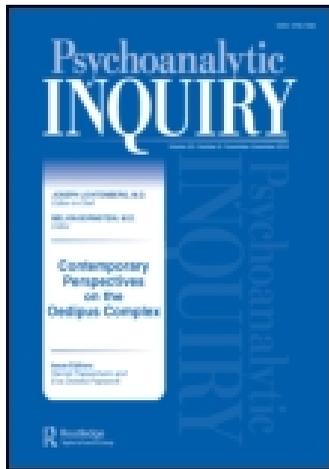


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Psychoanalysis and the Ideologies of Science

Jon Mills, Psy.D., Ph.D., C.Psych., ABPP

Despite burgeoning interest in psychoanalytic thought throughout many disciplines in the humanities, psychoanalysis today is facing a crisis. Confronted with methodological, discursive, epistemological, and empirical challenges to theory and practice, not to mention waning public interest in psychoanalytic treatment, psychoanalysis continues to find itself displaced from mainstream scientific and therapeutic approaches within the behavioral sciences. Not only is psychoanalysis questioned on its scientific credibility and therapeutic efficacy from other disciplines, it is even disputed within contemporary psychoanalysis itself. Criticized for its theoretical models and scientific questionability, psychoanalysis faces critique by the *new empiricists* who are at once eager to legitimize and refine the discipline, yet are radical in their dismissal of many of the cardinal elements that have historically defined the profession. In this article, I challenge the ideologies of science, which are reflective of a privileged, hegemonic master discourse. The force of this discourse is built upon a fantasized objectivist epistemology and reductionist framework that is far removed from the human condition. I attempt to argue that science lacks true explanation as it artificially reduces the human being to simplistic, naive theories of parsimony that carry dogmatic ontological assertions about mind, human nature, and behavior. Such reductive paradigms further ignore the role of theoretics and subjectivity that by definition saturate any empirical method, and hence color its results; not to mention import an inflated valuation of the alleged virtue of empiricism itself.

The question and status of psychoanalysis as a legitimate science has been a grave source of controversy. Although Freud (1938, p. 282) insisted that psychoanalysis is a natural science, it has been lambasted on the grounds that it fails to qualify as science (Cioffi, 1998; Grünbaum, 1984) despite the fact that the scientific credibility of psychoanalysis has been empirically investigated since its inception (Fisher and Greenberg, 1977, 1996). Within psychoanalytic research circles, however, there has been an increasing movement to legitimize, revise, and improve psychoanalytic theory and practice through empirical investigations in developmental psychology, clinical psychopathology, attachment processes, cognitive neuroscience, infant observation research, affect theory, defense mechanism research, and therapeutic technique (Bucci, 1997; Cramer, 2006; Fonagy et al., 2002; Luborsky and Crits-Christoph, 1998; Masling

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and Bornstein, 1996; Mills, 2005c; Shedler, 2010; Shore, 1994; Solms and Turnbull, 2002; Stern, 1985; Wallerstein, 1989; Westen, 1998, 1999). Of course this is good for psychoanalysis as a discipline, especially politically, as it spars with other popular clinical approaches boasting treatment efficacy (e.g., CBT). But in all its apologetics, psychoanalysis has a reason to be worried: It has not kept up with the times. Perhaps this is reflective of its self-aggrandizing nature due to its historical privilege as a major intellectual contribution to the humanities. Now it has to work harder to bake bread. Society wants proof—Where’s the beef? Do we go belly-up or join the game? Practitioners can no longer afford to resist assimilation into the mainstream if they want to compete for scientific and public respect, which ultimately effects funding allocations and remuneration from third-party payers, as well as patients’ access to extended-health reimbursements.

For all practical reasons, if psychoanalysis does not attempt an aggressive comeback by demonstrating its tangible value, it faces a continual litany of objections from insurance companies, underwriters, and actuaries who operate from a mathematical bottom-line mentality expecting quick and concrete results, which can ultimately determine the financial fate of the profession in America. Some have gone so far as to predict the death of psychoanalysis if it does not adopt a scientific framework as the fulcrum of its activities (Bornstein, 2001). Although there are some proponents of psychoanalysis who are antiempirical by disposition (Blass and Carmeli, 2007; Hoffman, 2009), instead opting for more clinical, philosophical, and hermeneutic approaches to theory and practice (Mills, 2002b), the field may be said to be splintered between those who value (a) therapeutic work and clinical theory, (b) rigorous empirical systematization, and those who are primarily concerned with (c) theoretical and applied psychoanalysis.

In the “spirit of true science,” Patrick Luyten (2015, p. 5) has recently challenged the field to think critically about several “unholy questions” of psychoanalysis that, he argues, does not live up to empirical scrutiny, namely: (a) the theoretical language of psychoanalysis; (b) treatment, technique, and training; (c) theories of development; (d) attachment and object relations models; and (e) the nature of explanation in psychoanalysis. I address most of his concerns in turn, which all hinge on the accusation that these five central tenets have not been empirically verified, hence are in need of rectification. But before I do so, I play devil’s advocate. I realize that psychoanalytic researchers are concerned about the future state of psychoanalysis and wish to improve its scientific viability. These are noble intentions and worthwhile pursuits. And this is unequivocally good for the profession. Yet the virtues and drawbacks of the conceptual foundations governing the philosophy of science have a long ideological basis that are at times fundamentally opposed and antagonistic toward axiomatic principles inherent to many disciplines in the humanities. It is from this perspective that I give voice to traditional criticisms of nomothetic approaches to scientific explanation, positivism, and the scientific worldview that purports only the empirical method can produce credible theories of truth, replication, and knowledge. Here I offer counterarguments in the true spirit of philosophy that have historically challenged dominant views on scientific paradigms. In doing so, I neither intend to disparage psychoanalytic researchers nor devalue their aims, only to expose certain philosophical concerns that have direct bearing on their explanatory models. In offering this critique, I hope there may emerge a *simpatico* between psychoanalytic science and the philosophical parameters that inform future research.

Luyten’s (2015) criticisms fundamentally rest on several assumptions about science as a privileged discourse and superior methodology that the field of psychoanalysis should adopt wholeheartedly and to its betterment; yet I argue this presupposition is inherently problematic and reflective of the ideologies of science as a master discourse. The force of this discourse is

built upon a fantasized objectivist epistemology and reductionist framework that is far removed from the human condition and the experiential subject that belies the biases of scientific explanation, which is inferential and speculative at best. Contra Luyten, I attempt to demonstrate that science lacks true explanation as it artificially reduces the human being to simplistic, naive theories of parsimony that carry dogmatic ontological assertions about mind, human nature, and behavior. Such reductive paradigms further ignore the role of theoretics and subjectivity that, by definition, saturate any empirical method, and hence color its results; not to mention import an inflated valuation of the alleged virtue of empiricism itself, which may be viewed as a supercilious and officious imposition on the human sciences in general.

