

Introduction

Learning from Superiors

If one were to found a college of psychoanalysis, Freud states wistfully in *The Question of Lay Analysis* (1926), one would want to include branches of knowledge far remote from medicine: “the history of civilization, mythology, the psychology of religion, and the science of literature” (*SE* 20: 246; all quotations from Freud are cited to volume and page from the *Standard Edition*, translated and edited by James Strachey). Freud’s insistence that psychoanalysis is a science led him to the conclusion that the study of literature is also a science, an assumption that no literary scholar would make today. Nor would most contemporary mental health professionals maintain that psychoanalysis is scientific. But apart from these claims, Freud makes a compelling case that future psychoanalysts do not require medical training. Psychoanalysts, Freud argues, do not use medical instruments, like physicians; rather, analysts work only with words, which can do “unspeakable good, and cause terrible wounds” (*SE* 20: 188). Words are always magical for Freud, and he was himself one of the greatest wordsmiths of the twentieth century. Freud structures *The Question of Lay Analysis* as a conversation or debate between himself and an “Impartial Person,” and anticipating the latter’s contempt of verbal dialogue, which occurs in the talking cure, Freud adds, “It is as though he were thinking: ‘Nothing more than that? Words, words, words, as Prince Hamlet says.’” It’s appropriate that Freud should invoke Hamlet here in recommending the widest possible education for analysts. Psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic literary criticism were born simultaneously, as can be seen in Freud’s famous October 15, 1897, letter to his confidant Wilhelm Fliess, in which, after discovering the existence of Oedipal feelings within himself, he refers to the gripping power of *Oedipus Rex* and *Hamlet*.

Freud wrote *The Question of Lay Analysis* on behalf of Theodor Reik, a non-physician member of the Vienna Psycho-Analytical Society who had been charged with violating an old Austrian law against quackery. The charge was later dropped. Freud did everything he could to support non-medical training for analysts. He could not persuade American psychoanalytic organizations to drop the requirement for medical training—that decision came a half century later—but he succeeded in enlisting psychoanalysts from a wide variety of academic disciplines. Near the end of *The Question of Lay Analysis* Freud makes a surprising admission. “After forty-one years of medical activity, my self-knowledge tells me that I have never really been a doctor in the proper sense, I became a doctor through being compelled to deviate from my original purpose; and the triumph of my life lies in my having, after a long and roundabout journey, found my way back to my earliest path.” Becoming a physician deterred Freud from his early goal of an “overpowering need to understand something of the riddles of the world in which we live and perhaps even to contribute something to their solution” (*SE* 20: 253), a goal he believed he fulfilled in the creation of psychoanalysis.

Elsewhere, Freud stressed the interdisciplinary nature of his creation—and his indebtedness to the arts. Upon being honored on his seventieth birthday as the discoverer of the unconscious, Freud disclaimed the title, admitting that the “Poets and Philosophers before me have discovered the unconscious; I have discovered the scientific method with which the unconscious can be studied” (Lehrman 164). And in “Delusions and Dreams in Jensen’s *Gradiva*” (1907), his first extended essay on literature and psychoanalysis, Freud referred to creative writers as valuable allies: “they are apt to know a whole host of things between heaven and earth, of which our philosophy has not yet let us dream. In their knowledge of the mind they are far in advance of us everyday people, for they draw upon sources which we have not yet opened up for science” (*SE* 9: 8). Freud expected his readers to know that he was referring to Hamlet’s words to Horatio—“there are more things in heaven and earth . . . than are dreamt of in your philosophy”—once again expressing his love for literature.

Few people realize that Freud wanted to become a novelist, as Wilhelm Stekel reported in his *Autobiography* (1950). “In my mind,” Freud confided to him as they hiked through the forests of Berchtesgaden, “I always construct novels, using my experiences as a psychoanalyst; my wish is to become a novelist—but not yet; perhaps in the later years of my

life” (Stekel 66). Freud never became a novelist—except to Freud-bashers, who accused him of fabricating fictions.

