrossed in a recently-published book about Freud and the psychoanalytic movement, titled *Freud and His Followers* by the Canadian scholar Paul Roazen. I had purchased the book days earlier. That school term I took a course in Jewish history taught by a rabbi, and I had chosen as the topic of my term paper, “The Jewishness of Sigmund Freud.” I used Roazen’s book as an historical source for the paper. I was intrigued by Freud’s project, namely, begetting a scientific discovery then gathering about him a body of disciples to disseminate that idea to the world.

Be that as it may.

At 2:00 PM on March 16, 1990 I had a weekly consult with my psychiatrist at that time, the psychoanalyst, Stanley R. Palombo, M.D., clinical professor of psychiatry at the George Washington University College of Medicine. I don’t remember what we talked about. After work that evening I stopped off at the local Safeway supermarket to pick up some items for dinner. Browsing in the market I came upon a product I had never seen before: Hershey chocolate pudding cups. I froze for a moment, with an almost child-like sense of wonder. I thought, “That must be really good! Hershey chocolate pudding!” I contemplated buying a package but decided against it. One of my psychological hang-ups centers on deferring the experience of pleasure, as if I were in exile from pleasure: both desiring an object but enforcing my estrangement from the object.

Since childhood I had romanticized notions about the Hershey chocolate company. In seventh grade, in November 1965, I read a biography of company founder, Milton S. Hershey, for an assignment in Mrs. Snyder’s English class. I identified with Hershey’s innovative spirit and his humanitarianism. He originated a novel method for manufacturing chocolate, erected a factory to make the product, then built a company town, Hershey, Pennsylvania, to house his workers. The chocolate industrialist also founded and funded The Milton
S. Hershey School in Hershey for “poor, healthy, male orphans between the ages of 8 through 18 years of age.” I associate Hershey’s ingenuity and social activism with Freud’s scientific adventurism—Freud’s discovery of an idea, psychoanalysis—and his later gathering about him a band of adherents to propagate it. In eighth grade, in May 1967, we took a class trip to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, the state capital, and on the way back home to Philadelphia we stopped off at the Hershey chocolate factory. The company handed out promotional material to visitors including samples of Hershey’s chocolate products and a brochure that talked about the company’s history and its chocolate manufacturing process. One page of the brochure described a new medical school then under construction in Hershey, The Penn State College of Medicine. For some reason, that interested me.

At the outset of my treatment with Dr. Palombo, in January 1990, I had given him a paper I had written about myself, a self-styled psychoanalytic study that I titled, The Caliban Complex. I was proud of the paper, which I wrote on Columbus Day, 1988. I thought I had made important discoveries in mapping out my psychic interior. I had a grandiose identification with the Italian navigator, Christopher Columbus. He was a boyhood hero; at age thirteen I had built a model of the explorer’s flag ship, the Santa Maria. Even today, my apartment is decorated with model ships and paintings of boats. In my neurotic estimation—with my psychoanalytic paper—I had delved into the uncharted channels of my mind just as Columbus had made an unprecedented voyage across the Atlantic Ocean to explore a new continent. Dr. Palombo’s apparent failure to share my bloated self-appraisal injured my narcissism. Did the narcissistic injury I experienced with Dr. Palombo resemble the psychic threat I experienced upon the birth of my niece fifteen years earlier?

After retiring on the evening of March 16, 1990 I had a dream, which I later memorialized. The dream I had that night encoded selected events earlier in the day as well as associations from my past, as Dr. Palombo explains in his book, Dreaming and Memory, “the dream compares the representation of an emotionally significant event of the past with the representation of an emotionally significant aspect of the previous day’s experience.” It was as if Dr. Palombo’s theory was coming to life before my eyes.

This is the dream:
I have just completed a session with Dr. Palombo. I go outside the apartment building in which Dr. Palombo’s office is located. Dr. Palombo is lounging in a swimming pool on an inflatable raft with a friend, also a physician. Dr. Palombo’s friend says to me: “Dr. Palombo is such a humble person, he probably never told you about his background, did he? Dr. Palombo is an outstanding physician. He was founder of the department of psychiatry at the School of Medicine at Penn State.” Dr. Palombo’s friend mentions that Dr. Palombo is Jewish. At that point I think, “I knew it. I knew that he was Jewish. He’s too fine a doctor not to be a Jewish doctor.” But then I think, “But ‘Palombo’ isn’t a Jewish name.” First I reason that perhaps Dr. Palombo is an Italian Jew. I then reject the idea that Dr. Palombo is Italian at all, and settle on the idea that he must be a Jew who has changed his name. I think, “His name must have been something like ‘Palombofsky’ and he changed it to ‘Palombo.’”

I find myself in a bedroom. I imagine that it is a hotel room. The room resembles my parents’ bedroom. I feel that I am an observer in the bedroom— that I have no active connection with the locale or the persons in the room. A woman in the room receives a telephone call. It is room service. The woman is advised that the hotel is sending a birthday cake up to the room, since it is the woman’s birthday. Dr. Palombo arrives. The woman tells Dr. Palombo that room service is sending up a birthday cake in honor of the woman’s birthday. Dr. Palombo becomes enraged. He says to the woman, “I am the great Stanley Palombo, a professor of medicine, and one of the greatest psychiatrists in the world. And room service is sending you a birthday cake? Who are you? You’re nobody!”
The Dream of the Borromean Islands

Upon retiring on the night of February 20, 2019, I had the following dream:

I am in a deeply wooded area. It resembles a picnic site. There is a lake and people are swimming in the lake. There are islands in the lake off to the distance in one direction. Off to another side of the lake there is what looks like an Egyptian temple, but it is just two supporting structures with a lintel (see picture above), as if it were a giant picture frame in the lake, the two sides of the frame and the top portion of the frame. I am intensely hungry. My sister is there and I say I am hungry for breakfast, tea with a piece of cake. I have a camera and I am taking pictures of the scene. It is a beautiful scene. A boy comes up to me and grabs the camera. He says to me, “I want that,” referring to the camera. I am angered: “Everybody wants something from me,” I think. There is a vague sense of anxiety throughout the dream. My sister seemed detached from the environment. It was as if she and I were having two different experiences in the very same environment. I was enthralled by my surroundings, but my sister seemed indifferent.