SCIENCE AS MASTER DISCOURSE

Science is a dominant discourse, a discourse of power. It holds a certain sway over mass culture as a master discourse that successfully inculcates (both consciously and unconsciously) the general prosaic belief that it alone holds the touchstone to truth. Here it is often thought that all other disciplines are inferior to science. Although it has propitious advantages in many fields and in contributing to proper domains of knowledge, its hegemony overshadows competing viewpoints and methodologies that enjoy legitimacy in their own right, which may be either compatible with or antagonistic to a scientific *Weltanschauung* depending upon what discipline one consults. Although science facilitates one's general understanding of the world, hence allowing one to see and appreciate aspects of reality that fall under its purview, it may also hinder and occlude other inquiries and disclosures that equally contribute to human knowledge. But as a dominant institution, it continually presents the appearance of precision, fastidiousness, reliability, and certainty, when such appearances are, in fact, political reiterations of a master hegemonic discourse designed to retain power and influence over masses and their economic resources.

Science is held in high esteem by society because it follows a special procedure that often proves to be of merit in furthering the knowledge industry. No sane individual can disparage science for its monumental contributions in improving the human condition: from medicine to technology people enjoy a better existence. When something is given the label *scientific*, it tacitly carries with it a stamp of approval based on claims that are particularly well-founded or undisputed, hence offering a privileged stance based on its methodologies. But analysts may readily question the basis of such authority when they closely inspect what science is actually doing. To begin with, not all scientific endeavors are the same, nor should one assume certain fields fall under the rubric of science even if they identify themselves as such. In politics and practice, certain specialities within the sciences may be adjudicated to be pseudoscientific when their methodologies are carefully examined. Here context is everything. There is partisan infighting in the scientific sector, just as there are hierarchical bodies that determine the scope of research projects that should be funded, departmental allocations of resources, and scholarly activities that are deemed *truly scientific* and worthy of support. Science is the gold seal securing economic backing and is, therefore, the dominant currency regulating most forms of commerce.

Although methodologies vary from discipline to discipline, what is not often said is that all domains of science rely on inductivism, speculation, and probability; are theory-dependent; are subject to anthropic selection bias; and are susceptible to observational discrepancies in perception, measurement, and calculation based on the nature of the examiner's subjectivity (Chalmers,

1982). Hypothesis testing presupposes theory, as does observation, experiment, and method construction under applications of relativism that suit the particular self-interests and dispositions of researchers. Observation selection effects are well documented in science (Bostrom, 2002), which are subject to biases in sampling techniques, limitations in measuring devices, self-sampling assumptions, methodological prescriptions, fallibility of falsification criteria, epistemic uncertainty, and anthropic reasoning that may contaminate data collection and the objectivity of investigative evidence. In fact, a fundamental metaphysical assumption that underlies science is the belief in a mind-independent world where one can discover, measure, and deduce fundamental physical laws that can then be generalized to all objects in its class, when this assumption begs the question of realism. This hegemonic stance becomes intractable when the subject-object divide institutes firm boundaries between the physical universe on the one hand, which is said to exist independent of all observers, and the human psyche on the other; especially when analysts' apprehension of the external manifold is dependent upon the subjective contingent nature of observation. Scientific realism furthermore presupposes a correspondence theory of truth, where a pure factual world is predicated to exist as objective, actual, and enduring, yet all experience and knowledge is necessarily mediated by mind. A more basic philosophical problem with this argument is the epistemological difficulty of claiming that anything actually exists corresponding to what we think or observe.

As a self-legitimizing discourse, science is keen to indoctrinate other disciplines into its own preferred mode of thinking by perpetuating power differentials to the degree that it has become a system of ideologies, the one who is supposed to know—the Big Other. This hegemonic symbolic matrix is called *science*, often thought of as pure knowledge, is, in fact, a cacophony of guesses called *experiments* in chase of knowledge, something it has no possession of until it is encountered or manufactured, then passed-off as truth corresponding to an objective reality.¹ Of course, this is not how science truly functions, which is very limited in its scope and ability to offer generalized explanations, but its mystique and illusory promise of offering ultimate answers to metaphysical questions maintains a stronghold over human consciousness, especially when offering causal attributions, hence insinuating—This is the way things really are! Because the very word carries the semiotic equivalence of knowledge and authority, this means that the institution of science is simultaneously a political enterprise where systems of abstract thought are manipulated, systematized, and applied to public matters in such a way as to become a master discourse affecting the intellectual, political, and economic constraints of a given society. Here the ideologies of science have infiltrated the world, which may be said to have an unconscious grip over the very way one approaches the question of knowledge.

Let's start with basics: What exactly do people mean by *science*? Historically, the term signifies knowledge acquired through experience (< Lat. *scientia*, from *scire*, to know). Contemporarily, it refers to the observation, identification, description, empirical investigation, and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena derived through experimental measures. People tend to use the term in a pedestrian fashion to signify a disclosure or truism about the natural world as a discovered fact, but this hardly happens in the behavioral and social sciences, which

¹To be fair to my research colleagues, many thoughtful empiricists recognize the limits to empirical measures and the dangers of overgeneralizability of results, which are typically more measured, contingent, qualified, and less deterministic. It is within the traditional philosophical debates against scientism as an epistemological and political movement lambasting or disqualifying other legitimate discourses that these criticisms are directed.

is the proper domain of both psychoanalysis and empirical psychology. Like any discourse, one needs to define one's parameters. Within psychology, human experience is not studied as it purely happens, such as in phenomenology; rather it is dislocated, redefined, and reframed from the vantage point of a contrived method and conceptual framework conducive to the imposed needs of the so-called scientist as the one who supposedly knows. This convention is superimposed *ex cathedra* on the object or issue in question simply because academic (political) custom has historically sanctioned this preferred discourse that continues to dominate majority opinion conditioning public sensibility. When mass world discourse is dictated by the language of science, it is understandable that psychology would not want to be left out of the fold. Will divine truth be illuminated by holy science? Or is this a psychom mythology born/e of social convention designed (sometimes with great hubris) to appease people's anxiety to know by offering hypotheses disguised as truth, which continue to subjugate the masses to ideology? Yet this propaganda inevitably comes up short, for science is always changing its mind, hence shifting the strictures of what it claims to know.

Today science is arguably equivalent to religion as a master discourse, which has equally put a spell over uncritical thinking members of society in desperate need of easy answers and quick cures. As such, the populace has been conditioned like dogs to accept whatever is spoon-fed to them as truth, whether it be a new medication, a fad in technology, or an insurer ready to financially support a particular service, pill, or product over another simply because it has the requisite stamp of scientific approval. Here one may observe an entrenched unconscious subjugation of reason, for much of society heedlessly trusts in anonymous authority under the stranglehold of scientific patriarchy.

