

BOOK REVIEW

ONLY PSYCHOANALYSIS CAN MAKE YOU REALLY UNHAPPY

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I. AGAINST PSYCHOANALYSIS

Psychoanalysis can no longer be considered a serious epistemological, medical or political force, now that “Big Pharma,” the *DSM-IV*, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and rigorous cost-efficiency exigencies determine mental health delivery in the first world. This doesn’t just mean that there won’t be any more free analyses for poor people, but marks a decisive shift in the conception, development and provision of psychological care: belief in the transformative and therapeutic powers of talk now appears thoroughly archaic if not simply deluded. Why talk—or, indeed, listen—when you can get yourself irradiated, do your six sessions of CBT homework, and pop pills? Rather than listening to patients, why not “listen to Prozac,” which undoubtedly has much happier things to say and cheerier news to convey than sufferers themselves. And rather than relying upon such theoretical constructs as the “Oedipal complex” or “the anal character,” the elementary particles of our acronymic mental universe have morphed into SSRIs, MRIs, and PETs. As for subjectivity, who needs it when you can see people’s brains grinding away in full living colour on a plasma TV?

After all, the effects of brain lesions caused by accident or disease—some of which, until recently, could only be revealed by autopsy, too late for the sufferers—can now be watched on-screen. Changes in electrical conductance, potentials and magnetic fields in the brain can be registered, monitored, recorded and analysed with unprecedented accuracy in real time. Developments in molecular neurobiology permit the “knock-out” of particular genes in order to test physical and psychological consequences. What these new technologies enable is not only the visualization of previously invisible phenomena, nor just their depiction in greater detail, nor simply their recording with greater accuracy than previously—although all of this is the case. Nor is it just a quantum leap in the

capacity to correlate results in one discipline with those in another, to bring together disparate research from all over the globe with an unprecedented rapidity. Rather, for the first time, brain, mind and behaviour can be studied simultaneously, *in situ*. It is this synchronisation of the study of brain, consciousness and activity that conditions the most exciting developments. As Antonio Damasio puts it, “The organism’s private mind, the organism’s public behavior, and its hidden brain can thus be joined in the adventure of theory, and out of the adventure come hypotheses that can be tested experimentally, judged on their merits, and subsequently endorsed, rejected, or modified.”¹ The discoveries these technologies have permitted about the development, structure, function and activity of the brain have rendered older hypotheses obsolete, as they have suggested radical new ones. When individual psychological disturbances or singular behaviours start being traced to brain lesions or to mutant genes, we are no longer in a world of humanistic encouragement, but in the regime of biological determinism. As Mark Solms notes, “The modern neuroscientific quest to solve the mystery of consciousness... involves an attitude to human subjectivity directly antithetical to the psychoanalytic attitude.”² Is it finally goodbye to psychoanalysis, then?

The problem remains that the actual science being done by researchers such as Damasio doesn’t always support the claims made *for* this science by the dominating triumvirate of Technology, Capitalism and Government. As ever, in our interminably post-Cartesian universe, the real problem remains how to suture nature to culture, brain to mind, theory and practice. Sure, one might even admit there’s no coherent formulation of the mind-body problem, and that mind should be considered an emergent property of brains—but there’s still no way for science to give any plausible resolution of the *qualia* problem.³ In principle, it seems unlikely that neuroscience will be legitimately able to ascribe psychological features to the brain.⁴ And it’s not so much an issue of explaining how the new drugs work—as explaining away why they don’t. If psychoanalysis, then, is to have a future, it is perhaps going to be by attending to these symptomatic gaps in the scientific evidence, and by building its precarious house upon the opacities of reason. But perhaps it can hope for even more? This may be possible, too, as such eminent researchers as Solms and Eric Kandel testify. The question still needs to be asked: what scope is there for psychoanalysis as an ethical practice?

1. A. Damasio, *The Feeling of What Happens: Body, Emotion, and the making of Consciousness* (London: Vintage, 2000), p. 15.

2. M. Solms, “What is Consciousness?” *JAPA*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (1996), p. 682.

3. “Qualia are the simple sensory qualities to be found in the blueness of the sky or the tone of sound produced by a cello, and the fundamental components of the images in the movie metaphor are thus made of qualia. I believe these qualities will be eventually explained neurobiologically although at the moment the neurobiological account is incomplete and there is an explanatory gap,” Damasio, p. 9.

