

PHANTASIES, NEUROTIC-BELIEFS, AND BELIEFS-PROPER

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This paper presents a philosophical analysis of three cognitive states familiar and important to psychoanalysts—phantasy, neurotic-belief, and belief-proper. It explores the differences among these three propositional attitudes and finds that the development of secondary process capacities of reality testing and truth directness out of earlier primary process operations (themselves prior to considerations of truth or falsity) plays a crucial role. Difficulties in the proper typing of cognitive states are discussed, as are the consequences of such confounds. This use of a philosophical method serves to sharpen the familiar psychoanalytic clinical concepts of phantasy and neurotic-belief. In addition, these same clinical concepts, once properly specified, have much to offer the philosophy of mind, where current understanding of representational cognitive states is restricted to those that are largely conscious and rational. When psychoanalytic concepts such as phantasy and neurotic-belief can be better integrated within the discipline of philosophy of mind, both philosophers and psychoanalysts will have a more complete and adequate theory of mind.

KEY WORDS: primary process; philosophy of mind; belief; phantasy; unconscious.

INTRODUCTION

Beliefs, according to most philosophers of mind, are cognitive states that take the form of propositional attitudes. But we can recognize three distinct propositional attitude types, all best considered “beliefs.” Beliefs of the first type have strict technical criteria that derive from a modern philosophy of mind viewpoint. Thus, the “beliefs-proper” of this sort are those propositional attitudes that are reality tested and truth directed. Beliefs-proper are held or dropped as reality testing brings evidence for or against the belief. While one can hold a false belief-proper, and thereby believe falsely, one cannot knowingly do so.

The second type of belief, perhaps best typified by religious beliefs, cannot be reality tested. As there can never be sufficient evidence accrued to know this sort of belief as true or false, one can hold it indefinitely, or

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choose to relinquish or even change it, without one's rationality being called into question. Many widely held ethical and cultural, as well as popular and everyday beliefs, belong to this category we will call "social-belief." In this paper there will not be much to be said about this type of belief.

"Neurotic-beliefs" comprise the third, and for the psychoanalyst, perhaps most interesting type of belief. Often fixed and central in our neurotic patients, these neurotic-beliefs more resemble phantasies than beliefs-proper. Both phantasies and neurotic-beliefs are propositional attitudes that can be characterized as primary process in organization, prior to truth considerations, and not reality tested. And yet, because in neurotic-beliefs psychic-reality based "knowledge" is substituted for knowledge gained by reality testing in beliefs-proper, neurotic-beliefs are experienced as though they meet the criteria for beliefs-proper. Not surprisingly then, factual knowledge of the sort that can easily cause beliefs-proper to change has almost no effect on neurotic-beliefs. This both reaffirms a basic psychoanalytic technical concept—the need for transference based working through—and helps explain why cognitive behavioral therapies (as well as those of our interpretative efforts, which consist merely in sharing facts) often prove disappointing.

In addition to providing some understanding of the above practical matters, a serious effort to classify propositional attitudes like phantasies, beliefs-proper, and neurotic-beliefs—a main goal of this paper—can afford psychoanalysts other advantages. By clearly defining and classifying some of the concepts central to clinical psychoanalytic phenomena, concepts such as neurotic-belief and phantasy, and by investigating how these primary process organized states differ from beliefs-proper, a method borrowed from philosophy can enhance psychoanalytic understanding.¹ Just as important, everyday psychoanalytic conceptualization can add considerably to the philosophy of mind, where it is commonly held that most representational mental states (i.e., mental states with contents), must be rational mental states.² (See Cherniak, 1981; Davidson, 1970/1980a, 1973/1980b, 1974/1980c, 1975/1984, 1982; Dennett, 1978, 1987; Fodor, 1975, 1986; and Stich, 1983. These philosophers are meaning holists who do allow for the occasional irrational contentful mental state, but only in the context of generalized normative rationality.) Because in our work as psychoanalysts we have routine and fluid access to various primary process mediated mental states, states that are anything but rare, we can uniquely participate in the effort to understand cognitive states, conative propositional attitudes, and mental states in general. We can be psychoanalytic clinicians and make psychoanalytic contributions to a theory of mind.

In order to do this in a systematic fashion, we need to be clear about

the differences among phantasies, beliefs-proper, and the more complex category of neurotic-beliefs. I begin with a few examples of neurotic-beliefs.

THREE SAMPLE CASES OF NEUROTIC-BELIEF FROM AN ORDINARY PSYCHOANALYTIC MORNING

I hope to demonstrate two points with these three examples. First, although neurotic-beliefs do not meet the criteria (to be elaborated at length below) for beliefs-proper at all, they are subjectively experienced no differently from beliefs-proper. Second, the phenomenon of experiencing neurotic-beliefs as beliefs-proper is so ubiquitous it can be demonstrated with almost any psychoanalytic patient in any hour. That said, I will discuss my first three patients on the day I wrote the first draft of this section of the paper.

My first patient, Dr. A, a 50-year-old administrator of a multispecialty medical clinic, began the session lamenting her lack of authority. She was aware that her voice was tremulous, and she complained that her clothes were nondescript and her overall appearance mousy. She felt terrible, as though she was someone in hiding. We recognized these as familiar complaints. They arose from her acting on her neurotic-belief that there was just one way to prevent a present day recurrence of the very damaging sexual behavior her father engaged in with her when she was between the ages of 3 and 9—that way was to be always hidden and unappealing so that all men would keep their distance. “Evidence” of various sorts for this neurotic-belief was brought to bear. There was the objective knowledge that her current behavior has in fact led to no inappropriate sexual relationships, although unfortunately no satisfying ones either. Then, with respect to the past, there was some psychic-reality based “knowledge.” Dr. A “knew” that since neither her neglected and hence disheveled sister nor her chronically psychotic mother seemed to attract her father in the same way, she, who had been a sparkly 3-year-old much desiring her father’s affection, must have been responsible for her father’s acts. So she “knew” she should have made herself hidden and unappealing then, too, and neurotically believed she had best remain that way now. Dr. A experienced these neurotic-beliefs as beliefs-proper, and she acted on them as one would beliefs-proper. But they are not beliefs-proper—not even false ones. They are more like complex phantasies, central to her neurotic problem; phantasies in which the reality-based evidence seeking and consequent knowledge involved with beliefs-proper is replaced by a façade of psychic-reality based “knowledge.”

My second patient, Dr. B, is a 35-year-old family practitioner. He holds a neurotic-belief that he is unattractive, physically and emotionally. So Dr.

B took the better part of this session to recount an impressively long list of friends, colleagues, patients, and persons who were potential love interests, all of whom had, via phone, e-mail, regular mail, or directly, complimented him on his looks and/or qualities of character. We were used to this; he commented that he was still trying to reality test by amassing evidence to counter his standard view of himself. But, we both realized this endeavor, no matter how many times repeated, would likely be close to useless. It was mere reality-tested knowledge, which had no sway with Dr. B's psychic-reality "knowledge." Again, what Dr. B experienced is a neurotic-belief not a belief-proper. Therefore, he will not drop it even when much evidence-based knowledge shows it to be false.

