THE MIND'S
COLLAGE

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THE MIND'S COLLAGE:
PSYCHIC COMPOSITION IN ADULT LIFE

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"I don’t think anyone would claim that Picasso’s collages are more important than Guernica, and yet collages seem to epitomize the imagination of modern painting, including Guernica, and of much modern sculpture. Their use of found-objects, their fragmentariness and their direct conversion of objective reality into a subjective experience, into abstraction, make collages the model for the most profound work in traditional forms.”

— Colin Westerbeck

Picasso. “Still Life with Chair-Caning,” 1911-12
To the memory of my father,

and to my mother
Acknowledgments

Writing requires a sustained listening to one's own voice. Hence it makes plain just how much one's way of speaking (and being) owes to the voices of others. Becoming aware of the extent of one's indebtedness can perhaps lead one, as a writer, to feel the "anxiety of influence" which Harold Bloom describes. But it can also lead one, as a person, to feel simple gratitude. My friends have believed enough in me and in my project to keep me going, to keep me honest, and to teach me, and I trust they know I have not forgotten.

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The image of feeling created by artists, in every kind of art--plastic, musical, poetic, balletic--serves to hold the reality itself for our labile and volatile memory, as a touchstone to test the scope of our intellectual constructions. . . . A philosophy of life guided by the vital image created by artists (all true artists, not only the great and celebrated ones) does not lead one to deprecate physical mechanisms, but to seek more and more of them as the subtlety of the phenomenon increases.

--Susanne Langer
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: ISSUES OF METHOD

To understand each person's actions we have to visit his special stage.

--von Uexküll

Comprehension in depth of a single instance will often enable us, phenomenologically, to apply this understanding in general to innumerable cases. Often what one has once grasped is soon met again. What is important in phenomenology is less the study of a large number of instances than the intuitive and deep understanding of a few individual cases.

--Karl Jaspers

This thesis is a study of an interview technique and a related theory of mind. I believe that the interview technique has value in connection with clinical diagnosis, research and therapy and provides a special microscope\(^1\) for

\(^1\)In choosing the word microscope I have in mind Eissler's use of the same word in connection with Freud's method of free association which opened up such an immense, unexplored psychological territory, and Eissler's comment that, if it is to advance, "Psychology . . . will have to wait for the development of new methods of exploration, such as can be handled productively even by average minds--or else it will have to wait for a new genius." Eissler adds that such a new contribution to psychology would be recognizable not by its theories, but by its case histories. (See K. R. Eissler, "Freud and the Psychoanalysis of History," p. 620.)
observing the complex psychological processes by which the self forms and composes images in order to maintain a sense of orientation and a feeling of aliveness. I call the technique the collage method; the formative psychological process I call psychic composition.

The collage method arose in the context of psychohistorical research. While I believe this method has usefulness beyond that specific context, it is with reference to the intellectual assumptions of a discipline seeking to bridge psychology and history that the logic of the collage method can most readily be perceived.

Precisely because it locates psychological processes in the concreteness of historical times and places (and, conversely, accounts for historical change in terms of what is plausible psychologically) psychohistory must be restrained in evolving principles that abstract from time and place. One might argue that due to their connection to the contingencies of historical actuality and imagery, such methods and principles as a psychohistorical discipline might devise would automatically be proscribed from the body of purely abstract scientific laws. Or, quite oppositely, one might argue (perhaps following Polanyi) that

\[2\] Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy. See also Gerald Holton, Thematic Origins of Scientific Thought: Kepler to Einstein.
psychohistorical formulations, in explicitly taking account of historical context, emulate more authentically the principle of relativity so germane to twentieth century science.

The tradition of psychohistory associated with the work of Erik Erikson has emphasized a dialectic between universal psychobiological inclinations of the human organism (like the stages of the life cycle which circumscribe, epigenetically, what is humanly possible) and specific historical conditions (which determine the actual forms which human development takes). From this perspective the life stage we call adolescence, for example, is seen as the result of a complex interplay of constitutional givens (the rate of human maturation) with specific familial, social and economic conditions. ³

Whatever its fate may be as a scientific theory, Erikson's psychohistorical approach to development has profound implications for the study of motivation, and, consequently, for diagnostic procedures which take as their objective the investigation of human motivation. Robert Holt writes:

³See Kenneth Keniston, "Prologue: Youth As a Stage of Life." For a similar perspective on childhood see Philippe Ariès, Centuries of Childhood.
... the work of Erikson should be closely studied by the testing psychologist because it so beautifully exemplifies a truly organismic, biosocial approach to personality. For example, in the case histories with which he opens Childhood and Society there is a masterly interweaving of three types of considerations: processes inherent in the organism (constitutional structures, maturational sequences, etc.), the organization of experience in the individual ego (defenses, identity, modalities, etc.) and social organizing forces (the groups in which a person lives, their structure and cultural heritage). If we as diagnostic testers can approximate these brilliant performances and portray in such depth real human beings, we shall have profited by the best that modern ego psychology has to offer us.4

Though I regard the collage method as an interview technique rather than a diagnostic test (and will return to discuss this distinction further) I have sought, in much the way which Holt prescribes, to learn from Erikson's work. In Chapter II I acknowledge my debt to Erikson and relate the collage method to his work with children's play constructions, his configurational conception of identity and to Robert Lifton's ideas about a contemporary Protean style of self-process.

The general finding of my research—that the collage method is a phenomenological investigative tool of extraordinary power—is closely bound to psychohistorical

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assumptions on which I have relied. The collage method employs materials which insofar as possible replicate the texture and actuality of historical imagery. The materials are mostly reproductions of photographs, and Chapter VIII is devoted to an exploration of a three-way relationship between the photographic medium, the aesthetics of collage and the principle of composition which I regard as fundamental for a psychology of the self. The outlines of such a formative depth psychology, as I now see them, are adumbrated in the final two chapters. For the purposes of this initial exposition I want merely to emphasize the relationship between my use of photographic materials and psychohistorical theory which conceives of psychological development in the context of concrete historical imagery.

Gordon Allport once wrote that "... normal subjects ... tell you by the direct method precisely what they tell you by the projective method. They are all of a piece. You may therefore take their motivational statements at their face value, for even if you probe you will not find anything substantially different." I do

not completely agree with Allport's position, yet I think there is something of great value in what he says. The rationale of the projective tests is characterized by what Allport calls a "contempt for the 'psychic surface' of life," or what one might more broadly term an epistemology of suspicion.

In postulating a surface of psychic life comprising defenses, secondary elaborations and apparatus for reality testing, and a sequestered psychic depth where a guarded layer of motivational truth is to be found, the designers of projective tests have been forced to devise presumably revealing tasks for their subjects to perform which are, in fact, quite oblique to what the tester wants ultimately to know. It is not that the psychologist is interested in how good a story-teller the subject is, or how ingeniously he or she can search the dark corners of an inkblot, or how well he or she can draw a person or arrange brightly colored blocks in a tray. Rather, the psychologist assumes some connection—-to be validated either clinically, statistically or theoretically⁶—between such tasks as these.

and basic needs, fears, longings and the capacity of the psyche to relate itself to reality.

This set of assumptions about surface, depth and projection of psychic contents and structures in perceptual or artistic tasks is fundamental to the entire projective testing enterprise. In the early chapters of the thesis I examine these assumptions in an attempt to show their inadequacy.\(^7\) One need not, however, examine the


philosophical underpinnings of the projective tests (both perceptual and artistic) in order to find them seriously deficient as instruments for psychological investigation and diagnosis. Nor must one share Allport's sentiment that the best way to learn about someone's motives is to ask direct questions. Instead one need only look at the voluminous research literature which confronts the validity and reliability of the projective techniques. While this literature is fraught with conceptual and methodological controversy, the following appraisals of four different kinds of projective methods—the Rorschach, the Draw-A-Person Test (D-A-P), 8 the Shneidman Make A Picture Story method, 9 and


8 For discussions of figure drawing techniques and validation studies see J. N. Buck, "The House-Tree-Person Technique: A Qualitative and Quantitative Scoring Manual;" James E. Guinan, "An Investigation of the Reliability of Human Figure Drawings;" Emanuel Hammer, The Clinical Application of Projective Drawings; Philip M. Ktay, Review of the Machover D-A-P; Sidney Levy, "Figure Drawing As a Projective Technique;" Karen Machover, Personality Projection in the Drawing of the Human Figure: A Method of Personality Investigation; S. Star, "Reliability in the 'Draw-a-Person' Test;" Naomi Stewart, Review of the Machover D-A-P;
the Lowenfeld Mosaic Test\textsuperscript{10} are representative.

Summarizing research on the Rorschach (according to one survey the most frequently employed of all personality tests\textsuperscript{11}) Arthur Jensen writes, "Put frankly, the consensus of qualified judgment is that the Rorschach is a very poor test and has no practical worth for any of the purposes for which it is recommended by its devotees . . . the research has not revealed any significant differences in reliability or validity between beginners in Rorschach

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{9}For discussions and reviews of the MAPS test see John E. Bell, Robert R. Holt, Arthur R. Jensen, Albert I. Rabin and Charles R. Strother: Reviews of the MAPS test; and Edwin S. Shneidman, Manual for the Make A Picture Story Test.

\textsuperscript{10}For discussions and reviews of the Lowenfeld Mosaic Test see C. J. Adcock, T. R. Miles and George Westby: Reviews of the Lowenfeld Mosaic Test; B. L. Diamond, "The Mosaic Test: An Evaluation of Its Clinical Application;" Margaret Lowenfeld, "The Lowenfeld Mosaic Test;" and Fredric Wertham, "The Mosaic Test."

\textsuperscript{11}See Norman D. Sundberg, "The Practice of Psychological Testing in the United States." Sundberg found that the Rorschach was first, the D-A-P second, the TAT third, and the MAPS twenty-fourth in usage. A ranking for the mosaic was not given.
technique and acknowledged masters."

Summarizing research findings on the Machover Draw-A-Person Test, Philip Ktay writes, "Since the D-A-P is so frequently included in diagnostic test batteries in spite of uncertainty about its reliability and validity clinicians appear to be impressed by the extent and congruency of its contribution to the evaluation of personality."  Another comment on the D-A-P comes from Clifford Swensen who also observes that clinicians seem to find the test of value even though "Machover's hypotheses . . . have seldom been supported by the research reported in the literature . . . ."  

The MAPS test is employed much less frequently than the Rorschach, the D-A-P, or the TAT, but the research findings concerning the utility of this instrument have not differed from those for the others. Jensen writes that, "The MAPS has inspired comparatively little research," and


14Clifford H. Swensen, "Empirical Evaluations of Human Figure Drawings," p. 401.

15See Sundberg, "The Practice of Psychological Testing."
consequently "there are no satisfactory normative data." He concludes that, "Because the MAPS is much more cumbersome to use than the TAT and does not seem to yield anything substantially different from the kind of psychological insights gained through the TAT, it has not gained widespread popularity as a clinical instrument. ... Validities [such as have been found for the MAPS] are useless for individual assessment. At present there is no basis for recommending the MAPS for any practical use." 16

One reviewer of the Lowenfeld Mosaic Test finds it "comparable in stature to the Rorschach test ... and by its very nature liable to give rise to the same sorts of controversy." 17 Woodrow Morris writes that the "... sole use of the [Lowenfeld Mosaic] has been in arriving at a diagnostic label, while little has been demonstrated regarding the ability of the test to delineate the more subtle nuances of personality structure and dynamics." 18 There is some evidence that one can, with the aid of the

16 Arthur R. Jensen, review of the MAPS test in Personality: Tests and Reviews, pp. 1274-75.


Mosaic test, obtain statistically significant correlations of personality descriptions. However, one reviewer of the literature concludes that although the testee does appear to reveal in his designs "important aspects of his way of life . . . it appears never to be safe to make a blind diagnosis [on the basis of the Mosaic Test] even with regard to the most obvious matters."  

The burden of the research on projective methods seems to be that although many clinicians feel that the projective tasks elicit significant and revealing samples of behavior it is difficult to determine through carefully controlled studies precisely what, if anything, such behavior indicates. (Speculating on why such procedures continue to be so widely employed clinically in spite of their unreliability Jensen suggests that the protocols of these unstructured tests "can act as projective materials for the play of the clinician's own intuitions." Given the ambiguity of initial clinical encounters and the

19 See for example George Westby, review of the Mosaic test in Personality: Tests and Reviews, p. 1268.


clinician's need for a handhold, the motivation Jensen suggests no doubt plays a strong part indeed.)

The gloomy research findings notwithstanding, studies continue to be done on these procedures. When combined with pessimistic studies of clinical predictive methods in general these studies cast a pall over the entire diagnostic enterprise which has been so central to the profession of clinical psychology. 22

As one surveys the voluminous and largely pessimistic literature on the projective tests one encounters, however, very few attempts to reconsider the basic assumptions which underlie these procedures. In one such reconsideration Bernard Murstein writes that for all the projective techniques, "... one is struck by their relative inefficacy in dealing with sophisticated subjects. The very ambiguity of projective techniques as well as lack of

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stimulus structure alerts a subject to the possibility that what he says 'may be held against him'."\textsuperscript{23} Gerald Lesser writes in a similar vein that although one of the contentions upon which projective tests are based is that "the more ambiguous stimuli should provide the most fruitful protocols for diagnostic and research purposes ... evidence is accumulating that both reliability and validity [and personal revealingness] can be improved by using less ambiguous stimuli."\textsuperscript{24} And Sidney Blatt touches (rather tentatively) the issue of the separation of diagnostics and therapy and the mystification that surrounds psychological testing by asking, "Could the diagnostic relationship, under certain conditions, be used as part of the therapeutic process by offering the patient the opportunity to explore some of his perceptions and associations?"\textsuperscript{25} Blatt concludes that the differentiation between diagnostics


\textsuperscript{25}Sidney J. Blatt, "The Validity of Projective Techniques and Their Research and Clinical Contribution," p. 336.
and therapy is easier to bridge with children than with adults but that more is in fact possible in this area with adults as well.

Such issues as these are extremely important for the collage method and I discuss them in detail in the following chapters. Perhaps the most telling point to be made here, however, is that although I developed the collage method after becoming dissatisfied with the Thematic Apperception Test, I regard the collage method neither as a projective technique nor as a test. My objectives in using this method have in fact been very different from those of the projective testers.

All projective methods (whether they require a response to an ambiguous stimulus [as in the TAT and Rorschach], an arrangement of geometric pieces [as in the Mosaic], a combination of arrangement and narrative response [as with the MAPS], or a spontaneous artistic production [as with the Draw-A-Person, the House-Tree-Person test and finger painting26]) share two projective assumptions which I believe have grave consequences not

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26For discussions of finger painting as a diagnostic technique see Asya L. Kadis, "Finger Painting As A Projective Technique," and P. J. Napoli, "Finger Painting and Personality Assessment." More than any of the other artistic-projective modes of personality assessment, finger painting blends aspects of diagnosis and therapy. In this sense it has more in common with the collage method than any of the other methods surveyed, which in constructional aspects bear a more obvious resemblance.
only for their clinical utility as diagnostic instruments but, I suspect, for their failure to impress statistical researchers as providing useful measures. The first assumption has to do with the presumed necessity of presenting a task which is oblique to the actual issue under investigation. This assumption arises from what I earlier called an epistemology of suspicion, and is connected with attitudes toward mental illness (which projective methods are most often called upon to predict), professionalism, etc. Since I discuss this issue at some length in early chapters of the thesis I will not examine it further here.

The second assumption I call the Neptune assumption after the way in which astronomers were led to the discovery of Neptune through observing irregularities in the motion of Uranus. The aspirations of projective testing are similar. There is the presumption that (given a faith in psychic determinism) the way in which a subject responds to an inkblot or arranges blocks must indicate something, itself invisible, about psychic structure.

Psychology's Newton not yet having arrived to specify the influence of all relevant intervening variables, deductions and predictions of this kind having any measurable significance (statistical or otherwise) are virtually impossible to make reliably. This is in fact exactly what the statisticians have found.
The combined effect of the epistemology of suspicion and the Neptune assumption have been enormous and, one might even say, disastrous for projective psychology. Confident that the most profound results were to be obtained by catching their subjects or patients off guard, the projective testers have not found it particularly important to interest these people in the tasks from which deductions about psychic life were to be made. Presuming that all deviations from expected behavior were interpretable (if only one had norms and weights), the projective testers have been content to use rather crude materials to stimulate the responses they have wished to observe.

The MAPS test, for example, was designed especially to observe psycho-social aspects of fantasy production. Yet the backdrops and stand-up stereotyped doll figures are so crude as to be insulting to a test subject. Similarly, the administration of figure drawing tests frequently meets with protestations about the artistic ineptitude of the subject, but is met with a standard (and not wholly ingenuous) reply, "That's alright; we're not interested in how well you draw as long as you draw a person." 27 Since the interpretations placed on these

27 Sidney Levy, "Figure Drawing As A Projective Test," p. 261. See also Emanuel Hammer, The Clinical Application of Projective Drawings and Karen Machover, "Drawing of the Human Figure: A Method of Personality Investigation."
drawings depends upon the examination of minute details, a subject's capacity to render graphically what he or she has in mind is certainly not entirely irrelevant. The protestations of the alarmed subject were not completely off the mark.

Chastened by this long excursus through the literature on projective testing, let us imagine that one returns to Allport's question ("Has the subject no right to be believed?") and to his assertion of confidence in candor ("The normal subjects tell you by the direct method precisely what they tell you by the projective method"). Might one not conclude that neither Allport nor the projective testers have been entirely wrong but that neither provides a sufficiently sophisticated rationale for an investigative method?

I believe that the psychoanalytic theory of defenses notwithstanding, people are in fact strongly motivated to tell their stories as fully and honestly as they can (hence, the subject of narrative becomes a central theme in this thesis). For this to happen, however, the context has to be right, in two ways. First, there has to be either sufficient trust or sufficient anonymity (the phenomenon of the stranger on the bus to whom one tells one's life
story) that one is not threatened, and in fact feels confirmed. Second, one has to have a place to begin, a way of keeping track of and recognizing what is important, and a structure for the narrative. It is in this double sense that the collage method provides a context.

Like the TAT, the collage method uses pictures. But they are pictures of a different kind, are used in a different way and for a different purpose. The projective tests seek a sample of behavior about which inferences relating to motivational tendencies can be made. With the collage method I seek the images which give rise to the motivation itself. The method seeks to replicate formative processes sufficiently closely that the data obtained—unlike TAT stories or figure drawings—is not at one step (at least) removed from what I want to know. With the collage method people are able to say (and in fact do say), "Yes, these are the things that are important to me; these are the things I think about, and this configuration reflects the way they seem to relate to each other." Since that is precisely what I want to know about my subjects—what is important to them and how the various things relate—I have no need to make inferences in the way the projective testers must. People use the pictures and the composition they make to say things they want to say, rather than as stimuli for projection. My subjects tell me what I
want to know directly (though not without help), and then confirm that, "Yes, that is what I meant to say." 28

That, of course, does not mean that I do not ask questions and (contrary to Allport's advice) probe further in the interviews on the basis of tentative hypotheses which I make. These are exploratory hypotheses about the structure of a particular collage, and I try to enlist the subject's participation in examining potentially significant patterns. I ask not only about the forms in the collage itself, but about the relationship of this form as a whole to other forms in the subject's life: ways of furnishing a house, serving dinner, finding work, talking to a friend, making love. As the subject and I together explore what he or she has made, new questions occur and are pursued with whatever support the collage can render. The motivation felt by the subject is an awareness that he or she can profit by the exploration: the collage reveals form but also helps to create it; diagnostic and therapeutic processes take place in tandem.

28 Robert Holt writes, ". . . it could be maintained that an empathetic sharing, an imaginative penetration into the inner life of another person is at the heart of what we mean when we speak of understanding him, far more so than the ability to predict his behavior." ("Discussion: On Using Experiential Data in Personality Assessment," p. 26.)
The crucial point is that the collage is meant, intended as a statement about one's life in a medium (as I shall argue, relying on evidence from many fields) that is peculiarly well-suited for making such an exposition. The subject shows me and tells me about the images that matter to him or her. The collage method simply helps that to happen, and provides a form for communication so that there will be fewer misunderstandings. Structure and content emerge together.

All of this relies upon a psychology of the image which the thesis undertakes to develop, or at least suggest. One aspect of that psychology consists of my attempt to show that the collage task is essentially one not of projection but rather of symbolization and of virtualization. The collage presents a bounded field for the rendering of felt tensions between images. The analysis of this field requires a set of categories that have not been generally employed in psychology, and these (having to do with centering, grounding, valencing and formative categories of images) I endeavor to develop in the final three chapters in an outline of a formative depth psychology.

I see the collage method as having great power to reveal the relationship between everyday concerns and basic, fundamental aspirations and struggles of the self. These aspirations and struggles I call core images, by which I
mean something close to what Henry Murray meant in speaking of "unity-themas." I will argue that the power inherent in this method is a combined product of several contributing factors. One factor is a coming together of a psychohistorical understanding of self-process combined with the extraordinary capacity of photographs to serve as vehicles for feeling. Another is the power of scanning to serve as a kind of psychological and motivational tropism in which, as Susanne Langer phrases it, "... value may be adumbrated before perception of forms is complete." Finally, the compositional processes in collage are sufficiently isomorphic with those of the mind itself that through this medium image-tensions may become conscious which otherwise would only be vaguely or dimly known.

The collage process is a virtualizing rather than a projective method, and it provides a mode of inquiry rather than a test. As I have employed it the method yields no score, only an opportunity to observe the mind at work on matters of concern. So far thirty-five collages have been made, all by reasonably healthy well-functioning people whose very sophistication required that I employ a method

29 Murray, Explorations in Personality, pp. 604-05.

that would convey respect. I have made ten collages myself in order to experience the processes involved and monitor changes in myself over time.

My work with collage is still very exploratory, though I have been at it for over three years. At this point I can argue strongly that the method has extraordinary power as a phenomenological technique and has contributed substantially to a new (and I believe fertile) way of looking at the self's orientational processes and the mind's compositional ones. Though collage is common in popular culture and in informal psychological work (especially with groups) no one else I know has used this method in the systematic ways I have begun to do. There is, consequently, no research literature that speaks precisely to the method I have evolved.

My work thus far has furnished me amply with, as Langer puts it, "turbulent notions that seem to belong together, although in some unknown way."\(^{31}\) I feel I now

\(^{31}\)In this and much of the theory to follow which underlies my work with collage, I rely heavily on Susanne Langer's work on symbolization and feeling, and my debt to her is great. The following quotation from an early chapter ("Idols of the Laboratory," pp. 52-53) of her monumental and still unfinished work, Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling, suggests Langer's position on the kind of scientific discipline appropriate at this stage in the study of "mental and social phenomena." It is a position with which I concur. It is in this philosophical context that I locate my clinical work with collage and my speculations about psychic composition:
have categories which serve reasonably well to classify
the data I have observed and until I (and perhaps others)

The state of having turbulent notions
about things that seem to belong together,
although in some unknown way, is a pre-
scientific state, a sort of intellectual
gestation period. This state the "behavioral
sciences" have sought to skip, hoping to
learn its lessons by the way, from their
elders. The result is that they have modeled
themselves on physics, which is not a suitable
model. Any science is likely to merge ultima-
tely with physics, as chemistry has done,
but only in a mature stage; its early phases
have to be its own, and the earliest is
that of philosophical imagination and
adventure.

It is even conceivable that the study of
mental and social phenomena will never be
"natural science" in the familiar sense at
all, but will always be more akin to history,
which is a highly developed discipline, but
not an abstractly codified one. There may
be a slowly accruing core of scientific
fact which is relevant to understanding
mind, and which will ultimately anchor
psychology quite firmly in biology without
ever making its advanced problems laboratory
affairs. Sociology might be destined to
develop to a high technical degree, but
more in the manner of jurisprudence than
in that of chemistry or physics. Were that,
perchance, the case, then the commitment to
"scientific method" could be seriously
inimical to any advance of knowledge in such
important but essentially humanistic pursuits.

Whatever the future, let us not jeopardize
it any further by denying to our researches
the free play which belongs to brain children
as well as to animal and human infants. The
philosophical phase we have missed lies at the
very inception of research; if we would build
a sounder frame of psychological, ethical and
social theory, it is to that incunabular stage
that we must return.
have had a great deal more experience with this method
I am reluctant to specify hypotheses about definite
relationships among variables. "Classification is," as
Whitehead observes, "a halfway house between the immediate
concreteness of the individual thing and the complete
abstraction of mathematical notions." 32

The collage method has been of great value in
finding out about the structure of individual lives, com-
bining something of Allport's direct approach with the
provision of a context which enables people to tell more
than they know how to say. Eventually perhaps, criteria
will emerge by which one will be able to recognize types
of collages with some reliability and on that basis predict
characteristics about psychic composition, like the capacity
to make certain changes or the need for certain kinds of
life structures. I am reluctant to do that now, for two
reasons. First, I suspect it might render static the
appearance of the processes I am interested in observing, 33


33 See in this connection the caveats suggested by
D. Bannister and J. M. M. Mair in their chapters
"Reliability" and "Validity" of The Evaluation of Personal
Constructs. They write, for example, "Kelly once defined
reliability as 'that characteristic of a test which makes it insensitive to change'" (p. 156).
focusing my attention on limited aspects of broad phenomena, with harmful effects not only on theory building but on the interviews themselves. Second, I am convinced that in the early stages of a new approach such naming, rather than leading to valid hypotheses and inferences, can all too readily become a kind of labeling which replaces rather than furthers thought. That is the route which research with the projective tests has tended to follow, resulting more in scientism than in science.
CHAPTER II

IDENTITY, PROTEANISM, PSYCHIC COMPOSITION

... visual images, which are commoner and probably more primitive than auditory ones, show one of the most important functions of the human brain—composition.

--Susanne Langer

For several years now I have been asking young lawyers, scientists, educators and writers to make collages and then to talk and dream about the very complex compositions they assemble. This process, which I call simply the collage method, developed from a study Robert Lifton and I have been doing in which we have sought to understand how certain innovative young adults are managing to sustain themselves in various kinds of work, living out in the changed climate of the 1970's some of the values widely espoused in the 1960's.

By "living out" I mean deriving a durable motivational force from certain images which provide an energizing sense of self and world.¹ The term image as I use it

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¹The self is here defined as the most inclusive set of symbolizations for one's being, as well as the ongoing transformational processes which sustain these symbolizations. See Robert Lifton, The Life of the Self; Living and
includes all one's symbolic forms for anticipating contact with the environment—it is, in Susanne Langer's phrase, the "modulus of imagination; in the complexity of our mental organization it is a sort of living cell ..."\(^2\)

The image acknowledges no firm distinction between a cognitive and an emotional apprehension of the world: what one feels cannot be separated from what one knows.\(^3\)

The motivational thrust provided by one's images\(^4\) depends...

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\(^3\) In Gestalt Therapy by Perls, Hefferline and Goodman (the theoretical sections mostly the work of Goodman) one finds this insightful passage (pp. 408-09): "It is clear that emotions are not confused or rudimentary impulses, but sharply differential functional structures. If a person has crude emotions, it is that his experience as a whole is crude. The emotions are means of cognition. Far from being obstacles to thought, they are unique deliveries of the organism/environment field and have no substitute; they are the way we become aware of the appropriateness of our concerns: the way the world is for us."

See also Ernest Becker, *The Revolution in Psychiatry*, p. 153 and pp. 181-83. Becker writes (p. 153), "Emotion is a sign of potential discord, a sign that the accustomed rhythm is not going to be maintained."

\(^4\) For the idea of "image thrust" I am indebted to Edgar Levinson's important book on formative psychology, *The Fallacy of Understanding: An Inquiry into the Changing Structure of Psychoanalysis*, p. 81.
in turn importantly on the qualities of the configurations which they compose. About such configurations one can ask, for example, whether they are sufficiently structured and firmly anchored to persist; adequately textured, so that the tensions between old and new elements can energize the whole; and coherent enough that one both feels and is recognizable as being "together."

"Getting it together" is in fact an extremely apt phrase to describe all this. In the integration of psychic elements wayward members too must be given a place, as Jungian thought particularly has emphasized. The collage method provides a way of observing and facilitating these compositional processes; the method encourages a therapeutic respect for the psyche's often confusing mosaic of images. Collage also provides a model for conceptualizing what I call psychic composition, a remarkably unstudied area in psychology given its significance in life.6

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5. For a discussion of the tyrannies of the Western monotheistic myth of psychic integration, see James Hillman, Re-Visioning Psychology, chap. 1, esp. p. 21, and pp. 38-51. For a brilliant discussion of the association between image and the idea of psychic "place" see Frances A. Yates, The Art of Memory.

6. Within psychoanalytic theory such study takes place mostly under the overtaxed rubric of "narcissism." Heinz Kohut speaks of "the insufficient consolidation of the self." See The Analysis of the Self: A Systematic Approach to the Psychoanalytic Treatment of Narcissistic Personality Disorders.
The collage has been extraordinarily helpful in approaching with respect the complicated lives of our adult research subjects—people whom we chose to study precisely because we admired their vigorous inventive capacities and their sustained ethical commitments. But gradually the method has assumed an integrity of its own. I now believe that the collage method has rather broad implications for psychological theory and for clinical research, assessment and practice. Collage suggests restoring the image to a central place in our theory, and leads one to believe that "the criteria of aesthetics—unity, line, rhythm, elegance—may be transposed to the psyche, giving us a new set of qualities for appreciating what is going on in a psychological process."  

When he first spoke of identity formation in the 1950's, Erik Erikson used the term configuration, and it is clear that Erikson, an artist before he became a psychoanalyst, meant by the word an arrangement, a pattern, a gestalt, in which elements appear to fit together (or

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7 For a history of the image concept in psychological and philosophical thought, see C. E. McMahon, "Images as Motives and Motivators: A Historical Perspective," See also Jerome Singer, "The Vicissitudes of Imagery in Research and Clinical Use."

don't)--with all the emotional ramifications such fitting or unfitting can have. The identity-configuration metaphor has, in Erikson's work, always been explicitly spatial\(^9\) and implicitly visual. So it is no surprise to discover Erikson emphasizing in his Godkin Lectures (1972) the priority of vision as the "leading perceptual modality for the organization of sensory space, for reality testing and for adaptation."\(^{10}\) He describes the play constructions

\(^9\)From the beginning, Erikson has spoken of identity in terms of what is taken in or left out, how widely or narrowly one will explore. In his recent Jefferson Lectures the spatial metaphor, its developmental origins and relation to body posture, are discussed at length. (See Dimensions of A New Identity, pp. 85-111).

\(^{10}\)"Play, Vision and Deception," 1972, mimeo. See also Erwin W. Straus' discussion of sensory modalities in his essay, "Aesthiology and Hallucinations," in Rollo May, et al., editors, Existence. Straus writes, "The predominance of seeing and the visible has made it the model of our world-interpretation and self-understanding." Erikson makes clear that whatever the dependence of identity upon sight, the former transcends the latter. He writes (Godkin Lectures, p. 25), "... we can never exist without mental visions which go beyond what sensory vision can grasp or our grasp of things can confirm." Rudolf Arnheim asserts that, "Vision is the primary medium of thought." (Visual Thinking, p. 18.) See also James Hillman, Re-Visioning, esp. p. 121.

My own belief is that thought and images are neither essentially visual nor essentially non-visual. Rather, images and thought are essentially configurational. It is this configurational quality which a visual mode captures relatively readily while maintaining a maximum of informational density.

I find congenial the following formulation of Jacques Monod, in which he emphasizes what he calls "subjective simulation:"
which for years he has asked children to make so as "to render visible and dramatize in a microsphere," as he puts it, "a moment of fate."

Erikson says that children "go at such a task [building a play construction] with a peculiar eagerness . . . [and] complete absorption." He suggests that children are capable of using such a microsphere "for a relevant 'statement' which in condensed form may restate what inner conflict or uncertainty appears to be uppermost in the child's mind."

Erikson never accounts for the peculiar eagerness and absorption he observes as children put together dramatic scenes. But as I have watched one young adult after another

It is the powerful development and intensive use of the simulative function that, in my view, characterizes the unique properties of man's brain. And this at the most basic level of the cognitive functions, those on which language rests and which it probably reveals only incompletely. ... I am sure that every scientist must have noticed how his mental reflection, at the deeper level, is not verbal: to be absorbed in thought is to be embarked on an imagined experience, an experience simulated with the aid of forms, of forces, of interactions which together only barely compose an 'image' in the visual sense of the term. ... The nonvisual images with which simulation works would be more rightly regarded not as symbols but, if I may so phrase it, as the subjective and abstract 'reality' offered directly to imaginary experience. (See Monod, Chance and Necessity, pp. 154-56.)
make a collage, I have seen that eagerness and absorption too, and I have seen also a similar readiness to talk about the composition when it is finished. One might reasonably expect that young children would enjoy moving blocks and toy soldiers around, but who would have imagined young lawyers cutting, tearing and pasting pictures, for three to six hours at a stretch, with utter involvement?

The question with which Lifton and I began our study arose from his essay "Protean Man" and from our wish to explore processes of continuity and change in the ways in which young adults make innovations in their styles of living and working. We both felt that the formulations in "Protean Man" put a stress on experimentation and change to the neglect of continuity (and what we would later call grounding). A study of innovative young adults would provide an opportunity to examine the issue of change more broadly in the context of theoretical work Lifton had begun on formative process.11

In "Protean Man" Lifton described a contemporary psychological style characterized by a capacity to live with a welter of divergent images and a related capacity, indeed

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11To trace the evolution of Lifton's thinking on these matters see the final chapter, "The Survivor," of Death in Life (esp. section 5, "Formulation"); Home from the War, esp. pp. 424-42, and The Life of the Self.
a proclivity, to make dramatic shifts in identity and experiments with the self during adulthood. Lifton sees the Protean self as a creature of two historical developments: the break in a sense of felt connection between individual lives and the culture's nourishing symbols and institutions, and the flood of imagery produced by mass communications. The recurrent problem for contemporary men and women is that of sustaining both form and energy. The two are closely related, and may be psychologically identical. Saul Bellow, whose novels have explored the precariousness of psychic composition in our time (Herzog's profusion of letters was a desperate attempt to anchor the self), provides in Charles Citrine, the exhausted protagonist in Humboldt's Gift, a model-victim of the chronic trauma of an excessive stimulation: "The whole thing was so momentous, overmastering, tragic, that in the end what I really wanted to do was lie down and go to sleep."

Erikson called it identity confusion or identity defusion, and the terms are highly evocative. But in locating the attainment of identity in late adolescence roughly at the midpoint of the life cycle (in terms of stages though not life span; the identity crisis is the fifth of eight stages) Erikson suggests what for many people seems chimerical: the passing of the identity crisis. Though it is urgently sought—in therapies of every sort, in the much discussed return to professional aspirations
among students, in movements both toward and away from conventional cultural and political commitments—identity remains elusive. One has only to look again at the words Erikson chose for his definition of identity (a definition now twenty-five years old!) to recognize our need for something that more fully grasps our situations. Erikson wrote in *Childhood and Society* (p. 261): "The sense of ego identity, then, is the accrued confidence that the inner sameness and continuity prepared in the past are matched by the sameness and continuity of one's meaning for others, as evidenced in the tangible promise of a 'career.'"

That definition has great appeal, but it describes my grandfather's life more than mine. He did missionary work in China before the first World War, returning to Union Seminary to finish theological training, served as a Congregational minister for nearly sixty years, and started a church from scratch during his Florida 'retirement.' If there are those now, and of course there are many, who can make such a firm life commitment as my grandfather, there are few indeed who do it with as little inner sense of personal relativity—the feeling that perhaps one is meant for something else. Though he was immensely tolerant, my grandfather never lost what David Riesman calls an "inner gyroscope." Oddly, perhaps predictably, it was Watergate that most undermined his confidence and
his optimism.

From 1899, when he was fourteen, until 1974, when he died at the age of eighty-eight, my grandfather kept a line-a-day journal. For the most part, his brief journal notations simply describe what he did each day, where he went and who he saw, what the weather was like. Writing in his journal was for him a kind of habit, a daily rhythm, not a way of searching for a sense of self.