4. “What [Neuroscience] cannot do is replace the wide-range of ordinary psychological explanations of human activities in terms of reasons, intentions, purposes, values, goals, rules and conventions by neurological explanation. And it cannot explain how an animal thinks or perceives with reference to the brain’s, or some part of the brain’s, perceiving or thinking.” P. Hacker and M. Bennett, *The Philosophical Foundations of Neuroscience* (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), p. 3.

II. AGAINST COMPLACENCY

These days, such accounts as the one I've just sketched seem invariably to open books on psychoanalysis. This strikes me as an interesting generic development, a kind of psychoanalytic version of Samuel Beckett's famous statement "I can't go on, I'll go on." These days, psychoanalysis tends to get itself going by pretending it's on the ropes, just about to go down for the count—before making an incredible recovery. Jonathan Lear's new book *Freud* doesn't depart radically from this model. Where it does differ, however, is in its clarity, detail, and argumentative style, its fundamental hostility to what Lear denominates "complacent thought."

Indeed, the book opens with a recitation of negative examples (as Chairman Mao might say) of such contemporary complacency. For Lear, complacent thought is evident in the following propositions:

- That we can find out all we need to know about human behaviour and motivation by conducting polls, examining democratic votes, choices made in the market-place, and changing fashions. In short, human motivation is essentially transparent.
- That all human disagreements are in principle resolvable through rational conversation and mutual understanding.
- That we have reached the "end of history"
- That all serious psychological problems will soon be treatable either by drugs or neurosurgery
- The only form of psychotherapy that is needed is rational conversation (2).

And, finally, that

- "Freud is dead": His account of a "talking cure"—psychoanalysis—has about as much validity as invoking Zeus (3).

What's noteworthy for Lear is that our rationalistic, scientific universe finds itself confronted, doubled, by apparently antagonistic irrational acts, such as terrorism. Yet Lear points out how much energy terrorists expend in justifying their acts with declarations, arguments, good explanations and reasons, etc.: "If one reads those who want to blow us up, it is striking how much they try to present themselves as reasonable"(4). As he continues: "The terrorist thinks it is because his people have been humiliated that he is justified in his acts. But might the situation be just the reverse? That is, because he takes a certain pleasure in destructive hatred, he has become attached to his sense of humiliation"(4). It is precisely this feature, that of an unconscious "motivated irrationality," which one needs something like psychoanalysis to account for, and it is precisely this feature that Lear explores in detail.

Throughout the introduction, conclusion, and the seven chapters of this book (with titles like "Sex, Eros and life," and "Principles of mental functioning"), Lear gives some excellent presentations of the bases and consequences of Freud's positions. He further provides clarifying critiques and/or justifications of such positions. Every chapter proceeds neatly through a set of central questions, concluding with a useful little summary as well as with suggestions for further reading. We find discussions of

the Rat Man, Elizabeth von R., Freud's dream of the botanical monograph, Dora and transference, Plato's divisions of the soul, and so on. Throughout, Lear insistently returns the psychoanalytic and philosophical issues to questions of living.

Lear is employed as a philosopher on the University of Chicago's prestigious Committee on Social Thought, as well as being a practising psychoanalyst. He is the author of a number of excellent academic books and articles on philosophy and psychoanalysis, including *Love and its Place in Nature* and *Therapeutic Action* (engagingly subtitled *An Earnest Plea for Irony*). This book, however, is slightly different. On the one hand, it is a summa or recapitulation of much of his thought to date; on the other, it's an excellent introduction for common readers who are interested in psychoanalysis and what uses it may have today. Clear, well-informed, beautifully argued, I wholeheartedly recommend this book, which comes plastered with enthusiastic cover encomia from such luminaries as Richard Rorty, Sebastian Gardner and Slavoj Žižek. But I also have a few caveats, which I will discuss a little further on.