On February 12, 2019 I had my final therapy session with a non-analyst therapist with whom I had a contentious relationship. About a week later – the day following the dream (February 21, 2019) – I was scheduled to have my first session with a new therapist, a psychoanalyst. I was both intensely excited and anxious about seeing her.

On the day of the dream, February 20, 2019, I happened to watch the BBC news on television. A news story featured an interview of an Italian-born professor of theology affiliated with Villanova University, outside Philadelphia, my hometown. He discussed the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church. The news story featured film footage of the Pope speaking to a crowd of people in Vatican Square from inside the Vatican.

1. In 1978 I took a trip to Italy. I visited the Vatican. On a Sunday I went to see the Pope speak to a large crowd in Vatican Square from his Vatican residence. I also visited Stresa, in the lake region in Northern Italy. Stresa sits on Lake Maggiore. In Lake Maggiore are the three Borromean Islands.

The Borromean Islands (Isole Borromee) are a group of three small islands and two islets in the Italian part of Lago Maggiore, located in the western arm of the lake. Together totaling just 50 acres in area, they are a major local tourist attraction for their picturesque setting.
I photographed the lake and the islands. I remember thinking, “This is one of the most gorgeous things I have ever seen.” My hotel room in Stresa overlooked Lake Maggiore. I remember watching the sunset over Lake Maggiore one evening; it was spectacular.

2. Villanova University is located in the western Philadelphia suburbs. I had been accepted to the LL.M. program in tax law at Villanova University in 1983. Also in the western Philadelphia suburbs is a Catholic seminary, St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. My mother mentioned that seminary several times.

3. The weekend of December 30-31, 1978, three months after my trip to Italy, I visited New York City. I stayed at a hotel over the weekend to see Wagner’s Tristan und Isolde and Strauss’s Elektra. I visited the Metropolitan Museum of Art where I viewed the Egyptian temple, The Temple of Dendur, located in the Sackler Wing (see picture above). The Temple of Dendur had been a gift from the Egyptian Government to the United States, donated in 1967.

Thoughts:

The issue of corruption in the Catholic Church parallels my notion that my therapist, and the clinic that employed her, was corrupt; I viewed her work and the work of her clinic as “cult-like.” I saw her work as a form of brainwashing, not legitimate psychotherapy. I wanted to expose the corruption of my therapist in the letters I wrote about her the way the victims of sexual abuse exposed priests in the Catholic Church. But I also wanted to provide psychoanalytic insight into the themes that emerged in my therapy sessions: a psychoanalytic interpretation of my personality struggles that was ignored by my therapist. The letters I wrote about my therapy sessions were simultaneously an attempt to expose the “corrupt work” of my therapist and an attempt to demonstrate what a legitimate psychoanalytic inquiry of my personality would reveal. I am reminded of the work of Martin Luther who sought to unmask the corruption of the 16th-Century Catholic Church and simultaneously revive the original ideals of the founders of the Church. The Catholic Church, as an institutional structure, paralleled, in my mind, the mental health clinic where I obtained therapy. Both the Catholic Church and the Clinic had, I believed, a false self-image as benefactors ("givers"), when in fact, in my perception, they were both exploitive and corrupt.
I note that the theme of vacation seems prominent. The manifest dream takes place at a holiday site, and my associations to the dream relate to holiday trips I took in 1978 to New York City and Italy. The present dream parallels in important ways a previous dream in this book (The Dream of Eggs and Lox), which I associated with Freud and psychoanalysis and which also featured the theme of hunger.

You will recall that in the Dream of Eggs and Lox . . .

. . . I am in Atlantic City on vacation with my father. It is a Friday morning. I am very hungry. My father and I go to a restaurant in the inlet. The waitress says: “It’s the end of the week. We have no food. We are waiting for a food shipment. I can serve you, but only one meal. One of you will have to go to another restaurant.” My father and I sit at a table. My father is served an order of eggs and lox. I am angry with my father. I think: “Any other father would let his son eat the one meal and make the sacrifice of going hungry. Because I have a selfish father, I will have to go hungry.” I think, “I have to have my blood drawn later, so at least, I will not have had a high fatty breakfast.” I leave the restaurant and my father and take a walk alone on the boardwalk. I come to Vermont Avenue. My family used to stay at Vermont & Oriental every summer with friends of my father. The Vermont Avenue Apartments have been torn down and I have pangs of nostalgia. In their place have been built a large, modern apartment house. It is pleasing, but it just isn’t the way I remembered Vermont Avenue. There are shops on the first floor. There are many tourists there. I said to one of the tourists, a woman: “The Vermont Avenue Apartments used to be located here.” She said, “I didn’t know that. I never saw that building.” I said, “Did you see the movie Atlantic City? It starred Burt Lancaster. There was a shot of the Vermont Avenue Apartments in that movie.” She said, “I never saw that movie.” I walk on down Vermont Avenue, hoping to come to Oriental Avenue, to see the house where we used to stay. Everything has changed. All the buildings have been torn down. There are sand dunes everywhere with pine trees planted everywhere. I get lost.

Be that as it may.

The theme of wanting is overdetermined in the present dream. I am intensely hungry. This parallels the boy who wanted my camera; he was “hungry” for my camera. Does this state of wanting relate to the issue of envy, which is a state of wanting?
Does “the temple that looks like a picture frame” parallel the camera, a device that “takes pictures?” Does the dream image of taking pictures with a camera symbolize my act of writing letters about my therapy sessions, which memorialize the interactions between me and my therapist and also elaborate psychoanalytic themes overlooked by my non-analytic therapist?

