

Father Hunger and Narcissistic Deformation

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In this article, I will advance the hypothesis that paternal availability and the relationship between the mother and father are crucial components of evolving character structure in children.

Furthermore, I propose that a kind of narcissistic pathology featuring perverse sexuality may eventuate in the absence of paternal availability and in the presence of a disordered relationship between the parents. Additionally, I will also suggest that the ways in which aggression is or is not modulated and organized is a crucial component of this evolving disorder, and that boys are more susceptible to its full manifestation and expression than are girls.

BACKGROUND

What are the origins of object cathexes in childhood? Also, what are the factors that favor a thwarting of such processes and a subsequent investment of the self with those relational bonds that were initially directed toward others? How does the

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development of hatred as a manifestation of the lack of modulation and organization of aggressive drive and fantasy figure into this process? Is arrogant and contemptuous control of and disregard for the other an invariable perversity, which characterizes the appropriated sexuality of such children? Do many of these features figure into the abortive attempt of the insufficiently parented child to construct his own version of the parental caretaking and sexual couple? Is the role of the father particularly crucial in the regard? The analytic treatment of children offers a potentially important window on these complex and important questions pertinent to the development of narcissistic character pathology. I shall present four abbreviated analytic vignettes to demarcate the territory.

VIGNETTE 1

Felix was 4 years when he entered analysis. His father's analyst suggested an evaluation as the boy was often sluggish and withdrawn and occasionally belligerent. Felix was the only child of parents in their middle 30s. His mother had been previously married; it was father's first marriage. Both were professional, although father came from an independently wealthy family and no longer worked. There had been an unsuccessful attempt to provide Felix with a sibling, and overwhelming difficul-

ties in the parental relationship were now grossly apparent. The mother spoke of ending the marriage, and the father appeared defeated and depressed.

Felix began his interactions with me by introducing the king of Spain, "King Alphonso," a most unpleasant autocrat with a fondness for sushi. He was a fascinating character, and it took me a long time to realize that the complexities and curiosities of this imaginary person had kept me from noting that I was treated as quite extraneous to what was occurring. As I tried to make inquiries about the King and about his eating, the boy treated me as if I was not there.

I resolved to stay interested in King Alphonso and his isolation. This took some doing because the king was only interested in his sushi. Every day, Felix described the selection of the fish, the preparation of the wasabi and soy sauce, and the ritualized consumption. I would ask about the fish, about the sushi cutter, about the rest of the king's day. No information was forthcoming, but the play continued. It was different each day in some small detail from what had transpired the previous day, but the broad outline of regal sushi eating remained unchanged. I learned that the fish were cut and consumed raw, that Alphonso did not care as to how this felt to or for the fish; in fact he could not comprehend the question and therefore its mere utterance enraged him.

I shared with Felix my growing concern that the King could not possibly be happy with the state of affairs that prevailed. In fact, I said, he seemed oblivious and indifferent. This intervention was met with a blistering attack. Who was I to comment on matters pertaining to the court and the King? Felix said. I was a lowly commoner and knew nothing. People had been eliminated for lesser offenses, Felix added. I was both startled and relieved by the vehemence of the response that my intervention had elicited.

Felix was not finished with this response, however. He sneezed and mucous

came from his nose. He took the mucous in his hand, moved his hand in my direction, and then put it into his mouth. I observed that what came out of and then back into his body, namely the nasal mucous, came very close to me. I resolved to watch for the aggression inherent in this gesture that was aborted and then I also thought that Felix might not actually differentiate entirely between himself and me as he considered wiping his hand on my arm. It is important to note that body as useable in what might be considered dialogue with another is present, that the degradation of the other is joined, that aggression is poorly modulated, and that the self-with self

conversation goes on, even as it appears to be interactive with the other. I continued to reflect on the sneezing episode.

It was not an isolated event. Each time Felix sneezed or coughed, his hand would proceed in my direction. I came to be able to ask about this. Eventually, we were to learn that in some ways I was being treated as if I were a tissue, or possibly a part of himself, but importantly, that Felix also was considering that I was still more than the snot or the tissue, that I was also Dr. Herzog, that we played together, and that I was helping him. I was told that even King Alphonso noted that something out of the ordinary was happening. Felix thought that



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having noticed this, that the King might consider ending his isolation and choose a Queen and perhaps even go on to make a royal family.