Much as I admired my grandfather, his life--like the solidity of Eriksonian identity--has always seemed unavailable to me as a model. But the fluid shape-shifting suggested by the mythical Proteus is inadequate also to describe the life I live and the lives I know. There are powerful linearities still, and a central task of my work has been that of devising a psychological language both precise and dialectical so that one might accurately portray the interplay of continuity and change in the lives of young adults. What I find most pertinent about the image of the Protean shapeshifter is the evocation of the contemporary sense of contingency: whatever one does, whatever one chooses, there are others (and one knows them or knows of them--and finds in their choices something appealing) who do it differently. Proteanism suggests the subjective sense of continual alternatives, the knowledge that there are always others--ideas, people, projects,
potential life patterns. That knowledge in turn poses a constant threat to the imaginative grounding of whatever one attempts.

Of course, there is vastly greater continuity in the external forms of individual lives than the proliferation of imaginative possibilities would suggest. But one does well, I think, not to underestimate the continuities there either: the lure of images suggesting linear aspiration, growth and consolidation. Perhaps all one can say is that people come to seem both more and less Protean as one gets to know them— their fantasies and dreams wilder and more diverse than even they would have imagined, the shifts and breaks in their lives less abrupt as one recognizes what they were trying to do all along.

Protean discontinuities seem most dramatic when one observes the life of another person episodically—if, for example, one receives occasional letters from a friend who seems always to be involved in some new venture. Then the day-to-day formative processes underlying the inner and outer transformations are invisible. One notices instead the manifest plurality of apparently unconnected incarnations. If one looks closely, however, at even the most dramatic shifts in a life history, one begins to discern a story. The story is the narrative (though it may be much more implicit than articulate) that forms the
path between points which, viewed from the outside, may appear as disconnected jumps. Many people on the left, for example, were surprised, saddened and angry to discover Rennie Davis (a founder of S.D.S.) suddenly appearing in the leadership of Guru Maharaji's Divine Light Mission. But Carl Oglesby, who has known him well for years, could write of Rennie:

Maybe this is the best way to understand his otherwise surprising apostasy from politics to religion. The instinct for the radical act, for finding the center of concrete change in the way people live their lives, has always been at the core of Rennie's politics. This is the instinct which took him to the South in the early '60's, to the industrial urban wastes in the mid-'60's in SDS's long project of community organizing, and into the front of the anti-war movement after that. This is the instinct which he tapped in me and my wife and our friends and the thousands of others he touched over the years just past. It was this instinct that put him on the plane to Paris to meet with Madame Binh, just as surely as it was this instinct which took him on to India, to the circle of the Perfect Master, and to the change he's had the moral audacity to make. 12

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Erik Erikson's differentiation of ego-identity from self-identity provides a recognition of this problem of abstractive distance, and the closely related problem of inner vs. outer perspective. Erikson writes, "One can speak of ego identity when one discusses the ego's synthesizing power in the light of its central psychological function, and of self-identity when the integration of the individual's self- and role-images are under discussion." See Identity: Youth and Crisis, pp. 208-11.
Oglesby's point here is that there is a formative process underlying even the most dramatic and mystifying self-transformations, and hence there are inevitably important strands of continuity. In Rennie Davis' case this continuity includes an attraction to transcendent forms of consciousness in himself and others. During the '60's, Oglesby writes,

The political decision, when its power was high, came easily. It was the decision for freedom in one's own life with others. It was liberating. It fused intuition with reason. It gave us strong images of authenticity that came alive among us like the songs which, as time passed and the decade revolved, it became next to impossible to sing without heartache and suppressed unbelief.

To the degree that Protean "experimentation with the self" suggests discontinuous shifts in identity, it is incompatible with a theory emphasizing formative process. It is not that Rennie Davis suddenly sold out his politics to the Guru; his politics (profoundly understood, in a way that was perhaps available only in retrospect) were, in important respects, religious from the start.

Lifton describes a formative process underlying Proteanism which is most plausible at the historical and psychohistorical levels. I think he is correct in recognizing that an accelerated rate of historical and technological change has had a devastating effect on the
credibility of cultural symbols and institutional forms. The consequence of this is a heightened sense of what Kierkegaard called irony, meaning that "the internal is not the external" as Lifton puts it, we continue to live in these external forms but they no longer live fully in us. Our public life no longer provides a context, or no longer provides it as reliably as presumably it once did, for connecting our individual lives with symbolization of continuity.

The connection between public life and the quest for continuity is as old as Western culture itself; Hannah Arendt observes that, "The [Greek] polis was supposed to multiply the occasions to win 'immortal fame,' that is, to multiply the chances for everybody to distinguish himself... [A] second function of the polis... was to offer a remedy for the futility of action and speech; for the chances that a deed deserving fame would not be forgotten, that it actually would become 'immortal,' were not very good."  

The Protean project which Lifton describes involves the effort to renew the forms of symbolic immortality at

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13 Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 287.

14 Arendt, The Human Condition, p. 197.
the individual and collective levels, around relationships to family, work, learning, politics, religion, nature and experience itself. In recognizing a hunger for symbolizations of continuity which maintain the feeling of life—symbols whose availability to individuals depends primarily upon the viability of social forms—I think the Protean image makes a significant contribution to contemporary social theory. What the notion of Proteanism fails to provide is a sense of the formative processes at the individual level which lead to (or impede) change. "The Protean style of self-process," Lifton writes, "is characterized by an interminable number of experiments and explorations—some shallow, some profound—each of which may be readily abandoned in favor of still new psychological quests."³¹

But, one might ask, is it really true that such experimentations and explorations are so readily abandoned? Change, while it may be urgently sought, still exacts its toll in dread even in the most characteristically Protean people I know, particularly once they reach thirty. Then questions of the relationship of each life-episode to its neighbors begin to press hard indeed.

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Conceptually, Proteanism constitutes a recognition that most of our lives tend to be less linear than those of our parents and grandparents. But as a theoretical device for envisaging personal evolution it remains within the model of identity, failing to depict the complexities of psychic reverberation which lead either to stability or change. There is the observation, an accurate one I believe, of a tendency for identities to be sequentially multiple \(^{16}\) and (due to image bombardment and the precariousness of cultural values) highly contingent at every point. (In addition to being faced with too many plausible alternatives for one's life, one is constantly overstimulated with information for which one has no psychic place at all, for which there is no relevant activity one can imagine undertaking as a result of possessing this information. This is what makes Ernest Becker's term "partialization"---derived from Otto Rank---so appropriate. He writes: "What we call the well-adjusted man has just

\[^{16}\text{However, there is in the Protean style, as Lifton describes it, an essential thematic monolithicity. In spite of the stress on plurality, the Protean self continually re-enacts the myth of the survivor, though in connection with different modes of immortality. Here it contrasts sharply with James Hillman's Jungian pantheon of mythic polytheism in which the survivor would be one mythic image (perhaps Odysseus, or Agamemnon after the slaying of Petroclus) among others. See Re-Visioning Psychology, pp. 88, 222.}\]
this capacity to partialize the world for comfortable action."\textsuperscript{17} Yet the emphasis on global description of the self, inherent in the identity model, is retained in Proteanism. One moves beyond the limitations of identity as one decreases the abstractive distance.\textsuperscript{18} To paraphrase a well-known formulation of Erikson's, the task of psychic composition continues where the usefulness of the identity

\textsuperscript{17}See Ernest Becker, The denial of Death, p. 179. Many of these bits of information constitute psychic noise; they never attain the status of what I will later define as images.

\textsuperscript{18}The issue of abstractive distance has to do with the appropriate scale (temporal as well as spatial) at which a given phenomenon may be best observed so that certain patterns are visible and others are either subsumed or excluded. A good introductory discussion of this problem is J. Bronowski's chapter, "Knowledge or Certainty," in The Ascent of Man, esp. pp. 353-56. (See also Henry Murray's comment in chap. 5, footnote 13.)

The abstractive distance from a given life history required for an observer to describe that life as Protean is too great to permit a description of the continuous formative processes which have generated "shifts" or "Dis-continuities." (Experientially one may feel one's own life to be Protean—as I did when I started assembling my "notebooks" [see below]—as a result of 'immediacy;' too little abstractive distance.) Similarly, "identity" (like the other life-crisis polarities) is an abstraction from the motivating images which sustain a certain uniformity in one's experience of oneself (and in the visage one presents to others). Just as symbolization makes experience possible, so psychic composition is the continuous formative process which continually creates and re-creates the self. Susanne Langer discusses the sensory and imaginative components of experience in Mind, Vol. 2, p. 342.
concept ends. The psycho-historically astute observation that our identities have become more Protean implies, in turn, a fundamental reformulation of our approach to what we call personality. If we would explore the ways in which alterations in one area of a life impinge upon others and reverberate through the entire self, then we must first imagine the self as a composition of images, an elaborate web of meaning transformations. This is the model of the self as collage.

19"Identity formation begins, finally, where the usefulness of identification ends." Identity: Youth and Crisis, p. 159.

There is a significant conceptual ambiguity in the way Erikson uses the term identity. On the one hand identity refers to one pole of the crisis of the life cycle stage of adolescence (identity vs. identity confusion) from which, if the crisis is on balance favorably resolved, the virtue of fidelity may issue. But identity is also used by Erikson and others to describe an achieved sense of coherent selfhood at any stage of life, and Erikson uses it too in a still more general way to refer to national character, as in "American identity." I use the term psychic composition to describe the continuous process of composing the elements which together constitute the self, hence the formative process which underlies all the crises of the life cycle.

20Here Langer's concept of the "act" is of fundamental importance: Mind, Vol. 2, p. 265: "The impingement of any act on another—most obviously the impingement of peripheral acts, sensory receptions, on intraorganic acts, but also that of centrally motivated somatic or cerebral acts on each other and on peripheral ones—effects change in the situation of the act impinged upon; and a change of situation is what motivates a new act." See also George Herbert Mead, The Philosophy of the Act, edited by Charles W. Morris.
CHAPTER III

COLLAGE--IN MY LIFE AND IN MODERN ART

... it seemed at times that Rauschenberg's work surface stood for the mind itself--dump, reservoir, switching center...
--Leo Steinberg

I did not first encounter the notion of the self as collage in twentieth century art history, though one might have come upon it there. For me it was a solution to what I regarded as an idiosyncratic personal problem. After I graduated from college (1966) I taught for a number of years, motivated by an uneasy duality of interests; a desire to teach and a desire to avoid the draft. (Teaching was then, in some places, a draft deferrable occupation.) What I really wanted to be doing in those years was studying economics in graduate school, or at least trying that out and moving on if I found it not to my liking. Unless I wanted to confront the draft, and then, given my politics, go either to Canada or jail, I couldn't do that. I found my energy sporadic and uneven. I knew what my problem was--I saw it diagnosed by Paul Goodman. He could write of himself:

I always worked hard in a way that made sense to myself--and sometimes got fired.
It is devastating that this is not the common condition. If people go through motions that do not make sense to them and do not have their allegiance, just for wages or other extrinsic rewards, there is an end to common sense and self-respect. Character is made by the behaviors we initiate; if we initiate what we do not mean we get sick. And as we see, the accumulation of such motions that are not continually checked up as meant can produce calamities.¹

I wanted a way to keep track of the unlived lines, vectors as I thought of them, of my psychic energy so that I would at least know what I wanted to be doing. I concluded that my thoughts each day were as points on lines I could not discern, and I wanted a way to put the lines into relief, to map them. Intuitively at first I began to save things, letters that I wrote and received,² quotations that interested me, programs, notes, jottings, almost everything. I dutifully punched holes in whatever interested me that was flat enough to be accommodated in a notebook. I began salting away fragments of experience, hoping they would add up to something.

As the stuff accumulated, I would periodically

¹New Reformation: Notes of a Neolithic Conservative, p. 200. This quotation was one of the first things I included in my "black notebooks."

²Actually, it was my grandfather who suggested that I save copies of the letters I wrote.
flip through it all, noticing what I had been doing. I have filled seventeen notebooks now and, like my grandfather's line-a-day, punching holes in things and squirrelling them away has become one of my life rhythms. But my grandfather's journals are highly ordered affairs, mostly five-year diaries in which five years of the same date are visible on a single page. My notebooks are dense and chaotic by comparison, really little more than chronologically arranged wastebaskets in which the items have been punched rather than crumpled.

Maybe those notebooks have been my alternative to psychotherapy; I have often thought that I was trying to discover a compelling narrative in the goings-on of my life which I might reasonably extrapolate. The notebooks emerged from my seeing myself as a melange of often competing images, scraps, fragments of experience seeking

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3 On the whole question of the relationship of narrative to experience, see Steven Crites, "The Narrative Quality of Experience;" John Dunne, Time and Myth: A Meditation on Storytelling as an Exploration of Life and Death; Steven Marcus, "Freud and Dora: Story, History, Case History;" esp. p. 91; and Lionel Trilling, Sincerity and Authenticity, p. 140. Langer writes, "The formative element of biographical memory is verbal conception." (Mind, Vol. 2, p. 344.)

Philip Rieff writes, "... the value of therapy is just its prolonged opportunity for the patient to formulate his emotions." (Freud: The Mind of the Moralist, p. 117.) Hannah Arendt quotes Isak Dinesen's statement that, "All sorrows can be borne if you can put them into a story or tell a story about them." (The Human Condition, p. 175.)
extension, connection, completion, resolution. It was years later, after I had been using the collage method in my interviewing, that I came upon Leo Steinberg's commentary on what Robert Rauschenberg was doing in his collages all during the 1960's:

The picture plane, as in the enormous canvas called Overdraw (1963), could look like some garbled conflation of controls system and cityscape, suggesting the ceaseless inflow of urban message, stimulus and impediment. To hold all this together, Rauschenberg's picture plane had to become a surface to which anything reachable-thinkable would adhere. It had to be whatever a billboard or dashboard is, and everything a projection screen is, with further affinities for anything that is flat and worked over--palimpsest, cancelled plate, trial blank, chart, map, aerial view. Any flat documentary surface that tabulates information is a relevant analogue of his picture plane--radically different from the transparent projection plane with its optical correspondence to man's visual field. And it seemed at times that Rauschenberg's work surface stood for the mind itself--dump, reservoir, switching center, abundant with concrete images freely associated as in an internal monologue--the outward symbol of the mind as running transformer of the external world, constantly ingesting incoming unprocessed data to be mapped in an overcharged field.4

What Steinberg calls Rauschenberg's picture plane was able to subsume during the 1960's an incredible variety of objects--clocks, neckties, street signs, radios,

4Other Criteria, p. 88.
even Rauschenberg's own bed.\(^5\) But while employing a vast range of materials to meet his artistic needs, Rauschenberg remained faithful to one of the seminal principles of twentieth century painting, the deceptively simple notion that the picture plane is flat. Indeed, in taking such wild chances with the materials, Rauschenberg managed all the more to assert the breadth and importance of the principle of flatness. The desire both to challenge and to assert the flatness of the picture plane apparently derives from a dialectic of conservatism and innovation as well as from Rauschenberg's conception of the requirements of his own symbolic program. It was his way of making his presence felt on even the rawest of materials in his "combine-paintings." Steinberg continues:

Rauschenberg found that his imagery needed bedrock as hard and tolerant as a workbench. If some collage element, such as a pasted-down photograph, threatened to evoke a topical illusion of depth, the surface was casually stained or smeared with paint to recall its irreducible flatness. The integrity of the picture plane—once the accomplishment of good design—was to become that which is given. The picture's flatness was to become no more of a problem than the flatness of a disordered desk or an unswept floor.

From the early 1950's, the relation of the "figures"

(if one can use that word) of Rauschenberg's paintings to their "ground" had been a central issue in his work. In the all black paintings which he did at Black Mountain in the summer of 1952, Rauschenberg began by pasting torn and crumpled newspaper to the canvas "to make a lively ground, so that whatever I did would be in addition to something that was already there, so that even the first stroke in the painting would have its position in a gray map of words."\(^6\)

The tension between that which is given and that which the artist makes or transforms has been at the heart of the collage problem since the medium was discovered, or rediscovered,\(^7\) by Picasso and Braque in 1911 and '12. The notorious printed chaircaning in Picasso's collage of those years--both jarringly "real" and obviously fabricated, even fake--established, along with Braque's *trompe-l'oeil* painted nails, the issue of the picture's boundary in relation to the world as a primary concern of twentieth century art.\(^8\) As fragments of words were added


\(^7\)See the long pre-history of collage in folk art, scrapbooks, Valentines, etc. described in Weshler, *Collage*.

\(^8\)See Clement Greenberg, "Collage," p. 70. This issue is prominent in all art forms. See, for example, on modern theater; Richard Gilman, *The Making of Modern Drama*. See also Harold Rosenberg, "Collage: Philosophy of Put-togethers."
(Rauschenberg's inclusion of entire newspapers merely constitutes a logical extension of something begun long before) paintings could be "read" as well as looked at, posing explicitly the question of exactly what kind of cognitive experience viewing a painting provides.

The answer, at least for twentieth century collage, is the experience of some fundamental internal inconsistency, discordance, discrepancy, and tension, so that no single perspective will make sense of the whole. Max Ernst called it the "collage idea" and "collage thinking;" 9 Susan Sontag calls it the "collage principle," and relates it to "the art of radical juxtaposition;" 10 New York artist Budd Hopkins calls it the "collage attitude." 11 Ernst, whose working life as an artist has spanned virtually the entire twentieth century to date, sensed not only that the "almost-play of cutting and pasting was a concept deeply germane to our time" 12 but that it was

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11 Unpublished paper, "The Collage Attitude."

analogous to the psychological idea of identity. In 1936 he wrote that women observed in him a flagrant inconsistency between his gentle, moderate manner and the earthquake-like violence of his ideas. But, he explains, "when two dissimilar aspects of reality are juxtaposed on a plane which would not appear to suit them . . . the very fact of their being put next to one another leads to a mutual exchange of energy." Then, between parentheses to emphasize the understatement, Ernst quietly asserts, "Collage is the word for this, in plain speech." He says the energy generated by the juxtaposition of the incompatible elements "may proceed calmly and steadily, or it may take the form of an explosion accompanied by lightning and thunder. I am tempted to consider it as the counterpart, in either case, of the phenomenon known to classical philosophy as IDENTITY. IDENTITY (to paraphrase André Breton's remark) MUST BE CONVULSIVE OR WILL CEASE TO BE."\(^{13}\)

When Ernst speaks of the energy generated by placing diverse elements side-by-side and equates his own identity to the collage principle, he calls attention to the related phenomena of psychic (and artistic) transformation and psychic (and artistic) composition. One need not

\(^{13}\)Russell, Ernst, p. 122. Breton had said, "Beauty will be convulsive or will not be at all." Quoted by Sontag, New York Review, November 28, 1974, p. 38.
go so far as the poet Lautréamont, who asserted that "beauty is the fortuitous encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on a dissecting table" to recognize the importance of tension—whether symbolic or literal—as a common source of energy and meaning. The cubist painter and collagist Ferdinand Léger spoke of the "life of fragments" and considered the pictorial technique of overlapping (in which many images are only partially visible) necessary to a graphic rendering of his own sponge-like existence. And Kurt Schwitters, the maker of such elegant Dada collages, commenting on the beginnings of his Merz style, wrote, "Everything had broken down and new things had to be made out of the fragments. It was like an image of the revolution within me ... 16

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16 MOMA #6, p. 40; see also Jung, *Man and His Symbols*, p. 253, on Schwitters, collage and the alchemical principle of transformation in which mundane elements are elevated to the status of precious objects.
CHAPTER IV

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL LOGIC OF COLLAGE

Punch no holes.
--Letter from a friend

All of which takes us far, and yet not very far at all, from the holes I was punching in things all during the late 1960's. One woman I dated at the time was disconcerted by my intense determination to deposit so much of my life in those notebooks and she rebelled by writing in the left-hand margins of her letters to me, "punch no holes." These instructions on her letters, now long-since dutifully punched and filed, sit there incongruously like a Dada misnomer.¹ In a gentle way, they attest to the ironic fragility, if not the utter futility, of what I was trying to do and my stubborn persistence in doing it. I wanted to put in those notebooks scraps of everything I cared about, mostly I suppose so I wouldn't lose things.

¹ Or perhaps a surrealist misnomer: I think especially of Magritte's inscription beneath his painting of a pipe done in the late 1920's, "Ce n'est pas une pipe," and the mislabeling in his "The Key of Dreams." The whole experience is reminiscent too of Kierkegaard's brooding awareness that his writing, addressed to "the single, solitary one," would someday be grist for the academic mills.
felt that my 'self,' precarious as it often seemed, was the only locus of the continuity of my experience and I wanted a more literal, less memory-dependent repository. Because I had moved around so much, had had so many jobs, studied at so many schools, and had so many friends in such far-flung places, I knew I was the only person who had a coherent narrative of my own history. So it was as both an aid to memory and to help me make connections that I diligently began saving things.

Perhaps my father's sudden and mysterious death when I was nine had sensitized me to the precariousness of memory, and of existence itself.² My memory of my

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²In June of 1975, I learned why, for 22 years, my father's death had been so mysterious. He died after being secretly given LSD by the CIA. Robert Lifton speaks of "symbolic fatherlessness" in connection with the Protean theme, arguing that, "Protean man requires freedom from precisely that kind of superego--he requires a symbolic fatherlessness--in order to carry out his explorations." ("Protean Man," p. 322.) The startling revelations about the fate of my own father suggests in a literal and dramatic fashion what I believe to be a more general relationship to fathers in contemporary adulthood: a continual finding, losing and re-finding born out of an urgent need for sources of authority perceived as authentic and an equally urgent longing for self-created autonomy. This dialectic has special-contemporary importance (in different ways for men and women) but is grounded, I believe, in a more universal psychological tension. This is what Ernest Becker, in a profound reinterpretation of the Oedipal struggle, calls the "emotional ambivalence of the causa-sui project" (the desire to be father to oneself), which has to do with ambivalence around the assuming and yielding of self-sufficiency--ultimately with the symbolic relationship of a conscious creature to death. (See Becker, The Denial of Death, Chapter 6.)
childhood, even my later childhood, was sparse, and my impression of my father was very incomplete. So the questions of how one accumulates and divests oneself of one's experiences and how one then calls upon memory to sustain a sense of self had held a special interest for me. 3

I suspect that the rupture in my life story around my father's death did contribute to my inchoate inclinations toward collage, but I am certain that whatever was unique in my situation quickly merged with vague and sometimes acute feelings of personal dislocation that are far from unique. Philip Slater, for example, describes how the experience of living in a network rather than a community implies that no person is fully known by anyone else. A network, he says, "is an addressbook—a list of

3On the use of photography for maintaining an image of self in the absence of memory, see "In Search of Melissa," by Melissa Shook, U.S. Camera/Camera Annual, 1973. Melissa Shook lost her mother when she was twelve and also had no childhood memory. She began photographing her own young daughter almost compulsively, and the project evolved into one of self-portraits.

Rauschenberg makes an interesting observation on the relation between 'using up' his past in paintings and his own personal energy: "Actually, I like all the investigation...that happens now. One looks forward to a painting finishing itself... because if you have less of the past to carry around you have more energy for the present. Using, exhibiting, viewing, writing and talking about it is a positive element in ridding oneself of the picture." (See Andrew Forge, Rauschenberg, p. 19.)
people who may have little in common besides oneself. Each network has only one reference point that defines it. No two people have the same precise network. Living in a network--Slater's metaphor of the self as addressbook--mitigates against communal memory by insuring that the self will be known only fragmentarily to each person one encounters.

If it took a Max Ernst to equate collage and identity in 1936, it takes no such prescience to do so today. To employ the collage method in systematic psychological work is simply, on one level at least, to appropriate perhaps the most pervasive art form of all. Collage is a grass roots phenomenon and the young adults in our study have readily analogized the collages I was asking them to make with the bulletin boards, scrapbooks, calendars, wall designs and spatial arrangements in their own environments. Indeed, many of them had made collages

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4 Earthwalk, p. 16.

5 Marge Piercy writes, "... the collage--violent juxtapositions, quotes and fragments--is a natural form for people growing up in a media-bombarded culture." ("Tom Eliot meets the hulk at Little Big Horn: the political economy of poets," Marge Piercy and Dick Lourie, in Literature in Revolution.

In Ways of Seeing (p. 30) John Berger writes: The means of reproduction are used politically and commercially to disguise or deny what their existence makes possible. But sometimes individuals use them differently.
before, as gifts, as exercises in groups, or spontaneously as a method of self-exploration. So they welcomed the opportunity to use the pictures and materials I made available—cutting, tearing, and trying out various placements of images to see which felt right.

In an important essay, Donald Weismann, collagist, painter, and teacher, has spoken of the collage as psychological model. He writes that, "the 'operations' I

Adults and children sometimes have boards in their bedrooms or living rooms on which they pin pieces of paper: letters, snapshots, reproductions of paintings, newspaper cuttings, original drawings, postcards. On each board all the images belong to the same language and all are more or less equal within it, because they have been chosen in a highly personal way to match and express the experience of the room's inhabitant. Logically, these boards should replace museums.

The only systematic psychological work with collage of which I am aware is that of Edith Wallace, who sees the medium largely in Jungian terms. She employs collage in work with groups where she has individuals make collages from very thin colored tissue paper. So far as I know Wallace has not published on her work; I am aware of it through conversation with a participant in one of her groups. Wallace uses tissue paper because (in adherence to the Jungian view of the psyche's autonomy) it cannot be fully controlled. Tissue paper with moist glue on it slips, and makes uncontrollable, but not meaningless, arrangements, a view of the collage process that resembles the surrealist position of automatism. Also, the translucency of tissue paper permits various overlapped levels to show through. Wallace stresses the capacity of collage to evoke dreams, and discussion takes place only after there has been time for a dream. In interpreting the collages (again in accord with principles of Jungian thought) she apparently stresses
experience in making collages have proved to be models for what I do and for much of what I have done with just about all the bits and pieces and stuff and things and events and occasions of the entire life I live." He suggests that in using in his collages things he has saved, fragments point to their own "completeness," as a "neighborhood of compatibles" is established in the composition.

Weismann continues:

If I were asked how I chose between this bit of wallpaper and that bit of Greek theater-ticket stub, I might say that the one 'looked better' in relation to the rest of the growing configuration. If pressed, I might add that I did not have much difficulty choosing the bit of wallpaper because it felt like a clue to success, while the Greek theater stub seemed to adumbrate failure. Now, were I asked against what I had measured these two things, I more than likely would have to say that I had measured them against the still unformed coherence of the still only potential collage, because in a very real way that is exactly what I did: I physically placed first one and then the other of these material bits in the forming pattern of the collage and, after looking, rejected one and saved the other.

As Weismann explains, a piece of wallpaper used in a collage remains a piece of wallpaper while at the same time becoming part of a more general pattern of the arrangement in which it is placed. The feelings evoked by the composition are then a joint product of the specific left (unconscious) and right (conscious) dimensions of the compositions.
associational reference of the actual materials employed and the structural coherence of the whole. The "life of [the] fragments" (in Léger's phrase) is thus a complex one—they are literal instances, symbolic exemplars, and compositional elements. The dialectic of particularization and abstraction is inherent and explicit in collage—that remains a source of both its aesthetic and its psychological fecundity.

I have suggested the ways in which collage is a model of contemporary experience, its multiplicities and fragmentations mirroring our possibilities and frustrations. But I have come to believe that collage presents (in three distinct ways) a plausible model of mind as well.

First, Susanne Langer's assertion that the symbolic function of an experience is to stand for other experiences like it is echoed in the complex life of collage fragments, where the suggestion of generalization is manifested in the concretely particular. It is the insistent literality of collage elements that so convincingly evokes feeling.

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7One thinks in this connection of Donald Barthelme's statement, "Fragments are the only form I trust," (quoted in Lifton, History and Human Survival, p. 351) and, by contrast, of E. M. Forster's phrase in Howards End: "Only connect."

Individual collage elements function simultaneously as members of different constellations. The breadth of feeling evoked by the individual collage elements, however, transcends the particular elements employed in the composition, in the way that one memory triggers another, and gives to the specific elements an ambiguous status. Each element stands for itself as a literal exemplar while simultaneously serving a place-holding function for a whole range or class of associated images. Some of those images, if reflected upon, may evoke other images more potent than the specific connotation of the original collage element. From the perspective of such a new image the original element can suddenly be subsumed in a new class of associations, or even appear irrelevant. Yet the feeling which the original element initially evoked (which was implicitly involved in the motivation for its choice and placement in the collage) no doubt owed something to the range of its

9Commenting on the literality of collage elements Harold Rosenberg writes, "In the vision of collage, the identity of an object is suspended between its practical reality and the conceptual whole in which it is set. A banknote incorporated in a collage has surrendered its simple character as money and undergone aesthetic transformation. A friend of mine was shocked when this principle was violated by burglars who plucked a twenty-dollar bill from a collage hanging on his wall. Collage invites the spectator to respond with a multiple consciousness in which forms, objects and images are interchangeable." (See Harold Rosenberg, "Collage: Philosophy of Put-Togethers," p. 178.)
potential reverberations, as well as to its specific reference.

This dialectic, in which an individual image determines a class (or classes) of other associated images, then assumes a place as a member of such a class, or is perhaps overwhelmed and obscured by some new image within the class, gives to collage elements a significant ontological ambiguity. Constellations of images form, dissolve, and re-emerge with modified inclusiveness. Paradoxically from the standpoint of set theory, a single image may constitute at once a whole class, a member of a class, and not be in the class at all. This ambiguity mirrors rather closely the multiple levels of abstraction at which a single image can function in acts of mentation.

A second aspect of collage as model of mind is composition. Here the rich metaphoric potential resides in the principle of overlapping—the deceptively simple notion that one element can be placed on top of another. In constructing a collage one can locate elements far from each other to emphasize their distance (perhaps their mutual repudiation); adjacent to each other to emphasize their emotional proximity, or in layers to suggest, for example, their redundancy. Collage mirrors the symbolic pathways and spacings which characterize thought. Meaningfulness itself is dependent upon the feeling that something
has a context which defines it; location and juxtaposition are the fundamentals of the collage aesthetic.

In arguing that there is something paradigmatic about collage, one is brought back to the earliest of Freud's psychological work, his *Project for a Scientific Psychology*. There, couched in a mechanistic neurophysiological terminology, one encounters a striking envisagement of the mind as a latticed network of meaning pathways where a common neuronal junction can conjoin two apparently divergent meanings. It is this model which,

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Context is, of course, crucially important for memory and recognizing as well as for meaning, as the frequent experience of not recognizing a person (like a bank teller) encountered out of his or her familiar context.

Wittgenstein's late reflections on the problem of meaning in the actual way people use words arrives at an implicitly collage metaphor. In the *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein argues that no single definition or meaning strand unites all the various usages of a word like "game." We are justified in using a single word for such divergent purposes, he says, only because there are "overlaps" of meaning between various usages such that a kind of path can be made from one usage to any other. At the extremes, however, various usages may have no shared meaning. Wittgenstein arrived at this "anthropological" perspective through a prolonged consideration of the relation between language and the "forms of life." See Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, esp. pp. 222-38.

after all, sustains the psychoanalytic method of free association, the cornerstone of all psychoanalytic clinical work. The early collagists were well aware of the analogies between their "free association of images" and the psychic process Freud was describing. But for our purposes, a more evocative source is existential thought where the

May 1, 1975.

Commenting on Freud’s method of free association Philip Rieff writes:
"By its indiscriminany acceptance of the relevance of every statement, the Freudian technique of interpretation shows itself to be based on a logic of the coherence behind contradiction to which we are perhaps more accustomed in modern art. Take, for example, the Merz paintings put together by the Dadaist Kurt Schwitters during the early twenties. In the attempt to shed conventional aesthetic restraints, Schwitters selected deliberately unartistic materials. One collage of his, of extraordinary brilliance, is assembled from the gutter-pickings of a single city block; I am reminded of Freud's stricture that his method divines things from 'the rubbish heap . . . of our observations,' from the collation of the most insignificant details. Schwitters made another collage by tearing up a sheet of heavy blue paper, then dealing out the pieces at random on a sheet of white, pasting these where they fell. In these efforts he meant to demonstrate—and was successful, I think, in doing so—that there is nothing necessarily unartistic within the arbitrary and unplanned."

"A similar assumption supports Freudian therapy."
(Freud: The Mind of the Moralist, p. 82.)

On the issue of pathways in the mind/brain considered from the direction of neurophysiology see D. H. Hubel, "The Visual Cortex of the Brain," and the work of Hubel done in conjunction with T. N. Wiesel. See also Wilder Penfield, The Mystery of the Mind.

12 See Herbert Read, A Concise History of Modern Painting, pp. 97, 130.
self is defined by its imaginal possibilities. Here there is an intimate connection, too, with a Jungian perspective, an emphasis on the self as a "composition of images," each of which has a psychic place.

Third, there is in collage an inherent analogy to the transformative aspects of human symbolization in which, to paraphrase Rauschenberg, what is newly experienced is always in relation to something already there. One thinks of Freud's metaphor of archeological layering, but from the standpoint of collage, one would see accretion formatively--new elements not simply evoking and being subsumed by old.

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13 Rollo May, Existence, p. 76.

Ernest Schachtel writes: "The unfamiliar object, in some respects, is potentially capable of renewing and bringing to the fore man's basic situation: of being in the wideopen, the pathless, with few innate patterns to guide him, of having countless possibilities of finding his way in and to the world open to him. This situation is both his glory and his predicament; it constitutes his potential richness, his freedom, as well as threatens him with anxiety, from which he may try to escape by protecting himself in a closed but stagnant world of a repertoire of familiar pathways." (Experiential Foundations of Rorschach's Test, p. 47.) Schachtel's observation here has to do with what I will later describe as "virtual orientation."

14 See James Hillman, Re-Visioning Psychology, p. 41: "[Restoration of the image to its proper place in psychology] means bringing the imaginal perspective, bringing fantasy, to all that we see. Thus everything is transformed into images of significance, and with that change in view we view ourselves differently, we see that we, too, are ultimately a composition of images, our person the personification of their life in the soul."
ones, but re-orienting all aspects of the emerging configuration. One is closer here to Piaget than to Freud.\footnote{Piaget's terms accommodation and assimilation suggest alternatively that in the encounter with novelty either the pre-existing structure or the new elements are transformed. What one misses in Piaget's very formal description is precisely the existential dimension, from which perspective the encounter with novelty--its motivation and implications--is never a purely cognitive matter. (Ernest Becker makes this same critique of Lévi-Strauss. See his Escape From Evil, p. 19.) No artist, aware that each brush stroke including the last can fundamentally alter a composition, would feel comfortable with the psychoanalytic assumption. Perhaps that is why Erikson, the artist, has been so important in giving integrity to stages of life after childhood. Of course, one must also say that in every "act," whether the execution of a painting or the living of a life, structures established early exert powerful influence over subsequent options. Langer writes, "What guides (the artist's) work is a conviction that the quality he cannot clearly envisage yet will emerge, and that he will know its pure expression when he sees it. There is enough of it in the first formal conception to beget a sense of congruence or incongruence in most of his former moves . . ." Mind, Vol. 1, p. 120.}
CHAPTER V

THE T.A.T. AND BEYOND

Where in the world did you get these pictures? Did Sigmund Freud invent these things?

--Comment of a young lawyer when presented with the Thematic Apperception Test cards

There is a theoretical logic to support the collage as model in psychological work. But it was not that logic which led me in the spring of 1973 to ask a young lawyer, whom I had been interviewing, to make a collage. Much of the impetus came from him. After six or eight interviews spread over as many months, I told this man that I would like to give him the Thematic Apperception Test.¹ Lifton and I had chosen the TAT because we were aware of its use in comparable studies² and we knew of no other psychological test which more closely suited our purposes.

As I showed him the first card—a dark, sketchy

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¹Copyrighted in 1943 by Henry Murray and the staff of the Harvard Psychological Clinic, the TAT consists of twenty pictures which are shown to a subject who is asked to tell a story about them. The stories are then analyzed for thematic content.