From the beginning, then, psychoanalysis has depended upon interdisciplinary knowledge, and its future development and survival will depend upon embracing its roots in multiple disciplines. Psychoanalytic interdisciplinarity is not a new idea, but in the following pages I discuss in detail six noteworthy contemporary clinicians and scholars, from a range of academic disciplines, who are shaping psychoanalysis. Offering a retrospective view of the writers’ work enables us to see recurrent patterns that might not have been visible at the beginning of their careers. Following each discussion, I interview the author, who casts additional light on his or her work.

I began this book in late 2019, believing there was a timely double entendre in the approaching new year: 2020 would give me the hindsight, I hoped, to discuss my favorite contemporary psychoanalytic thinkers in a year that had a sonorous sound to it. Who knew that 2020 would be an *annus horribilis*, the year of the calamitous coronavirus pandemic, not to mention a frightening US presidential election unlike any other? Teaching through Zoom for an entire year, feeling isolated and anxious like everyone else, dependent on a virtual technology I did not fully understand nor know how to use, I was grateful for the return of in-person teaching in the fall of 2021. I could not see my students’ masked faces, but I began to feel human again. I completed this book in early 2022, but just as the world seemed returning to a semblance of recovery, Russia invaded Ukraine, which reminded me of a grim cartoon I read somewhere decades ago about the weapons of the Fourth World War: a bow and arrow.

COVID-19 had one silver lining for me. Sheltered at home, I found it was a good time for reading and writing. Dr. Johnson’s words to his future biographer, James Boswell—“Depend upon it, Sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates his mind wonderfully”—is no less true about life during a pandemic.

I admire many contemporary psychoanalytic scholars and clinicians, and it was a challenge to limit myself to a handful and then go into as much depth as possible in my discussions of their work. I chose the writers for several reasons. Sander Gilman, the late Allen Wheelis and Joan Wheelis, Nancy J. Chodorow, Christopher Bollas, and Adam Phillips are all genuinely interdisciplinary writers, spanning two or more fields, including my own, literary studies. All are deeply rooted in the humanities. All are highly controversial, in many cases lightning rods,

challenging conventional psychoanalytic wisdom. All have spent a lifetime devoted to expanding and often critiquing psychoanalytic knowledge. And all regard themselves as outsiders, on the margins, despite the fact that they offer an inside view of psychoanalysis. Sometimes an outsider has unique insight into a group's inner workings.

A Brief Autobiographical Note

Like the authors I discuss in this book, I, too, am an outsider despite having spent more than half a century reading and writing about psychoanalysis and teaching graduate and undergraduate courses on literature and psychoanalysis. After receiving tenure in the late 1970s at SUNY-Albany, now called the University at Albany, I studied for three years at the National Psychological Association of Psychoanalysis (NPAP), the first non-medical psychoanalytic institute in the United States, founded in 1948 by Freud's student Theodor Reik. During the early 1980s, when I studied at NPAP, only medically trained psychiatrists could become candidates or members of the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA). It was not until 1989 that APsaA, under pressure of a lawsuit filed by four members of the American Psychological Association, permitted non-medical clinicians to study at APsaA-approved institutes. APsaA's exclusionary practice did not affect me. I had no desire to become an analyst. A handful of English professors have become practicing psychoanalysts, including not only Christopher Bollas but also Peter L. Rudnytsky and Vera Camden. My goal in studying at NPAP was to increase my understanding of psychoanalysis for my teaching and scholarship.

While studying at NPAP, I was probably the only person who was not in analysis. Going into analysis for several years, with two young children and a wife who was at the time a stay-at-home mother, would have involved incurring crushing financial debt, something I was unwilling to do (it would have made me more neurotic!), particularly since I didn't want to change careers. I was content to be a "research scholar" at NPAP and muddle through life without the benefit of analytic self-enlightenment. When the other NPAP students told me that I was missing the most valuable component of psychoanalytic education, a personal or training analysis, I shrugged my shoulders. The other students at NPAP spoke about their own personal analysis and what they learned from their patients; I joked that my clinical practice was limited to conflicted fictional

characters, adding that I had inexpensive malpractice insurance because fictional characters seldom sue the psychoanalytic literary scholars who write about them. If I were beginning my life over again, I would make the same career decision, becoming an English professor and spending my life writing about literature and psychoanalysis.