Patient three, Dr. C, a 30-year-old married man, was intermittently intense or withdrawn in his relationship with his wife. Owing to a very recent and acrimonious fight they had, we learned that whenever she felt her need for space compromised (as she often did), he felt her reject him with much force. He could not tolerate being excluded by her and felt the need to make it right immediately, which was of course impossible. Dr. C next had the following associations. Yesterday, after the session, he had been able to think about our work together for some 15 minutes after the session. He realized that, although remarkable, rarely had he had any thoughts whatever about his analysis between sessions. In fact, he stopped his work about a minute before the end of each hour. Today we were able to understand why he withdrew before I ended each session and why he stayed withdrawn until we began the next one. This behavior owed to a neurotic-belief that my stopping each hour constituted a rejection and that rather than live through the 24 hours or so until our next appointment, he made our relationship nonexistent. I speculated, too (although not yet with my patient), that the revival of our relationship every day was important in terms of one of his most central and wishful phantasies, namely that his relationship with his long dead mother could likewise be revived so regularly and so easily. When I do make this interpretation, I will likely talk in terms of my patient "acting as though he believes" that the dead-then-alive cycle in the analytic hours is something that he can re-create with his mother, thereby bringing her back to life, if only temporarily. I will make the interpretation without expecting a change in my patient's thinking, either on the basis of reality-based knowledge about the nature of death or on what will be his new knowledge that he actually entertains such an idea. Yet, I will comment to Dr. C in terms of "acting as though he believes," because he will not experience the contents of such a neurotic-belief in any different way from how he would experience the contents of a belief-proper, or a social-belief for that matter.

But as with Drs. A and B, mental contents of Dr. C's neurotic-beliefs

are different; both from contents in social beliefs, which need admit of no evidential modifications, and from contents in beliefs-proper, which must be reality tested and rendered true or false. Rather, for all three patients, the contents of the neurotic-beliefs discussed here are among the important components of each patient's core phantasies. Not that phantasies are the same as neurotic-beliefs. Phantasies (as I will discuss at greater length below) are primary process based and prior to considerations of reality testing and truth vs. falsity. Neurotic-beliefs are composed of one or more phantasies, *plus* psychic-reality based "knowledge" that provides confirming "evidence" for the phantasies' content. (Neurotic-beliefs can be considered "phantasies-plus.") The following analogy might clarify this further: phantasies bear the same relationship to a neurotic-belief—which needs its façade of rationality; as latent dream wishes do to a secondarily revised manifest dream—which needs its secondary process façade. Of course, phantasies—including the sort of structured, complex, partly unconscious, multileveled and multidetermined type of phantasy described in these three patients—are quite different from beliefs-proper. Just how they are different and why they are different are of central importance and will be addressed forthwith.³

DEFINITIONS OF BELIEF-PROPER AND PHANTASY

In philosophical terms, a belief-proper is that type of propositional attitude that aims at the truth (see Velleman, 1998). Thus, Dr. A cannot have the belief-proper, "it is time for my session to end" unless she ascertains that the particular set of conditions by which this proposition would be true—namely that this session started at 6:45 a.m. and it is now 7:30 a.m.—obtains. What this amounts to, in more familiar terms, is that the contents of beliefs-proper are specified with respect to time and place and that belief-proper contents are always (and ever) subjected to reality testing. She can maintain her belief-proper that it is time for the session to end now, 1/15/99, at 7:30 a.m. in Ann Arbor, even when she remembers that it is 5:30 a.m. in Colorado where she grew up. On the other hand, if Dr. A has the belief-proper that the session will momentarily end, but consults her watch (which is in good working order) to find that it is 7:10 a.m., she will no longer hold the belief-proper that the session is about to end. Actually, since the belief-proper that the session will be ending now would, under these conditions, entail a contradiction, she *can* no longer hold this belief—at least not as a belief-proper. Obviously, she can still desire, wish, or fantasize that the session were ending; any of these may have had a causal role in the initial, but now known to be false, belief. But, what Dr. A cannot do is hold the belief-proper that the session will end now, while

knowing that it will not. From the above, it should already be apparent that beliefs-proper are propositional attitudes that, in psychoanalytic terms, are examples of secondary process mentation; they are each grounded in a particular time and place, they are all reality tested, and they never admit of contradictions. All of this requires some cognitive sophistication and maturity.

Phantasies are quite different from beliefs-proper. From a philosophical perspective the difference is appreciated in that phantasies are characterized as those propositional attitudes in which there is no attempt to match the truth conditions of the proposition to what obtains in the world (see Brakel, in press.) Thus, if Dr. A has longed for a break from the work of her analysis, she might fantasize "It is at least 7:30 a.m. now in Ann Arbor, and this session will very soon end for today."⁴ without any consideration of the actual time. Further even if she's made aware that the time in Ann Arbor is now only 7:10 a.m., her phantasy that it is at least 7:30 a.m. can remain her phantasy. This example demonstrates both that phantasies, unlike beliefs-proper, can admit of contradictions and that phantasies are different from beliefs-proper with respect to time and place specifications. Whereas with beliefs-proper, particulars of time and space play central if not starring roles; with phantasies, time and space specifications are relegated to roles of no more importance than those of undifferentiated extras. Thus, Dr. A can fantasize that her drive away from my office, which will occur at 7:35 a.m., is happening right now or that since it would be the case that if she were in Paris it would be around 1:15 p.m., many hours past her session, she, therefore, is in Paris—or that Ann Arbor is on Paris time, or that Ann Arbor is a new division of Paris. Moreover, not only can phantasies (as those above) be inconsistent with one another, each phantasy can be internally contradictory even within itself. Thus, Dr. A can fantasize that she is working in her psychoanalytic session now *and* that at the very same time she is taking a break from psychoanalysis, enjoying the Paris afternoon. If Dr. A should happen to become aware of the contradiction and want to "correct" it, she can create a phantasy with a condensation: she can fantasize, for example, us together in Paris, analyzing but also having a break from analysis. Clearly, in psychoanalytic terms, phantasies, even the conscious phantasies of adults, conform much more to primary process type mentation. Phantasies are not reality tested; they do not rely on time and place specifications, instead taking place in the "tenseless and unexamined present" (see Brakel, in press); and they admit of contradictions (or primary process condensation "correction" for contradictions) readily.

What if we apply these criteria for belief-proper to the neurotic-beliefs of my patients? Take first that beliefs-proper must be specified in terms of time

and place. Dr. A has a neurotic-belief that the way to stop men (who all are equivalent to her father) from engaging in inappropriate sexual relations with her is to make herself into a mousy hidden person. This is a propositional attitude in which the present is confused with the past. While being a less appealing little girl might (questionably) have deterred her father's pathological sexual interests, being a mousy woman will do nothing to stop what was in the past and will do nothing to prevent current-day sexual assaulters. Yet, Dr. A's neurotic-belief functions more like a phantasy; it operates in a tenseless and unexamined present. Now what about the reality-testing criterion that beliefs-proper do not admit of contradictions? Dr. B's case demonstrates that even though he accepts evidence that he is an attractive person contrary to his neurotic-belief that he is not attractive, his neurotic-belief remains every bit as fixed.

PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

If it is correct to categorize beliefs-proper as examples of secondary process mentation, then the capacity to hold beliefs-proper necessitates that any holder of such has achieved a great deal of cognitive development. After all, the capacity for secondary process mental operations requires much of thinkers. Mental contents need to be specified in terms of a particular time and a particular place. Contradictions must be appreciated, then not tolerated. Finally, the state of affairs obtaining in the world must be matched with the set of truth conditions that can make specific propositions true. In psychoanalytic terms, these capacities constitute the general ability to test reality.