²For example Kenneth Keniston's The Uncommitted: Alienated Youth in American Society.
drawing of a young boy looking at a violin on a table—the lawyer (who over the course of the interviews had grown to like and trust me) said incredulously, "Where in the world did you get these pictures? Did Sigmund Freud invent these things?" I neither apologized for the lugubrious quality of the images nor defended it, though of course I recognized it too. \(^3\) Instead, I simply encouraged him to let his mind roam freely and start telling stories, which he was quite willing to do. But the stories as they came out one by one seemed limp, inert, lifeless, unrelated to the dialogue or the energy that had developed between us. Neither of us seemed certain about why we had suddenly resorted to this way of being together—his telling stories (which had to include certain elements specified in the test instructions)

\(^3\)Henry Murray himself admits that this characteristic is there in the pictures (it is not a "projection," in any case he prefers the term "eduction") and he relates it to psychological tendencies of his own which influenced his choice of pictures. See Murray's contribution to A History of Psychology in Autobiography, Vol. 6.

For a consideration of an alternative to the term projection see Leopold Bellak's discussion of perception, apperception and "apperceptive distortion," which puts projection at one end of a perceptual continuum (uncontaminated cognitive apprehension would be at the other end). Bellak also makes interesting reference to Totem and Taboo to show that Freud was aware that projection was an aspect of the process of symbolization necessary for perception that could not be restricted to pathology. (See Bellak, "On the Problems of the Concept of Projection.")
which I could not comment upon, in response to pictures that we both knew were strangely archaic.

Sometimes he got interested in one of his stories and elaborated it with special flourish. But he knew (as did I) that the real purpose of the stories lay in their subsequent analysis, not in the telling now. So, most of the stories were told and readily abandoned, yielded to the tape recorder and forgotten. Suddenly I had become a "psychologist," he was a "research subject." The game we were playing did not injure our relationship (there was enough trust between us to absorb the TAT); but our knowledge of each other was not expanding in ways we could recognize and share, so we were bored.

All of that is part of what Ernest Schachtel calls the "test situation"—it is routine, and its dimensions have been described, analyzed, and presumably accepted within the psychological professions. But since this fellow and I liked and respected each other, and since no medical or academic rationale was immediately available to conceal our chagrin, we simply felt it and wondered how to make the best of it. I mentioned this experience to Lifton, questioning our reliance on the TAT. In keeping with our desire to learn more about how people make life

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4 The Experiential Foundations of Rorschach's Test.
forms, he suggested that we think about some "better way to enter into and observe the formative process in the act of creating new syntheses."

The TAT was designed to reveal "to the trained interpreter some of the dominant drives, emotions, sentiments, complexes and conflicts of a personality," especially unconscious ones. We were interested, too, in emotions and conflicts as expressed in recurrent themes, but the notion of drives—motive forces which (though perhaps more malleable than instincts) exist apart from symbolization—was alien to our conceptualization of formative process. If symbolization is the essence of human mentation, then one cannot treat images as extrusions from instincts or drives (as the TAT and Rorschach tend to do). Rather, one must explore the motivating images themselves, for that is where the psychic energy is.

Psychoanalytically influenced diagnostic devices are essentially the product of what Henri Ellenberger calls the

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7See C. E. McMahon, "Images as Motives and Motivators: A Historical Perspective;" and Jerome Singer, "The Vicissitudes of Imagery in Research and Clinical Use."
"unmasking trend,"⁸ the attempt to get behind the in-authentic verbalizations and rationalizations of consciousness. As Lionel Trilling has pointed out, within the psychoanalytic framework, "authenticity readily attaches itself to instinct,"⁹ so the diagnostic process consists of an attempt to sneak past the conscious defenses without spending years on the couch. The assumption is that the images, words, wishes and hopes of which one is aware are not at all what really motivates one. Those are "surface" phenomena.

But, of course, it is the antinomies of surface and depth, conscious and unconscious (which constitute the assumptions of the TAT), that were the bugaboos in the story-telling session I have described. My lawyer friend no doubt surmised that now--psychodiagnostic test in hand--I was no longer interested in his stories in the same sense in which I had been interested in all the life-experiences he had recounted to me in earlier interviews. Now I could get "behind" (or "beneath") what he had told me, to what he could not or would not say. No wonder we had problems. As an alternative, I wanted a "test" or method that would deepen our dialogue while respecting his

⁸The Discovery of the Unconscious, p. 277.

⁹See end of chapter for footnote.
impulse to say what he could. I wanted a method that would acknowledge (while perhaps extending) the range of images which he was well aware were important to him. Most of all I wanted a method that would liberate energy by eliciting his concerned participation in the situation—

10 On the importance of direct responses, see Gordon W. Allport, "The Trend in Motivational Theory." Allport argues that in many cases the best way to determine what a person wants is to ask him or her.

11 The Jungian perspective constitutes an important challenge to the psychoanalytic assumption that in moving beyond awareness one leaves behind the image as a genuine source of motivational force.

12 See Gestalt Therapy, p. 398: "... consider the following difficulty: what if the very thing that offers the essential explanation, the creative power of lively excitement, will either withdraw from [the laboratory] situation or will intervene in the experiment, upset the controls, unsterilize the situation, perhaps decline to be experimented on at all, and insist on the existing problem, not the abstract problem? In such a case, in the interests of science one must turn away from the fetishism of the accepted 'scientific method.' The experiment must be real and meant, in the sense of being a sophisticated effort for personal happiness, and therefore a partnership in which the 'experimenter' and the 'subject' are both men." Goodman here obviously means adult.

Goodman's chastisement of the experimental Gestalt psychologists for their role in perpetuating a division between depth and general psychology is most pertinent here: "... for years, in order to refute the associationists, the Gestalt-psychologists devoted themselves to proving that the perceived wholes were 'objective' and essentially physical, not 'subjective' nor the result of emotional tendencies. Yet what an astonishing victory to win! for throughout physical nature the gestaltists keenly sought out whole tendencies, insisted on the context and the inter-relation of all the parts in order to bolster psychology; but it was only in this one case of human feelings that the gestalt-principle did not apply! An emotion was not a real
Erikson's excited children, eager to talk about their play constructions, seemed to me a worthy paradigm. What, I wondered, would be an analogy for adults of Erikson's play constructions for children?

The active constructive aspect would have to be maintained. However, the elements to be used in the part of the perception it accompanied; it did not enter the figure!" ... ambitious for this victory, they carefully sterilized (controlled) the experimental situations, making them less and less possibly interesting to any subject; and nevertheless, by wonderful ingenuity, they were still able to demonstrate the gestalt. Yet their very success should have alarmed them and served as disproving evidence, for it was against their basic principle of the context; that it is where all the functions are mobilized by a real need that the gestalt is most evident. What they ought to have experimented was just the reverse: to know the weakening of the formative tendency when the task becomes a mere laboratory task, abstract, isolated, unconcernful." How apt a critique this is of projective testing.

Erik Erikson puts the same point equally assertively in describing the evolution of the Freudian concept of the therapeutic alliance: "Thus was established one basic principle of psychoanalysis, namely that one can study the human mind only by engaging the fully motivated partnership of the observed individual, and by entering into a sincere contract with him" (Insight and Responsibility, p. 29). And again (p. 229), "I have put it this way: one can study the nature of things by doing something to them, but one can really learn something about the essential nature of living beings only by doing something with them or for them. This, of course, is the principle of clinical science."

Gordon Allport, long ago, asserted the need in psychology to cope with "patterned uniqueness"—the problem the psychologist has in assembling "into a unitary image all the fragments of information he obtains regarding a person." Imagination and the University, p. 70.
construction would no longer be toys. Rather, the logic of our study seemed to suggest that we use the cultural and historical material which constitute the stuff of adult life.\textsuperscript{13} My fundamental assumption—that motivation

\textsuperscript{13} Here again one is brought back to issues of surface and depth, because in one sense the images which surround us are at the psychological surface. For a discussion of the surface-depth distinction, see Nevitt Sanford, "Surface and Depth in the Individual Personality." Henry Murray makes the argument for abstracting from the texture of experience in constructing theory: "Science must overlook a great deal of the rich texture of concrete experience in order to put into relief the underlying interactions of forces." (Explorations in Personality, p. 288.) Edgar Levinson in The Fallacy of Understanding: An Inquiry into the Changing Structure of Psychoanalysis, makes the case for a concern with surface aesthetics in a new formative (his term is organismic) psychoanalysis: "In the machine paradigm, the emphasis is on 'dynamics,' i.e., on what is basic to behavior. Freud sought a human psychology that would be universal in its principles and applications—the equivalent of Lévi-Strauss' 'deep' structure. This is true of both the work machine and the informational machine. The organismic paradigm looks for what is unique and idiosyncratic. It focuses on, in a manner of speaking, the aesthetics of biology, the fingerprint rather than the organ system. What is unique is on the surface of man: coloring, features, voice patterns. No two people are alike. What is common to all men lies exposed to the dissector's scalpel." (pp. 70-71)

For interesting commentary on surface and depth in contemporary art from a strongly anti-formalist perspective, see Leo Steinberg, Other Criteria, p. 303: "Modern and medieval art agree that reality is not so much revealed as mocked by surfaces. But as, at a carnival, the choice of a mask may betray the reveler's characteristic nature, so surfaces bespeak something as to the truth below." (See also p. 242.) See also Rudolf Arnheim, "This is Conceptual Art," N.Y. Times, Op Ed. column, Saturday, July 13, 1974.

See also Robert Coles' essay, "The Inner and Outer World," which is a moving argument for studying people in the world in which they live.
depends upon symbolization, formulation, construal, meaning\textsuperscript{14}—required that I investigate precisely the ways by which adults establish and maintain configurations of action-pregnant meanings (which I began calling images). Once the problem was conceived in this way, as a task of finding a method to examine the symbolic constructions people make from real culturally available

\textsuperscript{14}The flavor of this approach is well suggested in this passage by Hugh Dalziel Duncan, in his introduction to Kenneth Burke's Permanence and Change (p. xxi):

"The heart of Burke's argument is simple enough, namely, that symbolic forms affect conduct because of the ways in which they affect communication, and thus all action. He is saying that motives lie not only in some kind of experience beyond symbols, but also in symbols. In sum, symbolism is a motive because symbolism is a motivational dimension in its own right. The way in which sex is symbolized largely determines the kind of emotions we have about sex. This does not mean that somatic sexual 'feelings' cannot be studied as we study any kind of somatic experience. But a feeling is not an emotion until the feeling is expressed and some form 'attaches' values to the somatic feeling." This argument is essentially Langer's, as well, in what she calls the "realization" of feeling through conception: see Mind, Vol. 1, p. 100.

Here, interestingly, there is important support from an unlikely quarter, learning theory. See Walter Mischel, "Toward a Cognitive Social Learning Reconceptualization of Personality." Mischel argues that stimulus-response theories have failed to investigate the ways in which individual persons construct, symbolically, those situations which will function as stimuli. He writes (p. 272):

"Although a person's expectancies (and hence performances) tend to be highly discriminative, there certainly is some generalization of expectancies, but their patterning in the individual tends to be idiosyncratically organized to the extent the individual's history is unique."
images, the answer was readily accessible.\textsuperscript{15} Pablo Picasso died two weeks after I settled upon collage as the tool I needed. In reading obituaries and thinking about his staggering influence in twentieth century art, I began to appreciate the psychologically unexplored significance of the collage principle Picasso did so much to establish.

I collected several boxes of old magazines and newspapers, brought them to my lawyer-friend and suggested that I had something else for him to try. I asked simply that he go through the materials, finding pictures he wanted to use to make a collage "reflecting things that had been on his mind lately." He was completely absorbed for several hours, after which we talked about what he had made.

In comparison to collages that he had and others have made subsequently, that first one was simple indeed; actually it was more poster than collage. The simplicity of his design was due in part, I think, to the sketchiness of my instructions, which reflected my initially tentative

\textsuperscript{15}I had made one collage previously. In the summer of 1970 I was introduced to this medium as a mode of self-exploration by my far-seeing friend Elisabeth Butters. When I returned four years later to look again at this early collage I found its prescience haunting.
approach to this fertile ground. But my subject was very enthusiastic about what he had done; it seemed "finished" and "good" and he wanted to tell me about it. I then began to learn that collage interviews have a special quality due to the accessibility of psychic imagery.  

16 The closest description of interviewing of an analogous kind I have seen is Winnicott's work with the squiggle game with children. See his marvelous Therapeutic Consultations in Child Psychiatry. For a description of triangulated encounter in which the third member is inert, see David Hawkins' lovely paper written for E.D.C., "I-Thou-It." See also, on the issue of an "intermediate area of experiencing" Winnicott's "Traditional Objects and Transitional Phenomena."
Lionel Trilling, Sincerity and Authenticity, pp. 141-43. As Trilling explains, within classical psychoanalysis, symbolic expression itself is viewed as a symptom. He writes (pp. 142-43): "It would be an incomplete but not an inaccurate description of the theory of psychoanalysis to say that it conceives of the conscious system of the mind as a mask for the energies and intentions of the unconscious system. . . . In the darkness of the unconscious to which they are relegated, these drives maintain a complex subversive relation with the conscious system and succeed to some extent in expressing themselves through it, not directly but by means of a devious symbolism. This symbolic expression of the repressed instinctual drives typically involves some degree of pain and malfunction and is called neurosis. . . . The therapeutic method is based on the belief that when once the conscious part of the mind learns to interpret the difficult symbolism of the repressed drives of the unconscious and by this means brings to light what is feared and thrust out of sight, the ego will be able to confront the drives of the id in all their literalness and thus be relieved of the pain that their symbolic expression causes."

The psychoanalytic approach to symbolism stands in sharp contrast to the tradition represented by Kant, Herder, Cassirer and Langer. Carl H. Hamborg, writing on Cassirer's theory of symbolism, observes (Symbol and Reality: Studies in the Philosophy of Ernst Cassirer, p. 40): "In Cassirer's words, 'we must accept in all seriousness what Kant calls his 'copernican revolution.' Instead of measuring the content, meaning and truth of intellectual forms by something extraneous which is supposed to be reproduced in them, we must find in these forms themselves the measure and criterion for their truth and intrinsic meaning. Instead of taking them as mere copies of something else, we must see in each of these symbolic forms a spontaneous law of generation, an original way and tendency of expression which is more than a mere record of something initially given in fixed categories of real existence.' From this point of view, symbols are not to be taken as 'mere figures which refer to some given reality by means of suggestion or allegorical renderings, but in the sense of forces produces and posits a world of its own. The question as to what reality is apart from these forms, and what are its independent attributes, becomes irrelevant here. For the mind only that can be visible which has some definite form; but every form of existence has its source in some peculiar way of seeing, some intellectual formulation and intuition of meaning.'"

As Hamborg points out, rather than viewing symbols as in any sense either displacement or distraction "Cassirer
considers it the very task of his 'philosophy of symbolic forms' that it should specify for each of the symbolic media (beyond which there is neither being nor truth for man) its characteristic 'index of refraction.'" (p. 13)

In certain respects Cassirer goes a bit further than I would (see Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, p. 92, footnote 7). But the general thrust of his philosophy and orientation which is important for my work is suggested in these quotations from his three-volume Philosophy of Symbolic Forms:

"The content of the spirit is disclosed only in its manifestations; the ideal form is known only by and in the aggregate of the sensible signs which it uses for expression." (Vol. I, p. 86)

"We shall seek to pursue the problem of signs, not backward to its ultimate 'foundations,' but forward to its concrete unfolding and configuration in the diverse cultural spheres." (Vol. I, p. 105)

"Through the [image worlds] alone we see what we call 'reality,' and in them alone we possess it: for the highest objective truth that is accessible to the spirit is ultimately the form of its own activity." (Vol. I, p. 111)

"If thought cannot directly apprehend the infinite, it should at least explore the finite in all directions." (Vol. III, p. 41)

See also Ernst Cassirer, An Essay on Man.

One of the places within American psychology where one finds a respect for the ontological significance of symbolization is in the work of Carl Rogers. See for example Rogers' essay "A Theory of Therapy, Personality, and Interpersonal Relationships, As Developed in the Client-Centered Framework" (in Psychology: A Study of A Science, Vol. 3, edited by Sigmund Koch), where, for example Rogers writes (p. 198): "Awareness, Symbolization, Consciousness. These three terms are defined as synonymous."

See also, Marshall Edelson's, The Idea of A Mental Illness and "Language and Dreams: The Interpretation of Dreams Revisited," and the "Introduction" to Language and Interpretation in Psychoanalysis.

One of our research subjects said to me after making a collage that he sensed a "radical, politically important idea" in the theory underlying this work. If that is true, as I hope it to be, I think this respect for the integrity of symbolization and consciousness is a significant reason. In this perspective the concept of image provides a formative connection between conscious and unconscious aspects of experience. Still, a dimension of depth (the implication that the potential for elaborating new interpretive meanings is endless) is retained. I think this appealed to our research subject as well.
CHAPTER VI

ORIENTING AND COMPOSING:

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE VIRTUAL

What we ordinarily think of as imagination is a directed process . . . whereby we . . . orient our emotional reactions to the ever-emergent situations which form the scaffold of life.

--Susanne Langer

The word collage is derived from coller (to paste or glue) and means pasting and, by extension, that which is pasted. The past participle collé (pasted or glued) is used as a slang term in French to mean faked or pretended.¹ The picture fragments and other materials pasted down in the collages people have made with me are certainly not anybody's actual psychic images. Nevertheless, I do believe the collage method I have evolved is a powerful phenomenological technique. Their collages have aided my research subjects in sharing with me something of the way they experience the world, with minimal intrusion of my own attitudes and preconceptions. That, after all, is the objective of phenomenology.²


²See Rollo May, et al., eds., Existence.
Following Susanne Langer's lead in her work on the philosophy of art, I conceive of the collage space as virtual space in that it symbolizes the feeling of orientation in the vastly more amorphous sphere of one's personal life.³ The distances and proximities between

³For Langer's ideas on the virtual and virtual space, see her Problems of Art, pp. 4-5, and chap. 3; Feeling and Form, chap. 5; and Vol. 1 of Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling, chap. 4, esp. p. 97. For a critique of Langer's concept of the virtual see Harold Rosenberg's essay "The Virtual Revolution" in his collection The Tradition of the New. Langer writes that in a painting, for example, every space is not merely a distance but an "expanse," i.e., symbolic of experienced, lived distance.

My suggestion that the collage be viewed as symbolic of orientation in a virtual personal life space may convey affinity with the topological psychology of Kurt Lewin. There are some similarities, the most important differences as I see them being that Lewin's maps of the life space are highly simplified and abstract, never exploring the experienced quality of the images in which the self is located. Lewin does stress the importance of "configurations" of psychological influences, but, lacking a rich conception of the motivational power of imagery and an appreciation of virtuality, his analyses tend to be highly schematic and literal. My definition of the image as a schema for enactment (of a sequence of feeling or outward behavior) leads me to investigate the complex precision of the image as it is experienced.

I agree with Robert B. MacLeod ("Person Perception: A Commentary," p. 240 in H. P. David, Perspectives in Personality Research) when he writes, "That event-structures have not been generally included in perceptual theory is due only in part to technical experimental difficulties; behind their rejection lies a silent assumption that the immediate data of experience are non-temporal, that the complex properties of events are second order phenomena. Even Lewin, who was a good phenomenologist, tended to think of life-space in terms of successive cross-sections."

See Lewin, A Dynamic Theory of Personality and Chapter Six, "Lewin's Field Theory" in Hall and Lindzey, Theories of Personality. I discuss Lewin's work briefly, in Chapter X, footnote 43 and Chapter VII, footnote 40.
collage elements suggest conceptions of felt relationships, and the composition as a whole presents the collage-maker's idea of his or her own experience of orientation amid the images which compose the self. When I say idea of experience, I do not mean to imply that there is anything intellectualized about the collage making either as process or form. Rather, I mean to emphasize that just as the pictures on the board are not actual psychic images, but are symbolic of them (in the sense of standing for them), so the experienced relations between elements is an objectification of subjective life, but is not a picture of anyone's inner world. I think "virtuality"--the presentation of an embodiment of subjective life, bounded by a "frame" and disengaged from ongoing events external to the frame--is a discrete experiential mode comparable to Erikson's distinctions among "factuality," "reality" and "actuality." Further, I regard the task of creating


In a sense, by bringing to the fore and isolating a process which is typically embedded in the whole fabric of experience the Rorschach virtualizes the act of perception (or, at least, an aspect of it) just as the collage virtualizes orientation.
a virtual space as being quite distinct from the act of projecting onto an ambiguous stimulus.

Langer has argued that painting presents an idea of space—a virtual space; dance does the same for power: it embodies an idea of power in virtual gesture. Music uses duration to create an order of virtual time; the novel uses narrative to create an image of virtual memory. In all these art forms an aspect of subjective experience is presented which is usually only vaguely known because, as Langer tells us, "most of its components are nameless, and no matter how keen our experience may be, it is hard to form an idea of anything that has no name." Discursive language fails to meet the purpose of articulating feeling; that is done by works of art—each in its characteristic mode.

The cornerstone of Langer's philosophy of art is

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Freud too uses the term virtual in justifying his hypothetical conception of two systems in the mind, the conscious and the unconscious. He writes, "Everything that can be an object for our internal perception is virtual, like the image produced in a telescope by the passage of light-rays." (The Interpretation on Dreams, Standard Edition, Vol. 5, p. 611.)

5 Problems of Art, p. 7.

6 The task of making the argument to support this point was Langer's burden in Philosophy in A New Key, and Feeling and Form.
the idea of the virtual: a domain in which some aspect of experienced life is transformed, embodied and made accessible to non-discursive conception. My research with the collage method has convinced me that this medium has a special capacity for presenting a conception of orientation among images. The collage itself, then, becomes a virtual symbolization of one's experience of one's life space—in the mode of a daydream. Recognizable elements from one life are imaginatively reassembled, but retain discernable connections to everyday experience.

In actual life one is constantly aware of pulls in various directions. Usually one has only an extremely vague sense of the realizations toward which diverse impulses impel one, and no sense at all of the interrelationships among the competing impulses themselves. That is why it comes as a relief to discover that the apparent divergence

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7 This, of course, has radical implications for psychology— it suggests a dependence of psychology on art for a presentation of feeling. This is the argument in Vols. 1 and 2 of Mind. Langer announces her task in the first sentence of Philosophical Sketches: "Among all the facts with which psychologists deal, the one they seem least able to handle is the fact that we feel our own activity and the impingements of the world around us."

8 Langer uses the word projection as I am here using symbolization. I think she has good reasons for so doing, but I prefer symbolization (in the sense of an external embodiment) to avoid confusion with projection as that word is used in psychoanalytic defense theory and in connection with diagnostic testing. See also Chapter VI, footnote 13.
of several of one's impulses is in fact illusory, that the enactments toward which they point are at least partially redundant and can be lumped in a single choice. Or to conclude that a number of one's troubles have a single common root, and may be best addressed from a new perspective that undercuts old confusions. Or to realize that one's apparent alternatives do not have equal claim to significance, that some are in fact essentially trivial in consequence, and can be selected without excluding others, and without one's needing to feel that one's sense of self is at stake. Or to discover that there is an inherent sequencing among competing impulses, of which one had been unaware, so that they can most effectively be expressed in some serial order. The experience of being oriented consists I believe in precisely this, that one feels centered amid one's potential enactments, having some--perhaps inarticulate--confidence that what one will do subsequently is immanent in what one is doing now. The feeling of orientation involves an implicit conviction that one's present place connects, through a series of transitions one can imagine (if vaguely), to other places one has been and wishes to go. Disorientation, and the anxiety it entails, are the reverse.⁹

⁹Langer writes (Mind, Vol. 2, p. 288): "What we
One young woman made a large amorphously shaped collage with protrusions extending in several directions. The overall design was asymmetrical and unwieldy. As she looked at her collage, this woman (who works as a group organizer) was obviously fascinated and at last she said, "I know there are so many things going on in my life, but I've never seen them all together in one place at one time before." The capacity of presenting all the elements simultaneously in a single configuration is precisely the distinguishing feature of what Langer calls presentational (non-discursive) symbolism.¹⁰ Still, the collage did not present a literal map of this woman's emotional terrain. But it did seem to her indicative of the way various parts of her life were co-existing at that moment and as she looked at it more connections, questions and feelings occurred to her. So we could rely on the collage, probing what its visual qualities suggested, while being free to

ordinarily think of as imagination is a directed process, an entertainment of images and often verbalized concepts whereby we organize our practical knowledge and, especially, orient our emotional reactions to the ever-emergent situations which form the scaffold of life." (See Chapter IV, footnote 13.)

Becker puts the matter simply when he writes, "Anxiety is a prospective emotion ...." (The Revolution in Psychiatry, p. 176.) He means what Kierkegaard meant in calling anxiety (dread) the "dizziness of freedom." (See Kierkegaard, The Concept of Dread.)

¹⁰ See Philosophy in A New Key, chap. 4, esp. p. 97.
move away from it when that seemed fruitful.

In the collage interviews, it has been important to maintain a distinction between collage pictures and fragments on the one hand and psychic images on the other. That distinction would seem obvious, since no outer form ever exactly replicates a feeling and its associated idiosyncratic memories. But in fact a capacity to maintain that distinction in the interview, and actually to rely upon it to open new possibilities for a dialogue, has only come after many interviews had bogged down for failure to be clear about the difference.

The people who have made collages have generally felt convinced that what they made "expressed" a good deal about where they were in their lives. At times I have been all too ready to believe them, and take them at their literal word. I would then inquire about what a particular picture or configuration made them "feel," hoping to learn about some important motivating image. But of course one sees a picture in a very different sense than one sees an inner image, and it has been a central problem with projective testing that these two kinds of perception have been taken as one. A fundamental virtue of the collage method, which I have been slow to understand and make explicit, is that these two modes can be to some degree disentangled.
The assumption of projective testing is that one sees contentless forms (like Rorschach’s inkblots) or ambiguous scenes (like Henry Murray’s TAT cards) according to unconscious motives: needs, desires, complexes, aspirations, wishes, and fears. Thus if the meaning of a stimulus is either unclear or ambiguous, and if the test subject is pressed to extract meaning where none is indisputably there, then the associations or stories elicited will reveal the subject’s biases in seeing, or what Rorschach called perception. The test subject will impose his or her interpretational patterns on the neutral or ambiguous stimulus; meanings will be projected gratuitously. From these the psychologist can assess personality tendencies. Rorschach and Murray differ markedly in their evaluations of the capabilities for their tests to elicit emanations from the unconscious. Rorschach says explicitly that his test “cannot be considered as a means of delving into the unconscious. At best, it is far inferior to the other more profound psychological methods such as dream interpretation and association experiments.”

Murray is more sanguine about the TAT. In the first

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11 See Rorschach, Psychodiagnostics, p. 16.

12 Psychodiagnostics, p. 123.
paragraph of the TAT manual he writes, "Special value resides in [the test's] power to expose the underlying inhibited tendencies which the subject, or patient, is not willing to admit, or cannot admit because he is unconscious of them." In fact, depending upon exactly what one means by the unconscious, the two views may not actually be so opposed as they appear. In any case, the essential assumption, common to both tests, is that perception is forced beyond the point of recognition, so that that which is seen is that which is projected, thereby revealing an inner rather than outer reality.  

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13 Henry Murray's theoretical assumptions are made clear in "Thematic Apperception Test" Manual (1943) and in Explorations in Personality, Hermann Rorschach's in Psychodiagnosics (1921). See also Henry Murray, "Historical Trends in Personality Research" in Perspectives in Personality Research, edited by H. P. David and J. C. Brengelman, where Murray exhibits caution about the assumptions of his method (p. 21): "(The astute psychologist) will not take for granted, let us say, either that a so-called 'projective test' is actually a test (of anything that can be specified before the administration of this procedure), or that the responses it educes are, for the most part, actual projections (according to any dynamic definition of the word)."

For a lucid discussion of precisely this distinction between projection "as a propensity to perceive an object in terms of some preconceived notion" and projection as an aspect of psychological defense involving false attribution, see John Bowlby, Separation (Vol. 2 of Attachment and Loss). As Bowlby points out, the former meaning is better covered by Piaget's term, "assimilation." (Separation, pp. 169-77.) On the latter meaning, see Anna Freud, The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense, pp. 119-30. Viewed externally, from the standpoint of that which is perceived, assimilation equals attribution.
Hermann Rorschach published his inkblot method in 1921. In 1925 Max Ernst, whose observations on the relation of collage to identity have been quoted above, developed a surrealist technique which he called *frottage*, the artistic analogue of projection:

Ever since his fifth or sixth year [Ernst] had been fascinated by the suggestive powers of simulated mahogany. The apparition of his father, on which so much turned in his childhood, had been set off by just such a panel; and when he was weather-bound in a little Breton hotel he found himself staring, with comparable fascination, at the well-scrubbed floor of his room. With many years of use, the graining of the floor boards had become more and more sharply accentuated, and he decided to see what would happen if he took a sheet of paper, laid it on the floor more less at random, and rubbed it across, smoothly and regularly, with a lead pencil. Suddenly he found that his visionary powers were in a state of hyper-stimulation.

For good general discussions see Lawrence K. Frank, "Projective Methods for the Study of Personality" in Alfred E. Kuenzli, ed., The Phenomenological Problem and L. Bellak, "On the Problems of the Concept of Projection," in Projective Psychology (ed. by L. E. Abt and L. Bellak). Frank makes clear the theoretical basis for associating perceptual tendencies with personality structure in the projective tests: "... The personality may be viewed as a dynamic process of organizing experience, of 'structuring the life space' (Lewin) according to the unique individual's private world."

See also Rollo May, ed., Existence, p. 123: "Research in the field of perception, e.g., by Gardner Murphy, demonstrates correlations between an individual's personality and his way of perceiving the sensory world ... ."

See also Levinson, The Fallacy of Understanding, pp. 150-54, 203 and Becker, The Denial of Death, p. 158.
and that contradictory images were piling themselves one on top of the other 'with the persistence and the rapidity which we associate with the memory of a love affair.' Fired with the idea that materials other than the floorboards might prove equally rich in suggestion, he turned to 'leaves and veinings, the unravelled edges of a piece of sack cloth, the brush marks of a so-called modern painting, a length of thread unwound from its reel and so on . . .'.

The drawings thus produced had a vitality and a significance which were not at all those of the material which had been explored. They abounded, in fact, in unexpectedly precise images whose nature revealed the initial cause, or something very like it, of the obsession which had led the artist to make the experiment.¹⁴

We learn much from an artist of Ernst's sensitivity and originality, and I have seen the rationale for the psychology of projection nowhere more intelligently articulated than in this passage. Ernst's appreciation of the capacity of strange, irregularly textured surfaces to induce fascination and evoke passionate images (like those 'we associate with the memory of a love-affair') is most impressive. How often, one is moved to wonder, do Rorschach's inkblots and Murray's ambiguous scenes (within the context of the "test situation") elicit images of similar passion?

No doubt Ernst's highly developed visual imagination had much to do with the extent to which such forms could move him, and with the freedom he clearly felt to explore

¹⁴From Max Ernst, by John Russell, pp. 82-83.
the "unexpectedly precise [psychic] images" which the frottage technique evoked in him. One may even suppose that such mobile access to the precision of one's perceptual experience on the one hand and the precision of one's imaginatively associated images on the other, and the discipline required not to confuse the two, is a hallmark of the creative artist. Rudolph Arnheim supplies us with an anecdote that tends, at least in part, to corroborate such a position. "Recently," he writes, "a well-known poet, after being told by a psychologist that his Rorschach test revealed 'lack of imagination,' commented: 'They don't seem to realize that years of hard training as an artist have enabled me to see an inkblot when I am shown one rather than to indulge in loose associations.'"\(^{15}\)

In an interesting essay called "Perceptual Analysis of a Rorschach Card," Arnheim observes that although "the objective nature of a Rorschach stimulus is commonly determined statistically by the frequency of 'popular' attributions of subject matter . . . the objective perceptual characteristics of the blots as visual stimuli could and should be explored in their own right."\(^{16}\) Arnheim argues

\(^{15}\)Rudolf Arnheim, *Toward A Psychology of Art*, p. 78.

\(^{16}\)Ibid., p. 90.
that the precise characteristics of an actual visual stimulus contribute significantly to the response evoked, the point being that even with a stimulus as "content-free" as an inkblot, the response elicited is not all "projection"—there's something really out there with a real structure that influences what one sees and feels.
CHAPTER VII

TOWARD A PSYCHOLOGY OF THE IMAGE

For in every action what is primarily intended by the doer, whether he acts from natural necessity or out of free will, is the disclosure of his own image. Hence it comes about that every doer, insofar as he does, takes delight in doing; since everything that is desires its own being, and since in action the being of the doer is somehow intensified, delight necessarily follows. Thus nothing acts unless [by acting] it makes patent its latent self.

—Dante (quoted by Hannah Arendt in *The Human Condition*)

In the collage materials I use there is no pretense that the pictures are vague or contentless or ambiguous. The content and style of the pictures vary widely; they include everything from Stonehenge to Woodstock, and many pictures emphasize mainly color or abstract pattern. But all are evocative in one way or another, and many are recognizable as to time and place. All the pictures and other materials are as interesting as possible because I have been convinced from the start that people reveal more of themselves (not less) when they are working with things that interest and involve them actively.

The pictures were not chosen because they transcend
time and place but, conversely, because they suggest times and places and people associated with significant kinds of feeling.\(^1\) Thus in the collage interviews it made sense to explore, in a double movement, first what is seen and felt in connection with a given picture or collage configuration, and second what is seen and felt in connection with the psychic image thereby evoked. It made sense, but the habits of mind derived from the projective assumptions do not yield easily. Significantly, it took a poet (who was doing a collage with me) to point out the problems engendered by my confusing undifferentiated literalisms, and to insist upon the legitimacy of the two movements I have now distinguished. Having learned from that collaboration, I now speak of a "double-fidelity"--the fidelity to what one sees as one looks outward, and the fidelity to what one sees as one looks inward.\(^2\)

\(^1\)See Coles, "The Inner and Outer World."

\(^2\)For a discussion of the whole issue of literalism, see Owen Barfield, *Saving the Appearances.*

In 1897 Freud confided to Fliess that he had changed his mind about the role of childhood seduction in the aetiology of neuroses. Freud decided that the seductions his patients described to him were for the most part imagined events rather than actual occurrences. When he realized his mistake (in earlier having taken his patients' stories literally) (Freud) not only "stumbled upon the Oedipus complex, which later was to assume such an overwhelming importance," but he also recognized inner, psychological events as having reality too. My problems in
In a central place in this poet's collage, for example, he had put a picture of two young women in bathing suits crouched on a beach. The two are smiling, have their arms around each other and one has her head playfully and a bit sheepishly tucked under the chin of the other. First the poet established this picture's context in the circular constellation in which it was placed, and I noticed its proximity to two breast-feeding pictures (one in which the mother seemed to be giving; the other in which the infant seemed more actively to be taking) and to a violent picture of a young boy about to smash a piano. Then he described the relationship of the two women as it appeared in the photograph. He emphasized their bodily closeness and especially their postures relative to each other, one being lower than the other in a position that appeared nestled, sheltered and protected. As he described these visual qualities, I could see them too. In a sense he was doing a close and careful "reading"\(^3\) of the picture, abstracting and emphasizing elements that evoked particular

\(^3\)See Norman N. Holland, *Readers Reading.*
“Collage of the Young Poet”
COLLAGE OF THE YOUNG POET
Central section of collage of the young poet showing picture of two crouched women in bathing suits.
feelings, enabling me to see the picture as he did.

Then, in a transitional movement, he spoke of what such an interrelated posture of two friends' bodies can suggest about the qualities of a friendship, in which sometimes one and sometimes the other of the two friends assumes, momentarily, the shelter-giving, nurturant position. He contrasted such a fluid, responsive kind of relationship with one that might, superficially, resemble it but in which these postures have been reified, made to serve as definitions of who each can be for the other. Then an inner image suggested itself--himself with a friend in several different situations--and we now explored this image with equal care. This image, emerging in connection with the picture of the two women but also in the wider context of the placement of that picture relative to the others I have mentioned, evoked powerful feelings about quality, equality and inequality in the important friendships in this man's life. Later in the interview he told me that he felt the collage process had created a significant emotional mutuality between the two of us, and a sheltered place for the exploration of things that mattered to him.

