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4 The interpretation of dreams

The Interpretation of Dreams is often regarded as Freud's most valuable book, and it was pivotal in his work.[1]

Freud began his psychological investigations by following up an insight of his senior colleague Joseph Breuer. One of Breuer's patients was a very intelligent and articulate young woman diagnosed as hysterical. Breuer inquired into her symptoms in great detail, and discovered that they were connected with her emotional life in a number of ways.

In particular, she and Breuer could often trace the beginning of a symptom to an event that had been significant to her but that she had forgotten. Where this was so, moreover, the symptom itself could be seen to be connected with feelings related to this event, which she had not previously expressed. Such symptoms thus had a meaningful connection with events and motives in the patient's life. And they were relieved when she brought these events to consciousness and felt and expressed the motives connected with them.

She was, for example, afflicted for some time with an aversion to drinking, which persisted despite "tormenting thirst." She would take up the glass of water she longed for, but then push it away "like someone suffering from hydrophobia." Under hypnosis she traced this to an episode in which a companion had let a dog – a "horrid creature" – drink water from a glass. She relived the event with great anger and disgust; and when she had done so, the aversion ceased, and she was able to drink without difficulty.

Thus, apparently, this particular symptom owed its origin to this

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episode (and also, of course, to the background, including motive, which the patient brought to it). The causal link between episode and symptom seems marked in the content of the symptom itself, since both were concerned with such topics as drinking water, disgust, anger, and refusal. So the symptom could be seen as expressing memories or feelings about something of which the patient was no longer conscious.[2]

Freud repeated Breuer's observations in other cases, and extended them by investigating the psychological background and significance of symptoms of other kinds. This meant that he asked his patients about their lives, motives, and memories in great detail.

Freud was a probing and determined questioner. He found, however, that the most relevant information emerged when his patients followed the spontaneous flow of their thoughts and feelings. So he asked them to describe this as fully as possible, and without seeking to make their passing ideas sensible, or indeed to censor or control them in any way. No one had previously sought so fully to relax the rational and moral constraints upon one person's description of thought and feeling to another, and this proved a valuable source of information. The drift of thought, once undirected and unimpeded, led by itself to the topics Freud had previously found important through questioning, and to others whose significance he had not suspected. Freud called this process of self-description "free association."

Freud had kept records of dreams for some years. He soon found that these too could be understood as linked with memories and motives that emerged in the course of free association. In investigating these connections, moreover, he could use his own case as well. So he began the same kind of psychological study of himself as he conducted on his patients, centered on the analysis of his dreams.

As this work progressed, Freud realized that his and Breuer's previous findings about symptoms were better represented in terms of the model he was developing for dreams.[3] He thus framed an account of symptoms and dreams that was relatively simple and unified. Moreover, as he soon saw, this could be extended to other phenomena in which he had taken an interest, including slips, jokes, and works of art. *The Interpretation of Dreams* thus sets out the paradigm through which Freud consolidated the first, pathbreaking phase of his psychological research, conducted as much upon himself as upon

his patients.[4] In what follows we will try to understand the nature and role of this paradigm.

I. MOTIVE, MEANING, AND CAUSALITY

Our most basic and familiar way of understanding the activities of persons – either our own, or those of others – is by interpreting them as actions resulting from motives,[5] including beliefs and desires. In everyday life we do this naturally and continuously. Thus we see someone moving toward a tap, grasping a glass, and so on, and interpret this in terms of his wanting a drink, and so moving because he takes this to be the way to get one. Again, we hear certain sounds, and take these as someone's asking for a drink, and so regard them as ultimately derived from a desire to do this, and a belief that making those sounds is a way of doing so.

This is a fundamental kind of psychological thinking, and one that partly defines our conceptions of mind and action. It is at once interpretive and explanatory. It is interpretive because, as such examples illustrate, assigning motives enables us to make sense of what people say and do. It is explanatory because we take the motives we thus assign to be causes within persons which prompt their actions, and which, therefore, serve to explain them.[6]

As we shall be seeing, Freud cast light on dreams and symptoms also by relating them to motives. In this he stressed both the hermeneutic and causal aspects of commonsense thinking. He spoke of the interpretation of dreams, and of finding the sense of dreams and symptoms. Finding the sense of something, however, meant showing that it stood in an intelligible connection with a motive or system of motives, and hence locating it in an order of interpretable psychological causes. And Freud took this to be part of the causal order of nature generally.[7]

The hermeneutic and causal aspects of explanation by motive are, in fact, deeply interwoven and closely coordinated. We can begin to see this – and to appreciate its significance – if we focus on the way that our capacity to use our commonsense psychology of motive is linked with our knowledge of language.

The close connection between language and motive shows in the fact that motives characteristically have, or can be given, what we may call *linguistic articulation*.[8] For example, as we may put it, we

do not merely desire, hope, or fear; we desire, hope, or fear *that S*, where "S" admits of replacement by any of a great range of sentences of our language.

In virtue of this motives can be said to have a kind of content, which sentences (as well as single words and phrases) are used to specify. For example, if we say that John believes (hopes, fears, or whatever) that Freud worked in Vienna, we thereby articulate John's motive by using the sentence "Freud worked in Vienna." This means that the content of the motive is that Freud worked in Vienna. The content is that given by the sentence.

A sentence contained in an ascription of motive in this way serves to describe the mind of the person to whom we ascribe the motive. But the sentence also, and at the same time, relates to reality. The usual purpose of the sentence is to specify how things are in the world, if it is true; and this is understood by all who know what the sentence means. In describing motives in this way, therefore, we represent our minds as engaged with the world – with the situations or states of affairs that would render the articulating sentences true. Where a desire, hope, or fear is *that S*, the situation that would render "S" true is also that which would satisfy the desire, realize the hope or fear, and so on.

This is part of what is sometimes called the intentionality, or object-directedness, of the mental. The mind of someone who believes that Freud worked in Vienna can be said to be directed on that man, and that city, and on his working there. Likewise if someone desires that he himself work in Vienna – again he is concerned with that person, that place, and so forth. The matter is the same, again, if he fears being poor, or the dark. The description tells us what object, situation, or aspect of reality he has (as we say) in mind.

Thus we can say that each motive of the kind we are considering has a corresponding phrase or sentence, which is tailor-made for it, and which shows its intentional content, that is, how it relates to the world. Such sentences specify conditions in reality, to which motives are related in characteristic ways, according to their type. Thus beliefs are related by such sentences or phrases to the conditions in which they would be true;[9] desires, to the conditions in which they would be satisfied; hopes and fears, to the conditions in which they would be realized; and so forth, through the sorts of motives whose contents bear on how things are.

In this way the language we speak, and the motives we ascribe in mutual understanding, fit together as if designed for each other (as, presumably, they were by evolution). An important consequence of this, I think, is that our capacity to understand the one serves also for the other. That is, we are able to understand motives, in good part, through understanding the sentences that articulate them.

In understanding a language we are able to understand an unlimited number of sentences, on the basis of the words in them and the way they are put together. For we understand sentences that are new to us, generally without effort, provided we know their grammar and the words in them.

When we understand an indicative sentence, we know how to relate it to the world, in the sense that we know the situation in which it would be true. Thus in understanding "Freud was a scientist" we know that it is true just if Freud was a scientist. We may miss this because it is so obvious that it goes without saying. But it is real knowledge, which relates that sentence and the world; and it goes without saying precisely because we do understand the sentence, and so already grasp the relation in question.

Again, in understanding, say, "All scientists are fallible" we know that it is true just if all scientists are fallible. Clearly there is a pattern here. We can indicate it by saying that for many a sentence "S" which we understand, we know something of the form:

"S" is true just if S.

Because in knowing a language we understand indefinitely many such sentences, this pattern picks out indefinitely many things we thereby know, or can become aware of.

As well as knowing the conditions in which sentences which we understand are true, we know how they relate to one another by implication. Someone who understands both "Freud was a scientist" and "All scientists are fallible," for example, will know that if both are true, so is "Freud was fallible." Clearly, again, we know, or can readily acknowledge, relations of this kind among countless sequences of sentences. We can put this by saying that often in knowing how one pair (triple, etc.) of sentences relates to the world, we are thereby able to know how another sentence does. This knowledge can be said to be of the form, for example:

If S_1 and S_2 are true, so is S_3.

Here also such relations coincide with ways in which we naturally think. Someone who is capable of knowing the above implications, for example, and who believes that all scientists are fallible, will tend to believe that Freud was fallible, if he believes that Freud was a scientist. Or again, if he thinks that Freud is infallible, he may change his mind about the fallibility of scientists, or deny that Freud was one. Whichever of these ways he thinks, he does so in accord with this pattern of implication, which links the truth of the first two sentences to that of the third. Each sentence we understand naturally links with others, and takes us to still others, and likewise for our thoughts, as our attention, interests, and the like direct.

Now as is familiar, almost everyone is capable of understanding sentences and their relations of implication on the basis of words. This seems to be a basic, and perhaps innate, human capacity. And this, it seems, goes with something like psychological understanding, of the motives that we articulate by sentences.

For, clearly, if we understand the "S" in an instance of "Jones fears that S," then we thereby know the situation Jones fears. And in knowing this we are thereby able to apprehend something about what things are like for Jones in his fear. Also, we know something about how this fear will interact with his other motives, and how this will bear on his behavior. For the impact of his fear will depend upon how Jones thinks about the situation he fears; and we know much about this in knowing the patterns of implication connecting the sentence that describes his fear with those in terms of which the rest of his motives are described. If I know that someone fears that he will wind up in poverty, but believes that if his friends stand by him this will not happen, then I know of further beliefs about his friends and what they will or will not do, that may comfort or alarm him. And the pattern of my thought is naturally poised to extend itself through this network of possibilities along with his, and will do so if he gives me a clue. Thus, it seems, understanding the sentences that articulate motives at once puts us *en rapport* with the minds of others, and enables us to grasp the interactive role, which these motives play as causes. Knowledge of meaning, for articulated motives, yields apprehension of situation, and of causal role, as one.

This, I think, illustrates the way in which our system of common-

sense psychological explanation is one in which our understanding of linguistic meaning and motivational cause work in natural harmony. Motives, as their name implies, are psychological causes. The phenomenon of articulation, however, makes clear that these are causes whose working is encoded in language – causes, that is, whose working is sensitive to, or coordinate with, the meanings of the terms standardly used to describe them. Hence we find that causal relations in the field of motive are mapped by relations of meaning in the field of language. In particular, as we see above, causal relations among motives are mapped by relations of implication among sentences, and causal relations between motive and reality by those between sentence and situation. Commonsense psychology thus shares the system and structure of language, so that hermeneutic understanding, and grasp of the causes of behavior, form a unity.

Part of this coordination of meaning and causality shows clearly in the basic case of desire. Desires are commonly described in terms of what they are desires for, that is, the things that would satisfy them. These, however, are precisely the actions or situations that desires serve to bring about, when they are acted on. (A desire to get a drink, e.g., if someone acts on it intentionally, should produce an action of getting a drink.) So, plainly, the linguistic articulation (or content) of a desire serves to describe it as a cause, in terms of an effect which that cause is supposed to produce when it operates in a certain way. In understanding the description of a desire, therefore, we already know a central feature of its causal role, that is, what it is supposed to do.