I associate to Penn State Abington, where I attended the first two years of college, which had a densely-wooded campus. At the center of the campus was a duck pond. It was delightful.

Is there a theme of my wanting (or hungering for) knowledge, knowledge about myself derived from psychoanalysis? Was this desire for knowledge related to my association to my college alma mater, Penn State? Was this desire for wanting knowledge also related to my association to the Catholic seminary? Did I not feel disappointment and unease with my therapist, who relied at times on cognitive-behavioral technique and who thereby thwarted my desire or hunger for self-knowledge?

In Kleinian theory, an infant whose wanting of the breast is frustrated transforms his fantasy of a “giving, bountiful breast” into a fantasy of a “bad breast,” that is, a frustrating or thwarting breast. In some sense, the infant whose desire for the giving breast is thwarted transforms his disappointment into a fantasy of a “corrupt” breast. Did the mental health clinic where I sought treatment symbolize the bad breast, the “corrupt breast,” that thwarted my desire for self-knowledge?

Freud associated ancient Egypt and its buried artifacts (symbolized in the dream by the royal Temple of Dendur) with psychoanalysis and the patient’s sequestered past as encoded in the unconscious. He viewed dreams, which he called the “royal road to the unconscious,” as the key to decoding the locked box of the patient’s unseen inner self. Indeed, Freud referred to his landmark book, The Interpretation of Dreams as the “Egyptian dream book.”

Perhaps in the dream my desired destination, psychoanalysis – the idealized, giving breast, which, in my view offered “great insightful wisdom” – was, figuratively speaking, “the other shore,” just as the dream image of the beautiful islands and the Egyptian royal temple were, in a literal sense, located on another shore. I was “this shore” – envious, hungry, unsatisfied, both as a
therapy patient and as concretely represented in the dream.

I am reminded of a commentary on a Buddhist parable found in the *Diamond Sutra*.

What does *paramita* mean? It is rendered into Chinese by "reaching the other shore." Reaching the other shore means detachment from birth and death. Just because people of the world lack stability of nature, they find appearances of birth and death in all things, flow in the waves of various courses of existence, and have not arrived at the ground of reality as is: all of this is "this shore." It is necessary to have great insightful wisdom, complete in respect to all things, detached from appearances of birth and death —this is "reaching the other shore." It is also said that when the mind is confused, it is "this shore." When the mind is enlightened, it is "the other shore." When the mind is distorted, it is "this shore." When the mind is sound, it is "the other shore." If you speak of it and carry it out mentally, then your own reality body is imbued with *paramita*. If you speak of it but do not carry it out mentally, then there is no *paramita*. 
Afterward: Daydreaming and Creative Writing

Freud raised the question of where writers drew their material from, suggesting that children at play, and adults day-dreaming, both provided cognate activities to those of the literary artist. Heroic and erotic daydreams or preconscious phantasies were seen by Freud as providing substitute satisfactions for everyday deprivations; and the same phantasies were in turn turned into shareable (public) artistic constructs by the creative writer, where they could serve as cultural surrogates for the universal instinctual renunciations inherent in civilization.

Freud saw the aesthetic principle as the ability to turn the private phantasy into a public artefact, using artistic pleasure to release a deeper pleasure founded on the release of forbidden (unconscious) material. The process allowed the writer himself to emerge from his introversion and return to the public world. If the phantasies came too close to the unconscious repressed, however, the process would fail, leading either to creative inhibition or to a rejection of the artwork itself.

Freud himself epitomized his essay's argument a decade later in his Introductory Lectures, stating of the true artist that: "he understands how to work over his daydreams in such a way as to make them lose what is too personal in them and repels strangers, and to make it possible for others to share in the enjoyment of them. He understands, too, how to tone them down so that they do not easily betray their origin from proscribed sources. . . . he has thus achieved through his phantasy what originally he had achieved only in his phantasy – honor, power and the love of women."

Years ago, in January 2005, I wrote a creative piece that was inspired by a two-day snow storm that I witnessed. The essay is based on the work of various authors—Jane Hamilton, Marya Hornbacher, Edith Wharton, Primo Levi, Boris Pasternak, Henry David Thoreau, and the psychoanalysts Margaret Brenman-Gibson and Stanley Greenspan—that I synthesized. The essay is in the form of a letter to an imaginary friend, a doppelgänger.

The essay points to the significance of the snow-storm-as-metaphor in my mental life. At a therapy session my therapist emphasized the idea that snow storms triggered comforting, nostalgic memories of my mother. Well, lo and
behold, fourteen years earlier, in January 2005, I had written the following ten-page essay about a snow storm and it contains no consoling thoughts about my mother, but it may contain veiled allusions to trauma.

The analytic significance of the essay becomes clear when one reviews the following excerpts from the text:

• My entire existence, in some sense, can be viewed as the lived aftermath of an accident, or series of accidents - a fall from grace. I used to think if you fell from grace it was more likely than not the result of one stupendous error or else an unfortunate accident.

• Put another way, I need a therapist who understands the structure of my ego – my psychic terrain, one might say – and whose map of that structure will permit me to arrive home safely on a snowy, winter afternoon. Someone who knows which roads are navigable, which ones are temporarily blocked, and which roads are permanently impassable. There is nothing more frustrating to a passenger riding in a winter storm than the driver’s self-aggrandizing false promises: promises about the ease of travel along a particular road that are based on the driver’s foolhardy failure to appreciate the severity of the road conditions.

It is striking and psychoanalytically intriguing that at a recent therapy session in 2019 I spontaneously created a metaphor about riding in a taxi cab that is virtually identical to the 2005 metaphor above about "a passenger riding in a winter storm." But in the 2019 metaphor I associated to an event from childhood to which I attributed significance. To paraphrase my former therapist, the psychoanalyst Stanley R. Palombo, M.D.: I had consciously substituted a metaphor about my current distressed mental state—my desperate concern that psychotherapy was not helping me arrive at my destination—with memories of past events of equal affective significance. By retracing the substitutions, one can see how a current conflict relates to childhood experience. See Palombo, S.R., “Day Residue and Screen Memory in Freud's Dream of the Botanical Monograph.”