In his late essay “Analysis Terminable and Interminable” (1937), Freud wrote about the difficulty of ending analysis. I don’t usually believe in omens, but I had a near-death experience returning home from my final psychoanalytic classes that allowed me to read the handwriting on the wall. It was easy to study at NPAP when I was on sabbatical after I received tenure, but it became harder when I returned to full-time teaching. One morning each week, on a non-teaching day, I would drive from my home in the suburbs to downtown Albany and take a three-hour bus ride to Manhattan. After spending the afternoon visiting museums or the New York Public Library, I would take two back-to-back evening courses (all psychoanalytic institutes have their classes in the evening to accommodate clinicians’ work schedules) and return to Albany exhausted, usually around 2:30 a.m., and then drive back home, collapsing into bed around 3:00 a.m., waking three or four hours later to teach my classes. At the end of the third year of psychoanalytic classes, I was so tired and disoriented as I was driving home that I couldn’t understand why the few cars on the road at that time were furiously blinking their headlights at me—until I discovered, to my horror, that I was driving the wrong way on the interstate. Narrowly avoiding crashing into a car that was hurtling toward me, I took it as a sign that psychoanalysis was literally killing me and ended my formal education.

“The older I have become, the less I have understood or had insight into or known about myself.” If the octogenarian C.G. Jung could write this without embarrassment at the end of his posthumously published memoir, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (358), so can I. An example of not knowing myself? I don’t simply become teary eyed while watching a film in a theater or television at home; my body begins convulsing violently as I struggle to hold back a torrent of tears. Curiously, these intense filmic moments, which happen frequently, are not always about love and loss. Nor can I predict when these emotional eruptions will occur. I will tear up sometimes in the classroom when a student reads aloud a poignant essay, or when talking with a friend about a sad experience, but I’m not referring to these understandable situations. Rather, helplessly witnessing my body tremble during a film or television program is of a different

magnitude. During these unbearable moments, I try to disguise my physical trembling lest I make a spectacle of myself.

Making a spectacle of herself is what Madelon Sprengnether does in her powerful film memoir *Crying at the Movies* (2002), where she traces her own weeping to the suppressed emotions following her father's accidental drowning when she was nine. Forbidden by her mother to display any emotions about her father's death, the bereft daughter, tongue-tied, escaped into fiction and film, where she read about and witnessed tales of orphans. Years later, partly as a result of being in analysis, Sprengnether learned that her fear of losing control in reel life betokened unresolved mourning in real life. Because of traumatic amnesia, the fragments of the story emerge like shrapnel, evoking piercing pain associated with sudden loss.

Is unresolved mourning the explanation for my own paroxysms of emotion while watching films? Have I failed to come to terms with the losses in my own life? I see myself as an emotional person, but have I not been emotional enough? I'm not sure. Would years of psychoanalysis help me understand this peculiar—*bizarre* might be a better word—behavior? Again, I'm not sure. All I know is that you wouldn't want to sit next to me in a movie theater.

Showing Authors How You Write about Them

I asked Sander Gilman, Joan Wheelis, Nancy Chodorow, Christopher Bollas, and Adam Phillips whether they were interested in reading my discussions of their work and responding to my questions. All generously agreed to do so. As Paul Roazen observes in *Freud and His Followers*, "In scholarship as in life, knowing the right questions is always the hardest problem" (xxx). Apart from Allen Wheelis, who was unusually self-disclosing, particularly in an age when psychoanalysts did not reveal much about themselves, the other writers in this book are not, and they did not always respond to my more personal (and intrusive) questions, such as "What did you learn about yourself from your analysis?" or "How did being a parent affect your psychoanalytic thinking?" Yet they were always forthcoming in the questions on which they did comment.