Only realistic desires can be satisfied, so desires are constantly informed by beliefs. Thus if someone desires to get a drink, and believes that the way to do so is to ask for a drink, he will ordinarily form a desire to ask for a drink. We form desires from other desires and beliefs in this way naturally and without reflection – the process is an instance of the natural interest-directed thinking mentioned above. This thinking too involves a pattern of implication, which we can grasp as holding among terms or sentences: We move from desire (to A) and belief (the way to A is to B) to further desire or action (to B). So here again our understanding of the contents of desires and beliefs, and the patterns that relate them, goes with an intuitive grasp of the way they work. The dynamics of motive, that

is, are again encoded in the linguistic roles of the terms and sentences that describe their contents.[10]

Now we can see something more about the commonsense link between content and causality by drawing on another closely connected idea. We regard many causes as bearers or transmitters of a kind of causal order, which we describe in terms of information. We speak of the structured groove on a gramophone record,[11] for example, as containing information about sound. This, in turn, can be taken as information bearing on either the past or future – as about a particular performance sounded, or again about how this record will sound, if played. This is because the record owes its structure to that of the events of the past performance, and in virtue of this structure can be used to shape events in a related way in the future.

When a desire causes an action, it also shapes and informs that action, in the sense that the desire determines and orders the parts and properties of the action. If I sing the national anthem because I want to, my desire will be responsible for my singing certain words and notes, making certain quite particular sounds and movements in a certain order, and so on. Surely in this case also there is again a transfer of order, or information; from desire as cause to action as effect. We mark successful transfer of this kind by describing the action as we describe the desire. Actions that go right are those that go as desired; and this means that they can be described in the same terms as (the content of) the desire that prompted them.

This means that the functioning of desires can be described in another way. A desire transmits an order to actions that is partly described by the content of the desire. So we can see the description of content itself as a description of the kind of order, or information, that is passed from desire to action. We can see desires that is, as *causes that transmit content to their effects.* And for causes that do this, it seems, we mark the causal connection hermeneutically, by a connection in (description of) content between cause and effect.

The same holds for belief. We have seen that beliefs are described in terms of the conditions that would render them true. This marks the fact that beliefs are supposed to bear information about reality, and so are meant to be shaped to accord with it. Beliefs are thus supposed to derive their content from reality, just as actions derive theirs from desires. Beliefs are thus shaped by the world in perception. Roughly, to perceive that S is to have reason to believe that S,

which is caused in an appropriate information-transmitting way by the situation that renders "S" true. So here again there is an information-bearing causal line, which we mark in terms of transmitted content.[12]

Likewise, again, for the shaping of desire by belief. Where an agent's desire is informed by his beliefs, the content of the beliefs is transmitted to the desires, and thence to action. This kind of transfer, as we saw above, fits a characteristic pattern, which links truth and satisfaction. By the pattern, the truth of an agent's belief (the way to A is to B) entails that the satisfaction of his final desire (to B) will secure that of his initial one (to A). So the pattern indicates not only how desire and belief naturally interact, but also how this is a function of the relations to the world that their articulating sentences specify (how the truth-conditions of beliefs are supposed to shape, or enter into, the satisfaction-conditions of desires). This in turn marks the way in which reality informs thought, one thought informs another, and thought informs action.

The case is similar with other motives. If someone decides to avoid what he fears, the content of his fear will enter that of his desires in a particular way – as specifying the situations he now wants to keep away from; likewise, again, if he accepts that he must honor an obligation, perform a duty, and so forth. The mark of the operation of motive is thus the transmission of content: The production of further motive or behavior with content that is the same as that of the cause, or appropriately derived from it. This being so, we can trace the operations of motive by the interpretation of content. Our language of motive is a natural system for the hermeneutic grasp of psychological causal role.

This means that our commonsense psychology of motive uses our mental capacities in a particularly concentrated and effective way. By describing motives by way of the words and sentences we use for describing the world, we harness both the full descriptive range of natural language for specifying similarities and differences among the causes of behavior, and the full synthesizing and projecting power of linguistic understanding for grasping the import of these specifications. This use of cognitive resources makes this everyday way of thinking a uniquely flexible and efficient mode of psychological explanation. It is not just that we have no alternative that affords comparable insight or predictive power[13] (although of course we do

not). Rather, it seems unclear that any such alternative is possible – that anything else could enable us to process such important information about ourselves, or to do this so well. For no description of our psychology that did not thus embed our description of the world could so directly reflect the way we are engaged with it, and hence the ways in which our attitudes toward worldly situations move us.

The underlying causal situation of course admits of description in other terms. Thus one might suppose that desires are in fact realized by inner representations or models of potential movements and actions, which function to shape the actions they produce.[14] (Such a model would be one sort of cause that could form its effect in the appropriate content-transmitting way.) A belief could likewise be said to involve a representation, shaped to model the situation to which it relates, and operating to form others, namely those in desires and other beliefs. The content-related causal role of other aspects of commonsense psychology could also be described in this way; and there is no barrier to thinking of the relevant representations or models as structures in the brain. But the remarkable thing about commonsense thinking is precisely that it *does not* present such mechanisms in such terms, but rather only via their linguistic articulation. For this gives them in a form that enables us to grasp their causal role in thought and action so naturally, rapidly, and intuitively that we need not even realize we are doing so.

These considerations suggest that there can be no conflict, but rather a natural and pervasive harmony, between the hermeneutic activity of interpretation and the causal explanation of behavior. We interpret one another by finding the right words or meanings – in effect by assigning sentences to motives, and hence ultimately to behavior. But this is also understanding one another in terms of causes that pass content to their effects and have conditions of satisfaction that they operate to secure. The finding of sense or meaning, the articulation of object- and satisfaction-directedness, and the establishing of commonsense causal order, are one and the same.

And so, as it happens, our natural criteria for sound interpretation, based on content, are at the same time criteria for good causal explanation. Thus for example the better a particular pair of instances (desire and action, say) match in content, the better we take the former to explain the latter. Thus we take a desire to sing the national anthem to be particularly well suited to explain someone's

singing the national anthem; for here, as in other cases, desire and action overlap in content. So generally, ascribing a desire will provide the best explanation we can manage for the complex, ordered sequence of events involved in an action. We can readily understand this in causal terms. The comprehensive matching shows that the cause has the features required to explain those of the effect; and each point of comparison renders the alternative, that the two are merely coincidentally related, less likely.

Also, we seek explanations relating to contents that are deep – in which factors like significant desires or emotions, or traits of character, are derivationally related to a whole range of behavior. This is partly because the derived items are thereby shown to share, and hence to have been shaped by, a common requirement as to conditions of satisfaction. An ideal, so far as these criteria are concerned, would be the derivation of the greatest possible range of behavior from the fewest motives, by steps between each of which there was the greatest possible interlocking of content. This, we can now see, is also an ideal of economic, comprehensive, and reliable causal explanation.

Freud's topic in what follows is interpretation, and the hermeneutic demands he makes on the reader are great. So it may be worth bearing in mind that these are demands for sensitivity to a certain sort of presentation of causes. Nor, despite its complexity, can interpretation be dispensed with in any case. No discipline can give us a grasp of phenomena that is surer than our understanding of the language in which they are couched. And this understanding is continuous with that of motive, and created and sustained in the commonsense interpretive practice whose nature and extension we are now considering.[15]

II. DREAMS AND MOTIVES

One of the main claims of the *Interpretation* is that dreams are wish-fulfillments. It will prove worth seeing what is involved in this as clearly as possible. So let us begin with one of Freud's simplest examples. Freud noticed that frequently when he had eaten anchovies or other salted food he would dream *that he was drinking delicious cool water.* Then he would wake up, find himself thirsty, and

have to get a drink (1900a, IV, 123). This is a familiar and, it seems, transparent sort of dream.

Clearly there is a content–content relation between Freud's motives and his dream. One of his motives is that he is thirsty, and his dream is that he is slaking his thirst. It can be no coincidence that a person should have this sort of dream when thirsty, so we assume that the thirst caused the dream. This is another instance of the fit between content and causality. The relation in content is evidence that here – as in the case of desire and action – thirst is working as a cause that transmits content to an effect. If we are to understand the dream in this way, however, we need the cause to have the requisite articulation: We must regard the thirst as focused on a particular kind of satisfaction, the cool drink that appears in the dream. Accordingly, Freud assumes that the thirst gave rise to a wish to drink, which the dream represents as satisfied.

This is in fact the ascription of a new motive, a dream-wish. It seems to implement the simplest possible hypothesis about the transmission of content from thirst to the dream – namely, that the thirst gave rise to an intermediary with a content that was realized in the dream. Such a hypothesis assimilates the production of the dream to the kind of transmission familiar from wishful thinking or imagining, in which desires or wishes cause representations of their own satisfaction. Hence the dream can be called a wish-fulfillment.

This is closely analogous to a very basic commonsense understanding of an action. If someone is thirsty and gets a drink, we will assume that he is doing what he wants. Here also we introduce an explanatory item – a desire to get a drink – which arises from the thirst and constitutes an articulation of it, and which we take to shape, and thus to determine the content, of the action we observe. This is precisely the role of the dream-wish; except, of course, that it shapes a dream, rather than an action, of drinking.

This difference is also important. In the case of desire and action, transmission and satisfaction go together – the content-bearing effect really satisfies the motive that shapes it. In the case of wish and dream this is not so. The satisfaction of a wish to drink cool water would be an actual drink, not a dream; and in fact the dreamer's real underlying thirst remains unslaked. The process of wishful imagining generally produces only representations of satisfaction, and not

real satisfaction. So while acting on a desire is a paradigm of rationality, representing the satisfaction of a wish in this way is not.

Indeed, wish-fulfillment can be seen as a paradigm of irrationality. To the dreamer, it seems as if he is active and satisfying his thirst; in reality, he is supine, and (so to speak) merely fobbing himself off, with a hallucination that, however pleasant, can at best bring temporary relief. So in a sense the dreamer is self-deceived, both about how things are with him (his motives and their gratification), and about how things are in the world (what he is actually doing). The illusion of which he is the author may, moreover, actually work to prevent his acting rationally; for so long as he imagines that he is drinking, he may be impeded from forming, or acting on, a real desire to drink.

Thus Freudian wish-fulfillment can be seen in two ways: as a marginal kind of satisfaction, in which a motive is allowed only imaginary gratification (although this may be the best that is possible for some motives); or as a kind of frustration, in which its form of expression actually prevents a motive from influencing action directly. This last feature makes clear that the role of dream-wishes is very different from that of desires, despite their having the same kind of content, in the sense of real conditions of satisfaction.

We generally speak of wishing rather than wanting where we take real satisfaction to be out of the question. Hence we may wish that we were younger, or that the past had been different, but do not take ourselves to desire such things. And since the role of wishes is not to produce actions, but rather to be related to imaginings or other expressions, we do not require that wishes be reasonable, sensible, or consistent.

Yet precisely for this reason, wishes can be especially informative. They are derived from motives, and articulate them, but are not realistically constrained. So, arguably, they can show what the conditions of satisfaction of the motives underlying them would be, if those motives could operate without hindrance from reality and rationality. This can be illustrated by the dream of drinking. The dream-wish is aimed at a drink that is particularly delicious, cool and satisfying – such, in fact, as occurs only in a dream. Freud may never have had such a drink, and this will not be the kind of drink he seeks when awake. Nevertheless, it seems, the dream may tell us something about his underlying motives, which his mundane realis-

tic desire does not. It may indicate something about the kind of drink he would really like, if freed from the constraints of reality.

Freud gives other examples concerning motives that are simple and basic and, hence, show themselves in a way we can understand with no difficulty. Thus there are dreams of children, such as his little nephew and daughter. The boy had reluctantly handed Freud a birthday gift of cherries, and awoken the next morning exclaiming "Herman eaten all the chewwies"; and the two-year-old Anna, forbidden to eat for a day because of vomiting supposedly owed to strawberries, had called out excitedly in her sleep "Anna Fweud, stwawbewwies, wild stwawbewwies, omblet, pudden." Here, it is natural to think, the children's wishes for forbidden food can be read directly from their dreams (or, rather, probable dream-reports), which represent these wishes as satisfied (1900a, IV, 130).