At a therapy session in 2019 I analogized my therapist to a taxi driver and analogized myself (as patient) to a passenger in the taxi who was desperate to get to his destination: “I feel like I am a customer in a taxi cab and you’re the driver. I depend on you to get me where I need to go, but you depend on me...
for directions. I have feelings of desperation about this — as if I will never get to the destination, as if my life depended on my getting to the destination.”

I later thought about the fact that at age two-and-a-half, during the summer of 1956, I suffered an accidental injury to the oral cavity that caused profuse bleeding. My mother later told me she thought the injury was life threatening, saying: “I was afraid you were going to bleed to death before I could get you to the doctor.” When my mother telephoned the pediatrician she learned that he was on vacation and that he had referred his patients to another doctor. Did my mother have feelings of panic about getting me to the referral doctor? Did I internalize my mother's panic? At that time my parents didn't own a car and didn't have driver's licenses. I have no idea how my mother transported me to the doctor who, I understand, was some distance away. 1/

Is it possible that the transference metaphor I created in 2019 about my desperate ride in a taxi cab is not a metaphor at all, but, in fact, a concrete representation of a real event from childhood: does the metaphor relate to my ride with my mother to the doctor’s office at age two-and-half to treat an injury to my mouth—resulting from an accidental fall (“an unfortunate accident”)—that my mother believed was life threatening?

1/ Feelings of despair about reaching a longed-for destination might relate to the existential trials of the creative individual. I am reminded of Erik Erikson's observations about Freud's anguish in mid-life about completing his psychoanalytic project: "Freud at times expressed some despair and confessed to some neurotic symptoms, which reveal phenomenological aspects of a creative crisis. He suffered from a 'railroad phobia' and from acute fears of an early death—both symptoms of an over-concern with the all too rapid passage of time. 'Railroad phobia' is an awkwardly clinical way of translating Reisefieber—a feverish combination of pleasant excitement and anxiety. But it all meant, it seems, on more than one level that he was ‘coming too late,’ that he was ‘missing the train,’ that he would perish before reaching some 'promised land.' He could not see how he could complete what he had visualized if every single step took so much 'work, time and error.' Erik H. Erikson, Insight and Responsibility.
I don't want to overplay the significance of this childhood physical trauma. It is important, rather, to view the trauma as psychologically related to several issues, namely, early separation-individuation, unconscious conflict, and depressive traits that are all operative in my character. Cf. Blum, H.P. "Picasso’s Prolonged Adolescence, Blue Period, and Blind Figures" (exploring early issues of separation—individuation, unconscious conflict, trauma, and depression revived and reworked in Picasso’s turbulent protracted adolescence).

**A Childhood Recollection about a Snow Storm**

**Saturday, December 24, 1966.** I was in the eighth grade. My thirteenth birthday had been the day before. A classic winter nor’easter was making its way up the coast: the Christmas Eve 1966 Snowstorm. Philadelphia began to experience blizzard conditions in the early morning that actually worsened after nightfall. I can remember the thunder and lightning. In the morning my parents argued fiercely in the kitchen. My father became so enraged that he started to bang his fists against his head. He was generally in a depressed mood during the Christmas season. His mother had died on New Year’s Day in 1933 and his father had died on Christmas Day in 1929. My father almost always seemed to relive these sad events at the end of the year. After my parents argued, my father retreated to my parents’ bedroom where he listened to the radio. Incidentally, my father had an Orthodox Jewish background, while my mother was Polish-Catholic. I did not have a Jewish education, though “Jewishness” (as well as covert antisemitism) was a pervasive presence in my childhood. Unlike my cousins, I did not have a bar mitzvah, the religious initiation ceremony of a Jewish boy who has reached the age of 13.

On Saturday morning, December 24, 1966, my mother, after surveying the nearly-empty pantry, concluded she would need to make a visit to the supermarket to replenish our quickly vanishing food supply. Because the snow storm was already treacherous, she couldn’t see how she could drive to the supermarket, but would have to go on foot. She decided to have my nineteen-year-old sister accompany her. I would gladly have gone with my mother but I had just taken a shower and my mother feared that I would get a chill. My mother contrived a plan. She would tie a cardboard box to my snow sled and transport a small number of necessary groceries in the cardboard box from the supermarket. And thus it came to pass that my mother and sister, buttoned up
against a fearsome east coast Christmas Eve blizzard, went off on foot to the food market with a snow sled pulled by a rope.

While they were out, my aunt, Zelda, my mother’s older sister, telephoned. When I informed her that my mother and sister had gone off together in the blizzard to the supermarket, my aunt was furious. She bitterly lashed out at me. She wanted to know why it wasn’t I who went to the market with my mother instead of my sister. Using the language of family therapists, my mother’s older sister was my mother’s “guard dog” — the individual who blindly attacks family members perceived as causing the slightest upset to their esteemed spouse, partner, or child.

Later in the afternoon, my mother announced that days before she had ordered a cake for my thirteenth birthday (which, you will recall, was the day before) from the Gimbels Department Store at the nearby Cheltenham Mall. My mother said she wanted me to accompany her to Gimbels to pick up the cake. And so, after dinner, my mother and I trudged off in the still-formidable-and-worsening blizzard to pick up my birthday cake because, as my mother explained, she didn’t want to “lose the deposit on the cake.” At about 6:30 PM my mother and I trooped off into the white madness. Gimbels was about two miles away. It was a half-hour walk to the mall on any normal day. But on this night it took us about two hours to make it to the mall. Every footstep was a chore. The sidewalks and roadways were buried under deep snow, which covered the streets from one row of houses to the other while sharp, gusty winds battered us. We were concerned the whole time about getting to Gimbels before the store closed at 9:00 PM. If we didn’t make it in time, the whole trip would have been in vain. I couldn’t see how we could get to our destination before the 9:00 PM closing-time if every single step took so much work, time and error. Luckily, we got to Gimbels and picked up our precious cargo, the infamous Christmas-Eve-Blizzard-Birthday-Cake, about a half-hour before the store closed. There was a route H Bus that had its terminus at the doorway of Gimbels. My mother and I took the bus home bundled against the cold.