There are advantages and disadvantages of showing people in advance how you write about them. The advantages include their willingness to correct factual errors, point out interpretive differences, remark on autho-

rial intentions, and sometimes offer additional information about their work that leads to new insights. The authors in this study knew from reading my chapters that I had profound respect for their psychoanalytic contributions, but I tried not to write “puff pieces” about them, which is the one disadvantage to showing authors how you intend to write about them. It is admittedly harder to criticize people when they read your evaluation of their work. Adam Phillips’s observation in *Equals* that “writing about someone turns too easily into writing on their behalf” (228) is true. Most people react sympathetically to positive evaluations of their work; the corollary is that they may react unsympathetically to negative evaluations.

In my experience, the many advantages outweigh the single disadvantage. In the mid-1990s, I began writing about my students in *Diaries to an English Professor: Pain and Growth in the Classroom*, always with their written consent after they received their final grades and with permission of the university Institutional Review Board, which oversees human research. I showed my students in advance how I intended to use and contextualize their essays and diaries. I did this for their protection and my own. I have continued to follow this protocol in my later publications on teaching, such as *Surviving Literary Suicide* (1999), and in my books about spousal loss memoirs and death education. Paul Mosher and I followed this protocol when writing *Confidentiality and Its Discontents* and *Off the Tracks*, interviewing subjects and then showing them how we contextualized their words.

On Not Being Janet Malcolm

Investigative journalists like Janet Malcolm never do this. Two of her sensationalistic psychoanalytic studies, *Psychoanalysis: The Impossible Profession* (1981) and *In the Freud Archives* (1984), which first appeared in two essays published in *The New Yorker*, skewer her biographical subjects. In her acknowledgments in the 1981 book, Malcolm expresses gratitude to “Aaron Green,” the forty-six-year-old Manhattan psychoanalyst whom she interviewed, for being a “remarkable and lovable man who opened his mind and heart to me and gave this book its life.” Notwithstanding these laudatory words, the graduate of the New York Psychoanalytic Institute comes across as abrasive, snobbish, self-absorbed, insecure, envious, and narrow-minded. Malcolm has the ability to elicit her biographical sub-

ject's dangerous disclosures and then watch, to cite Hamlet's proverbial expression, as he is hoist with his own petard. Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson's promiscuity is perhaps the single most striking detail in Malcolm's 1984 exposé. "I knew there was something wrong," he recklessly confides to her; "I'd slept with close to a thousand women by the time I got to Toronto" (*In the Freud Archives* 39). But it's Masson's grandiosity that is most startling. Malcolm's portrait accentuates his egotism and overweening arrogance, his penchant for extravagant hyperbole, his narcissistic longing for success, and his betrayal of those who formerly befriended him.

Malcolm never acknowledges how she had ingratiated herself with Masson to extract his confessions. As Robert S. Boynton reported in *The Village Voice* in 1994, she interviewed Masson first in Berkeley, where he was living at the time, and then in her townhouse in New York City, where he and his girlfriend stayed with her for four days. Before her first article appeared in *The New Yorker*, she sent him a letter with the words, "I think you'll love it." He didn't. The outraged Masson filed a 13-million-dollar lawsuit in California against Malcolm and *The New Yorker*, alleging that she had fabricated five quotations, including, most notoriously, his statement calling himself an "intellectual gigolo" (*In the Freud Archives* 38). The lawsuit, which has been compared to the Jarnydice v. Jarnydice court case in Dickens's *Bleak House*, dragged on for years, eventually reaching the US Supreme Court.