The interpretation of dreams dealing with more complex motives is naturally more complex. To see this, let us turn to a fuller example, that of the specimen dream Freud first analyzed, and with which he begins his exposition of his theory, the dream of Irma's injection (1900a, IV 106–21). Part of the content of this is as follows:

> I said to [Irma] "If you still get pains, it's really only your fault." She replied: "If you only knew what pains I've got now in my throat and stomach and abdomen – it's choking me." I was alarmed and looked at her. . . . I thought to myself that after all I must be missing some organic trouble. I took her to the window and looked down her throat. . . . I at once called in Dr. M., and he repeated the examination and confirmed it. . . . a portion of the skin of the left shoulder was infiltrated . . . M. said: "There's no doubt it's an infection, but no matter; dysentery will supervene and the toxin will be eliminated." . . . We were directly aware, too, of the origin of the infection . . . my friend Otto had given her an injection. . . . Injections of that sort ought not to be made so thoughtlessly. . . . And probably the syringe had not been clean. (ibid., 107)

This dream, unlike the previous ones, does not *seem* wishful. Irma was a young patient with whom Freud and his family were on very friendly terms. Although the dream was not a distressing one, much of it treats of two anxieties: that Irma was seriously unwell and that Freud had failed to see that her illness was organic, not psychological. In the dream Freud was alarmed about this.

Such a dream can be understood, Freud held, only in the light of the

dreamer's associations to it, that is, what the dreamer thinks of, if he lets his thoughts flow without censorship, in connection with the elements of the dream. As noted, Freud had already found that material which emerged in this way enabled him to understand much about symptoms. In using the same procedure for self-analysis, he would write down what occurred to him in connection with elements of his dreams as it did so, even where this at first seemed senseless or irrelevant.

Some of the most straightforward material yielded by association concerns the events of the day that influenced the dream and that are in one way or another shown in it. Freud held that such "day residues" were to be found in almost every dream. Often one is simply reminded of the connected material as one contemplates the dream. In the case of the Irma dream, this information was at hand.

The doctors M. and Otto, who appear in the dream, were long-standing friends and colleagues of Freud's. M. was a leading figure in Freud's circle (probably in fact Breuer). Otto had recently been visiting Irma's family, and had been called away to give an injection to someone who was unwell. The day before the dream Otto had reported, on the basis of this visit, that Irma was looking "better, but not quite well." Freud had felt vaguely reproved by this comment on a mutual friend, and had in consequence written out Irma's case history on the night of the dream, in order show it to M., so as to justify himself.

Taken against this background of motive, the apparent anxieties of the dream can be seen to have a further significance. For Freud saw that wishes related to his desire not to be culpable for Irma's illness, and not to be at fault, seemed prominent both in the dream and in his associations to it. Thus in the dream he had said to Irma *"If you still get pains, it's really only your fault."*

> I noticed, however, that the words I spoke to Irma in the dream showed that I was specially anxious not to be responsible for the pains she still had. If they were her fault they could not be mine. Could it be that the purpose of the dream lay in this direction?

The wish that Freud took to be operative emerged shortly later. He writes the relevant part of the dream in italics, and then describes his associated thoughts.

I was alarmed at the idea that I had missed an organic illness. This, as may well be believed, is a perpetual source of anxiety to a specialist whose practice is almost limited to neurotic patients and who is in the habit of attributing to hysteria a great number of symptoms which other physicians treat as organic. On the other hand, a faint doubt crept into my mind – from where I could not tell – that my alarm was not entirely genuine. If Irma's pains had an organic basis, once again I could not be held responsible for curing them; my treatment only set out to get rid of *hysterical* pains. It occurred to me, in fact, that I was actually *wishing* that there had been a wrong diagnosis; for if so, the blame for my lack of success would have been got rid of.

This hypothesis – that he was wishing for a misdiagnosis, so as to be relieved from responsibility for Irma's pains – fits with material in the rest of the dream. For it shortly emerges that the illness which Freud had failed to diagnose was caused by Otto's injection. Thus the conclusion of the dream is that Freud was not responsible for Irma's pains, but that Otto was. The reproach that Freud had felt in Otto's remark was thus dreamed as deflected back onto Otto, via the injection that Otto had given someone else.[16]

Freud cites many further details of the dream and associations that cohere with this hypothesis, and even critical commentators have found it compelling. Let us, therefore, take its initial plausibility as granted, and concentrate rather on its implications.

A first point is the character of the wishes that are represented as fulfilled. From the vantage point of the *Interpretation* as a whole, these are relatively straightforward and superficial dream-wishes, unearthed by only a first layer of associations and memories. Nonetheless they already stand in striking contrast to motives from waking life. By everyday standards, for example, these wishes are egoistic, ruthless, and extreme. We should regard someone who acted on *desires* with these contents – who to escape an imagined reproach arranged for his friend and patient to be seriously ill, and for revenge threw the blame for this on another friend, the author of the supposed reproach – as criminal or worse. Likewise the way of thinking shown in the dream is radically defective: The reversal of Otto's reproach, for example, seems like a transparently childish "It's not *me* that's bad – it's *you*."

As well as extreme, these wishes are sharply at variance with

Freud's other motives. In consequence, the representation of their fulfillment seems alarming rather than pleasant, and the acknowledgment of them, even as mere dream-wishes, is not entirely easy. Thus take the wish that Irma be physically ill. Since she was Freud's friend and patient, this would have been a source of considerable distress in real life; and the situation was one of some alarm in the dream. Accordingly, in acknowledging the wish Freud says that he "had a sense of awkwardness at having invented such a severe illness for Irma simply in order to clear myself. It looked so cruel. . . ."

In light of their content we can readily imagine someone denying that he could possibly have such motives, even as dream-wishes. Yet Freud's self-ascription of them is clearly consistent with his being a decent enough man, physician, and so on. For evidently the desires that guide his actions have other contents and draw on other sources. (What Freud actually did to justify himself, for example, was to go over Irma's case, and write up a report to check with someone.) So here the difference between wish and desire, already apparent in the dream of drinking, becomes more significant.[17]

I mentioned earlier the idea that wishes give information about the nature of the motives that give rise to them, by providing what can be regarded as an unconstrained articulation of their content. This naturally applies also to the present example.

Here the idea would be that the motives engaged in Freud by Otto's remark found two expressions. One was Freud's fleeting and unclear feeling of annoyance at Otto, and his activity in writing up the case to show to a colleague whom he particularly respected. The other, which analysis has brought to the fore, was the imagined situation in which Irma was physically ill, and the same respected colleague observed that the blame for this was to be placed on Otto's malpractice.

In light of the second expression, on this view, we can see that Freud's underlying motives are to be regarded as considerably different than the first expression alone, or even Freud's sincere account before analyzing the dream, would suggest. The analysis reveals motives that are more extreme, less coherent, and possessed of further contents than could previously have been acknowledged. Thus even this first example, if typical, would suggest the possibility of considerable revision of our everyday understanding of motive.

This revision seems, moreover, to be prompted by reasoning with

a discernible pattern, which Freud used in other cases. It will be important to assess this; so let us try to describe it as carefully and fully as possible.

In the instances we have been considering, three sorts of elements – motives, wishes, and dreams – are hypothesized to fit a causal pattern.[18] As a first approximation, the pattern can be written as follows:

$$\text{Motive}(C_m) \rightarrow \text{Wish}(C_w) \rightarrow \text{Dream}(C_d).$$

(Here the arrow indicates a causal connection, and C_m, C_w, and C_d are supposed to stand for the contents of motive, wish, and dream, respectively.)

In typical instances of this pattern, as we have seen, the motive and dream are introduced, and their contents assigned, by previously accepted criteria. The wish, by contrast, is introduced by hypothesis, or inference to the best explanation, in the way we have been describing.

The series of inferences that lead to this pattern seem roughly to be the following: We begin with a dream-report, and memories or associations that support the ascription of motives in the normal way. So we have

(1) Motive (C_m), Dream (C_d),

for example, simplifying,

Motive (thirst), Dream (drinking); or
Motive (no responsibility), Dream (organic illness);
Motive (annoyance at Otto), Dream (Otto's malpractice);
etc.

We now notice that C_m and C_d are related in content, in such a way as to lead us to suppose that the one has influenced the other.[19] This is, clearly, an important aspect of the inference. So letting R stand for this relation, and symbolizing as before, we can write this as:

(2) R (C_m, C_d); therefore, $M(C_m) \rightarrow D(C_d)$.

This now appears as an instance of causal transmission of content, which we already take to be the mode of operation of motives. At this stage, however, the apparent connection still requires to be elucidated. We can see that there is good reason to take C_m and C_d to be causally related; but we do not yet see just how they are related. So

the observed connection in content and the presumed causal connection are still in need of explanation.

Next we notice that this can be taken as an instance of a familiar pattern, that of the commonsense phenomenon of wishful imagining. This, however, means interpolating a further element, the dream-wish, in the way described. So this interpolation is an inference that serves to explain two phenomena. It at once elucidates the connection between motive and dream, and also thereby provides a more detailed explanation of the content of the dream. Thus we get, as above,

(3) $M(C_m) \rightarrow W(C_w) \rightarrow D(C_d)$.

This formulation now needs to be qualified, to indicate that the inference to it includes claims about the mode of causality, or mode of transmission of content, connecting the elements. The motive gives rise to the wish by, say, wish-instigation, and the wish to the dream by wish-fulfillment. Wish-instigation, we assume, produces an articulation of motive that is less realistically constrained than those seen in action; and wish-fulfillment as it were reverses the sign on this articulation, representing it as fulfilled. So we have

(4) $M(C_m) - [wi] \rightarrow W(C_w) - [wff] \rightarrow D(C_d)$.

This registers constraints on the contents that may figure in this kind of pattern. The C_m must be related as required by what we are calling wish-instigation to the C_w; and the C_w must likewise be related as required by wish-fulfillment to the C_d.

These are significant requirements, which bear directly on the double explanatory role performed by the introduction of the dream-wish. The final elucidation of the initial connection between motive and dream is gained by seeing the dream as the result of the combined and complementary processes of wish-instigation and wish-fulfillment.

This is not arbitrary, because each of these processes has a characteristic effect on content, and the combination of these effects seems to be just what is to be observed, in the initial difference between motive and dream. (The difference seems relatively precisely accounted for, by what we know about the two kinds of transmission involved in the explanation.) And this in turn entails a more ade-

quate account of the content of the dream, by reference to a wish with the requisite content and mode of transmission. Also, this means that the content of the explanatory hypothesis is fixed by what it is introduced to explain. Because the hypothesis represents the content of the dream as derived from that of the wish, the content of the hypothesis is read, in part, directly from the dream.

This seems also to be the pattern we find in Freud's examples of the dreams of little Herman and Anna.[20] The exaggeration of motive in Herman's having eaten *all* the cherries (none for the old man to whom they were originally given), or in the ampleness of Anna's menu, again seem instances of what we are calling wish-instigation, which have then been passed on to the dream by wish-fulfillment. In these cases, however, the original motives are inferred on different, more circumstantial, grounds, in which the dream itself plays a role. And this too, I think, strikes us as having a degree of cogency worth getting on with.

Collecting these ideas, we can represent the kind of inference with which we are concerned as

From: $M(C_m)$, $D(C_d)$, such that $R\ (C_m, C_d)$
To: There is a $W(C_w)$, such that
$M(C_m) - [wi] \rightarrow W(C_w) - [wff] \rightarrow D(C_d)$

This is clearly only a preliminary specification, but it admits of some discussion as it stands. As we have already seen, this is a kind of inference that has apparently cogent instances. The cogency, in turn, seems owed to the relatively precise explanation that an inference provides for the phenomena upon which it is based, namely the particular relation of content that obtains between C_m and C_d. So there is reason to take this as a form of inference to the best explanation of the phenomena upon which it is based. (In this also it appears to cohere with commonsense psychology, since motives seem in general to be introduced as the best explanation for what they cover.)[21]

Because this seems a potentially cogent sort of reasoning, and one of a familiar general kind, it is hard to see how there could be a methodological objection to its use, provided of course that the conditions that account for its cogency are adhered to. Of course there can be bad interpretations of this kind – one does not have to read far

to find them. But in these, I think, we can see that the appropriate conditions of cogency are in fact not met, and that this accounts for their weakness.