Lear is careful to underline that his is a *philosophical* introduction. This means that *Freud* deals with problems that are of interest to philosophers—particularly analytic moral philosophers—in a psychoanalytic way. At the same time, Lear also tries to provide philosophical rationales for psychoanalytic claims. Yet this dual approach is not that of a detached observer, dispassionately presenting the arguments for and against a particular hypothesis. On the contrary, as I've already implied, Lear is a committed pragmatist, careful to gauge concepts against the standard of life, concerned to avoid armchair philosophy and systematic deduction from first principles. As he comments: "Much of the criticism of psychoanalysis as extravagant—as well as much of the emptiness of academic debates—occurs because theoretical terms are invoked in isolation, cut off from clinical reality"(9). Lear means, then, that every philosophical account ought to be supported by a reference to practice if it is not to become merely misguided, mistaken or irrelevant. So it's no surprise that Lear quickly follows up his introductory punches by confronting contemporary moral philosophy and its dissociated idiocies (this is my phrase), its often ridiculously naïve beliefs in the modes and powers of reason, with the clinical evidence. Freud's case of the Rat Man, for instance, is proof that a deeply-reflective mind may not be, for all that, free: indeed, the Rat Man's "self-conscious reflection on his desires and impulses is a manifestation of his unfreedom"(12). The Rat Man deploys reflection precisely *to* exacerbate his sense of guilt and, as Freud notes in passing of another of his patients, obsessionals derive "considerable advantage" from their illness.

One can immediately recognise the trademark psychoanalytic moves in such inversions, whereby intelligent, informed, civilised, mild and liberal beasts start to look as deluded and vicious as their alleged irrational counterparts. Of course, psychoanalysis doesn't simply attack both rational and irrational prejudices; in Lear's terms, it rather forges a new distinction, that of "motivated unreason." This distinction is articulated with a remarkable theory of empirical metapsychology that resists positivism, and a new form of therapeutic praxis which aims to effect self-transformation through

affective but non-intrusive talk. The expert, the analyst, shuts up; the patient talks, about absolutely anything he or she can; they both then try to listen to what's being said with an attentiveness that goes beyond all other forms of intellectual exchange.

For psychoanalysis, of course, if people are acting for motivated unreasons, they cannot simply be apprised of the contradictions or inconsistencies in their beliefs. No one is going to respond to the truth by saying, gee, yeah, that's right, I'd just never thought of it like that. On the contrary, they are more than likely going to respond with denial, reproaches, accusations, abuse, even violent attacks, given their evident investment in their illusions. As Freud very quickly realised, you can't *reason* people out of their beliefs, especially when reason itself is part of the problem. As he says of obsessional behaviour (exemplified by the Rat-Man), the "predilection felt by obsessional neurotics for uncertainty and doubt leads them to turn their thoughts by preference to those subjects upon which all mankind are uncertain." Lear glosses: "in short, philosophical reflection can be used as a defense, blocking the self-understanding it purports to deliver"(13). This is where psychoanalysis really does take a step beyond the philosophical tradition: it cuts the Gordian knot of reflexive paradoxes by referring them to the divided life of the subject itself. Moreover, psychoanalysis claims that this human enthusiasm for motivated unreason is ultimately a form of *sexual* practice, and that sexuality is in some peculiar way at the heart of what it means to be human.

As Lear remarks with respect to Freud's early case study of Elisabeth von. R., who has come to see him because she is suffering, among other things, hysterical pains in her leg: "Freud's criticism is not about *what* she decides to do, but *how* she goes about living. So, when she comes home from her exciting night out and finds her father has gotten worse, she does not confront her conflicting feelings; rather, the pain in her leg gets worse"(62-3). Freud, in other words, does not hold Elisabeth morally responsible but *ethically* responsible for her actions. It is not that she's broken this or that moral code; on the contrary, she's a veritable epitome of the dominant codes, a lovely generous girl who's just trying to look after her poor sick father. She is in no way immoral. But she *is* unethical. Confronted with an ethical deadlock, the hysteric refuses the necessity to decide consciously, and falls sick instead: the compromise formation that is the artificial, hysterogenic symptom is the undone-deliberation's emissary in the field of the flesh. Trauma is crippling, wordless intensity that expresses itself through dissimulating representatives. Yet it is also somehow bound up with the fact of language, with a problem that is at once linguistic and unspeakable, obscene. What's unbearable for so many people about psychoanalysis is precisely its rendering of sexuality the central, Protean fact of human being.

If all this sounds nothing more than yet another re-edition of a "Psychoanalysis for Beginners," this isn't quite the case. One has to follow Lear's arguments in their detail, precisely because his concern is to give a decent philosophical justification to basic psychoanalytic claims. His analysis of Donald Davidson is exemplary. Davidson's interpretations of apparently anomalous behaviours rest on seeing such actions of agents as, first, entirely explicable from the point of view of certain beliefs they may hold; and,

second, by the fact that the beliefs of the agent must hang together holistically, that is, the beliefs must all share a dominant tenor or theme. To explain a set of actions, then, one needs to reconstruct a kind of coherent set of beliefs of the agent which explain the apparent behavioural anomalies. In some cases, however, it will only be possible to explain actions of an agent if these actions are referred to two separate “minds,” each with their own specific sets of reasons for doing things.