Because phantasies are propositional attitudes of a primary process nature, they do not require as much cognitive sophistication. In fact, young children can have contentful⁵ phantasies well before any consideration of truth vs. falsity, any constraining time variables, any attempt to test reality, and any notion of contradiction. Phantasies are phantasized not just by the very young not yet capable of beliefs-proper. Phantasies are also phantasized by cognitively mature adults. When an adult has a phantasy, the adult has consciously or unconsciously suspended the need to specify time and place and to exclude contradictions and in so doing, no longer tests reality. Thus, a phantasy is marked either by the developmental incapacity for, or the suspension of, these interrelated abilities. That this is unique to phantasizing among the cognitive propositional attitude types becomes apparent as we look not only at phantasy vs. belief-proper but at several other propositional attitude types, including hypothesizing, supposing, imagining, and pretending.

Each of these others, even pretending, depends on the capacity for assessing truth conditions of the proposition in question, and the related capacity for ascertaining whether these truth conditions have been met so that the proposition can be judged as true or false. In psychoanalytic terms, even pretending is preceded by the exercise of secondary process reality testing (including time and place orientation) with regard to matching what is pretended with conditions obtaining in the world. Thus, Dr. C, who with his young son, pretends to be a dinosaur in the dinosaur age, cannot really pretend this without the prior background understanding that he is a human father in the post-dinosaur era.⁶ Imagining is a thought-dominated type of pretending of which there are two forms. The first is a straightforward mental pretending in which, for example, Dr. C cannot imagine spreading his wings and taking flight unless he understands he is a flightless bipedal creature with two arms and no wings. In this type of imagining, just as is the case with pretending, what he suspends is not the capacity for reality testing and truth vs. falsity assessment, but the outcome of these operations after they've been performed. In the other type of imagining, although there is no suspension of reality-testing capacities, tests of reality have not yet been performed, and one may even choose not to perform them. Thus, I can imagine that X, my former supervisor, is at the gym today, without checking, and whether or not it is the case that X is at the gym.⁷ Pretending and both types of imagining are very different from phantasizing, because in phantasizing the very capacities for truth/falsity assessment, time/space assignment, and reality testing are either not yet in place or are suspended. Further, in phantasizing the suspension can take place either under one's conscious direction or unconsciously, whereas with pretending and imagining reality-testing operations (or products thereof) are actively and consciously put to the side.

Supposing and hypothesizing are even more sophisticated with respect to truth and reality testing. With supposing, the truth conditions of the proposition and the world are stipulated as matching—the supposition is taken-as-true—without emphasis on investigation of whether or not it is true. Propositions are supposed-true for some purpose, for example, in order to further an exploration, make an argument, continue a discussion, and so forth. The capacity to test reality is quite intact. However, reality testing is put off, with the truth of the proposition presumed temporarily in order to further some more pressing goal. With hypothesizing some proposition to be true, there is not only the presupposition that the hypothesizer has intact capabilities for assessing truth and falsity and reality testing but also that he/she has a serious interest in the truth status of the proposition in question. The hypothesizer is concerned with getting things right about the proposition and its relation to affairs of the world. He/she has perhaps per-

formed some reality testing operations already. And, the hypothesizer will likely be interested in the outcome of other, more definitive tests.

A TWO-STAGE DEVELOPMENT OF TWO REALITY-TESTING SKILLS

By examining these different propositional attitudes, we can see that a two-stage cognitive development with respect to truth assessment and reality testing takes place. The capacity for phantasizing marks the first stage in the development of propositional attitudes with truly representational, referring mental content (see Brakel, in press). Phantasizing, the earliest in the series of propositional attitude, does not require the capacity to test reality, to provide time/place specifications, nor to discern truth from non-truth. Phantasies take place before such reality constraints can be appreciated and before the difference between truth and nontruth can be considered. Not so with beliefs-proper, and not so with the other propositional attitudes alluded to, including pretending and imagining, the two types with which phantasies are often confused. Unlike phantasies, pretendings and imaginings are propositional attitudes belonging to the second stage of development. Here, contrasts between the situations pretended and those in the world are registered, and there must be the ability to assess the match between truth conditions of the particular propositions pretended and the particular affairs obtaining in the world. This is true reality testing, a skill (more properly a collection of skills) necessary for genuine pretending or imagining.⁸ That the outcome of the reality tests is overruled, or the operations of reality testing suspended, owes to the fact that there are, for the person pretending/imagining, aims more important than reality testing and truth assessment—e.g., affect discharge, practice of skills, fun.

There is another reality-testing skill differentiating those who can pretend and imagine from those who can but phantasize. Unlike phantasizers, imaginers and pretenders are aware that they are imagining or pretending. Thus, to pretend or imagine some content requires not just a grasping of that content but an awareness that one is engaging that content within the cognitive activity of pretending or imagining. This amounts to the understanding that imaginers and pretenders have that they are engaged in propositional attitudes different from having beliefs-proper.

Supposing propositions to be true builds on the cognitive skills developed in imagining and pretending. The awareness that one is *supposing* X to be true rather than *having the belief-proper* that X is true is a necessary condition for supposition. It allows the supposer, a thinker fully capable of ordinary reality testing, to circumvent the usual tests of the matches between world and propositional truth conditions and, due to some goal more

pressing than truth assessment, provisionally ascribe truth to an untested proposition.⁹ Hypothesizing requires at least as much cognitive sophistication as does supposing. This is so with respect to differentiating the various propositional attitude types and with respect to matching truth conditions of propositions with states of affairs in the world. Unlike all the other propositional attitude types examined, only hypothesizing shares with holding beliefs-proper the goal of aiming at the truth. When a proposition is hypothesized-true from the hypothesizer's viewpoint, however, more tests need to be applied before the proposition can be held as a belief-proper and believed-true.

Let's return to my three patients and their neurotic-beliefs. Since they experience them as beliefs-proper, it is clear that they do not regard them as different in propositional attitude type from other beliefs-proper. On the other hand, it is my contention that their neurotic-beliefs really are more correctly typed as phantasies, or better yet, what I'd like to call "phantasies-plus." Phantasies-plus are phantasies added to by the "evidence" for them supplied by psychic-reality. This activity of evidence seeking and the "knowledge" accrued contribute to the subjective experience of neurotic-beliefs as true beliefs-proper. My aim is to support this contention in the sections to follow.

CONNECTIONS WITH THE CONATIVE PROPOSITIONAL ATTITUDES: WISHES AND DESIRES

So far we've been looking at the cognitive capacities sufficient for phantasies as compared with the more advanced cognitive capacities necessary for beliefs-proper. Reality testing consisting of matching world truth condition with propositional truth conditions, the ascription of truth vs. nontruth, and the ability to classify the type of propositional attitude one is employing—all of these capacities absent in phantasizing, but present (at least to some extent) in pretending and imagining, and fully operative in supposing, hypothesizing, and holding beliefs-proper—are capacities characteristic of secondary process mentation. But how do the conative propositional attitudes of wishing and desiring fit here? Although it might be obvious that wishes belong with phantasies and beliefs belong with desires, the criteria we used to distinguish between the two stages of development in the cognitive propositional attitudes will not be of much use here. Wishes can be contradictory, they are impervious to constraints of reality testing, and truth conditions for these propositions don't even make sense. One cannot say, for instance, that the content of a wish is true or not true. All of this is no less true for desires. I can desire to be an eager, fresh eight-year-old again,

fully knowing it will never happen. Further, I can desire to be eight years old again and, at the same time, desire to be as wise and knowledgeable and old as the most senior analyst.