These conditions include, at the outset, the accurate ascription of base motives, and also a degree of connection between motive and dream that is significant enough effectively to rule out coincidence. Hence, in general, a dream cannot be cogently interpreted without this kind of background. (The case is different where we take the wish-fulfilling character of the dream to be clear. So far as we accept that a dream is a wish-fulfillment, and also can read the wish in it, then we can omit further recourse to the background, because we already see the base in the dream, wishfully transformed. This is nearly the case, perhaps, with Herman and the cherries.)

As well as possessing a degree of internal cogency, this kind of inference can be tested in other commonsense ways. A person's motives for one action are characteristically linked in content with those for other actions. So, generally, we cross-check our ascription of motive in one case by comparison with others. Ascriptions with contents that repeatedly figure in explanation are thus borne out, while others that do not fit tend to be revised, or dropped altogether. This helps to ensure that the total account of motive that we build up as we come to know a person maximizes the kind of coherence of content that marks good causal explanation, as sketched here.

The kind of ascriptions Freud is dealing with here clearly admit of this kind of checking. We should certainly expect the kind of concern shown in this dream with *not being responsible for illness* to show up elsewhere in a doctor's life and thought, so that the role ascribed to it elsewhere could be compared with that hypothesized here.

The introduction of psychoanalytic interpretation, moreover, means that we can cross-check ascriptions not only as among motives explaining actions, but also in relation to those shown in dreams, symptoms, and so forth. Psychoanalysis thus strengthens commonsense psychology as it extends it, by adding to the materials that figure in confirming and disconfirming ascriptions of motive. And since psychoanalytic ascriptions are thus subject to our commonsense kind of cross-checking, the maximum use of this is also a condition of their cogency.

In this instance we can see that Freud's further analysis of the dream both confirms the conclusions reached so far, and places them in a new context that amplifies and explains them further. So let us go into some of the rest of the material that emerged in his associations, starting with the next but one.

In associating to the part of the dream in which he *took Irma to the window* Freud remembered that the way Irma stood by the window in the dream came from a real scene he had witnessed, in which Dr. M had examined another woman by a window, and pronounced that she had a diphtheritic membrane. The woman was a friend of Irma's, who suffered from hysterical choking.[22] Thus, Freud saw, the Irma in the dream was a sort of composite figure, who had been given her friend's position by the window, as well as her cough, and infiltrated membrane.

The diagnosis by M of a diseased membrane, which was both remembered from this scene and reproduced in the dream, was in turn linked[23] with other things Freud remembered, and which he had deep feelings about. His daughter Mathilde had been seriously ill, and diphtheria and diphtheritis had been considered in her case. Also, Freud had recently heard that membrane tissue from the nose of one of his patients had been killed off, as a result of her following his own example, in using cocaine for nasal treatments.[24]

Freud had been a very enthusiastic advocate of the medical use of cocaine, which he had taken as his own therapeutic discovery. This enthusiasm, as he now recalled, "had brought serious reproaches down on me." Also it had, as he said, "hastened the death of a dear friend." The friend suffered from incurable nerve pain, and was addicted to the morphia he used to relieve it. Failing to grasp that cocaine was also addictive, Freud suggested he use it instead. His friend was soon dependent on increasing doses of cocaine, and died six years later.

Moreover this death, it seemed, was connected in Freud's mind with another, which again involved injections, for which he would wish not to be responsible. For he now associated as follows:

I at once called in Dr. M., and he repeated the examination. . . . This reminded me of a tragic event in my practice. I had on one occasion produced a severe toxic state in a woman patient by repeatedly prescribing what was at that time regarded as a harmless remedy (sulphanol), and had hurriedly turned for assistance and support to my experienced senior colleague. . . .

My patient – who succumbed to the poison – had the same name as my eldest daughter . . . Mathilde.

We can thus see from Freud's associations that the question of responsibility for Irma was linked in his mind with other cases, which were more serious and painful. His enthusiasm as a would-be therapeutic pioneer, when directed to cocaine rather than psychoanalysis, had harmed one of his patients, and hastened the death of a friend by injections. In the case of Irma he was now thinking of justifying himself by seeking the opinion of M. This, however, was what he had done in the case of another patient who was not doing well, and whom he had actually killed by injections.

It seems clear that these associated memories also influenced the dream. They suggest, for example, that M's claim that *the toxin will be eliminated* refers back to the episode with the patient Mathilde, in which Freud, in consulting with M, must have hoped that the toxin that he had injected would not prove fatal. And they enable us to see more of the significance of the deflection on to Otto, made via the notion of injection. Here are Freud's final associations, as they drift toward what is most significant for understanding this aspect of the dream.

Injections of that sort ought not to be made so thoughtlessly. Here an accusation of thoughtlessness was being made directly against my friend Otto. I seemed to remember thinking something of the same kind that afternoon when his words and looks had appeared to show that he was siding against me. It had been some such notion as: "How easily his thoughts are influenced! How thoughtlessly he jumps to conclusions!" – Apart from this, this sentence in the dream reminded me once more of my dead friend who had so hastily resorted to cocaine injections. . . . I noticed too that in accusing Otto of thoughtlessness in handling chemical substances I was once more touching upon the story of the unfortunate Mathilde, which gave grounds for the same accusation against myself. . . .

And probably the syringe had not been clean: This was yet another accusation against Otto, but derived from a different source. I had happened the day before to meet the son of an old lady of eighty-two, to whom I had to give an injection of morphia twice a day. At the moment she was in the country and he told me that she was suffering from phlebitis. I had at once thought it must be an infiltration caused by a dirty syringe. I was proud of the fact that in two years I had not caused a single infiltration; I took constant pains to be sure that the syringe was clean. In short: I was conscientious. (1900a, IV, 117,118)

In light of this material we can begin to see, among other things, why Otto's remark, and the topic of responsibility for Irma, should have acquired the significance shown in the dream. As we might put part of the point: Freud was so sensitive on the topic of Irma, partly because she was linked in his mind with sources of guilt of whose bearing he was unaware, until he had analyzed the dream. And if *such* guilt was to be linked with Irma and her pains, then better to have misdiagnosed her from the start and not bear responsibility at all.

The dream treats these deeper issues, it seems, with the same wishful irresponsibility as Irma's illness itself. Otto's supposed thoughtlessness in describing Irma's health has, in the dream, been transformed into a version of the very thoughtlessness – about injections, cocaine, and so forth – with which Freud would reproach himself. But since in Freud's dream it is Otto who makes thoughtless (and dirty) injections the question of Freud's own guilt does not arise. Thus the infantile "it's *you*, not *me*" produced by Otto's remark emerges both as further reaching, and more violently irrational, than was first apparent.

This is all the material from this dream we will consider. (For a partial survey, see the accompanying diagram of Freud's dream of Irma's injection.)

Clearly the topics or concepts in this material are closely interconnected, and woven in with the motives that seem to be engaged. For example the initial connections between Irma, her friend, Freud's daughter, and his other female patient, are made partly in terms of the notion of *infiltration*, or damage to a membrane, which Irma suffers in the dream, as did these other figures in real life. In the dream Irma's infiltration is connected with a toxin, and so links Irma with the patient whom Freud injected with a toxin. Otto's injection of the toxin in the dream thus links him not only to Irma there, but also to Freud's other female patients, as well as the friend who died after cocaine injections. Also, however, the causing of infiltrations was something that Freud, with his care as to syringes, could take himself to be beyond reproach about – he had thought just the other day about how some *other* physician might have caused an infiltration in a patient he regularly injected. (Not *me* – *him*.) So despite their variety, the uses of infiltration and related concepts here also show a unity in their working below the surface

FREUD'S DREAM OF IRMA'S INJECTION

Dream

Irma, friend and patient: Freud says if you still get pains it's your own fault; Irma at window choking, organically ill

M called in, repeats examination, finds infiltration, toxin

Otto has given thoughtless injection, syringe not clean

Associations (i)

Freud annoyed by Otto's remark

wants to justify himself via M.

thinks alarm ungenuine; dream speech shows he wants not to be responsible, wishing Irma's illness

Associations (ii)

Diphtheritic infiltration discussed in case of Freud's daughter Mathilde

M examining Irma's friend at window, hysterical choking, diphtheritic infiltration

M also called in case of patient Mathilde killed by Freud's toxic injections

Patient follows Freud's example, uses cocaine, gets nasal infiltration

Friend follows Freud's advice, dies addicted to cocaine injections

Otto's remark was thoughtless, Freud is conscientious about injections, always uses clean syringes, never causes infiltrations

Inferences

From dream, Associations

(i) Freud wishing Irma organically ill, to avoid responsibility; wishing to get back at Otto
Fulfilled as Irma organically ill, Otto's fault

(ii) Freud wishing to avoid responsibility for friend's and patient's deaths related to injection; wishing to get back at Otto.
Fulfilled as Otto gives thoughtless dirty injections

(iii) Both (i) and (ii) related to guilt

of the dream. They serve both to *collect* the instances of guilt and blame with which the dream is partly concerned, and also to *shift* this guilt and blame away from the dreaming Freud and on to his accuser Otto.

III. THEORY AND TERMINOLOGY

We have gone over some of Freud's first data, so let us sketch how these relate to the theoretical terms that Freud introduces in the *Interpretation.*[25] For this purpose I shall italicize terms while mentioning related material.

We have seen how Freud's interpretation of a dream proceeds from a connected field of material that arises by way of association to the dream and that includes motives and memories we can see reflected in it. Freud called the content of the dream as experienced and remembered its *manifest content,* and the material that had given rise to the dream, as shown in association, its *latent content.*

This terminology registers the fact that Freud took the motives that had given rise to the dream as fixing its content, just as we take the motives that give rise to an action as fixing how it is to be described. That is, Freud now describes dreams, like actions, in terms of their psychological roots, as well as their manifest and visible parts. (Thus in a dream, as well as in an action, the latent content of a kiss can be betrayal.) This seems reasonable in light of the kind of analysis we have discussed, for surely our sense of the content of the dream has changed, so that we now regard the representation of Otto as marked by Freud's latent wish to avoid responsibility.

Freud's interpretation of a dream proceeds from a comparison of manifest and latent content, and represents the manifest as a *transformation* of the latent. This is reflected in the rule of inference sketched above, which can also be taken as specifying a transformation, as between latent motive and manifest realization. Freud spoke of such transformation as effected by *dream-work,* which combined the latent elements and provided for their representation in manifest form. This has a number of further aspects, also apparent in the material discussed.