Lear thinks this “in two minds” kind of explanation, that Davidson gives with respect to the Rat Man, is erroneous.⁵ For Lear, it fails on at least the following grounds: 1) “it makes the unconscious look more rational than it often is”(27), and may imply there is a kind of tampering with the evidence here on the *presumption* of rationality; 2) it becomes necessary to ascribe to the agent an enormous number of other beliefs...in order to explain a single anomalous action. Now, 1) suggests that a too-rigorously prosecuted principle of charity clearly sins against the available evidence, while 2) clearly suggests there have been sins against Ockham’s razor in the unnecessary proliferation of complexity. For Lear, a better, simpler explanation is that: “Mr R ‘learns’ to trigger anxiety in himself, but he has no conscious awareness that he is doing this. And this activity is occurring at a more primitive level than that of belief, desire and intention”(37). The principle of charity is incapable of discerning, let alone accounting for, the incredible subtleties of behaviour revealed by psychoanalysis.

So psychoanalysis offers new kinds of explanation for actions that do not rely on the imputation of certain beliefs, coherence, or reason in the subject; by the same token, psychoanalysis doesn’t dismiss these features either. And it doesn’t stop there. For psychoanalysis is, above all “a *practical skill*,” even “a master-craft: as concert pianists dedicate themselves to music, so can psychoanalysts dedicate themselves to the human psyche. In both cases, the overarching art is the art of communication”(51). For Lear, then, psychoanalysis is above all a practice that picks up and intensifies the ancient Socratic ethical question: how to live? And: what is the right way to ask this question? What sort of answers might be of the right kind? And what are good and effective ways to go about changing one’s life?

III. AGAINST LEAR

Although I find much of Lear’s account convincing, I have a number of difficulties

5. The incident is as follows, followed by a fragment of Lear’s gloss:

“He is walking along a road on which he knows his lady-friend will later be traveling in a carriage. He removes a stone from the road so that the carriage will not be damaged. A bit later he feels compelled to go back to replace the stone in the road.”

There are two aspects of this moment which command our attention. First, Mr R cannot himself say what he is doing in the latter part of his act. Obviously, he knows he is replacing a stone—he can track his behavior—but he doesn’t know why. Thus his own behavior has become puzzling to him. Second, the latter half of the act looks like what Freud calls a “critical repudiation” of the first half. Mr R knows that he originally removed the stone out of love and concern for his lady-friend, but he has no idea why he replaced it” (24).

with it that can probably be correlated with our affiliations to different psychoanalytic orientations. What follows, then, should be understood as an attempt to trace why Lear deals with certain elements in Freud's work in the way that he does. If I will suggest that Lear's project betrays some serious limitations, this ought not be taken as a rejection: rather, as Harold Bloom provocatively insists, Freud is such a strong writer because he contains, as he exceeds, all his possible interpretations.

For example, and although this is perhaps at first glance a minor point, Lear suggests that: "Were he living today, Freud would likely be a neuroscientist, and not a therapist of any kind"(7). I cannot for the life of me see what the argumentative point of this remark is. First of all, it is a completely *unsubstantiable* speculation. Second, it is not a *plausible* speculation: it assigns motivations to Freud that the evidence doesn't really support. If Freud indeed writes that he finds "rest and full satisfaction at last" when working in Ernst Brücke's laboratory, this is at best a juvenile epistolary confession, and to make anything too grand of it is to succumb to pre-psychoanalytic biographical naivety. In my opinion, the evidence massively suggests that Freud was far too restless and ambitious to spend his life sexing eels. Third, this is not in any case a speculation that is called for by the material, or by Lear's narrative. It is thus a completely *supernumerary* speculation. Unsubstantiable, implausible and supernumerary: such a remark therefore evinces what Freud called a "kettle logic," a particularly pure form of motivated unreason.

What, then, might Lear be up to? He certainly implies that Freud's major interest was not a therapeutic one; at best, that the therapy was the consequence of theory, and not the other way round. But is this not exactly what Lear complains about in some philosophers, that they prefer to theorize without proper regard to practical realities? Is it then a covert slight against Freud, to suggest that he never would have come to analysis of his own accord? Or that Freud wasn't *really* interested in curing people? This would be a particularly strange imputation given Lear's emphasis throughout on the pragmatics of psychoanalysis. At the very least, this statement insinuates a misleading genealogy for the emergence of psychoanalysis.