These memories flood back every Christmas. It was really a disturbing day in some ways — what with my parents’ arguing and my aunt attacking me — but my memories of this day are affectingly nostalgic. I have the persistent wish to relive this day as if it had some special pleasure for me. Perhaps, the ancient
Roman philosopher, Seneca, offers a clue to my fond recollections: “Things that were hard to bear are sweet to remember.” But I am leaving something out. For my thirteenth birthday my mother had purchased for me a recording of Beethoven’s violin concerto in D major, opus 61. It was a recording of Nathan Milstein soloist with the Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. I have a personal identification with the Beethoven violin concerto. It was first performed on December 23, 1806 — the date of my birth. At that age I studied violin and played in the school orchestra. Also, for Christmas that year my mother purchased for me a recording of Wagner’s opera, Götterdämmerung, my favorite Wagner opera. It’s four-and-a-half hours long! I have had a life-long passion for that opera, and I still listen to it often.

There is a psychological phenomenon called “peak experience” in which the individual undergoes a moment accompanied by a euphoric mental state – a "rare, exciting, oceanic, deeply moving, exhilarating, elevating experience that generates an advanced form of perceiving reality.” The peak experience is even mystic and magical in its effect upon the individual. It is not necessarily about what the activity is, but the ecstatic, blissful feeling that is being experienced during it. Common triggers for peak experience include art, nature, sex, creative work, music, scientific knowledge, and introspection. I wonder if my challenging foot-slog through the snow storm on this day together with my enthrallment with Wagner's Götterdämmerung were peak experiences that contributed to ecstatic feelings that have left me with a nostalgic longing in adulthood. I think of the metaphoric meaning of an odyssey through the snow. Might a preoccupation with the unpeopled landscape of a blizzard express a dissociated state of bliss in which subjective agonies are suspended, or frozen in space and time—safely distanced from the elated sentient contemplation of one’s “solitary track stretched out upon the world?”

That was my thirteenth birthday. For his thirteenth birthday, the piano virtuoso Arthur Rubinstein’s parents bought him a special gift — the complete Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg, another Wagner opera, in what Rubinstein later described in his autobiography as “the incomparable piano version by Karl Tausig.”
Dear Friend,

I weathered the snow storm on Saturday, and spent the winter day in my room, while the snow whirled wildly without, and even the traffic noises were hushed. I occupied the day with Mr. Frost together with a host of other authors who populated my imagination as welcome guests: Jane Hamilton, Marya Hornbacher, Edith Wharton, Primo Levi, Boris Pasternak, Henry David Thoreau, and Margaret Brenman-Gibson. Stanley Greenspan was here too. But then, Dr. Greenspan is always here; he holds the key to my inner world, and he comes and goes at will. Oh, and lest I forget, Lord Byron visited briefly to convey a unique message "To Ellen."

In my loneliness I become a spectator. My imagination leads a procession of living creatures before me. I watch and listen to these guests of my imagination as I would a performance at the theater. And at times these fantastic creations of my inner world seem more real than reality itself. I may be affected by a theatrical exhibition; on the other hand, I may not be affected by an actual event which appears to concern me much more. I only know myself as a human entity; the scene, so to speak, of thoughts and affections; and am sensible of a certain doubleness by which I can stand as remote from myself as from another. However intense my experience, I am conscious of the presence and criticism of a part of me, which, as it were, is not a part of me, but a spectator, sharing no experience, but taking note of it, and that is no more I than it is you. When the play, it may be the tragedy, of life is over, the spectator goes his way. It was a kind of fiction, a work of the imagination only, so far as he was concerned. This doubleness may easily make us poor neighbors and friends sometimes.

I came across a poem of Robert Frost's that seemed especially appropriate: "Brown's Descent." The opening lines read: "Brown lived at such a lofty farm that everyone for miles could see his lantern where he did his chores in winter after half-past three. And many must have seen him make his wild descent from there one night, 'cross lots, 'cross walls, 'cross everything describing rings of lantern-light. Between the house and barn the gale got him by something he had on and blew him out on the icy crust that cased the world, and he was gone!"
My own life is like an unending slip and slide; I seem to be continually at the edge of an abyss, mere seconds and a few feet from swerving involuntarily into oncoming traffic. I fear crashing into the traffic in the opposite lane, hurling into the windshield – hurting myself and damaging the rearview mirror.

My entire existence, in some sense, can be viewed as the lived aftermath of an accident, or series of accidents - a fall from grace. I used to think if you fell from grace it was more likely than not the result of one stupendous error or else an unfortunate accident. I hadn't learned that it can happen so gradually you don't lose your stomach or hurt yourself in the landing. You don't necessarily sense the motion. I've found it takes at last two and generally three things to alter the course of a life: You slip around the truth once, and then again, and one more time, and there you are, feeling, for a moment, that it was sudden, your arrival at the bottom of a snowdrift.

That's the way I feel now. I feel as if I'm at the bottom of the heap, struggling to ascend from the snowdrifts that ensnare me in a winter wasteland.

At this moment, the problem is compounded by a writer's block. I feel I'm straining for something to say, something to express. I feel immobile, locked in the grip of a creative and emotional deep freeze.

