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PART ONE

***THEORIZING* Masculinities**

2
Psychoanalysis on Masculinity

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Psychoanalysis has a paradoxical position in discussions of masculinity. The Freudian movement made the first serious attempt at scientific research on masculinity and explanation of its major patterns. Yet its findings have been largely neglected in the current revival of social-scientific interest in masculinity. As all who have read Freud's texts know, psychoanalysis was the product of an incisive intelligence and a profound commitment to science. Yet psychoanalysis gave birth to the confused irrationalism that now shoulders aside all claims of science in popular discussions of the "deep masculine."

Psychoanalysis on the one hand has enriched almost every current of radical thought in the 20th century, from Marxism, surrealism, and existentialism to anticolonialism, feminism, and gay liberation. On the other hand, it has evolved into a medical technology of surveillance and conformity, acting as a gender police and a bulwark of conservative gender ideology.

My intention is to explore these paradoxes by tracing the history of psychoanalytic ideas about masculinity (with some attention to their connections to psychoanalytic practice) from Freud's first formulations up to the present. Given the diversity within psychoanalysis, this can only

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AUTHOR'S NOTE: This chapter began in a project undertaken 10 years ago with Tim Carrigan, whose help I gratefully acknowledge. Pam Benton and Mike Donaldson have provided more recent criticism and help. The initial work was supported by a grant from the Australian Research Grants Committee. There are, of course, many ways of approaching psychoanalysis. I have described mine in an essay on Freud (Connell, 1983), arguing for a social and dialectical view of psychoanalysis.

be an outline history. But I hope there is enough detail to establish that despite bizarre twists in the story, psychoanalysis remains a vital resource for the understanding of masculinity, and that some of the best leads it provides are found well back in its history.

Classical Psychoanalysis: The Oedipus Complex

Freud did not set out to do research on gender. He was a doctor, with a middle-class practice in Vienna, specializing in what were taken to be disorders of the nerves. He sought a psychology able to account for "neuroses" and a means of treating them. Within the cultural ferment of the turn-of-the-century European intelligentsia, however, his medical reasoning led to revolutionary conclusions: to a sweeping theory of sexuality, to the concepts of repression and the dynamic unconscious, and to the method *psychoanalysis,* hyphenated as it used to be spelled in English, that was both a remarkable tool of research and a debatable method of therapy.

All of this brought him, step by step, to the issues of gender that in other forms were being heatedly debated in advanced political and cultural circles. By the application of the new method Freud, more than anyone else, showed the artifice within the apparently natural characters of women and men, and made an inquiry into the way they were composed both possible and, in a sense, necessary.

Freud nowhere wrote a formal account of masculinity, though he wrote two dubious papers on femininity. To an extent, then, I have to reconstruct an inarticulate current of thought. Yet the materials are abundant, because Freud never stopped wrestling with issues about gender. One can distinguish three moments in the evolution of his ideas on masculinity.

The first was contained in the initial statements of psychoanalytic methods and concepts. *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900/1953a) set out Freud's basic principles: the continuity between normal and neurotic mental life, the concepts of the unconscious and of repression, and the language of interpretation that allowed unconscious mental processes to be read through dreams and symptoms. The Oedipus complex, "the fateful combination of love for the one parent and simultaneous hatred for the other as a rival" (Freud, 1931, p. 229), was introduced only in a guarded manner in this book. But in the next few years it was proclaimed the key moment in psychosexual development. What precipitated the oedipal crisis, for boys, was identified as rivalry with the father and terror of castration. These ideas were crystallized in the Little Hans case history

(1909/1955a). Freud now had a definite idea of a formative moment in masculinity, and the dynamics of a formative relationship. The "Rat Man" case history (Freud, 1909/1955b) confirmed these ideas and showed how the father complex played out in an adult obsessional neurosis.

The *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905/1953b), an abstract of early psychoanalytic thinking and the classic of modern sexology, offered the idea that humans were constitutionally bisexual, as a way of thinking about sexual inversion. Homosexuality, Freud argued, is not a simple gender switch: "A large proportion of male inverts retain the mental quality of masculinity." So there is an important distinction between the choice of a sexual object, that is, the structure of one's emotional attachments, and one's own character traits. (This distinction is still not always grasped in discussions of gender.)

In the second and third essays Freud offered a narrative of psychosexual development from infancy to adulthood, suggesting among other things that boys' and girls' sexuality diverges sharply only in adolescence. The explicit comments on masculinity were few, but there was a strong implicit argument. The general theme of the *Three Essays* was that adult sexuality is constructed by a long and conflict-ridden process, in which original elements are combined and transformed in extraordinary ways. The process may take unexpected turnings (perversion), seize up (fixation), or fall apart (regression) at any step along the way.

It follows that adult masculinity, as an organization of character around sexual desire, must be a complex, and in some ways precarious, developmental construction. It is not given a priori in the nature of men, as European culture generally assumed. It is not wholly defined by the active/passive polarity that Freud initially saw as underlying sexual and mental life, which in due course became the basis of Adlerian and Jungian theories of masculinity.

What I might call the architectural approach to gender, a focus on the process of construction, reached its peak in the longest and most polished of Freud's case histories, the "Wolf Man" study. This recorded the analysis of a Russian aristocrat that lasted from early 1910 to the eve of the First World War, and its central themes concern masculinity. It marked a second stage in Freud's thinking on the subject.

Freud introduced the issue of masculinity near the end of a long chapter on his patient's famous dream about white wolves, while reflecting on the early history of the little boy's sexual development. He toyed with an equation between activity/passivity and masculinity/femininity, suggesting that the latter was usually superimposed on the former at about the

oedipal stage. But he noted that in the crisis of the boy's emotional relation to his father, the feminine aim in relation to the father was repressed because of the fear of castration: "In short, a clear protest on the part of his masculinity!" (Freud, 1918/1955c, p. 47).

A pre-oedipal narcissistic masculinity was thus revealed, strong enough to force the repression of the strongest current in the boy's desires. Through a long argument, far too complex to summarize here, Freud pursued the psychological consequences of this archaic current of emotion, of the homosexual desire repressed in the oedipal crisis itself, and of an identification with women and jealousy of the mother that coexisted with the other currents.

