JOHN BOWLBY:
An Ethological Basis for Psychoanalysis

VICTORIA HAMILTON

BEYOND FREUD

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The work of an original thinker often calls to mind a key idea: Darwin's "survival of the fittest," Einstein's "relativity," or Freud and "sexuality." We associate John Bowlby with his lifelong study of the crucial role played by attachment and its corollorary, loss, in human development. He has assembled his major work in three volumes entitled *Attachment* (1969), *Separation* (1973), and *Loss* (1980). Bowlby's 'Attachment Theory,' together with the view of separation and mourning that it incorporates, is as novel to the study of human relationships as Darwin's theory was to the study of evolution. Yet Bowlby's (1979a) work is based upon and reflects the most obvious features of everyday life.

> Family doctors, priests, and perceptive laymen have long been aware that there are few blows to the human spirit so great as the loss of someone near and dear. Traditional wisdom knows that we can be crushed by grief and die of a broken heart, and also that a jilted lover is apt to do things that are foolish or dangerous to himself and others. It knows too that neither love nor grief is felt for just any other human being, but only for one, or a few, particular and individual human beings. The core of what I term an "affectional bond" is the attraction that one individual has for another individual. (p. 67)

Few would disagree with this statement. And yet, as with many new and simple ideas, we encounter considerable resistance to its implications. Bowlby is a

psychoanalyst and psychiatrist who was trained in the Freudian tradition of psychoanalysis. Since 1946, when he assumed responsibility for the Children's Department at the Tavistock Clinic,

London (swiftly renaming it the Department for Children and Parents), Bowlby has focused his research and therapeutic skills on the study and treatment of young children and their families. This experience has provided him with the basis for both his theory of normal infant and child development and a new view of pathology and its treatment. Although his work is enriched by fields such as ethology, cognitive psychology and systems theory, Bowlby's preoccupation with the joys and sorrows, the hope and despair, incurred in the making, sustaining and breaking of affectional bonds, places his contribution squarely within the arena of psychoanalysis. More than any other branch of medicine and psychology, psychoanalysis claims to investigate the emotional life of man. Nevertheless, despite over thirty years of research and teaching, Bowlby's conception of attachment has not yet been integrated into the discipline and still remains foreign to the thinking of most psychoanalysts.

In this chapter, I shall attempt to supply reasons for the resistance of psychoanalysts to Bowlby's thesis. Indeed, by reference to some of his most basic assumptions about human psychology, Bowlby himself offers various solutions. Throughout his work, he stresses the over-riding importance of the parameter "familiar/strange" in the development of human beings from the cradle to the

grave. From infancy on, we tend to orientate towards the familiar and away from the strange, a trait that has survival value for human beings and other species. We change our beliefs with reluctance and would rather stick with the familiar model. Ironically, psychoanalysts do not recognize that this "cognitive bias" (Bowlby, 1980) is functional and tend to regard the preference for the familiar as regressive.

The painful nature of the material that Bowlby presses upon us also elicits resistance. The reading of *Separation* and *Loss* is a test of endurance since both volumes spell out the grief to which an analyst must bear witness if he is to meet the pathologies of despair and detachment. To support his view of attachment and the repercussions of a disruption of affectional bonds, Bowlby draws on personal accounts of bereavement, on observations of children who have lost their parents either temporarily or permanently, and on works of literature. It is Bowlby's (1980) belief and experience that "He oft finds med'cine who his grief imparts" (p. 172) and that, in psychotherapy, "the deep vase of chilling tears that grief hath shaken into frost" (p. 320) must break. The therapist, like the poet, must have a capacity to endure and express the suffering that antecedes its cure.

The crux of Bowlby's thesis is that the pains and joys of attachment cannot be reduced to something more primary such as the sexual or death instincts. Just as a child's love for his mother does not result from the gratification of his oral desires, so the heart-rending expressions of grief quoted by Bowlby do not denote

destructive or guilty wishes that have been repressed. They may simply describe the painful process of healthy mourning.

> It is impossible to think that I shall never sit with you again and hear you laugh. That everyday for the rest of my life you will be away. No one to talk to about my pleasure. No one to call me for walks, to go "to the terrace." I write in an empty book. I cry in an empty room. And there can never be any comfort again. (Carrington, in Bowlby, 1980, p. 229).

Although many analysts fail to comprehend the relevance of Bowlby to the consulting room, his ideas are rooted in the Freudian context. Although he departs radically from parts of the Freudian tradition, he develops many ideas that Freud held to be important (particularly in his later life). Throughout his work, Bowlby acknowledges this debt and quotes passages from Freud's later work to support the theory of attachment. In 1938, Freud describes the relationship of the child to his mother as "unique, without parallel, laid down unalterably for a whole lifetime, as the first and strongest love-object and as the prototype of all later love relations-for both sexes" (p. 188). In the 1940s and early 1950s, when Bowlby first published his observations on disturbances in children and young people who had been separated from their parents, Freud's theories provided a stepping-stone away from the then popular stress on constitutional and inherited factors and gave him a framework with which to emphasize the importance of mother-child relations. Moreover, the effects of World War II upon both bereaved adults and young children in care spelt out, to all, the stark realities of separation and loss. Dorothy Burlingham and Anna Freud (1942) had reported on the suffering of

the children in their care at the Hampstead Nurseries, London, and James Robertson, a psychiatric social worker familiar with their work, had begun a series of studies of children separated from their parents who were living in residential nurseries and hospitals. The plight of these children was unmistakable and terrible. The World Health Organization was interested in the many thousands of post-war refugees and approached Bowlby to write a report on the mental health of homeless children. This report, entitled *Maternal Care and Mental Health*, was published in 1951. It was later popularized and reissued under the title, *Child Care and the Growth of Love*.

Child Care and the Growth of Love is a refreshing and readable book, full of observations, anecdotes and practical advice. Since all the heavy, statistical material is omitted in the popular version, the hypotheses advanced seem almost naive when viewed from the context of the sophisticated and well-documented model of attachment we have before us today. In this early work, Bowlby's basic insight into the origins of pathology stands out loud and clear: maternal care in infancy and early childhood is essential for mental health. The importance of this discovery, Bowlby (1953) felt,

> may be compared to that of the role of vitamins in physical health (p. 69) ...The outstanding disability of persons suffering from mental illness, it is now realized, is their inability to make and sustain confident, friendly, and cooperative relations with others. The power to do this is as basic to man's nature as are the abilities to digest or to see, and, just as we regard indigestion or failing vision as signs of ill-health, so have we now come to regard the inability to make reasonably cooperative human relations (p.

109).

In the intervening 40 years, psychoanalysts of varying orientations—Freudian, Anna Freudian, Jungian, and Kleinian—have responded to many of Bowlby's ideas in a piecemeal fashion. All would acknowledge the importance of his work and, with few exceptions, would claim that the nature of the mother-child relationship together with the vicissitudes of separation and loss, have significant implications for therapeutic intervention. Nevertheless, the proportion of practicing psychoanalysts who have been able to grasp the larger picture of human relationships and development outlined by the theory of attachment remains small.