I have come to recognize that children who have needed to withdraw object-related cathexes from interactivity because primary caregivers are not able to participate in an ongoing relational dialogue often elaborate syntactical material in play that resembles that which Felix adumbrated and often respond to the analyst's efforts to find out more with a "who do you think you are?" attitude. The body is often involved and a proto-perverse object relationship is given, first with the self and then with the other as both a self-extension and as another to be controlled. There is an amalgam of sexual and aggressive elements, which are deployed, initially in a poorly organized fashion and then in a more ritualized and organized way. Note, however,

that the analyst can "get through" and that the child is still open to such an intervention. Such openness, while still present in childhood, is often no longer available by the time an adult analyst meets a "Felix."

In 1997, Eleanor W. Herzog and I¹ suggested that a predisposition to developing a narcissistic personality disturbance might be occasioned by serious disruptions in the child's parental representation, which mirrored actual interactive reality. We reported on the analysis of a child, Ned, who manifested a narcissistic disturbance and who created a new parental couple by attending to the analyst and his wife as a necessary prerequisite to embarking on Oedipal object relatedness. We also proposed that self with mother and self with father representations without self with mother and father together representations potentially hamstrung psychological development and skewed in the direction of narcissistic

fixation. This conceptualization is moored in the conviction that pre-Oedipal triadic reality is a sine qua non for subsequent Oedipal elaboration. Since then, we have collected seven more cases, which appear to strengthen our supposition and which also feature this effort on the part of the child to create a new self with mother and father together representation.²

VIGNETTE 2

Mel, referred at 7 years, was almost completely incapacitated by hypochondriasis. Almost every day he complained of gastrointestinal upset and a feeling of being too ill to go to class. His mother, a neurologist, favored a diagnosis of depression and learning disorder and had sought pharmacological intervention. His father, a philosophy professor, felt muddled and unclear about his son's declining course. Mel was distracted and preoccupied at our first meeting. In the waiting room, he was writhing in his chair, complaining of abdominal pain and exhaustion. Entering the office, he rushed to the couch in order to rest. When I inquired about what was going on, he told me to be quiet and not to bother him. I replied that he seemed very bothered and that I hoped that he and I might figure out together why. He looked at me with scorn. How could the two of us do anything together, he wondered.

Over time, Mel let me watch as he worked on a project for school, which was about the life cycle of the lobster. Father lobsters fertilized thousands of eggs, which were later thrown by the mother lobster off her tail. The lobster parents could not stand each other; in fact, they hated each other and would promptly eat each other were they not to separate immediately after intercourse. The hapless embryos floated to the top of the water. Most were promptly consumed by hungry fish. Of the original thousands, three or four reached molting stage and with the additional weight of shell, descended to the safer depths. Each lobster was totally on his own, with no relationship to either progenitor.

It felt like great good fortune when Mel named one of the lobsters “Thermador” and we began to follow him more closely. Thermador liked really cold water and would struggle to find a depth that suited him temperature wise. If the water were too warm, he would develop a stomachache, which unfortunately featured a great deal of flatulence. The aroma of this gaseous discharge offended Thermador, and we came to appreciate that the lobster only liked himself if the surrounding water was very cool, his stomach didn’t hurt, and if he didn’t expel gas. In fact, Thermador hated himself when he produced a gaseous odor. Mel enhanced the story line he was elaborating by expelling gas loudly as he described Thermador’s dilemma. He seemed amused that I noticed this activity. I tried to decide whether it served our enterprise better to acknowledge the strong aroma, which now pervaded Mel to concentrate on the lobster and his predicament. Eventually, I commented that I might open the window. “Too bad,” was Mel’s reply. As the play continued, Mel devised a cure for Thermador’s flatulence. Emergence in boiling water until he turned red seemed to do the trick. Mel said he hated how Thermador smelled and now he would smell no more. I noted that this hatred toward the lobster might also be felt for himself and that there was no second chance or concern for the ongoing being of the other in this unmodulated rage.