Irma is shown in the manifest content with features that relate her in various ways to figures in the latent content. This reflects the fact that she shares significance with these figures, as one for whose

condition Freud has concern and responsibility, and hence the potential for guilt. And Freud's wishful absolution from blame in the manifest content evidently relates to feelings involving these latent figures also. Thus the Irma of the dream has a composite significance, which Freud describes as follows:

> The principal figure in the dream-content was my patient Irma. She appeared with the features which were hers in real life, and thus, in the first instance, represented herself. But the position in which I examined her by the window was derived from someone else. . . . In so far as Irma appeared to have a diphtheritic membrane, which recalled my anxiety about my eldest daughter, she stood for that child, and, behind her, through the possession of the same name as my daughter, was hidden the figure of my patient who succumbed to poisoning. In the course of the dream the figure of Irma acquired still other meanings. (1900a, IV, 292)

In light of this it appears that the transformation of latent to manifest content involves something like a channeling of representation and significance, from a number of latent figures and situations, onto a single manifest one, who as it were carries the wishful burden of the rest. Freud observed that something similar held in almost every dream he analyzed. He compared the process to the production of a composite photograph, and called it *condensation.*

Freud also observed that the latent content is often characterized by certain emotions or feelings, which appear differently, or not at all, in the manifest dream. Freud called the process that yielded this result *displacement.* Thus in the Irma dream Freud seems to have felt a significant latent guilt, toward the dead or damaged figures for whom Irma stood. In the transformation from latent to manifest content this guilt would seem to have been displaced. The deeper guilt appears at the surface, if at all, only as anxiety that Irma has been misdiagnosed; and this is a step toward absolution. Guilt itself seems almost entirely deflected, via the use made of the fact that Otto gave an injection while at Irma's, onto the figure of Otto himself.[26]

Freud also noted that the processes of condensation and displacement work in part by connection with language and other modes of symbolism. This has already been illustrated. We saw previously how the concept of infiltration served both to collect instances relating to concern and guilt, and to shift these away from the dreaming Freud. Here the collection via this term or concept corresponds to

the condensation of significance in the figure of Irma, and the shift to the displacement of guilt.

We saw in Section II that wish-fulfillment itself involved a two-fold denial of reality. Freud's notion of displacement adds to this a further, and distinct, vector of *distortion*.

Freud evidently found his thoughts and feelings about his responsibility for the deaths of his patient and friend painful. For this reason, it would seem, these figure in the manifest dream only in a form that would not remind him of them. They are touched on only indirectly, by allusions to toxin, injections, and the like. Death is not mentioned, and the patient Mathilde is the last of the series of figures to be found hidden behind the manifest Irma. Where things are made explicit, they are at the same time rendered unrecognizable. For example we could scarcely find a clearer expression of painful self-reproach than the exclamation that *injections of that kind ought not to be made so thoughtlessly* formulated at the close of the dream. But in the manifest content this is made to serve as a denial, rather than an acknowledgment, of the latent guilt that it nonetheless expresses.

This suggests a quite systematic process of disguise and distortion of things that are painful or otherwise unacceptable to the dreamer. Freud found this to be a very common feature of dreams, and likened it to the (Russian) *censorship* of his day. Thus although Freud's wish to avoid guilt for causing death is not rationally constrained in the means by which it is (represented as) satisfied, as we can see from the treatment of Irma and Otto, still it is very thoroughly censored, so that its representation arouses little discomfort.

Hence, as we may put it, Freud's wish not to bear responsibility in these cases is represented as fulfilled via both Irma's illness and Otto's malpractice, but without its main topic – Freud's own involvement in death – being clearly or explicitly represented at all. So this dream is also an instance of the *disguised* fulfillment, of a wish that is itself *kept from consciousness* in the dream.[27]

Among the things regularly kept from awareness in this way, Freud found, were motives that aroused great anxiety, and upon which it would be irrational and dangerous to act, such as the sexual and aggressive motives that Freud took to arise in early childhood, and so be first directed toward the parents. So Freud took it that these were subjected to a process of *repression*, which rendered them

incapable of influence on action – they were, as it were, taken out of the workings of everyday thinking, and relegated to another system, the *Unconscious.*

Motives in this system operated in accord with *primary processes* of mental functioning, including the condensation and displacement we have already seen. These, Freud hypothesized, allowed motives to gain a sort of primitive additive accumulation of strength (cf. again the collection and wishful shift of significance) which resulted in their sole form of expression, that of wish-fulfillment. Such motives thus have a form of organization that is prerational. They are cut off from the *secondary processes* involved in purposive, verbal, and realistic thought, and affect them only indirectly.

Freud noted that dreams commonly use *symbolism,* particularly in the representation of sexual matters. Since this is not particularly salient in the material we have covered, let us illustrate it by another example. Freud cites the dream of a man who had just received a young girl to live in his household. He felt attracted to her, apparently imagining *coitus a tergo;* and he thought she had given him the impression that she would accept an approach. That night he dreamed that:

> Standing back a little behind two stately palaces was a little house with closed doors. My wife led me along the piece of street up to the little house and pushed the door open; I then slipped quickly and easily into the inside of a court which rose in an incline. (1900a, V, 397)

The connection between house and girl was made clearer by the fact that the house, as the dreamer realized, was remembered from the girl's place of origin.

Freud's conception of symbolic sexual wish-fulfillment is regarded by many as the most controversial part of his work. In practice, however, it is the most thoroughly exploited. Symbolic expression serves simultaneously to communicate and to obscure a sexual content. So it can be used to arouse sexual fantasy, or to associate it with one thing or another, without unacceptable explicitness. Hence images of the kind Freud took to be natural expressions of wish-fulfillment are now commonly produced deliberately, so as to make use of their sexual content. For example Freud noted that in men "flying dreams usually have a grossly sensual meaning" (1900a, V,

394). Now, of course, airline tickets are sold by advertisements that feature attractive air hostesses, who smile and say "Fly me."

Freud noted that such use of symbolism often served as a disguise that protected the feelings of the dreamer about his own motives, and so passed the censorship spoken of above. This may have been so in the case of the dream of entry to the house, for the helpful role attributed to the dreamer's wife suggests a denial of conflict and guilt. Something similar seems to hold in culture. Certainly the meaning of many advertisements would be less acceptable if put straightforwardly.

Symbolism has, moreover, a broader role, as a kind of natural metaphor, or mode of comparison. The dream of Irma's injection, for example, begins with the question of her having accepted Freud's "solution" to her problems; and in the rest of the dream this is elaborated with a host of comparisons, involving the taking and putting of substances of various kinds in various ways. Thus Irma's failure to accept Freud's interpretations is shown as her choking on what has been put into her, this as one chemical or another, and so on throughout the dream.

This is not just disguise, but an independent form of information processing, or symbolic thought. And we can take this kind of thinking to encompass much that we have been explicating. In metaphorical thinking we juxtapose two or more things, and so regard each in light of the other. Freud's analysis suggests that his dreaming mind was occupied in a form of comparison of Irma with a whole range of other figures, present and past, and that such unconscious comparison plays a far-reaching role in our mental life.[28]

IV. EXPLANATORY SCOPE, STRUCTURE, AND ACCUMULATION

We have begun to see how the data of free association, and the kind of reasoning that Freud applied to them, might serve to extend commonsense understanding of motives and their working. We can judge relatively little of this on the basis of the material we can cover here. Still it seems that Freud's reasoning, as sketched, has notable potential for both scope and power.

As regards scope, we can see that such reasoning need not be

limited to dreams. It turns upon relations of content. So it would seem potentially applicable to a whole range of phenomena with representational content, provided the right information could be collected about the representations and their relations to motives. Hence Freud applied this reasoning widely. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* he uses it to elucidate symptoms as well. Thus he takes the example of a young female patient who was

> most surprisingly dressed. For though as a rule a woman's clothes are carefully considered down to the last detail, she was wearing one of her stockings hanging down and two of the buttons on her blouse were undone. She complained of having pains in her leg and, without being asked, exposed her calf. But what she principally complained of was, to use her own words, that she had a feeling in her body as though there was something "stuck into it" which was "moving backwards and forwards" and was "shaking" her through and through. Sometimes it made her whole body feel "stiff." My medical colleague, who was present at the examination, looked at me; he found no difficulty in understanding the meaning of her complaint. (1900a, V, 618)

Here we see the same sort of reasoning as above, but applied to a seemingly physical complaint. The symptom can be understood as a representation of the satisfaction of a wish derived from a (perhaps unconscious) desire to have sexual intercourse. And of course this explanation might be cross-checked with others, as Freud's description suggests.

Also, reasoning of this kind is capable of gaining power through use, in two connected ways. First, such reasoning creates inductive support for the kind of conclusion that it is used to draw. So far we have considered examples whose wish-fulfilling character could be established more or less directly by reference to memory and association. But the regular finding of such examples might lend inductive support to the view that most dreams, symptoms, or phenomena of some other kind, were similar in this respect. Again, such examples might support the view that motives like guilt, or mechanisms like distortion, were common features of wish-fulfillments. In this case the judgment that a particular dream was a wish-fulfillment, or provided grounds for the ascription of particular wishes, might have a degree of support external and additional to the features of the instance.[29]

Moreover, what analysis reveals is not just a single latent motive,

but a characteristic structure. We find levels of association, which correspond to layers of motive. Thus with the Irma dream the first level of association takes us to events and motives of the day before the dream and enables us to relate some of the contents of the dream to these. The next takes us to earlier events and to deeper motives. These are closely related to those of the previous layer – there is Freud's wish to avoid responsibility for Irma, and then the guilt that underlies it – and also cast light on further features of the manifest dream; and so on.[30] The accumulation of instances of good explanation, therefore, lends inductive support to the ascription of a latent framework, within which elements can fit at a number of interlocking places. This in turn enables additional evidence to be brought to bear in a variety of ways.

In addition, inference of the kind we are considering is cumulative in another way. It operates upon motives in virtue of their content, and yields further motives and specifications of content. It naturally tends, therefore, to supplement the base on which it operates. Each inference adds information about motive and content, which is available to serve as a basis for the next inference, and for further inferences in future.[31]

The fuller the base, the greater the possibility of seeing more of the kind of noncoincidental connection between contents with which such reasoning begins. Also the more an element of the base is used in good explanations, the better it is confirmed by its explanatory role, and by its interlocking with other elements so confirmed. So the use of such reasoning might supplement and strengthen its base in such a way as to prompt still further and surer inferences; and these in turn might yield further such supplementation; and so on.

These considerations suggest that experience might give us good reason for an extension of commonsense psychology that was both sound and radical. We might proceed, that is, by a series of inferences that were grounded in common sense, and had strong support at each step, to an understanding of dreams, symptoms, and actions cast finally in terms of motives quite different from those that were commonsensically acknowledged at the outset.[32] This is, I think, the possibility that was realized in Freud's work. Since this kind of extension depends on the taking of many instances, we cannot hope to show it convincingly here. Still, the following may serve as an illustration. A man dreamed

he had a secret liaison with a lady whom someone else wanted to marry. He was worried in case this other man might discover the liaison and the proposed marriage come to nothing. He therefore behaved in a very affectionate way to the man. He embraced him and kissed him. (1900a, V, 398–9)

The dreamer in fact had a secret liaison with a married woman, who was the wife of a friend; and he did think that his friend might have noticed something. This situation seems reflected in the dream, so that the friend could be identified with the "other man."

The dream, however, omitted something that was particularly important in the situation. The dreamer was expecting this friend to die from illness, and so was consciously occupied with his intention to marry the widow after the death. And also, the dreamer's associations to his hypocritical affectionate behavior in the dream traced it to a source quite different from the friend with whom he was consciously concerned: It came, rather, from his memory of his own relations with his father in childhood.

Now if we take this dream to have the same structure as that of Irma's injection, the dreamer's friend and his father will stand behind the other man of the dream, in the way that Freud's injured patient, his dead patient, and others stood behind Irma. On this account, that is, the other man will be a composite figure, formed by condensation, and deriving his role as unsuccessful rival from the dying friend, but his capacity to make the dreamer's liaison come to nothing from the father. The figures in Freud's dream were linked by his attitudes of concern, responsibility, guilt, and so on. Here, by contrast, the links would appear to pertain to sexual rivalry, hypocrisy, and guilt.