In addition to the painful nature and unfamiliarity of Bowlby's point of view, the alienation felt by many psychoanalysts may proceed from an ambivalent and even negative attitude towards research in the behavioral sciences. Bowlby's theory depends more upon direct observation of attachment and separation behavior than upon inferences drawn from the analysis of adults. Freud himself waged a comparable battle with the behavioral sciences of his day in his search for knowledge of man's mental life. But now that psychoanalysis has been established for almost 100 years, this posture amounts to little more than prejudice and exacerbates the isolation of psychoanalysis from related branches of human psychology and biology. Psychoanalysts often argue that research, based upon the observation of "external reality," is irrelevant to analytic work, the domain of

which is the exploration of “inner” or “psychic reality.” Some psychoanalysts even argue that the study of normal infant and cognitive development would impede their “intuition” into the unconscious phantasy life of the patient.

In my view, neglect of research findings has led to a fixation in the psychoanalytic theory of development. The Victorian picture of children, implicit in Freud’s theory, has changed very little in the century since psychoanalysis began. A dominant feature of this picture is of a withdrawn, asocial, narcissistic and egotistical creature. Young children must be socialized into affectionate relationships with others and induced to learn about the outside world through the frustration of their wishes and the civilization of their instincts. As Freud (1905) said, “All through the period of latency children learn to feel for other people who help them in their helplessness and satisfy their needs, a love which is on the model of, and a continuation of, their relation as sucklings to their nursing mother” (pp. 222-223). Through her care and affection, the mother “teaches” her child to love. One of the leading child psychoanalysts of today, Margaret Mahler (Mahler, Pine, & Bergman, 1975), describes the newborn as little more than a vegetable. Only “by way of mothering ... the young infant is gradually brought out of an inborn tendency toward vegetative, splanchnic regression and into increased sensory awareness of, and contact with, the environment” (p. 42).

This statement, based upon direct observation, is totally inconsistent with the body of infant research that has been assembled by the disciplines of ethology,

developmental psychology, anthropology and pediatrics. The contrasting picture of the infant, to which Bowlby has made a large contribution, is of an alert and curious creature who becomes intensely attached and most sensitively attuned to his or her mother. The full impact of human attachment seems almost as unpalatable to psychoanalysis today as was Freud's discovery of childhood sexuality. Bowlby's insight into the conflict between the methods of traditional psychoanalysis and conventional scientific research is that, like workers in many other disciplines, the psychoanalyst must be capable of assuming two roles that require two very different mental outlooks. Whereas the scientific attitude discourages personal involvement and advises emotional detachment as a requisite for rigor and objectivity, the art of psychotherapy requires a capacity for immersion and imagination.

In order to delineate some of the major theoretical implications of Bowlby's research for the discipline of psychoanalysis, I will focus on four aspects of his theory of attachment. These are (1) instinct theory, control theory, and evolution; (2) the nature and function of attachment behavior from infancy to old age; (3) normal and pathological processes of mourning in response to separation and loss; and (4) psychoanalysis as art and science.

INSTINCT THEORY, CONTROL THEORY AND EVOLUTION

All studies of human behavior, except those based upon the most extreme

theories of learning and conditioning, posit certain basic behavioral patterns, which have traditionally been termed instincts. Although there is disagreement about the nature of these basic patterns, all agree that the term "instinctive" denotes those behaviors that are common to the members of a species and that are more or less resistant to environmental influences. Bowlby's model of attachment is built upon a theory of instinct that is widely accepted by biologists and physiologists but differs radically from that of traditional psychoanalysis. There is disagreement not only over the kind of instincts deemed common to man —for example, instincts for sex or self-preservation— but also over the meaning of the term "instinct" itself.

The psychoanalytic concept of instinct derives from Strachey's translation of Freud's *trieb.* Some psychoanalysts now consider that the translation of *trieb* as "drive" is a more precise rendering of Freud's thinking. Omston (1982) has pointed out that Strachey "clustered and clumped" Freud's wording into single Latin and Greek terms, thereby losing the subtleties of Freud's distinctions. Freud himself used the term *instinkt* quite selectively. *Instinkt* was more of a technical term and referred to a precisely determined activity. *Trieb*, on the other hand, was used to refer to a "surging and rather undifferentiated need" (Omston, 1982, p. 416). Thus, problems of translation have compounded the confusions arising out of the psychoanalytic view of the instincts and of the behaviors and emotions to which they supposedly give rise.

Like Freud, Bowlby defines the concept of instinct precisely. The contemporary concept, proposed by biologists and ethologists, offers an alternative account of human motivation that has not yet been incorporated into psychoanalytic theory. Even critics of the traditional view seem unaware that a coherent alternative exists. In accordance with the scientific framework of his day, Freud used the term to denote an inner motivating force or drive that operates as a causal agent. An instinct is activated from within by an accumulation of stimuli and is terminated when the energy aroused flows away. For example, the oral instinct is aroused by hunger and, when a mother nurses her baby, she reduces the amount of pent-up libido (energy) to a tolerable level.

Bowlby substitutes the phrase "instinctive behavior" for the more common noun "instinct." The adjective "instinctive" is intended to be descriptive and leaves open the question of motivation. Human behavior varies in a systematic way, and yet, as Bowlby (1969) notes, there are so many regularities of behavior and certain of these regularities are so striking and play so important a part in the survival of individual and species that they have earned the named 'instinctive' " (p. 38). Bowlby (1969) describes four main characteristics of behavior that traditionally have been termed instinctive:

a. It follows a recognizably similar and predictable pattern in almost all members of a species (or all members of one sex);

b. It is not a simple response to a single stimulus but a sequence of behavior that usually runs a predictable course;

c. Certain of its usual consequences are of obvious value in contributing to the preservation of an individual or the continuity of a species;

d. Many examples of it develop even when all the ordinary opportunities for learning it are exiguous or absent (p. 38).

This account shows that the ethological view of instinctual responses is based upon a very different dynamic to the Freudian view. First, the term "instinctive" always refers to an observable pattern of behavior, which is activated by specific conditions and terminated by other specific consummatory stimuli. For instance, attachment behavior in a child is readily elicited under certain environmental conditions such as cold, bright light, sudden darkness, loud noise, the appearance of strange or unexpected objects and under certain internal conditions such as fatigue, hunger, ill health, and pain. Nearly all the behaviors elicited by these conditions are terminated by contact with and responsiveness from the mother. Second, instinctive patterns are usually linked together and do not occur in isolation. This means that a particular behavioral pattern is not linked causally to one motivating system, but results from the coordination—or the lack—of a number of instinctual responses. Integration is often achieved through the avoidance of various hazards, such as cold weather, sharp objects, loud and sudden noises, and so forth. Here, the care and protection afforded by mother plays a unique integrating function.

Third, many attachment behaviors are reciprocal and only function effectively within a social system. For instance, an infant's proximity-seeking

behaviors are matched by the mother's retrieving behaviors. The latter resemble the child's attachment behaviors in their biological function-namely, protection from danger and survival. Indeed, in Bowlby's estimation, the feedback system involved in watching and visual orientation is more important than the oral instinctual behaviors emphasized by psychoanalysis. Many attachment behaviors only make sense within a social context and have been suitably termed *social releasers* and *social suppressors*. Babbling, for instance, is most readily released and increased by human faces and voices, particularly by the sight and sound of the mother. In general, friendly responses such as smiling and babbling are easily elicited and reinforced by human stimuli. The situation is usually reversed with respect to crying. Here, social stimuli are the main terminators or suppressors. For instance, picking up and holding the infant is the most rapid terminator of crying from nakedness. Rocking and rapid walking is the most effective suppressor of crying from loneliness, although not of crying from pain, cold or hunger.