In this case study Freud went a long way beyond the formulas of the *Three Essays*. Here he produced the first really detailed map of the contradictions and fissures within an adult man's personality. He showed an adult heterosexual masculinity underpinned (and undermined) by several contradictory layers of unconscious emotion. This case study stands as a challenge to all later research on masculinity. No account of the subject will do that has not absorbed the Wolf Man's lessons about the tensions within masculine character and about its vicissitudes through a life history, the turnings, strategies, and negotiations involved.

To recognize Freud's genius as a clinical observer is not to say he grasped the theoretical consequences of everything he saw. The Wolf Man study was accompanied by a frustrated worrying at the idea of masculinity/femininity. Freud kept coming back to the active/passive polarity although obviously dissatisfied with it. He remarked about this time that the concepts of masculinity and femininity "are among the most confused that occur in science" (1905/1953b, p. 219, n. 1, added to the text in 1915). This comment was followed by a distinction between psychological, biological, and sociological concepts of masculinity/femininity. But he could not get these definitions together.

The Wolf Man study itself reveals the underlying problem Freud could not resolve. The narcissistic masculinity predating the oedipal crisis implies a powerful cathexis of male genitals, but there is nothing in the particular case that would account for this. Ultimately the boy failed to acquire the consolidated masculinity to which he was, so to speak, patriarchally entitled—the failure that brought the grown man to Freud's door as a patient.

Both the failure and what it was a failure in are social. The particular configuration of the Wolf Man's childhood milieu, a scene of elusive desires and attenuated relationships, made it impossible for him to settle

on an acceptable object of desire. But the issues go far beyond one household. Castration anxiety, indeed the whole oedipal constellation, rests on a *cultural* exaltation of masculinity and overvaluing of the penis. This was clear enough to Adler at the time and is basic in modern feminist psychoanalysis. But Freud was engaged then in a polemic against Adler's ideas, and indeed the point was made difficult to see simply by the way he set up the analysis as a clinical case study. The medical approach both gave him the materials of the problem and prevented its resolution.

The Wolf Man study and the theoretical reflections it spurred, but did not resolve, were the closest that Freud came to spelling out a theory of masculinity. There was, however, something more to come, a moment in the development of his ideas when another perspective on masculinity became possible, even half-emerged.

This chance was provided by the structural theory of personality he developed in the years around 1920, particularly by the concept of the superego. This, in his mature theory, is the agency in personality that judges, censors, and presents ideals. It is formed in the aftermath of the Oedipus complex by internalized parental prohibitions (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973, pp. 435-438; Silverman, 1986).

Freud initially used this concept to fill out his narrative of individual development and character formation. But he began to see it as having a gendered character, being crucially a product of the child's relation with the father. The mechanisms that produce it, he concluded, are clearer and more decisive in the case of boys than of girls; this became a key idea in his late writings on femininity. Most striking, in *Civilization and Its Discontents* and other late writings about culture and religion, he began to see a sociological dimension in the concept of the superego: "Civilization, therefore, obtains mastery over the individual's dangerous desire for aggression by weakening and disarming it and by setting up an agency within him to watch over it, like a garrison in a conquered city" (Freud, 1930/1961, pp. 123-124).

This line of thought remained speculative; Freud never became acquainted with the methods of social research. But its implications are profound. For here is the germ of a theory of the patriarchal organization of culture and the mechanism of its transmission between generations through the psychodynamics that construct masculinity. To develop the idea would be to tilt further toward social determinism than Freud ever did. Later writers on masculinity have moved exactly in that direction but have mostly abandoned Freud's theorizing about the superego.

So Freud opened more doors than he walked through. But the leads he gave for the analysis of masculinity were remarkable enough. Beginning with conventional, essentialist ideas about a masculine/feminine, active/passive polarity in emotional life (a conception he could never quite shake off), he moved on to provide a method for the investigation, a guiding concept for it, a first map of the development of masculinity, and a warning about the limits of the idea. I will finish this discussion with some notes on each of these.

The method "psycho-analysis" itself means intensive study, one person at a time. It involves the decoding of personal meanings in an extraordinarily fine-grained way. (Freud, unlike many Freudians, did not go in for prepackaged symbolism.) It requires a strenuous balancing of concern for the person and critique of what the person says—an affectionate and curious skepticism balanced by a sense of the pain and poetry of life.

This has not proved an easy stance to sustain. In medical psychoanalysis it has usually been converted into a formula of professional detachment, in which the answers are in principle known in advance. Consequently, the method has ceased to be a means of discovery. In psychoanalytic cultural and social theory, the method has been dropped and only the interpretive formulas kept. Theorists debate the Law of the Father or the significance of sublimation without two cases to rub together.

The concept of the unconscious is still far from universally accepted; Freud's formulations of the idea hardly represent the state of the art now. What his formulations did, however, was signal the presence of powerful motives and defenses that cannot be easily acknowledged. This is important in getting past concepts of masculinity as simple rationality or simple self-interest; psychoanalysis makes one aware of how complex personal "interests" may be. Modern analyses of homophobia depend on this point. With the idea of the unconscious, Freud introduced a concept of layers in personality, which can be in contradiction with each other—indeed, usually are. Each personality is a shade-filled, complex structure, not a transparent, homogeneous whole.

The map Freud offered was his account of psychosexual development, centering on the Oedipus complex, a map he kept updating and redrawing to the end of his life. This map was not the list of "stages" that later child psychology took psychoanalysis to be (which I learned, as an undergraduate, like a litany: oral, anal, genital, latency . . .). It was, rather, the script of a drama, with characters (body parts, family members, parts of the mind), a plot line (pre-oedipal attachments, the oedipal crisis, identification), and a good deal of suspense about the denouement. Freud was highly aware of the different paths the plot could take because people arrived as his patients when their dramas had in some way gone awry. This led him directly to the view that different adult personalities were the outcomes of different paths of development, not different starting points. For this reason he rejected the notion of *qualitative* difference between homosexual and heterosexual people, such as the concepts of biological difference and a "third sex" that were being produced in his day by Magnus Hirschfeld and others in the early homosexual rights movement (Wolff, 1986).