This double-fidelity, the double-literalism$^4$ of

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$^4$I use the word literalism in the sense of "adherence to the explicit sense of a given text or doctrine" (American Heritage Dictionary) to emphasize precision with
picture and of image, takes one beyond the cynical assumptions of projection, where (especially in the "test situation") what one "sees" can suddenly feel almost gratuitous. Ernst's movement from the apparitions of frottage to the energy exchanges of collage parallels a movement from projection of virtualization as a method of psychological exploration, the creation of a special space symbolic of the felt tensions between images.

As I have come increasingly to respect psychic precision, I have also learned that the collage method requires what, following Jung, I call "sticking to the image." Jung warned against free association when working

respect both to one's experience in perceiving a picture and one's sense of an inner image. I do not mean to imply anything like naive realism, or suggest that symbolization is not fundamental for both modes of experience, but rather I wish to stress a literal and tenacious adherence to the qualities of one's experience.

5Of course, frottage is also a form of virtual space in Langer's terms. TAT stories could be taken as virtual forms of narrative, though they almost never are, but rather are ransacked for "themes."

6"The 'manifest' dream-picture is the dream itself, and contains the whole meaning of the dream. When I find sugar in the urine it is sugar and not just a facade for albumen. What Freud calls the 'dream-facade' is the dream's obscurity, and this is really only a projection of our own lack of understanding. . . . We do not have to get behind such a text, but must first learn to read it.

The best way to do this, as I have already remarked, is to establish the context. Free association will get me nowhere, any more than it would help me to decipher a Hittite inscription. It will of course, help me to uncover
with dreams because he felt that in moving freely in all
the directions a dream can suggest, one loses the value of
the dream's integrity as a psychic form. He spoke, instead,
of amplification—enlarging the context of the dream by
gathering associations which are then brought back to the
dream to illuminate the manifest content. Jung takes the

all my own complexes, but for this purpose, I have no need
of a dream—I could just as well take a public notice or a
sentence in a newspaper. Free association will bring out
all my complexes, but hardly ever the meaning of a dream.
To understand the dream's meaning, I must stick as close as
possible to the dream images . . . I keep on returning
to the image, and I usually say to my patient, 'suppose I
had no idea what (the image) means. Describe this object
and give me its history in such a way that I cannot fail to
understand what sort of thing it is.'

In this way we manage to establish almost the whole
context of the dream-image. When we have done this for all
the images in the dream we are ready for the venture of
interpretation." From C. G. Jung, "The Practice of Psycho-

Hillman says simply that if one interprets a snake
in a dream, one kills the snake. (Re-Visioning Psychology,
p. 39.) See also Jung, "The Transcendent Function" in
Vol. 8 of the Collected Works (The Structure and Dynamics
of the Psyche); in which the contemporaneous, purposive
function of psychic images is explored, particularly in
connection with transference. What Jung there calls a
"synthetic-constructive" mode of interpretation (p. 75), the
way of "creative formulation" (p. 84), is very close to what
Lifton and I have called a formative perspective. See also
Jung's Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, Part I, Chapter
6, "The Synthetic or Constructive Method;" James Hillman,
Re-Visioning Psychology, esp. p. 39, and Gaston Bachelard,
The Poetics of Space. This and all of Bachelard's books
are of great importance in conveying a sense of respect
for the precision of psychic images, and for gaining
appreciation of the role played in imagination by the
"material elements"—earth, air, fire and water.

Their agreement on the importance of context, and
on the natural tendency of the organism toward equilibration
(what Jung calls the compensating tendency of the unconscious)
is the real meeting place of Jungian analysis and Gestalt
therapy.
manifest dream-picture very seriously, insisting that it is the dream itself. When he encourages sticking to the image of the dream Jung is really insisting that the integrity of the dream's virtual form, and hence its transformative power, be preserved. But Jung also gives another argument for sticking to the image provided by the manifest content, this being the assertion that the dream is "a pure product of the unconscious." 7 I cannot follow Jung in this rationale because to speak of "purity" in this sense betrays a belief in absolute psychic partitioning which I do not share. 8 Lancelot Law Whyte suggests that, "It may be wrong to think of two realms which interact, called the conscious and the unconscious, or even of two contrasted kinds of mental process, conscious and unconscious, each causally self-contained until it hands over to the other. There may exist, as I believe, a single realm of mental processes, continuous and mainly unconscious, of which only certain transitory aspects or phases are


8 Langer writes, "The difficulty of drawing a sharp line between animate and inanimate things reflects a principle which runs through the whole domain of biology; namely, that all categories tend to have imperfect boundaries." Mind, Vol. 1, p. 259.
accessible to conscious attention."\(^9\)

Whyte's position here closely replicates that of Susanne Langer\(^10\) and constitutes a fundamental tenet of formative psychology where the goal is to describe symbolic continuities and mediating processes rather than point to the effects of isolated mechanisms.\(^11\) I think there is considerable wisdom in sticking close to the image (both in dream exploration and in collage interviewing based on formative theory) not because it is any sort of pure product, but because it presents a dramatic envisagement of a pertinent existential situation.\(^12\) Thus it provides clues to processes of psychic (symbolic) transformation, and hence to channels of feeling and energy: the available capacities for various kinds of experience. Nor must one assume that the image yields all the relevant personal or contextual detail; only that the structure and content of


\(^{10}\) See Mind, Vol. 1, esp. chap. 1, "Feeling," p. 21, where Langer writes, "... being felt is a phase of the process itself. A phase is a mode of appearance and not an added factor."

\(^{11}\) See also, Edgar Levinson, *The Fallacy of Understanding*, esp. chap. 6.

\(^{12}\) See Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, p. 131.
the image have precision and integrity which convey a message in irreplaceable form.

That form, in turn, bears the imprint of all those symbolic processes which have determined it, most of which are not present in immediate awareness. ¹³ In the collage interviews I do, I try to move from the perceived "neighborhood of compatibles" in the collage composition itself to the images which have engendered the feeling that certain things belong together. The assumption I make is not that the pictures employed represent a psychic "surface" and the associated images a psychic "depth," or that such distinctions can be drawn at any point in the process. ¹⁴ Rather,

¹³ Here I follow Langer's discussion of the act. She writes, "Subordinate acts appear to converge on the achievement of an integral larger whole. The result is that a dynamic pattern is realized in the occurrence of the total act. Every constituent act has its particular impulse, with its own intensity and easiest path, its possible alternatives if that path is obstructed, and its own rate of progress; and every impulse, when it ensues in action, resolves the particular organic tension it represents, which is an accumulation (perhaps infinitesimal) of potential ready for transformation into some other phase. In living systems such charges tend to form integrated patterns, i.e., unitary but organized impulses, and spend themselves under the influence of one largest, unifying impulse, in a flow of events that takes the characteristic form of a single act." Mind, Vol. 1, p. 292.

¹⁴ John Dewey writes, "The sensible surface of things is never merely a surface." (Art and Experience, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1934, p. 29.) See also Nevitt Sanford, "Surface and Depth in Individual Personality," The Psychological Review, Vol. 34, No. 6, November 1956. (See also Chapter V, footnotes 9 and 13.)
what I have again and again seen is that an initial feeling that a certain portion of a picture was "right" and belongs "there" carries with it a rich load of "implicit meaning." 15 The exploration of that feeling of conviction may at times move my interview subject and me far from the collage itself, into areas that can quite surprise the maker of the collage (a psychological fact that is itself extremely interesting and surprising, given what one might presume, incorrectly, to be an antinomy between the deliberateness of the collage-making and some more inaccessible unconscious process). In so doing, we give symbolic completion to some of the spontaneous impulses that led to the choices in the first place.

That, at least, has been my assumption, and as we move along in the dialogue of the interview, I try to elicit the rich feel of the images evoked, their place in the subject's life story, 16 as well as their immediate motivational feel in the present—what impulses (toward

15 See end of chapter for footnote.

16 No one better than Gaston Bachelard, in The Poetics of Space, has described the richness of such central personal images. Bachelard speaks of our, "... hunger for images" (p. xiv, On Poetic Imagination and Reverie) just as Hillman speaks of the soul's desire for experience. See Re-Visioning Psychology, p. 122, and Suicide and the Soul. On Bachelard see Edward K. Kaplan, "Gaston Bachelard's Philosophy of Imagination: An Introduction."
sequence of action or feeling) the scenes and persons described suggest to one right now. Meanwhile, the collage itself remains, always to be returned to, like manifest content whose form becomes almost numinous as it begins to serve us both as a kind of shared engram.

What I seek in such an interview is core images, those that contain the most fundamental and far-reaching personal envisagements of one's feeling of life and what one construes as threats to the feeling that oneself is and will remain alive. I must leave for subsequent papers the task of demonstrating in narrative detail and of elaborating, again experientially, the carrying forward of implicit symbolizations in connection with actual images. Here I simply stress the centrality of the image itself for the collage method, its rich implicit sequences of feeling and action providing the real substance to be

17 This stress on the symbolization of life and death is fundamental to the formative paradigm; see Lifton, The Life of the Self, chap. 3: "Central to human experience is the struggle to evoke and preserve the sense of the self as alive, and avoid the sense of the self as dead. All living beings share the struggle to remain alive. But the urge to retain and enlarge the feeling of being alive--of vitality--is specifically human, an evolutionary trait of symbolizing mentation that stands at the border of biology and culture. These basic aspirations--remaining alive and retaining the 'feeling of life'--suggest the stress in formative theory on imagery and symbolization of human continuity." See also Lifton and Olson, Living and Dying, and Ernest Becker, The Denial of Death and Escape from Evil.
explored in the interviews.

One takes great risk in building a theory around a concept as problematic as image.\textsuperscript{18} But I have felt a need in this work, in Langer's words, for "a basic concept elastic enough to allow the widely diverse definitions we want to derive, in essential relation to each other."\textsuperscript{19} In the definition of image upon which I now rely I have sought to absorb three fundamental psychological processes into a unified concept. First is the importance of imagery for the process of abstraction. An image shows how something appears or seems, schematizing experience along the lines of salient features.\textsuperscript{20} Second is the capacity of an image to evoke feeling, a capacity so intimately related to emotional life that I do not believe that either can be studied very far in isolation from the other.\textsuperscript{21} Langer


\textsuperscript{19}Langer, Philosophical Sketches, p. 61.

\textsuperscript{20}See end of chapter for footnote.

\textsuperscript{21}Langer emphasizes the importance of images for
speaks of "the image with its whole cargo of feeling," suggesting that an image can function as an emotive vehicle, its contours and texture laden with specific tones and attitudes. It is this connection of imagery to feeling which has prompted the meticulous phenomenological explorations of poetic images by Gaston Bachelard and C. Day Lewis and which, as Jerome Singer explains, makes the exploration of imagery so fundamental to the process of experience itself (Mind, Vol. 2, p. 342): "Certainly in our history, presumably for long ages--eons, lasting into present times--the human world has been more filled with creatures of fantasy than of flesh and blood. Every perceived object, scene, and especially every expectation is imbued with fantasy elements, and those phantasms really have a stronger tendency to form systematic patterns, largely of a dramatic character, than factual impressions. The result is that human experience is a constant dialectic of sensory and imaginative activity--a making of scenes, acts, beings, intentions and realizations such as I believe animals do not encounter. [Emphasis mine, E.O.] In fact, it is only in human life that I think one can really speak of 'experience.' And it is experiences that make up human memory, a psychical background of each normal person's current consciousness and future envisagement. It is this structure that constitutes what we mean by the 'life of the mind.'"


I have already cited Bachelard's work, which as Jerome Singer points out has exerted a much greater influence on philosophical and psychological work in Europe than America. See also C. Day Lewis, The Poetic Image and Wallace Stevens, The Necessary Angel: Essays on Reality and the Imagination.
psychotherapy. 24

Finally, I have wished to emphasize in a definition of imagery the potential for activity which resides in the image. Kenneth Boulding writes that, "We can see all behavior as governed by the image and its value system," 25 meaning that the image includes all the organism's internal structures for differentiating environmental impact and engendering attuned responses. Bachelard writes simply, "Man lives by images," 26 and James Hillman, meaning essentially the same thing, says, "Everything begins in fantasy." 27 Robert Holt, using the psychoanalytically derived concept of wish in the way I use image and activity, makes a more modest assertion: "All behavior is caused, but not necessarily (and not in all its details) determined by

24 Singer writes ("The Vicissitudes of Imagery in Research and Clinical Use," p. 171): "The journey itself, the very process of exploring this preconscious realm through the succession of images is intrinsically therapeutic." Carl Jung writes (Memories, Dreams, Reflections, p. 177): "... I learned how helpful it can be, from the therapeutic point of view, to find the particular images which lie behind emotions."


27 Hillman, Re-Visioning Psychology, p. 223.
wishes." I think it is important to point out that in Freud's writings thought is conceptualized as "trial action." It is sometimes claimed that psychoanalysis does not include a cognitive psychology. Yet Freud's theory of internalization (as Roy Schafer has shown) laid the foundation for subsequent work in ego psychology on the importance, in both evolutionary and ontogenetic terms, of the acquisition of what might be described as increasingly sophisticated inner imagery. And as

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29 Freud writes ("Two Principles of Mental Functioning," p. 221): "It [thought] is essentially an experimental kind of acting, accompanied by displacement of relatively small quantities of cathexis together with less expenditure of them." See also New Introductory Lectures, p. 89: "Thinking is an experimental action carried out with small amounts of energy, in the same way a general shifts small figures about on a map before setting his large bodies of troops in motion."

30 Schafer, Aspects of Internalization. Schafer emphasizes the contributions of post-Freudian ego psychologists, especially Heinz Hartmann, in the development of this aspect of psychoanalytic theory. See also Arnold Model, Object Love and Reality.

31 Cassirer uses the term "inner form" (Philosophy of Symbolic Forms, Vol. 1, p. 81) but for my purposes I find the word form even more multi-hued and ambiguous than the term image.
Grossman and Simon make clear in their well-known article on the role of anthropomorphism in the psychoanalytic model of mental structure,32 Freud believed that inner imagery tends to assume the dramatic form of personal enactments.33

Following upon this discussion my definition of the

32William I. Grossman and Bennett Simon, "Anthropomorphism: Motive, Meaning and Causality in Psychoanalytic Theory." Grossman and Simon quote a 1906 statement by Freud: "our understanding reaches as far as our anthropomorphism."

(Langer emphasizes the tendency of images to form patterns, "largely of a dramatic character" (in Mind, Vol. 2, p. 342.) Kenneth Burke has developed a whole approach to literature based on what he calls "dramatistics"—"stressing language as an aspect of 'action,' that is, as 'symbolic action.'"

James Hillman makes the case for personifying from a Jungian perspective in Chapter One, "Personifying or Imagining Things," in Re-Visioning Psychology.

33A central issue in all this which I have by no means resolved is the relation of the terms symbolization, symbol and image. Generally, I take symbolization to be the broad term covering all aspects of mental formulation. As Langer writes (Philosophy in A New Key, p. 41): "Symbolization is the essential act of mind; and mind takes in more than what is commonly called thought." Symbols and images have a complex class relation in which, depending upon how each is functioning relative to the other in a given situation, each may function constitutively as an element in the other. "Symbols," Langer writes, are "vehicles for conception" (Philosophy in A New Key, p. 60). Thus an image as a schema for enactment may include many symbols as elements. Alternatively, a complex symbol (for example the Christian cross) may include many images. (See Paul Tillich, chap. 3, "Symbols of Faith" in The Dynamics of Faith.) Essentially, a mental element construed from a motivational aspect I would call an image and construed as a vehicle for conception I would call a symbol.
image may appear simple indeed. I think of an image as a schema for enactment. In this terse definition I compress the abstractive capacity of imagery in presenting salient features of appearance (by which I do not mean exclusively visual appearance); the capability of an image to hold and transport impulses for feeling, and the potential of images to be unfolded as activity which takes the form of structured sequences of action, thought and emotion. "Everything begins in fantasy" means that every action undertaken derives from an image, a schema for enactment.

Though the word image in common usage tends to

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Ernest Becker, following Alexander Leighton, uses the term "sentiment" in very much the way I use image. He too specifies three aspects of sentiment: (1) perception and cognizance of objects (appearance), (2) a locus of action-possibility (potential for enactment), and (3) self-value (feeling). These three aspects he calls the "action-triad." (See Becker, The Revolution in Psychiatry, pp. 148-57.)

Herbert Fingarette uses still another term--"meaning scheme"--and, again, it holds essentially the same place in his thought that image does in mine. He writes, "... meaning schemes have conceptual, conative, and affective aspects. ... They are woven into the fabric of human response--indeed they are the constitutive structure of that response insofar as it is typically human and not merely animal." (Herbert Fingarette, The Self in Transformation, New York: Harper and Row, 1963, p. 22.)
suggest something visual (or, as in public relations jargon, an appearance as contrasted with a reality), and though the collage method does depend importantly on visual processes, I do not, in my reliance on the term image, wish to imply an exclusively visual emphasis. My work with collage has led me to believe that the image forming process which Jacques Monod calls "subjective simulation"\(^{35}\) is at root neither visual nor non-visual but essentially configurational. It is the configurational aspect of collage that renders it so powerful a tool for investigating interior space. I say "powerful" because my research subjects tell me they have felt themselves known in rather special ways through the use of this medium. What they have sensed, I think, is that the collage has enabled me relatively quickly and confidently to enter empathetically the composition of images that constitutes the self. The existence of a tangible, visual analogue of feeling helps to confirm during the interview that we are in fact talking about the same things, thus rendering the process of becoming known more conscious. Primarily the collage provides entrée, especially to core images.

The question of core images remains a mystery in all this, a mystery I cannot help but connect to the soul

itself. I think of core images as those which yearn most deeply for attention, care, enactment; the most fundamental sources of passion which remain personal, rooted in the idiosyncrasies of a life history. Core images of the self (which assume a special and problematic importance because our historical period is one in which for many people acceptable social forms are not readily and easily available as guides for living) provide a kind of ultimate sense of what is appropriate for one. I do not know very much yet about the stability of core images, their malleability, the ways in which they influence and reflect the large and small events of one's life. I cannot specify exactly how

36 James Hillman describes his book Re-Visioning Psychology, based on the 1972 Terry Lectures at Yale which I attended, as a "book about soul-making." On page x he indicates what he means by soul. "First, 'soul' refers to the deepening of events into experiences; second, the significance soul makes possible, whether in love or in religious concern, derives from its special relation with death. And third, by 'soul' I mean the imaginative possibility in our natures, the experiencing through reflective speculation, dream, image, and fantasy— that mode which recognizes all realities as primarily symbolic or metaphorical." Then Hillman connects soul to image (p. xi): "... I follow Jung very closely [here]. He considered the fantasy images that run through our daydreams and night dreams, and which are present unconsciously in all our consciousness, to be the primary data of the psyche. Everything we know and feel and every statement we make are all fantasy-based, that is, they derive from psychic images. ... Here I am working toward a psychology of soul that is based in a psychology of image." I think of core images in connection with what Paul Tillich called matters of "ultimate concern." (See The Courage to Be, p. 47.)
one recognizes core images in interview material. But I suspect that the enactments such images portend are reservoirs of personal energy and excitement, repositories of self-recognition, exhilaration, relaxation, comfort, and, when conflicted or strained, are sources of enormous personal enervation and feelings of depletion. Bachelard writes "Only images can set verbs in motion again." And in another place he says, "As I see them, archetypes [what I am here calling core images] are reserves of enthusiasm which help us to believe in the world, to love the world, to create our world. . . . Every archetype is an opening out, an invitation to the world. Each opening gives rise to a reverie of flight. And reveries directed toward childhood restore us to the powers of primal reveries. The water, fire, trees, and vernal flowers of childhood—what genuine bases for an analysis of the world!"

Viewed subjectively, from the standpoint of their capacity to give rise to feeling, core images embody one's sense of what one is really about; that is the source of their association with passion. Core images are those

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37 See end of chapter for footnote.

38 Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, p. 110.

personal visions around the fundamental issues of life
(love, work, play, belief, etc.) that, quite simply, appear
the most important, that provide the most distilled sense
obtainable of what things it is crucial for one to become,
to retain, to regain or to avoid. Core images are schemas
for core enactments, enactments which pertain most directly
to maintaining the feeling that the self is alive. Viewed
structurally, from the standpoint of their place in the
configuration of the self, core images are at the center. 40
This implies that they constellate the most other images

40 Kurt Lewin's topological psychology is based on
diagramatic representations of the "differentiation" of
regions in the "life space" into "cells," some of which
(due to their remoteness from the perceptual-motor region)
he regards as "peripheral," and others (due to their prox-
imity to this region) he regards as "central." Lewin then
speaks of the permeability-impermeability, the firmness-
weakness and the fluidity-rigidity of the cell boundaries
and the nearness-remoteness of cells with respect to one
another. The ideas of "valence" and "tension" play an
important part in Lewin's psychological vocabulary, as they
do in mine. But for all of Lewin's terminological closeness
to my work, his way of describing the life space does not
capture much of the actual passion associated with images
(which, after all, are what compose the "cells"), and his way
of speaking of the "environment"denudes it of historical
richness and concreteness. Thus I consider Lewin to be a
continuously important reference rather than a real ally in
the work I am doing. A psychology of the image yields to
schematization, as the phenomenologists keep reminding us,
only to a limited degree. See Kurt Lewin, A Dynamic Theory
of Personality and "Lewin's Field Theory" in Calvin S. Hall
and Gardner Lindzey, Theories of Personality. (See also
Chapter VI, footnote 3, and Chapter X, footnote 43.)
around them and that these others derive their valence, their importance and their relevance from their proximity

41 My use of the term constellation to mean the cluster of images related to a core image owes something to Jung's usage of the word, and to his closely connected term, derived from Adler, "complex." However, Jung's usage is dependent upon his quite compartmentalized view of the unconscious and is heavily tinged with pathological associations. Jung writes (in "A Review of the Complex Theory," in The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche, Vol. 8 of the Collected Works, p. 94):

"The term [constellation] simply expresses the fact that the outward situation releases a psychic process in which certain contents gather together and prepare for action. When we say a person is 'constellated' we mean that he has taken up a position from which he can be expected to react in a quite definite way. But the constellation is an automatic process which happens involuntarily and which no one can stop of his own accord."

By comparison, "... a feeling-toned complex [which it is the task of the word association test to identify] is the image of a certain psychic situation which is strongly accentuated emotionally and is, moreover, incompatible with the habitual attitude of consciousness. This image has a powerful inner coherence, it has its own wholeness and, in addition, a relatively high degree of autonomy, so that it is subject to the control of the conscious mind only to a limited extent, and therefore behaves like an animated foreign body in the sphere of consciousness. ... Certain experimental investigations seem to indicate that its intensity or activity curve has a 'wave-length' of hours, days, or weeks. [That is, it has the form of what Langer calls an act.] This very complicated question remains as yet unclarified." (p. 96)

"... fundamentally there is no difference between a fragmentary personality and a complex." (p. 97)

"Complexes are in truth the living units of the unconscious psyche, and it is only through them that we are able to deduce its existence and its constitution. The unconscious would in fact be—as it is in Wundt's psychology—nothing but a vestige of dim or 'obscure' representations, or a 'fringe of consciousness,' as William James calls it, were it not for the existence of the complexes. ... The via regia to the unconscious is not the dream, as [Fried] thought, but the complex, which is the architect of dreams and of symptoms."
to core images. Being a distilled essence of all those images which they constellate, core images are the most abstract of all one's images, and can impose their form on the widest range of situations, experiences, and memories. In this way they become the ultimate source of pattern in one's way of constructing the world (one's "world-design" as the existentialists say), the source of the repetitiveness of "neurotic" ways of living,\textsuperscript{42} and the root of one's "character." Core images, at least in their full

\textsuperscript{42}See David Shapiro, Neurotic Styles. Shapiro writes (p. 13): "It is possible . . . to demonstrate that individuals possess relatively stable cognitive tendencies that determine the form of the influence that a motive or need exerts on their cognition." Speaking of the "ways of thinking" which the Rorschach test helps to identify, Shapiro says (p. 2): "It seemed to me that these ways of thinking—ordinarily used to identify defense mechanisms, traits, and diagnostic syndromes and, in general, to draw a picture of psychological make-up—must in themselves represent psychological structures of importance, and these structures might be of a more general type than the specific traits or mechanisms that could be inferred from them."

What Shapiro seeks is essentially a formative theory of neurosis, though without a more general theory of the image and symbolization than he brings to bear I do not think that is fully attainable. He continues (pp. 14-15):

"Philip Rieff . . . has criticized Freud's psychological system for its lack of recognition of contemporary attitudes, tendencies, or 'forms of the mind' in their own right. Rieff has in mind, as an example of such contemporary tendencies, the general perceptual tendencies investigated by the Gestalt psychologists. Freud commits the error, Rieff maintains, of identifying contemporary attitudes of character traits with their presumed origin. He argues that 'while an oak does originate in an acorn, the mature tree cannot be held to be still "essentially" acornish.' This criticism is justifiable to a considerable extent in my opinion, and it may be that the lack that Rieff points to,
inclusivity, cannot be conscious, but for a non-Freudian reason having little to do with their incompatibility with acceptable aspirations. Rather, the reach of situations which they encompass is so broad that their unified influence as patterns which influence wide areas of perception is unrecognized. "Unconscious" in this sense means unrecognized context rather than unexpressed impulse.

Situations which evoke core images induce the widest circle of reverberations in the self, the most profound sense of threat as well as of possibility. Core images are the most highly valenced, the most heavily weighted with abhorrence and allurement. Transformations in core images, because of their power to affect all aspects of symbolization and experience, constitute, metaphorically, the death and rebirth of the self.

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of 'forms of mind,' or, as I would say, contemporary modes and styles of functioning, is largely responsible for the present-day lack of a psychoanalytic psychology of character. "

"... I have attempted to show what such 'forms of mind' may consist of."

See also Howard Shevrin, "Forms of Feeling: The Role of Ideologs in Empathy and Dream Imagery," paper presented to 1971 meeting of AAAS.

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43 See end of chapter for footnote.
For what follows, I rely on Eugene Gendlin's paper "A Theory of Personality Change" and his Experiencing and the Creation of Meaning. See also Langer, Mind, Vol. 1, p. 303, where she speaks of the "carrying out" of an act in a way that parallels Gendlin's term, the "carrying forward" of implicit meanings.

Nor do I think the idea of "implicit symbolization" would have seemed so strange to Freud. In the section on "Remembering" of his technical paper on "Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through" (Collected Works, Vol. 12, p. 148) Freud writes:

At this point I will interpolate a few remarks which every analyst has found confirmed in his observations. Forgetting impressions, scenes or experiences nearly always reduces itself to shutting them off. When the patient talks about these 'forgotten' things he seldom fails to add: 'As a matter of fact I've always known it; only I've never thought of it.' He often expresses disappointment at the fact that not enough things come into his head that he can call 'forgotten'—that he has never thought of since they happened. . . . In some cases I have had an impression that the familiar childhood amnesia, which is theoretically so important to us, is completely counterbalanced by screen memories. Not only some but all of what is essential from childhood has been retained in these memories. It is simply a question of knowing how to extract it out of them by analysis.

See also Ernest G. Schachtel, "On Memory and Childhood Amnesia," in Metamorphosis.

There is a continuum between aware process and implicit symbolization which is obscured by the conscious-unconscious dichotomization. This is, I think, why Freud had such conceptual difficulties in knowing where, in his bifurcated scheme, to locate the ego, and especially the so-called censor.

I prefer the term 'implicit symbolization' to 'the unconscious' even though the former term fails to evoke the reverberations of a mysterium so pregnant in the latter. Rather than emphasizing what is absent from awareness (but presumably efficacious in some way) as the term unconscious does, implicit symbolization emphasizes what is present in awareness—even if only cryptically and in a form which one may suspect to have been distorted by other meanings lurking outside awareness but influencing the content of awareness.
After all, in any clinical situation unconscious meanings are always hypothetical, the only actual data one has being that which is present and hence at least partially conscious. For an interesting general discussion of various meanings of "the unconscious" see Kenneth Burke, Language as Symbolic Action, chap. 4, "Mind, Body, and the Unconscious."

The sense of what I mean by implicit symbolization is well suggested in the following paragraph from a paper by Roy Schafer: "By disclaiming actions we limit the excitement and violence of social existence. Human beings have developed and use language to spare themselves from all manner of arousal, pain, anxiety, guilt, loss, and destructiveness. They allude to what they are passing over as they pass over it. [Emphasis mine, E.O.] This allusiveness is part of what we call unconscious communication. It makes up a large part of what the analyst listens for." ("Action: Its Place in Psychoanalytic Interpretation and Theory," p. 187.)
20 The sense of this function of imagery is suggested in Langer's discussion of the difference between an image and a model (Mind, Vol. 1, pp. 59-60):

"An image is not a model. It is a rendering of the appearance of its object in one perspective out of many possible ones. It sets forth what the object looks or seems like, and according to its own style it emphasizes separations or continuities, contrasts or gradations, details, complexities or simple masses. A model, on the contrary, always illustrates a principle of construction or operation; it is a symbolic projection of its object which need not resemble it in appearance at all, but must permit one to match the factors of the model with respective factors of the object, according to some convention. . .

It is different with images. An image does not exemplify the same principles of construction as the object it symbolizes but abstracts its phenomenal character, its immediate effect on our sensibility or the way it presents itself as something of importance, magnitude, strength or fragility, permanence or transience, etc. It organizes and enhances the impression directly received. And as most of our awareness of the world is a continual play of impressions, our primitive intellectual equipment is largely a fund of images, not necessarily visual, but often gestic, kinesthetic, verbal or what I call situational. . . Suffice it to point out that we apprehend everything which comes to us as impact from the world by imposing some image on it that stresses its salient features and shapes it for recognition and memory.

Images are abundant and often fragmentary, not single and coherent like a model. We use and discard them prodigally. . .

The high intellectual value of images, however, lies in the fact that they usually, and perhaps always, fit more than one actual experience. We not only produce them by every act of memory (and perhaps by other acts), but we impose them on new perceptions, constantly, without intent or effort, as the normal process of formulating our sensory impressions and apprehended facts. Consequently, we tend to see the form of one thing in another, which is the most crucial factor in making of the malestrom of events and things pressing upon our sense organs a single world. In this way all the things which one image roughly fits are gathered together as instances of one conception. The image is not, I think, made of an accumulation of specific impressions, as many specific photographs, superimposed, constitute a composite photograph. The original image may have been derived in roundabout and irrecoverable ways. But it fits
many impressions, even if somewhat imperfectly, nearly
eough to permit their treatment as things of one kind;
which is to say, it permits their interpretation in terms
of the conception which the image expresses. . . . I do not
know what the cerebral function of fitting images to sensa-
tions is; but it is, or at least enters into, the act of
interpretation, and is probably intimately related to the
process of concept formation."

Piaget's work is obviously crucial for the schematizing
function of mind.
The issue of how one recognizes core images is, I think, a profound and probably ultimately insoluble problem. The question is not merely that of recognizing an area of someone's life that is particularly impassioned at a certain moment. Rather it is the problem of determining how to identify that area concretely, how to isolate it both laterally (with respect to other contemporaneous concerns in the person's life) and temporally (how much of the history of a given image is one to include in what one is calling a core image?). This latter issue of temporal sequestering is a special problem precisely for a non-reductive psychology, one which argues (as I would) that all images ought to be reduced for analytic purposes to their primal origins in early childhood. An image is a phenomenon in the present, but a phenomenon which has a history.

If, for example, one finds that a person is especially troubled by the issue of living arrangements--e.g., apartment vs. group living situation, marriage vs. living alone, etc.--the core areas of the self involved have to do with home, place and personal bonds. (See below for discussion of the way Lifton and I have formulated the idea of core areas of the self.) But the core images evoked are bound to be numerous and interconnected, involving elements long in memory mingled with aspects of one's current situation: family of origin, friends, work. None of these can be isolated, all proliferate and touch every part of the self. We can say that all are images fundamental in the history of the self, but each can be valenced by the immediate life-problem so that the self becomes newly centered around it. It is then that the special qualities of an image, in its function as constituting part of the core of the self, are revealed.

Or, to take another example, if I say that my grandfather is a core image for me I mean that certain aspects of his life (as I envision that life) have an important motivating force for me. But it is not precisely my grandfather who is my core image, but rather what my grandfather, as I symbolize him, makes me want to do at a given moment in my life.
To the question Where are core images? there are many answers. The bodily therapies (Reichian, psychomotor [see Albert Pesso: Experience in Action: A Psychomotor Psychology]) find them in the musculature, in the readiness to make or inhibit certain kinds of movement; transactional analysis and rational emotive therapy find them in our scripts for interpersonal behavior and our subvocal inner sentences; behaviorism finds them in conditioned stimulus-response linkages; gestalt therapy finds them at the contact boundary; and, of course, psychoanalysis finds them in the unconscious. For sociological analyses core images are a function of roles, hence the property of the group, community or institution. (One of the interesting things about Berger and Luckman's The Social Construction of Reality is that they attempt to show—as very few sociological analyses do—the processes which mediate between collective structure and individual symbolization.) James Hillman finds the question of where the images are, like the question of where the gods are, to itself require "psychologizing." He argues that the question of "where" derives from a fantasy of place, and rather than pursuing it to any definitive answer, the question itself requires 'deepening' in the process of making soul.

Logically one could imagine a problem of infinite regress in specifying anything like a core image. That is, a psychological tendency could be identified and related to an associated image, which itself might derive from a tendency associated with still another image, and so on in onion-peel fashion such that the word 'core' would have no meaning. That is, in my mind, a logical possibility though not a clinical, existential one. Ultimately, one establishes in an interview a constellation of images which do appear to have the feel of irreducibility.

The Jungian theory of archetypes has problems closely related to those which arise in connection with core images, but ones which are, due to the ontological claims sometimes made by Jung on behalf of his archetypes, perhaps more ultimately befuddling. These problems are sidestepped if one distinguishes between core areas of the self (areas of recurrent human concern) and core images (the envisagement of these concerns by a particular person).

I find Paul Tillich's reflections on this issue very helpful. (Tillich's comments are drawn from his contribution to the bulletin issued by the Carl Gustave Jung Memorial Meeting, held in New York, December 1, 1961.) Tillich begins by contrasting the Roman Catholic and Protestant positions on symbolism. In the Catholic view, "The symbols produced, in terms of analogy, are final, since the subjectivity of the symbol-experiencing group does not participate in its creation. The symbolic context has become a known thing. Changes caused by changing human
experiences are not considered. In contrast to this rational-static doctrine of analogia entis, the Protestant attitude toward religious symbols should be existential and dynamic. Symbols are born out of the revelatory experience of individuals and groups; they die if these experiences can no longer be revived and the symbols in which they have been expressed have lost their creative power."

"In this situation, Jung's doctrine of archetypes can point to a way out. It distinguishes between symbols and archetypes. Symbols are the infinitely variable expressions of underlying, comparatively static archetypes. It is important that Jung attributes to the archetypes another ontological status than that attributed to the symbols. They are potentialities, while the symbols are actualizations conditioned by the individual and social situation. The archetypes lie in the unconscious and break into the conscious life in experiences which show something of the ecstatic character attributed to the revelatory experiences. That they are preformed in the unconscious as potentialities makes understandable both the wide range of their variability and the traits of a definite structure which limit the possibilities of variation."

But Tillich concludes by saying that Jung's position does not and cannot provide a final solution to this problem: "This leads to the question of the relation (between symbolic and archetypal elements) in a concrete religious set of symbols. If the archetypes remain mere potentialities, how can one recognize, distinguish, and describe them? It seems to me that this is possible only if one compares a large number of symbolic expressions and discovers similarities which point to a common archetypal basis. But if one tries to determine this basis concretely, one has another symbol and not an archetype. I sometimes feel that Jung's naming of archetypes is, because of this situation, somehow casual and not directed by a principle of selection. Theologically this would mean that the lasting element in the growth and development of religious symbols cannot be separated from the variable element. It appears always as background, but if it is drawn to the foreground, it becomes a symbol."