A more thorough exposition of the new concept of instinctive behavior requires a review of changes that have occurred since Freud's day in two other disciplines: one, the new field of cybernetics (also referred to as systems theory, information theory or control theory), and the theory of evolution. Most psychoanalysts have not followed these developments and thereby compound their misconception of Bowlby's work.

Since most analysts are unfamiliar with control theory, they are unable to

grasp that Bowlby offers an alternative theory of motivation. According to cybernetic theory, behavior is organized homeostatically into systems that are activated by certain signals and terminated by others. This model's characterization of causation calls into question methods used by psychoanalysts in determining the source of a patient's pathology. The analyst attempts to reconstruct past events that overdetermine current behavior in the life of his patient. Cybernetic explanation, on the other hand, is always negative. In cybernetic explanation, we do not look for the cause of an event. Instead, we first consider alternative possibilities and then ask what knocked these other alternatives out of the running. The negative nature of cybernetic explanation is conceptualized by the term restraints. When we look at a particular behavior pattern, we ask, What were the restraints that excluded alternatives from the system? An excellent example of this distinction between restraints that are negative and clues that are positive has been given by the anthropologist Gregory Bateson (1967):

> For example, the selection of a piece for a given position in a jigsaw puzzle is "restrained" by many factors. Its shape must conform to that of its several neighbors and possibly that of the boundary of the puzzle; its colour must conform to the color pattern of its region; the orientation of its edges must obey the topological regularities set by the cutting machine in which the puzzle was made; and so on. From the point of view of the man who is trying to solve the puzzle, these are all clues, i.e., sources of information which will guide him in his selection. From the point of view of the cybernetic observer, they are restraints (p. 400).

Zoologists and ethologists working in the field have used this restraint

model of explanation for a long time. The ethologist Niko Tinbergen (1972) has described the life of animals observed in their natural habitat as “a multi-dimensional tightrope act” (p. 200). The fittest are those life forms that are not eliminated by environmental pressures. Animals survive, reproduce and evolve within the restraints of many variables. Success depends upon their capacity to cope with a bewildering variety of obstacles. However, the healthy and happy man balks at such a suggestion. He does not feel that negatives have governed his success. But the cybernetic model does not imply a tragic outlook. It does not seek to explain why people behave as they do but why, at any one time, an individual behaves one way rather than another.

In accordance with the cybernetic model, Bowlby (1969) suggests that we call the successful outcome of an activated behavioral system *goal corrected* rather than *goal directed*. Human beings constantly revise, extend, and check their working models of the environment and adjust their behavior accordingly. As with the system of *negative feedback* in cybernetics, goal corrected systems are designed to control behavior so as to adjust any discrepancies between initial instruction and performance. This approach further implies “that no single adaptation is viewed as ideal; it is always the compromise result of many different, and often conflicting, demands. When we analyze human behaviour, we usually study one behavioral characteristic and one environmental pressure at a time” (Hamilton, 1982, p. 11). We lose sight of the broader context. We may not see the competition between conflicting activities or that different environmental

pressures are dictating incompatible responses. An event is not the outcome of a number of causes but the end product of a process of elimination of many factors, none of which may be causally related to the final outcome.

Psychoanalysts are particularly interested in emotional ambivalence and conflict behavior, such as that between approach and withdrawal. Bowlby points out that the activation of such conflicts often will result in so-called compromise behavior. The individual plays out fragments of two different systems. Within this class of compromise behavior I would include tics or stereotyped and inappropriate gestures. An action may be dissociated from its context or cut across by a contrary action. A person may signal his attraction to another only to negate his own initiative by rejecting the other's response. This compromise behavior represents an exchange between two people. Originally the two incompatible sequences of behavior were enacted by two separate people-for instance a mother and her child. Behavioral systems may also be "redirected" to another goal in the way that has been traditionally described as *displacement*. Actions or feelings are, in Bowlby's terms, *redirected* from one person on to another person or object. We should not equate compromise behavior with neurosis, however. Even a curious, securely attached child may exhibit both clinging and exploratory behavior in a novel environment. Tinbergen (1972) discusses the compromises that birds must negotiate between safety and nourishment. Camouflage protects the birds while they are motionless. However, they must eat. As Tinbergen (1972) said: "While they could feed more efficiently if

they never had to freeze, and would be better protected against predators if they never had to move, they can do neither, and selection, rewarding overall success rather than any isolated characteristics, has produced compromises" (p. 154-155).

Both cybernetics and psychoanalysis concern themselves with the **information** carried by events and objects rather than with the event or objects themselves. They do not investigate forces, drives, impacts, or energy exchanges except as they confer meaning to concrete events. There is no information or communication without context. A word acquires meaning in the larger context of the utterance, which again has meaning only in a relationship. For instance, the schizophrenics' "word salad" becomes intelligible through study of the communicational patterns and relationships within his family. Communication between psychoanalyst and client acquires meaning in the context of the *transference relationship*.

In addition to goal correction, systems theory discovers another restraint governing behavior. "Nothing"—that which is not—can exert a powerful influence. Information theory refers to this as a zero message. Zero messages, such as absence or unresponsiveness, may cause extremely strong emotions. Bateson (1970) gives as an illustration of a zero cause "the letter which you do not write" (p. 452). This letter "can get an angry reply." Increasingly, psychoanalysts now look at the negative trauma, which is not an event such as incest, the birth of a sibling, or an aggressive attack, but rather is a lack of psychological connection.

This focus emerges from the many studies of the narcissistic personality disorder over the past decade. A prolonged absence of connectedness and responsiveness often lies at the root of the despair, apathy, and detachment that characterize attachment pathologies.

An evolutionary perspective is necessary to make sense of the last two characteristics of instinctive responses listed by Bowlby (see p. 7): first, that the consequences of a sequence of instinctive responses may contribute to the preservation of an individual or the **continuity** of a species, second, an instinctual response may develop in an individual "even when the ordinary opportunities for learning it are exiguous or absent" (Bowlby, 1969, p. 38). Clinicians usually do not consider the evolutionary context. Frequently, their background is in medicine and they have not been trained to interpret the behavior of individuals within the context of species survival. Moreover, clinical practice does not provide much opportunity to acquire this perspective.

Consideration of the evolutionary perspective should affect psychoanalytic theory and practice. What sort of inferences do clinicians make when they are unable to explain behavior in terms of the individual, including his or her particular history and present environment? The practitioner usually concludes that such behavior is caused by "constitutional" factors or that it is a bizarre externalization of the patient's phantasy life. Melanie Klein's concept of persecutory anxiety, a state that gives rise to all sorts of destructive phantasies

and is itself consequent upon the workings of the death instinct, exemplifies this sort of explanation. Bowlby's interpretations of children's fears and phobias spring from the evolutionary view of attachment and entail a very different theory of explanation to that of the death drive.