The daughter of a psychiatrist, Malcolm was a brilliant writer who authored riveting books, but her journalistic ethics were highly problematic. As she declares in the opening paragraph to *The Journalist and the Murderer* (1990), indirectly commenting on her earlier books, the journalist is a "kind of confidence man, preying on people's vanity, ignorance, or loneliness, gaining their trust and betraying them without remorse" (3). Malcolm died in 2021 at age eighty-six. In her *New York Times* obituary, Katharine Q. Seelye cites Robert S. Boynton's warning in 1992: "Don't ever eat in front of Janet Malcolm; or show her your apartment; or cut tomatoes while she watches. In fact, it probably isn't a good idea even to grant her an interview, as your every unflattering gesture and nervous tic will be recorded eventually with devastating precision."

I'm a psychoanalytic literary scholar, not an investigative journalist, and I'm not interested in befriending biographical subjects only later to betray them. Only once have I had a problem when I sent a manuscript in advance to a person I was writing about—the psychoanalyst Hans J.

Kleinschmidt. By comparing Kleinschmidt's case study, ironically titled "The Angry Act: The Role of Aggression in Creativity," published in *American Imago* in 1967, with Philip Roth's highly autobiographical novel *Portnoy's Complaint* (1969), a chapter of which, "The Jewish Blues," appeared in 1967, I realized to my astonishment that Roth was Kleinschmidt's patient. Both analyst and patient were writing about the same biographical material.

Had I made this discovery solely on the basis of "The Angry Act" and *Portnoy's Complaint*, I would not have written about Roth, who would have been victimized twice, first by his analyst and then by a literary scholar. But in his 1974 novel *My Life as a Man*, Roth lightly fictionalizes this shocking breach of analytic confidentiality and leaves all the clues necessary for a psychoanalytically oriented literary critic such as me to make the connection. I decided to send my chapter "Philip Roth's Psychoanalysts," which was part of the book I was writing at the time, *The Talking Cure: Literary Representations of Psychoanalysis* (1985), to Kleinschmidt, asking him if he was willing to comment on it. Instead, he threatened to file a lawsuit against me. Kleinschmidt eventually backed off, however, and conceded that everything in my discussion was factually accurate.

In reading Adam Gopnik's wry essay "Man Goes to See a Doctor," first published in *The New Yorker* in 1998 and then reprinted in Jason Shinder's *Tales from the Couch: Writers on Therapy* (2000), I had a sense of déjà vu all over again, for I could tell from Gopnik's sly description that his German-born analyst, pseudonymously called Dr. Max Grosskurth, was none other than Kleinschmidt. Whenever the elderly Grosskurth fell asleep, which was often, all Gopnik needed to do was to refer to Roth's name and the analyst's head would immediately jerk straight up.

None of the chapters in this book contain any explosive revelations, but I didn't know whether the authors would be willing to take time away from their busy schedules to answer my questions. They did. They didn't always agree with my observations about their work, but no one asked me to delete any material. I did not ask the authors the same question (such as "Are you hopeful about the future of psychoanalysis?"), mainly because some of them had already answered the question in their books. Nor did I ask the authors to comment on each other's work. Some authors responded with brief answers, while others gave more expansive replies. I always thought of additional questions to ask after a "conversation" ended, but I didn't want to be a nuisance with another email query.

Discussing Authors' Scholarship before Interviewing Them

Several interview collections exist, including Peter L. Rudnytsky's excellent 2000 volume *Psychoanalytic Conversations: Interviews with Clinicians, Commentators, and Critics*. These collections, however, do not include in-depth discussions of the interviewed writers. My conversations with the writers were, with one exception, email exchanges. I sent my questions to the authors; they responded, and, in some instances, I added follow-up questions, hoping to achieve the illusion of the spontaneity of an actual conversation. I couldn't do this with Adam Phillips, however, because he doesn't use email. I would not have been able to contact him without the help of Christopher Bollas, who kindly gave me Phillips's London address and telephone number. Reluctant to telephone Phillips, mainly because I have a hearing problem, I mailed him a copy of my chapter about his work, and, to my delight, he agreed to read my chapter and responded promptly with his comments, which he snail-mailed me.