On this interpretation the dreamer's liaison would thus represent his enjoying also the object of his father's desire, and his hypocritical affections in the dream would refer also to those to his father, from which they were actually derived. The dreamer's father, in turn, would be represented not only as a rival, but also as one expected to die, and upon whose death the gratification of the dreamer's desires depended. Thus by finding in this dream the same structure as before, we should arrive at an interpretation of it in terms of the Oedipus complex. And as in Freud's dream, the topic of the dreamer's involvement with death, which figures clearly in the material that seems to have influenced the dream, would seem to have been censored out.

This interpretation turns on the comparability of the motives relating the figures from which the dream is derived. Three aspects of the dream seem to bear on this. First, we obtain what seems to be a straightforward derivation of manifest from latent content, if we assume that the latent motive is a wish to be a successful rival to the father. This also brings the motives relating to the dreamer's father into greater congruence with those bearing on his friend and rival, with which they are linked by association. In addition, taking the father as the object of the wish also serves to explain the representation of the other man in the manifest content as a potentially frustrating rival, as opposed to a temporary hindrance. Finally there is the relation of motives in the latent content itself. The dreamer's rivalry in love with his friend must have been a source of conflict to him, since he was betraying, and perhaps wishing the death, of someone for whom he also had real affection. This would seem similar in structure to oedipal rivalry.

We obtain the greatest fit between associated figures and motives if we take the dreamer to have a similar ambivalence and rivalry to his father. This seems the conclusion toward which the comparison registered by the dream points. Nonetheless this conclusion remains lacking in support, because no further justification appears in the material reported.

Still the conclusion admits of further support. More features of the case might home in on the motives toward which the dream so far only points suggestively. The dream might be linked with further feelings or memories about the parents, or the transference of these onto the analyst. Or it might, again, be one of a series, each of which indicated the same pattern of feelings, and some of which made enmity to the father clearer. Also there might be evidence from other cases: that dreams generally were wish-fulfilling, that layers of motive revealed in association were highly congruent, that the oedipal constellation of motives was very widespread, and so on. Any of these things would add something to our reasons for taking this dream as bearing on oedipal interpretation, and a combination of many, such as psychoanalysis is supposed to provide, might add notable weight. And if this is so, there is surely also the possibility that we might have registered this supporting material before we encountered this dream and its associations, and so been able to see the dream in this light on first acquaintance.[33]

Finally, let us consider some thinking that has been influential in psychoanalysis since Freud. The grounds for Freud's account of childhood included adult memories of sensual and aggressive feelings toward the parents, as well as the reliving of these in the transference, and the further evidence provided by associations, dreams, and the like. However extensive or comprehensive such evidence becomes, it remains indirect, and remote in time from the events upon which it is supposed to bear. Freud took it, however, that there was no better source of information, since children did not in the main act on their oedipal motives, and indeed lacked the concepts and ways of thinking required even to put them into words. Hence also, although children often have symptoms and difficulties analogous to those of adults, Freud did not try to apply analytic therapy to them, except in special circumstances, and then in a very limited way.[34]

But in addition to speaking, children constantly represent things in play – with, for example, dolls, toys, clay, paints, and games of make-believe. Later analysts, and in particular Melanie Klein,[35] realized that these representations, like dreams, could be seen as showing very articulate contents, which reflected the children's motives and mental states, and embodied their wish-fulfilling fantasies. This made it possible to analyze disturbed children, and hence to learn more about their mental life.

To take an example from a child playing a game of make-believe in which she had the part of a queen: When she

> as queen, had celebrated her marriage to the king, she lay down on the sofa and wanted me, as the king, to lie down beside her. As I refused to do this I had to sit in a little chair by her side and knock at the sofa with my fist. This she called "churning" . . . immediately after this she announced that a child was creeping out of her, and she represented this scene in quite a realistic way, writhing about and groaning. Her imaginary child then had to share its parents' bedroom and had to be a spectator of sexual intercourse between them. If it interrupted, it was beaten . . . If she, as the mother, put the child to bed, it was only in order to get rid of it and to be able to be united with the father all the sooner.[36]

Freud noted that the parents are frequently represented in dreams as king and queen. If we take this child's real parents so to stand behind the figures she represents here, we can see this game as

concerned, among other things, with her feelings about their sexual relations. So these are feelings that the child can play out fairly fully, even if she cannot put them into words.

The representation of her parents' relations – as lying together with something knocking something, or "churning" – has elements that could be taken as symbolism or metaphor in adult dreams. In such a dream these elements could be connected by association to articulate sexual thoughts, as in the example of the house, door, passage, and so forth earlier. Since the child thinks about such things less articulately, the meaning of a representation has to be shown in other ways, such as the structure of the play of which it is part (e.g., by the fact that the knocking or "churning" took place after the king and queen lay down together, and was followed by the birth of the child). This can nonetheless be relatively clear; and in some instances things are shown more explicitly. Thus, for example, when this little girl masturbated, as she did openly, both at home and in her analytic sessions, she would play what she called "the cupboard game," in which she would pull at her clitoris, saying she "wanted to pull out something very long."

Although we cannot go further into the matter here, it seems reasonable to hold that such representations in play can be related to the kind of infantile sexual and aggressive motives that Freud hypothesized. (For example in this material there may be: a wish to be the queen; to lie down beside the king; to do "churning," with something knocking at something; to alter the situation of being a child excluded from the parental bed; to make another child suffer the same situation; to have something very long in, or perhaps as, her genital; and so on.[37]) Accordingly, many analysts have taken conclusions drawn on this basis to support, and to extend, those of Freud.

We noted at the outset that Freud's work on dreams provided a paradigm in terms of which he could consolidate both previous findings and future investigations. This seems reflected in the range of application of the reasoning we have considered, which allowed Freud's thinking, and that of his successors, to relate to a wide variety of bases and sources in a similar way. There is, unfortunately, no space here for a fuller account of these matters, which would treat also of the limitations of this theorizing, particularly as compared with that of physical science. Still, the tendency in philosophical

and methodological discussions is almost always to emphasize purported weaknesses rather then strengths in Freud's thought. To obtain a correct view it is necessary to lean against this long prevailing wind.

NOTES

1 The judgment of value was Freud's own, in his final preface, and commentators have tended to agree. Richard Wollheim, for example, regards the book as Freud's "masterpiece"; and Frank Sulloway takes it to be the "greatest" of the series of early works which "places Freud among the most creative scientific minds of all time" (*Freud: Biologist of the Mind*, [New York: Basic Books, 1979], p. 358).

For some recent philosophical criticism of Freud on dreams see Clark Glymour, "The Theory of Your Dreams," in R. Cohen and L. Laudan, eds., *Physics, Philosophy, and Psychoanalysis* (Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Reidel, 1983, and Adolf Grünbaum, *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis: A Philosophical Critique* (University of California Press, 1984). I think these criticisms are based on misunderstandings, which I have in turn criticized in "Epistemology and Depth Psychology: Critical Notes on *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis*" in Peter Clark and Crispin Wright, eds., *Psychoanalysis, Mind and Science* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1988). The present essay continues the argument of that paper.

On the general methodology of Grünbaum's critique, see also note 21. On the contra-Freudian theory in J. A. Hobson's interesting recent book *The Dreaming Brain* (London: Penguin, 1990) see note 27.

2 For this instance see 1895d, II, 34ff. The connection of such material with Breuer and Freud's early theory, that "*hysterics suffer mainly from reminiscences*" (II, 7) is relatively clear. Also, however, the same symptom can be construed as fulfilling a wish not to drink, originating in this scene. This illustrates how the data that led Freud to frame his first hypothesis also fit the second.

3 Thus in 1899 Freud wrote to his friend Wilhelm Fliess that "the dream schema is capable of the most general application . . . the key to hysteria as well really lies in dreams" (1985 [1887–1904], 338). And in his first preface he describes the theoretical value of the dream as that of "a paradigm" that is "the first member" of a class of phenomena including "hysterical phobias, obsessions, and delusions" (1900a, V, xxiii).

4 For this last reason the book establishes a notable relation between author and reader. In presenting his own dreams Freud asks his reader "to make my interests his own for quite a while, and to plunge, along

with me, into the minutest details of my life" (1900a, IV, 105–6). Although he reveals much, Freud still wants to keep his secrets. At the same time his purpose is to provide new ways to understand the material he presents and leaves hostage to his reader's penetration. So his methods point beyond what he says, to further conclusions about his life and feelings.

Freud's findings about symptoms could be replicated only by other physicians, and with a great deal of perseverance. Many people, by contrast, could follow his example and investigate dreams. Such attempts, moreover, could be informative without going deep. The partial analysis of just a few dreams, for example, may acquaint someone with such novelties of Freud's approach as free association and that to which it leads, in a way that importantly supplements reading. Thus through the *Interpretation* Freud began to gain a wider audience, who understood something of the nature of his work.

D. Anzieu provides detailed discussion of Freud's analyses of his own dreams, and references to a number of further works on Freud's dreams, in *Freud's Self-Analysis* (London: Hogarth Press, 1986). As Anzieu notes, Freud very often provides clues so that persevering readers can work out things left obscure.

5 In what follows I shall be using "motive" in a broad way, for almost any of the psychological causes by which we ordinarily explain behavior, as in "He did it because . . . ," "He did it out of . . . ," and so forth. Thus, for example, love, hatred, jealousy, envy, greed, and lust are motives, as well as the more fully articulated instances derived from them, such as conviction as to the rightness of one's own conduct, desire to harm one's rival, and so forth.

6 This kind of explanation, and particularly its causal nature, has been explored by Donald Davidson in a classic series of essays beginning with "Actions, Reasons, and Causes" (see his *Essays on Actions and Events* [Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1980]), to which I refer the reader in search of a deeper and more detailed treatment.

7 Freud emphasized the connection of his thought with commonsense explanation by motive in saying, for example, that as opposed to Breuer he "was inclined to suspect an interplay of forces and the operation of intentions and purposes such as are to be observed in normal life" (1925d, XX,23). And he says that in speaking of "the sense of a psychical process we mean nothing other than the intention it serves and its position in a psychical continuity. In most of our researches we can replace 'sense' by 'intention' or 'purpose' " (1916–17, XV, 40). Freud's word translated by "purpose" here is *Tendenz*, which according to Strachey might be better translated by "trend." I think that part of

Freud's idea is that brought out below, in terms of the characterization of intentionality.

8 This notion of articulation was introduced by Wittgenstein, who stressed its importance for psychology. (See his *Philosophical Remarks* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1975], p. 70: "I call only an *articulated* process a thought. . . . Salivation, no matter how precisely measured, is not what we call expectation.") Articulated motives are the "propositional attitudes" spoken of by Russell in his introduction to Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1922) and thenceforward in analytic philosophy. They might better be described, as Wittgenstein takes them in that book, as attitudes toward situations or states of affairs.

9 As I shall be using these terms, the truth-condition of "Snow is white" is that snow is white, of "Grass is green" that grass is green, and so on, ad infinitum. The notion is used for motives by way of the sentences that articulate them. Thus the sentence that articulates the motive of belief in "John believes that snow is white" is "Snow is white." The truth-condition of this sentence, and hence of the belief itself, is that snow is white.

Similarly, I take it that the satisfaction condition of the hope that snow is white is that snow is white. The condition of satisfaction of the desire that snow be white (for snow to be white, etc.) is that snow be white; this condition, however, is met if snow is white, so again the condition can be cast in the indicative, as that snow is white. The case is similar, despite grammatical variations, for the other motives with which we shall be concerned.

The condition of satisfaction, realization, or whatever, of a given motive stands in a relation to that motive that is logical or conceptual. It is a norm or rule, given in language, that having a drink of water satisfies a desire to have a drink of water, or that a belief that grass is green is true if grass is green. Wittgenstein makes the point in a parallel case by saying that "It is in language that an expectation and its fulfillment make contact" (*Philosophical Investigations* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1963], p. 445).