I would like to suggest that Mel and Felix present in a somewhat similar way. Mel’s “too bad” attitude was a more direct expression of disregard and even contempt than Felix’s somewhat more modulated “Who do you think you are?” But there is a family resemblance. I was soon to learn that Mel’s parents were very unhappy with each other, also. In both families, the mother felt contempt toward her husband and perplexed and perturbed by but significantly more interested in her son than in her marital partner.

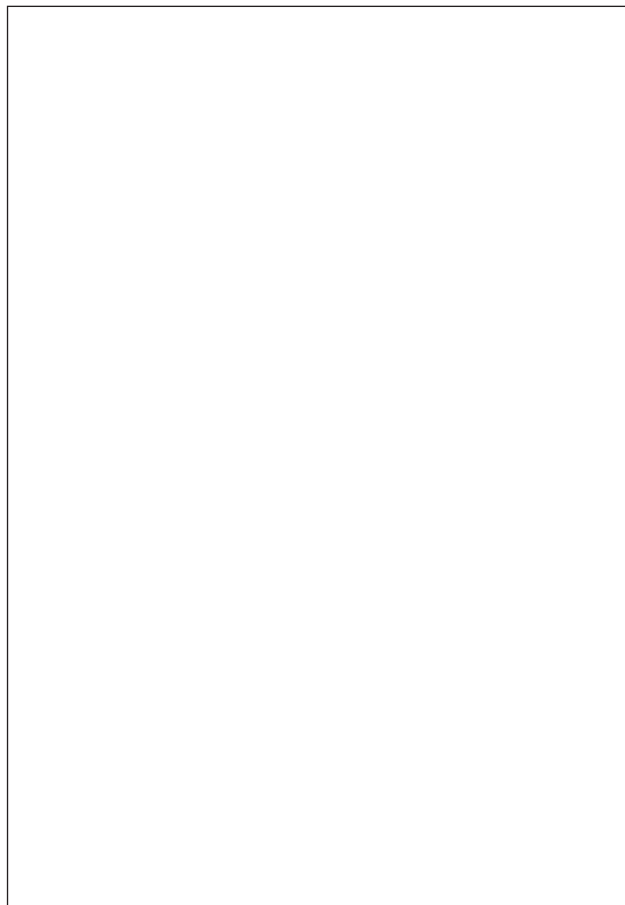
Narcissistic deformation in childhood often features a contemptuous arrogance, which reveals the absence of an effective paternal authority sanctioned by the mother and often a concomitant demeaning of the father’s modulating and organizing capacity by the mother which is explicit. The child without a paternal authoritative helper is left on his own in regard to his aggression and displays a painful amalgam of self-generated efforts to organize and deploy this part of himself. There is often a conflicted identification with the demeaning mother as well.

Furthermore, we note the nasal discharge and the flatulence, the first with Felix, the latter with Mel, proclaim the appropriation of a body function into a seemingly relational matrix, which is in fact controlling rather than interactive. Lastly, note the presence of hate as an effect, which combines aggression with

total disregard for the well being of the other. In fact, this affect appears to be directed toward parts of the self.

VIGNETTE 3

I will illustrate this latter unfolding, a more clearly perverse self with other schema, by telling you about Basil. He entered analysis with me at 14 years in dire circumstances. He would not do his schoolwork, was alternately hyperaggressive and impossibly submissive, and headed in a direction that his headmaster called certain failure. Basil’s father had been an industrial baron who drank himself to death; his mother, much younger than the father, was a movie star. Unlike either Felix or Mel, Basil seemed to take an instant interest in me. He commented that I was big and that I had a big reputation and a big fee to match. He stated that his mother had told him how lucky they both were that I had time in



my schedule to see him. He lounged on a chair as he made these comments, spreading his legs wide and scratching his crotch and butt frequently. The comments did not feel friendly nor did he seem sincere. To myself, I wondered about the location and meaning of the scratching. It really came as no surprise when at the end of the first hour, he told me that I could kiss his butt for all he cared. I responded by saying that I knew that “kiss my butt” is a figure of speech, but I presumed that Basil was saying something important by employing it. I hoped, I said, that we might find out together what that was. I did not remark on the fact that he seemed to have a quite persistent itch in that area. He said that I was strange and that he would come to see me again next week because, “I have to.”