There is a stillness without and a confused tumult within. I gaze out my window. I seem a part of the mute melancholy landscape, an incarnation of its frozen woe, with all that is warm and sentient in me fast bound below the surface; but there is nothing unfriendly in the silence. The silence is a balm for my inner disquiet. I simply feel that I live in a depth of moral isolation too remote for casual access, and I have the sense that my loneliness is not merely the result of my personal plight, tragic as it is, but has in it, as I've hinted many times before, the profound accumulated cold of many stark and harshly-demanding winters.

The night following the storm was perfectly still, and the air so dry and pure that it gave little sensation of cold. The effect produced on me was rather a complete absence of atmosphere, as though nothing less tenuous than ether intervened between the white earth and the gray sky above.

I let the vision possess me as I contemplated what to write to you. I am never so happy as when I abandon myself to these epistolary dreams. A wave of
warmth goes through me as I think about the fact that for me the act of writing is the prolongation of a visit. Saturday night. I set about to write. I scribbled some notes in longhand. What I wrote that night fell into two parts. Clean copies – improved versions of earlier scribbling – were set out in my best penmanship. New work was written in an illegible scrawl full of gaps and abbreviations. In deciphering these scribbles, I went through the usual disappointments. Last night these rough fragments had moved me, and I myself had been surprised by some felicitous passages. Now these very passages seemed to me distressingly and conspicuously strained.

The passages didn't flow. A clear and pleasing narrative did not materialize. I felt torn between a fevered urgency and a bitter languor. I cannot blame my inner censor for the block; that censor, like a good psychoanalyst, contemplated my outpourings with evenly-hovering attention. The ideas were there all right, but they failed to materialize into a cohesive communication. I not only feel that I am incomprehensible to others; I am sometimes incomprehensible to myself as well. There were many false starts – and jarring stops. It was like driving through a winter storm. My thoughts made slow headway, and a vague fear gripped me as I envisioned veering off a train of thought or, alternatively, into a jarring wreck of incompatible ideas. The driver in a winter storm strives vigilantly for a commodious path, and is dismayed when he finds how far, after a seemingly interminable ride, he still remains from home.

It has been the dream of my life to write with an originality so discreet, so well concealed, as to be unnoticeable in its disguise of current and customary forms; all my life I have struggled for a style so restrained, so unpretentious that the reader or the hearer would fully understand the meaning without realizing how I assimilated it. I strive constantly for an unostentatious style, and I am dismayed to find how far I still remain from my ideal.

Saturday evening I had tried to convey, by words so simple as to be almost childish and suggesting the directness of a poem, my feelings of mingled idealism and fear and longing and courage, in such a way that should speak for itself, almost apart from the words.

Looking over my rough sketches now, I find that they needed a connecting theme to give unity to the lines, which for lack of it fell apart.
I take a break from my writing, and look out the window. I peer closely and inquisitively at the flakes of snow on the window ledge. Each crystal flake has an individual identity. Like a poem, each flake speaks of itself alone in a lyrical manner. Each six-sided flake expresses its own self in a broad, spacious hexameter. The regularity of the rhythm, independent of the meaning and inherent in the meter itself, does not strike me as doggerel; rather it contains a unique message expressed in infinite variety within a set form. Variety of expression within a strict form is difficult but engaging; the structural exigencies of poetry obviate verbosity just as nature imposes simplicity of form on the snowflake as a hedge against crystalline "windiness." The snowflake exalts in the concise and strong. It describes itself with the greatest rigor and the least clutter. The snowflake is compact, discrete; it is delineated by neat boundaries. Its individual identity is secure. The snowflake is a paradigm of firm, but precarious, self-delineation. Time and temperature will soon conspire to fuse the individual snowflakes into a crust amounting to a loss of individual identity.

Like the narrative of the psychoanalytic patient, every detail of the snowflake's form, however trivial, has a meaning. In the snowflake each crystalline projection has a structural function just as the analytic patient's outpourings follow narrative necessity.

The patient expresses his thoughts with clinical parsimony. In psychoanalysis the preferred explanation for a series of symptoms tends to be cast in terms of single events from the patient's past rather than different events on different occasions. The single event may be repeated again over time but the form of the event tends not to change. Similarly, nature endows each snowflake with an economy of expression within a hexagonal form.

The flake makes you think of something solid, stable, well-linked. In fact it happens also in crystallography as in architecture that "beautiful" edifices, that is symmetrical and simple, are also the most sturdy; in short the same thing happens with the crystal as with cupolas of cathedrals, the arches of bridges, or the well-designed theater whose structure follows the demands of acoustical science. And it is also possible that the explanation is neither remote nor metaphysical; to say "beautiful" is to say "desirable," and ever since man has built he has wanted to build at the smallest expense and in the most desirable
fashion, and the aesthetic enjoyment he experiences when contemplating his work comes afterward. Certainly, it has not always been this way: there have been centuries in which "beauty" was identified with adornment, the superimposed, the frills; but it is probable that they were deviant epochs and that the true beauty, in which every century recognizes itself, is found in the upright stones of a simple farmhouse or the blade of the farmer's ax.

Early Saturday afternoon I looked out my window. The old park -- or what remains of it -- came right to the tool shed, as if to peer at my face and remind me of something. The snow was already deep. It was piled high on the tool shed. Snow hung over the edge of the shed, like the rim of a gigantic mushroom. A solitary raven was perched on the roof devouring, in Lord Byron's words, "the yellow harvest's countless seed." For a moment the bird freezes in an upright position, fixed like a stage prop suspended in time. The world stops.

Although it was early afternoon and full sunlight, I felt as if I were standing late at night in the dark forest of my life. Such was the darkness of my soul, such was my dejection. The new moon shining almost at eye level was an omen of separation and an image of solitude.