Although science (in espousing naturalism) is grounded in empirical methodology, observation, measurement, verification, falsification, and replication, it employs explanatory models relevant only to specified research across a whole host of disparate domains. The nuanced methodologies in the natural sciences, such as in experimental particle physics or biochemistry, are vastly different than ones employed in the social and behavioral sciences; yet people often have a tendency to view all disciplines that identify themselves as *scientific* to be equivalent in scope and explanatory power, when this is not the case. In fact, there is a pecking order in the scientific community where true or pure experimental methods and observation inherent in naturalized approaches may devolve into manufactured situations that have nothing to do with the natural phenomena in question. Here it becomes rather easy to reconfigure *nature*, where mathematical models create statistical manipulations that derive statistically significant results, rather than actually contributing anything to one's understanding of the phenomenon in question.² This is much of empirical research today in behavioral science: It advances trite (if not worthless) hypotheses and theses about the human condition based on inference, speculation, and the pet theories of researchers—not on deduction or indisputable states of affairs; and then creates

²Although intended for another context, physicist Victor Stenger (2007) made the interesting and perspicacious observation that "a number of studies have claimed to be able to overcome the lack of statistical significance of single experiments by using a technique called 'metanalysis,' in which the results of many experiments are combined. This procedure is highly questionable. I am unaware of any extraordinary discovery in all of science that was made using metanalysis. If several, independent experiments do not find significant evidence for a phenomenon, we surely cannot expect a purely mathematical manipulation of the combined data to suddenly produce a major discovery" (p. 93). And this is coming from an academic astrophysicist.

an artificially controlled set of variables that extract the true subject from its subject matter.³ This fabricated approach dislocates the complexity that actually comprises the research subject in question by reducing it to artificial principles, which it statistically analyses to get the magic numbers it can then generalize to all subjects in its class, proclaiming all along that it corresponds to an objective realism. Here lies the ideology of scientism: One may only have pure knowledge through the scientific method.

In reality, research presents its own versions of truth as a circumscribed discourse or talk (ἀπόφασις), nothing more. The broader discourse of *logos* (λόγος) far exceeds the scientific method by virtue of the fact that science (by its own definition and kerbing scope of inquiry) may only offer a window into a particular slice of truth it has carved off by the delimitations generated through its own methodology. A perfect example of this is how a social or behavioral researcher controls for variables by creating a false environment—one completely removed from the real world, where all the variances that compose human reality are arbitrarily removed, hence extracted or displaced from the pure phenomenon in question, and reduced to a simplified paradigm that is said to represent such reality. All results merely point toward conclusions culled from the limited parameters of the manufactured research project itself, not the real object(s) it attempts to study. Here behavioral science is destined to remain self-alienated and isolated through its very method from studying the complex holism that comprises the human situation. In the end, there is analysis of data selectively extricated from the whole, rather than a comprehensive unifying analysis of the whole itself. In more metaphorical language, people get snapshots enclosed by frames, but never the whole picture itself.

THE LANGUAGES OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

Luyten (2015) begins his critique of psychoanalysis with a false scenario when he claims that the field shies away from asking tough questions of itself and fails to embrace novelty and change. There are a few in recent times who have embraced internal critique as a way of advancing the specialty (Eagle, 2003; Eagle et al., 2001; Masling, 2003; Mills, 2005a, 2005b, 2012, 2014; Summers, 2008), and the relational movement is a recent good example of introducing theoretical

³This is one reason why the fields of phenomenology and hermeneutics reproach scientific methodology for its lack of reflectivity and for not examining the true object in question in its native form and as it exists in its phenomenal moment or modes of appearance. These philosophical criticisms of the scientific method also extend to the subjectivity of the researchers who assume they can extricate themselves from their subject matter under the guise of pure objectivity. These are axiomatic challenges—hence categorical arguments—directed toward the philosophical frameworks informing scientific paradigms that rely on the control and manipulation of experimental variables, hence they are ideological oppositions to the essence of science. The controlling of variables that lead to reduction and simplification of the phenomenon in question in the service of avoiding logical or inferential errors begs the question of the accuracy and generalizability of results if they do not reflect a pure analysis of the actual phenomenon itself. This is why philosophy has historically always offered alternative models of explanation that originally rely on metaphysics, which are speculative, abductive, and empirical in scope, beginning with the ancients' preoccupation with mind and matter, later refined by the modern philosophers, advanced more by the German and British idealists, and culminating in the phenomenological and hermeneutic traditions of 20th century continental philosophy. Given that human behavior and mental processes are far more complicated than studying organic matter in a test tube or under a microscope, such as in biochemistry, the ideological challenge to scientism from phenomenological hermeneutics stands as a valid criticism toward many branches of empirical psychology today.

and technical reform; but I must agree with Luyten that critique often breaks a taboo inherent in the psychoanalytic professional culture to the degree that psychoanalysis largely comprises an assemblage of factions holding onto their preferred theoretical customs. But he soon compares the discipline to the natural sciences such as biology, which is a category mistake, and claims that the core ideas of psychoanalysis have a “shaky conceptual and empirical foundation” (p. 5). His main point is that to be progressive, such theories should be replaced by new and more comprehensive models aided by science. This, of course, begs the question of what it means to be progressive and comprehensive, of which many analytic traditions would claim they are.

Luyten (2015) accuses psychoanalysis of employing metapsychological concepts that are “hindering the advance” of the field due to their “descriptive, rather than explanatory, nature” (p. 7). But nowhere does he define what he means by *description* versus *explanation*. Although he does give examples from evolutionary biology through discourse on genetic and neuronal reduction, which I comment upon shortly, he does not delineate his premises. Through a meandering series of straw man arguments, where he positions psychoanalytic concepts in such a manipulative way as to attack their validity, his conclusion is that psychoanalytic theories “are often sophisticated, metaphorical and circular descriptions rather than *true* explanations” (*italics added*). Here he imports the notion of truth, as though science has the proper explanatory answer. Once again, without defining his terms, he immediately jumps to accusations that psychoanalysis—and he is painting with a broad brush—fails to demonstrate a “*causal link*” between theory and actuality, thereby declaring, “We have explained nothing.” Here Luyten reveals his cryptic agenda: Science offers causal explanations; theoretics are fanciful, linguistic narratives that have little to do with why or how things really happen.

It is important to define the nature of description versus explanation, as this invented binary seems to be important enough to Luyten (2015) to use it as a rally cry against the scientific status of psychoanalysis. Parenthetically, it should be noted that much of his critical rhetoric relies on the empirical work of Peter Fonagy and his research colleagues in Britain, Europe, and the United States, of which Luyten is part of his team. I do not begrudge these *new empiricists* for self-promotion, as their work has influenced my own thinking in many appreciative ways. Yet the curious silence of value assigned to explanation over description deserves close attention. Recall, Luyten does not define these terms; they are simply presumed. But these terms mean different things to different disciplines. Explanations are typically thought of as warranted assertions about the causality of events, when they are actually *statements of interpretation* of facts that clarify events and their presumed causes, which necessarily rely on descriptions of events or actions to do so. Explanations necessarily require descriptions to offer any understanding of the phenomena in question, and as such demonstrate the link between explication and fact. Descriptions by themselves are attempts at providing a narrative of what was observed or recorded and to depict or give an account of factual events, but its narration, exposition, argumentation, and meaning are dependent upon definition.

Philosophically, descriptivism is the notion that evaluative statements aim to be purely factual in nature and are determined in relation to their truth conditions. In symbolic logic, for example, a theory of descriptions (introduced by Russell, 1919; but refined by Strawson, 1950, 1952, 1959; and Donnellan, 1966, 1978) pertains to analysis of sentences containing definite and indefinite descriptions. Here descriptions are only meaningful in the context of attributive and referential statements and their symbolic relations inherent in sentence structure. Explanation, on the other

hand, makes something intelligible or understandable by explaining why or how something happened, such as impersonal events or human actions. There are several types of explanations that may be causal, teleological, inductive, deductive, reductive, methodological, subsumptive, and so forth. Like descriptions, explanations are contextually derived and contingent upon multiple factors. Luyten (2015) accuses psychoanalysis of only offering descriptive theories rather than true explanations, but there is nothing from his argument that supports this conclusion. Descriptions and explanations are inseparable as explanations necessarily rely on descriptive events (offered as evidence) and their mutual *relata* to confer meaning.