Also Wittgenstein stresses that "the fact that some event stops my wishing does not mean that it fulfils it. Perhaps I should not have been satisfied if my wish were satisfied" (p. 432). Of course it is true that a desire is normally extinguished or altered when its condition of satisfaction is known to obtain. This, however, is part of the rational working of desire, and so part of the parallel between meaning and the causal role of motives that we are discussing.

10 This encoding is accomplished, I think, by our use of our language for

describing the world *within* our language for describing motive. I discuss this more fully in my essay in Hopkins and Savile, eds., *Psychoanalysis, Mind, and Art: Essays for Richard Wollheim* (Oxford: Blackwell, forthcoming).

11 Wittgenstein compares the representational or information-bearing role of thought to that of a gramophone record at *Tractatus* 4.014. Since he takes the record to be an abstract model, this is part of his account of mind and language in terms of mental models. On this see also note 14.

12 The "direction of fit" of desires and belief is thus the direction of the flow of information that they register. And the role of transmission of information is not accidental here. In many cases it is clear that a belief will not count as a belief that S, unless linked in an appropriate content-transmitting way to the situation that would render "S" true, or to the objects and properties that figure in this situation. (This does not of course mean that innate beliefs are impossible, since, among other things, they may be shaped in the appropriate way by evolution.)

Ruth Garrett Millikan's *Language, Thought, and Other Biological Categories* (Cambridge, Mass.: Bradford Press, MIT Press, 1984) contains a most illuminating account of the determination of content by evolution. Although these matters are beyond the scope of the present paper, I think that Millikan's account may enable us to understand the thinking described in psychoanalytic accounts of fantasy, primary process, and so forth, as a form of processing of biologically significant information.

13 Interpretation is connected with a kind of prediction that we could make by no other means, as when we are able to predict various things about the remainder of a person's pattern of action (that he will put his hand *there*, or next move *there*) on the basis of interpreting part of it. Nonetheless our interpretive understanding goes well beyond our ability to predict; for we are built to be able to use others as sources of information regarding things that are beyond our ken and out of our control.

14 As note 12 indicates, this seems to be the psychology implicit (but not fully worked out) in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. Wittgenstein sought to explain our capacity to think and act in reference to things in the world in terms of inner pictures or models, which were used by the mind (or brain) in thought, and hence exercised causal control over behavior. (See also, for example, his claim that "Language must have the same multiplicity as a control panel that sets off the actions corresponding to its propositions," and that "Our expectation anticipates the event. In this sense it makes a model of the event" in *Philosophical Remarks* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975), pp. 58, 71; and also *Zettel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1967) pp. 236, 444.

Wittgenstein often returned to this theory, but could not see how to

free it from objection, and finally let it go. The account in Millikan, cited above, is at a number of points comparable to it. Mental models and their connection with content are also illuminatingly discussed in Colin McGinn's *Mental Content* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1989).

15 I should like to thank Gabriel Segal for discussing the ideas of this section with me and making a number of comments that were clarifying and prompted improvements in exposition.

16 Freud summarizes his interpretation as follows:

> The dream fulfilled certain wishes which were started in me by the events of the previous evening (the news given me by Otto and my writing out of the case history). The conclusion of the dream, that is to say, was that I was not responsible for the persistence of Irma's pains, but that Otto was. Otto had in fact annoyed me by his remarks about Irma's incomplete cure, and the dream gave me my revenge by throwing the reproach back on to him. The dream acquitted me of the responsibility for Irma's condition by showing that it was due to other factors – it produced a whole series of reasons. The dream presented a particular state of affairs as I should have wished it to be. *Thus its content was the fulfillment of a wish and its motive was a wish.* (1900a, IV, 118–9)

Agreement on the cogency of this extends to Grünbaum and to Glymour, cited above, who describes this part of Freud's account as "enormously plausible." It should not, however, be supposed that Grünbaum or Glymour would accept the overall account that follows, which contrasts sharply with theirs.

17 To say that wishes can conflict with the motives that govern our actions is to say that they need not accurately reflect what we value, when we take things more fully into account, as we do in deciding how to act. Thus the wishes that Freud finds here conflict with something he presumably values considerably, and might in reality make serious efforts to preserve, that is, the welfare of a family friend and patient.

This enables us to see that Freud's account of dreams is consonant with the fact that many dreams are connected with alarm or anxiety. The representation of the fulfillment of motives that clash with what we value greatly is, surely, an appropriate source of anxiety. So such feelings in dreams are not paradoxical, on Freud's account, but rather a consequence of something familiar. If we accept that human beings have seriously conflicting motives, then we must allow that their wishes – or indeed in some cases their desires or voluntary actions – can be a source of distress, anxiety, or whatever.

18 I do not mean to imply by this that wishes are not motives. Rather, they are distinguished from other motives here, because they have the particular role of mediating the production of representations.

19 Freud often takes it that connection in content among psychological

elements provides grounds for inference as to causal connection (see, e.g., 1900a, V, 528). This idea was taken up and explicated by Schmidl in "The Problem of Scientific Validation in Psychoanalytic Interpretation," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* (1955). (I owe this reference to the researches of Frank Cioffi.) It is, I think, strengthened by consideration of the systematic relations of content and causal role in commonsense psychology indicated in the text.

20 There is a question as to whether we should represent these instances as of the pattern in the Irma dream, since there is so little in the way of independent grounds for ascribing the motives that we take to give rise to the wishes behind them.

The same question arises for reasons. We sometimes know an agent's desires and beliefs in advance, and infer merely that he is now acting on them; and sometimes we infer the contents of previously unsuspected desires or beliefs from what the agent does. Should we take ourselves to use the same pattern of inference in both cases?

The sense in which the pattern is the same is that the conclusion of such inference always imposes the full desire–belief–action pattern onto the material interpreted, even if only some parts of the full pattern are *introduced* in the instance of inference. Likewise in this case, where the conclusion actually involves the full motive–wish–dream pattern.

We thus have differences among instances of the same pattern, regarding the number of elements taken as part of the base for inference, and the number introduced in the inference itself. In general the more added, the greater the chance of error, and the greater the relevance of cross-checking. Also, the more added, other things being equal, the less *internally* cogent the inference; for the instance accomplishes less explanatory unification of already given material.

As we shall see in the final section of this essay, the taking of many instances of inference of this kind might enable us to accumulate a basis for inference that would enable us to see a wide range of representations as wish-fulfilling, and (perhaps) to read the wishes in them more readily and directly.

21 Adolf Grünbaum, in his critique *The Foundations of Psychoanalysis*, argues that psychoanalytic causal claims must be taken as answerable solely to Millian inductive canons, saying, for example, that "the establishment of a causal connection in psychoanalysis, no less than in 'academic psychology' or medicine, has to rely on modes of inquiry that are refined from time-honored canons of causal inference pioneered by Francis Bacon and John Stuart Mill" (p. 47).

Grünbaum thus apparently does not allow that psychoanalytic claims are supported in any such way as is sketched here. He devotes almost a

third of his book to arguing against hermeneutic approaches to psychoanalysis, and does not acknowledge that hypotheses about motive can be supported by explanatory considerations.

His methodology thus makes no room for the kind of interpretive thinking that we already take to establish the working of motive, and extend in psychoanalysis. The Millian modes of inquiry that he endorses, moreover, seem inapplicable to motive.

These are, roughly, correlational and eliminative methods: They are applied to items or properties that are observed to go together, to determine whether this co-occurrence is causal or accidental. So they are applied to A's and B's that are already given, to investigate whether the A's actually cause the B's, as opposed, say, to accompanying them by chance.

Now as noted in the text it seems that we should not construe ourselves as simply *observing* that motives co-occur with the actions or wish-fulfillments that we take them to cause. Rather, surely, we are better represented as *hypothesizing* the various motives, in order to explain what we observe in terms of them. We thus treat motives as a species of unobserved causes, introduced to explain observed effects. This has two consequences. First, the putative causes and effects are not of the same observational status, as Millian methods presuppose. And second, the pair of items in question are already understood as cause and effect, and on non-Millian grounds.

So far as claims as to the working of motive are understood in this way, it follows that they neither admit nor require certification by Millian or Baconian modes of inquiry. They do not admit of it, because you cannot verify whether a cause that you are taking as beyond observation actually is a cause by observing how it co-occurs with its putative effect. And they do not require it, because the hypotheses by which they are introduced already acknowledge their causal status, and are in turn supported in other ways, and via their explanatory consequences. Because psychoanalysis is a psychology of motive, the Millian methodology that Grünbaum advocates seems radically inappropriate to it.

The danger, moreover, is not merely that such modes of inquiry do not adequately register support for interpretive hypotheses as to the role of motive. Rather, they are also likely to represent true claims as false. For Millian and Baconian methods are meant to serve a sieving or eliminative function – to eliminate the A's and B's that might mistakenly be taken as connected, but are not. And methods that sift out A's and B's that are not strongly correlated are also liable to sieve out causes that, like motives, play a special or restricted role.

Mill's First Canon, for example, allows us to infer that A is not the cause of B, if A occurs without B. (Cf. the "we may reason thus: b and c

are not effects of A, for they were not produced by it in the second experiment . . ." in *John Stuart Mill's Philosophy of Scientific Method* [New York: Hafner, 1970], p. 212.) This would enable us to reason as follows: people who are hungry (even desperately hungry) sometimes do not eat, and people who are thirsty sometimes do not drink; so hunger and thirst do not, as one might have supposed, cause eating and drinking. This, clearly, provides no explication of the role of motive, save that it is not that of sole sufficient condition; so the use of such a criterion is tantamount to an ignoring of the actual causal role of motive. This is not Grünbaum's intention, but he provides no account as to how Mill's canons are to be used so as to avoid such results.

Their difficulties show in further ways: Millian canons are on the face of it insensitive to the vast range of connections and distinctions of meaning and logic by which information about the working of motive is carried in commonsense psychology, and so unfit to detect or certify it. Also, they commonly require repeated instances to be used upon, whereas motives constantly vary, in response to need, experience, and thought, and so rarely satisfy the same description from instance to instance. (Motives are, however, very rich in the kind of causally connected content, with which commonsense and psychoanalytic reasoning works.)

Clearly it would be an error to conclude that motives do not perform significant explanatory and causal work, because they do not stand still for certification by Millian methods, which would in any case fail to record their labor. But it remains unclear, where the basic roles of motives are concerned, what other conclusions these methods are suited to draw. Hence, of course, their suitability as a vehicle for criticism of Freud.

As noted in the text, commonsense psychological practice involves the cross-checking of ascriptions of motive from action to action, and psychoanalytic practice extends this. If we construe motives as causes whose role is reflected in their content we can see our commonsense causal/hermeneutic thinking as performing a function of integration of instances, positive and negative, in relation to causal hypotheses, which is partly analogous to that of inductive methods as used elsewhere. The lesson to be drawn from this, however, is not that commonsense or Freudian thinking is unsupported without Millian testing, but rather that it is already (to some degree) supported by a kind of testing that is analogous and appropriate to it.

22 The association is

I took her to the window. . . . The way in which Irma stood by the window suddenly reminded me of another experience. Irma had an intimate woman friend of whom I had a very high opinion. When I visited

this lady one evening I had found her by a window in the situation reproduced in the dream, and her physician, the same Dr. M., had pronounced that she had a diphtheritic membrane. The figure of Dr. M. and the membrane reappear later in the dream. It now occurred to me that for the last few months I had every reason to suppose that this other lady was also a hysteric. Indeed, Irma herself had betrayed the fact to me. What did I know of her condition? One thing precisely: that like my Irma of the dream she suffered from hysterical choking. So in the dream I had replaced my patient by her friend. (1900a, IV, 110)

23 The linkage also goes via further elements of the dream – a white patch, and scabs, which Freud saw in Irma's throat when he examined her – which are not discussed here. (They pretty clearly have to do with the sexual aspect of the dream.)