Tillich's manner of distinguishing between symbols and archetypes points to the difficulties which arise if one attempts to specify the relationship between core areas and core images, particularly if the core areas become more than simply categories of possibility and one begins to attribute to them, as Jung does with the archetypes, some degree of autonomous existence. In the theoretical paradigm which Lifton and I have been employing, death and life continuity constitute a kind of archetypal structure (in Tillich's terms) in our way of conceiving both historical change and individual life experience. Imagery around
death, continuity and life vitality is the most fundamental and universal level of motivational symbolism. But in any concrete act—either personal or historical—that archetypal imagery can never be fully disentangled from the far more relative images in which concrete acts are embedded.

One can see this issue in the interviews with young professionals which I have done. The struggles of a young scientist to remain vital and alive may be motivated by ultimate imagery around life and death, but these struggles are mediated by and experienced through the actual day-to-day conflicts and projects with which the scientist is occupied. Occasionally, one may get a more pure glimpse at the connection between day-to-day work and life-death imagery. I felt I got such a glimpse when one scientist told me about the thrill she always gets when she watches a cell divide under a microscope. But even then it would be wrong to say that for her, watching that cell encompasses what it means for her to feel alive as a scientist.

If this young scientist feels herself to be especially alive while watching a cell divide, one can see a special kind of incarnation of this fundamental level of motivation in an activity in which she often engages in her work. But the motivation for that act, as for any act, is overdetermined, and the satisfactions, pleasures and ecstasies derived from it are always some combination of the proximate and the ultimate.

Rudolf Arnheim's critique of Jung's theory also has important bearing on the issue of the mediation between symbol and archetype. He writes (in his essay "Analysis of Symbol of Interaction," in Toward A Psychology of Art, p. 223): "Jung does believe that the archetypal patterns are intrinsically related to the meaning for which they stand. He realizes that the symbolic content is perceived directly within the image. Symbols, he says, are 'pregnant with meaning,' and 'image and meaning are identical.' Indeed he might argue that the survival value of archetypes consists precisely in their giving directly perceivable expression to basic patterns of human existence. What he does not seem to realize is that once he admits the perceptual self-evidence of such symbolism, there is no need to enlist the services of hypothetical hereditary mechanisms at all."

"If every human being's unconscious or conscious mind is capable of spontaneously perceiving certain elementary shapes as images of significant life situations, no genetics is required to explain why these shapes turn up independently in many cases. . ."

"But (so far) no concrete analysis of any but the most elementary visual properties (that is, upward, downward, angular and curved) has been presented to demonstrate the correspondences of expressive shape and significant life situations. . ."
I have spoken extensively in Chap. VII, footnote 37 of archetypes. Another prominent psychological tradition which I think should be mentioned uses the term "internalized objects" to speak of something close to what I am calling core images of the self. Like Jungian archetypes I think the so-called "object relations" perspective holds both powerful insights and grave problems. The essential problem is that although in the object relations language "internal object" really means inner image, the entire theoretical perspective is developed in the absence of any kind of general notion of either imagery or symbolization. In fact the work of Melanie Klein preserves a rather archaic version of instinct theory. That internal objects are essentially images is made clear by Harry Guntrip (Personality Structure and Human Interaction, p. 229): "An internal object is an imago, a mental image of a particularly fundamental kind, which defined psycho-analytically is an unconscious psychic image of a person or part of a person as if the object had been taken into the mind, developed within the inner mental world, repressed and elaborated from infancy onwards, and heavily loaded with emotion. As Susan Isaacs says: 'Such images draw their power to affect the mind by being "in it".'"

But things are not really so simple. Fairbairn writes (quoted in Guntrip, p. 322): "Unless it is assumed that internalized objects are structures, the conception of the existence of such objects becomes utterly meaningless." Fairbairn's observation here points to the great importance of Susanne Langer's assertion that "the symbolic function of an experience is to stand for other experiences like it;" and her claim that "the high intellectual value of images lies in the fact that they usually, perhaps always, fit more than one actual experience." Because object relations theory has been developed in isolation from any general theory of imagery and symbolization it continually bogs down over fundamental problems.

The power of object relations theory lies in its appreciation of the life and death kind of demonic force that can reside in images formed early in childhood, and the capacity of these images to counteract and subvert subsequently acquired emotional and cognitive modes. The images involved tend to be of parents or other adults playing a parental role, and siblings. But the theory is almost exclusively reductionist, and gives only the most limited kind of suggestion as to the ways in which these images are susceptible to influence and transformation by adolescent and adult experience. Nor does one get any sense from object relations theory of the way in which these "objects" interplay with other aspects of the psyche, other concerns of
living, in a formative process.

In general, object relations theory, in my judgment, suffers from over-emphasis on regressive influences in the self. This sort of unbalance is probably inevitable in any theory built so exclusively upon the formative determination exerted by certain aspects of childhood experience. (I consider Winnicott's work to be a significant exception; I think Winnicott's appreciation of the formative importance of certain modalities of experience like play and reciprocity, rather than a narrow focus on internalization of objects as such, is crucial to the importance of his work.) Though object relations theory does place great emphasis on struggles around primal matters (nurturance, closeness, fear of annihilation) I think the theory lacks an appreciation of the formative, purposive, life-seeking thrust of the imagination itself.

Fairbairn explains the dynamic involved in choosing libidinal badness, taking external badness into oneself and bearing it (the internalization of bad objects), as the child's decision that "it is better to be a sinner in a world ruled by God than to live in a world ruled by the Devil." (An Object-Relations Theory of the Personality, p. 66.) This formulation suggests that there is at the heart of object relations theory a profound conception of human existential dilemmas.
CHAPTER VIII

THE AESTHETICS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

AND THE LOGIC OF COLLAGE

A photograph is only a fragment.
--Susan Sontag

Midst the mysteries of core images I think it is important to say that the collages of which I am speaking consist mainly of reproductions of photographs, and I suspect that some portion of what I have observed in my work with the collage method is explained by the peculiarly contemporary powers of the photographic medium itself. The whole collage method is perched, one might say, on a boundary between non-discursive and discursive symbolization.¹ That is true in an obvious sense in that I first invite my subjects to make a visual composition and dream about what they have assembled, and then ask them to talk about these things. But there may be something about photographs as such (and about our usual experience of viewing them), a quality which their manipulation in the collage process intensifies but does not create, which

¹For Langer's discussion of this distinction see Philosophy in A New Key, chap. 4, "Discursive and Presentational Forms."

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makes them ready vehicles for the encapsulation of both verbal and nonverbal images.

The photographs one customarily encounters—on the pages of newspapers, magazines and the surfaces of billboards—are surrounded by a sea of print. Of all the photographs one sees (most of course being reproductions of photographs rather than photographic prints) those that are presented without editorial labeling, as for example in a gallery exhibition, must constitute a very small percentage. A substantial part of that small percentage, for most people, is composed of photographs of trips or familiar persons taken by oneself or one's family or friends, and the viewing of such pictures always calls forth narrative. 2

I think there is something liberating about encountering unlabeled photographs, even more so when the encounter is combined with an invitation to choose among a wide array, and to cut and tear the photographs, pasting

2On the importance of captions in viewing photographs Walter Benjamin ("The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," p. 226) writes: "[Photographs] stir the viewer; he feels challenged by them in a new way. At the same time picture magazines begin to put up signposts for him, right ones or wrong ones, no matter. For the first time, captions have become obligatory. And it is clear that they have an altogether different character than the title of a painting." See also John Berger, Ways of Seeing, p. 28.
them together so as to make the result one's own. Suddenly one is using photographs to tell one's own story, rather than being exposed to yet another illustration. The latent urge to escape the tyranny of photography--in which one is constantly being presented with someone else's image of one thing or another--forms the basis of the initial excitement with which people begin making their collages. The tyranny and the excitement both derive from the technological fact that photographs are infinitely reproducible.

"In principle a work of art has always been reproducible" observes Walter Benjamin in his important essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." But, Benjamin continues, it is only with the coming of photography that the very notion of an "original" loses all meaning. In that process the special quality of presence possessed by a unique work, a quality Benjamin calls the "aura," is eliminated. Photographs never acquire the kind of history which an old painting can come to possess over the course of its existence. "What is really jeopardized," Benjamin concludes, "when the historical testimony is affected is the authority of the object. . . . One might subsume the eliminated element in the term 'aura' and go

\[^{3}\text{Illuminations, p. 218.}\]
on to say: that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art, . . . [the result of] the detachment of the reproduced object from the realm of tradition."

Of course it is that very reproducibility (by printing as well as photographic methods) which has permitted ours to become a culture so cluttered with photographs. And it is the absence of an aura, the lack of what Benjamin calls "the authority of the object," the absence of a sense that photographs are in any way precious objects, that permits our research subjects so readily to take scissors to them, and to revel in their own enfranchisement as manipulators of a photographic environment.  

There is something in the very nature of photographs which invites collage. Technically photographs are, quite literally, slices of time. But they are also, as Susan Sontag has pointed out, slices of space.  

4Could it be that it is precisely the retained aura of paintings and sculpture that makes them inviting targets for disfigurement in museums? Perhaps it is their elevated status, which in a photographic age seems unwarranted and tyrannical that provokes such angry outbursts, acts that resemble assassination, in certain emotionally susceptible people. Benjamin speaks of aura as "the unique phenomenon of a distance, no matter how small," a distance which can provoke resentment.

5"Photography," p. 62. This is the first of four articles which Sontag wrote for The New York Review which have been important in my thinking about this medium.
Their individuality lends them a memorability which is
greater than that of television, in which one is pre-
sented with "a stream of under-selected images, each of
which cancels its predecessor."\textsuperscript{6} However, the memorability
of photographs is purchased, in Sontag's opinion, at the
cost of their capacity to purvey anything like genuine
understanding:

\begin{quote}
[A photograph] makes reality atomic,
'manageable,' opaque. It is a view of the
world which denies interconnectedness. The
ultimate wisdom of the photographed image
is to say: 'There is the surface. Now
think—or, rather, feel, intuit—what is
beyond it, what the reality must be like
if it looks this way.' Strictly speaking
there is never any understanding in a
photograph, but only an invitation to
fantasy and speculation.
\end{quote}

... the 'reality' of the world is not in
its images, but in its functions. Function-
ing takes place in time and must be explained
in time. Only that which narrates can make
us understand.\textsuperscript{7}

I do not think it is true that only that which
narrates can make us understand,\textsuperscript{8} and I believe that the

\begin{flushright}
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\textsuperscript{6}Ibid., p. 61.

\textsuperscript{7}Ibid., pp. 62-63.

\textsuperscript{8}In a subsequent essay ("Shooting America," p. 24)
Sontag says "The photographed world stands in the same
relation to the real world as stills do to movies." Clearly Sontag goes much further than would Susanne Langer
in depreciating the intellectual value of images (cf. Chap. VII,
fn. 21). Langer's fundamental insistence that an image
shows how something appears while a model shows how
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relationship of photography to narrative form is actually more ambiguous than Sontag's statement would imply. I think she is right to point out, as she does in a subsequent essay,\(^9\) that looking at photographs can create "a false sense of ubiquity, a deceptive mastery of experience," and can, as Max Kozloff puts it, "delude us to think we have been somewhere else in time and space."\(^10\) This peculiar power means that the inner narratives which photographs engender are not binding, that photographs can, as Kozloff says, suggest "any meaning, or none at all."\(^11\) Photographs entice narrative too easily; they lead us to assume we know things we do not really know, things we have not really experienced. Thus photographs confuse us.

something is constructed and operates is, I think, only superficially consistent with Sontag's stress on the necessity of narrative for conveying understanding. This is true (by definition) if by understanding one means discursive understanding. But of course Langer does not believe that the limits of knowledge are set by the limits of discourse.

See also, John L. Fell, Film and the Narrative Tradition.


\(^11\)"Critical and Historical Problems of Photography," p. 289. Kozloff's whole statement is worthy of quotation. He writes, "Photography's chief characteristic is its malleability--the way it can suggest any meaning, or none at all... photography is a limitless source of life's raw material--charged by the contradiction that what it presents is simultaneously vicarious and extremely graphic."
The essentially confusing element, both experimentally and theoretically in connection with the issue of narrative, is a photograph's relationship to time. Kozloff writes:

Something seen in a photograph convinces us that it, or a presence very like it was once there—but at the same time we realize there is nothing that stops it from changing shape or from aging and shifting. The photograph has only arrested one of 'its' mutations—whether eventually meaningfully or no. And those who do photography, treating of its limitations that way, may flow with it, omni-attentive, at the beck of an infinite series of obscure transformations. Variably lucid as a record of its instant, the photographic image might be unclear, opaque in ours. The surfaces that it represented are all we can know, for the reason that they had to be dislocated in the psychohistorical sense.¹²

In another place Kozloff suggests that, "In its special form of consciousness, camera work theoretically lies between fiction with its narrative techniques and painting with its metaphoric ones."¹³ This is precisely the boundary position I had in mind in claiming that the collage method itself lies between discursive and non-discursive symbolization, containing elements of both. My

¹²Max Kozloff, "New Japanese Photography," p. 43. Kozloff relies on Lifton's essay "Protean Man" for the central theme of his article, calling photography "the protean medium incarnate."

rationale for this ultimate claim rests upon three subsidiary ones. First, photography itself, while it is not a narrative form, evokes in the viewer an impulse both to fantasize\textsuperscript{14} and to make narrative explanations, carrying forward the "series of obscure transformations" implicit in the photograph. (This characteristic legitimizes, in photographic-aesthetic terms, what I earlier called double-fidelity in my interview method.) To account for this I would cite the illusion of stillness in a photograph which raises the question of a before and after,\textsuperscript{15} and what Kozloff calls the "prodigiously evidential" quality of photographs which contrasts with their failure to convey

\textsuperscript{14}Sontag writes ("Photography," p. 61): "A photograph is both a pseudo-presence and a token of absence. Like a wood fire in a room, photographs--especially those of people, of distant landscapes and faraway cities, of the vanished past--are incitements to revery. . . . The lover's photograph in a woman's wallet, the poster photograph of a rock star over an adolescent's bed, the snapshots of a cabdriver's children, above his dashboard--all such talismanic uses of photographs express a feeling both sentimental and implicitly magical, attempts to contact another reality." Both Sontag and Kozloff comment on the sense of pathos and nostalgia which photographs can evoke, a product of their evident relation to pastness. This quality is no doubt important for the kinds of fantasies photographs tend to elicit.

\textsuperscript{15}This is the question upon which the procedure in the Thematic Apperception Test is based. The test instruction asks the subject to look at a picture and tell a story including speculation on what is happening now in the scene, what led up to this moment, what will develop later, and what feelings are suggested.
any meanings that are inescapable or irrefutable.

Second, a single photograph suggests a proliferation of narratives, a mosaic of possible interpretive lines. Sontag writes:

A photograph is only a fragment. With the passage of time its original connections become unstuck; it drifts away, into a kind of soft abstract pastlessness, and open to any kind of reading (and collage-matching) except a straight one.  

And again:

Poetry's commitment to concreteness and purity of language parallels photography's commitment to pure seeing. Both imply discontinuity, fragmentation, wrenching things from their context (to see them in a 'fresh way'), then reassembling them arbitrarily, by collage.

In making a collage one plays with the photographs, imagining their alternative relationships to each other as one changes their relative shapes, sizes and positions. One creates a multitude of potential contexts for each picture, and with every new context an altered matrix of narrative implication. In a sense the collage process restores an interconnectedness of meaning which Sontag argues photography itself denies.

Finally, I think the overall collage method as it

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has developed in my work (including the process of preparing to make a collage, its actual construction and then a sequence of interviews) heightens the tensions around narrative which are pregnant in the photographic medium itself. I seek in the entire experience to intensify the dialectic of holistic envisagement and linear explanation so as to explore a wide range of symbolic modes which play a part in formative process. The explicit inclusion of this rhythm is, I believe, a vital part of the excitement my collage-making subjects have felt. I have speculated that perhaps this excitement has to do with a relatively infrequently encountered combination of left and right brain symbolic processes which in the collage experience are called upon to perform in tandem.\textsuperscript{18}

\textsuperscript{18}David Galin writes, "... each hemisphere is specialized for a different cognitive style; the left for an analytical, logical mode for which words are an excellent tool, and the right for a holistic, gestalt mode, which happens to be particularly suitable for spatial patterns, as well as music." (p. 6) Reporting research by J. E. Bogen, Galin writes, "... one of the reasons that the commissurotomy patients [those who have had the two brain hemispheres surgically disconnected from each other so that they cannot function together] appear so normal to casual observation is because the activities of daily life do not demand much integration of holistic and analytic thought." (p. 14) Quotations from "Implications for Psychiatry of Left and Right Cerebral Specialization: A Neurophysiological Context for Unconscious Processes."

Jung writes, "Complete redemption from the sufferings of this world is and must remain an illusion. ... The goal is important only as an idea; the essential thing is the opus which leads to the goal: that is the goal of a lifetime. In its attainment 'left and right' are united,
conscious and unconscious work in harmony." Jung quotes from Acta Joannis: "Harmony of wisdom, but when there is wisdom the left and the right are in harmony: powers, principalities, archons, demons, forces . . ." This is in accord with Jung's basic idea that the principle of the relation between conscious and unconscious is mutual compensation in a reciprocal dialectic of equilibration. ("The Psychology of the Transference," p. 200.)

See also Robert E. Ornstein, The Psychology of Consciousness, chap. 3, "The Two Sides of the Brain."
CHAPTER IX

THE COLLAGE METHOD

The 'operations' I experience in making these collages have proved to be models for what I do and for much of what I have done with just about all the bits and pieces and stuff and things and events and occasions of the entire life I live.

--Donald Weisman

The logic of Walter Benjamin's famous 1936 essay to which I have referred is, in what it implies methodologically for a psychology interested in the study of experiential processes, not very far removed from Marshall McLuhan's much later and even more famous speculations on the psychological impact of mass media.¹ Benjamin quotes a sentence by Paul Valéry to suggest the dimensions of a cultural transformation which the name McLuhan now symbolizes: "Just as water, gas, and electricity are brought into our homes from far off to satisfy our needs in response to a minimal effort, so we shall be supplied with visual or auditory images, which will appear and disappear at a simple movement of the hand, hardly more than

a sign."

The "industrialization" of photography (and other
technologies of mass communication) creates, in addition to
a vastly altered political situation which Benjamin de-
scribes, an altered psychological one as well. I recounted
my experience with the TAT to suggest very concretely
what let me to begin thinking critically about the assump-
tions of projective testing. But it is one thing to find
such assumptions inadequate, and another to create a more
contemporary alternative. For one thing, if one opts as I
did for the McLuhanesque non-linearities of collage then
one encounters Benjamin's mechanical reproduction problem
head-on. That is, if one wishes to immerse one's research
subjects in precisely the image profusion that McLuhan
describes, how is one to obtain the images?

I wanted to provide a wide array of pictures
(ultimately the number has come to over four hundred),
in color as well as black and white and including every
kind of subject matter and style of treatment I could find.
I wished to enable my subjects (who have in fact been more
colleagues in this research than subjects in any conven-
tional sense) to choose as many or few of the pictures as
they wished to use, and then to cut, tear or mutilate them
in any way they wished prior to pasting them on a board
to make a collage.
The pictures used in a collage would, in good mass society fashion, be consumed in the process, and of course could not be recycled in their original form. I strongly believed that any method which would preserve a given set of pictures intact would interfere with precisely the enfranchisement over these materials which I wanted to extend. Further, in order to gain a modicum of control over this process so as to be able to make at least some evaluations of a comparative nature, I wanted to be in a position to present an identical set of photographs for each new candidate to employ. The Benjamin mechanical reproduction problem appeared here: how was I to obtain 400 diverse photographs, reproduced by means that would suggest mass production techniques (I felt that actual photographs would not invite cutting—they would still retain too much of an aura), with a great many copies of each?

The solution to that problem did not appear quickly, but ultimately Time-Life Books gave me fifty copies of each of thirty Time-Life photographic volumes, from which I was able to get all the pictures I required.2 There is

2The Time-Life books which I have used include seventeen volumes of the Life Library of Photography, eight volumes of This Fabulous Century (one volume for each decade of the twentieth century and a prelude volume covering the period 1870-1900), four volumes from The American Wilderness series, and The First Cities from the Emergence of Man
probably no firm that could have better solved my problem, and certainly none that more universally symbolizes "art in the age of mechanical reproduction." In view of this, and considering the scope of my project, I have been tempted to take seriously a friend's suggestion that I call my method "The Olson Test of Time and Life."

In preparation for selecting from all these books the set of pictures to be made available to collage-making subjects, I relied upon a set of categories of core areas of formative process. The core areas are spheres of human activity in which, over the entire life-cycle, core images are established. They represent a schematic inventory of areas of primal human concern, and are comprised of:

1. Personal bonds . . . . This category includes sexuality, family, friendship and all other forms of human personal relationship.

2. Place . . . . . . . . Includes home, community, relationship to the polity and to societal issues.

series. Time-Life Books supplied me with fifty copies of each book. I am greatly indebted to this firm for this generous benefaction which has made my research feasible in the rather grand terms I envisioned. Nicholas Benton, Public Relations Director, understood my project immediately and went to great lengths to help me.
3. Work
   Includes all forms of learning, making, creating.

4. Death

5. Play

6. Transcendence

7. Nature
   Includes images relating to organic process, the body, nurturance, growth.

8. Technology
   Includes tools and images of the human-made environment.

9. Time

10. Symbols of the self
    A category largely redundant with others (in the sense that images in any category above play a part in symbolizing the self) but focusing particularly on that aspect of various images which assumes a special role in defining the self as such; such things as belief, mood, style, habitual personal patterns, etc.

Clearly there is a great potential for overlap between these categories, as there would be with any alternative set. Images of work, for example, include many images of technology. In addition, no picture can be assigned to a specific category solely on the basis of its content; its concrete function in any actual collage depends upon how it is construed. One person might see a picture of a baseball game primarily as an image of competition
(hence as a form of personal relationship, category 1); another might see it as a reminder of an old hometown (category 2); another primarily as an image of recreation (category 5). For another it might be a reminder of a sense of inadequacy at sports (hence a symbol of the self, category 10).

These problems notwithstanding, the list of core areas was very helpful in choosing a balanced set of pictures, just as it has been in reviewing and interpreting the clinical material generated by the collage process. Because the collage process depends upon visual manipulation it was desirable that the pictures represent a range of variation on several visual-content dimensions: a balance of black and white pictures and those in color; a range of size; some in which abstract pattern predominates over recognizable subject matter; a range of people represented in the pictures in terms of age, ethnicity, economic status, sex, geographic area. In addition to pictures, the materials made available includes an array of other things: pieces of cloth of varying textures, bits of clothing ranging from blue denim jeans to part of a nylon slip to material from a gray wool suit, rope, wire, a dollar bill, aluminum foil, birch bark, an envelope, cotton, sandpaper, and circles, squares and triangles in two different sizes and three different colors of
construction paper.

All of the pictures and materials are mounted on eleven cardboard panels of 3 1/2 feet by 4 1/2 feet. Both surfaces of the panels are used, so the process of selecting the elements one wishes to use in a collage consists initially of scanning twenty-two panels. The panels are hinged and mounted on a display apparatus (like those used to display posters in an art store) so that one can either stand or sit in front of the panels and flip them so as to scan all the materials. Small samples of the non-picture materials are attached to the panels; larger samples for use in collages are available in a basket nearby. The panels are designated by letter (A-V) and each picture is numbered. Copies of each picture, again for actual use in the collage, are available in folders keyed to the panels by letter and number. Each panel contains fifteen to twenty pictures varying in size, content and style. (I also provide colored poster board backings, poster paint, magic marker and glue.)

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*I am indebted to Rudolf Arnheim for the idea of presenting the materials in this way. When I initially described this project to him Arnheim was reluctant to endorse the use of such a large number of pictures. When I insisted that that was precisely the nature of my method he said that it was then important to mount the pictures in such a way that each subject could be expected to see them all.*
The set of pictures and materials which I have chosen to use are in no sense an ideal set; in this situation the concept of an ideal set probably has no meaning. More significant is the concept of stimulus latitude, the range of tolerable variation permitted to stimuli intended to initiate identical acts. The collage process of the mind itself consists of an ever-emergent composition, a plethora of images constantly establishing new tensions. As an approximation to that collage one can point to the surface of one's desk, littered with the evidence of work in progress; to one's daily, weekly or yearly calendar, marked to indicate in outline how one has spent one's time, where one has gone, whom one has seen; to one's home or shop or office as a literal description of the space in which one lives and works; to one's diary, journal, scrapbook or album as an intimation of images in memory. In that sense the notebooks in which I have kept all manner of personal remnants are closer to the texture of my actual experience than the relatively more abstract and patterned collages I have also been making over the last few years.

4For a description of the use of self-made maps as an indication of the experienced space in which people live see Kevin Lynch, The Image of the City. I used this technique with great success in interviewing one of the survivors of the Buffalo Creek, West Virginia flood in 1972.
The notebooks have scraps of many things, but much of what I continue to deposit in them is very similar to things already there, similar enough to function as roughly equivalent images for me. Looking through those notebooks I can tell many stories of starts, false starts and prolonged experience, but for most autobiographical purposes I would not need everything I have saved. Some of those scraps stimulate in me essentially identical associations; they would be redundant images in my collage.

The pictures and materials on the panels are, again, another step removed from my notebooks. But I have found that I and the other people who have made collages from them have found them adequate. They have served perfectly well as symbols in the compositions we have wanted to make, designating various qualities of feeling we have wanted to indicate almost as well as referents taken more literally from our own environments.

Perhaps only I would find the materials from my own notebooks entirely satisfactory as raw materials for making a collage. Some larger number of people could use the pictures and materials on the panels, because for them the

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5 The population so far included consists mainly of young professional people, all white. I have also done a collage with a young woman, a survivor of the Buffalo Creek flood, who is not a high school graduate.
Time-Life pictures would constitute stimuli roughly equivalent to their own more personal albums. The theoretical plausibility for such equivalence is made clear by Langer:

Generalization is inherent in all acts, since perfectly identical situations do not occur, so 'repeated' acts would be impossible if they could not allow for ambient changes within a fair range of conditions having similar implementing values; for instance, one kind of food or another for eating, one avenue or another for running.  

But of course the range of stimuli having "similar implementing values" for a given act depends importantly upon how strongly motivated the act is. When one is separated from a lover, for example, it seems that anything and everything can bring the lover's image suddenly to mind; every word or place can seem to relate to some experience shared or some characteristic of the lover, and can serve as a (scarcely needed) stimulus for yet another inner rehearsal of memory or reverie.  

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7 Shakespeare in the first scene of Act 5 of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" gives these lines to Theseus:
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact.
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold:
That is the madman. The lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt.
In this sense the collage process has been, at least for the people with whom I have worked, a remarkably strongly motivated activity. Apparently there is, in Bachelard's term, an "image hunger" or, I think more accurately, a hunger for the experience of composition (a chance to put some things together in experimental combinations), sufficiently strong that people can be very tolerant of what might seem to be inadequacies in the materials I present to them. Another reason for this wide tolerance is that (in contrast to the projective test situation) there is no mystification about what one is doing. One knows that one is using a fragment of a picture, for example, to serve as a vehicle for a whole complex area of feeling. Since "areas of feeling" have many aspects and pictures have many qualities it is perhaps not surprising that pictures which do not look like the scene one wishes to symbolize (at least from most external perspectives) can nevertheless serve quite well in a collage as an exemplar of that aspect of one's way of seeing and feeling the world. One man, for example, used in his collage a picture of Stonehenge to evoke a feeling of solidity in his childhood, placing near it a picture of a family in a covered wagon to add the additional valencing he required. What I am suggesting is that the stimulus latitude for the compositional task of collage-
making may be, ironically, broader than that for the projective tests with their self-consciously vague or ambiguous forms.

If it is true, as I think it is, that the collage process calls forth those immediate images funded by core constellations, then it is even more plausible that people would find in a wide variety of pictures qualities that would adequately well connect with some essence of what they wish to portray. The combination of a strong impulse toward enactment (at least in the protected and—senses—potentially healing sphere offered by the collage process), the polymorphous richness of the image fragments from which core images are themselves distilled, and the malleability of photographs as graphic stimuli make quite understandable what I have in fact observed: that people are quite willing to work with the materials I provide.

The act for which I hope my set of materials can function as equivalents for many people is the formative act of composition. Thus, assembling the pictures can serve both as a reminder of how one holds the various spheres of one's own life together in actual experience and as a protected zone in which one can make some new synthesis by a combination of personally characteristic and perhaps innovative means, taking a few new chances. Certainly the pictures I presently have on the panels would
function this way for only a limited range of people; beyond that range the materials would appear strange or perhaps simply boring or irrelevant. The dependence of the collage process on specifically recognizable pictures makes the process as culture-bound as the pictures. I consider that limitation to be the necessary correlate of a characteristic essential to the formative process I seek to explore through collage: its location in the concreteness of historical space and time.

As I have indicated, I do not take the idiosyncrasies of manifest content to be irrelevant to the transformations of imagery and feeling I am calling the formative process. Conversely, the continual creation and re-creation of images takes place in specific places and times, that is, in history. It is in connection with

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8 Perhaps even more so, since the idea of collage-making itself would seem strange in some places. But I suspect, as does Langer, that composition is a universal aspect of mentation. Certainly it is much less dependent on culturally determined forms of media experiences than collage.

9 This is why Langer writes (in her chapter "Idols of the Laboratory," Mind, Vol. 1, p. 53):
"It is even conceivable that the study of mental and social phenomena will never be 'natural science' in the familiar sense at all, but will always be more akin to history, which is a highly developed discipline, but not an abstractly codified one. There may be a slowly accruing core of scientific fact which is relevant to understanding mind, and which will ultimately anchor psychology quite firmly in biology without ever making its advanced problems laboratory affairs."
actual problems, actual life and the images it presents, that formative process is ideally studied. This is the context in which real intelligence, real passion, real concern are evoked.

There are, I believe, principles of formative process which can be abstracted from the idiosyncratic transformations one sees in any actual collage process, more formal criteria that have to do with categories of images, image constellations and ways of establishing tensions between images. But the task of abstracting such principles is a precarious one, always liable to the danger of omitting from a discernable pattern precisely that element of situational texture which has facilitated (or

My view of mental life as concrete, rooted in historical time, is a Protestant rather than Catholic position in terms of James Wall's comparison of Protestant and Catholic perspectives on evil. In a review of The Exorcist Wall says, "The Protestant view of the soul is relational, not spatial... The Protestant [understands good and evil] as relational terms... We happen to believe that the 'supernatural' operates within historical time, so we find no conflict between psychological and supernatural explanations. But The Exorcist is presented from the perspective that evil can be spatially located [in the Devil]--a premise compatible with Roman Catholic tradition, but unacceptable from the Protestant perspective."

"What is the 'self','" asks Ernest Becker, "if not a composite of social motives, of learned self-justification?" Becker goes on to formulate a rationale for a psychohistorical view of the self. (Becker, The Revolution in Psychiatry, pp. 189-95.)
inhibited) an actual transformation. So the collage process is inevitably and determinedly culturally relative, at least in its initial stages.

In fact, several weeks before someone is to make a collage I ask him or her to "get a box; put it in your room or office and start putting things into it that you might want to add to the materials I will provide for your collage, things (like pictures, letters, pieces of clothing, tickets, notes, etc.) that reflect your interests, things you like or dislike, things you're doing, working on and thinking about." That invitation, of course, reintroduces the element of variability of materials which I had sought via The Time-Life pictures to minimize. But it has seemed a reasonable compromise between a standardized situation and a highly personal one, offering several advantages

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10 My point here is a bit like that of the man who, upon reading a biographer's account of his life, remarked, "If I had not experienced all those things which my biographer has decided were unworthy of mention in my biography I would not be here today." And there is Justice Holmes' statement, "I do not give a fig for the simplicity this side of complexity, but I would give my life for the simplicity on the other side of complexity." See also, Gordon W. Allport, The Use of Personal Documents in Psychological Science.

11 In this its assumptions are precisely opposite to those underlying intelligence testing which has sought (with reason, given the role of "IQ" in the social order) to present itself as not culturally biased.
which I decided were not outweighed by those inherent in my retention of control over all the materials.

First, standardization is highly relative in any case since I had made no assumption of one to one correlation of given pictures to given meanings. The meaning of any collage element would depend on the images it evoked, though it has seemed reasonable to believe that shared patterns would be more recognizable with generally standardized materials. Second, inviting someone to add their own materials to the standard ones de-mystifies the experience, conveying a sense of control over the process, making it clear that I see the collage as potentially

12 This perspective is, of course, in marked contrast to Freud's method of dream interpretation where, in the extreme, images are seen within a set of standard psychoanalytic categories. Dream symbols have meanings in almost the dictionary sense in which words do. Thus, all idiosyncratic elements are eliminated in the interpretation. As Philip Rieff puts it (Freud: The Mind of the Moralist, p. 158):

"Whatever is idiosyncratic in the dream may be noted and then dismissed as part of the 'manifest' disguise, an effort of the dream's work to conceal a standard wish."

By comparison, Jung's double movement of interpretation--first personal amplification and then general or archetypal amplification--manages to provide a wider therapeutic context in which an image can acquire new meaning while its meaning on the personal level is not jeopardized.
formative for them as well as having research value for me. Since the materials are thus no longer all mine I clearly have no special knowledge of them. This explicit message helps to remove the Svengali aspect of mystery and privileged professional access so much a part of the projective test situation. Third, in starting to collect things several weeks in advance one initiates a rather specific mode of collage thought having to do with seeing the stuff of one's life as a kind of incarnation of one's concerns and inclinations.

Finally, the standardized material is itself made more usable by virtue of being mixed with personal artifacts. One finds it easier to see this material as symbolically plausible as one imagines it colluding with one's own store of scraps, each extending the range of the other and adding spontaneity to the experience. The material people bring with them often includes words, and

13 This element of advocacy has been a central concern in the clinically-based research Lifton has done, and in the work he and I have done together. See, Lifton, Home From The War, p. 17, Chap. 14; "Experiments in Advocacy Research;" and The Life of the Self, Chap. 7, "Advocacy: The Person in the Paradigm."

14 Margaret Singer, in a consultation about the problem of the collage instructions, confirmed my own inclination to de-mystify the process as much as possible. Her comments have been extremely valuable for my work.
I had sought in presenting pictures extracted from any verbal context (so as to avoid prior labeling) to reserve the words for the interviews. But I have found that items like personal letters, memos and notes when they are used in collages, function well with the photographic material, becoming images as dense as the pictures themselves.

Often I have given prepared collage instructions to the prospective collage maker at the same time I suggested "getting a box." These instructions are four pages long and present guidelines for making the collage and a rationale for its value. (A copy of the instructions is included as Appendix A.) The first paragraph of the instructions reads:

The process of making a collage and then talking about it can help people explore ways in which they give form to what they see and experience. The term "collage" simply means a composite image made of materials pasted together. The process of choosing and assembling those materials enables one to take a fresh look at what feels important in one's life and how things fit together.

Then the instructions distinguish seven steps in the collage process: 1. Scan and select, 2. Pull from the folders and basket the materials chosen, 3. Choose the background (any color, size and shape--from colored tagboard), 4. Focus and eliminate (cutting and tearing the elements in any fashion, and adding new elements from the panels if desired), 5. Arrange the composition:
"Let your feelings play freely with the images--do not hesitate to respond to what the images seem to want to do," 6. Final touches, and 7. Paste. ("After you have finished we can talk briefly about the collage you have made, and then have a more extensive discussion about it within a day or two.")

The initial instruction, to "scan and select," sets the tone for the entire process:

Sit in front of the large panels and scan all the pictures and materials. As you scan let your attention move to whatever seems to attract you.

During this preliminary scanning you will find that you feel attracted to some pictures, dislike others, and that many will not hold your attention at all. Note those pictures that seem especially interesting or significant, whether beautiful or ugly, whether you feel drawn to them or mildly irritated or even repelled by them... You can also include pictures that, for no particular reason, you just think might be useful. You may choose some pictures because they connect with things especially on your mind now or with certain memories, struggles or anticipations.

In this preparatory phase one's eyes wonder among the pictures, consciously remembering certain pictures for later use, noticing some subliminally,¹⁵ and apparently

¹⁵I have repeatedly seen evidence for this, for example, in a subject's returning to the panels later to find a picture they suddenly needed but barely remembered having seen, and in rather precise verbal descriptions in interviews of pictures that he or she would or would not have employed if they had been available--pictures actually on the panels.
not responding to others at all. The great quantity of
information which is absorbed during the period of scanning
suggests that this process is strongly, if implicitly,
guided by personal value.