The new concept of instinctive behavior, familiar to ethologists for many years, makes the traditional antithesis between innate and acquired characteristics unnecessary. Every class of behavior is a product of the interaction of genetic endowment and a specific environment. Although the human species has a tremendous capacity for versatility and innovation, many behavioral systems only operate in their environment of evolutionary adaptedness. Moreover, this adaptedness is a property not only of the individual but of the population.

THE NATURE AND FUNCTION OF ATTACHMENT BEHAVIOR FROM INFANCY TO OLD AGE

In 1958, Bowlby published "The Nature of the Child's Tie to His Mother." This paper marked the second major juncture in Bowlby's intellectual development and was pivotal to many of the ideas that he pursued later. In this work, the somewhat anecdotal comments and observations of "Child Care and the Growth of Love" (1953) coalesce into a coherent theory. He no longer underpins his argument with references to Freud but rather to ethology and the new evolutionary point of view. Bowlby had not yet incorporated the systemic

approach, but his terms now belonged to that framework.

This paper confronted the various psychoanalytic schools with a direct challenge. Despite subsequent developments in Bowlby's attachment theory, this critique remains a valuable summary of many of the major differences between the attachment and psychoanalytic viewpoints. Much of the paper is devoted to an informative and incisive account of four traditional theories of the child's tie to the mother:

1. *The theory of secondary drive*. According to the view, the baby becomes interested in and attached to his mother as a result of her meeting the baby's physiological needs. In due course, the infant learns that she is also the source of gratification.

2. *The theory of primary object sucking*. The infant has an inbuilt need to relate to a human breast, to suck it, and to possess it orally. In due course, the infant learns that attached to the breast is a mother with whom he or she must develop a relationship.

3. *The theory of primary object clinging*. There exists an inbuilt need to touch and cling to a human being, and this need is on a par with the need for food and warmth.

4. *The theory of primary retum-to-womb craving*. Infants resent their

extrusion from the womb and seek to return there.

In this early account of attachment, Bowlby includes the theory of primary object clinging. This view had been proposed by Imre Herman in Budapest and adopted by Alice Balint and Michael Balint. Together with W. R. D. Fairbairn and Donald Winnicott, they were to become prominent members of the British Middle Group. This school of psychoanalysis, to which Bowlby belongs, shares with him an emphasis on bonding and object relating over gratification or the avoidance of pain. Bowlby (1958) lists five instinctual responses—sucking, clinging, following, crying and smiling. These five instinctual responses "serve the function of binding the child to the mother and contribute to the reciprocal dynamic of binding the mother to the child.... Unless there are powerful in-built responses which ensure that the infant evokes maternal care and remains in close promixity to his mother throughout the years of childhood, he will die" (p. 369).

Bowlby remarks upon the vast discrepancy between formulations springing from empirical observation and those made in abstract discussions. He points out that leading child analysts with first hand experience of infancy, such as Anna Freud, Dorothy Burlingham, Melanie Klein, Therese Benedek, and Rene Spitz, are apt to describe such interactions in terms suggesting a primary social bond. In their theorizing, however, they persist in describing social interaction as secondary.

Bowlby's paper also challenges the traditional psychoanalytic view of orality. First, he downplays both sucking and the primary orientation towards the mother's breast. He argues that psychoanalytic theory is fixated on this response and that clinging and following play a more central role in later disturbance. Both Bowlby and Margaret Mahler emphasize the importance in the ontogenesis of pathology of disturbances arising during the second half of the second year. In Mahler's view, the rapprochement phase of the separation-individuation process is particularly stormy because the child's growing independence conflicts with the continuing need for mother's care and control. Bowlby focuses more upon the mother's rejection of the child's clinging and following. He also points out than an infant's oral behavior has two functions: attachment as well as feeding. Western culture has overlooked the fact that the infant spends more time in nonnutritional sucking than in feeding. Whereas traditional psychoanalysis views oral symptoms as regressive to an earlier, more infantile stage of development, Bowlby interprets such disturbances as displacements. Within the context of attachment, oral symptoms designate the substitution of a part for a whole. They chronicle the splitting off of feeding from the rest of a relationship. Compulsive thumb sucking might express a frustrated attachment or even a displacement of the nonnutritional aspect of feeding itself, rather than regression to some autoerotic stage.

In similar fashion, Bowlby distinguishes sexuality from attachment in loving (traditionally called libidinal) relationships. Although these two systems are

closely related and share some of the same patterns of behavior, they are distinct. Their activation varies independently of one another. Each directs itself towards a different class of objects and is sensitized at a different age.

As already noted, Bowlby holds attachment behavior to be instinctual and on a par with the pursuit of sex and food. He expresses his fundamental difference with traditional psychoanalysis most clearly in his interpretation of the complex repertoire of behaviors with which the infant maintains proximity to his or her caretaker. For Bowlby, the primary function of this behavioral system is to insure the child's survival and protection from predators. Most psychoanalysts do not think in such terms. Although they do enumerate various primitive mechanisms of defense, none of these concern the survival of the individual in his or her environment. The term "defense" is used to refer to psychological processes, such as projection, projective identification, idealization, denial, splitting, repression, and regression. Bowlby follows traditional usage by reserving the word "defense" for psychological defenses and using the word "protection" when talking about the function of attachment behavior. Since this distinction does not exist in traditional theory, the child's tenacious efforts to keep close to his mother are not usually seen as related to a social system in which they elicit reciprocal responses of retrieval and picking up. Rather, the child's demands for closeness are interpreted onesidedly as a denial of separateness or as an attempt to omnipotently control the "object" for the fulfillment of narcissistic wishes. The infant is seen as using crying and clinging as weapons of control. Some analysts even believe that the

infant's clinging and grasping and enjoyment of being held indicate a wish for return to the womb.

In general, the evolutionary viewpoint leads us to interpret a great deal of human behavior, whether of children or mature adults, as cooperative rather than self-seeking. Since the unit of biological adaptation is the social group and not the individual, survival depends upon cooperation. Psychoanalysis has concentrated on those behavioral systems that are limited by particular events, such as orgasm, eating, or elimination, and has ignored systems such as attachment whose goal is a constant state. Attachment theorists believe that only an indirect relationship exists between such interactions as feeding, weaning and toilet training, and a healthy attachment. Attachment is neither a developmental stage nor a system limited by an event. Its continuing set-goal is a certain sort of relationship to another specific individual. Attachment is regarded as the product of a control system that maintains homeostasis by means of behavioral rather than physiological processes. The maintenance of proximity between child and mother is a kind of environmental homeostasis. As Bowlby points out, there are many alternative ways of maintaining this homeostasis. However, the organization that controls these behaviors is conceived as permanent and central to a child's personality. This organization is never idle. As Bowlby (1969) says: "In order for a control system to perform its function effectively it must be equipped with sensors to keep it informed of relevant events, and these events it must continuously monitor and appraise." In the case of an attachment control system,

the events being monitored fall into two classes: one, potential danger or stress (external or internal), and two, the whereabouts and accessibility of the attachment figure.

The distinction between behavioral systems that are limited and those that are ongoing affects the conception of development. As one would expect, current views of human biology and control theory differ greatly from those of psychoanalysis. The traditional model implies that there is one developmental line. Personality disorders derive their form from stages that were normal at some earlier phase of life. In normal development, the individual is thought to progress through the oral, anal, phallic and genital stages. If fixations occur, the person "regresses" back down the ladder. Thus, the various disorders of later life repeat phases of healthy childhood. The diagnostician considers the resolutions and fixations appropriate to each stage in order to decide whether the adult before him or her suffers from a pregenital, anal-sadistic, narcissistic, borderline, oedipal or neurotic disturbance.