Throughout this book I take a chronological approach to their psychoanalytic writings, which allows me to point out the continuities and occasional discontinuities of their thinking. With a single exception, I comment on all of the books of each writer. Sander Gilman has authored or coauthored over ninety books (he can write a book faster than one can review it), and thus I limit myself to his psychoanalytic scholarship, which itself is vast. I also discuss the literary and psychoanalytic commentary surrounding the authors' writings. Whenever possible, I discuss how their work has influenced my own teaching and writing.

The Plan of This Book

Chapter 1 examines Sander L. Gilman, one of the great contemporary psychoanalytic cultural historians. He is, almost certainly, the world's most prolific psychoanalytic scholar. More than anyone, Gilman shows how Freud's unconscious feelings about his identity, particularly his ambivalence over being an Eastern European Jew, were inscribed into psychoanalytic theory. Demonstrating how the "poisoned" concept of race stands at the center of nineteenth-century science, Gilman offers radically new readings of Freud based on race, class, and gender. He analyzes how the "Jew" in Freud's Jewish jokes becomes the "woman" in psychoanalytic theory, embodying negative qualities of moral inferiority, weakness, and

passivity. Gilman is the master interrogator of stereotypes and the rhetoric of differences, exposing the largely unconscious ideologies with which we structure the world. Like Michel Foucault, Gilman is interested in studying power, but unlike the influential French philosopher, Gilman focuses on the psychological dimensions of power. If we appear “smarter” than Freud, Gilman told me, we must remember that Freud developed the psychological tools by which we study him.

Chapter 2 focuses on Allen Wheelis, who, next to Freud and Irvin Yalom, was probably the greatest writer of psychotherapy tales. Like Yalom, Wheelis was a *disillusioner*. I started reading Wheelis’s novels in the 1980s and interviewed him in his elegant San Francisco home in the late 1990s, when I first began writing about him. Regrettably, I have little memory of what we discussed together. (Only later did I ruefully remind myself to write down everything important lest my poor memory betray me.) Wheelis at first fictionalized a traumatic childhood experience that he later wrote about in a nonfiction book, allowing us to see the lifelong humiliation he experienced as a child. He was a trenchant critic of his profession, to which he nevertheless remained devoted. Many of his fiction and nonfiction books describe the professional hazards of being a psychoanalyst. He was among the first analysts to write about the limits of insight, which does not always produce therapeutic change or relief from suffering. Like Chekhov, Wheelis believed that the role of the artist is to ask questions, not answer them. Fascinated with clinicians of despair, he is never despairing in his commitment to his twin passions, literature and psychoanalysis.

It is not common for a daughter to enter the same profession as her father and mother, and even less common for a psychoanalyst to write a memoir about her relationship to her parents. For this reason alone, Joan Wheelis’s 2019 memoir, *The Known, the Secret, the Forgotten*, is noteworthy. Indeed, it is the only memoir of which I’m aware in which a psychoanalyst writes about her father and mother who were themselves analysts. Joan Wheelis offers a unique perspective on her parents, both of whom lived and practiced to their nineties. In her responses to my questions, she describes her complicated feelings about reading her father’s books. She also writes about following in her parents’ footsteps by becoming a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst but then going in her own direction by using a new therapeutic approach, dialectical behavior therapy, one that is especially valuable for “borderline” patients who usually are not helped by psychoanalysis. In her professional publications, Joan Wheelis displays the same modesty and humility when writing about patients as her father did.

Chapter 3 highlights Nancy J. Chodorow, whose first book, *The Reproduction of Mothering* (1978), has become a classic, profoundly influencing how two disciplines, sociology and psychoanalysis, theorize motherhood and child development. Despite the fame she achieved from the book, it was difficult for her to find a tenure-track academic position: psychoanalytically oriented feminist sociologists were not in demand in the 1970s. In her most recent book, *The Psychoanalytic Ear and Sociological Eye*, Chodorow offers a new psychoanalytic approach, intersubjective ego psychology, combining two antagonistic theoretical models, ego psychology (the study of defense mechanisms) and interpersonal psychology. She elaborates on two types of analysts: those who, driven by theory, listen *for* a patient's speech to confirm their own theoretical approach, and others who, by contrast, listen *to* a patient in an attempt to be more open-minded and inclusive. Chodorow's own preference is clear, and, following her lead, I listen to what she says. She proposes a new interdisciplinary academic department, "Individuology," to study human complexity. If such a department existed, Chodorow's books would most certainly be taught. In her responses to my questions, she offers excellent advice to psychoanalytic scholars beginning their careers.