One such example he gives of nebulous psychoanalytic theory is the claim that “the patient’s depression is related to his severe superego,” which he says “does not explain vulnerability for depression” (Luyten, 2015, p. 7). But notice here that he evokes a *relation* between an actual condition (depression) and a state of mind (severe superego), only to then say that this does not demonstrate a causal connection, when this may readily be offered as a causal explanation, albeit an incomplete one; just as early socialization practices or genetic predisposition are insufficient (hence incomplete) as explanations, not to mention palpably reductive. Here behavioral science research is in no better a position to offer viable explanations than psychoanalytic theory because it invariably reverts to inference when addressing the relationship between description and causation. Do genes or socialization history cause depression over superego severity, when by definition superego theory points to the internal phenomenology of depressed states of mind (viz. excessive guilt, feelings of worthlessness, need for punishment, etc.)? One can no more prove that genes or the environment cause depression than internal dynamic processes, even when one postulates interaction effects, because this presupposes that causation is reducible to material and efficient forces that trump the principle of overdetermination as causal complexity; not to mention the obvious fact that intrapsychic dynamics are operative in all forms of depressive phenomenology. These naive accounts that Luyten (2015) endorses furthermore trivialize the sophistication of mental functioning that psychologically mediates between our embodiment and cultural environs that influence our experience of the world. What people are ultimately debating about is the question of causation, not description, and here so-called scientific explanations fare no better than psychoanalytic theory. Recall that the ancients used the term *cause* (αἰτία) to mean the reason or explanation for something happening. In fact, with psychoanalytic explication, you have a far richer and robust attempt to explain complexity, whereas the simple causal reductive paradigms endemic to behavioral science remain a philosophical embarrassment.

One of Luyten’s (2015) main criticisms of psychoanalysis is its reliance on the language of “poetics” or metaphor rather than the so-called scientific language of “schematics” (pp. 7–8). Here he presupposes that discourse on the human condition should be circumscribed to a scientized (often mechanistic) framework rather than view the range of human expression as encompassing a vast use of ideational, emotional, desirous, and valuational language that more properly symbolizes the complexity of being human. Furthermore, he imports a higher valuation in the use of more technical (presumably objective) language that supposedly characterizes the sciences. But all descriptive and explanatory language is a semiotic enterprise that signifies a whole range of signification practices based on observed linguistic conventions, hermeneutic contingencies, and grammatical relativism that convey meaning within formalized systems of discipline-specific discourse. Here a variety of languages are used to suit their contexts. In the end, all explanations are semiotic descriptions of meaning.

Luyten's (2015) reference to the poetics of psychoanalytic language is meant in a pejorative fashion, rather than as an aesthetic achievement expressing the interior emotional qualities of the soul (*Seele*) or metaphorical mind. In his estimate, it does not always speak to the "realm of justification" following the law of parsimony customary of science (p. 8). But why should one adopt such antiseptic models when explaining human experience, let alone assume that parsimony is superior to metaphorical attributions of meaning? This was certainly not a problem for the ancients who revered both the notions of schematics as idea or form (ἰδέα) and aesthetics, which were realized through psychological expressions via poetics (ποιητικῆς)—such as in drama, literature, and art, as well as moral and spiritual activity of the human psyche. Although Luyten does acknowledge the interdependence of metaphor within scientific paradigms, he does nevertheless believe that science is a superior discourse of "comprehension" and "understanding," when the humanities, in general, would beg to differ. In fact, this juxtaposition between human studies (as a semiotic science) and empirical psychology (as a natural science) is simply begging an old question, and one that is not very original, at that. The same banal argument is offered over again: Science has the potential to offer a more complete and comprehensive understanding of human phenomena that demonstrates its efficaciousness while psychoanalytic theory does not. Says who? Says science, he would retort, based on its own self-legitimizing propositions, the very legitimacy of which are in dire need of an argument to warrant such predications without running the risk of collapsing into a *petitio principii*.

It can be argued on a priori grounds that no discourse is in itself complete: neither the scientific method nor psychoanalytic theorizing have cornered the market on truth. And nor is it accurate or helpful to perpetuate this false dichotomy: Psychoanalysis is as empirical as it is theoretic because it addresses the observations, scope, and limits to human experience as they are clinically encountered in the consulting room. This methodological approach to working with patients in the real world is no less valuable than contrived research programs that change the parameters of the real-life situation in which clinicians immerse themselves in every day.

THEORETICAL MYOPIA IN THE AGE OF THE BRAIN

Luyten (2015) is enamored with the master discourse of science and advocates for a reductive theory of mind rooted in the neurosciences. He states, "The more analysts learn about the brain, and neurocircuits involved in explaining psychological phenomena, the more they need to change their language" (p. 8). But one may ask, "Why?" Not only is this a non sequitur, it fails as an argument for why parsimony would require one to change one's modes of discourse. Relying on the language of genetics, evolutionary biology, environmental determinism, and neuroscience, Luyten believes that "inbuilt capacities" for self-other "mapping," the "mirror neuron system," "activation versus deactivation patterns," our "genetic make-up," "vulnerability," and "gene expression," "evocative gene-environment correlations," "interactions" and "effects," and general references to the brain somehow are proffered as a better way to explain human psychological phenomena, when these are presumptive, narrow assertions that fail to fully capture the meaning of felt experience and the qualia of psychic reality. Furthermore, they are ontologically reductive. Take, for example, Luyten's explanation that "a cortical midline system is *responsible for generating* the experience of self as distinct from others" (italics added; p. 17). This is material reduction at its finest. This statement captures perfectly the anthropic bias in science: Material-efficient substrates of the brain *cause* mental phenomena, when there is no sound justification

for this conclusion. It is merely *doxa* based on simple-minded versions of determinism. Here Lutyen invents his own mythology by importing causality into the phenomena he describes rather than simply highlighting their correspondence to physical-energetic processes in the brain. This *correlation-causation confound* is lush in the sciences and perpetuates a flagrant myopia devoid of critical thinking rampant in empirical psychology.

By reappropriating the language and procedures of generic (hence noncontextualized) science, which are often ad hoc, and fortifying metaphysical commitments to reductionism as an explanans for the explanandum, behavioral science research is overstating its actual contributions to knowledge. This exaggeration of credibility, which is simultaneously a political self-posturing, furthermore sustains the false consciousness of scientific ideology as the one who is supposed to know. Not only does a generic scientist foray carelessly into making causal assurances that have multiple layers of ambiguity and uncertainty, there are other ontological ramifications that become philosophically problematic for the empiricist to answer. Reductionism (1) commits the fallacy of misplaced concreteness; (2) makes a mereological attribution error; (3) ignores the metaphysics of overdetermination; (4) overvalues the notion of Occam's razor; (5) succumbs to a rudimentary model of mind; (6) is unable to adequately address the question of qualia or the phenomenology of lived experience; (7) is incapable of resolving the notions of self and psychic holism; and (8) fails miserably to account for agency and human freedom (cf. Mills, 2002a). Talking about neuronal activation patterns does nothing to explain the experiential stream of consciousness or the phenomena of awareness as it is happening moment to moment: Conscious and self-conscious experience cannot be reduced to biochemical transactions in the brain as this explains nothing about one's conscious intentionality, feelings, meant objects, or lived meaning one generates through psychic experience.