However, before we abandon these familiar criteria, let's note that some of the very same secondary process capacities—the many aspects of reality testing for example—are very often used by desirers to evaluate their desires in a few dimensions. When someone has a desire, he/she recognizes it as the type of conative propositional attitude it is,¹⁰ and then, in conjunction with assessing what obtains in the world, he/she develops some notion of whether or not the desire can be realistically fulfilled and by what means. People use beliefs-proper about what obtains in the world to attempt to fulfill their desires. For an everyday example, suppose Dr. B gets a message from his secretary that an old friend from out of town is here in Ann Arbor for one day only and wants to meet him at 2 p.m. Suppose further that on this day Dr. B has a full load of patients scheduled, and his analytic appointment is at 2 p.m. He has, given the realities of time and space, what amounts to contradictory desires: to meet his friend at 2 p.m. and to see his analyst at 2 p.m. By having various consistent beliefs-proper, he can choose a course of action to attempt to maximize the fulfillment of both of these desires, albeit one at a time. Suppose he has a belief-proper that despite his secretary's message about his friend's specific availability, his friend is usually rather flexible about time. Or suppose he remembers that his analyst occasionally has been able to reschedule on short notice, so that he has the belief-proper that she might be able to now. Dr. B can put these beliefs-proper to the test and try to rearrange one of the 2 p.m. meetings. On the other hand, suppose Dr. B held a different belief-proper about his friend, namely, that although possessing many good qualities, he is given to playing stupid jokes on people. Or suppose Dr. B noted that his secretary has been making a lot of mistakes in taking phone messages lately. In neither of these last two cases would he have a sufficient set of beliefs-proper to warrant changing his original schedule, despite really desiring to see his friend.

The situation with wishes and phantasies is much different. Wishes seek fulfillment, too. But in the realm of phantasies they achieve a type of fulfillment unlike that discussed just above. For example, Dr. C wishes to be male and female. In his phantasy he is two: one who is male and one who is female. He has two other separate phantasies: one where he is male and another where he (she) is female. There is no problem that the first phantasy is internally inconsistent and that the two subsequent ones are inconsistent with one another. There is no problem that both of these wishes are impossible given the real world of earth physics and human biology. In these phantasies, his wishes are experienced (phantasized) as fulfilled.

BELIEFS-PROPER, UNLIKE PHANTASIES, MUST BE SEPARABLE FROM DESIRES AND WISHES

There is another important difference between beliefs-proper and desires on the one hand, and phantasies and wishes on the other—a difference in which the two-stage development concerning primary process vs. secondary process capacities is central. Beliefs-proper must be held (or dropped) irrespective of desires (and wishes), according instead to what conditions obtain in the world. No matter how much she desires to be in Paris, when Dr. A. sees a university building from my office window she must hold the belief-proper that she is seeing a part of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, not the Sorbonne in Paris. And, no matter how appealing Dr. C would find it to be both male and female, no matter how he wishes for such an omnipotent state, the real-world evidence that he is a man necessitates that he cannot hold the content “I am male and female” as a belief-proper. He can wish that this were so, he can phantasize that it is so, but he cannot hold a belief-proper that he is male and female as there is much reality-tested real-world evidence to the contrary.¹¹ On the other hand, there is no need whatsoever for phantasies to be separable from wishes. In fact, it is reasonable to wonder if phantasies can even exist without embedded wishes. Could Dr. C have a phantasy of being male and female without it representing some sort of wish or set of wishes?

To be capable of having those cognitive propositional states (i.e., beliefs-proper) that are entirely separate from conative propositional states (i.e., wishes and desires), it is required that secondary process mediated reality testing has developed sufficient stability that it will be maintained even under the pressures of primary process wishes to override it. A lovely example of reality testing that is not so sturdy comes from an experiment with chimps reported in the journal *Science*. (The work was done by Sarah Boysen at Ohio State University as reported by Fishman, 1993) Chimps were trained until each had the ability to recognize plastic Arabic numerals 1–10 and to associate these numerals with the number of items indicated. This ability, including the understanding of more vs. fewer items was demonstrated as follows. There was an initial training on numerals and their associated amounts. One chimp then had several runs in which she was given a choice of two plastic numerals, for example, a 4 and an 8—with one of the numerals to represent the number of gumdrops she herself would get and the other to represent the number of food bits for her partner, another chimp. One numeral was always higher than the other. The selecting chimp picked the higher plastic numeral first (e.g., 8), got rewarded with eight gumdrops, and then watched her partner chimp get the four gumdrops represented by the remaining plastic 4. Next, a new and more complicated

condition was introduced for two chimps, Sarah the selecting chimp and Sheba, her partner. Now the experimenters repeatedly gave Sheba the number of gumdrops matching the numeral Sarah chose first. Thus, when Sarah choose the plastic 7, Sheba got seven gumdrops and Sarah herself was left with the plastic 3 and three gumdrops. After a number of such trials Sarah had no trouble picking the lower valued plastic numeral first, thereby reserving for herself the higher numeral and the larger number of gumdrops represented. From the experimenters' view (really from any view) the learning experiment was a great success. But, a control condition is of interest for our purposes. When instead of the plastic numerals the experimenters used two piles with differing numbers of gumdrops—for example, four gumdrops vs. eight gumdrops—Sarah, the chimp flawlessly making the plastic numeral selections so as to increase her own gumdrop reward, could not learn to forestall choosing the pile with more gumdrops first. Presumably an easier task in that no association of numeral with number is required, Sarah could not help but choose the pile with more gumdrops first—even after seeing that again and again Sheba got the big gumdrop pay off. It seems she could not stop the wish for more food from interfering with aspects of her reality-testing capacities. She could not separate her belief-proper that she would get the bigger pile if and only if she first pointed to the smaller pile, from her desire for as much food as possible right now!

Back in the human world, the neurotic-beliefs of my three patients are also not independent of wishes and desires. Dr. A's neurotic-belief that her hidden, nondescript appearance will ward off inappropriate sexual advances past and present cannot be separated from her wish and desire that such a presentation to the world would have had a protective effect in the past and would have that effect now. Also, her neurotic-belief that she was responsible for her father's sexual behavior toward her, painful though it is, is admixed with the wish that her father's behavior was under her control all along—her wish that she wasn't, isn't, and won't be helpless. Similarly, Dr. C's neurotic-belief that I stop the sessions intending to reject him cannot exist: (1) without his concurrent wish (and preemptive action) to be the one who stops our relationship; and (2) without the older wish (on which the present-day wish and behavior are predicated) never to have felt and never to feel again the pain of being abandoned by his mother.

THE REALM OF ACTION: DESIRES/BELIEFS-PROPER VS. WISHES/PHANTASIES

So far three important differences between phantasies and beliefs-proper have been discussed. First, the conditions under which the contents of beliefs-proper are true or false must be assessed with respect to conditions in

the world. This reality-testing skill is not required for phantasies. Second, having a belief-proper necessitates being capable of properly typing it a belief-proper. No such capability for distinguishing and correctly typing propositional attitudes is required for phantasies. Third, beliefs-proper must be able to be assessed with independence from attendant desires and wishes. A belief-proper must be retained or dropped based only on matches between its content and the state of affairs obtaining in the world. This is not required for phantasies.