What we call scanning is of course a fundamental
function in all organismic adaptation. But it assumes a
special prominence in modern life where psychic survival
amid profuse stimulus bombardment requires the capacity to
eliminate from one's awareness, deliberately, or at least
purposively, many stimuli which one never pauses to recog-
nize.16 Described in this fashion, the concept of scanning
thus includes the problematic notion that, as Langer puts
it, "an image or any presentation can be evaluated before
it has been recognized."17

Seeking to make sense of Bruner and Postman's find-
ings that a "'negative' value in the meaning of a presented
word or the significance of an image tends to delay or
distort perception," Langer provides an interpretation
which illuminates the rapidity and significance of the
scanning phase of the collage process:

16 Robert Lifton calls this capacity "the numbing
of everyday life," in The Broken Connection, in prepara-
tion.

the perceptual act, consummated in
human agents by the intellectual event of
object-perception, but starting as a deep,
complex, gradually gathering enactment of
a total sensory impulse; an impulse elicited
from the peripheral receptor organ by some
ambient event, but propagated through the
brain via many paths, and entraining all
sorts of impulses--defensive, conative, or
more vaguely emotive--as elements of itself
along the way. Its psychical phase develops
gradually, however fast its completion may
seem; perception is not an instantaneous
act followed by discrimination and evaluation,
but is built up by processes of discrimina-
tion, each of which imposes some value on the
ultimate form. The smallest element, going
into its own psychical phase at its own
time... may give the percept a cathexis
stemming from the past of the organism
before the intellectual phase of the
sensory act is completed.

The significance of these findings in
human psychology... lies in the objective
demonstration that value may be adumbrated
before perception of forms is complete;
indeed, the expectant, covert anticipation
of the full percept appears to be an emotively
tinged process, missed in our ordinary intro-
spective analysis because of its minuteness
and transitory character. The complexity of
the human perceptual act, which culminates
in the recognition of a word, an image or
some other closed form, allows earlier
phases to be felt in other than cognitive
ways, either as an uneasiness about the coming
presentation or an eager expectation of it,
growing as the percept emerges.\(^\text{18}\)

\(^{18}\) Langer, Mind, Vol. 2, pp. 115-16. Langer goes on
to report that Lazarus and McCleary use the term "subcep-
tion" to signify such discrimination without awareness.
Carl Rogers makes this one of the postulates (number 10)
in his "Theory of Therapy, Personality and Interpersonal
Relationships."
Much of the entire collage process consists of the "realization" or "carrying forward" of numerous psychic acts ensuing from choices whose force has been felt without being fully appreciated cognitively. So Langer's suggestion that "value may be adumbrated before perception of forms is complete" provides an interpretation not only of the phase of picture scanning, but of the mode of unaware deliberateness, a spontaneous decisiveness which characterizes the compositional phases of the collage process and the interviews as well. Early in my collage work it was precisely this unknowing choice-making which puzzled me because it so belied a bifurcated conscious-unconscious model of mind. Speaking of his own collage making (and with a sense like Langer's that something problematic is going on) Donald Weismann writes, "I find

Erikson, in his first Godkin Lecture, emphasizes the importance of the infantile version of scanning, which is the baby's attentive watching of the mother's face and eyes while nursing. Then, in his second lecture, he connects this with the process of scientific concept formation. He writes, quoting Einstein, "'Taken from a psychological viewpoint (a certain) combinatory play seems to be an essential feature in productive thought--before there is any connection with logical construction in words or other kinds of signs which can be communicated to others. . . . All our thinking is of this nature of a free play with concepts; the justification for this play lies in the measure of survey over the experience of sense which we are able to achieve with its aid.' The word translated here as survey is Übersicht, better translated as overview, with the connotation of a free scanning of a wide horizon."
myself saying that in working toward a coherency of
'rightness' I use as a standard— an exemplar of correctness— something which for me does not yet actually exist, and will not exist until the collage has been created."

This firm but unelaborated conviction, this as yet non-discursive sense of "rightness," is what propels the collage process, giving it from the start an ineluctable depth.

Weismann continues, mirroring Langer:

The materials, objects, images which I either create or select as part of the search for a collage are not arrived at randomly. In those prolonged acts of visual perception of which I have spoken, I become aware of chains of events running inside me. These events feel like special impressions made upon the steadily running continuous wave of visual perception. It is as if the means of visual perception, so long as we are awake, run more or less steadily like an electric current. This is a kind of strong constant. Now, when these prolonged or more intense acts of visual perception are experienced, no matter how subtly or delicately, it is as if the special form or pattern of these acts becomes the modulating force for the entire and powerful current of perception. The whole continuous flow of visual perception seems to take on the qualities of these special perceptions, and in the process these qualities are immensely amplified. With these specific qualities now modulating the general current of visual perception, the whole body feels as if it also has taken on their character. One begins to act in accordance with the prevailing mood set up by the particular chain of perceptual events. And one 'plays along,' much as the players do in the best of musical jam sessions after they have 'gotten with it.'
To remain in the mood and to act in accordance with this mood as it shifts with the linkages of perceptual events—that is the trick.19

Acting in ways consonant with the dominant mood is indeed the trick, but I have repeatedly been surprised to see how quickly the intent of the scanning phase is grasped and an incipient personal project initiated. In the winter of 1974 I used the collage method while interviewing a young (twenty-four year old) woman in West Virginia who had survived in 1972 Buffalo Creek flood disaster. (See Appendix B for interview transcript and commentary.) This woman did not know the word collage (she called her collage "posters") but as I explained the process to her she immediately understood and responded, "Oh, I see, you

19 Weismann, "The Collage As Model," pp. 99-100. Writing about the establishment of "mood" through the accumulation of the kinds of acts of visual perception (as well as other forms of perception) Langer says: Emotional reactions are always to our own impulses in situations which do not immediately let them pass into action, that is, obstructions, long or briefly unmet needs, and especially conflicting motivations, which may be large or almost imperfectibly small. The small ones are the neglected ones, of which we may take no notice at all. They just belong to the ever-moving situation in which one lives. Yet they may summate to impart a general feeling tone to the passage of life in its situational context. (Mind, Vol. 2, p. 277.) Langer's idea that "value may be adumbrated before perception of forms is complete" is really a formula for what is called intuition as, for example, when one person meets another and is attracted or repelled without, at first, realizing why.
want me to show you how I'm tryin' to piece my life together." After three hours of intense and occasionally anxious work she was finished. After we had talked for several hours about what she had done she reflected, "I think it's a great accomplishment to have put this together, and in so short a time. I'm amazed at myself for having done it. And it's really true. The whole thing is completely true and completely me. It's my life. All these pictures--they're none of us, and yet, they're all of us. I'm in it everywhere, in every bit of it. It's where I've come from, where I've been, and where I can't get to."

This woman made her collage in the small trailer where she and her family live in the Buffalo Creek hollow. I hadn't been able to bring my picture-panels with me so she had had to scan the pictures by flipping through them on the kitchen table. Almost immediately she was arranging the ones she wanted into piles; soon there were four piles and ultimately five. This initial sorting determined the form of the collage composition she then made: she really made two collages that were closely connected and yet also, as she told me, "don't fit together at all."

One had four sections (dominated by a dark panel related to images of the flood) that flowed together and collectively suggested "how I feel most of the time:" the impact of the flood on her relationship to her homelife, husband,
children, love, and struggles to attain "peace of mind."
Another panel, which she placed off to the side, portrayed
memories of childhood, and she insisted, "This has nothing
to do with all that over there." As with most of the other
Buffalo Creek survivors, the day of the flood divided all
one's experience into a "before" and "after." In her
collage this woman had found the courage to stay with her
mood and carry through her intentions. And I couldn't
have agreed with her more; it was a "great accomplishment."

With the exception of this particular collage made
in West Virginia, all of the others have been done in my
living room. I tell the prospective collage-maker to keep
an entire afternoon or evening free for the collage-making,
and when he or she arrives at my house we begin by dis-
cussing the instructions over coffee or tea. I demonstrate
the collage panels on which the pictures are mounted (which
I call the "collage tree"), and point out the whereabouts
of other materials (tagboard backings, scissors, rubber
cement, etc.). I also ask whether her or she would like
music, and if so I point out a variety of records:
classical, rock, folk, jazz. Then I leave, saying that I
will be available in the next room if there is a problem.
Sometimes once the process is underway I go out, perhaps
to a movie, promising to return in a couple of hours.

The impression that I hope to convey is that of
providing a safe space in which a person can feel protected in taking the formative risks that the collage process invites. It has no doubt been important that these experiences have taken place in my house, in a situation in which I feel comfortable in offering what Henri Nouwen calls "hospitality." 20 My living room has a large rug, and most people end up working in the open space on the floor, sometimes in front of a fire. This situation is, of course, not at all "sterile" in the laboratory sense, or even replicable in other than a very approximate way from one person to another. What I do hope is reproduced is the quality of the invitation extended, that of offering open, inhabitable space where one can undertake an exploration. My own excitement about the collage method is certainly part of the equation too, and the fact that my hallway is lined with stacks of Time-Life books no doubt conveys a spirit of commitment to this work.

During the collage-making itself I want to be present for the subject in the sense that he or she will feel safe and will know that the situation does have boundaries. At the same time I do not want the subject to feel bothered or observed. As I have come through

experience increasingly to respect the power of this method
I have also come to appreciate the importance of providing
whatever context seems to be required in order to make the
situation feel safe. During the interviews following the
making of the West Virginia collage to which I have referred
the woman said, "I feel like I just laid out my whole life
and just about everything about me to an almost total
stranger, and I don't know why I did it." She had suddenly
realized that she had exposed more of herself than she
thought she was exposing, and her psychological nudity
caught her by surprise.

The capacity of the collage method to produce such
a sudden feeling of unanticipated self-exposure derives
from two intertwining factors in the experience itself.
The fact that the perceptual acts upon which the method
rests are emotionally (and cognitively) richer than one is
aware as one is working ("value may be adumbrated before
perception of forms is complete . . .") combines with the
impulse the method induces toward potentially healing self-
disclosure. One senses in the collage situation a healing
opportunity, and one uses it to address personal issues
one has rarely addressed so directly, inclusively and
quickly. In fact, I had stayed with this woman in West
Virginia as she made her collage, listening and responding
as she provided a running monologue concerning the choices
she was making. Still, it was not until we had concluded several hours of interviews that the sudden new knowledge manifested in her "posters" was assimilated as part of our growing friendly collaboration.  

If I were to choose one quality that has most characterized the entire collage process for all the people with whom I have worked it would be the intensity of the experience. Some people have made their collages in as few as two and a half hours, others have taken nine or ten; the mode has probably been around four. Just as the woman from West Virginia had her own way of approaching the collage task, immediately sorting the pictures into piles, so it has been with each of my subjects. The nature of the task seems to elicit very idiosyncratic styles of approach, and all of that becomes part of the data (to be explored in the interviews) which the method generates. Some people, for example, have insisted upon looking at all the pictures one at a time; some have found it necessary to have a conceptual or thematic construct in their minds before they

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21 In the summer of 1975 when as the result of the public disclosures of CIA involvement in my father's death I got a special sort of indirect message about the power of the collage. Having seen me and my family on TV and sympathizing with our plight as a survivor herself, this woman wrote me a kind letter of support. Not knowing exactly what to say in this difficult situation she wrote, "... but you know me almost as well as I know myself and with your knowledge and understanding you know how I feel."
approach the pictures, some scatter the pictures all over
the room during their initial immersion, others maintain a
visible order throughout their work. Edgar Levinson has
written of the "homologues"—isomorphisms between content
and form—which characterize experience, such that once a
form or pattern is perceived its homologues can be seen to
reverberate at various levels of abstraction in other
spheres. This is a key area of investigation for the
collage, where the transformations of form that take place
between the approach to the collage, the collage-making
itself, the interviews and the days which intervene between
them, and the configurations of the collage-maker's life
itself can become an explicit subject of exploration.

But however idiosyncratic the collages have been,
the intensity of the experience itself has not varied much.
The hours spent making the collage pass quickly, people
forget how late it is and want to linger in the experience;
often people who had to go to work the next morning have not
left my house until after 2 A.M. The collage process seems
to have a special capacity for inducing what Mihaly
Csikszentmihalyi calls a "flow experience." He says that

22Levinson, The Fallacy of Understanding, pp. 142-53.

23"Flowing: A General Model of Intrinsically
Rewarding Experiences," by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, The
such experiences are characterized by a merging of action and awareness, a centering of attention on a limited stimulus field, a loss of a sense of the self as a construct to be interposed between stimulus and response, a sense of being in control of one's actions and the relevant environment, a sense that coherent, non-contradictory demands for action and unambiguous feedback emanate from the experience itself and a feeling that the experience provides its own intrinsic rewards. What seems most pertinent to the collage process is the experience of centering, focusing on a limited task which engages all aspects of the self including the body (note Weismann's observation that the "whole body feels as if it has taken on" the special qualities of one's visual perceptions). 24 The feeling that a relevant action (a specific act of choosing, arranging, cutting or pasting) can ensue from one's perceptions contributes to the motivational force generated by the perceptions themselves. I find appealing Csikszentmihalyi's formulation of the way in which such

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University of Chicago, manuscript to appear in The Journal of Humanistic Psychology under the title, "Play and the Nature of Intrinsic Rewards: A Formal and Empirical Model." I am indebted to John MacAlloon for calling my attention to this paper.

24 Schachtel speaks of the "memory of the body" as contrasted to the conscious or subconscious memory of the mind. (Experiential Foundations of Rorschach's Test, p. 131.)
motivation in flow experiences derives from the centering tendency inherent in the nature of the self. He writes:

It is one of the most basic needs of self-conscious organisms to have an organized experience of their own selves. One needs to know that one's actions are not random, that they are not completely controlled from the outside, that this organized center of awareness that is the self can cope with its environment. 25

I think that the capacity of the collage process to provide a context for obtaining a view by the self of its own organization and organizing processes, while at the same time not relying primarily upon introspection, 26 is


26 Paul Goodman writes (Gestalt Therapy, p. 389): "... the self, aware in middle mode, bursts the compartmenting of mind, body, and external world. Must we not conclude that for the theory of the self and its relation to the 'I,' introspection is a poor primary method of observation, for it creates a peculiar condition? We must begin by exploring a wide range of concernful situations and behaviors. Then if we resume the introspection, the true situation is apparent: that the introspecting ego is a deliberate restrictive attitude of the psycho-somatic awareness, temporarily excluding the environmental awareness and making the body awareness a passive object."

Goodman continues (p. 396): "The 'mystery' of the creative for psychoanalysis comes from their not looking for it in the obvious place, in the ordinary health of contact. But where could one expect to find it in the classical concepts of psychoanalysis? Not in the super-ego, for that inhibits creative expression; it destroys. Not in the ego, for that originates nothing, but either observes or executes, or suppresses and defends itself. It cannot be the ego that is creative, for the artist cannot explain himself; he says, 'I don't know where it comes from, but if you're
what makes the "merging of action and awareness" so absorbing. One is able, via the collage medium, to regain and assert the vitality of the self as a formative organizing center, even while acknowledging those spheres and issues in relation to which one is confused, uncertain, even uncentered. To experience oneself as a source, in Erikson's terms to be "activated and central rather than inactivated and peripheral," is the mark of psychological vitality.  

In the sequence of steps which the collage method entails—making the collage, looking at it and reflecting upon it, talking about it in the interviews—the collage itself, as a physical thing, plays a crucial role. Therefore the issue of the degree to which people can, in fact, use this medium to explore and express things they feel about themselves and the world becomes a fundamental

interested in how I do it, this is what I do—" and he then begins a boring technical explanation that is the subject-matter of art criticism and art history but not of psychology. Therefore psychoanalysts guess that the creative must be in the id—and there it is well hidden. Yet indeed, an artist is not unaware of what he does; he is quite aware; he does not verbalize it nor theorize it, except a posteriori; but he makes something by handling the material medium and solving a rough new problem that defines itself as he goes along."

27I quote from memory remarks Erikson made at Wellfleet, Massachusetts in August 1973.
question for the method. Contained in this general question are a wealth of subsidiary but equally thorny ones involving expressionistic versus formalist theories.

28 This question was put to me very sharply in two slightly different forms in the summer of 1973. In a discussion at his home in Provincetown Robert Motherwell argued that collage is a language with its own assumptions, history and techniques, in which our subjects would be untutored and illiterate. Asking that they use this esoteric medium to say something about themselves would be, according to Motherwell, like asking English-speaking persons to tell their life story in Chinese. Motherwell conceded that the collages might provoke people into saying things that were interesting or important, but insisted that one could not expect non-collage artists to use the medium with any degree of expressive fluency. Motherwell's concession to the possibilities of dialogue about the collage was thus in essence simply a statement that anyone's "inept" collage could become a stimulus for projection.

Peter Brooks came to the same conclusion about the futility of attempting to employ an artistic medium as a vehicle for expression, but this argument was based on slightly different reasoning. He made the formalist point that the traditions and physical materials of any art form mediate and limit what can be done in that medium at a given time, and therefore one cannot assume that "outer form [in the collage] has any necessary relationship to inner form [in the self]." Second, he argued that people have seen collages and would fall into visual and perceptual clichés, simply reflecting in their collages things they had seen in Picasso and Braque in a walk around the Museum of Modern Art. Certain assumptions, Brooks argued, are built into the medium. In a sense Brooks was saying people would know too much about the medium while much of what they knew would be undigested; Motherwell was saying people would be too ignorant to use the medium at all. The points come together in the conclusion that people would produce simply cultural and visual clichés.

The really perplexing and, to me, interesting issue in all this is the relation between inner and outer form, the question of what kinds of information, about the structure of the self are loaded into the perceptual and compositional acts; what it means when someone says to me "this collage feels right."
of art, the constraint imposed upon my subjects by their often limited artistic skill (at least in the sense of their being untrained), the question of how one would recognize a psychological characteristic in a collage if one in fact assumed that people really could project their feelings into a collage—what kind of catalogue of standard forms would one use?

I have no definitive and final answers to these questions; some of what I do believe I will reserve for inclusion within the context of a discussion of the relative contribution of the visual and verbal material to the overall data which the method produces. Here I would emphasize what I have repeatedly observed: that the people with whom I have worked have done extremely inventive things in their collages, and the inventiveness has been in the service of opening up new psychological territory so that it can be seen as well as talked about. This is what they believe. In order to document that visual inventiveness I would have to describe individual collages in detail, and that can best be done in a separate context.29 In any case I have

29 As one example I would cite again the collage made by the woman in Buffalo Creek who survived the 1972 flood disaster in which many people in her family were killed. Part of her process of regaining full psychological vitality has involved having an essentially non-sexual extra-marital affair with a truck driver. Even her mother-in-law has colluded in making arrangements with kids and
in mind nothing that would strike one as grand or surprising, but rather subtle manipulations of picture, paper and material in ways that have struck the collage-maker and me as particularly apt and suggestive in a specific situation. And, further, I have not found the collages to be visual clichés, partly because I have not seen them as graphic art (that is, as purely visual solutions to purely visual problems), partly because hackneyed, trivial and trite elements form some probably not insubstantial proportion of everyone's psychic geography, and finally because it has been extraordinarily interesting to be in a position to observe precisely the ways in which the culturally trite is absorbed within the individually unique. It has seemed to me that the inventiveness people have shown in this

schedules so that she may see this man, since it has so obviously been an important source of new energy for her. In her collage this aspect of her life she depicted in what she called her "serenity corner," the only part of the collage that included any significant amount of color. There, near a picture of a large solid rock ("the kind of ground I'd like to stand on"), a peaceful lake ("the kind of quiet place I'd like to be") she pasted, in a central position, a picture of a large, heavy wooden door which mostly concealed a picture of a grassy meadow beneath it. But, as she showed me, the door could be lifted up, exposing a very small picture of a couple walking arm in arm which she had cut out from another larger picture and pasted in the meadow. That heavy door, "what it kept out and what it kept in" (her words), and what energies were made available for other parts of her life by spending some time "behind that door"—all this became a focal concern of our many hours of talk. (See Appendix B.)
medium and their proclivity and capacity to use the collage medium for their own purposes is something that one might reasonably have expected to find. There is something psychologically paradigmatic about the combinatorial task which collage imposes, something which, for cultural and historical reasons which apply at least in this culture, people quickly recognize and enter into via the essentially photographic materials I provide.

In the research with young adults in which the collage developed as a replacement for the TAT the collage-making session and the interviews which followed it have come after six to eight other interviews covering matters of life-history and current life/work situation. The model for employing the collage which emerged in that context involves five steps. The first begins several weeks before the collage is to be made when I tell the person about the process and suggest "getting a box" to save fragments of interest from one's own life. The second is the making of the collage itself. The third is an interview of no more than one hour, immediately following the making of the collage. The fourth is the period of time, usually two days, which intervenes between the first and second interviews. And the fifth is a much longer
interview, often of two to two and one-half hours.

Sometimes I have used additional interviews after the second; often I have used the collage with two interviews and no initial preparatory interviews; and I have begun to experiment with an indefinite number of interviews around the collage which becomes a kind of collage-therapy. But the model which has become the standard form is the two-interview sequence. This has provided a very satisfactory combination of results, important information of a research kind for me and useful self-exploration for the collage-maker. When the collage is finished I tack it to the wall and begin the interview there on the living room floor, maintaining as much as possible the mood and flow of associations stemming from the collage-making itself.

As a heuristic device to lend conceptual clarity to the place of the collage as a visual form relative to the theoretical and research issues we are interested in, Lifton and I have spoken of a "collage triangle":
Visual form in the collage
(aesthetic style)

Psychological content suggested by the collage itself and the interviews (formative processes in the collage and collage-making)

Life-form and life-form making (formative processes which sustain the life of the collage-maker)

The collage triangle suggests a three-way dialectic involving elements of differing symbolic closeness to the literal object one can point to as "the collage." Ultimately one hopes to be in a position, via the collage, to be able to say something about how psychological form is established and sustained in the life of a particular person (and perhaps to be able to make statements of a general kind about formative process in psychic life). But for the moment, as one begins the interviews, one has merely a strange conglomerate of pasted pictures which, one assumes, has an as yet undisclosed form of pregnancy.

The task of the first interview, necessarily brief because the subject is often tired, is to get an initial
phenomenological sense of the worlds the collage-maker has been inhabiting during the preceding hours. Toward this end the collage itself serves as a kind of map. Because the map is fresh, the feelings from which the collage choices ensued are still very much alive. And because they are so alive there is a reluctance to move outside them. These conditions establish the parameters of the first interview.

The task of this interview is a phenomenological one; its goal, however, is to get a sense of the images most impassioned at this moment in the person's life. Thus the rhythm of the interview moves between a ruminative, descriptive mode on the one hand and a more precarious imaginative extrapolation on the other. All of this can generate considerable absorption and excitement, but it is nonetheless prey to failures in what I earlier called the double-fidelity to picture and image.

The process of interpreting or evaluating the data is not distinct in this method from the process of generating it. As collage-maker and interviewer look together at the collage (one kind of data) they begin to talk (and in so doing generate data of another kind). A young lawyer who made a collage sensed this overlap and said she liked the collage method because it allowed for "due process"--tentative interpretations were always up
for review. And I think she was also relieved by a perception that if there is a very large subjective element in every psychological interpretation at least this method enlisted as a component the subjectivity of the subject.

Usually the interview starts itself, sometimes with the collage-maker simultaneously adding more glue to the composition's wobbly components. Often the talk at the beginning is about how surprised one is that so much time has gone by so quickly, how one went about the project, and almost inevitably, a comment about how content one now feels, how "right" the thing looks. Any of these observations can be pursued; certainly in the course of the discussion one will want to know a great deal about how the collage was made: what the initial feelings were as the task was approached, how the scanning and sorting process went, how the composition began to take shape, what was pasted down first, where (if at all) things bogged down. (Often there is a period of feeling "tired" just before the pasting--before the thing is given final form.) Generally such information comes out partly in a lump and partly piecemeal as compositional processes are remembered while a particular picture or cluster is being described.

An important part of the first interview which I try to do systematically is the collage tour. I simple ask the collage-maker to locate him or herself somewhere in the
collage where it seems feasible to start and then to trace a path around the collage, describing what the pictures or clusters bring to mind. The tour at this point is not exhaustive; there will be ample time later to learn more about specific configurations and transitions. Frequently the tour gets combined with a description of the process whereby the collage was constructed. In any case it is important to learn something about each of the elements in the composition.

Depending upon available time there are a number of other questions which are usefully raised in the first interview. One can ask, for example, "As you step back and look at the collage as a whole now, what strikes you about it?" "How does the overall form feel to you? Does it seem similar to or different from other familiar forms in your life, the way you describe your room, arrange your

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30 Renato Tagiuri writes ("Movement As a Cue in Personality Perception," p. 180): "There is, first, some question as to whether a line pattern conveys different information when interpreted as a path than it does when interpreted as a pattern qua pattern. . . . Paths can be distinguished in terms of the extent to which they yield inferences to such characteristics as direct/devious, confident/unsure of self, purposeful/aimless, cautious/impulsive, . . . rigid/pliable . . . afraid/unafraid . . . orderly/disorderly." See also Schachtel, Experiential Foundations of Rorschach's Test, p. 47.

A line pattern seen as a path becomes an avenue for movement, for the expression of an intention.
desk, plan your time, etc.? Are there pictures or clusters in the collage that seem too large or too small as you look at the composition now? Are there specific areas in the collage that strongly fascinate or repel you; are there spaces or places that seem especially inhabitable, places you could imagine being right now, people you would like to be with? What seems central in the collage?"

By the time the interview nears completion I hope to have a fairly clear impression of the most compelling images, the picture-theme combinations that have a particularly pressing energy associated with them. Obtaining such an impression involves, essentially, an abstraction or distillation from the collage so that its inner emotional logic is apparent. Usually I explain this goal quite directly to the collage-maker and suggest that toward this end it is useful to see the collage process as the construction of a daydream,\textsuperscript{31} adding that, "Once the collage is finished it helps to liberate it in a sense from its boundness to the materials you have pasted together. One way of doing this is to sit quietly for a few minutes just letting your eyes move around the collage, following

\textsuperscript{31}Many collagists, particularly those associated with Dada or Surrealism, have explicitly connected their work with dream and daydream and have used induced daydreams as a stimulus to their work. See H. Read, A Concise History of Modern Art, p. 96.
whatever path they choose, lingering as long as you like at any particular place. Then, when you feel ready, close your eyes and see how the collage appears to you."

After the person has closed his or her eyes I ask them, while keeping their eyes closed, to describe what they see. At this point some people try to reconstruct as much of the collage as possible from memory, anchoring their recollection around key forms in the collage. Others begin to observe an active metamorphosis in which the collage begins to transform itself, with pictures moving around, new shapes emerging, or one or two images suddenly looming and enveloping the whole space. Whatever happens, we stay with this inner exploration until there seems to be an impulse to open one's eyes and look again at the collage.

Usually there is some reaction to the discrepancy between what has been remembered or imagined and what one now sees. And often too the collage by now has acquired a luminosity (or numinosity) and the person is very intrigued by the capacity of the collage form to summarize such vast amounts of feeling. We discuss whatever feelings have been evoked, and then I suggest that what has happened as a kind of daydream can often be extended through a night dream. "As you go to sleep for the next couple of nights you might try bringing the collage to mind, and let your mind's eye imaginatively move around the collage as a whole
and especially around the images that intrigue you, thinking at the same time about some of the things we have discussed. As you do this you can suggest to yourself that you have a dream about these things and sometimes that will happen. Of course the dream may not look like anything directly from the collage. If you do have any dreams write them down in the morning and we can talk about them when we meet again."

At the conclusion of the first collage interview with one young lawyer I suggested that he look at the collage, then close his eyes and describe what he saw. After he had closed his eyes this man observed the raised contours of the collage (he had created relief and compression in the collage by folding pictures accordion-fashion in two places) evolve into the shape of a woman and then into a tree, which reminded him of a painting he had seen of a tree filled with children. Though we did not talk about it at the time, he had spent time the preceding summer in the mountains with his wife and son, recovering from an illness. While there he and his son had built a treehouse. After returning to the city in the fall he had enrolled in a course in carpentry.

Two days later when we met for the second interview this man told me he had not had a dream, but said he had thought a lot about his not having included any picture of
work in his collage. The picture from the panels that then came to his mind was one that was divided into four sections, each showing men working. But he said he couldn't remember what the men were doing. As it turned out that was a picture of carpenters. And in the days between the first and second interviews that omitted and partially forgotten picture had held a special interest because the image of carpentry carried further the compositional processes which the collage initiated. The formative place which carpentry had assumed as an image both of continuity (his mother had always been skilled at crafts) and revitalization became clear.

There is a strong psychological logic for incorporating dream within the collage process, a logic that goes beyond the association of dream with collage in the history of modern art. First, the virtualizing that takes place in the collage is in the mode of daydream. The elements employed retain their everyday associations and connections; what the collage permits is a reassembling of these elements rather than their total transformation according to the dictates of feeling as would take place
in dream. In this sense the collage is at a kind of boundary of actuality and virtuality; this is precisely its power in exhibiting the imagination at work, playfully, but very much in touch with one's real life situation.

But, of course, what dreams and daydreams share in common is their collage quality. This capacity for rearranging things in a new way is what makes the dream and daydream state such a powerful source of creative reformulation. Interestingly, this collage-quality of dreams has been long appreciated. Two brief passages from the Upanishads (sixth to eighth century B.C.) make this connection explicit:

When he goes to sleep [the dreamer] takes along the material of this all-embracing world, himself tears it apart, himself builds it up; he sleeps (dreams) by his own brightness, by his own light. In that state the person becomes self-illuminated.

When he falls asleep [the dreamer] takes from this all-comprehending universe the timber, cuts it down, and himself builds up of it his own light, by virtue of his

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32 At the end of Feeling and Form Susanne Langer includes "A Note on Film" in which she says that the "mode of appearance" of film is the dream mode: "it creates a virtual present, an order of direct apparition. That is the mode of dream." Photographs, as Sontag argues, have a more literal quality than film, but suggest narrative in a less authoritative sense. That is why, she argues, photography has an affinity with the dislocational style of Surrealism. And this, I think, ties together photography, collage and daydream.
own brilliance; when therefore he sleeps
this spirit serves as light for itself.
There are no carts, no teams, no roads,
but carts, teams and roads he fashions for
himself; there is no bliss, joy or desire,
but bliss, joy and desire he fashions for
himself; for he is the creator.33

33The first passage is from S. Radhakrishnan (ed.),
The Principal Upanishads (London: George Allen and Unwin,
1953, p. 257). The second is from Paul Deussen, The
Philosophy of the Upanishads (New York: Dover, 1966,
p. 302). I am indebted to Donna and David Wolf for calling
my attention to these passages.
The connection between these passages and modern
art is quite striking. Commenting on Picasso's method in
the cubist paintings around 1912 that immediately preceded
his work with collage, Herbert Read writes, "... although
the composition is derived from reality, there is no imme-
diate perceptual image to be represented—rather a group of
visual elements associated with a memory image. These
associated elements may indeed, as Picasso always insisted,
be derived from visual experience; but the important
distinction is that the painting becomes a free association
of images (a construct of the visual imagination) and not
the representation of a subject controlled by the laws of
perspective. The whole conception of 'realization,' as
attempted by Cézanne, had been abandoned. The focus is no
longer concentric, fixing the object in a spatial continuum
which recedes to a culminating point on our horizon. The
focus is in the picture-space itself, and to the organization
of his picture-space all visual elements contribute as color
and form, but not as the representation of an immediate per-
ceptual image. There is only one 'percept': that is the
combination itself: any elements from nature, that is to
say, visual images derived from the subject, are broken
down so that they may serve as structural elements. The
solid rock is quarried (broken up into cubes); the stones
are then used to build an independent structure."

"This is the moment of liberation from which the
whole future of the plastic arts in the Western World was
to radiate in all its diversity ..." (A Concise History
of Modern Painting, p. 96.)
A second connection of collage to dream has to do with what Langer calls the dream's capacity for the "completion of unfinished perceptions by the production of subjective imagery."\textsuperscript{34} The dream's images carry "charges of feeling, sometimes great, sometimes low-keyed" which are apt to be derived from "unnoticed or unimportant details in previously perceived situations, events, pictures and communications."\textsuperscript{35} Langer argues that Freud's model for dream production—in which the dream reproduces morally censured perceptions—looks unpromising in light of present neurological evidence. Rather, the experimental studies of picture perception done by Pötzl suggest that incompletely seen forms were favored dream material. Such forms, she writes:

\dots lend themselves most readily to fantastic distortion and interpretation; the images constructed at their suggestion are the readiest to take on symbolic value, which seems, indeed, to influence the process of their formulation . . . [In our ordinary picture perception] many existing forms are lost because the areas which compose them figure as 'spaces' in the picture, under the domination of the obvious represented objects . . . They go unnoticed, but in the formulation of dreams

\textsuperscript{34}Mind, Vol. 2, p. 283. Elsewhere (p. 262) she writes that "dreaming is a cerebral completion of acts which could not be overtly consummated."

\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., p. 280.
they sometimes give rise to the most important images. Yet all these 'peripheral' impressions, no matter what caused them to be peripheral, once they do appear in conscious perception as visions tend to undergo the same fragmentation and recombination, inversions, substitutions and often bizarre distortions as those which Freud found to be originally suppressed by fear or disapproval; and just like the emotionally rejected material, the most casually obscured, unrecognized forms—obliterated by retinal defects or bad presentation—lend themselves to such elaboration and interpretation and are ready vehicles for symbolic values. 36

The power of Langer's position is that it locates the predominance of trivial elements in dreams within the context of a general theory of acts pressing for completion. There is a striking tendency in dreams for elements drawn from everyday life to take on an expressionistic significance out of all proportion and relation to the role they play in waking life, a phenomenon Robert Lifton has termed "the primalization of the prosaic." But in positing that trivial images are the readiest to take on symbolic value (because they have little of their own) which influences the process of dream formulation, Langer does not account for the precision of the dream images in condensing into a single vision a highly charged presentation

36 Mind, Vol. 2, pp. 281-82.
of a relevant existential situation. She does say that it is the continual accumulation of more emotive impulses than can be freely, overtly spent in the social context of human life that provides the impetus for the "dream work." These are emotional reactions to our impulses "in situations which do not let them pass into action, that is, obstructions, long and briefly unmet needs, and especially conflicting motivations, which may be large or almost imperceptibly small. The small ones are the neglected ones, of which we take no notice at all." 

My collage work has taught me the importance of broad contextual location for the attribution of value to individual elements. This broad context, and its tendency

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37 Rudolf Arnheim writes ("Artistic Symbols--Freudian and Otherwise," pp. 219-20): "We are beginning to realize that during sleep, man re-enters into fuller possession of a basic and most valuable capacity of the human mind, which consists in representing abstract states of affairs by striking images. It is this capacity, badly impaired during our waking hours by Western culture, on which the artist also relies. Far from hiding their referent, artistic symbols give tangible appearance to the ideas they represent. They revive and clarify the issues of human experience."

Arnheim also gives an interesting clue as to why dream images can become emotionally colored by experiences remote from those out of which the specific images arose. He writes (p. 218), "In the human mind, different strivings are not completely insulated from each other, and therefore strong preoccupations may be expected to intrude into activities genuinely directed toward other aims."

to reverse or alter emphasis derived from more limited or immediately pragmatic considerations, often imputes value that diverges from or contradicts that obtained from a more limited perspective. In particular, elements associated with one's present situation (as opposed to those reaching further back in one's personal past) and those associated with immediate commitments (as opposed to those having some ultimate significance) tend to predominate in initial conscious responses. Dream (and daydream) tend to restore valuation commensurate with the breadth of core images.  