Basil and I continued our work together. He was often aloof; always dismissive. The theme of his rear end and my interest continued. This decidedly homosexual focus seemed, however, distinctly non-sexual, or more precisely, neither erotic nor object related. Basil would make comments regarding how his rear end felt to him. He would comment on the completeness or casualness of his wiping. All of these comments were made with a kind of leer and an implication that he was uncovering an uncontrollable interest of mine. I tried to figure out why his body talk and what seemed to be teasing seemed so blatantly about something else. What was this something else? This theme continued.

Here, the narcissistic evolution of a perversity seems clear. The other is to be controlled by a body part and thus not taken into account as a separate entity. Of course, Basil’s selection of entrapment mode reveals much about his own conflicts and fixations and perhaps his assessment of my vulnerabilities, but the overarching effort is to control the other and to prevent the emergence of real interaction or object relatedness. I struggled with how I might use both the material and Basil’s stance to engage him. Eventually, I said that I thought his evaluation of his

rear end and its appeal mattered and that I thought that his efforts to involve me with that part of him were complicated. He said in response, that it wasn’t about his interest, but about mine. I said I knew that he had said that, but that I thought that was an effort to keep me out even though he provoked by proposing that I wanted in. He said that I was incomprehensible. I then said that in some way, I thought that he was suggesting a dialogue, although, I did not yet understand the relationship between the symbolic part — that I, the analyst, was incomprehensible. When I said what I said, I tried not to be seductive or dismissive, but rather to take seriously his communication and to invite him to listen seriously to me.

Basil responded by telling me that I was a jerk. Then he growled: I wondered if my talking had been premature, unwise, or just too much. I waited, somewhat apprehensively. Basil was cursing at me, then he got up from his chair and began to pace. His vocalizations continued but seemed to become more organized. I waited. He looked at me carefully and then his sneer lessened somewhat and he said: “Is this right, you are admitting that you are a jerk—in the symbolic sense, is the way, I think you put it and you are actually wondering why I keep talking about my rear end in the actual, I think you said, anatomical sense.” “That is exactly, what I am saying,” I said, and I felt that we had perhaps turned a fateful and felicitous corner. Basil looked somewhat relieved. I know that I felt greatly relieved.

Our course had become somewhat clearer. Did this scenario reflect early experience with the ill and then disappearing father or with the very present, perhaps too much so celebrity mother, or was this a reference to disappointing aspects of the mother and father together experience and the subsequent representation of Basil with both of them? Why was the self represented as a rear end, which would entrap and control? How had we found a way to address these issues?

VIGNETTE 4

Ralph came to see me at 3 years. His mother, a CEO of a large company, complained about his sadism and his irresistible physicality. She told me that she was divorced from her husband, but that since she had adopted Ralph while still married, that he was sort of the boy’s father. “There is very little to him,” she stated in describing her former husband. The mother thought that it would be best if I were to see Ralph with her because he might be afraid to be alone with “a man like me.” I wondered about this, particularly the meaning of “a man like me.” However, as Amanda seemed quite convinced that this was the way to proceed and did not seem to be interested in my wonderings nor to brook disagreement easily, I concurred. I was informed that Ralph’s father was no good and that he would certainly have no role to play in whatever ensued.

In our four initial meetings, which occurred in the aforementioned format, Ralph barely acknowledged my presence and seemed to be preoccupied with the irresistible urge to hide under my analytic couch or to refuse to enter the playroom at all. His mother barely seemed to notice, talking on with no reference to her son. She was more interested in talking with me. I tried to make contact with the boy in both modes, his hiding, and his refusing. He did not respond.

Increasingly, I worried that Ralph would be put off by mother’s talking with me and her seeming incapacity to notice his disappearance that alternated with her heated physical wrestling when he was reluctant to come in. I proposed that our next meeting be without her. She laughed as though I were joking. “How can anything be without me?” she said. I stuck to my guns and said that I was convinced that the time had come for me to see Ralph alone. “It will never work,” she stated. “You won’t come and see this dangerous old man without me, will you, Snookums?” she now stated. I said again: “Let’s try it next week, Ralph, and let’s see if we can find a way for us to-

gether to find out what the dangers are and what we can do about them.”