This sense of immense variety in adult outcomes being produced by the complex combination and recombination of a few initial ingredients also underpinned the point Freud most insistently made about masculinity: that it never exists in a pure state, as the whole being of a man. Femininity, too, is always part of a man's character, whether in the form of bisexual object choices, a passive aim in sexuality, or identification with the mother. It was a strong sense of the truth and importance of this insight, I think, that kept Freud playing with the idea of constitutional bisexuality long after it had ceased to perform a useful function. It was this critical and disturbing insight that was thrown out with the bathwater when later, more conservative, psychoanalysts explicitly abandoned the theory of bisexuality.

The Road Not Taken: Masculine Protest

Freud's early psychoanalytic writings were received with a mixture of enthusiasm and hatred that is hard to grasp today. He was both vilified as a kind of pornographer and hailed as a medical genius. Within a few years a movement had formed around him, whose core members were doctors who had adopted his therapeutic methods. Associations were founded, journals launched, congresses held. This movement became the medium of theoretical debate over Freud's ideas. It also rapidly became (partly in response to the vilification from outside) a means of social control, insisting on orthodoxy as the price of membership. The intellectual history of psychoanalysis therefore became a history of splits.

The first of these involved Alfred Adler, a socialist doctor who had become convinced of the importance of social factors in disease before meeting Freud and who became for a time his most active supporter. Adler

was president of the Psychoanalytic Society in Vienna at the time of his clash with Freud in early 1911. Some minutes of the key meetings survived, giving off a strong odor of unspoken anger, whether personal or political is not clear (Jones, 1958, pp. 148-149). At all events the occasion of the split was a series of papers read to the society by Adler, and it is a remarkable fact that the centerpiece of these papers was a theory of masculinity.

Adler's argument started from the opposition of masculinity and femininity that was found in the *Three Essays.* Adler, too, treated this as a basic polarity in mental life. He differed immediately, however, in stressing that the feminine side of the polarity is devalued by the culture. Children of both sexes, being in a position of weakness vis-à-vis adults, are thus forced to inhabit the feminine position; they necessarily develop a sense of femininity and doubts about their ability to achieve masculinity. The "childish value judgments" formed about this masculine/feminine polarity persist as a central motive in later life.

Submission and striving for independence coexist in the child's life, setting up an internal contradiction between masculinity and femininity. "This usually initiates a compromise"; in normal development some kind of balance is struck. The adult personality is thus a balance under tension.

But if there is weakness (and Adler had the idea that neurosis often was triggered by some physical inferiority or other), there will be anxiety that motivates an exaggerated emphasis on the masculine side of things. This "masculine protest," in Adler's famous phrase, is central to neurosis. It is basically a matter of *overcompensation* in the direction of aggression and restless striving for triumphs.

In his vivid sketches of the masculine protest, Adler was not drawing a sharp distinction between neurotic and normal. He saw the masculine protest as active in normal mental life, neurosis breaking out only when it failed to be gratified and turned sour.

It was not far from here to a critique of masculinity itself. Though the masculine protest as such was a feature of women's life as well as men's, in women's case it was overdetermined by their social subordination. In men's case it could become a public menace. Adler took a highly critical view of hegemonic masculinity and men's domination of women, cued by the feminist and socialist critiques of women's subordination. For instance, in discussing children's uncertainties about their sexual roles, he remarked: "To this is added the arch evil of our culture, the excessive pre-eminence of manliness. All children who have been in doubt as to their

sexual role exaggerate the traits which they consider masculine, above all defiance" (Adler, 1956, p. 55).

As an account of the sources of neurosis, this had moved a long way from Freud's libido theory. Adler rejected Freud's biologism. In an argument that anticipated Sartre, Adler criticized the theory of repression as mechanistic, suggested that drives are constituted in personality in variable ways, and saw the Oedipus complex as only one form that might be taken by a larger dynamic—"a stage of the masculine protest."

Freud vehemently rejected this view as an unwarranted simplification of neurosis, and on this point Freud was certainly right. Adler left the Society, taking part of its membership with him. The break was a serious loss for both sides. Orthodox psychoanalysis from that point on became an increasingly closed system, resistant especially to the issues of social power that Adler had emphasized.

Adler, for his part, lost touch with Freud's marvelous sense of the intricacies and contradictions of mental life. He was still to do very interesting writing about politics and psychology, including a sketch of a psychology of power, important work on education, and an early and perceptive socialist critique of Bolshevism (Adler, 1928, 1956). His book *Understanding Human Nature* (1927/1992) had a statement of a psychoanalytic case for feminism that was clearer than any found elsewhere until the 1970s.

But he never did theoretical work of such quality again. The idea of the masculine protest was gradually domesticated as the abstract idea of "striving for superiority," diluting the sexual politics. Adler himself became, like other Freudian dissidents, the father-figure of a small cult and the author of an increasingly woolly though warm-hearted system that went under the name of "Individual Psychology." During the 1920s Adler pushed left-wingers out of his movement in a search for respectability, as orthodox psychoanalysis did on a grander scale. (The story can be traced in Ellenberger, 1970; Sperber, 1974.) The critical theory of masculinity sketched in his early papers was never developed.

Toward the Archetypes

Adler has been mostly forgotten; not so the next dissident to leave Freud's camp. Carl Jung was even more prominent at the time: The president of the International Psychoanalytic Association and a noted

clinician and experimental psychologist, he was widely regarded as Freud's successor (Wehr, 1987). His alternative psychoanalysis has remained the most influential.

The conceptual issues between Freud and Jung at the time of their break had nothing to do with the theme of masculinity, but Jung had already begun to explore that question in a long article on "The Significance of the Father in the Destiny of the Individual" (1909/1961). Its main line was an orthodox Freudian argument about the importance of the family constellation around the child in shaping later emotional life. Jung offered, in a short case history of an 8-year-old boy, a beautiful study in ambivalence and the layering of motives in masculine development—the themes that Freud was shortly to paint on the larger canvas of the Wolf Man study.