Jung makes a very similar point using the language of teleology to assert, essentially, that dreams have a prospective capacity because they are associated with acts involving the life of the organism and its psychic outlook. He writes "... the dream is, properly speaking, a highly objective, natural product of the psyche, from which we might expect indications, or at least hints, about certain basic trends in the psychic process. Now, since the psychic process, like any other life-process, is not just a causal sequence, but is also a process with a teleological orientation, we might expect dreams to give us certain indicia about the objective tendencies, precisely because dreams are nothing less than self-representations of the psychic life-process." (Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, p. 131.) In "General Aspects of Dream Psychology" (p. 258) Jung speaks of the "prospective" quality of dreams. One can think of this, in a way quite consistent with Langer's theory, as a sort of daring, honest, risk-taking tendency inherent in dream imagery in which psychic acts initiated but abandoned under the pressure of daily involvements are completed at night in accord with the subjective impression which the images have made. This process of completing the act at night gives the symbolization of dreams a special freedom, and makes it possible for their often strange configurations to propose solutions to problems, and to offer
Since core images are the most abstract as well as the most inclusive, their envisagement can employ the widest possible range of immediate forms. In addition, the impassioning of core images gives them a wide tolerance of presentational form. The dream image mediates between an immediate and, frequently, consciously appreciated valuational context, and one that transcends it temporally and connects it to issues in which the life of the self is directly at stake. Given these constraints the image chosen must be an ingenious compromise between triviality which will permit valuational range, and specificity in order that the reference of the dream image may be precise.

The collage process initiates a wealth of valuational acts whose impulses cannot immediately be fully expressed, both because their implications are only realized once the composition is complete and one has lived with it for a while and let it settle in, and because some acts are incompatible with others which, for one reason or another, one has chosen to complete instead. Because the collage materials are essentially pictures, rather than the diffuse situational ingredients one encounters in actual life, the forms of many complete acts (culminating in full perception)

new perspectives on existential predicaments. Dreams are wish-fulfillments in a specific sense—-they complete psychic acts.
are rather richly adumbrated in them, heightening the
tension to be resolved in a dream. Because the pictures
and the compositional process of the collage-making raise
in an extraordinarily concrete form questions which have
great life significance, the transparency of immediate con-
scious images to core images increases, as does the likeli-
hood that a dream will result, restoring a balance between
immediate and ultimate import.

Usually my collage subjects have had dreams, and
these become a central focus in the second interview. In
preparation for that interview, which usually follows
within two days (a brief enough interval that the collage
is still very fresh, long enough to allow for dreams and
ruminations), I spend a substantial amount of time reflect-
ing on the first one. The collage process produces data
of such a dense and complex kind that one needs ample time
to absorb it, and find one's way. I do this by tape-
recording the first interview and then listening to it
slowly, diagramming it in the form of the collage. Since
the aim of the first interview is essentially phenomenologi-
cal, this first step is a crucial one. On a large (2 feet
by 3 feet) piece of white paper I indicate the position
of all the collage elements. Then, as I listen to the
tape, I note key phrases about various pictures and clusters under the elements which elicited them. At the same time I draw arrows around the diagram, indicating the direction of movement in the interview. Under each notation about a given picture I draw a line, so that I will have a rough indication of how often that element is returned to during the interview. The arrows give me a sense of the important pathways between elements, and I try to keep track (by numbering the comments) of which pictures were discussed early and late in the interview.

Making this diagram also provides an opportunity for a sustained look at the collage. The visual criteria which I employ suggest no firm psychological conclusions, but they do force me to notice aspects of the composition which I might otherwise miss and, together with the interview material, help me begin to appreciate the structured, patterned quality of the collage-maker's experience. These criteria form a link, to be deepened and expanded as I learn more in the second interview, between what I can see in looking at the collage and hear in listening to the tape, and a structural analysis of the images which comes later as a

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40 Lifton and I refer to these as the "Hopkins Criteria," after Bud Hopkins who gave us a good lesson in how to look at collages, and visual compositions in general. Rudolf Arnheim has also taught me a great deal about essentially these same elements. See Arnheim's Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye.
part of the overall interpretation.

VISUAL CRITERIA:

**Number and density** of elements used

**Spacing/distance:** Juxtaposition, overlapping

sparseness, crowding, openness

Quality and degree of mutual infusion of elements

**Background/foreground** qualities

**Clustering**

**Differentiation/fusions**

**Centering/Handling** of borders and peripheral areas

**Cutting/tearing:** Ways of dealing with edges and boundaries

**Color/light/dark**

**Overall Form:** horizontals, verticals, obliqueness

**Shapes:** geometry (ovaling, squares, etc.)

**Weight:** Centers of gravity

**Size/relative sizes**

**Movement/dynamics**

**Balance/Significant symmetries**

**Rhythms**

**Simplicity/Complexity**

**Texture**

**Abstractive Levels**
Examining an interview in this much detail requires substantial discipline, but if the "bracketing" out of one's assumptions (to use the parlance of phenomenology) means anything at all it certainly requires a sustained effort to stay with the experience, living with it until its own configurations begin to emerge. The collage as a visual entity is a guide in this process, but my subjects have not been artists, so discerning the form in their constructions necessitates both a prolonged exposure and the interpolation of the interview material to illuminate the composition. The last of the visual criteria, "abstractive levels," is not really visual at all, or at least it soon raises issues that are not essentially visual. This has to do initially with the varieties of correspondence or relationship between collage elements and experience. In any one collage it is likely that some aspects of the person's life will be pictured rather literally and others more obliquely, metaphorically and (at least in the beginning), confusingly.

But, of course, the question raised in thinking about "abstractive levels" in the collage itself soon pose more profound problems about the symbolic constructions inherent in this person's way of organizing his or her experience, difficult questions about that inner composition of images. As I diagram the interview I think about
these things, and make notes of the things that are especially unclear to me to raise in the second interview. In the course of all this my eyes and my ears get attuned—I begin to think and feel in terms of this collage, its pictures, phrases and the images they suggest. 41

Thus what I bring to the second interview, beyond any tentative agenda of questions and concerns, is a confidence that I have begun to get a very special glimpse of another person's inner world. 42 That confidence impels me in the second interview to take risks that might otherwise seem pretentious, and often the second interview is a quite powerful experience for me and the collage-maker. Its purpose, however, is somewhat different from the earlier one. In the first encounter the primary aim is phenomenological: I want the collage-maker, using the collage, to show me how to enter his or her image-world. Secondarily, and especially by the end of that interview, I try to see where the passion is, to "fish for energy" as a friend put

41 Because of the discipline and care required in this whole process I have often thought that whatever else may become of the "collage method" it would make an extraordinary tool for use in interview training and teaching clinical method.

42 Ever since I was a child the question of How can one person really share another's thoughts? has fascinated me. The collage method owes much to that question.
it. But I make that transition slowly and hesitantly, knowing that my grasp of the contexts of various images is unsteady.

Much more happens in the first interview than I can absorb at the time, but the process of diagramming and simply looking at the collage and thinking about it for a couple of days enables me to shift the balance of purposes for the second interview. There my primary interests are: What is happening in this person's life now?; What is he or she trying to do, and what images are sustaining or impeding the life-flow?

But what, indeed, is anyone trying to do? All of us, I believe, are striving to maintain the organic life of our bodies and the symbolic life of our selves. Retaining and enlarging the feeling that the self is alive—what Ernest Becker calls the individual urge to maximum self-feeling—\(^{43}\) I take to be the root psychological

\(^{43}\) Becker, Escape from Evil, p. 59. Becker opens the introduction to this book ("The Human Condition: Between Appetite and Ingenuity") with the question: "What could we say in the simplest possible way that would 'reveal' man to us—show what he was trying to do, and what it all added up to." He continues, "Existence, for all organismic life, is a constant struggle to feed—a struggle to incorporate whatever other organisms they can fit into their mouths and press them down their gullets without choking ... I think this is why the epoch of the dinosaurs exerts such a strange fascination on us: it is an epic food orgy with king-size actors who convey unmistakably what organisms are dedicated to ... To paraphrase Elias
motive. It is to psychology what the quest for organic life is to biology. The quest for a life of the self is a quest for symbolic life, the urge to transcend death through the creation of individual and collective culture. That is what Becker means when he writes: "As we have learned conclusively from Rank and Brown, it is the immortality motive and not the sexual one that must bear the larger burden of human passion."\(^{44}\)

Images are the vehicle for that passion. The second interview stays close to the images, exploring sources of aspiration and terror. Becker writes, "Terror always relates to the ultimates of life and death;"\(^{45}\) but what is true of terror is no less true of aspiration.

If all of this seems abstract, even intrusively philosophical, I can only say that via the concreteness of the collage it readily takes on flesh. But if the collage can be a facilitating vehicle it can also be, at times, an

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Canetti, each organism raises its head over a field of corpses, smiles into the sun, and declares life good . . . Once the organism is satiated, this becomes its frantic all-consuming task, to hold onto life at any cost—and the costs can be catastrophic in the case of man . . . the will to live, the burning desire of the creature to count, to make a difference on the planet because he has lived, has emerged on it, and has worked, suffered and died."

\(^{44}\) Becker, The Denial of Death, p. 142.

\(^{45}\) Ibid.
obstacle. One needs to feel free to leave it, to move into and out of it with a respect for what it can do and full awareness of its limitations.

The second interview usually takes place in my study, with chairs arranged so that we are not quite facing each other and can easily see the collage. The collage is again tacked to the wall, which means that one is looking at it not in the position in which it was made. During its construction the collage is on the floor and one's whole body is in the collage as one moves around arranging and pasting the pictures. That means that many compositional choices are more viscerally felt than conceptually appreciated, especially because while the collage is on the floor one is always much closer to certain sections than others. But when the collage is hung vertically one's eye is approximately equally distant from all parts of the composition, and for the first time one sees it as a whole.

The discrepancy between the deliberateness which went into the collage and the unfamiliarity of its design when viewed at a new angle creates an ironical situation which becomes the source of leverage for the interviews. The additional element in the second interview is the time which has intervened since the collage was constructed, during which the memory of the collage has almost certainly been a central preoccupation. So again the interview
began naturally, with a question like "How does the collage appear as you look at it now?"

Often there have been a couple of pictures which have proved particularly haunting, and sometimes these are ones that were almost included in one collage but were omitted from the final composition. In explaining the collage instructions I always ask that one set aside materials which one thought of using but did not, and in preparation for the second interview I look at these and keep them handy for reference during the talk.

Sometimes early in the second interview I take a few minutes to summarize what I have been thinking about the collage, concluding with the images that seem particularly interesting to explore. I do this not as an expert who has applied a formula to what has transpired, but as one who has taken time to reflect on what has been done and said. If I succeed only in conveying that I am involved with the collage that is enough to enable the collage-maker to take more risks. The second interview is different from the first because the collage is familiar territory between us.

In the second interview I have a clear sense of where I would like us to go, but no definite notions about how this should happen. To put it aphoristically, the first interview looks for images and explores their ground. The second interview stays with the images and tries to elicit
their thrust. These processes overlap considerably, but there is a substantial difference between learning about the origin and current feel of an image, and creating a context for its imaginative extrapolation. Both are tasks of formulation, neither need be reductive in emphasis.

Often the interview moves from talk about how the collage has felt over the last couple of days to a new attention to its compositional detail. This is part of the dialectic of "distance and relation," in Martin Buber's phrase, which is fundamental for the whole method. In a

46 Philip Rieff writes, "... the value of therapy is just its prolonged opportunity for the patient to formulate his emotions." (Freud: The Mind of the Moralist, p. 117.)

47 In a series of William Alanson White Memorial Lectures given in 1957 Buber gave a lecture entitled "Distance and Relation." (Reprinted in Psychiatry, Vol. 20, May 1957.) Buber writes, "... we reach the insight that the principle of human life is not simple, but twofold, being built up in a twofold movement which is of such kind that the one movement is the presupposition of the other. I propose to call the first movement 'the primal setting at a distance' and the second 'entering into relation.' That the first movement is the presupposition of the other is plain from the fact that one can enter into relation only with being which has been set at a distance, more precisely has become an independent opposite, ... An animal's 'image of the world,' or rather, its image of a realm, is nothing more than the dynamic of the presences bound up with one another by bodily memory to the extent required by the functions of life which are to be carried out. This image depends on, it clings to, the animal's activities. It is only man who replaces this unsteady conglomeration, whose, constitution is suited to the lifetime of the individual organism, by a unity which can be imagined or thought by him as existing for itself."
double fidelity—to picture and to image—one looks at and then imagines the collage. In this interview there may be another tour, but in this case the emphasis is on imagined movement rather than a logic of construction. That is, I repeatedly ask, "What is the feeling that would take you from this part of the collage to that?" The emphasis is on felt processes of transition—how one imagines oneself from one mood, one activity, one place, one conversation, one day to another.

It is the uniqueness of these images of transition which, I believe, sustain what we call the personality, or the self, and create the manner in which time is characteristically experienced for one and parcelled out in recurrent rhythms. Langer writes that, "A rhythmic phenomenon may involve no exact repetition, but is always a dialectical pattern in which the resolution of tensions sets up new

"The realization of the principle [of entering into relation in genuine meetings] in the sphere between men reaches its height in an event which may be called 'making present.' As a partial happening something of this is to be found wherever men come together, but in its essential formation I should say it appears only rarely. It rests on a capacity possessed to some extent by everyone, which may be described as 'imagining' the real: I mean the capacity to hold before one's soul a reality arising at this moment but not able to be directly experienced. Applied to intercourse between men, 'imagining' the real means that I imagine to myself what another man is at this very moment wishing, feeling, perceiving, thinking, and not as a detached content but in his very reality, that is, as a living process in this man."
tensions . . . 

Exploring the thrust of images in the second interview requires letting them be felt as initiators of some characteristic action, and letting this action become the basis of a story. If there has been a dream, that provides important indications about the directions of emotional urgency.

As Langer’s theory of dreams would lead one to predict, many of my collage subjects have had dreams which we could connect quite readily to their collages, and if not night dreams then extensive daydreams. The dreams carry forward some particular image elicited by the collage, often highlighting an insufficiently appreciated aspect. Perhaps the most striking example of this from my work thus

48 Langer, Mind, Vol. 1, p. 204.

49 In much of my work I feel a strong affinity with the theoretical position of psychomotor therapy in which emotion is defined as an impulse to use the body in some way. Albert (Pesso writes (Experience in Action: A Psychomotor Psychology, pp. 53-55): "Experience in psychomotor therapy leads me to believe that the primary equation in life is feeling (or sensing) leading to action, leading to interaction. Life seeks targets for its own expression and growth . . . In psychomotor structures, I have learned to watch the body the client to see where on his body the interactive energy can be perceived and then to attempt to arrange the accommodation by means of the 'other bodies' of the group members to 'match' the potential behavior that is appearing. An adult client is not a primitive infant and what can be seen on his body is a complex, symbolic conglomerate of tensions and imminent behaviors and inhibitions." Obviously, Pesso is here relying upon an implicit conception of the imagery very much like that I have used in the collage work.
far is a dream of extraordinary visual simplicity and power. During the first interview this man and I had focused on areas of the collage having to do with his childhood and family, particularly as these seemed to relate to his own current inability to come to a decision about whether to get married. Much of the feeling surrounding that issue was epitomized in a picture of a young boy taking a dive into the ocean where other swimmers are awaiting him. That picture and the ones surrounding it seemed plausible material for a dream, so at the end of the interview I suggested that as he went to sleep he let these images pass before him, and in addition the shape of the whole collage (which was a sort of flattened 'X' shape).

The right side of the collage was comprised of pictures and materials suggesting two slightly different images of this man's childhood. The lower right reflected a sense of his family as sturdy, strong and with a lean, rugged quality. (The picture in the absolute bottom right position was of Stonehenge—an ultimately grounded image.) The upper right included boyhood pictures of sexuality and sports. Both sets of images exerted a strong hold on him, but those in the lower right (which he sensed were most important in connection with his own potential for creating a family) had in recent years become painfully unavailable. Current problems in his family, about which he was angry
“Red X Collage”
Red-x Collage as it was originally constructed
Red-x Collage showing bit of red omitted from initial construction
Red-x Collage with red-x added during second interview after it appeared in a dream
but felt powerless to influence, had given these images a nostalgic, sequestered quality.

On the left the collage contained pictures of alternative futures, the upper left of suburban sterility the lower left of exhuberant involvement in human relationships, social concerns and outdoor activity. At the end of the interview he said, "It's interesting; the part of the collage that was very deliberate is the left-right diagonal" (\).

When I asked, early in the second interview, whether he had had a dream he found it difficult to give a yes or no answer. First he said he had awakened in the morning without having had a dream; then he said he did wake up in the night with an image of a bright red X in his mind, later he said the X was "hot." "It was a very flat cross, a little flatter than a regular cross and one axis was longer than the other. It's odd because I always dream."

The reason he had not considered this a dream was that the dream was a static image; it had no narrative quality. But as we explored it, that static quality--epitomized in the short, truncated aspect of the one axis (X)--was a symbol for much of his current frustration.\footnote{The "Red-X collage" bears a striking compositional resemblance to Anthony Caro's sculpture of 1966 "Red Splash," pictured on p. 138 of \textit{Anthony Caro} by William Rubin. Caro's}
What neither of us realized at first was that the shape of the cross came directly from the overall design of the collage, its short axis mirrored an abbreviated dimension

sculpture has a wide red axis and a narrow red axis in positions analogous to the long and short axes in the "Red-X collage." At the intersection of the two axes the sculpture has a rectangular red piece of metal (the red splash) just as the "Red-X collage," as we reconstructed it in the interview, came to have at the intersection of its axes a picture of two boxers. That picture, like the bit of red, had initially been left out because "it seemed too much." Caro's work, as Rubin discusses it, derives from the principle of syntax which was the heart of the cubist aesthetic, so it is very much in the collage spirit.

In a recent paper Erikson suggests a way in which the configuration of a cross derives ontologically from tensions inherent in adulthood. (Erikson writes:

"To get at the core of adulthood, I have suggested, one would have to begin with the human posture, held up as it is by a backbone supporting uprightness. We could then go to the periphery, along the embracing and the constructing and destroying power of arms (tools and armaments) and the magic of the touch of the hands, and the power of the legs to move away from what is to be left behind, and forward to that which is to be mastered, joined, conquered, or annihilated. As a Navajo medicine man recently put it when asked by a friend for a definition of what is human: indicating the figure of a cross, he said that a person was most human where the (vertical) connection between the ground of creation and the Great Spirit met the (horizontal) one between the individual and all other human beings." (See Erikson, "Reflections on Dr. Borg's Life Cycle," p. 18.)

This is a formulation which I think Paul Tillich would have found congenial. In a tape-recorded discussion with Carl Rogers made in Chicago in 1965 Tillich defended his insistence upon putting his thinking about human nature in theological terms by saying, ". . . metaphorically speaking, man lives not only in the horizontal dimension, in the relationship of himself as a finite being to other finite beings, observing them and relishing them. But he
we had not seen, and its red color was the same as a piece of red fabric he almost put into the collage.

As it turned out he had also omitted, after a good deal of thought, a picture of two boxers because "It seemed to dwarf everything else visually. I didn't want that to take up so much of my collage." Gradually it emerged that the boxer with whom he had identified was the one who was being battered, an image of impotent rage focused around this boxer's inactivated left arm.

"The connection," he said "is that there's a lot of violence in the red. The red had a hot feeling. That's also has in himself something which I call metaphorically the vertical dimension--a line not to heaven with God and other beings in it, but toward something which is not transitory and finite but which is infinite, unconditional, ultimate. I usually call it, men have an experience in himself that he is more than a piece of finite object which come and go." [Transcription from tape by E.O.]

One can readily relate Erikson's and Tillich's formulations to the tensions around grounding and centering as these emerge in the "Red-X collage" and then note a connection between the visual form of that composition (one long and one short axis) and the image of the cross as it is borne by Christ. That ultimate image of bearing one's burden in order to transcend one's condition connects, in turn, very closely with the themes of childhood, relation to parents, to one's own adulthood and to a potential marriage partner which formed the substance of the interviews around the "Red-X collage." Through this sort of formative analysis the collage method helps one to see connections between individual experience on the one hand and what might be called archetypal symbols on the other, rather than regarding the latter as inexplicable manifestations.
one reason I haven't been able to connect it with the
collage. There's nothing in this collage that's as bright
or expressive as the red." Then he told me about having
considered using a piece of red cloth in the collage but
that it, too, had seemed too much.

In the course of the interview we tacked the boxer
picture up on the collage and constructed a large red
cross, of the material he had considered using, and tacked
that up too so that it had the shape of the dream. That
opened the way for images of anger and, because altering
the collage constituted an act of freedom and force, images
of power and assertion as well. The latter part of the
interview centered around two imagined stories: what would
happen when the young diver landed in the water, and what
might happen if he told the woman he was considering marry-
ing to "get off my back."

51 Very near the place where the two axes of the
collage crossed he had put a picture of his own which he had
brought with him, a playful picture of himself kneeling on
the ground with the woman standing on his back. Adjacent
to this was a picture of a "laughing truck driver, mocking
me for what I've let myself get into," and, on the other
side some birds because "I felt a real weightless quality
with the birds. I thought it was fun to put a picture of
[her] on my back against the weightless quality of the birds."

Altering the collage by reconstructing it according
to a previously unacknowledged inclination is felt as an
expression of power because it asserts the groundedness of
the self in freedom. Rollo May writes (Existence, p. 76):
"... the capacity for transcending the immediate situa-
tion is the basis of human freedom. The unique character-
istic of the human being is the vast range of possibilities
The development of a story or stories is the concrete aim of the second interview, and this is where the collage method, after its long detour, makes contact with the method of the TAT. There the process consists entirely of telling stories when provided with the stimulus of an ambiguous picture and a formula for narrative structure. In the collage the stories are not projection but extrapolations, and they retain an essentially "virtual" quality even when they include much material drawn explicitly from the memory of one's actual experiences. The stories told to me in this context, for example, by a lawyer about Friday afternoons drinking beer with lawyer friends after a rough week of trying cases as a public defender, and by an educational planner about a Bolivian festival he had actually attended with a woman he

in any situation, which in turn depend upon his self-awareness, his capacity to run through in imagination the different ways of reacting he can consider in a given situation. . . . In a variety of ways the human being can select among many self-world relationships. The 'self' is the capacity to see one's self in these many possibilities. This freedom with respect to world, Binswanger goes on to point out, is the mark of the psychologically healthy person. . . ."

In this sense the collage process becomes a paradigm of psychological health, altering the collage an instance of psychological renewal. Needless to say it is the tangibility of all this in the collage process, rather than anything unique to it, which makes it such a powerful experience.
met at a bazaar, were like that. What these stories conveyed was a deeply desired and personally paradigmatic form of personal enactment located in the concreteness of remembered detail. But such stories are essentially vehicles for saying what it feels like to act in a certain way with a personally characteristic style of anticipation and risk in the face of an evolving situation, and are no less extrapolations for their drawing explicitly on significant memories.

I think of the collage stories that emerge in the second interview as stories which one very much wants to tell but usually has no context for. If they are fantasies, it is in a special sense. They do not take off from arbitrary materials, they do not leave behind the daily constraints of one's real situation. Rather they begin there, connecting those aspects of one's everyday existence that seem to embody—if only in the most fragmentary way—what one is really about with a projection of how such aspects might grow. In a sense the stories are imaginative leaps for which, ordinarily, one lacks the courage, the ground to give one a place to begin.  

52 For Langer's ideas on the creation of a "virtual past" see her chapter "Virtual Memory" in Feeling and Form.

53 See William F. Lynch, Images of Hope: Imagination as Healer of the Hopeless; Ezra Stotland, The
The content and form of these stories is so idiosyncratic and bound to the particularities of actual collages that it is difficult to generalize about them. It has been important, however, to form some tentative hypotheses about how best to move in the interview from the exploration of pictures and images to the elaboration of a story. Actually the shift is not so dramatic as it may appear because already in the distinction between picture and image a transition to imaginative extrapolation is implied. As one amplifies what is seen in a picture or inner image one gathers a fund of associative material which is then available for the collage story.

The story itself then is a kind of abstraction and transmutation of the imagery which the collage has engendered. The psychological relationship between self and place is so intimate \(^{54}\) that from the beginning of the first interview I am listening and watching for places that the self wants to be, a habitat where important images can

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\(^{54}\) See, for example, in Robert Coles' *Migrants, Sharecroppers, Mountaineers* (Vol. 2 of *Children of Crisis*) chap. 1: "The Land," and chap. 6: "The World of the Hollows."
be unfolded, given life. That means that I am listening as well for what might be called utopian images of the self. I do not mean idealized images or infantile wishes, but rather the adult form of wish, which is hope.

I have found that the most powerful stories center around themes of love and self-love, giving these universals the concreteness and personification they require. But, of course, given the context which the collage provides, the formulation of a story is never the personification of a universal but rather it is a provision of leeway, what Erikson calls Spielraum to the images themselves. If this concrete embodiment or localization can derive from some form inherent in the whole collage (like the "red X") or at least a major sub-configuration then it may be drawing upon aspects of symbolization that are relatively

55 See James Hillman, Re-Visioning Psychology, chap. 1, "Personifying or Imagining Things."

56 Erikson, Godkin Lectures, "Play, Vision and Deception."

57 In her essay "Psychoanalysis and Norman O. Brown's Life Against Death," Susan Sontag speaks of the "twin subjects of eroticism and liberty." Her juxtaposition of these made me more aware of the elements that have to be combined in order to initiate the collage story and dream: love and aspiration.

58 I have used the term "bizarre corner" to refer to some section of a collage which is especially zany, wild, expressive and imaginatively uninhibited.
inchoate, implicit, felt as appropriate structures rather than as themes.

Often the story includes dialogues constructed around persons who seem to be, or might be, in various places in the collage, people one might meet in such a place. Then the collage-maker can be asked "What would you do or say with such a person?," or the narrative can remain in the third person to allow the images full rein without the intrusion of a prematurely collective "I." Often I have sensed a preference for retaining the third person while also retaining the prerogative of commenting ironically (as if parenthetically) on what is happening. That is, the "as if" quality of the narrative is completely apparent but preferred nonetheless as a protection against premature actuality and embarrassment. The images being unfolded are "Not quite I" and "Not yet I."

As soon as possible after the interviews are complete I photograph the collage in color, and give the collage-maker an eight by ten inch color print and keep one for my file. The scaled down collage in the photograph makes some aspects of the composition more obvious and certainly facilitates rapidly comparing one collage with another. But I have been saving the actual collages too so that I can refer to them as well because the original scale is important.
The collage interviewing is a special and perhaps privileged case of formative interviewing. In order to connect the collage interviews with principles that transcend this specific context I would emphasize four aspects of formative interviewing.

The first has to do with seeing symbolization as an ongoing process coterminous with experience itself.\(^5^9\) Thus formative interviewing is non-reductionistic because there is no assumption of specific symbols which stand for or represent referents to which the symbols can then be equated.\(^6^0\) Just as art, in Paul Klee's well-known formula,

\(^5^9\) See Langer, Philosophy in A New Key, and Lifton, The Life of the Self.

\(^6^0\) In this sense formative theory owes much to existential phenomenology in which the effort is to determine the concrete function of a symbol in the subject's "inner world" rather than apply a formula. See Rollo May, ed., Existence, p. 77: "How an existential therapist might interpret a given dream or an outburst of temper on the patient's part, might not differ from what a classical psychoanalyst might say, if each were taken in isolated fashion. But the context of existential therapy would be very distinct; it would always focus on the questions of how this dream throws light on this particular patient's existence in his world, what it says about where he is at the moment and what he is moving toward and so forth. The context is the patient not as a set of psychic dynamisms or mechanisms but as a human being who is choosing, committing, and pointing himself toward something right now; the context is dynamic, immediately real, and present."

May refers to the work of Alfred Adler, linking context, intentionality and memory (p. 69): "Alfred Adler used to point out that memory was a creative process, that we remember what has significance for our 'style of life,' and that one's whole 'form' of memory is therefore a mirror
does not represent the visible but renders visible, so symbolization is non-reducible, constitutive in its own right. The implication of this for interview method is what I earlier called sticking to the image, which in turn makes possible, for both interviewer and interviewee, what Buber calls "imagining the real, . . . the capacity to hold before one's soul a reality arising at this moment but not able to be directly experienced." In the interview one stays with the image, letting it find its desired context. In such interviews, including collage interviews, the interviewer has a checklist of areas to be covered, prepared in advance, but usually no pre-formulated questions. Thus the method combines the fluidity of psychotherapy, in which the client most actively sets the agenda based on his or her own needs, and the more structured setting of a research interview in which one wishes to obtain data which addresses certain issues. In "sticking to the image" one seeks to obtain a full impression of the situational feel of important events, memories, decisions and concerns.

of the individual's style of life. What an individual seeks to become determines what he remembers of his has been. In this sense the future determines the past."

A fundamental question for formative psychology has to do with the various ways in which people accumulate and refer to and use their pasts.

61Buber, "Distance and Relation," p. 103.
Closely related to this principle is a second one involving the assumption that the self is essentially purposive, looking for openings (images), ways to move that symbolize the expansion of the self, the retention of the feeling that the self is alive.\textsuperscript{62} Ernest Becker uses the term "maximum self-feeling" and writes:

Man can expand his self-feeling not only by physical incorporation but by any kind of triumph or demonstration of his own excellence. \ldots [Man] is in an almost constant struggle not to be diminished in his organismic importance. But as he is also and especially a symbolic organism, this struggle against being diminished is carried on on the most minute levels of symbolic complexity.\textsuperscript{63}

The implication for formative interviewing is that one seeks out precisely those symbolic openings--images--that portend the expansion of self-feeling. There is an affinity here with what the existential phenomenologists

\textsuperscript{62} Roy Schafer makes this point in his paper "The Mechanisms of Defense," p. 55, when he writes, "It may well be that each mechanism [of defense] preserves an id mode." And he continues (p. 61): "It is a question of what defense asserts as well as what it repudiates. \ldots In other words, if there is 'fight' in defense, there is also love in it." I consider these passages to be an excellent example of a sensitive psychoanalytic observer and writer saying in psychoanalytic language more than that language was designed to say, a skill which of course Erikson has in large measure. See "American Prophet: Erik Erikson Analyzed," by Frederick Crews.

\textsuperscript{63} Becker, \textit{Escape from Evil}, p. 11.
call intentionality as "the structure which gives meaning to experience," except that here this "structure" is seen as inherently related to symbolization around life and death. Formative interviewing is given energy and profundity by its assumption that the self is always doing something: it is engaged in symbolic transformations which assert and protect its own aliveness. Thus "minute levels of symbolic complexity" are seen as consonant with ultimate struggles, and immediate, proximate issues are related to an ultimate dimension. Keeping the question "What is the self trying to do?" at the fore in the interview does for the dimension of meaning what a non-reductive approach to interpretation does for temporal emphasis. Just as memory is formed by present aspiration, and current struggles cannot be equated with their infantile precursors, so the meaning of one's immediate efforts is given by the profundity of the hermeneutical grid on which they are placed.  

A third principle of formative interviewing is an

64 See Rollo May's chapter "Intentionality" in Love and Will, p. 223; also May, Existence, p. 77.

65 On the issue of hermeneutics in psychoanalytic interpretation see Paul Ricoeur, Freud and Philosophy. Jung's psychology and clinical method is of great relevance and importance here.
insistence upon the psychohistorical context: the explicit recognition that the encounter between interviewer and subject is mediated by the historical and cultural actuality they can share. This principle derives from seeing the image as concrete and specific even if there are structures of human psychic response which, issuing from recurrent and universal human situations (birth, growth, struggle, membership in a cycle of generations, parenthood, death), transcend specific times and places. The balance between adequate acknowledgment of archetypal patterns on the one hand and concrete historical formation on the other is difficult to achieve and maintain, no less in the style of one's clinical presence than in one's theories. But if it is axiomatically true that there is never anything

66 The interview's inevitable historical concreteness is a result of the fact that the encounter between human beings takes the form of community rather than communion. Langer writes (Mind, Vol. 2, p. 312): "Contact between individuals is a reality for all the higher animals, whether it is limited to sexual and parental relations as in arboreal sloths, slightly exceeds that as in the cats, which have agonistic encounters, too, and in youth play with their littermates, or governs most of each member's normal activities, as it does in truly gregarious kinds. In animals this relationship is almost a physiological condition, a felt communion of action and emotion and desire; in man that communion is progressively weakened by the growing tendency to individuation which comes with the increase of mental activity that eventuates in dream, fantasy, memory images and the mechanisms of symbolic transformation, the fateful speciality of the human brain." On the self as a psychohistorical creation see Ernest Becker, The Revolution in Psychiatry, pp. 189-95.
new under the archetypal sun it is also true that what the archetypes trade for universality is historical existence: any actual image or combination of images, any actual collage, is a novel and idiosyncratic creation.

In the interviews, therefore, one looks not only for what, in a particular person, is widely shared, but for how this person has given specific expression to, and has thus re-created, that which is historically (and universally) available. One seeks to learn how individual and collective themes connect and diverge, which requires that the interviewer's capacities for empathy be historically as well as emotionally attuned. As the interviewer listens for the historically and culturally specific the interviewee is encouraged to do so as well. Erikson has described, in explaining his method in his study of Gandhi, the complementarity of four conditions under which an autobiographic record—and I would generalize to say interview encounter—emerges. These have to do with four place variables in the lives of interviewer and subject: the moment in each of their lives, and in the lives of their communities, when the interview takes place, and the relationship of that moment to sequences or trends, again in lives of both individuals and their communities.67

In the interviews with young professionals to which I have referred, I often ask about particular experiences in connection with historical and cultural developments, the impact, for example, of the Kennedy years, the early civil rights movement, rock music, the Vietnam War, the atomic bomb, the political movements of 1960's. Our discussion of these is no less personal than our talk about matters like sexuality, family relationships and work experience, because my assumption is that the overall feel of one's life is the product of the wider context in which one lives as well as the quality of one's immediate relationships.  

68 Raising such questions has value not only for research in enabling one to learn more about the relationships between history and individual lives, but, like Jungian general amplification, can have therapeutic value in providing a wider context in which individual, personal struggles can be seen. 69

68 I think that a major problem with studies of lives like Robert White's Lives in Progress is that this wider dimension is explored only perfunctorily.

69 The value of asking historical questions for precisely this reason—-to create a new context in which the events of one's life can be seen—-has been highly developed
Finally, I would emphasize the importance of dialogue, collaboration and an overall spirit of advocacy and healing intent as vital principles in formative interviewing.\textsuperscript{70} I have seen all this nowhere better or more succinctly said than in a few sentences from the Wolf-Man's account of his analysis with Freud:

This is not the place to speak of all the phases of my treatment. I can only say that in my analysis with Freud I felt myself less as a patient than as a co-worker. The younger comrade of an experienced explorer setting out to study a new, recently discovered land. . . . This feeling of "working together" was increased by Freud's recognition of my understanding of psychoanalysis, so that he even once said it would be good if all his pupils could grasp the nature of analysis as soundly as I.\textsuperscript{71}

Freud, of course, regarded himself as a scientist, not a therapist. How surprising then to find him using the word "pastoral" to refer to analytic work:

\begin{quote}
in family therapy, where individual family problems can be seen in relationship to a number of generations. See especially the work of Murray Bowen, for example his paper "Family Therapy and Family Group Therapy," in Comprehensive Group Psychotherapy, edited by Kaplan and Sadock.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{70} In this connection, and as a fundamental text on interviewing, I know of nothing better than Harry Stack Sullivan's \textit{The Psychiatric Interview}. See also Robert Coles' "The Method," in Lifton and Olson (eds.), \textit{Explorations in Psychohistory: The Wellfleet Papers}. See also Coles' essay "A Young Psychiatrist looks at His Profession."

\textsuperscript{71} The \textit{Wolf-Man}, by the Wolf-Man, p. 140.
In psychoanalysis there has existed from the very first an inseparable bond between cure and research. Knowledge brought therapeutic success. It was impossible to treat a patient without learning something new; it was impossible to gain fresh insight without perceiving its beneficial results. Our analytic procedure is the only one in which this precious conjunction is assured. It is only by carrying on our analytic pastoral work that we can deepen our dawning comprehension of the human mind. This prospect has been the proudest and happiest feature of analytic work. Are we to sacrifice it for any considerations of a practical sort?  