When researchers make such causal attributions to brain organization, they appear to be unaware of the philosophical consequences. The founders of phenomenology long ago rallied against this reductionist attitude inherent in materialism and positivism, which was simultaneously a political protest against the scientific hegemonic positioning of their day. How can molecules, cells, and genes actually cause the conscious act of perceiving and intentionally conveying emotional and symbolic meaning? These are higher order developmental achievements belonging to a sophisticated psychological organic process. Reducing the unique qualitative aspects of perception to genetic determinism is a meaningless proposition when a nonperceptive cell does not apprehend an object of conscious experience or awareness like a human agent does. A nonconscious entity, such as a particle, is not capable of causing a higher order organic activity or function that is derived from a complex systemic organization, yet the fallacies of scientific reduction govern our discourse on causation. How can an imperceptible atom cause intentional conscious activity when this tiny speck of enmattered energy has no capacity to experience, emote, think, or perceive the conscious world people inhabit? How can particles grouped into neuronal clusters actually *instantiate* the multifarious acts of consciousness? Logically they cannot, for only an evolved organic holistic system that is irreducible to its parts is capable of such intricate mental activities, for consciousness (not to mention self-consciousness) is a cultivated phase of natural order.

One of the main problems with the reductionist perspective in neuroscience and biosemiotics is that it is unable to account for human freedom (see Mills, 2010). One notable exception is Ansermet and Magistretti's (2007) claim that the "neuronal apparatus" is actually based upon

a biology of freedom that allows for neural plasticity or modification in how it unconsciously encodes experience. They say:

The concept of plasticity means that experience can be inscribed in the neuronal network. An event experienced at a given time is marked at the moment and can persist over time. The event leaves a trace, and simultaneously, time is embodied. . . . [T]he fact of plasticity thus involves a subject who actively participates in the process of his or her becoming. (p.13n3)

Their attempt to wed *bios* with *psyche* is to be applauded, especially when they speculate on the possibility to “conceptualize a psychic causality capable of shaping the organic” (p. 7). However, there still remains the question of agency. Ansermet and Magistretti (2007) repeatedly situate the locus of agency within the “mechanisms of plasticity” (p. 47), which they reduce to neuronal processes. Thus, they inadvertently collapse agency into biological structures without properly accounting for the agent directing these agentic functions. Here they commit the merelogical attribution error of assigning agency to a part or subsystem of the brain rather than addressing the human subject as a complex systemic whole. If agency is reduced to neuronal (and specifically *synaptic*) plasticity, rather than being coextensive with and directing neural modification, then mind becomes an epiphenomenon with no real causal powers of its own.

Rhetorical phrases Luyten (2015) employs, such as “studies suggest,” there is “growing evidence” which “is also congruent with neuroscience findings” (p. 17), are informal fallacies of logic that appeal to authority and consensus among a subgroup of researchers interested in promoting their own way of thinking. This is neither proper justification nor does it demonstrate causality. Just because a group of professionals adhere to a thesis about human phenomena does not make it true. Explanations require strong argumentation and demand demonstration based upon evidence. The evidence of observation conveyed as description cannot be passed off as an explanans. It is one thing to locate neuronal functionalities, biochemical processes, and physical structures of the brain, but it is quite another to conclude these are the causal apparatuses behind higher psychological organizations we call mind. One may ask: How do you know that? Are there plausible alternatives to material reduction? Why could it not be the other way around: mind produces, hence causes, alteration in brain activity and the neural mechanisms people think are “responsible for generating” mentation and thought? A truly scientific attitude would be open to alternative explanations, not self-satisfied with reductive paradigms.

Notwithstanding the contributions of naturalized explanations in evolutionary biology, neuroscience, and the study of the brain, it has become all too superficial and one-dimensional to collapse mental processes into neuronal patterns, rather than see how the sophistication of consciousness as a self-organized systemic achievement can produce neurochemical-biologic effects of its own. Just because the brain may be scientifically observed and measured by technological methods and neuroimaging techniques such as functional magnetic resonance imaging and positron emission tomography scans does not mean that mind is equivalent to its physical locality. In other words, one should not simply assume a linear one-way causal relation among brain processes that determine the productions of consciousness as an epiphenomenon, but rather human consciousness should be conceived as an evolved organic matrix that equiprimordially and reciprocally determines physical effects that transpire in the brain as a dialectical two-way, causal systemic informational and relational exchange of events that leave their reverberations on neuronal activity. One cannot justify the belief in absolute (hard) determinism when it comes to biological organisms without shouldering a presumptive causal bias (Mills 2013b),

especially when the complexifications of consciousness may exert a causal influence on how the manifestations of brain activity are understood.

Proponents of mental determinism that rely on reductive epistemologies based on brain discourse grounded in neuro-ontology commit a mereological fallacy (Bennett and Hacker, 2003) by demoting psychic complexity to its material constituents alone, not to mention being guilty of the fallacy of simple location or misplaced concreteness where human consciousness is said to be found in a reducible particle (Whitehead, 1925).⁴ Here the intricacy of an organic whole or gestalt is reduced to its parts as neuroscience mistakenly conceives of mind *as* brain. Yet this naive determinism supporting the conclusion that mind equals brain still continues to infect contemporary science. Although the brain is a necessary condition for mind, it is far from a sufficient one: Mind cannot be reduced to brain states alone, for mind is a higher-order developmental and epigenetic organic process that transcends simple equations.

IN DEFENSE OF THEORY

Theory is never purely divorced from method, yet one may categorically (logically) separate out descriptive events from theoretical explanations. Luyten (2015) charges much of psychoanalysis with espousing an “obsolete model of the mind” (p. 9) by holding onto outdated theoretical orientations inherited from tradition. It is true that some theories are antiquated and need to be aborted, as certain techniques need to be refined, expanded, or displaced for more appropriate interventions that are tailored to the patient’s needs and the unique contingencies of the analytic dyad; but once again he paints with a broad brush. It is important to remember that there are many post-classical movements within the psychoanalytic domain that have developed since Freud’s time, hence introducing redirecting shifts in emphasis, reformed approaches to theory and praxis, and the outright rejection of earlier models. This obvious fact is not mentioned in his critique, yet Luyten does pick and choose various concepts to criticize from Freudian, Kleinian, and Lacanian theory, as well as general principles of object relations and ego psychology. Given I have offered my own critique of many of these approaches (Mills, 2012, 2014), we share similar views on outdated developmental models and some theories of psychopathology, as well as how theory guides practice and how it is a useful clinical heuristic. But some of the claims Luyten makes with regards to core psychoanalytic constructs deserve special attention.