Bowlby's model, drawn from control theory and ethology, proposes that at birth, there exists a large array of potential pathways. Development progressively diminishes these alternatives. We should look not for the cause of a fixation but at the restraints that lead an individual to choose one alternative over another. Returning to Tinbergen's analogy, healthy development resembles the adjustments that a tightrope walker must make continuously in order to maintain

his or her balance. Either excessive sensitivity or insensitivity to environmental changes will cause the tightrope walker's downfall. In human development, sensitivity from birth allows for maximum adaptability to the social environment. This biological perspective, which stresses the cooperative nature of human behavior, is opposite to and contradicts Freud's view that avoidance and withdrawal precede approach behavior. According to Attachment Theory, avoidance and withdrawal are most readily activated when the infant is able to discriminate the familiar from the strange.

Questions about the ontogenesis of mental disorder raise the problem of how to measure attachment. Initially, theorists sought to measure normal or abnormal behavior by reference to the strength of the attachment between the individual and his or her childhood attachment figures. However, these reseachers soon noted that intense attachment did not necessarily indicate a good or harmonious mother-child relationship. Paradoxically, attachment behavior can be most intense when a mother discourages or threatens her child's need for proximity. The traditional viewpoint might diagnose such a child as perverse or masochistic. But the child's stubbornness makes systemic sense if his or her instinctual apparatus is geared toward proximity as the means of survival. The threat of withdrawal would redouble the child's efforts. Fear stimulates attachment behavior. A victim will often develop a strong attachment to the person who causes his or her suffering, especially if, as in the case of a young child, there is nowhere else to turn. Loss of an attachment figure is the child's foremost

fear.

Research on attachment shows that the two most important variables in the creation and maintenance of a secure attachment are the sensitivity of a mother's responsiveness to her baby's signals and the amount and nature of interaction between the two. Degrees of security or insecurity provide the yardstick by which we measure a healthy attachment. Consequently, Bowlby (1973) has substituted the term "anxiously attached" for the traditional description of an insecure child as overdependent. Clinging behavior, illustrative of anxious attachment, has often been described as jealous, possessive, greedy, immature, overdependent, or intensely attached. Bowlby's concept of anxious attachment respects the natural desire for a close relationship without pejorative connotations.

In addition to a child's protest and upset over his mother's departure, researchers now regard various other correlations as indicative of the security of an attachment. Foremost among these are the child's behavior upon reunion with the mother, and comparison of his behavior at home with his or her behavior in a strange (often experimental) setting. Anxiously attached children often fail to greet their mothers upon return. Furthermore, they are less exploratory than their secure counterparts, not only in a strange situation but also at home in their mothers' presence. Ainsworth and Bell (1970a) have correlated children's ambivalence in a strange situation with general ambivalence in the home environment. Ambivalent children tend to resist contact when picked up and to

ask to be picked up when they are set down. They do this whether at home or in a strange environment. Logically, one might expect proximity-seeking behavior to be incompatible with exploration. However, Ainsworth, together with other attachment researchers, have noted that most children do not explore constructively when **avoiding** contact. Avoidant children tend to move around hyperactively or to alternate uncomfortably between avoiding and seeking contact. In addition, children who resist contact, are often more angry, aggressive and disobedient than children for whom contact is pleasurable.

Bowlby correlates the development of "puzzling phobias" (see Freud, 1962, p. 168) with anxious attachment. When a child is unable to communicate directly his fears about separation, he may try to redirect or displace onto animals or other puzzling objects the anxieties he feels in relation to his parents. He may be furious and terrified that the parent will desert him, but he dares not express such feelings lest by so doing he provokes that which he most fears. Instead, he complains about something else, or he may have temper tantrums that express both rage and fear. Bowlby reinterprets Freud's case of Little Hans in this light.

In volume one of *Attachment*, Bowlby suggests that five main classes of behavior should be considered in any attempt to assess the attachments of a child. These are:

1. Behavior that initiates interactions, such as greeting, approaching,

touching, embracing, calling, reaching, and smiling.

2. Behavior in response to the mother's interactional initiatives that maintains interaction (all the initiating behaviors plus watching).

3. Behavior to avoid separations, such as following, clinging, and crying.

4. Exploratory behavior, as it is oriented toward the mother.

5. Withdrawal or fear behavior, especially as it is oriented toward the mother.

None of these considerations fit the Freudian picture of the infant or young child, which describes the infant as being enclosed in a state of primary narcissism, "shut off from the stimuli of the external world like a bird in an egg" (Freud, 1911, p. 220). The child's object relations are seen as minimal. The contrasting view of attachment theorists points to the quality of mother-infant interaction, which is built up out of communication 'games' as well as proximity-maintaining behaviors. The success or failure of this mutual endeavor is crucial to the arousal of a baby's interest in the first weeks of life. Indeed, Ainsworth and Bell (1970b) have correlated the attachment behavior of 1-year-old children placed in a strange situation with the extent to which they had been permitted to be an active partner in the feeding situation as 3-month-old infants. Such findings suggest that the mother's ability to conceive of the relationship as a partnership

affects the development of both attachment and exploration.

One fascinating detail of this research, which again contradicts the primary narcissism hypothesis, pertains to fluctuations in the responsiveness of each partner to the initiatives of the other. The infants responded on every occasion when the mother initiated interaction. However, whereas some mothers were encouraged by their baby's social advances, others evaded them; where some mothers were made more solicitous by their child's crying, others became more impatient. By the time the children's first birthday was reached, the magnitude of the differences between one pair and another could hardly be exaggerated.

Two other researchers, David and Appell (1969), describe, at one extreme, a pair who interacted almost continuously throughout the baby's waking hours, and, at the opposite extreme, a pair who were hardly ever together, mother occupying herself with housework and largely ignoring her daughter. In a third pair, mother and son spent much time silently watching each other while each was engaged in some private activity. Such findings suggest that mothers play a much larger part in determining interaction than do infants. For instance, although initially there is little correlation between a baby's crying and a mother's responsiveness, by the end of the first year, a baby cared for by a sensitive, responsive mother cried much less than one cared for by an insensitive or unresponsive mother.

One of the strengths of attachment theory, initiated by Ainsworth (1982) and Bowlby (1982) is that it has stimulated a very able group of developmental psychologists to make such empirical studies of socioemotional development. These studies would be extremely useful to psychoanalysts, particularly those working with children and young people.

As is only too obvious to the layman, a child's pattern of attachment usually correlates with the way his mother treats him. By preschool age, this matrix will have become a function of the child himself or herself. This internalization or, in Bowlby's terms, "cognitive map" of attachment may also correlate with the child's participation in the regulation of his or her care and mothering. Bowlby likens the regulation of mothering to the regulation of food. Both mothers and professional people often ask whether or not a mother should meet her child's demands for her presence and attention. If she gives in on mothering, will this encourage the child to demand that she give in on everything else? Will the child ever become independent? Bowlby (1969) responds with an answer which he tells us is "now well known":

> From the earliest months forward it is best to follow a child's lead. When he wants more food, it will probably benefit him; when he refuses, he will probably come to no harm. Provided his metabolism is not deranged, a child is so made that, if left to decide, he can regulate his own food-intake in regard to both quantity and quality. With few exceptions, therefore, a mother can safely leave the initiative to him…Thus, in regard to mothering —as to food—a child seems to be so made that, if from the first permitted to decide, he can satisfactorily regulate his own "intake." Only after he reaches school years may there be occasion for gentle discouragement. (p.