24 The relevant part of the association is

I was making frequent use of cocaine at that time to reduce some troublesome nasal swellings, and I had heard a few days earlier that one of my women patients who had followed my example had developed an extensive necrosis of the nasal mucous membrane. I had been the first to recommend the use of cocaine, in 1885, and this recommendation had brought serious reproaches down on me. The misuse of that drug had hastened the death of a dear friend of mine. (1900a, IV, 111)

25 These matters are treated elsewhere in more adequate detail. Freud provided his own concise introduction to them in *On Dreams* (1901a, V, 633–86). There is a clear and philosophically informed account in ch. 3 of Richard Wollheim's *Freud* (London: Fontana Modern Masters, 1971). The introductory account in ch. 6 of Paul Kline's *Psychology and Freudian Theory* (London: Methuen, 1984) includes a survey of empirical work on dreams, and references to the literature in academic psychology.

26 This is not an example that Freud gives, although it seems a reasonably clear instance of the phenomenon as he describes it elsewhere. I am inclined to think that this is because he did not at this time give sufficient attention to the role of guilt. Also his concept of displacement, like that of condensation, has many complexities not touched on here. See 1900a, IV, 305ff.

27 It is thus worth noting that these few data from Freud's initial specimen dream, analyzed only this far, tend to confirm what J. Allan Hobson calls Freud's "disguise censorship" model of dreams, and thus to disconfirm the rival "transparency" alternative recently proposed by Hobson himself. (See *The Dreaming Brain* [London: Penguin, 1990].)

Hobson's book has been highly praised, and the work on the physiology of dreaming and its relation to psychology that he presents seems valuable and illuminating. Nothing in the scientific material, however, supports his contention that dreams are transparently related to the

motives that influence them. Physiology is at best silent on this point. And since physiological mechanisms are opaque to consciousness, their acknowledgment tends rather to support the view that what moves us in acting or imagining need *not* be transparently revealed.

It is hard to see why dreams should be supposed to have a transparent relation to motives, when actions do not; and hard to see why Hobson should now insist on this idea, in the face of the many examples to the contrary that Freud and others have long been providing. Hobson does not, however, discuss these. (He does say, somewhat surprisingly, that "Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* . . . is devoid of either detailed descriptions or illustrations of actual data. . . . There are no verbatim dream reports. . . ." p. 90.) One readily understands objection to Freudian interpretations that are very complex or farfetched. But on this point simpler and plainer data seem already to suffice.

Hobson's insistence on transparency seems to affect his consideration of data generally; in accord with it he seems happy to disregard associations and focus on manifest dream content alone.

This is surely a retrograde step. For by ignoring associations and memories Hobson fails to avail himself of data that could enrich his hypotheses, and against which they could be tested. For example, when he comes to consider the role of memories in the dreams of his subject the "Engine Man" Hobson holds, like Freud, that the dreamer goes "back, back (into his memory file)," in search of material connected with the themes of the dream (278). But because he does not consider actual memories that this dreamer links with the material of the dream, his ideas about the role of memory remain unconstrained by real data from memory, and hence speculative. In the analysis of the Irma dream, by contrast, we find data with clear bearing on many hypotheses about the "memory files" that the dreamer opens (information about significant actions and persons, significant motives, and so on.)

Hobson attempts to justify his procedure by urging, for example, "With such rich manifest content to work with, why delve deeper?" (234). One answer would be that it is preferable for scientific hypotheses to take account of all relevant data, so far as possible, even if some have to be got by delving. Where hypotheses about memory and dreams are concerned, the dreamer's own actual memories, and the way they are shown in association, seem clearly relevant.

Hobson does say that "it will be important to verify biographical surmises in living subjects whose dreams are interpreted within the transparency framework." In this way, he holds, we need not be "throwing out the psychodynamic baby with the psychoanalytic bathwater" (281). But if interpreting "within the transparency framework" means avoiding data

of association that disconfirm the framework, this is not good scientific practice. It is one thing to see what you can get on the basis of manifest content alone, or manifest content and physiology; it is quite another to hold that conclusions reached in this way should supplant those based on fuller data. Hobson appears to be claiming that his "transparency framework" should replace Freud's ("the psychoanalytic bathwater"), while systematically ignoring evidence that confirms Freud's and disconfirms transparency.

Also, the methodological considerations that Hobson takes to guide his own approach seem actually to fit better with Freud's. Hobson stresses that he seeks to anchor psychological thinking in physiological knowledge, by assuming or hypothesizing an isomorphism between physiological and psychological levels. He calls this the "principle of isomorphism," and illustrates it by "such a bottom-up hypotheses as: if the brain's visual centers are active in REM [rapid-eye-movement] sleep, then dreams will be characterized by visual sensation; similarly, if the brain's motor centers are active in REM sleep, then dreams will be characterized by intense imaginings of movement" (p. 158).

Accordingly, Hobson urges that "the sensorimotor hallucinosis of the dream experience is the direct and necessary concomitant of the specific activation of sensorimotor brain circuits" (p. 210), evidence for which he describes with admirable lucidity. This is certainly plausible, and clearly in harmony with Freud's psychological findings. The stress on motor neurons and bodily movement, for example, coheres well with the partial analogy between dream and action emphasized in the text.

There is, however, further relevant brain activity, which Hobson does not omit to mention. He notes that in REM sleep "the penis of the male and the clitoris of the female are both periodically engorged through the night in concert with changes in the brain" (p. 138); and he hypothesizes that dream sleep provides maintenance and development of the brain circuitry involved in sexual activity, and also perhaps "genetically determined behavior rehearsal" (p. 294) for it. As he says, "the fixed-action patterns that constitute the sexual act itself have a life of their own. They are, apparently, in constant readiness. REM-sleep erections and wet dreams are the outward sign that at least part of this theory must be correct" (p. 295).

But then what about the "direct and necessary concomitant" of the nightly activation of brain circuits in this case? Consistent application of his principle of isomorphism would suggest that Hobson should here reason as above. The parallel would be: If the brain's "sexual activity" circuits are active in REM sleep, then dreams will be characterized by

sexual imaginings. This would be a significant application of isomorphism, because it would yield a "bottom-up hypothesis" that was genuine and risky, as opposed to those cited, in which the principle is used to derive only what is antecedently well known.

And taken thus seriously, Hobson's principle of isomorphism, and the data he cites concerning REM sexual arousal, cohere with Freud's independent finding that dreams are frequently characterized by sexual imagining, which is, however, disguised or symbolic. Because Freud's claim was based on associations and did not employ the notion of isomorphism, this provides evidence of the utility of the principle from a distinct source, and also some indication that it extends to association and memory as well.

On the other hand the data and principle seem again to conflict with "the transparency framework." Hobson reports no sexual dreams from the Engine Man, for example; but presumably his circuits and patterns too were refreshed several times a night. On the other hand, Hobson does report, for example, that "The Engine Man also flies, magically, as in this account. . . ." (p. 244).

28 Metaphor is discussed in connection with Davidson's work in Marcia Cavell's "Metaphor, Dreamwork, and Irrationality" in E. LePore, ed., *Truth and Interpretation: Perspectives on the Philosophy of Donald Davidson* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986). The notion also plays a significant role in Lacan's explication of Freud. See, for example, *Ecrits* (London: Tavistock, 1977) ch. 5.

Symbolic thought can also be seen as enabling unconscious motives to influence the overall course of action, so that patterns of wish-fulfillment and rational action are more closely interwoven than might appear. A possible example is mentioned in note 34.

29 Compare the way that someone who checks his visual estimate of distances by pacing them off acquires inductive evidence that his visual estimate is accurate, and thereby increases the confidence he can rightly accord to cases in which he judges by vision alone.

30 Freud's conception of analysis is thus connected with an ideal of explanatory completeness: An analysis would be complete, in theory, when we had gone as deep in motive, and as far back in time, as was required to collect all the latent material operative in producing the manifest.

In the case of the Irma dream Freud continued his analysis well beyond the associations reported in the *Interpretation* and found sexual motives bearing on the women represented in it. See his reference to "sexual megalomania" in Freud and Abraham, *A Psychoanalytic Dialogue* (London: Hogarth, 1965).

31 Thus Freud's first interpretation puts *avoidance of responsibility* clearly

into our base for interpreting his wishes; and this paves the way for the deeper interpretations about avoidance of responsibility relating to other cases, and the guilt that would explain it, which follow. Because these cohere with the original ascription, they tend to confirm it; and these in turn clearly pave the way for more.

32 This is a possibility that Grünbaum seems disinclined to acknowledge. He has written the following in a personal communication to the analyst Marshall Edelson, quoted in the latter's *Psychoanalysis, A Theory in Crisis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), p. 330:

> I no more think that psychoanalytic theory is an *extension* of commonsense psychology than I think theoretical physics is an extension of common-sense "physics." What commonsense man believes a table is mostly *empty* space between particles?? . . .
>
> If psychoanalysis were the extension of commonsense you depict, why did it encounter so much disbelief? . . . It is *utterly* incredible commonsensically that horror dreams should be wish-fulfilling.

In these remarks Grünbaum seems not to take account of the idea that an extension can go far from its commonsense basis, but by steps each of which is cogent in light of what has gone before. Strictly speaking, only the first such step needs to accord with unmodified common sense; and that step may itself take us beyond it. This seems to be how it is with the Irma dream.

As to Grünbaum's other points: A theory based on common sense but going well beyond it would be expected to encounter disbelief precisely where those to whom it was presented had not traversed sufficiently many of the steps supporting the extension. But we surely need not go very far to accept the possibility that a person's own motives (or indeed his own actions on occasion) may have aspects that are horrible to him, so that he finds their unconstrained realization a nightmare.

33 Here also the oedipal motives might serve to explain the dreamer's situation in a deeper way. It might be that he was drawn to a liaison with the wife of a friend partly *because* he linked this situation with his father. In this case the liaison itself would be wish-fulfilling, and so a sort of symbolic or metaphorical gratification of repressed motives.

34 As he said, "too many words and thoughts have to be lent to the child, and even so the deepest strata may turn out to be impenetrable to consciousness" (1918b, XVII, 9). He did, however, direct the therapy reported in "Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy" (1909b, X, 5ff).

Little children can of course make some use of concepts related to sexual motives. Thus consider the following exchange recorded by Melanie Klein, from a conversation in which she had tried to explain to a little boy how babies are made.

Fritz listened with great interest and said, "I would so much like to see how a child is made inside like that." I explain that this is impossible until he is big because it can't be done until then but that then he will do it himself. "But then I would like to do it to mama." "That can't be, mama can't be your wife, for she is the wife of your papa, and then papa would have no wife." "But we could both do it to her." I say, "No, that can't be. Every man has only one wife. When you are big your mama will be old. Then you will marry a beautiful young girl and she will be your wife." He (nearly in tears and with quivering lips) "But shan't we live in the same house together with mama?" *The Writings of Melanie Klein* (London: Hogarth Press, 1975), vol 1, pp. 34–5.

35 I have discussed some of Klein's theories, comparing them with Piaget's and relating them to some experimental work with babies, "Synthesis in the Imagination: Psychoanalysis, Infantile Experience, and the Concept of an Object," in James Russell, ed. *Philosophical Perspectives on Developmental Psychology* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987). Her work is also discussed in Richard Wollheim's *The Thread of Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

36 *The Writings of Melanie Klein*, vol II, pp. 39, 40.

37 Other phenomena can be observed here, such as the child's attempt to identify with certain figures and feelings, by taking their part herself, or to distance herself from others, by assigning them to the partner in play. Also this play indicates how some forms of representation come quite close to the phenomena that they represent (the lying down together), while others remain at greater distance.