Years after the split with Freud, Jung came back to these themes, but now in a very different mood. He was system building, and the masculine/feminine polarity, as Freud and Adler had found, is seductive to system builders. In *The Relations between the Ego and the Unconscious,* one of the key statements of his new system, Jung plunged in. He distinguished between the self constructed in the exchanges between a person and the social environment, which he called the *persona* (Greek for *mask*), and the self constituted in the unconscious by the process of repression, which he called the *anima.* These tend to be opposites; the opposition is to a large extent a gender opposition. Public masculinity means private femininity.

> No man is so entirely masculine that he has nothing feminine in him. The fact is, rather, that very masculine men have—carefully guarded and hidden—a very soft emotional life, often incorrectly described as "feminine." A man counts it a virtue to repress his feminine traits as much as possible, just as a woman, at least until recently, considered it unbecoming to be "mannish." The repression of feminine traits and inclinations naturally causes these contrasexual demands to accumulate in the unconscious. (Jung, 1928/1953, p. 187)

Disregarding his own careful qualification, Jung swept on to explain why masculine men have a feminine interior: because of this repression, because of the influence of women in adult life, and—another piece of Jung's system building—because of the influence of inherited, archetypal images of women. The archetypes in the collective unconscious, originally introduced in arguments such as these to explain the paradoxes of emotional life, in due course became the main theme of Jungian argument about gender.

Jung applied these ideas in an interesting exploration of the emotional dynamics of patriarchal marriage. He suggested that to the extent a man identifies himself with a strong, authoritative masculine persona, "he becomes inwardly a woman," compensating the outward show with "feminine weakness," and this can result in moral subordination to his wife. This was the most subtle part of Jung's analysis. His attempts to extend the analysis to women—assigned an *animus* while men had an *anima,* in a mirror-image argument—were crude in the extreme.

In this and other writings (e.g., Jung, 1982), Jung picked up the Freudian theme that was troubling many psychoanalysts at the time, the presence of femininity within masculinity, and gave it a popular face. He gave it a label ("anima and animus") and an easily understood explanatory formula (development of masculinity equals repression of femininity and vice versa). He presented this familiar opposition as rooted in timeless truths about the human psyche, through the theory of archetypes.

If Freudian concepts without Freudian methods have been common in recent cultural theory, Jungian concepts without any methods at all have dominated recent speculation about masculinity. Archetypes are fatally easy to find, in the absence of the discipline originally provided by clinical case study. Jung's own later books ranged enthusiastically through esoteric arts and world religions in search of archetypes. Followers have scoured mythological systems in search of gods and goddesses who will do as archetypes of modern psychological traits. I do not know whether to laugh or cry when confronted with texts such as "The Mythic Male" (Bethal, 1985), an erratic hunt through Greco-Roman myths, taken completely out of their contexts, for male gods who personify different "modes of masculine consciousness." The phenomenally successful *Iron John* (Bly, 1990) is a Jungian work exactly in this vein, except that Robert Bly finds his myth and most of his archetypal figures in a folktale retold by the Grimms rather than more conventionally in the pages of Ovid. However, he, too, ignores the cultural origins of his tale and scrambles its interpretation with ideas about "Zeus energy" and even wilder borrowings from oral cultures.

Equally influential was Jung's treatment of the masculine/feminine polarity as a universal structure of the psyche. Here Jung's influence, initially progressive, has been increasingly reactionary. The polarity at first provided a way of calling for a balance in mental and in social life between masculine and feminine influences. Jung, indeed, was the first

person to propose what might be called masculinity therapy, which became popular in the 1970s (Solomon & Levy, 1982). He argued that "a certain type of modern man," accustomed to repress weakness, could no longer afford to. To change, it was necessary to distinguish oneself from both persona and anima. In a very interesting passage Jung suggested techniques for talking to one's anima, as if to a separate personality, and educating it (Jung, 1928/1953, pp. 199-208).

But if this launched the idea of men "getting in touch with their femininity," repopularized 40 years later, it did so at a high price. With both femininity and masculinity seen as archetypal structures of consciousness, no *historical* change in their constitution is possible. All that is possible is a change in the balance between them. In modern Jungian writing this produces an interpretation of feminism, the political movement, not as an attempt to contest the oppression of *women* but as a reassertion of *the feminine*. It assumes that in recent history the feminine has been dominated by the masculine, not that women have been dominated by men.

This is why Jungian theory has become central to the current antifeminist reaction among formerly progressive men. For this formula immediately yields the idea that modern feminism is *tilting the balance too far the other way* and suppressing the masculine. This is exactly what a whole series of Jungian writers have been arguing (Bly, 1990; Corneau, 1991; Kaufman & Timmers, 1985-1986; Tacey, 1990). The idea is enthusiastically received in the North American "men's movement" as an explanation for men's troubles with feminist women. Bly's very influential criticism of "soft men" who have caved in to feminism and lost the deep masculine is based precisely on this Jungian formula of archetypal balance.

Because Jung's original texts are now little studied, the roots of this argument in the early history of psychoanalysis are forgotten. It is worth recalling those roots to see what has been lost. Jung based his analysis on a metapsychological opposition, which Freud was gradually working his way past. Jung's formulations lost most of the subtlety and complexity in Freud's maps of psychosexual development, a loss reflected in the crudity of recent Jungian concepts of masculinity. By locating the basic determination of gender in the racial unconscious, the supposed depository of the archetypes, Jung turned completely away from the path toward social and historical understanding that had been pointed out by Adler.

Clinical Psychoanalysis and Its Taming

In the 1920s an increasingly visible split developed between those to whom psychoanalysis remained a method of individual therapy, and who therefore stayed within a medical or at least clinical framework, and those to whom psychoanalysis was a powerful general psychology able to inform cultural analysis of all types. In this section I will sketch the development of ideas about masculinity in the clinical tradition.

By the end of the 1920s gender issues had become a problem among orthodox psychoanalysts as well as an issue between them and dissidents. A small controversy about the issue of masculinity developed in technical psychoanalytic journals. It would be an exaggeration to speak of a feminist psychoanalysis, but women were more prominent in the second generation of analysts and there were some feminist strains in their thinking. The cultural milieu of Weimar Germany, increasingly the center of gravity for psychoanalysis until Hitler took power, had its differences from that of Hapsburg Vienna.