I have already argued that the languages of science, which are largely procedural, cerebral, nonemotive, and so forth, merit no special consideration as a superior type of discourse because all language is imbued with meaning and anthropomorphic properties that infiltrate every discipline. As such, Luyten’s (2015) argument that metaphorical or poetical portrayals of human experience are inadequate in comparison to scientific terminology (cf. Bornstein and Becker-Matero, 2011) fail because one cannot step outside of semiotic classifications of meaning construction every discourse conveys in some fashion. The issue becomes: For what purpose and context is a said discourse applied? Different definitions, goals, aims, etc., will determine a particular approach to methodology, interpretation, and explanatory conclusions derived. Taking

⁴See my discussion and critique of reductive material ontologies (Mills, 2010), pp. 10-12, 251, 263n9.

as surprising examples, Luyten challenges the canonical notions of *projection*, *splitting*, and *representation*. Relying on his close collaboration with Fonagy (e.g., Fonagy and Luyten, 2009), Luyten proclaims that the process of projection or projective identification “does not actually involve the projection of internal mental states in the mind of someone else (how would that work?), but rather precisely the *opposite* process: that the supposed receiver of the projection resonates with the other’s internal mental states because of people’s inbuilt capacity for self-to-other and other-to-self mapping” (italics added; p. 8). Setting aside the geographical language (which employs a spatial metaphor), Luyten at first denies that the subject could project his or her own internal thoughts onto another, but then claims that the other really does not receive these thoughts, rather it triggers the “mirror neuron system,” which “starts to feel like the other person (who purportedly projects), because he or she is unable to inhibit his or her attempt to map the self on to the other” (p. 8).

Here I see no contradiction with classical theory. Unless one is prepared to reject the whole history of modern philosophy, phenomenology, and the philosophy of mind, it is an uncontested fact that the internal subjectivity of a thinker directs thoughts onto objects (as either external to oneself and in the sensuous world, or as internalized relations derived from personal experience). Of course, this is a two-way reciprocal relation when one encounters another human being, which is also characteristic of transference. At the very least, people must concede that when two subjects encounter one another, separate psychic processes are activated in each subject, yet they are mutually implicative and transpire on parallel levels of mental functioning. To imply that one is not projecting and the other is not really receiving a projection, but instead becomes confused when they see the face of the other, which then triggers internal events based on a confusion of internal circuitry and a disinhibition of self-other mapping is simply a circular argument that betrays the dialectical nature of subjectivity. Reducing projection to brain processes is not only ontologically diminutive, it furthermore serves no clinical utility when encountering projective identificatory processes in the office. What would you say to a patient?—I think your mirror neurons are misfiring!

The point I am clarifying is that a subject is not really inserting thoughts into another person’s mind, of which Luyten (2015) would presumably agree, but this does not annul the dynamics of projection or projective identification. Each individual assumes a complementary dialectical (inverse) relation to another, with mutual psychological processes potentially operative at any given moment (which in scientized language is referred to as *activated* or *deactivated*—recall that Freud preferred the terms *inhibition* and *disinhibition*); therefore, the subject is always engaged in a simultaneous process of projecting internal contents onto others and identifying with various aspects of others’ states of mind that are expressed, articulated, instantiated, or inferred through their behaviors, utterances, affect, nonverbal body comportment, and so on, which is then either negated, unformulated, dissociated, or sensuously taken up by the other (even if only partially) as an internal experience of their own related to their own unique intrapsychic configurations. The other’s behavior stimulates (activates) internal experiences in one’s self that one attempts to mediate and make sense of through meaning attributions in self-other representations, not that one can read others’ minds or that others can directly place their thoughts into one’s mind. If anything, people are always projecting their own thoughts onto others as meant objects whether they identify or resonate with our inner experiences or not.

Luyten (2015) makes similar sweeping dismissals of select (cherry-picked) aspects of psychoanalytic theory, such as “there is no such thing as a state of primary narcissism or an autistic stage, as infants are oriented toward others from the very first stages of life” (p. 9). But

he fails to appreciate how these theoretical terms are utilized to denote functional properties or as experiential modes of self-relation inherent in infantile development: Orientation to others does not negate the intrinsic interrelations of mind nor address the question of self-organization that is indisputably internally derived from intrapsychic configurations that logically transpire before birth as unconscious presubjectivity (see Mills, 2010). Just because infants are adapted toward the world and their caregivers from birth does not mean that their inner experiences and correspondent self-relations (even if biologically driven) do not conform to the semiotic equivalent of a solipsistic or primary self-enclosed state of self-orientation in the face of external reality characteristic of Freud's or Ogden's theoretical explanations as an attempt to label the inner phenomenology of mind at this incipient stage of development.

Luyten (2015) also opines that “defense mechanisms are not activated by intrapsychic conflict,” which “does not seem to correspond to what is actually happening” (p. 9). Then what is actually happening? According to Luyten, it is simply a matter of automatic learned responses corresponding to neural circuitry. This absurd behaviorist oversimplification of unconscious experience does not remotely come close to offering a cogent explanation of inner phenomena simply because it cannot capture the qualitative dimensions to internal life, let alone address the functions, motives, and conflicts involved in the “activation” of defenses to begin with. The same lame argument applies to the phenomena of “splitting or conversion,” which Luyten believes is “implausible.” He asks, rather naively and concretely, “What exactly would be split in splitting? Do analysts really believe that a representation is split into two or more parts? Or that one part of a representation is kept unconscious (i.e., is defended against)?” (p. 9). Although offering no substantial arguments of his own, instead reiterating the notion that these are not “parsimonious” accounts customary of empirical methodology, and that they participate in an antiquated model of the mind, which is tantamount to saying they do not conform to a scientific way of thinking, Luyten is convinced that his false binary assertions are justifications for dismissing standard psychoanalytic discourse as mere lore.

Defenses, by definition, are internally instituted by unconscious or preconscious processes (even if they are stimulated by environmental forces or acts of consciousness) with teleological motives aimed at achieving particular psychic functions and ends. This may be explained within a naturalized framework consistent with evolutionary biology and contemporary neuroscience without devolving into a mechanistic explanation that strips away the affective and experiential quality of mental life. Splitting is a description of an internal process of division, negation, and fracturing by partitioning off particular aspects or spacings of interiority as *mental relations* to objects, which may contain many elements such as sentience, affects, images, fantasies, thoughts, and other apperceptive experiences retained in memory (or memorialized within somatic processes) and related to as internal objects, which are the re-presentations (*Vorstellungen*) of sensuous experience recollected from the unconscious abyss (Mills, 2002c). The crass rejection of these core psychoanalytic ideas via negation without providing any proper argumentation is fallacious.

Luyten (2015) continues his critique of psychoanalytic developmental theories beginning with an overly simplified misrepresentation of Freudian theory, only then to generalize it to post-classical thought by summoning the nature versus nurture debate in a pedestrian dichotomous fashion. The conceptual move Luyten makes is to proclaim that the language of “evocative gene-environment correlations” somehow better captures what is *really going on* when we posit developmental processes and their intervening psychopathologies (p. 15). It is beyond embarrassment that in this day and age the nature-nurture-interaction discourse of the 1960s

is being reintroduced under new pretenses, when this simply perpetuates an unsophisticated paradigm of causation. Propositions of epigenetic mechanisms altering gene expression, genetic vulnerability to particular environmental stimuli, gene-environment effects, and synergistic interaction all presuppose reductive causal models that do not sufficiently take into account complex interactive patterns inherent to overdetermination; such as the nature of phenomena influencing qualia and one's subjective experiences of the world, transgenerational transmission repetitions, and unique cultural factors that define the history, retention, and environs of certain group or ethnic socialization practices, all of which affect unconscious agency, personality formation, and personal freedom of choice regardless of so-called gene-environment correlations, which are speculative hypotheses at best. Moreover, these theses don't really explain anything. How can a gene or an external object account for (hence produce the complexity of) consciousness? A gene is not a conscious agent, neither is any environment a conscious being. The presupposition that human mental activity is reducible to these basal conditions extricates the human being from its own essence. Our genetic predispositions, history, or environmental facticity are merely generic substrates of biological life and the cultural contingencies that we are thrown into as pre-given ontological structures that inform our being in the world. They are necessary conditions, but far from sufficient ones.