The significance of these three differences becomes highlighted when we consider the realm of action. It is also in the realm of action that the subjective experience of neurotic-belief as no different from that of belief-proper becomes problematic. Suppose in her analytic hour Dr. A becomes aware that she desires a tissue. If she has the belief-proper that the box of tissues in my consulting room is not empty, she will act and reach for a tissue. If, however, she has the belief-proper that the box is empty, she will not act. Further, if she even just imagines, supposes, or hypothesizes that the box has tissues, because so small an outlay is involved in this case, she will probably reach for the tissue box without further investigation. She will probably do this even realizing that she has only imagined, supposed, or hypothesized tissues being available. But, if getting a tissue involved leaving the consulting room and going to my waiting room, if she's merely imagined, supposed, or hypothesized tissues there, she probably would attempt to accrue further evidence (i.e., by asking me if there are some tissues in the waiting room) before interrupting her session. What about pretending? Dr. A, under some circumstances (e.g., in order to dramatize something), could merely pretend she had gotten a tissue; she could pretend to use it, too, knowing full well the pretend functioning of the pretend tissue would serve a different purpose from real use of the real thing. Finally, Dr. A could have a phantasy that there is a tissue in the tissue box, either knowing she's phantasizing or not realizing it. If she's aware of merely phantasizing, she may or may not act. After all, even though phantasies are prior to considerations of truth or falsity, mature thinkers know that sometimes phantasies just happen to be true. If her phantasy is of the type where she does not experience it as a phantasy, she's even more likely to reach for the tissue and start to use it, her actions unconstrained by reality. The example is certainly a mundane one, almost sure to have no important consequences. But let's return now to the neurotic-beliefs of my three patients.

Neurotic-beliefs, I have claimed, should not be considered beliefs-proper, but instead phantasies-plus—where the “plus” stands for evidence sought on the basis of psychic-reality and then action based on the resultant knowledge. Thus, while the contents of neurotic-beliefs resemble the contents of primary process mediated phantasies, they are experienced as beliefs-proper in large part due to the operation of the psychic-reality based

search for evidence and due to the resultant knowledge. The mistyping of neurotic-beliefs as beliefs-proper then allows neurotic-beliefs to lead to actions with very troubling consequences.

Dr. A's neurotic-belief that she must stay mousy leads her to act so as to actualize this. Consequent to these actions, her life is without the pleasures of male friends, companions, and lovers. Dr. B's neurotic-belief that he is not attractive as a person, physically and emotionally, is painful. In fact, so painful that he is driven to spend much of his waking time collecting people who think well of him in the hope of eventually disconfirming his entrenched neurotic-belief. But, his neurotic-belief driven actions and behaviors, meanwhile, are clearly to the detriment of other actions and behaviors, which could lead to the type of satisfying relationships for which he longs. Dr. C's neurotic-belief that I reject him every day in ending the sessions also leads him to actions—namely the anticipatory counterattack actions of terminating our relationship and ceasing all thoughts about his analysis from one minute before the end of every session until our work and relationship are revived the next day. These actions may jeopardize the very analysis and certainly do diminish its effectiveness.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the last two sections we have taken up first, the necessity for the separation of beliefs-proper (but not phantasies) from desires and wishes, and second, the special relationship between beliefs-proper and action. Both of these matters are closely related to the two reality-testing skills—(1) matching propositional truth conditions with world conditions, and (2) properly ascribing mental content to its cognitive state type—discussed above. To consolidate the various factors required for the two stage development yielding the capacity for genuine beliefs-proper, let's propose that beliefs-proper must meet four criteria: (1) there must be a matching of the truth conditions of their content with those that obtain for the world (reality testing one); (2) there must be a proper typing of the mental content in beliefs-proper as beliefs-proper (reality testing two); (3) beliefs-proper must be held (or dropped) independent from simultaneous desires and wishes; and (4) beliefs-proper, because of meeting the three criteria listed just above, bear a particular relationship to actions. To appreciate more fully these four factors, let us now examine various cognitive states (propositional attitudes) during dreaming in these terms.

COGNITIVE STATES IN DREAMS, INCLUDING DREAM-BELIEFS

The adult dream world contains many of the cognitive states of the adult waking world, but within the dream. When an adult dreams, the dreamer

experiences him- or herself as believing, imagining, pretending, supposing, perceiving, remembering, and so forth. But, these dream-beliefs (and dream-perceivings, etc.) cannot really meet the criteria to be considered beliefs-proper (or veridical perceptions, etc.). Although within the dream the dream-beliefs' contents presumably have been reality tested against what obtains in the world, the world is a dream world and the reality testing often lacks the secondary process mediated sophistication and consistency of awake world reality testing. For example, here is a dream of convenience (Freud, 1900–1901/1962a, p. 125) I had in medical school. “I hear a loud clanging. I don't understand what it means but feel compelled to get up and go to the delivery room and assist, and so I go.” When I awakened I realized that in the dream I believed myself to have been present in the delivery room, when in actuality I was still in my “on-call” bed. In the awake state I also understood that the loud clanging, incomprehensible in my dream, had been my pager ringing, summoning me to the delivery room as the on-call medical student for the obstetrics service. Reality testing even within the dream was off, and since in my dream I believed I had left for the delivery room, while in fact I slept soundly and dreamt, it is clear that my dream-belief did not help me match the truth conditions of the belief with those of the world.

Deviating from tests of reality in an even more striking way is the following. Dreamers are incorrect when they, within their dreams, experience themselves to be having the belief-proper type of propositional attitude. Instead, dreamers are dreaming and believing-within-the-dream, that is, having dream-beliefs. But, the great majority of dreamers in the great majority of dreams do not experience themselves as dreaming and therefore they *cannot* properly identify the type of propositional attitude they employ. Things do change as soon as the dreamer awakens. Once awake, most of the cognitive states and propositional states of the dream can be properly ascribed. So, the dreamer can then say, “That memory of X in the dream, was just as I do remember X.” But, the dreamer can also say, “That memory of Z in the dream was very different from any actual memory of Z.” With respect to dream-beliefs, too, they can match (awake) beliefs-proper or not. The standard of comparison always comes from actual belief-proper. A dreamer, now awake, can say, “In my dream I believed that your hair was very long and green. Now, I still have the belief-proper that it is long, but of course it is not green.”

Shevrin (1986) and I (Brakel, 1989) debated about the role of consciousness in the ability to discern the various types of cognitive states and propositional attitudes, one from the other. Shevrin held that being *conscious of* some mental content, whether it be in a dream, hallucination, or during alert awakesness, was sufficient to ascribe (and then fix) the content to a

particular cognitive state type (e.g., as a memory, perception, belief, wish, or an imagination, etc.). I, on the other hand, held that one's being *conscious of* some content was necessary, but that the ascribing and fixing within a type required *alert awake consciousness*. Dream-percepts and dream-beliefs make good counterexamples to Shevrin's claim. The mental content experienced as a visual percept in a dream might well have never been a percept. It can, for example, have had its origin as a memory or a daydream. As for a belief within a dream: (1) it may fail even the questionable reality tests applicable within primary process dominated dreams, (2) it may reflect no waking belief-proper past or present of the dreamer, and (3) it cannot be properly identified within the dream as a dream-belief rather than a belief-proper. True, once awake from a dream or in a posthallucinatory state, people can (most often) properly (re) type the contents they had experienced as dream or hallucinatory contents in various cognitive state/propositional attitude forms. Yet, even the grossest distinction—that between contents originating in a dream or hallucination vs. those originating in awake perceptions, memories, or beliefs—takes place only during alert consciousness. Certainly, the finer discriminations that separate dream-percepts from awake percepts, and awake percepts from awake images imagined and those remembered, will require alert awokeness. To demonstrate, here is a simple example. I had a dream in which I believed X to have broken his leg. When I awakened I realized X had not broken his leg. Indeed, only in the subsequent alert wakeful condition did I properly type the dream-belief as having been a dream-belief. Further, only in alert wakefulness could I consider the dream-belief as revealing my phantasy (likely wishful) of a broken legged X underlying and motivating the dream-belief.