Here's another small but also telling point, linked to my first. Lear engages in a very irritating re-naming of famous figures. The Rat Man becomes "Mr R," Anna O. "Ms O," Fräulein von R "Ms R," and so on. Lear's justification seems to be that he is showing these figures a respect they don't get when they're reduced to mere monikers (just as he calls Osama Bin-Laden "Mr Bin-Laden"). Perhaps so. But it quickly begins to seem more and more like a poor and slightly puzzling joke instead: "Ms O," for example, sounds more like she's out of a sado-masochistic pulp novel (*The Story of Ms O*), than an important figure in her own right. Indeed, she could *never* have been "Ms O" in the first place: there were no "Mss" at the time, and that is precisely one of the unexpected, belated messages of *Studies in Hysteria*. That a woman of the time could be *only* a Fräulein or a Frau is a fact that, psychoanalysis shows, has serious implications for mental health. Symptomatically, Lear doesn't ever refer to Freud as "Mr Freud" (or even "Dr Freud"), though these clearly are acceptable appellations, nor of "Mr F." Nor has he spoken of "Mr Charcot" or "Mr Davidson."

So there's some evidence of ambivalence in Lear's presentation, presumably directed towards Freud himself. This ambivalence reaches fever-pitch around the question of repetition. So it's no surprise that the phrase "over and over again" recurs—dare I say it?—over and over again throughout this book. When Freud changes his drive-hypothesis in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* on the evidence of returned soldiers suffering repetitive nightmares, it's because it's clear that the pleasure principle can no longer be the ultimate determinant of mental life. Rather, the soldiers' recurrent distressing dreams are better understood as attempts to master trauma retroactively through compulsive repetition. Freud seizes on this compulsion to repeat as evidence of another kind of drive: the death drive.

Lear protests:

But why assume that a mind that has been so damaged by trauma is operating according to a more original function? Why not simply assume instead that the mind has been damaged? As such, it may have difficulty operating according to any principle. On this interpretation, there is no primordial principle *beyond* the pleasure principle; there is mental breakdown. (156)

For Lear, we must therefore "abandon the idea that repetition is the *aim* of the compulsion"(158).⁶ This leads him to formulate a leaner, but by no means meaner, account of repetition. On the one hand, repetition for Lear is not expressed by the identifiably same act or objects, but by the same pulsion seizing on apparently radically different elements. The objects differ but the aim remains the same. On the other hand, this aim for Lear is split: there are neurotic repetitions and virtue repetitions (see his analysis of courage on pp. 151-153). In fact, there are what he rather barbarously nominates "neurtues" (a portmanteau word comprised of "neurotic" and "virtues"), in which creativity is put in the service of rigid and reactive ends. So repetition can be either the index of an enduring pathology (i.e., an unconscious fixation) or the index of something that expresses itself only in its repetitions (i.e., virtue). This distinction between types of repetition (neurotic/virtuous) conforms exactly to the distinction that Freud makes in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* between "active" and "passive" modes of repetition.

This is all very well, but it depends for whatever validity it has on a dismissal of Freud's empirical evidence, notably the famous "*fort-da*" game. For Lear, Freud's error vis-à-vis the death drive derives from a blind insistence on discerning the same repetition phenomena everywhere. But if the *fort-da* game has any explanatory power at all, it must frustrate Lear's argument, i.e., it is evidence that an *undamaged* infantile mind is indeed operating *on the same principle as those of the shell-shocked soldiers*. So Freud *can* at once assume that trauma might be revelatory of a hitherto unknown primordial

6. For Lear, if we get rid of the death-drive, this leaves us with two explanatory possibilities: 1) "we might be witnessing a repeatedly failed attempt to master a trauma."(158), in which case "the compulsive repetitiveness would be an epiphenomenal manifestation of the mind's failure to keep functioning"(158); 2) "the mind becomes active with respect to traumatic disruption. It disrupts itself. This is the formation of a primitive defense which I have earlier called the anxiety defense"(158). In other words, Lear will do anything to stick to pre-death-drive Freud.

function, and that this function cannot coherently be considered, say, a *mimetic* one (as might be tempting if one considered children's games alone). Again, Freud's genius is manifest in his marshalling of diverse evidences; it is by considering such evidences simultaneously that Freud can discern what they might share, without succumbing to whatever equivocations they may also present. One can then argue that Freud is not pointlessly proliferating agencies at all; indeed, Freud's speculative boldness in suggesting the death-drive is a consequence of his *dislike* of proliferating agencies. On this point, then, Lear's argument appears tendentious and weak.