Debate was launched by Melanie Klein (1928) in an article on the "Early Stages of the Oedipus Conflict." What Klein uncovered was not the pre-oedipal masculinity that had surfaced in the Wolf Man case, but something even more unexpected: a pre-oedipal femininity in boys. She went so far as to talk of the "femininity-phase" as a normal part of development, characterized by both identification with the mother (wish for a child, etc.) and jealous rivalry of her. The theme of femininity within masculinity was taken up by Felix Boehm (1930), who stressed the frequency with which boys and men identify with women and show currents of envy and jealousy toward the mother. Like Klein, he postulated an early feminine phase of development—"the male is first of all a little girl"—heavily overlaid later but never without its effects in the psychology of men.

There is a certain air of surprise about these articles, as if their authors were somewhat disconcerted by what they had found. Freud himself was plainly bothered at this time by the issue of gender; these years saw not only his continuing efforts to unpack the active/passive dichotomy but also his articles on female sexuality and femininity. The issue was soon pushed further.

In an article crisply titled "The Dread of Women" Karen Horney (1932) noted both the pervasiveness of this theme in mythology and psychology

and the insistence with which men deny it. She traced both facts to aspects of boys' sexuality that were missed by Freud's focus on fear of the castrating father. For Horney, fear of the mother is more deep-seated and more energetically repressed. The vagina itself, she argued, is the symbolic center of the process. The boy's typical reaction to feelings of inadequacy is to withdraw libido from the mother and focus it on his own self and genital, reactively strengthening his phallic narcissism—and preparing the ground for castration anxiety. Later reactions among men are fueled by these emotions, among them the tendency to choose socially inferior women as love objects and the practice of actively undermining women's self-respect to support "the ever precarious self-respect of the 'average man.' "

This article by Horney was the high point of the critique of masculinity in classical psychoanalysis. It had obvious flaws. It postulated a biological heterosexuality to prove the little boy's knowledge of the vagina, and gave no reason (any more than Freud had done) why the boy's experience with his mother should be generalized to the whole universe of women. Nevertheless the debate crystallized two key points: the extent to which masculinity is a structure of overcompensation and the fundamental connection of the making of masculinity with the subordination of women. The feminist edge to Horney's argument is obvious.

In the following generation clinical psychoanalysts briskly retreated from these positions. The retreat was not accidental; it was bound up with the whole institutional and political history of psychoanalysis at this time. Psychoanalysis in the German-speaking countries was virtually wiped out by the Nazis in the 1930s, who considered it "Jewish science." Many practitioners emigrated to the United States. There, for a variety of reasons—including their precarious position as immigrants, the local analysts' base in a conservative medical profession being increasingly integrated with the corporate world (Starr, 1982), and the impact of McCarthyism—the movement shed its sexual and cultural radicalism. As Marcuse (1955) noted, psychoanalysis moved far to the right in the generation between 1930 and 1960. It became for the most part a technique of normalization, concerned with adjusting the unhappy individual to the demands of social reality, rather than with questioning the terms on which that reality was constructed.

To say that psychoanalysis is a technique of normalization is no metaphor: The practice has a social effect. One can see this in cases in which psychoanalysts have reported the whole course of a treatment. I will give a French example, the analysis of a psychotic 14-year-old boy by Françoise Dolto (1974). Like the best of Freud's case studies, and those of Laing

(discussed below), this gives a vivid account of the strained emotional interior of a whole family. The psychoanalyst intervenes by explaining the law of the father to the boy and pushing him toward the oedipal crisis, which he has never had. The analytic cure thus involves the reinstatement of what orthodox psychoanalysis defines as the normal type of masculinity.

This social practice gave more than symbolic meaning to the way psychoanalysts' shift to the right affected their thinking about gender issues and about masculinity specifically. The developmental path to adult heterosexuality, which Freud had seen as a complex and in many ways fragile construction, was increasingly seen as the unproblematic *natural* path of development. All others were deviant and signs of pathology. Marriage itself could be seen as a sign of mental health, and phallic aggressiveness a desired outcome of therapy for men. Psychoanalysis thus came to medicalize every type of gender dissent from the hegemonic pattern in middle-class white American culture. Most conspicuously, it medicalized homosexuality, which was declared inherently pathological by conventional analysts in the 1950s and 1960s, clearly the product of "disturbed parent-child relationships" (Bieber et al., 1962). The result was a long series of efforts to "cure" men of their homosexuality, in which psychoanalysts found themselves aligned with the purveyors of electric shock treatment and other professionals who abused gay people.

The immensely detailed critical history of psychoanalytic ideas about male homosexuality by Kenneth Lewes (1988) shows that this naturalizing of one "healthy" path of development and pathologizing of all others required a basic shift in the conception of the Oedipus complex. To Freud and the early analysts the Oedipus complex was *necessarily* traumatic, with no exceptions, and its passing was necessarily disruptive. That was basic to their sense of the fragility of adult masculinity. As Lewes observes, classical theory saw the Oedipus complex as having a range of outcomes, *all* of them neurotic in some sense. Human sexuality involves a traumatic encounter with culture, hence the sense of tragedy in Freud's cultural criticism. The nontragic, normalizing medical psychoanalysis of the 1940s and afterward lost the capacity for a critique of masculinity that classical theory had provided.

As Marcuse noted, this loss of critical edge was widespread in psychoanalysis at the time. A prime example of what he called Freudian "revisionism" was the work of Erik Erikson, perhaps the most influential psychoanalytic writer of the midcentury. Erikson (1950) departed from Freud's libido theory not on logical but on historical grounds. At the end

of the 19th century the management of sexual impulses might have been a formative issue in development; but in the circumstances of mid-20th-century life, the crucial issues had to do with establishment of ego-identity. Erikson's work had immense influence on child and adolescent psychology and on popular psychology at the time. The concept of "identity" became a catchword, and his model of stages in human development became the basis of educational as well as therapeutic programs. In due course the concept of identity as the focus of emotional development also provided the basis for a new model of gender.