I paused and reflected. My mind wandered. Thoughts and images emerged unbidden as I contemplated the blinding whiteness of the snow. A mirage appeared, as a thought out of season. I was in Bayreuth, Germany, in January. The tool shed directly across from my apartment window appeared to me as a chimera; it was Wagner's Festival Theater in mid-January, six months before the summer opera festival will begin. The theater has fallen into its customary winter disuse. As for the out-of-season festival theater -- a "beautiful" edifice of magnificent symmetry and noble and imposing forms -- on a lofty hill outside the town, when there was only the falling snow to be seen and the auditorium was bare, comfortless, and shadowy, it felt to me less like a place of high art and pleasure than a vacant library that had closed early on a snowy January day -- or, perhaps, a New England barn, atop a hill that everyone for miles can see.

The mirage seemed to give the appearance of a somewhat arcane sensation, a suggestion of something simultaneously flaunted and guarded, a sort of a private delusion waiting to be revealed. Through the charms and simplicities of Bayreuth, during the months before the summer festival, the image of Richard
Wagner perpetually looms, like an icon or an ideal – the comforting presence of an imagined friend, perhaps – and in my fancy left my mirage of Bayreuth in a condition of half-bewitched expectancy. Just you try putting Wagner out of your mind in Bayreuth – even in January! Wagner became in this moment a symbol of All-Things-wished-for but denied: an embodiment of frustrated enticement. He became a symbol of the special friend one despairs of ever finding. I recognized my emotional emptiness in the phantasm of the out-of-season, vacant theater at Bayreuth. And then, in a moment the image of Wagner that had gripped my fantasies disappeared, as if it had been blown out on the icy crust that cased the world, and he was gone!

I was left with a spiritual hunger borne of a disconnected feeling. The disconnected mood which strains for closure more in the artist than in others is the same bridge that joins me to Victor Hugo's "miserables." My emotional starvation welcomes as a brother fellow seekers: idealistic souls who pursue an inner vision of truth and meaning in defiance of the compact majority. But my starvation, however painful, also aids me in that central necessity for any artist – to find a communicative Form or structure whereby I can simultaneously heal my inner disconnections and end my disconnection from others. My gift – if it be called a gift – permits me, while integrating the contrarities within, to provide such integration for my audience as to unite me with it. This is the self-healing and other-healing function of all art.

It is only by writing these letters that I seem able to derive any satisfaction from life. Social avenues of engagement with others seem blocked by the barrenness of my frozen soul. I am forever locked in the grips of a slippery slope that I desperately want to ascend, but to which I – like Camus's Sisyphus – am forced to submit in fatal descent. I lack the capacity for true engagement with others, and so I occupy myself with an imaginary connection with a distant and unseen audience through the communicative form of these letters.

For the genuine artist, the search for a suitable form competes in importance with the need to express a particular content. Mere content alone veers toward dissolution and in comprehensibility in the absence of a unifying structural barrier or boundary.

Structural issues of a different kind also mediate social relatedness, for, as Erik Erikson has observed, true engagement with others is the result and the test of
firm self-delineation. Where this is still missing, the individual when seeking tentative forms of friendship is apt to experience a peculiar strain, as if such tentative engagement might turn into an interpersonal fusion amounting to a loss of identity, and requiring, therefore, a tense inner reservation, a caution in commitment. Because I myself have never resolved this strain I isolate myself and enter, at best, only stereotyped and formalized interpersonal relations. For where an assured sense of identity is missing even friendship becomes a desperate attempt at delineating the fuzzy outlines of identity by mutual narcissistic mirroring: to make a friend then often means to fall into one's mirror image, hurting oneself and damaging the mirror.

I seek a real person, an actual other, a comrade-in-arms – a psychical ballast, as it were – with whom I can share my thoughts and feelings.

If I can't make a friend, I would hope I might find a therapist with whom I could communicate: someone whose opinions I can respect, someone who might offer narcissistic nourishment to ease my emotional starvation. But at the moment there is no one.

What I desperately need at this time is a therapeutic process, including a transference relationship and the skillful guidance of a seasoned therapist to avail myself of opportunities for new growth: someone who can appreciate the needs, limitations, and capacities associated with my ego structure. What I need is a therapist who has a road map of the structural components of my ego processes to go alongside a road map of intrapsychic content (e.g., wishes, conflicts, fears), that can increase my understanding of my Self and improve my day-to-day adjustment.

An important fact: I grew up in the theater. My parents were actors and directors, and I myself began performing when I was just a child. There is no place on earth that fosters narcissism like the theater, but by the same token, nowhere is it easier to believe that you are essentially empty, that you must constantly reinvent yourself in order to hold your audience in thrall. In childhood I became fascinated with transformations, with mirage and smoke and mirrors (rearview or otherwise). Perhaps a genetically less sensitive, less porous, and less gifted youngster would have responded with greater resilience to his family and would have achieved a more comfortable day-to-day adjustment. But I was hypersensitive to the goings-on in my family, and my
early life in the theater exacted its toll.

I need a therapist who has a rich understanding of the various dramas played out in my intrapsychic life. I need a therapist who will sit quietly as he watches the play unfold, while being in his or her own mind also a co-actor. I need a therapist who appreciates the psychodrama of therapy: one who, within the walls of his office, is able to surrender his identity to the phantoms that haunt his patients, continually attending to the form of the moment of communication while bearing in mind the whole session as it echoes and repeats the form of the patient's life drama. I require a therapist who can accommodate the multifarious diffusion of my identity — my inner gallery of characters — and who can surrender himself to the act of witnessing the entire process of my inner drama play out.

*Put another way, I need a therapist who understands the structure of my ego — my psychic terrain, one might say — and whose map of that structure will permit me to arrive home safely on a snowy, winter afternoon. Someone who knows which roads are navigable, which ones are temporarily blocked, and which roads are permanently impassable. There is nothing more frustrating to a passenger riding in a winter storm than the driver's self-aggrandizing false promises: promises about the ease of travel along a particular road that are based on the driver's foolhardy failure to appreciate the severity of the road conditions.*

It's especially important clinically to understand the structure of the ego, in addition to the particular dynamic phenomenon the ego is struggling with at any moment so that therapist and patient can knowledgeably journey across the patient's mental landscape: to observe the patient's wishes and abstracted feeling states, make connections between different wishes and feelings (as well as different sides of a conflict), and understand these in historical, current, and future contexts.