His mother had her driver bring Ralph the next week. The boy entered the playroom, took off his shoes, and threw them at me. I was astonished when he cursed at me. I had never heard a 3 year old speak that way, and I wondered if it had been a mistake to ask his mother not to come. Transiently, I felt as though I could not manage without her. Over the next several meetings, we repeated a similar sequence. Ralph would partially disrobe, try to physically fend me off, and would do the same thing verbally. I tried to determine whether he was afraid or if something else was going on. In the sixth meeting without his mother, Ralph shouted at me. “I don’t want you here, you dangerous old man.” He then repeated: “Dangerous, dangerous, dangerous.” “What does dangerous mean,” I asked. Ralph did not answer.

We continued, and I seemed to be getting better at anticipating when the boy would attack. I started to say to him that I could feel something coming. I hoped to interest him in telling me what was building up inside of him. We now began a phase in which the periods between attack featured solitary play on Ralph’s part. He would find a toy and begin using it. He behaved as though my interest or interrogatories were inaudible. I persisted and sometimes would construct a parallel play. I hoped that there would be some area of intersection and noted that this only occurred when Ralph would attack me or continue shouting profanities at me. About once a week mother would call to tell me that she assumed that nothing was happening in her absence. “We will do it your way,” she continued. “I will not be coming in.”

After about 40 hours, I decided to try a new tactic. I posted two rules in the playroom. These were: 1) no hitting; and 2) we shall try to discuss what happens. Ralph’s response to the rules, which I read to him was: “Who says?” I responded: “I do.” “You?” Ralph said in his usual dismissive tone. “Yes, these are my rules and it is I

who am saying so,” I replied. I waited and watched what would happen. Ralph took off his shoe. I thought that he would throw it at me again. I said: “Rule 1: no hitting.” Ralph said: “Do you think I am deaf?” and threw the shoe in the opposite direction. I felt very pleased with this development and I said to Ralph: “It is clear that you can hear and that we are beginning to be able to understand each other.”

I was not prepared for the next development. When Ralph returned the next day, he again threw his shoes away from me rather than toward me and then he said, “My feet stink.” Before I knew what was happening, he stuck both feet in my face. “That is a strong smell,” I said. I was thinking about what this might mean, when I noticed that Ralph had withdrawn again and was under the couch. “Why are you hiding,” I asked. There was no response. I wondered about the smelling feet and their being put in my face. Was this a challenge to Rule 1 or to Rule 2? What might happen next? I thought that this play on Ralph’s part was more related, but why did he disappear? The next day seemed even harder to understand. Ralph came into the room and began to drag me. I released myself from his clutches and said: “What is going on?” He looked away and then hid again. I said: “Ralph,” both searchingly and emphatically. At first, he did not answer. Then he said: “Ralph is here. Smell my feet,” then, “Is anyone else here? I hate you.” By the end of the hour, I had figured out that he was repeating behaviors from our initial meetings, which had featured mother and him together with me.

Dimly I understood that something about himself with his mother had been evoked by my posting of the rules. This was either a regression or an elicited representation of dyadic reality. I had hoped to provide something like this with my rules. I wondered why the “smell my feet” was a part of this. I thought of Basil and his rear end. I thought that this was the beginning of what could become a perversion (eg, that the narcissistic dilemma

could only be breached by a seemingly sexual relationship in which control was central and the biological format facultative). Was there also the suggestion that the sexualized aggressive representation of self with body part or self with other constituted a desperate effort to create a third, and unrecognizable facsimile of the sexual parental couple through the eyes of a very young child?

Ralph continued to struggle in each hour. He seemed to speak with his body rather than with words. I tried to verbalize something of what I thought was happening. I said: “When I posted the rules, you stopped attacking me. But then you seem to have become very interested in the smell of your feet, and I wonder if you want to know if I am, too.” Ralph listened but said nothing. I continued this line of inquiry. Eventually Ralph spoke. “If I cannot keep you away throwing my shoes at you, I don’t know what to do.” “Why must you keep me away?” I asked. “Dangerous,” was the response, then, “You are a weirdo.” “Am I?” I asked. There was silence. Then Ralph said: “I will make you smell my feet; they stink. I hate them, their smell, I hate you.” “They do have a strong smell,” I said. “Feet often do.” “Why?” asked Ralph. “Feet sweat, and sweat has a strong smell,” I continued. He looked calmer. “No, yes, really, everybody’s? Yours, too?” “Often,” I responded.