This was developed by Robert Stoller (1968), whose work centered on a remarkable development in gender practice, the invention of the "transsexual." The creation of this social category has been traced by Dave King (1981), who shows the interplay of a medical technology of "sex reassignment," journalistic fascination with "sex changes," and psychiatric categories for gender marginality. The invention of the surgical techniques created a need for psychological assessment of who should be allowed to go under the surgeon's knife, and this led to a research concern with gender identity. Stoller's study of transsexuals and of little boys who seemed to be on a path toward femininity led him not toward the classical psychoanalytic view of gender as a contradictory structure, but to the conviction that there was a noncontradictory, unitary *core gender identity* laid down in the first years of life. This was established by the pattern of emotional interaction between parents and children, and it was powerful enough to override the physical facts about the body if they were discordant. Transsexualism for men was thus psychologically defined not as the *desire to be a woman,* but as the *belief that one already was.*

Though built on the lurid gender contradictions of transsexuals' lives, this too was a normalizing theory. It located identification with women not in the unconscious of all men, but in a specific aberrant group. Boys affected by bad mothering—"the malicious male-hater" is one of Stoller's categories for describing the women in their lives—may be "rescued" by intervention to normalize family relationships. Given such views among the psychiatrists, one can imagine what gender ideology is like among the surgeons. It is not surprising to learn from nonmedical researchers such as Anne Bolin (1988) that males wanting sex reassignment surgery take great care to conform to the *doctors'* beliefs about appropriately feminine dress and behavior. Not much contradiction will be left hanging out.

The concept of core gender identity has had wide influence since it was propounded by Stoller, as a theory of normal gender development as well as a theory of aberration. It has influenced recent psychoanalytic writing about child development (Tyson, 1986) and about homosexuality (Friedman, 1988) and recent anthropological discussions of masculinity (Stoller & Herdt, 1982).

This has come a long way from Freud. Robert May (1986), indeed, seriously questions whether this is a psychoanalytic view at all. May argues that Erikson's concept of identity is really a meliorist ego psychology and goes on to show that the concept of gender identity in the work of Stoller and others has lost essential insights about conflict, fantasy, and the unconscious.

Clinical psychoanalysis in the United States, both with and without libido theory, thus evolved a normalizing psychology of gender whose main effect in practice was to reinforce social convention and whose main effect in theory was to define departures from hegemonic masculinity as actual or potential pathologies. Because this definition of healthy masculinity is given from outside the science, that is, by the dominant gender order, no theoretical consensus is required—and none exists. When the American journal *Pyschoanalytic Review* put together a special issue "Toward a New Psychology of Men" (Friedman & Lerner, 1986), it was noticeable that there was no new psychology in it. Rather, several established perspectives—gender identity, Jungian, classical Freudian, and object-relations—sat beside each other without interacting. That seems to be the state of ideas about gender in the clinical psychoanalytic tradition as a whole. I think this incoherence has a lot to do with the historic failure to develop the openings that Adler and Horney offered toward social analysis. Let me turn, then, to the wilder shores of nonclinical, unofficial psychoanalysis where the social has been a central theme.

Radical Psychoanalysis

Adler's attempt to merge Freudian theory and social radicalism perhaps came too soon, but war and depression spurred new attempts. The most spectacular was made by Wilhelm Reich, the only person, as far as I know, to have been thrown out of both the international communist movement and the international psychoanalytic movement. In the 1920s and early 1930s he was at the cutting edge of psychoanalysis and one of the leaders, alongside radical Adlerians, of a move to turn it into a form of social action. His attempt to develop a program of sex education and therapy in working-class Vienna and Berlin (Reich, 1972) is one of the most fascinating episodes in the history of psychoanalytic practice.

In the brilliant essay on "Ideology as a Material Force" that opened *The Mass Psychology of Fascism,* Reich (1933/1970) took up Freud's question of the social function of sexual repression and connected it with the creation of a social order that was not only an exploitative class society but also an "authoritarian patriarchy." Patriarchal marriage and family provided its organizational frame. Psychoanalysis revealed that "the interlacing of the socio-economic structure with the sexual structure of society and the structural reproduction of society take place in the first four or five years and in the authoritarian family" (Reich, 1933/1970, p. 30). The family is, in effect, the factory of the authoritarian state.

From this promising beginning Reich developed an analysis of fascist movements as the culmination of repressive tendencies in capitalist society. He offered a remarkable analysis of fascism's appeal to women through a reactionary ideology of the family, which deserves to be better known. But this and other lines of thought drew him away from the little Hitlers ruling inside the "authoritarian family." The nearly simultaneous rejection by his comrades both in psychoanalysis and in revolutionary politics undermined the synthesis between them that he had sought. As Reich's mind became more and more filled with thoughts of blue-tinged cosmic orgone energy (Rycroft, 1971), gender became less and less of a puzzle to him. His later writings have nothing of interest for the analysis of masculinity.

The theme of the authoritarian family was, however, picked up by the Institute for Social Research, the famous "Frankfurt school." In exile in Paris after the Nazi takeover of Germany and trying desperately to explain what had happened there, theorists of this group drew psychoanalytic and Marxist ideas together in the volume *Studies on Authority and Family* (Horkheimer, 1936). This was the point of departure for Erich Fromm's famous book *The Fear of Freedom* (1942), which set out a historical typology of personality structures centering on the "mechanisms of escape" from the anxieties set up by the great historical changes producing individuality and alienation. Fromm offered, in effect, a historical typology of masculinities. One of the escape mechanisms, "authoritarianism," combined masochistic and sadistic traits; Fromm saw this as being characteristically produced in the German lower middle class and a reason for their support for Nazism. The other mechanisms, "destructiveness" and "automaton conformity," were nowhere near as vividly described; but the latter had a continuing career in American social criticism, as Riesman's (1950) "other-directed character," Mills' (1951) "cheerful robot," and Marcuse's externalized superego (1964).

Even more influential was the research undertaken after the Institute's second flight, to New York, published in *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950). The underlying idea was that fascist movements managed to tap hidden psychological predispositions with roots in the emotional dynamics of childhood. The key pattern identified was a combination of conformity to authority from above and aggression toward those below. These traits were traced back to harsh and loveless parenting, dominance of the family by the father, sexual and emotional repression, and highly conventional morality. The threads were teased out in great detail through clinical case studies as well as projective testing and attitude surveys. The book was notionally about generalized types of personality and attitude, but it was in practice a discussion of men. Indeed, *The Authoritarian Personality* marked an important moment in research on masculinity, comparable to the Wolf Man case study 30 years before. It provided the first detailed clinical picture of a type of masculinity linked to the social and political setting in which it was constructed.