This dream example provides another reason for revisiting the debate between Shevrin and me. That the correct typing of the dream content can occur only after the dream, in the alert wakeful condition, demonstrates that properly distinguishing among various cognitive states and propositional attitudes requires another vital aspect of reality testing. I refer here to the ability to recognize mental contents that originate from inside as content from inside, for example, dream-percepts, waking imaginations, hallucinatory-percepts—and to distinguish these content types from content from outside, such as awake percepts and awake beliefs-proper that arise from these percepts.

Let's look at the four criteria for beliefs-proper to see if dream-beliefs can qualify. (1) It is clear from the foregoing that no dream-cognitive states can meet the reality-testing requirement of experiencing mental content within the proper propositional attitude type. Because dream-beliefs are dreamed as beliefs-proper, they fail this reality-testing task. (2) Dream-be-

liefs cannot match the dream-beliefs' truth conditions with conditions obtaining in the world of the dream, much less those obtaining in the world. (3) In terms of the separation of cognitive states from conative states necessary for genuine beliefs-proper, dream-beliefs have no independence from underlying wishes and desires. Returning to my dream of convenience, the dream-belief that I have gone to the delivery room is inextricably linked with my desire not to be awakened to work in the middle of the night. That other latent wishes were likely present, too, follows from Freud's (1900–1901/1962a) posit that every dream consists in wishes, more or less disguised, more or less fulfilled (see pp. 122–133, esp. p. 122; pp. 134–162, esp. p. 135; and pp. 550–572). But, we need not support Freud's claim here. All that is needed to make the current point is to establish that a dream-belief can still be a dream-belief and yet have no independence from wishes or desires, whatever other wishes and desires may be latent. (4) Finally, do dream-beliefs have the same special relationship to actions that beliefs-proper do? This is the easiest matter of all. Of course they do not; during REM sleep volitional actions, routine and normal during waking states, cannot take place. The consequences of this can vary. As I remained in my bed asleep while I had the dream-belief that I was going to the delivery room, I did not make a very good impression as a medical student. On the other hand, once when Dr. C reported a dream in which he was being slugged by a thug and finally took out a knife and stabbed his attacker, no one was physically harmed.

Having examined the four criteria necessary for genuine belief-proper, a cognitive attitude requiring development through the second stage, we can conclude that no dream-cognitive state, including dream-beliefs, meet the criteria. This really amounts to no more than Freud's (1900–1901/1962a) understanding of speeches, calculations, judgments and other secondary process highly rational cognitive operations within dreams. Freud held that these contents, organized internally in a secondary process fashion, were appropriated by the primary process organized dream-work, much as various newspaper clippings can be appended whole cloth within a collage. He stated, “. . . the dream-work does not in fact carry out any calculations at all . . . the dreamwork cannot actually *create speeches*” (p. 418). He continues:

Everything that appears in dreams as the ostensible activity of the function of judgement is to be regarded not as an intellectual achievement of the dream-work but as belonging to the material of the dream-thoughts and having been lifted from them into the manifest content of the dream as a ready made structure.¹² (p. 445)

UNCONSCIOUS CONTENTS AND COGNITIVE STATES

Freud found the dreaming state especially revealing in a number of ways. Although dreamers are clearly experiencing mental contents—and in this sense “conscious of” their mental contents—dreamers are not in alert wakeful consciousness.¹³ But dreamers, unlike anesthetized patients, are not unconscious. Yet, Freud (1900–1901/1962a, pp. 279–309, 588–609, 610–621) hypothesized that dream mental contents and dream cognitive states resembled those mental contents and cognitive states he inferred to exist in unconsciousness. He posited that a predominantly primary process organization characterized both types of mentation. To the extent that Freud is right, we would expect all unconscious mental content states to have the usual primary process problems with reality testing capacities. Moreover since by definition unconscious mental content cannot be experienced and there is thus no consciousness of the content, there be no assessment of the content as a cognitive state. Thus, the disagreement between Shevrin (1986) and me (Brakel, 1989) dissolves; we concur that these unconscious cognitive states cannot be differentiated according to type, as they cannot even be experienced. This would be the case for contents that have never been in consciousness and even for those sophisticated secondary process mediated cognitive states (such as genuine beliefs-proper) once in consciousness and now repressed. In fact, Shevrin (1988) has suggested that along with rendering mental content unconscious, repression “removes the tag” from mental contents as it disables the capacity to ascribe mental content to particular cognitive states. Thus when content is unconscious, it is incoherent to suggest that any typing as to its cognitive state origin is possible. Even gross distinctions between inner content states vs. outer ones cannot be made.

Finally, let’s look at the effects that unconscious contents and cognitive states can have on actions. Unlike the situation with dream-cognitive states in which motor paralysis inhibits actions, actions are indeed the possible effects of all sorts of unconscious contents and unconscious cognitive state causes. Unlike the case that with alert-awake-conscious cognitive states where only beliefs-proper mediate effective actions, any type of unconscious content or cognitive state can lead to actions of all kinds. The consequent behavioral unpredictability is thereby not at all unpredicted from a theoretical viewpoint!

Having examined the four criteria for genuine belief-proper, it is obvious that no unconscious contents or cognitive state types should be considered at the second developmental stage. The more sophisticated second stage requires (1) reality testing of the mental content in terms of conditions in the world, (2) proper ascription of the cognitive state to its cognitive state

type, (3) a separation of beliefs from conative propositional states (wish, desire), and (4) a unique mediating role with respect to effective actions in the world. Unconscious contents and cognitive state types do not meet any of these criteria.

CONFOUNDS

Dream-beliefs, neurotic-beliefs, and the unconscious contents of the multilevel, multidetermined, complex, central phantasies contributing to those neurotic-beliefs are all quite different from beliefs-proper. And yet, as very frequently happens, they all are acted on as though they were genuine beliefs-proper. During dreaming and outside of consciousness the mental contents of dream- and unconscious cognitive states cannot be properly assigned and contents fixed within their appropriate cognitive state type. Hence, confusions in proper typing that become apparent in the later wakeful conscious condition are predictable. It is further predictable that more frequent and more profound confusions arise regarding unconscious contents than with dream-cognitive states, since mental contents within dream-cognitive states do regularly admit of some correct ascriptions to type after the dreamer has awakened. Mental contents that are unconscious, on the other hand, cannot be properly typed at all, even when these contents are causing actions in alert wakefulness. But, why are the confusions in the direction of taking dream-beliefs or unconscious contents as beliefs?¹⁴

The short answer is that awake adult human thinkers have a default manner of gaining understanding. Our default awake mode utilizes secondary process mediated mental operations rather than primary process ones, relying on basic principles of logic such as noncontradiction, as well as various reality testing skills. Hence, in the service of putting content in a form that mature human thinkers find most workable, much mental content gets re-configured to conform with the propositional attitude of belief-proper.