Be that as it may.

It is now early evening on this snowy day in mid-January. The storm has all but passed. The stir is over. I step forth once again to peer outside my window. I strain to make the far-off images beyond my windowpane yield a cue to the events that may come in the days ahead. Night and its murk transfix and pin me, staring through thousands of stars. I cherish this moment, this rigorous
conception of a snowy winter evening, and I consent to play my part therein as spectator. But another play is running at this moment, so, for the present, I seek a premature release. And yet, the order of the acts has been schemed and plotted, and nothing can avert the final curtain's fall. The January thaw will soon take off the polish of the snow's crust. I bow with grace to natural law. I stand alone. All else is swamped in fuzzy dissolution. To live life to the end, while peering back to the path one has already traversed, is not a childish task. 
Till my next letter, Friend!

Note about Hamlet and Hamlet

At a therapy session I talked about having had a problematic relationship with my mother and, on some level, a fantasy idealized relationship with my father. At a later point, in a seeming digression, I said to my therapist, “Let me read to you a paragraph of a creative piece I wrote in January 2005.” The text I read was the concluding paragraph of the creative piece, “Reflections of a Solitary on a Snowy Afternoon in January.”

It is now early evening on this snowy day in mid-January. The storm has all but passed. The stir is over. I step forth once again to peer outside my window. I strain to make the far-off images beyond my windowpane yield a cue to the events that may come in the days ahead. Night and its murk transfix and pin me, staring through thousands of stars. I cherish this moment, this rigorous conception of a snowy winter evening, and I consent to play my part therein as spectator. But another play is running at this moment, so, for the present, I seek a premature release. And yet, the order of the acts has been schemed and plotted, and nothing can avert the final curtain’s fall. The January thaw will soon take off the polish of the snow’s crust. I bow with grace to natural law. I stand alone. All else is swamped in fuzzy dissolution. To live life to the end, while peering back to the path one has already traversed, is not a childish task.

In fact, the paraphrase I read was a reworking of Boris Pasternak's poem, “Hamlet,” part of a collection of poems included in Pasternak's novel, Dr. Zhivago.

After I finished reading my paraphrase of Pasternak's poem, I said to my therapist, in a shock of recognition: “I’m Hamlet! This is a paraphrase of Pasternak’s poem ‘Hamlet.’ Hamlet had a disturbed and unsatisfying
relationship with his mother, while his idealized father is absent from the action — Hamlet’s father appears as a ghostly revenant, a mere memory or idea in Hamlet’s mind.”

Pasternak’s Poem “Hamlet”
The stir is over. I step forth on the boards.
Leaning against an upright at the entrance,
I strain to make the far-off echo yield
A cue to the events that may come in my day.
Night and its murk transfix and pin me,
Staring through thousands of binoculars.
If Thou he willing, Abba, Father, Remove this cup from me.
I cherish this, Thy rigorous conception,
And I consent to play this part therein;
But another play is running at this moment,
So, for the present, release me from the cast.
And yet, the order of the acts has been schemed and plotted,
And nothing can avert the final curtain’s fall.
I stand alone. All else is swamped by Pharisaism.
To live life to the end is not a childish task.

The poem’s narrator, an actor standing on stage, is simultaneously the character Hamlet as well as the actor playing Hamlet, as if each was a metaphor for the other. This plays upon the fact that the character Hamlet was also an actor.

You will recall that the creative piece, “Reflections of a Solitary on a Snowy Afternoon in January” includes the following paragraph, which can now be seen to link up with Pasternak's poem, “Hamlet.” The narrator of Pasternak’s poem is simultaneously the character Hamlet as well as an actor playing Hamlet. In my family I was simultaneously Gary Freedman as well as the “actor” playing Gary Freedman.
An important fact: I grew up in the theater. My parents were actors and directors, and I myself began performing when I was just a child. There is no place on earth that fosters narcissism like the theater, but by the same token, nowhere is it easier to believe that you are essentially empty, that you must constantly reinvent yourself in order to hold your audience in thrall. In childhood I became fascinated with transformations, with mirage and smoke and mirrors (rear view or otherwise). Perhaps a genetically less sensitive, less porous, and less gifted youngster would have responded with greater resilience to his family and would have achieved a more comfortable day-to-day adjustment. But I was hypersensitive to the goings-on in my family, and my early life in the theater exacted its toll.

It is noteworthy that Hamlet’s respective relationships with his scorned, unempathic mother and his idealized but unavailable (because dead) father parallel the dynamics of Kohut’s case of Mr. U, which I referenced previously. Mr. U turned away from the unreliable empathy of his mother and tried to gain confirmation of his self through an idealizing relationship with his father. The self-absorbed father, however, unable to respond appropriately, rebuffed his son’s attempt to be close to him, depriving him of the needed merger with the idealized self-object and, hence, of the opportunity for gradually recognizing the self-object’s shortcomings. Kohut, H., *The Restoration of the Self*.

James Groves, M.D. has made a similar observation about the effect on Hamlet of having had an unempathic mother: “Not just Kleinian object relations theory but also [Kohut’s] self-psychology shows the [closet] scene [in Hamlet] as pivotal; it sees the individual’s main task as the development of a cohesive self. Unempathic parenting leaves behind fault lines that rupture under stress to become a fragmented self. When the child is used as a selfobject, the parent’s ‘mother,’ the child is parentified. A child used as the selfobject of a parent is vulnerable to fragmentation. Hyman Muslin comes to this same formulation describing Hamlet’s fragmentation into a ‘self of despair’ under stress; he sees Hamlet’s use of Gertrude as a healing selfobject to repair himself, just as we are arguing.” Groves, J. *Hamlet on the Couch: What Shakespeare Taught Freud*. 