356)

By 4 to 5 years of age, the child's capacity to consider another person's point of view provides additional clues to the status of the child's goal-corrected partnership. Another variable by which we can measure the security of an attachment is a child's resiliance. A child whose background state is one of anxious attachment will have few resources to draw on when faced with untoward and stressful circumstances. In conclusion then, the organization of attachment, which is initially labile, becomes progressively more stable. This development may be cause for optimism or concern.

Let us now consider what the attachment model implies for the growth of self-reliance. Psychoanalysts have looked at development as a linear progression from a state of dependence to one of independence. This has distorted our understanding not only of dependence in childhood but also of independence in adulthood. For Bowlby, self-reliance goes hand in hand with reliance upon others. Confidence in the attachment figure and in the self are built up together. Indeed, the capacity to rely on others when occasion demands and to know upon whom it is appropriate to rely is essential for true self-reliance. Many people have confused self-reliance with the kind of independence that Bowlby characterizes as compulsive caregiving and compulsive self-sufficiency. The compulsive caregiver and the fiercely self-sufficient person will experience their own needs for love and care through, respectively, administering to others or apparently needing nothing.

Bowlby believes that a person's success in finding appropriate people to help him or her through hard times depends upon childhood experiences. This ability holds a special importance for dealing with a serious loss. A major determinant of reaction to loss is the way the bereaved's attachment behavior was evaluated and responded to by the bereaved's parents-whether they could share his or her fears, unhappiness, and grief or whether he or she had to bear sorrows alone. The solitary child has a hard time finding a comforting shoulder in later life. Such people shun the thought and disavow the need for solace. What children learn to expect in the nature of comfort from their parents determines in large part whether, as adults, bereavement will make them sad or whether it will overwhelm them with despair and depression.

NORMAL AND PATHOLOGICAL PROCESSES OF MOURNING IN RESPONSE TO SEPARATION AND LOSS

"The great source of terror in infancy is solitude" (James, 1890). A similar sentiment was expressed indirectly in a poem quoted by Bowlby that was written by an 11-year-old girl whose parents were abroad for some years:

> The beauty of love has not found me
> Its hands have not gripped me so tight
> For the darkness of hate is upon me
> I see day, not as day, but as night.
>
> I yearn for the dear love to find me
> With my heart and my soul and my might
> For darkness has closed in upon me

I see day, not as day, but as night.

The children are playing and laughing
But I cannot find love in delight
There is an iron fence around me
I see day, not as day, but as night.

Bowlby could not study attachment without encountering the suffering that ensues from the breaking or disruption of affectional ties. In the years between the publication of "The Nature of the Child's Tie to His Mother" in 1958 and *Attachment* in 1969, Bowlby published five papers on separation anxiety, grief and mourning in infancy and early childhood, processes of mourning, and pathological mourning. The publication of *Attachment* was followed in a similar fashion by the second and third volumes in the series, *Separation* (1973) and *Loss* (1980). The latter two volumes, based on the attachment model, again provide a very different picture of human responses to separation and loss than that of traditional psychoanalysis. Their central and simple thesis is that, just as attachment is the primary source of well-being in human beings, so loss is the major source of suffering.

Bowlby looks at human loss and distress on two levels: first, the inevitable grief, anger, and despair that result when ties are broken, and second, the ways we organize ourselves to deal with these painful and often conflictual feelings. Just as in his study of affectional ties Bowlby first searched for regularities in the attachment behaviors common to human beings, so Bowlby detects prototypical

responses to loss and separation. The uniformity of these responses makes sense in the context of the theory of attachment and the evolutionary framework.

By the time Bowlby wrote *Separation* and *Loss* the most common successive responses to loss—protest, despair, detachment—had been well documented by other authors, foremost among whom were James and Joyce Robertson. Although many psychoanalysts had recognized that separation from loved ones is a principal source of anxiety, there was still considerable reluctance to assimilate this simple formula into clinical practice. In addition, Freud's influence had led to the belief that the processes of both adult and childhood mourning and normal and pathological mourning differed considerably. Bowlby pointed out, however, that, as in the case of attachment, there is considerable similarity between the mourning of children and of adults and that many of the responses to loss that had hitherto been regarded as neurotic were quite natural. Attachment, unlike dependence, remains as an organizational system throughout life; so grief, even in its normal course, has a long duration. A bereaved person may experience for a long time an insatiable yearning for, and an "irrational" but natural striving to recover, the lost person. These feelings may return intermittently for the rest of the individual's life.

Although most attachment theorists would now characterize the three phases of protest, despair and detachment as typical of normal mourning in both children and adults, in fact an additional initial phase is usually described as well

as—depending on whether the loss is final or temporary—a fifth and final phase. Prior to the protest and angry attempts to recover the lost object, most people experience a sense of numbness and disbelief. During this period, bereaved individuals must adjust all their expectations and beliefs. Whereas psychoanalysis uses the term "denial" to describe the state of disbelief, Bowlby renames it "selective exclusion." The fifth stage, experienced only when loss is temporary, is characterized by extremely ambivalent behavior upon reunion with the lost person. This can be demonstrated by a lack of recognition and absence of all emotional affect at one extreme and, at the other, by clinging, acute fear of being left, and bursts of anger lest the person desert again.

Bowlby links the three most common reactions to loss—protest, despair, and detachment—with three processes, all of which contain considerable potential for future disturbance. These are separation anxiety, grief and mourning, and defense. Separation anxiety is a reaction to the danger or threat of loss; mourning is a reaction to actual loss; and defense is a mode of dealing with anxiety and pain. As with attachment, the outcome of these responses depends largely on the ways other people respond to the feelings of the bereaved person.

Following Freud, most psychoanalysts have concentrated exclusively upon the last of the three phases-detachment and defense. Although Freud and Melanie Klein accorded a central place to anxiety in everyday life, neither recognized that separation anxiety was as primary as, for instance, castration or persecutory

anxiety. W. R. D. Fairbairn and Ian Suttie were the first psychoanalysts to assign a primary status to separation anxiety. Not until Freud's seventieth year, in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926), did he perceive that separation and loss were principal sources of psychopathology. Hitherto, Freud had linked anxiety to fears of castration, to the harshness of the superego, to aggression, and to the death instinct. Even analysts such as Anna Freud and Melanie Klein who remarked on the universal distress shown by infants and young children when their mothers were absent continued to ask, Why are they anxious? What are they afraid of? Many ingenious explanations have been proposed to answer these questions: the birth trauma, signal anxiety, anxiety consequent on repression of libido, persecutory and depressive anxiety, and guilt about aggressive impulses.