If the hypotheses so patiently investigated by the Frankfurt school were right, this was a masculinity particularly involved in the maintenance of patriarchal ideology—marked by hatred for homosexuals and insistence on the subordination of women. But it was not the only show in town. *The Authoritarian Personality* analyzed this character type in contrast to a "democratic character" that could resist the appeals of fascism. Inadvertently, therefore, the research documented different *types of masculinity,* distinguished along lines other than the normal-versus-pathological categories of clinical psychoanalysis. In this light, the arguments of mainstream psychoanalysis could be seen as accounts of the tensions in one specific pattern of masculinity, rather than in masculinity in general.

This was a theoretical step of considerable importance. But it was not followed up. The Frankfurt school dispersed, and its most famous inheritor in the next generation, Juergen Habermas, had no interest in gender. Discussion of *The Authoritarian Personality* sputtered out in technical debates over personality measurement and Cold War attacks on its politics (Christie & Jahoda, 1954).

Neither Reich nor the Frankfurt school questioned the classic conception of libido. But this was directly challenged in the "existential psychoanalysis" proposed in France by Jean-Paul Sartre. In *Being and Nothingness* (1943/1969) Sartre rejected the idea of libido as a necessary basis of personality, suggesting rather that libidinal determination was a mode of being that the person *could* take up. Sartre saw "empirical psychoanalysis,"

as he called the Freudian tradition, as too mechanical, insisting that what was specifically human was the process of constituting oneself by choice and commitment. He replaced the concept of the unconscious with an argument about the different ways self-knowledge is organized. The "mystery in broad daylight" could be understood by a method that Sartre called existential psychoanalysis. The core of this was tracking down the life history to establish the constitutive commitments that had ramifying effects through the rest of the life. Sartre's emphasis on method was remarkable, given that most reworkings of psychoanalysis marginalized the issue.

It was Simone de Beauvoir who applied existential psychoanalysis explicitly to questions of gender in *The Second Sex* (1949/1972). Hardly a treatise on masculinity, the book was nevertheless instructive for masculinity research. It showed how the method could be used to delineate a range of ways of life *within* the broad gender categories. De Beauvoir's brilliant essays on various types of femininity transcend the typologies of more orthodox psychology, which persistently have a static, accomplished character—as if setting up the typology had closed off the historical process that produced it. Existential psychoanalysis in her hands showed gender as a developing engagement with situations and structures, including the consequences of previous choices.

What this could mean for studies of men is shown in the early work of the Scottish psychiatrist R. D. Laing. In his famous study of schizophrenia, *The Divided Self*, Laing discussed the striking case of "David," a student whose studied eccentricity—swishing around with an opera cloak and cane, for instance—seemed to be going a bit too far. Probing, Laing found a whole life that had been composed of playing parts—the good child, for his mother; the precocious schoolboy, for his teachers; after his mother's death, the little housewife, for his father. A gender subtext came out. The dramatic roles David rehearsed in front of his mirror were always women's roles, the clothes he dressed up in were his mother's, and he found himself unable to stop playing the part of a woman. His struggle against this commitment was what led to his fantastic get-up and extravagant manner: "This 'schizophrenic' role was the only refuge he knew from being entirely engulfed by the woman who was inside him, and always seemed to be coming out of him" (Laing, 1965, p. 73). The struggle to escape from his female personae had led him to set up a whole series of other personae that now formed, in Laing's terminology, an elaborate false-self system.

In this and other texts (Laing, 1969; Laing & Esterson, 1970) Laing gave wonderful accounts of the internal politics of the family. However,

he never developed the clues his own work offered to the analysis of gender. He came to believe conventional therapy did more harm than good and soon became the central figure in the British antipsychiatry movement, which criticized the very category of schizophrenia and tried to create communal modes of personal healing. Nor did Sartre turn to gender relations in his later theorizing (Sartre, 1976), which offered powerful abstract models for connecting personal practice with large-scale social dynamics, but worked out the details only for the dynamics of class.

Apart from these cases and Sartre's own vast study of the novelist Flaubert, *The Family Idiot* (1981-1989), the methods of existential psychoanalysis have remained for the most part unused. I think this is profoundly unfortunate, because they offer the best chance in the psychoanalytic tradition to overcome mechanical and categorical ideas of gender. In Laing's studies the contradictions of gender are not mechanical. They are produced socially, but they become contradictions precisely by being taken up as incompatible courses of action, with the person being committed to two (or more) at once. It was this dynamic that had the power to tear apart David's control of his emotions; his defense, the false-self system, has parallels in other masculinities recently studied (Connell, 1991).

Much better known in current research on gender is the work of Jacques Lacan, a contemporary of Sartre, whose structuralist psychoanalysis has had a powerful influence on cultural studies and on feminist theories of gender in France and Britain (Roudinesco, 1990; Turkle, 1978). It has not led explicitly to a theory of masculinity, but certainly has an implicit one.

Where object-relations and identity theories played down the Oedipus complex, Lacanian theory not only reasserts it but takes it as the model of cultural processes in general. Oedipal repression becomes the constitutive moment of language or of the social. The phallus becomes the point of reference of every semiotic system. Masculinity is, in effect, written outward from the oedipal knot into the realm of communication and social order as a whole. Femininity, by contrast, may become the principle of disorder in the sense of being the negation of this phallocentric ordering of meaning, as it seems to do in Luce Irigaray's (1985) writing and in literary theory influenced by her. Men's homosexuality, too, can be read as the refusal of the oedipal path of sexual development, as in the influential work of Guy Hocquenghem (1978).

The articles by Klein, Boehm, and Horney discussed earlier not only marked the peak of interest in masculinity in classical psychoanalysis but also were part of a shift of interest among psychoanalysts toward the

earliest years of childhood. Klein herself, by the 1940s, was a recognized leader of this movement. It was pursued in the following decades by the object-relations school of psychoanalysis, which laid emphasis on the direct social relations of child rearing. John Bowlby's (1951) famous "maternal deprivation" thesis was an early product of this work, with the ideological effect of pressuring mothers to stay in the home with their infants—a prime example of the way psychoanalysis served to police the gender order.