Another notable failure is Lear's failure to deal with aesthetics. Though Lear admits that Freud thought more highly of literary works than he did of most philosophy, Lear doesn't even hint at the import that such an affinity might have for psychoanalysis itself. To my mind, if you don't take into account how important aesthetics (and literature in particular) is to Freud, you will miss something essential about psychoanalysis. It may be the case that his analytic philosophical training has reduced Lear's attentiveness to aesthetic issues. But there's no reason why he shouldn't pay more attention: after all, Richard Wollheim was an outstanding aesthete. And, indeed, aesthetics makes a kind of "return of the repressed" at the level of the metaphors that Lear deploys (for example, the peculiar analogy with concert pianists quoted above).

It is Lear's obsession with psychoanalysis as first and foremost an *ethical* practice that overruns all other interests, to the point where this obsession begins to skew his interpretations (it is presumably the root of his aesthetic blindness). Otherwise, how to explain the following, absolutely hallucinatory statement in regards to "Remembering, repeating and working through"? For Lear, this essay is allegedly Freud's "deepest meditation on transference. In my opinion, it is the most significant article Freud wrote: if all of his works were somehow lost except for this one, we would be able to reconstruct what is valuable in psychoanalysis"(133-4). First of all, this is a bizarre statement, redolent of the lascivious dreams of apocalyptic clerks ("If by some unthinkable catastrophe it happened that..."). Second, it is patently untrue. To harp on a point already made: what could never be reconstructed from this (admittedly) superb article of Freud's are the theoretical problems posed to analysis by *sublimation* (and thus also of the problem of aesthetic invention). For achieved literary works, as Freud recognises elsewhere, are not *simply* forms of repetition, nor *simply* of working-through. Sublimation cannot be simply equated with Lear's own preferred model of psychoanalytic cure. Third, Lear's declaration only makes sense if one assigns an *absolute* value to the ethical moment in Freud, at the expense of everything else. So Lear can also dismiss the writings on civilization and religion as "the least valuable aspect of Freud's work"(192). It's at moments like these that one actually looks for a little more of the Davidsonian charity that Lear has already dispensed with....

I believe that the aforementioned features (the kettle-logic, the stylistic ambivalences, the downgrading of aesthetics and the death-drive), taken together, are symptoms of unassimilated residues of American ego-psychology trying to work their way out

through Lear.⁷ Not that there's anything wrong with that, as Seinfeld says, but it does have a number of consequences for Lear's project. It turns him into, despite himself, a good Kantian liberal, insofar as he insists that there's something immature about, say, the rat-man's actions, which "is a surrogate for emotional integration"(40). If Lear persuasively criticises Freud for relying on a covert providential vision of history, necessary if Freud is to have a fixed point from which to criticise religious illusions, Lear himself covertly relies upon a kind of integratory vision of individual development, that of the ego. This is in line with Lear's comments on Plato, for whom the soul's appetites and spiritual hungers (for recognition, honour, etc.) must be regulated in accordance with the dictates of reason. This is also why Lear is concerned to elevate Eros over the death-drive which, as we have seen, he dismisses as a superfluous hypothesis. But he too needs a shave from Ockham's razor, given his own conviction that ethical egoistic integration is the fundamental good.

Lear implies that, in the final analysis, the true difference between philosophy and psychoanalysis is that philosophers—his own overt models are Socrates, Plato and Aristotle—think humans *can* be happy with morality despite the conflicts of the world, whereas Freud thinks humans can never be happy even when the world seems to be on their side. For Freud, the decision humans have to make is this: between misery and unhappiness, between bad or worse. Lear takes the first option, the philosopher's option, at the cost of misrepresenting some critical features of Freud's work. In the end, there's too much love in Lear—and not enough death.

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7. Indeed, Lear is being faithful to his own teacher & analyst, Hans Loewald: as Lear notes, "a good interpretation, according to Loewald, does more than make the unconscious conscious. It offers the opportunity to integrate this newly found understanding into one's overall organizational structure," "The Introduction of Eros: Reflections on the Work of Hans Loewald." JAPA 44 (1996), pp. 673-4. As it happens, this is almost exactly Lear's position too, and he also follows Loewald in the downgrading of the death-drive....