Bowlby has made various suggestions as to why psychoanalysts have found it so very difficult to conceptualize in theory that which they so clearly observe. First, Bowlby makes the common observation that the psychoanalytic theory of normal development is almost entirely based upon work with adult patients. Obviously, in clinical practice, the psychoanalyst is constantly preoccupied with the understanding of defenses that, although once useful for survival, are now obsolete. When these findings are projected back onto the theory of infant and child development, we find an imbalance towards a study of the mechanisms of defense, and an ignorance of the normal child's expressions of loss, grief, and anxiety.

Second, traditional psychoanalysis assumes that a child does not seek out other people for their own sake but only as containers or modulators of tension, anxiety, aggression and so forth, or as sources of gratification. This tenet discourages the idea that a child might react directly to the absence of a loved one.

Third, Bowlby believes that the lack of distinction between cause and function has not only harmed psychoanalytic theory in general but also that this confusion particularly impedes its understanding of the anger that so often follows a loss. This anger is caused not just by the separation. Bowlby believes that its function is to recover the lost person. Not only do anger and reproach ensure the person's return, they also threaten him so that he or she dare not desert again. In a responsive mother-child relationship, the child's anger is often very effective. The aggressive wishes not only express the simple desire to hurt the person who has inflicted pain and suffering, but they are also intended to punish the person for desertion and to reinstate proximity.

Fourth, Bowlby makes another distinction between guilt and grief in response to loss. Freudian and Kleinian theory lose track of the difference between these two responses. Grief and mourning are expressions of depressive guilt. Guilt is a "natural" reaction to loss. For Bowlby, grief covers an amalgam of emotions—anger, anxiety, and despair. Guilt, on the other hand, may often signify displacement and may result from an angry reproach against the self instead of the lost person. When the expression of natural feelings, such as yearning, anger,

and reproach, are discouraged (which is very often the case, particularly when the bereaved are young children), these feelings can be redirected either to third parties or on to the self. When reinforced socially, these displacements can generate various pathological behaviors, such as denial of permanent loss with sustained secret beliefs in reunion or vicarious caregiving and sympathy for other bereaved persons. Repressed yearning can lead to compulsive wandering, depression, and suicide. Depressed people often tend to idealize their attachment figures. In traditional theory, idealizations are often thought to mask aggressive and destructive phantasies. According to Bowlby, however, such depressed people, particularly children, may be entertaining two completely incompatible models of relationship—their own and that of their caretakers. When circumstances are favorable, however, anger, reproach, and yearning fade following their expression to the appropriate person. The mourner finally accepts that his loss is permanent and that his or her feelings are nonfunctional. These responses are then succeeded by a period of disorganization and almost unbearable grief. However, if this grief is expressed to and understood by others, it can lead to reconnection with the world and "a relieving sweet sadness may break through" (Bowlby, 1963, p. 7).

Fifth, Bowlby makes a crucial distinction, ignored in traditional theory, between "natural" and "reasonable" fear. This distinction affects our understanding of separation anxiety and of the responses to actual or threatened loss. Following Freud, psychoanalysts have concluded that when anxiety is not

related to real danger, it signifies a neurosis. Absence per se does not seem to threaten life or limb. However, as we noted earlier, the zero message exerts just as much influence as its positive counterpart. Even among mature adults, mourning often is mixed with acute and "irrational" terror. Nearly all bereaved persons report symptoms such as insomnia and fear of being alone or of going to strange places. All these feelings are natural to separated children. The loss of a secure base threatens both children and adults as much as physical assault. This phenomenon, Bowlby (1973) notes, prompts the psychoanalyst to engage in "a prolonged hunt for some primal danger situation" (p. 169). The analyst concludes that the expressed fear is not the real fear. So many of the fear stimuli that affect us seem inappropriate in the modem context. We don't see too many saber-toothed tigers these days! Nevertheless, it is perfectly natural for a young and vulnerable child to fear the existence of dangerous creatures. All children exhibit some fear of the dark, of being alone, of loud or sudden noises, of bright lights and of looming objects, particularly when these appear in combination. Bowlby points out that these same phenomena frighten the same child much less if they occur when the child is with an older, trusted person. All these fears are viewed by Bowlby and other ethologists as natural. They contribute to survival in the environment of evolutionary adaptedness. As Bowlby notes, these fears still hold their survival value. Although in the city we need not worry too much about wild animals, we still need to remain alert to danger. City children are vulnerable to traffic accidents, for example, and many city parents worry about the risk of

criminal assault. Besides, the fear of wild and dangerous animals is still reasonable in many parts of the world. Even in Los Angeles, a young child growing up in certain hillside areas must treat his environment with some caution. Chances are they are sharing the hill with a family of coyotes and the odd rattlesnake. Fears are often ordered hierarchically. For instance, children will follow their mothers in the face of dangerous traffic rather than risk separating from her. When we investigate a fear that has become unmanageable, we would consider its evolutionary context before making our interpretation. Otherwise, we risk taking up arms against a mechanism of survival.

Sixth, Bowlby's concept of defense—renamed selective exclusion— also reflects the systemic approach. In the normal course of events, we exclude a vast proportion of information from consciousness. This protects our attention from distraction and overload. The selective exclusion of information is as necessary and adaptive as the reduction of flexibility that follows from specialization. Both contain the potential for maladaptation, however. Persistent exclusion is usually maladaptive; nor does automatic attachment and attachment behavior necessarily contribute to survival. Change can be economical, but it is difficult; and correction requires skilled attention. Bowlby (1980) also stresses the diversionary role of defensive activity, "for the more completely a person's attention, time and energy are concentrated on one activity and on the information concerning it, the more completely can information concerning another activity be excluded" (p. 66). Any activity—work or play—can be undertaken as a diversion. The only psychological

requirement is absorption. Much defensive exclusion is related to suffering. A response is disconnected from its context in an interpersonal situation and relocated upon the self. This gives rise to symptoms such as hypochondria, guilt and morbid introspection. For

Bowlby, no system is more vulnerable to defensive exclusion than attachment. For instance, pathology may develop if defensive exclusion continues beyond the initial stages of bereavement.

The evolutionary context makes Bowlby's theory of attachment and mourning seem simple, even blindingly obvious. Human beings come into the world genetically biased to develop certain behaviors that, in an appropriate environment, result in their keeping close to whoever cares for them. This desire for proximity to loved ones persists throughout life. Only when children feel secure in their primary attachments can they go out with confidence to explore and make the most of their world.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AS ART AND SCIENCE

If we consider the development of psychoanalysis over the past nine decades, we find that new discoveries have rarely led to consolidation, let alone to critical discussion. Indeed, the extreme subjectivism of many psychoanalysts generates one quarrel after another. Psychoanalysts avoid rational methods of discrimination between rival hypotheses. It seems that any interpretation can be

supported from within the terms of any one theory. Relationships between analysts are not usually built on the pursuit of a common, though tricky, endeavor, but on loyalty to a particular faith. Does such and such an analyst believe in Freud, Jung, or Klein? Does this analyst practice “real” analysis?

And yet, the whole edifice of psychoanalysis—its theory of development and its theory of cure—depends upon the assumption that adult pathology stems from problems, real or phantasied, in infancy. An outsider might then assume that psychoanalysts would keep up with the findings of those disciplines to which their field is most closely related-in particular, cognitive and developmental psychology and human biology. Surely, analytic research would benefit from the study of infants and children in natural settings. Instead, psychoanalysts tend to fall back on so-called veridical reconstructions of infancy gathered from the clinical material of adults. The paucity of observational studies diminishes the number of independent variables with which to correlate analytic reconstructions. Inevitably, the psychoanalytic theory of normal personality development has remained weak and open to criticism.