Some evidence for this default operation comes from our human reactions to the cognitive world of frogs. Frogs rapidly zip out their tongues whenever small black insects are within their visual fields. Frogs are quite successful in capturing and then quickly swallowing these little black bugs. A not uninteresting fact. More interesting still is that frogs will repeatedly react in just the same way to little black pellets called BBs. They will zip out their tongues, capture, and swallow endless BBs or endless bugs, indiscriminately. What is going on for these frogs? Is it, as many contend (including the philosophers Dennett, 1987, and Fodor, 1986), that the frogs (1) want bugs; (2) have beliefs-proper that BBs are bugs; and, therefore, (3) go for every bug and BB? If this were so, frogs engaged in this behavior would be demonstrating the capacity to make correct inferences and to have genu-

ine (albeit in this case false) beliefs-proper. Perhaps from this viewpoint the frog cognitive problem would be diagnosed as an overinclusive category for bug. The other alternative is that frogs have a reflex-like reaction whenever a dark object of a certain size appears. If this is the correct explanation, when it comes to bugs and BBs successful frogs probably have full bellies, but no beliefs-proper and no inference processes.¹⁵

Despite the fact that the latter explanation requires far less speculative baggage and is thereby a better bet, humans find it irresistible to impart beliefs-proper and the capacity for beliefs-proper to others once they themselves have reached what has been referred to here as the second developmental stage. Adult humans tend to attribute the a full-blown capacity for genuine beliefs-proper not only to various creatures in the animal world¹⁶ but to their own unconscious and dream states, as well as to very young children clearly operating at the first stage of development.

More Complex Confounds

The situation with neurotic-beliefs experienced and acted on as though they were beliefs-proper is even more complex. If, as I have proposed, neurotic-beliefs are core phantasies *plus* evidence and knowledge gained from psychic-reality testing (as opposed to reality testing), the natural tendency to ascribe content from various cognitive states to beliefs-proper will be added to by the performance of these distorted tests of reality. While it is a given that general reality testing is not without its psychic-reality component and that, therefore, in some sense there is no reality that is not psychic-reality mediated, it is also the case that in general, tests of reality contributions from the consensual objective world outside oneself modulate and overrule many idiosyncratic psychic-reality verdicts. On the other hand, the character of the evidence and knowledge gained to support neurotic-beliefs makes clear that with respect to this class of propositional attitudes, it is the conflict laden, primary process organized psychic-reality testing that predominates. The actions yielding psychic-reality based evidence for these neurotic-beliefs *feel* no different to the holder of these neurotic-beliefs from his/her actions producing reality based evidence with respect to propositional attitudes typed correctly as beliefs-proper. Thus, the holder of a particular neurotic-belief classifies it as a belief-proper, not only in accord with the default natural tendency to do so but deliberately and with assurance!

Consequences of the Confounds

If beliefs-proper are attributed to frogs when they really don't have the capacity for genuine beliefs, no harm is done. Of more importance is the

tendency adults have to adultomorphize children, which perhaps leads to unreasonable expectations and short parental patience, and certainly inhibits true empathic understanding. Relatedly, regarding aspects of our own mentation, we humans tend to assume more secondary process organization than is warranted in a number of ways. For example, we frequently assume that various awake cognitive states (including perceptions, memories, imaginations, beliefs, etc.) are independent of our conative states (wish, desire) when clearly they are not.¹⁷ This assumption is closely related to one of the central thesis of this paper, namely that we often mis (type) dream-cognitive states, unconscious contents and states, and waking complex phantasy states (including the phantasy-plus states of neurotic-beliefs), all as beliefs-proper. Looking generally at this sort of classification mistake, we can see it has far-reaching consequences. Because beliefs-proper, unique among the propositional attitudes, have a role toward selecting and causing effective actions and behaviors in the world, when mental contents and propositional attitudes other than those of beliefs-proper are treated as beliefs-proper, actions and behaviors result that are not effective (to say the least). What this amounts to is a very rudimentary account, derived from a philosophical analysis of the different cognitive states and propositional attitudes, of why neurosis are usually so detrimental.

Before concluding, I want to make a brief, practical point. The very classification mistake we have been examining here has resulted in raising unwarranted hopes about cognitive behavioral treatment. Indeed, when it is the case that people are suffering from false beliefs-proper, cognitive behavioral therapy should (and often does) work. False beliefs-proper are genuine beliefs-proper; they just are wrong. But for many patients, erroneous and false beliefs-proper are not the problem. For people like my sample three patients, the problem is better characterized as four-layered: (1) there are the unconscious conflicts involved in the content of the core, complex phantasy; (2) psychic-reality testing (rather than reality testing) yields evidence for distorted knowledge concerning the content of the phantasy; (3) there is a mistyping of the resultant neurotic-belief as a belief-proper; and (4) such neurotic-beliefs are not merely experienced as beliefs-proper, but acted on as such. For problems of this sort, no amount of cognitive behavioral therapy can work. Perhaps an analogy with the frog situation will help clarify why. If frogs merely had the false belief-proper that BBs were bugs, if they had an overinclusive category, one would find that frogs experienced with both bugs and BBs would, after some training, learn to modify the category and appreciate the difference. After all, on many external criteria that frogs are sensitive to (taste, weight, texture), bugs are rather different from lead BB pellets. But, frogs will ingest countless numbers of both bugs and BBs, despite intensive and extensive cognitive-behavioral training attempts. Cognitive-behavioral training can change false and erroneous be-

liefs-proper. It cannot address a matter such as a hard-wired category born of a reflex-like proclivity to react to everything that is even potentially food. This is a matter at a different level. For each of my patients, too, the problem is at a different level from than that of false belief-proper. The complex, partly unconscious, multilevel, multidetermined, central phantasies *plus* the psychic-reality testing derived knowledge of their content that Drs. A, B, and C each experience as beliefs-proper—are not simply false beliefs-proper. For all three of these patients (and presumably for many others like them) these are neurotic-beliefs—not beliefs-proper at all. Treatment attempting to address these phantasy laden, primary process mediated, neurotic-beliefs as though they were false beliefs-proper will be a misguided treatment, for it is predicated on one of the very sources of the problem—the mistyping of various cognitive states and propositional attitudes that are not beliefs-proper as beliefs-proper.

CONCLUSION

I have written an interdisciplinary paper, interdisciplinary in two directions. In one direction, using the philosophical method of consistent, careful distinction and even using philosophical technical definitions, some increased clarity has been provided with regard to phantasy, neurotic-belief, and other important propositional attitude and cognitive state types frequently seen in doing psychoanalysis. In this way, a philosophical analysis provides the clinical theory of psychoanalysis with something of value. From the other direction, psychoanalytic clinical concepts about phantasy, neurotic-belief, and unconscious contents—when properly specified—can contribute much to a general theory of mind and to the discipline of philosophy of mind. In the current climate, most philosophers of mind claim that conscious and rational propositional attitudes comprise the great majority of representational contentful mental states. We as psychoanalysts know that that view is inadequate. In every patient, in every session, we not only assume unconscious contents and various unconscious cognitive states, we deal directly with propositional attitudes that clearly refer to content and yet are primary process mediated—a-rational, or irrational—façades of rationality notwithstanding. It is important that we be able to communicate this knowledge.

ENDNOTES

1. That such a philosophical analysis would benefit psychoanalytic clinicians was suggested by Dr. Jack Novick (personal communication).
2. This was unbelievable to me, as I am sure it will be to other psychoanalysts. I have attempted to make a philosophical case for primary process (a-rational) mental states with

referring representational content in an article intended for philosophers (see Brakel, in press).