“We understand each other,” was his next comment. “Yes,” I said, “We are trying to do that. I wonder why it feels so dangerous to understand each other. It also seems reassuring that you and I might be alike in certain ways. I think that we can use our rules to make it safe.” Ralph nodded and did something extraordinary. For the first time, he put his shoes back on. I knew that by stating that my feet could have a strong smell, I was offering a male-male alliance to Ralph, which I hoped would ease his isolation and help him to feel less vulnerable in regard to the danger and the wish for merger with his powerful mother.

COMPARISONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

So these four patients and I wrestle in various venues with the concept that the self is too much, too strong, too little, too weak, in aroma, in impulse, in complexity, to be self managed or to be comanaged. Instead, it is to be foisted upon the other as in “you do not exist,” or in its more seemingly somatized, mucous management between Felix and me; the presence of flatulence and its odor between Mel and me; and then in a more sexualized form, and “smell my feet,” with Basil and Ralph, respectively. I wonder if there is not a set of rules that reflect actual interactive deficits in either the self with each parent realm or in the self with mother and father together realm. The resultant incapacity to modulate and organize plays itself out in what is, if there is not an intervention, a progression toward a narcissistic personality disorder. Hatred as an extreme form of unmodulated aggression is omnipresent and some representation of the parental sexual couple is, perhaps, unconsciously depicted in a desperate effort to create a useable third.

The self develops as another self-seeking structure. In actuality, the self develops as a self with mother, self with father, and self with mother and father together seeking structure. Distortions resulting from suboptimal availability in any of these spheres affect narcissistic development. Ways of compensating for non-reciprocal systems evolve, and they always contain the pain of what wasn't represented as the original insult and its subsequent elaboration. The provenance of each evolving narcissistic disturbance is clearly depicted in its psycho-architecture. A mythology reflects its region as the poet Wallace Stevens writes.³

The self-evolving without adequate interactive partners attempts to adapt. The adaptation that involves the taking of a body part or function as partial object and then the use of deformed aggression as the mode of interaction results in private perverse practices and in a seemingly sado-masochistic object relations schema. Note,

however, that none of this is totally what it appears to be. It is a situation demonstrating the continuous necessity to differentiate the genotypic from the phenotypic. What is actually occurring is the requirement that force be used to control the self and in some evolving way the other as a part of the self and as something foreign from the self. The original other has had to be constructed from a less than adequate model, the mother with the self, the father with the self and the mother and father together with the self. This construction is forced; it is a matter of necessity, eventuating from the lack of actual availability. This forced construction extracts a huge cost from the self. It biases the capacity to recognize the reality of the other and it prescribes a relational mode, which perpetuates this cost. It harnesses itself to the affect of hatred and the self-perversion, and the other perversion course is set. It is, of course, predicated on the reality of the child not being recognized by his caregivers to begin with.

It is interesting to compare and contrast this formulation with Target's and Fonagy's⁴ notion of the difference between an object becoming a part of the self and the mind's evolving the capacity to represent a relationship of self with other. They speak of “triadification” occurring in either a more or less felicitous fashion, reflecting the mother's capacity or incapacity to recognize her child's mental functioning and her capacity or incapacity to recognize, permit, and convey the valued reality and separateness of the father's mental functioning to the child. Clearly these conceptualizations of the developmental routings to mindedness are germane to the constellation of intrapsychic unfoldings, which I am describing. They presage a narcissistic deformation and a representation of self with father, self with mother, and self with mother and father together, which predisposes to malfunction rather than to optimal capacity to play, to love and to work, both by and within oneself and with others.