Chapter 4 explores Christopher Bollas's writings, particularly how they reveal his psychoanalytic *literary* education. Bollas received a PhD in English literature before he became a renowned psychoanalyst. Evidence of his literary training is striking in all of his writings. Bollas is one of the most evocative psychoanalytic stylists, as can be seen in the theory for which he is best known, the "unthought known," named in the subtitle of his first and probably most influential book, *The Shadow of the Object*. Bollas is among the most stylish psychoanalytic theorists, with an uncommon knack for aphorisms and neologisms. He coins many new psychoanalytic expressions, such as a *sightophile*, a person who prefers seeing to thinking, reminding us that sight (and insight) without careful thought may be counterproductive. Bollas is also a talented creative writer; he has authored three novellas and a collection of plays, all of which dramatize his psychoanalytic vision. Bollas's fictional writings allow him to offer satirical criticisms of his profession in ways that would not have been possible in his nonfictional writings.

Chapter 5 considers Adam Phillips, regarded as one of Britain's greatest living psychoanalysts and literary critics. Freud loved literature and wrote, as he ruefully acknowledged, as a creative writer; nevertheless, he turned to literature mainly to confirm psychoanalytic theory. By con-

trast, Phillip reverses the process, arguing that psychoanalysis is a part of literature. A paradoxicalist and provocateur, Phillips is a masterful writer; his Wildean wit makes his books, to cite one of his titles, *Unforbidden Pleasure*. To cite another of his book titles, he is always *Attention Seeking* but never narcissistic or solipsistic. To avoid reading Phillips, we would be *Missing Out*, to quote still another book title. But if one had to equate Phillips with a single book title, it would be his coauthored *On Kindness*. He maintains throughout his many books a dual allegiance to literature and psychoanalysis. Challenging conventional psychoanalytic wisdom, he offers us, in his slender biography of the creator of the talking cure, a post-Freudian Freud, a disenlightener who, instead of solving the Sphinx's riddle with the discovery of the Oedipus complex, affirmed, perhaps without knowing it, mystery, ambiguity, and unknowability. Phillips's vision of psychoanalysis is uniquely his own—and, for me, irresistible.

In the conclusion I discuss psychoanalysis as a work in progress. Based on the differences among the writers in this book, one might refer to *psychoanalyses* to highlight the plurality of psychoanalytic visions. I raise several issues, including the extent to which psychoanalysis is scientific, the Dodo bird effect, the marital inequality between literature and psychoanalysis, the controversy over the new English translation of Freud's writings, and my impressions of my conversations with the authors in this study, including the realization of my own "unfinished business." Part of this unfinished business involves my transference to the authors, something of which I was not aware until it was pointed out by the anonymous reviewers of this book, who in effect became my "analysts." I end with a brief comment about the fate of psychoanalysis, looking forward to a time when the cataclysmic year 2020 will give way to a brighter future.

Had I world enough and time—and additional space in this book—I would have interviewed several other leading interdisciplinary psychoanalytic thinkers, such as Jessica Benjamin, Deborah Britzman, Glen Gabbard, Julia Kristeva, Thomas Ogden, and Peter Rudnytsky. I hope I have an opportunity to write about these seminal thinkers in future books.

"Every man I meet," Emerson observed in a letter in the late 1800s, "is my superior in some way. In that I learn from him." Sander Gilman, Allen Wheelis and Joan Wheelis, Nancy Chodorow, Christopher Bollas, and Adam Phillips are unquestionably superior clinicians, scholars, and theorists. All of them are, to use a social media word, *influencers*. I learned much from them, as I hope to show.