By contrast, a minority of psychoanalysts, such as John Bowlby, James Robertson and Christoph Heinicke, are attuned to the methodological limitations of retrospective research. As a result, they have undertaken various prospective studies that follow the behavior of children about to undergo experiences of separation from their mothers. Since analysts of all orientations seem to agree

that separation in childhood plays an undeniable role in adult pathology, one might expect that the observation of separation behavior in a variety of settings could offer a fertile ground for intergroup study. In my opinion, those analysts who have undertaken such studies manifest greater agreement over their findings, show less of a propensity for schisms, and have found it easier to maintain a more open and scientific attitude towards the work of their colleagues. An analyst's views of infancy crucially affects his interpretations of unconscious material. It makes a great deal of difference to the patient whether the analyst sees him or her as a bundle of id impulses, a raging orally fixated infant, a frustrated narcissistic self, a thinking and curious creature, or a victim of a broken attachment.

In a recent article, "Psychoanalysis as Art and Science," Bowlby (1979b) draws attention to two very different aspects of the discipline of psychoanalysis: the art of psychoanalytic therapy and the science of psychoanalytic psychology. In so doing, he emphasizes on the one hand, the distinctive value of each and, on the other, the gulf that divides them "in regard both to the contrasting criteria by which each should be judged and the very different mental outlook that each demands" (p. 3). As Bowlby observes, this distinction is not confined to psychoanalysis. "It applies to every field in which the practice of a profession or a craft gives birth to a body of scientific knowledge-the blacksmith to metallurgy, the civil engineer to soil mechanics, the farmer to plant physiology, and the physician to the medical sciences. In each of these fields the roles differentiate. On

the one hand are the practitioners, on the other the scientists, with a limited number of individuals attempting to combine both roles. As history shows, this process of differentiation often proves painful and misunderstandings are frequent" (p. 3). Bowlby attributes much of the confusion in psychoanalysis to the lack of differentiation of these two roles. He contrasts the roles of practitioner and research scientist under three headings and uses the case of medicine as an example:

1. *Focus of study*. The practitioner aims to take into account as many aspects as possible of each and every clinical problem with which he must deal. This requires him to draw on any scientific principle that may appear relevant and also to draw on his own personal experience of the condition in question. The research scientist must have a very different outlook. He aims to discern the general patterns underlying individual variety and, therefore, ignores the particular and strives for simplification. He also tends to concentrate on a limited aspect of a limited problem.

2. *Modes of acquiring information*. In his role of giving help, the practitioner is permitted access to information of certain kinds that are closed to the scientist. He is permitted to intervene and privileged to observe the consequences of such interventions. The research scientist, however, has the advantage of enlisting new methods to cross-check on

observations made and on hypotheses born of older methods.

3. *Mental attitudes—scepticism and faith*. If he is to be effective, a practitioner must have faith. He must be prepared to act as though certain principles and certain theories were valid. He is likely to choose between various theories on the basis of his own experience. As Bowlby points out, such faith is not a bad thing in clinical practice. A great majority of patients are helped by the practitioner's faith and hope. The very lack of these qualities may make many excellent research workers ill suited to be therapists. The scientist, on the other hand, must exercise a high degree of criticism and self-criticism. In his world, neither the data nor the theories of a leader, however much personally admired, may be exempt from challenge and criticism.

Bowlby (1979b) believes that it is only by recognizing these differences that the strengths of each role can be used to fullest advantage "or that any person can occupy both of them with any hope of success" (p. 5). The repercussions of Bowlby's view are serious because it calls for a reversal of the set adopted by a great number of psychoanalysts—namely, unquestioning faith in a theory and scepticism in their practice. Bowlby's cross-checking of the reports of adult patients with observations of young children should reduce the analyst's scepticism of his patient's memory. For example, Bowlby takes very seriously the reported threats of separation made by parents to their children. Not only should

the analyst cross-check his findings with those of neighboring disciplines, but he must be able to review his work critically outside his consulting room, either by taking notes or by detailed discussion of case notes or tape recordings with his colleagues. Bowlby proposes that analysts might keep a detailed record of the responses of their patients before and after each weekend, each vacation, and each unexpected interruption of the sessions, with an equally detailed record of how the analyst dealt with them. This would enable the analyst to check the repertoire of responses a given patient presents on these occasions, and also the changes in response the patient presents over time.

In my view, the medical bias in psychoanalysis has led not only to neglect of the two roles required of the research psychoanalyst, but also to an underestimation of the art of psychoanalysis. Fearful of his emotional responses to the patient and of his imaginative powers, the analyst, aiming to maintain a "scientific" attitude, may remain aloof, neutral and dissociated from the interactions with his patient. The art of psychotherapy, according to Bowlby (1979b) requires "all the intuition, imagination and empathy of which we are capable. But it also requires a firm grasp of what the patient's problems are and what we are trying to do" (p. 12). For instance, analysts who are not prepared to meet the heavy burdens of dependence should be careful about their choice of patients. In order to have such a firm grasp of the patient's problems, questions of etiology and psychopathology should be clarified and the practitioner should be informed of the whole range of family experiences that evidence shows affect the

development of the child. Although medical science is competent to deal with this area of psychopathology, it eschews the use of imagination, and psychoanalysis has suffered accordingly. In addition, analysts have followed Freud in his equation of imagination with phantasy and the creative process with sublimation. Like Freud, many analysts continue to regard art as an anarchic process motivated by sublimation. They continue to ignore the skills and rules that are involved in every creative process.

Bowlby's work is a testimony to the skills of imagination, immersion and objectivity. Not only does his trilogy present a simple point of view based on the distillation of a vast array of research, it also portrays the extraordinary depth of feeling of a unique individual. Few psychoanalytic books evoke the utter grief, despair and loneliness that bereaved persons, particularly children, have suffered. Most psychoanalytic texts prefer to discuss the stereotyped defenses against feeling—aggression, projection, denial, and so forth. One might conclude that few psychoanalysts are themselves capable of suffering the depths of anxiety and sadness that are only too painfully obvious to all those who have worked with young children.

> …Dick…told him about his own father's death, which had happened when Dick was a child at Dublin, not quite five years of age. "That was the first sensation of grief," Dick said, "I ever knew.... I remember I went into the room where his body lay, and my mother sat weeping beside it. I had my battledore in my hand, and fell a-beating the coffin, and calling papa; on which my mother caught me in her arms, and told me in a flood of tears papa could not hear me, and would play with me no more...And this," said

> Dick kindly, "has made me pity all children ever since and caused me to love thee, my poor fatherless, motherless lad." (Thackeray, H. E., in Bowlby, 1980, p. 265)

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VICTORIA HAMILTON was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland in 1941, studied at Glasgow School of Art, and graduated in philosophy at University College, London. Her psychoanalytic training was undertaken at the Tavistock Clinic, London, during which time she attended John Bowlby's seminars on ethology, child development, and attachment. She has worked as a child psychotherapist for the National Health Service and the Child Guidance Service in London and in private practice in Los Angeles. She currently lives in London.