3. I will not, however, take up the very interesting and complicated story of how phantasies, particularly unconscious phantasies embodying various important unconscious conflicts, become structured and organized as central to the formation and maintenance of individual neuroses. This area has been amply and ably discussed in the literature from the classic works of Freud (see especially 1905 [1901]/1962b, 1906 [1905]/1962c, 1909/1962d, 1916, and 1919/1962f), to the modern extension of this view by Arlow (1985, 1991a, 1991b, and 1996), and with respect to developmental considerations by Novick and Novick (1996), to provide but a very incomplete list.
4. From this very simple example the most important difference between a wish and a phantasy can be appreciated. A phantasy, even in its most basic form, always has mental content such that a wish (or set of wishes) is represented as fulfilled. Wishes can exist in unfulfilled, not-yet-fulfilled, and even unfulfillable forms.
5. By contentful I mean mental content that is *about* something; namely, that the mental content represents and refers to something.
6. Wimmer and Perner (1983) did a classic experiment demonstrating that the ability to pretend to be in another's shoes comes after the ability to form beliefs-proper. Children were shown a puppet play in which a puppet named Maxi first puts some candies in a box and then goes out to play. While he is out playing, the mother puppet moves the candies to the cupboard. Children are asked where Maxi will look for the candies on his return. Five-year-olds have no trouble indicating that Maxi will look for the candies in the box where he left them. But three- and four-year-olds more often indicate that Maxi will look for the candies in the cupboard. These children have a correct belief-proper that the candies are in the cupboard where the mother puppet has put them, but they cannot pretend to be in Maxi's position—they cannot pretend to be in the position of one who does not have this belief-proper.

As interesting as these findings are, this experiment should not be taken to indicate that the ability to pretend is an all-or-none ability. Rather, what is suggested is that while all three groups of children showed the capacity for true beliefs-proper, the five-year-olds, more than the three- and four-year-olds, demonstrated the capacity for sophisticated pretending.

7. The distinction between this second type of imagining and phantasizing can be tricky. How can we distinguish between choosing to suspend one's capacity for reality testing in having a phantasy that X is at the gym vs. choosing not to reality test the imagination that X is at the gym. I contend that there is an important difference. In the example of imagining something, the imaginer is always aware not only of what is imagined but also of "imagining," of having a particular type of propositional attitude, an imagination. In phantasizing something, however, one is aware only of the content of the phantasy, not of the particular propositional attitude "phantasizing." Thus, take entities that cannot exist—impossible geometrical figures, the current King of France, a golden mountain, and so on. These impossible entities can be imagined or phantasized. When I imagine these entities, I am aware that I am imagining, and because I am aware that I am imagining (and not having beliefs-proper), I am not troubled that these entities may be impossible. When I phantasize about these same impossible entities, since genuine phantasizing requires either the suspension or insufficient development of reality-testing capacities, I am aware only of these entities—entities that happen to be impossible—while I have awareness neither of the reality status of these entities nor that the propositional attitude I am engaging in is phantasizing. (See the next section and the section on dream-beliefs for fuller explanations.)

8. Analogously, Novick and Novick (2000) hold that playing is not really possible without an understanding that the play differs from reality, in other words, that the play is play (p. 203).
9. Supposing can be considered an intellectual type of imagining and pretending. As with pretending and the first type of imagining, something (X) can be supposed-as-true, even when the supposer knows X to be not true. As with the second type of imagining, something can be supposed-as-true even choosing not to investigate X's relation to truth or falsity.
10. This recognition of a desire as a desire means that when someone desires sexual satisfaction, for example, he/she not only realizes that "sex" is on his/her mind but also realizes that he/she "wants something, in this case, sex." The realization that one wants something has implications for evaluating actions leading toward fulfillment. As will be explored in the body of the text below, the case is different for wishes. The awareness of a wish as a wish can be absent.
11. He has at times held the neurotic-belief that he is part male and part female, with reality testing supplanted by the psychic-reality "evidence" that his hips and skin are really feminine.
12. Dr. Althea Horner, in reviewing this article, raised an extremely interesting potential counterexample to my view of dream-beliefs. She reminded me that often in typical anxiety dreams, the dreamer soothes him-/herself within the dream with true assertions like, "But I already have my Ph.D." This brought to my mind another type of potential counterexample: the dreams in which the dreamer dreams the true statement, "But I'm only dreaming." Yet, if we follow Freud in the above quotation, we might understand both of these as cases in which secondary process true beliefs-proper (rather than dream-beliefs) have been appended to the dream in the service of the primary process dream-wish(es). Thus, since in the typical anxiety dream one wishes that some feared future situation would work out as well as some long past accomplishment already has, and since the primary process dream-work involves disguising by displacement the future event with the past one, insertion of the belief-proper regarding the past success assuages the dreamer partly by keeping the displacement in place. A similar analysis can be made for dreams where the dreamer dreams, "This is only a dream." While it happens to be a fact and a true belief-proper, this particular true belief can fit the needs of the dream-wishes, too. Thus, for example, "It's only a dream" can allow all sorts of otherwise forbidden dream wishes to continue being fulfilled within the dream.
13. For a full discussion of these two aspects of "consciousness," awake alertness, and consciousness of, and their different roles see Shevrin (1986) and Brakel (1989).
14. Strictly speaking, it is only from the perspective of waking consciousness that the bias goes as stated. Unconscious contents of various sorts and sources, either never conscious or repressed, as well as awake perceptions, desires, imaginations, and beliefs-proper can appear within dreams as dream-propositional attitudes of various types. Likewise, contents originating from any type of awake cognitive state presumably can, when outside of consciousness, exist in various and perhaps shifting unconscious cognitive state types. Yet, this notwithstanding, we are more capable of studying phenomena from the perspective of conscious wakefulness. In the alert, wakeful, conscious state we know there are serious consequences of taking unconscious mental contents (and dream-mental contents) from various cognitive state types and acting on such contents as though they were conscious awake beliefs-proper.
15. This sort of hard-wired reflex-like operation can certainly yield evolutionary success provided that overinclusive eating of black things doesn't (1) prove toxic and (2) doesn't preclude the ingestion of real food. Indeed, it should not be ruled out that frogs have a

genuine concept or category constituted by their reflex-like activity—a concept we might name “black things to eat.” Note that from a frog’s viewpoint, such a category would not be overinclusive.

16. That frogs are unlikely to have genuine beliefs-proper, in no way implies that frogs are not capable cognizers. They can form perceptual representations that are predictable and meaningful reductions of the external world such that in conjunction with inputs from within, often instinctually driven, frogs can perform actions leading to biological success in terms of nutrition, survival, and reproduction. Frogs can also learn, and as discussed in the footnote 15, it is certainly possible that they have concepts and categories. What I am questioning is the notion that frogs can operate at the largely secondary process mediated level necessary for genuine beliefs. I speculate instead that their cognitive organization (including the sort of categories they form) is likely more similar to our primary process mediated and less developed mentation.
17. Not even taking up the ubiquitous influence of unconscious and conflictual wishes, it is clear that conscious desires have great influence not only on imaginations, memories, and beliefs but also on basic perceptions. A very simple study by McClelland and Atkinson (1948) was done in which two groups of subjects—one group desiring food and very hungry and the other group not hungry—were asked to describe what they saw when they were presented what was actually just blobs or smudges on a screen. The hungrier group “saw” food items significantly more often than did the other group.

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