It is ironic, then, that object-relations theory should become the main basis for the openly feminist psychoanalysis that developed in the United States in the 1970s and 1980s—and specifically for its account of masculinity. Here a major change in theorizing about masculine development came to fruition. In classical theory the drama had centered on the *oedipal entry into masculinity,* whether the key agent was the father (Freud) or the mother (Horney). This emphasis was carried on by Lacan, for whom the symbolic father was central. In the arguments of Nancy Chodorow (1978) and Dorothy Dinnerstein (1976), the drama centers on *pre-oedipal separation from femininity,* with the focus unquestionably on the mother.

Chodorow's book was called *The Reproduction of Mothering,* but it contained an account of masculinity that has had a large impact on recent thinking (McMahon, 1993). The division of labor in child care meant that boys, like girls, had a woman as primary love object and object of identification. The construction of masculinity proceeded through the disruption of this identification, resulting in a character structure emphasizing boundaries between people and lacking that need to complete oneself in relations between people that led women toward mothering. Chodorow's argument developed an ideal-type of masculine and feminine development. Dinnerstein's argument, based on clinical work, gave greater emphasis (like Horney) to *fear* of the mother in the pre-oedipal period. Dinnerstein saw the reaction against femininity as a powerful underlying motive in men's hatred of women and men's violence in the public world from which women were excluded.

These claims have been much debated. There is, I think, force in Ian Craib's (1987) argument from within object-relations theory that approaches like Chodorow's tell us little about the internal organization of masculine personality. This parallels the criticism of gender identity theory made previously and recalls my earlier point about the fading of Freud's concept of the superego. But there is no doubt about the political significance of this work. Here the radical cultural potential of psychoanalysis has come to the surface again.

Conclusion

Psychoanalysis offers to modern thought on masculinity a uniquely rich method of investigation, some illuminating general principles, and an immense variety of specific hypotheses and insights. These do not come without cost and risk.

The method, based on the clinical case study and Freud's "talking cure," yields massive quantities of evidence for investigations of gender. Pop psychologies of masculinity are based on a parody of this method, the anecdote purporting to summarize a "case." I should therefore emphasize that the genuine case study—whether classical, Jungian, or existential, whether short or long—is a *discipline* of inquiry. The investigation produces evidence that has to be interrogated; interpretations are subject to challenge by fresh evidence. It is difficult and time-consuming work. Psychoanalytic interpretations reflect the complexity of the people being studied; they do not seek to reduce personalities to simple formulas.

Long before social constructionism became influential in discussions of gender, psychoanalysis had offered a picture of adult character as constructed through a long, necessarily conflict-ridden, process. This process produces a layered and contradictory structure. If social researchers on masculinity learn any one thing from the Freudian tradition, it should be this. Freud's concept of the unconscious, though immensely influential, is only one way in which this layering and contradiction can be represented. Sartre and Laing have provided another, in their analyses of contradictory commitments and practices.

Recognizing a conflictual process of construction, psychoanalysis further recognizes that the process can follow different paths. Indeed, this was fundamental to Freud's understanding of the neuroses as constructed from the same materials as "normal" mental life, put together in a different way. Psychoanalytic research has provided rich documentation of the diverse paths the construction of masculinity can take, both within the one society (as in the psychoanalytic work of the Frankfurt school) and between societies (as in the cross-cultural study of alternative nuclear complexes by Anne Parsons [1964]). The idea of multiple masculinities that is familiar in recent social research finds a precise meaning, and some of its strongest evidence, in psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysis is often read as a theory of the individual, and Freud certainly dreamed of foundations in biology; but in truth it is a social science. Psychoanalytic case studies are all about the relationships that constitute the person, the prohibitions and possibilities that emerge in that

most extraordinary and complex of social processes, the raising of one generation of humans by another. Psychoanalysis does not provide an alternative or a supplement to social theories of masculinity; it is engaged in social analysis from the start. Psychoanalysis forces one to recognize that the social is present in the person—it does not end at the skin—and that power invests desire in its very foundations.

Yet the understanding of the social in most psychoanalytic work is severely limited (and in some instances, such as the Jungian tradition, practically absent). Questions of social structure and large-scale dynamics are often very remote. Those psychoanalytic formulations that are clearest about questions of social dynamics, or even make use of social-structural concepts—such as Adler's and Horney's work in the early decades, the Frankfurt school, and more recently Laing's work on the family and feminist object-relations theory—are the most fruitful sources for the analysis of masculinity.

Given these principles, psychoanalysis provides a tremendous range of hypotheses, suggestions, insights, and guesses about the making of gender and the working of gender relations. Freud's idea about the importance of castration anxiety, Adler's argument about overcompensation, Jung's suggestions about the gender dynamics of marriages, Horney's and Dinnerstein's arguments about the importance of boys' fears of the mother, the Frankfurt school's ideas about the impact of family power structure and societal alienation, Chodorow's ideas about emotional separation, Lacanian arguments about the oedipal ordering of symbolization, are all useful lines of thought. To treat one of them as the a priori framework for a theory of masculinity would be to misuse psychoanalysis (in a way unfortunately typical of its applications in the social sciences). But deployed in the detail of cases (which need not be only individual life histories, for as Dollard's [1937] classic study of race relations showed, psychoanalysis can also be deployed in the study of collectivities and institutions), these ideas will greatly enrich understanding of the social dynamics towards which we grope with terms such as masculinity.

Freud did not succeed in founding a science, in his own sense of a positivist science of the mind. He founded something more ambiguous, and more interesting: an enterprise of scrutiny and theory that has the capacity to be both an ideology and technology of social control and a means of cultural critique and personal discovery. Both sides of psychoanalysis show in its tangled encounters with issues of masculinity. I think Freud's invention is an essential aid in understanding men's gender and

gender politics, but is never enough on its own. It is an instrument that needs to be used with precision, on the right kind of material, in full awareness of the social mysteries that create the mysteries of desire.

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