If behavioral science would refrain from importing causal attributions into their explanations, and merely stayed within the parameters of their research models, perhaps much of these disagreements would be dispensed with, or at least bracketed. In any event, the point is that these causal implications should be deferred. But Luyten (2015) continues to mischaracterize psychoanalytic theory when he declares that behavioral scientists "question one of the most basic assumptions of object relations and attachment theories, namely that parental behavior largely *determines* child development" (italics added; p. 15). Notice the simple one-way causal relation he attributes to these broad theoretical schools within psychoanalysis, when this is simply a straw man. He provides no original textual references to any pivotal theorist in the object relations movement that says parents' behavior causes child development, yet we should all assume it does. Luyten's solution is to replace this so-called environmental determinism with evocative gene-environment lingo as a more appropriate explanation, which is merely a clichéd reiteration of antiquated dichotomous rationale replete in empirical psychology. This blinkered framework of thinking that guides theory and procedural methodologies in behavioral science is itself a form of professional mythology I like to call *bioideology*.

When Luyten (2015) continually uses the flagship phrase "there is growing evidence" (pp. 14, 15) as a justification for why people should believe the verity and validity of his arguments that genes, the environment, or both cause the human being to be, relate, feel, act, and experience, he is merely putting a new spin on old ideas using the rhetoric of science. One such example is that attachment processes may be attributed, hence caused, by the presence or absence of DRD4 7-repeat allele, which epitomizes the fallacy of simple location. Such complexities in psychological processes cannot be logically reduced to these factors alone without committing a mereological error under the seduction of positivism. I suppose the inability to think critically about causal complexity is conditioned by how science successfully imposes its master discourse on the educational process, much like how the CBT and empirically-supported treatment movements prescribe a rote set of procedures for all treatment populations across the board as if all people in that group are the same, when this is a category mistake that fails to appreciate the fact that "the only statistically pertinent sample is $N = 1$ " (Mills, 2012, p. 178; also see Verhaeghe,

2004). Making grand universal generalizations to “groups” assumes that everyone in that group is the same or possesses similar characteristics to be pigeonholed into some class, when this presumption strips away subjectivity from the subject, the unique experiential field that composes the lived quality of a person’s inner life in relation to their personal history, and lumps them into an impersonal classification that may have little to do with how they actually think, feel, and perceive the world. Of course, this is passed off as objective evidence, when it is more properly based on the hegemonic agenda of scientism pretending to be the one that knows.

To illustrate the brazen pronouncements of hubris Luyten (2015) upholds under the banner of science, he is willing to deny the internal reality of representations in the mind, which he claims “are no longer in line with what *is now known* about representational processes: *Representations do not exist*; thus they cannot be split or integrated, and they cannot be hierarchically organized” (italics added; p. 16). In the history of philosophy, from Aristotle to Husserl, representations are essential to the internal workings of the mind. With Kant’s introduction of the epistemological turn in late modern philosophy, through to Fichte, Hegel, and Schopenhauer, Luyten’s brash dismissal of such an important psychological process in the history of ideas is most incredulous. Instead, he says representations are “*states of mind*.” But of course they are: They are internal spacings of internalized sensuous experiences that have been mnemonically imprinted and organized in the unconscious mind, recollected through the mediatory processes of memory and imagination, and realized in lived phenomenal time as intrapsychic qualitative states of psychic reality, as the whole history of modern philosophy has already explained through various standpoints from the British empiricists to the German idealists. Here Luyten is reinventing the wheel and attempting to pass it off as a new discovery. He believes the language of representation is guilty of reification, when this is the very thing he commits when he condenses complex mental processes to *neural circuits* characteristic of material reductionism. Representations are far from being reified; rather, they are fluid *processes* with variable contents as sentience, affect, and imago are distilled within various schemas mediated by memory, imagination, and cognition (Mills, 2002c, 2010).

How is this neuro-language of brain circuitry helpful in offering an explanation of the phenomena of representation? It is not, because it dislocates phenomenology from the phenomena in question. When one attempts to dissect phenomenology, one kills it. The mechanical rendition of the *awareness* or *presence* of lived experience to biochemical and physical structures in the central nervous system is an unwarranted ontological predication that has no bearing on lived psychic reality. The proverbial joke becomes: “Just use some fancy science-language and others will pretend they understand it. And we can sell them something to boot!” A profound explanation indeed.

A redundant form of straw man reasoning is used again and again by Luyten (2015) in attempting to manufacture a bifurcation between concepts or phenomena when they do not exist. Not only does he do this by making the concept *representation* a reified object—opting instead to import a process account, as if that is an original idea—he further pulls this move by claiming that “people do not *have* a self or identity or personality; rather, they have the ability, to a greater or lesser extent, to activate a more or less consistent, coherent, and differentiated *feeling* or *experience* of coherence and stability” (p. 17). Notwithstanding the current pomocentrism that is popular in some forms of contemporary psychoanalysis, this position denies selfhood yet evokes the *agency* of the subject as possessing the “ability . . . to activate” feeling states and personal experience. But if one does not have a self, identity, or personality, how can one activate

anything? Does this just magically come from neurotransmitters firing randomly in the brain that gives the illusion that I have internal thoughts, feelings, desires, and so forth, which influence my conscious awareness of my experience of these internal events, or does this not require an agent performing such activities, even if these modes of thought are unconsciously constituted? By definition, self-consciousness (as self-reflectivity) necessarily requires an internal point of reference that people typically call the self, even if they view the self as a fluent and transient process of becoming.

This false antinomy between the self as a static thing versus a process system of change unfolding within universal invariances inherent to mind dates back to the pre-Socratic antipode of being versus becoming. It is merely old wine in new bottles, which have now turned to vinegar. Luyten's apparent lack of knowledge of the history of philosophy, not to mention his cavalier attempt to snatch the credit for introducing a so-called "new" perspective, deserves what Plato (1961) referred to in his dialogue *Gorgias* as a refutation by laughter (cf., 473e). This is a good example of why empirical psychologists should humbly refrain from veering too far from their path of expertise.

ON EXPLICATION IN PSYCHOANALYSIS AND OPERATIONALIZATION IN SCIENCE

Luyten's critique of five central tenets of psychoanalysis ends on a denunciation of its explanatory powers in favor of the empirical tradition. Luyten believes that due to the complexity of psychoanalytic theory that relies on metaphorical discourse, this "hinders operationalization" in science (p. 17). The implicit assumption here is that psychoanalysis should concern itself about empirical operations. But why should operationalization matter to the psychoanalyst who does not believe in science as a privileged discourse, let alone care about matters that have nothing to do with working with patients, especially when other methodologies in the humanities and in clinical praxis are more relevant? Without proper justification, Luyten further harangues that psychoanalytic frameworks fail to develop a "comprehensive understanding of the human condition." Just because the overspecificity and complexity of theory do not easily fit into sanitized, artificial, and arbitrarily operationalized approaches to behavioral science research does not mean there is no comprehensive explanatory scaffolding about the human condition. He provides no argument, only the non sequitur that what psychoanalysis offers is not true explanation, hence, once again, begging the question on truth. The insipid conclusion is the reiteration that psychoanalysis has faulty assumptions that belie empirical verification. But what he specifically hones in on is drive theory, thus proclaiming "the notion of drive is obsolete." On one hand, he embraces the field of genetics and evolutionary science, and on the other he negates human *Triebe* or instincts, itself a most blatant contradiction.