In a series of earlier communications,⁵⁻⁷ I have suggested that libidinal, aggressive,

and narcissistic availability of each parent is not only affectively vital but requires a physical component as well. Thus, mothers must actually hold their children, and fathers must also interact physically. I have suggested that neuronal development including the elaboration of enzymatic systems necessary for optimal aggressive management are contingent upon actual physical interaction and have illustrated this with reference to paternal involvement with regard to the important modalities of scent and sting. This is, of course, a putative schema reflecting both clinical observation and very tentative neurophysiological theorizing. In all cases, the ways in which this is accessed by the child and provided by the father is heavily influenced by the mother's feeling about the physicality of masculinity and thus the mother and father together relationship is built into the availability and eventual meaning of these aspects of paternity. Again, in order to develop authoritative self-structure, a boy must know the authority of his father and feel his mother's approval and endorsement of masculine self hood, competent and effective in managing aggression, and in constituting a legitimate conduit to interaction with others in the outside world.

Danny, a child whose dilemmas and solutions have been previously published,⁷ explored the possibility of self-spanking and contrasted it with a spank delivered by a father or analyst who loved him and cared about his future development. Poignantly, he proclaimed that spanking his own bottom when he had been out of line was completely different from having his father do it. Jack Panksepp's discussion of tickling, which cannot be self administered and requires the presence of an active other, reflects this basic truth as well.⁸ Danny also discussed the strong smell of the analyst after exercise and revealed that the “deodorant” part of his fantasy life revolved around whether or not the actuality of the father's scent could be endorsed by mother and thus be available to him or whether she could control its masking or actual ablation. In so

doing, he was discussing the option for a related, biologically real father and mother interacting with him and his biology rather than the absence of these vital forces and the forced and perverse solution that their absence presages hatred of the self, masked as grandiosity, and control and denigration of the other.

MALE PREVALENCE

I would like to propose that it is not accidental that I draw on male cases for this exposition. It is the particular vulnerability of the male child to paternal absence and his imperative need for the mother with father together representation, which skews the distribution of this disorder according to gender. It may also be that the male child's greater aggressive load and thus subsequently greater need for mentorship in its regard predisposes him to use unmodulated and then sexualized force on himself and on others in the absence of a modulating and organizing father. The problem of hatred for such boys is extreme, and the havoc that ensues is incalculable both for the individual boy and for all others who cross his path. Thus, boys may be more susceptible to the development of a narcissistic personality disorder in the absence of good enough mothering, good enough fathering, and good enough mothering and fathering together.

All of the constituents of this disorder are also more prevalent in male children, the development of a perverse pseudo-relational schema, the appropriation of sexuality for control rather than mutual pleasure, and the restriction on the inherent playfulness of normative sado-masochistic relatedness under the aegis of unmodulated aggression. Violence, intrapsychic and interpersonal, the end product of unmodulated and unorganized aggression, is the ultimate disintegration product of inadequate paternal authority.

The mother must sanction her husband's and the child's father's use of his own calibrated aggressive physicality in the service of their son's management of his own aggression in order to prevent this disorganized outcome.^{9,10}

Recently, exciting new work on the Y chromosome has explicated the ways in which the potency of maleness requires base exchange by a self coiling mechanism in order to promote genetic diversity and repair and protect against what geneticists label Muller's Ratchet,¹¹ which involves the inevitable decay of not correcting, that is noninteracting and nonexchanging genetic material.

CONCLUSION

A child's capacity to play is his or her greatest developmental asset. Child analysts utilize this modality as a way of accessing unconscious process and mobilizing restitutive developmental forces, which favor gyroscopic stability and an optimization of each child's endowment and environmental succor. Analytic treatment for children with unfolding narcissistic personality disorder is imperative. By using displacement, enactment and interactive enactment, the three play modes, which characterize the child's armamentarium,¹² it is possible to reactivate developmental hungers that facilitate object-oriented progression.

Ralph, Basil, Mel, and Felix can be reached and assisted in a manner that allows them to re-access a fuller representational deck. This in turn enables a return to "full deck functioning," which has as its core-object relatedness and respectful interaction and well enough modulated aggression.¹³ The absence of such psychoanalytic intervention, conversely, is associated with an increasingly "ceilinged" prognosis and ever-evolving psychological morbidity. Perverse patterns of relating and self-regulation become

increasingly resistant to interpersonal appeal and the sexualized substitute for actual relating more firmly ensconced. As with other malignant illnesses, when treatment occurs has a decisive impact on outcome and prognosis.

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