It is unfathomable, both logically and empirically, to negate the ontology of drives as embodied organic processes that evolutionarily inform human desire, affect, cognition, and behavior. These innate instinctual impulses or biological processes are in today's lexicon often equated with genes that have built-in teleonomic pressures (Mills, 2010), which orient and motivate the organism to action and ensure its survival. The psychophysiological instantiation of drives or genes in no way cancels out people's relational natures and object-seeking attachments (Mills, 2012), rather they are the biological substrate within an unconscious agentic organization that makes

relatedness to others possible (Mills, 2010). Jettisoning drive theory is tantamount to denying the basic instinctual systems inherent to animal bodies. To displace the primacy of sex and aggression in the human condition violates the laws of nature, not to mention the empirical fact that sex and aggression are two of the most salient aspects of social existence in all spheres of human affairs. This is evinced by the fact that pornography is the number one industry on the World Wide Web, just as sex unconsciously fires human material production in all forms from economics to fashion, cosmetics, advertising, and gendered socialization practices; not to mention the indisputable fact that all cultures manifest human aggression: from the nursery to every community worldwide, domestic, national, and global (military) conflict saturates our daily consciousness throughout the planet (Mills, 2013b).

When one looks closely at the tenor and posturing of Luyten's arguments, they are designed to create the impression that psychoanalytic theory fails because, as Luyten accuses, it is "overly simplistic about the complexity of developmental processes," adhere to a "naive environmentalist position," and that they have "limited predictive effects" because there is "more to development" than object relations and attachment mechanisms (p. 18). But of course there are: This bald fact underscores the complexity of psychoanalytic theory. Luyten is not remotely justified in lumping all psychoanalytic approaches to theory and method into the same basket, and his perennial mischaracterizations are a continuation of his use of informal fallacies. Nowhere does one find in Freud, for instance, any statement that commits him to either a simple biological *or* environmental determinism. He accounted for inner and outer, hence the intrapsychic, intersubjective, and the social, and meticulously details the workings of drive, wish, and defense, identification, object attachments, semiotics, the process of civilization, and the cultural environs that influence individual and collective development. Luyten's main agenda here is in fortifying the illusion of the "predictive" promise he thinks science is able to deliver in its explanatory models, when experimental psychology is no more predictive of human behavior than psychoanalytic sensibility. Are gene-environment-interaction (statistical) probabilities any more capable of predicting future events than a thorough understanding of the phenomenology of a person's developmental history and life experience? No, because people are simply not causally determined in such rote fashions by these categorically reductive automations. On the other hand, one may be more justified in predicting possible future occurrences from people when one understands their psychic lives and developmental history because inner phenomenal experiences motivate human activity. Here the scientific method is no more likely to predict future events than the phenomenological method. Once again, one may smell old propaganda under the political hegemony of empiricism.

Luyten's solution is to return to the evolutionary lingo driving theories of explanation in the biological sciences, where the complexity of human cognition, emotion, motivation, and behavior devolve into perfunctory involuntary processes that strip the human being of its psychological and experiential sophistication. He overstretches the explanatory nature of his preferred holy science, and is quick to devalue the broad domain of psychoanalytic treatment as offering "nothing unique" (p. 19). If this were genuinely the case, then psychoanalysis would be a bankrupt discipline, and as such, practitioners would no longer be in business. Although the psychoanalytic landscape has changed in terms of both theory and praxis, analytic practitioners continue to employ modified psychoanalytic principles in their varied clinical activities regardless of the pressures for mainstream treatment approaches or the hyperbole of scientific psychology. Such political posturing exemplifies the master discourse attempting to sell analysis something novel, when this is merely the recapitulation of its well-entrenched ideology.

CONCLUDING UNSCIENTIFIC POSTSCRIPT

For the record, I am not against science, nor am I an antiempiricist; I am merely critical of the way the so-called scientific method has been politically annexed by empirical psychology eager to join the ranks of high authority in a privileged position of determining what constitutes so-called knowledge and how analysts should conceptually frame a *philosophy of explanation*. In my opinion, empirical psychology does not offer a philosophy of explanation, rather it offers a method that produces tangible results that enlist and describe data, which are then converted into an explanans as a conflation of the explanandum. Scientific psychology has the onus of proving itself in the world of academia and public affairs, where research grants, publication numbers, and the procurement of external funding determine its worth. But it is not remotely commensurate to the specialized fields that compose the proper domain of the natural sciences where precise observation, experimentation, and discovery of natural laws and their processes are much more systematized and rigorously investigated. Sadly, empirical psychology suffers from an inadequate conceptual framework on how to philosophically approach its methodology when constructing explanatory models. Resorting to reductive paradigms of causation does not help its position, for it becomes tautologically ensnared by its own presuppositions fueled by circular reasoning. To avoid begging the question of causation via reductionism, empirical psychoanalytic psychology should consider developing conceptual models of explanation that take into account the complexifications of overdetermination and human agency.⁵

The ideologies of scientism continue to condition conventional modes of discourse on causal explication and human knowledge. The humanities in general, and continental philosophy in particular, continue to challenge the Cartesian, logocentric, positivist, and materialist frameworks underlying the scientific hegemony of Western thought, yet the preponderance of science as a master discourse totes the potential for both discovery and mastery over natural order, whereas the humanities typically do not. To what degree the promise of science is based on illusion, or even sophistry, continues to fragment professional disciplines in debate. Within psychoanalytic inquiry, camps continue to remain divided, as well as based on differing methodologies and theories of explanation. This is largely based on, I suggest, an ingrained worldview that is split in terms of its epistemological claims and capacity for prediction governing its elucidatory models. Although psychoanalysis, as a discipline, has much to gain by empirically validating its theoretical premises and technical procedures, it remains in need of a philosophically coherent framework of explanation that resists the reductive ontological commitments expounded by contemporary science. Parsimonious approaches to theory and operationalization only complicate the matter by perpetuating shallow explanations rather

⁵With the exception of Ansermet and Magistretti's (2007) work, I am unaware of any contemporary empirical research in neuroscience or the philosophy of mind that attempts to address the question of causality, agency, and human freedom that does not devolve into material reduction, epiphenomenalism, and brain or evolutionary discourse. The fundamental problem here lies between ontology and phenomenology: the former is primarily concerned with foundational aspects or first principles and the question of ultimate reality; the latter is concerned with preserving the source, force, and independence of lived experience and its qualitative manifestations. Because science employs reductive models and the humanities resist such tendencies, I am afraid there will always remain an ideological clash of theoretical assumptions and their imported values.

than answer to the conundrums generated by complexity. A more vibrant psychoanalysis could conceivably emerge if researchers and scholars attempted a consilience between science and philosophy.

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