There are many forms of advocacy, but that which I consider to be appropriate to formative interviewing, and to psychohistorical research in general, is a balanced dialectic between disciplined, critical reflection (what

72 Freud, The Question of Lay Analysis, p. 256. The burden of Philip Rieff's book on Freud's heirs and legacy is to document precisely "the triumph of the therapeutic" element in this alliance and its issuance in "psychological man." (See The Triumph of the Therapeutic.) In this sense Erikson is nowhere more a Freudian than when he writes, "... the clinician's basic view ... asserts that scientists may learn about the nature of things by finding out what they can do to them, but that the clinician can learn of the true nature of man only in the attempt to do something for and with him." ("The Nature of Clinical Evidence," p. 80.)

73 Subjective involvement, considered as the only route to certain kinds of knowledge and insight, is, in the tradition of study associated with the work of Erik Erikson (which of course grows out of the model of analyst-patient encounter in psychoanalysis) not only a clinical principle but an investigative one as well. Erikson speaks of the "self as instrument" in research (see "The Nature of Clinical Evidence" and "The Golden Rule in the Light of New Insight") and this principle has been fundamental for the work of Robert Lifton (see "On Psychohistory," p. 32) and Robert Coles (see "The Method") as well.
Erikson calls "disciplined subjectivity") on the one hand, and colleagueship combined with an effort to offer help on the other--the double movement Buber summarizes so elegantly in the phrase "distance and relation." It may be that the equality of relationship in which neither person can learn what he or she wishes to know without the aid of the other is the essentially therapeutic element in the encounter. Ironically, it may have been precisely Freud's insistence on his function as an investigator which militated against arrogance and condescension in his analytic work, though of course Freud's advocacies were circumscribed, as one's own inevitably are, by the limitations of his own worldview and psychohistorical place. For my own part, in my collage work I have been able only at my best moments to keep up with what my subjects have to teach. At the same time the collage has provided a space and, hopefully, a form of "hospitality" in which both I and the collage-
maker can feel free to ask questions which might be more difficult to ask in other contexts. This is what a young lawyer meant when he said the method allowed for "due process."

That I have been roughly the same age as many of my research subjects has created certain difficulties, but most of all I think it has highlighted a need for me to provide some indication of who I am in the dialogue. In

the word hospitality from its connotations of bourgeois graciousness to its original connections with hospes: the providing of place and shelter for another. (Nouwen writes:

If hospitality asks for attention without intention, we are saying that we want to allow the other to enter our life, our house, our world, on his terms and not on ours. Here we can start seeing that hospitality means creating room for the other and making the friendly space where he can feel free to come and to go, to be close and to take distance, to rest and to play, to talk and to be silent, to eat and to fast. The paradox is that hospitality indeed asks a peaceful withdrawal, by which the empty space can be created in which the guest can find his own soul. ("Marriage As Ministry")

It is in this sense, of "peaceful withdrawal" for the creation of open space, that Nouwen uses the word celibacy to refer, metaphorically, to the respect for the boundaries of the other, and the refusal to intrude, which is essential for every form of healing relationship. See Nouwen's Creative Ministry, The Wounded Healer, and With Open Hands.

Nouwen writes, "What does hospitality as healing power require? It requires first of all that the host feel at home in his own house, and secondly place for the unexpected visitor. Therefore, hospitality embraces two concepts: concentration and community." (The Wounded Healer, chapter: "Ministry by a Lonely Minister, p. 91.")
attempting, as a young adult, to learn something about the nature of adulthood I have had to let something of my own experiences, insights, confusions and struggles be known in the interview process. In a sense, since these things comprise the only self I have to bring to the interview situation, I could not do otherwise. In fact, I say relatively little about myself in the interviews. Given the nature of the contract, my subject and I come together to learn about his or her life, not mine. But sometimes, especially at the beginning, the subject wants some handles on me: what I am doing, what perspectives, intellectually and politically, I bring to my work, what I hope to achieve.

Certainly all my subjects have learned things about me that I did not choose to reveal, and I do not wish to imply that the process of letting oneself be known, while remaining the interviewer, is a wholly calculated effort. Rather it is a perspective one brings to the work: that one's own subjectivity is, in the end, the only tool one has and the only real resource one can make available in the encounter.
CHAPTER X

COLLAGE ANALYSIS

People create the reality they need in order to discover themselves.

--Ernest Becker

I said at the outset that I connect the collage method with the study of psychic composition. In analyzing the material, both visual and verbal, which this method generates it is the psychic composition of images which I seek to understand.

The theoretical perspective I bring to the analysis of collages is one which sees the image as the bridge between phenomenology and dynamics. That is, it is via the concreteness of the image that I enter the experiential world of another person and discover something of how this person orient him or herself among competing memories, impressions and strivings. But, viewed motivationally, the image is the source of enactment because the image maintains the symbolic life of the self. As long as one can find something to remember, to contemplate, to consider, to imagine, then one has a project, and the symbolic life of the self goes on. Viewed dynamically, in terms of its
relationship to change or advance,¹ I seek to learn how
one image becomes another. In exploring psychic orienta-
tion and psychic dynamics one must begin with the image.
The task of phenomenology is then to remain with the
image so that the full texture of its place in an overall
composition may emerge. The task of dynamic explanation
is different; it requires pruning down the image, yielding
something of the experiential richness so as to highlight
those features which account for sequential transformation.²
Here one seeks to order the images (or their remnants,
depending upon what relationship between surface and deep
structure is postulated in one's theoretical model³)

¹I am not using "dynamic" in the psychoanalytic
sense, where it would denote some relation between con-
scious and unconscious.

²This is what Henry Murray means when he writes,
"science must overlook a great deal of the rich texture of
crude experience in order to put into relief the under-
lying interactions of forces." (Explorations in Per-
sonality, p. 288.) Jung makes a parallel point in con-
trasting "understanding" with "aesthetic formulation;"
"The Transcendent Function," p. 84.

³For a discussion of this issue of surface mani-
festation as a transformation of deep structures in its
relation to psychoanalytic interpretation see Marshall
Edelson, Language and Interpretation in Psychoanalysis,
especially Part One: "Prolegomena to a Theory of Inter-
pretation." Edelson's perspective is derived mainly from
Chomsky's transformational-generative grammar. Edelson's
position is clear, but to my mind his work is rather formal,
and lacks the urgency, the sense of passion, which resides
in symbolization and which is present in every page of
Freud. In formative theory an appreciation of the
according to the abstractive principles embodied in theory. Formative theory relates the life of the self to the symbolic processes entailed in creating and re-creating the image itself. Symbolization and motivation are seen as being intimately related. Because the image is given a central place in its motivational theory, the process of dynamic elucidation—inevitably reductive from any perspective—comports comfortably with the concreteness of phenomenological rendering.

Erik Erikson interprets children's play constructions by finding in them what he calls a "central conflict": in the microsphere of the play space "the child [presents] a relevant 'statement' which in a condensed form may restate what inner conflict or uncertainty appears to be uppermost in the child's mind." Erikson writes that the central conflict embodied in the play construction is:

... characteristic of the developmental crisis being lived through by the child and yet also related to an historical crisis lived through by his community. In each such play event, the past and the future appear in the suggestion of a trauma or a traumatic possibility, that is, a connection between symbolic processes and passion comes from keeping the ultimate issues of life and death central.
threatening fragmentation. . . . [Such] a recapitulation of a possible doom often also suggests a promised utopia through playful mastery in the present. . . . [The structure made] states a solution of the dilemma in terms of a new stage of life and a new social setting. . . . The total event, then, is a representation of and an experimentation with a new identity element within a new sense of community: a requirement for the ego at all times. 4

One can find central conflicts too in the collages which I and my research subjects have made, and the things Erikson says about the central conflicts in children's play constructions apply very closely to these as well. In the minds of adults, perhaps no less than in the minds of children, one issue or problem or nagging doubt is likely to be holding sway at any given moment and influencing or contaminating or at least rubbing off somehow on

4Erikson, "Play, Vision, and Deception." Though my way of working with collage is quite different from what Erikson describes with play constructions, the spirit of his work, and particularly what he describes in these lectures, has been very important for my work. As one example of the formative spirit in Erikson I would cite these simple but crucial sentences: "... in adolescence, the peer generation and the ideological universe become part of the arena which is the equivalent of earlier stages. I emphasize equivalent, because our clinical habits often make us look for substitutes, our most persistent interpretive search probably being that for mother-substitutes."

D. W. Winnicott's method of interpreting children's squiggles, also deeply informed by psychoanalysis even if in a liberated version, is, like Erikson's, to look for a central conflict.
most of one's other concerns. So in examining collages I try to be alert to such monothematic organizing principles. But the minds of adults, because they are capable of more abstract symbolic transformations than those of children, are likely to carry further the reverberations of any single concern, and to transmute that concern more subtly and paradoxically.

Therefore I have not wanted to restrict in advance what the collage method could teach me about formative process by focusing on central conflicts which, after all, are not difficult to discern in ordinary conversation where there is adequate trust. In the study of innovative young adults from which the collage method emerged I have been interested in the intricate processes by which people create new forms, new ways of living and working which can contribute to cultural rejuvenation. In approaching these lives I wanted a less dichotomous and biased, more open conceptual term than conflict. I have found tension to be a useful organizing idea. Relying on Susanne Langer's parallel principles--"... all life is tension, and so is

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5Rudolf Arnheim writes, "In the human mind, different strivings are not completely insulated from each other, and therefore strong preoccupations may be expected to intrude into activities genuinely directed toward other aims." ("Artistic Symbols--Freudian and Otherwise," p. 218.)
all psychical experience,"⁶ and, "The illusion of tensions is the stuff of art"⁷—I have sought to discern how a whole configuration of images establishes a particular kind of field, characterized by many criss-crossing tensions which vary both qualitatively and in their intensity or cathexis. It is the nature of the field taken as a whole, the entire collage of the mind, which accomplishes what I call characteristic transformations of feeling and establishes and alters the form of one's life. The needs produced by core images do indeed present one with conflicts, and these can become not only central but excruciating in their urgency and claims upon one's attention. But by the time one reaches adulthood whatever conflicts become central are embedded in a web (or tangle) of related aspirations and competing interests which ramify those conflicts widely and subtly. It is to the complexity of this emotional terrain, to the texture of a broad range of mutually-impinging image tensions, rather than to a central conflict, that the collage method is addressed.


⁷Ibid., p. 104. Suggesting the importance of an abstracted pattern for related acts of perception, Langer writes, ". . . [a] visual form, once abstracted, is imposed on other actualities, used interpretively wherever it will serve, and as long as it will serve." (Mind, Vol. 1, p. 165.)
A by-product of the "central conflict" mode of thought which reveals its severe conceptual limitations is the idea that perhaps there is some area of the mind that is, or can become, free of conflict so that it can, in a sense, think in peace. This is the conception which Heinz Hartmann's "conflict free sphere of the ego" embodies. I find this a seriously flawed notion because its suggestion of "neutralized id energies" cannot account for the passion with which precisely adult intellectual activity is pursued. This notion derives in turn from that of sublimation, and from psychoanalytic conceptualization in which all energy is originally instinctual. Rather than conceiving the mind as energized, on the one hand, by central conflicts which relate to instinctual modalities and, on the other, as a tranquil sphere where purely cognitive operations can be pursued unimpeded by "developmental issues," the collage method relies upon a more highly differentiated notion of symbolic tensions, from which the impassioned symbolization of life and death is never absent.  

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8 See Heinz Hartmann, The Ego and the Problem of Adaptation and Robert W. White, "Ego and Reality in Psychoanalytic Theory."
As in the situation of Erikson's talking to a child about his or her play construction, but unlike the TAT and Rorschach diagnostic encounter, one begins the collage interviews with what Alfred Schutz calls a "cogitation," a vehicle or carrier for feelings, volitions, emotions, and thoughts of a "fellowman." One begins, in short, with something another person has made, and into which he or she has put (one can assume) a great intensity of thought. Ultimately the interviews themselves become a second form of cogitation, or what Langer, in an equally inclusive term, calls "mentation." Though its meaning is very unclear at the start of the interview, the collage itself, as one primary cogitation, is not the kind of stimulus for talk which the TAT and the Rorschach present. Already, once the collage is made, one form of cogitation is available; therefore the interviews are not "projective" in the sense that talking about an inkblot is.

This is a simple point, but a fundamental one,

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9 Schutz writes, "It is true that, as Husserl stated, any comprehension of the other's thought--always disregarding telepathy--requires as vehicle, carrier, or medium the apprehension of an object, fact or event in the outer world, which, however, is not apprehended as a self in the mere apperceptual scheme but appresentationally as expressing cogitations of a fellowman. The term 'cogitation' is here used in the broadest Cartesian sense, denoting feelings, volitions, emotions, etc." (Alfred Schutz, On Phenomenology and Social Relations, p. 200.)
because the cogitation which is the collage is constructed under the assumption that one will have the opportunity to talk about it, and the cogitation which is the interview is elicited in connection with the collage. Therefore each cogitation, considered separately, has a peculiar kind of incompleteness: an interpreter of the data is presented with neither a work of graphic art (able to stand alone on visual terms), nor a self-sufficient text. The collage serves as a sort of elliptical map which guides the talk, and the talk itself, once the interviews are over and it has become a text, requires the collage to add relief (in a topographical sense) to the discourse—to provide clues as to the meanings of transitions and to indicate degrees of relative importance or weight. I think it is because the two cogitations complement each other in this way that I find a collage becoming more beautiful during the interview, as its maker teaches me how to regard it.  

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10 In a discussion of the collage at Wellfleet, Massachusetts, Richard Sennett helped me to clarify my thinking by arguing that the collage as a visual form is relevant only in that it gets a person talking, and thus enables an interviewer to end up with a text; it is the text then, as written discourse, which becomes, so to speak, the bottom line of the whole process. Robert Motherwell was aghast when I explained my method to him because I was asking utter novices to try to speak in the privileged language of collage, and because I asked people to use in their collages the everyday images of the culture which
Any interpretational or analytic scheme is essentially a set of categories, a grid, for ordering what one considers to be data. Therefore, a task logically prior to analysis itself is that of establishing what the data is, and what it is about. If one for a moment one lumps together the two cogitations which the collage method elicits, and regards them as a single presentation, the question would be, what is this presentation about? What kind of material is it that the collage method encourages a person to disclose?

I think the collage method elicits immediate images in a form that makes them particularly transparent in relation to the core images to which they connect. That is, what my collage-making subjects have been doing is establishing, in a concrete medium, the implicit order which resides in their current concerns. In so doing they are guided, or so I believe, by core images—images of

Motherwell considers it the task of art to purify, and in the end eliminate. (Hence the serene quality of the Gauloise cigarette packages in Motherwell's collages.) Motherwell, in the same way, was relieved to discover that people talk about their vellages, which means that they are not then really collages at all but a kind of montage projection screen.

Coming from a verbal perspective on the one hand and a visual one on the other, Sennett and Motherwell (in separate discussions) came to an agreement that what one gets is a text. As I hope I have made clear in the idea of two interrelated cogitations, I think the matter is more complicated than that.
long-standing and broad implication. Thus the configuration in the collage symbolizes both a set of current concerns and a set of ultimate or core concerns.

The collage process encourages the disclosure of those explicit and implicit criteria by which one is currently ordering and organizing experience, and is, at the moment, carving up reality. Alfred Schutz called these personal organizing schemes "typifications," and he posed the question in this way:

How does the individual member of a group define his private situation within the framework of those common typifications and relevances in terms of which the group defines its situation?\footnote{See Alfred Schutz On Phenomenology and Social Relations, pp. 84-85. Schutz's editor, Helmut R. Wagner, writes in his introduction to this volume (pp. 24-25): . . . the problem complex of relevances, within which men find their bearing in everyday life, leads us to the consideration of additional means which make this world cognitively manageable. Its myriads of phenomena, each of them a unique occurrence, are sorted out into a limited number of classes: similar phenomena are considered the same, called by the same name, and considered alike in important characteristics. The world is a typified world, said Schutz, and he dealt extensively with its typifications.

Individual typifications have social implications. Schutz pointed out that various of the pet terms of sociologists, such as system, role, institution, etc., refer back to typifications made and used by individuals. Yet, in reverse, most of these
I do not believe, nor I think does Schutz, that all private concerns originate in group membership; I think individual ontology—the growth and decay of the body; the sense of threat and exhilaration entailed in taking new risks—contributes a vital share as well. But it is the culturally available typifications which enable the individual person to formulate an infinite variety of impulses, feelings and sensations into what we call experience. Any adult person has a variety of available typifications which apply, at least in part, to a given situation. This superfluidity of organizing categories constitutes experientially what Schutz calls multiple realities and what Budd Hopkins regards.

Typifications are socially preestablished. In a final section, Schutz referred to the close tie between typification and relevance: men would be unable to recognize what is relevant and what belongs to which domains of relevance, were it not for their acquaintance with 'the socially approved system of typifications and relevances.' Taken together these passages should demonstrate the way in which Schutz mediates between the primary sphere of immediate human experience and the derived sphere of preestablished cultural interpretations, be it in the form of the given linguistic system, be it in the form of prescribed hierarchies of relevances.

Schutz's use of the concepts of relevance and typification to describe how individuals establish their "situation" (in W. I. Thomas' term) and maintain a sense of "orientation" fits closely with the collage mode of orientation in virtual—symbolic—space.

See also Raymond Firth, Symbols: Public and Private, and Becker, The Revolution in Psychiatry, esp. chapters 5 and 6.

12 Schutz quotes the well-known sentences from the
simply as the collage problem of modern life. "The pluralistic, contradictory and intellectually complex collage image," Hopkins writes, "stands as a model for the most characteristic readings of contemporary experience... There is no longer a [single] frame of reference." 13

Principles of Psychology in which William James writes, "Each world whilst it is attended to is real after its own fashion; only the reality lapses with attention. Reality means simply relation to our emotional and active life; whatever excites and stimulates our interest is real." Commenting on James' formulation Schutz writes, "We prefer to speak of finite provinces of meaning upon which we bestow the accent of reality, instead of subuniverses as does William James. By this change of terminology we emphasize that it is the meaning of our experiences, and not the ontological structure of the objects, which constitutes reality. Each province of meaning--the paramount world of real objects and events into which we can gear our actions, the world of imaginings and fantasies, such as the play world of the child, the world of the insane, but also the world of art, the world of dreams, the world of scientific contemplation--has its particular cognitive style. It is this particular style of a set of our experiences which constitutes them as a finite province of meaning. All experiences within each of these worlds are, with respect to this cognitive style, consistent in themselves and compatible with one another (although not compatible with the meaning of everyday life). Moreover, each of these finite provinces of meaning is, among other things, characterized by a specific tension of consciousness (from full awareness in the reality of everyday life to sleep in the world of dreams), by a specific time perspective, by a specific form of experiencing oneself, and, finally, by a specific form of sociality." (Alfred Schutz, On Phenomenology and Social Relations, pp. 252-53.)

For Erik Erikson's distinctions between factuality, reality and actuality see his Dimensions of A New Identity, p. 33.

My college subjects have used their collages to present what might be called their most pressing typifications, the ones that are posing problems by virtue of their mutual incompatibility, or which have become interesting for some other reason, perhaps because they are new and still experimental, because one is relying on them in a new way, or because one senses their impending obsolescence. The collage process requires that one begin by accumulating an extremely wide range of associative material (the pictures initially selected during the scanning phase), but as the composition begins to take shape only the material which connects with elements in some contemporary, ongoing act seems to require inclusion. One is left with particularly potent images, or typifications, in a context of other images which gives them salience.

The notion of typifications is an essential one for the study of formative process and, because it lies

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14 Schutz writes, "In the individual's definition of his private situation the various social roles originating in his multiple membership in numerous groups are experienced as a set of self-typifications which in turn are arranged in a particular private order of domains of relevances that is, of course, continuously, in flux." (Alfred Schutz, On Phenomenology and Social Relations, p. 84.) This is an eloquent and elegant description of the collage as method and metaphor.

15 See end of chapter for footnote.
at the boundary between individual psychology and culture, this concept forms an indispensable psychohistorical bridge. The process of collage analysis, in turn, involves the abstraction of these typifications in association with concrete images, and their classification according to a set of categories consistent with formative theory. The complexity of formative theory, not to mention psychic composition itself, is such that this abstractive process requires a number of somewhat overlapping stages, which will be described here under the headings: 1. Structure of images and constellations, 2. Centering and valencing, 3. Grounding and thrust, 4. Formative categories of images. In connection with this exposition I find a second collage triangle useful:

1. Structure of images and constellations

2. Centering/Valencing

3. Grounding/Thrust

4. Formative categories of images (second order collage)
1. STRUCTURE OF IMAGES AND CONSTELLATIONS

In analyzing the structure of images and constellations I seek to move from the aesthetically keyed dimension of visual criteria presented earlier to a related but more explicitly psychological dimension. The visual criteria are especially useful when I am diagramming the collage because they help me to look attentively at the collage. But ultimately I am interested in images, and these are not pictured in any literal way in the collage. So the first step is to cull from the collage and interview material that I call image-themes. Here I include thematic material drawn from the interviews combined with images which the collage itself suggests. The images are particular envisagements which seem to embody and subsume what is often a long sequence of thematic material. The image of a "covered-wagon family" from the "red-X collage," for example, served to summarize for the man who made this collage (and therefore for me as interviewer) an involved complex of description and feeling about his family and the idea of family.

I list the image-themes and note (by relying on the collage diagram I have made) the important connective pathways, ways of moving (in the collage and the interview) between images and constellations. This process helps me to become more clear about what the constellations are--
which images consistently attract or repel each other, thereby creating important subconfigurations.

For the sake of logical precision one might speak only of image-themes in connection with the collage material. But I find that once I have done the abstractive work of isolating the images and thematic material in this way, I tend to collapse it into an overall sense of what, at this point, I simply call images. The images are more general than the image-themes, but can readily be reconnected with the more concrete image-themes. In the "red-X collage," for example, there was a complex image involving emptiness, order, sterility, stasis and deadness which aroused apprehension, frustration and anger; an image of an unavailable past which entailed nostalgia on the one hand and a feeling of inhibited movement on the other; and an image of welcoming community connected with a desired re-centering of the self. In abstracting from image-themes to images in this way one moves closer to core images.

Though I have and employ a number of formal categories for understanding image structure, it is structure as it is experienced by the collage maker, and not structure in any absolute sense, that I seek to understand. Such formal criteria can be collected from many sources (I have, for example, found those applying to movement, color, form, etc. in Rorschach interpretation to be very helpful). Such
criteria sharpen one's eye, but do not replace one's own phenomenological work. For example, I quickly noticed that the Buffalo Creek collage was long and narrow, but it was not until its maker described it as "strung out" that I had more than a hunch of what to make psychologically of that. The cluster of pictures on the left side of the "red-X collage" are isolated by a couple of inches from other areas of the collage, but the man who made the collage saw this distance as very far indeed, perhaps unbridgeable from where he felt himself to be. A young lawyer described his feeling that the large unfilled space of his collage reflected a recurrent sense in his own life; "I always feel like I need a lot of room because I keep thinking there are many things in my life, but actually there are very few things I care about." All this is in keeping with Langer's dictum that "the illusion of tensions is the stuff of art," though because the collages are only an approximate art the presentation in them of a virtual (entirely graphic) illusion of tension is not nondiscursively self-sufficient.

Once one has a sense of what the images are it is possible to look at them through a number of structural categories. I consider boundary qualities, image distances and image qualities.

Under boundary qualities I am interested in how the
images have been distinguished from each other—what principles have been used to establish "typifications," or formative distinctions—how one carves up the space, literally in the collage and, metaphorically, in life. How, for example, do the major images and image-themes relate to the categories of core areas of formative process: personal bonds, place, work, death, play, transcendence, nature, technology, time, symbols of the self? Does the collage center around a few of these to the exclusion of others? How do these areas function in the collage?

Since boundaries establish areas of contact as well as separation, I examine closely the qualities of the boundaries themselves, the permeability of images and constellations by each other as well as their vulnerability to impingement by new experience. Where do pathways seem fluid and open, where are they rigid and blocked? (Here I think of the collage-maker who described a path half way around the collage and then suddenly stopped, explaining that to get to the other half she had to go back to the beginning. When I asked why she didn't simply keep moving

\[ \text{16 This emphasis on continua and mediating processes is fundamental to the formative perspective. Susanne Langer writes, ''... every boundary of a form is also a conjunction of forms, the surrounding spaces taking their gestalt from the volumes they limit.''} \] (Mind, Vol. 1, p. 205.) (See also Lifton, The Life of the Self, pp. 51-52.)
she said—echoing a proverbial Maine farmer—"You can't get there from here.") I also examine patterns of priority, dominance and subordination established between images and constellations, and seek to understand what criteria, whether implicit or explicit, underlie such hierarchies.

The category of image distance has to do with felt qualities of spacing in the literal and metaphorical collage. Here one can explore questions involving redundancy, discrepancy, closeness, overlapping and remoteness of the images and constellations. At issue here is the kind and degree of tension established between inner images. This can range from no tension at all in the case of redundant images, to mutual enhancement with images that fit together and sustain each other, to a high degree of conflictedness where there is mutual repudiation. Image distance combines with boundary qualities to produce predominant experiential modes. For example, rigid image boundaries and a high degree of redundancy result in the feeling that nothing new seems to happen in one's life, the experience of boredom. Highly permeable boundaries and relatively little redundancy results in minimal structuring and form—ultimately producing a feeling of chaos—and diminishes the capacity to discern resemblance and therefore to organize experience creatively. Thus the structure of images is intimately related to the way in which time is
experienced.17

The felt distance of images from each other is closely tied as well to the experience of major emotions. Guilt, shame and embarrassment, for example, are evoked when impermissable passages have been made across image boundaries; pride is connected with a feeling of ascendancy relative to certain (often old) images; disappointment and regret with a sense of remoteness from now unattainable images. Excitement is associated with novel image stimulation where grounding is adequate to avoid anxiety.

Most collages contain play, humor and wit. Sometimes these occur in connection with some especially strange or fanciful area of the collage, a kind of "bizarre corner." But often wit and whimsy are exhibited in connection with central life themes that are straightforwardly depicted. Collage lends itself to humor and mockery because it is a medium that encourages stark juxtapositions, surprising things bumping into each other; and, of course, the sudden appearance of elements that are and are not wholly unexpected is paradigmatic for all humor. But it is always important to notice exactly where the humor, the Spielraum and leeway, are in a collage, what elements they help to liberate and

17See Minkowski, Lived Time, and Bernard Landis, Ego Boundaries.
how pervasive is their influence.

Finally, one can examine the qualities of the images themselves—for vividness, sensuality and literalism. Vividness has to do with clarity and articulation; sensuality with primary bodily modes of internalization and expression; literalism with the extent of imaginative elaboration which enables an image to contribute to one's life history rather than one's life history being subsumed by a relatively unrecreated image. In any actual collage some images will be more literal in this sense than others. In the Buffalo Creek collage, images having to do directly with the flood were the most literal; in the face of such an overwhelming experience one is long held in a kind of thralldom, in the spell of an experience which one feels powerless to transform in accord with one's own inner imperatives.¹⁸

Psychic life exists on a continuum along which external events are given greater or lesser degrees of inner recreation. With most events, as time passes, memory incorporates the picture of the event into one's own life story in such a way that the event becomes an element in one's own narrative.¹⁹ But a trauma insists


¹⁹John Dunne's book Time and Myth: A Meditation on
upon the literal, and upon the endless repetition of the literal in search of a second chance, an opening that might have been taken. As long as the traumatic retains its hold, one's life is rather more an element in the history of the trauma than the reverse.

In the Buffalo Creek collage (and in the life of the woman who made it) the flood retains a literal hold.

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Storytelling as an Exploration of Time and Death takes as its theme the problem of finding leeway in life by establishing a "relationship" to the things of one's life. In this movement of the spirit, or, one might say, of symbolization, lies the element of freedom in any situation attainable by a change of perspective. Dunne writes (p. 22), "Considered by themselves, apart from a man's relationship to them, [the things of life] are commonplace. There is nothing remarkable, nothing memorable about them. It is only when the overtones are sounded, only when a man's relationship to the things of his life is considered, that his deeds begin to seem worthy of being remembered, worthy of living on in memory, worthy of becoming immortal in story... No one relationship to the things of life, therefore, no one form of the conscious self, however conscious it may be, is enduring. If there is something that endures in man, it is the life of the spirit that carries on from one relationship to another. (p. 39)... The things of a man's life... undergo a change on account of his relationship to them. The things of his life enter his life and pass from it. They are the part of him 'that doth fade.' His relationship to them, his relationship to his love and hatred, his desire and disgust, his joy and sorrow, his fear and daring, his hope and despair, causes them all to 'suffer a sea-change into something rich and strange.'"

Dunne's emphasis on the leeway provided by the spirit is close to what Erik Erikson means by Spielraum. See The Godkin Lectures.

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20 See Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, and, for an alternative view, Søren Kierkegaard, Repetition: An Essay in Experimental Psychology.
The flood panel of her collage is black to represent the actual blackness of the flood, and the pictures there depict actual flood scenes witnessed. This is in striking contrast to other panels in which there is a much more active dialectic between picturing an event or scene and illustrating the feeling it elicits, its place in an evolving psychic composition.

Even in Buffalo Creek after the flood, life retains texture, and one is less intimidated by and more assertive with respect to some images than others. As this woman told me as we talked about her collage, "The flood is what led me into all this--into seeing the kids more as individuals and myself connecting with 'em as much." Earlier she had told me how the flood had sensitized her to the plight of victims all over the world. So while the flood retains its literal power as an event and resists being inwardly formulated and recreated as an element contributing to the centered thrust of one's own life, it is nevertheless bound up with areas in this woman's life in which she has re-centered and in which she does show marked capacity for metaphorical depiction.

Visual qualities in a collage can provide essential clues to these subtle differentiations of symbolic process. In this collage, for example, the flood panel and the panel depicting "the way I feel sometimes" are the most similar
in terms of non-overlapping and image spacing. The panels involving family and "serenity" are also visually similar: both have considerable density and overlapping. Only the serenity panel and the one of her own childhood have any color at all.

The image is a function of the mind's capacity for symbolization, and symbolization proceeds unevenly, goaded along in certain areas by new developments in others, or broadly impeded by a diffuse sense of threat. The mind's capacity for symbolic partitioning implies that for brief or long period one's feeling of life can be localized in delimited spheres and projects. How long such a process can be sustained and how well it may serve one cannot be answered in any absolute sense. These questions themselves take one beyond the category of image structure to a consideration of centering and the closely related process of grounding.

2. **CENTERING AND VALENCING**

Centering and grounding are the heart of formative process. They provide fundamental analytic concepts because through them the dynamic life of the image is related to
the ontological principles which underlie all growth.\(^{21}\)
The life of any organized entity is constituted between the
poles of self-identity (remaining the same) and self-
alteration (change). The preservation of the self is
dependent upon the capacity to assimilate new content
(whether organic content which is food or symbolic content
which is new meaning) within a consistently structured
whole, while the growth of the self is dependent upon the
capacity to submit existing structure to relative dissolu-
tion in the encounter with novelty. The functions of
centering and grounding are closely related, and both rely
upon a dialectic of participation and individuation: going
out and coming back.\(^{22}\) In the act of centering, new con-
tent is related to pre-existent structure under the dimen-
sion of value; in grounding, absorbed content is assimilated

\(^{21}\) I rely here on Paul Tillich's indispensable work
on "The Self-Actualization of Life and Its Ambiguities,"
Systematic Theology, Vol. 3. See also Susanne Langer's
closely related work in chap. 9, "On Individuation and
Involvement" in Mind, Vol. 1. See also Tillich's Love,
Power and Justice.

\(^{22}\) For a discussion of "passing over" and "coming
back" as particularly contemporary forms of spiritual move-
ment, see John Dunne, The Way of All the Earth.
to an ongoing history in acts of memory and anticipation. Paul Tillich writes that "... nothing is final [in a life process] except those structures which make the dynamic possible." Such structures are established in acts of centering and grounding.

Grounding involves the relation between potential acts and the self's rootedness in its own history and biology. Centering involves the self's location amid meaning structures that are differentiated according to value. Tillich writes:

The psychological self can be disrupted by its inability to assimilate (i.e., to take into the centered unity an extensively or intensively overpowering number of impressions), or by its inability to resist the destructive impact of impressions drawing the self in too many or too contradictory directions, or by its inability under such impacts to keep particular psychological functions balanced by others. In these ways self-alteration may prevent or disrupt self-integration. The opposite derangement is caused by the psychological self's fear of losing itself, with the result that it becomes indifferent to stimuli and ends in a stupor which prevents any self-alteration and transforms self-identity into a dead form.23

23 Tillich, Systematic Theology, Vol. 3, p. 38. What Tillich here calls a "stupor" is what Lifton means by "psychic numbing." See his The Life of the Self. Ernest Becker poses the same question by asking, "How big a piece of 'reality' can man bite off without narrowing it down distortingly?" Becker connects this problem to what he calls "transference-heroics." See his The Denial of Death, pp. 139-58.
Psychologically, centering becomes focused in the parallel questions which individual persons continually pose to themselves: How much new experience must I try to absorb in order to avoid becoming an empty, tautological self-identity? and How much new experience can I absorb without becoming lost in confusion?

There are no final answers to these questions, only transitional equilibria and the texture of experience provided by the tensions of opposed inclinations: to take in more, to explore further; to take in less, to rest.  

Erikson speaks of "a need in the human ego to be central to one's world rather than shunted to the periphery," and a related need to be active in one's world rather than inactivated and negligible. If it is true, as Tillich insists, that "Personal life emerges in the encounter of person with person and in no other way" then the process of centering always includes that of becoming central for

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24 Tillich writes, "The strange elements which must be assimilated have the tendency to become independent within the centered whole and to disrupt it. . . . In order to be safe, the organism tries to rest in itself, but since this contradicts the life function of self-integration, it leads to disease and disintegration." *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 3, p. 35. See also Alfred Schutz's brilliant essay, "The Homeowner."

25 Erikson, Godkin Lectures, "Play, Vision and Reception," manuscript.

others as well. In a general way, one can say that centering raises two related questions: what is central to one; to what and to whom is one central? The fact that centering involves not only a perception of that which is central to one's self but also a recognition of that for the life of which one's self has become central (including acknowledgment by those for whom one's life has taken on special value) implies that one finds here a boundary of individual and collective process. Individual centering requires community, and therefore every psychology of the self must include a social, historical dimension.

Centering and grounding are symbolic, hence formulational, processes. Because grounding has to do with the relationship of the self to its own image history, much of conventional psychoanalytic clinical interpretation, which tends to reduce an image to its history (or,

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28 Kenneth Boulding writes, "The image is built up as a result of all past experience of the possessor of the image. Part of the image is the history of the image itself." (The Image, p. 6.)
as Freud taught us, a fantasy of its history) rather than emphasizing its present intent, would take place under this heading (though such interpretation would by no means exhaust what is here included within grounding). 29 Many of the issues that arise in relation to centering, however, have been relatively ignored within psychoanalytic theory because they depend upon an essentially formative, non-reductive perspective.

The terms "centering" and "grounding" are used metaphorically in psychology, but each derives evocative force from its retained, concrete reference. The idea of a psychic center is derived from a geometrical circle and, as Tillich writes, "is applied metaphorically to the structure of a being in which an effect exercised on one part has consequences for all other parts." 30 Though one cannot point to a spatial locus which is one's psychic center, the sense of orientation provided by images does provide one with a location in which certain aspects of reality are immediate and proximate, and others are more remote and contingent. 31 Thus the idea of psychic centering is not

29 See Jung, "The Transcendent Function."


31 See Kenneth Boulding, The Image, pp. 3-6. See also Roy Schafer, Aspects of Internalization where the psychoanalytic concept of internalization is presented in terms of
entirely metaphorical. Similarly, the sense of being psychically grounded derives from the literal firm earth in which one feels rooted and upon which one can build with confidence. The woman in Buffalo Creek, very aware that in spite of what had been done to the landscape by the flood it was primarily her history which had been ruptured, pointed to a picture of a large rock in her collage and said, "That's the kind of ground I'd like to stand on."

In its most literal form, centering involves choice about which elements shall be at the center and which shall be at the periphery of one's psychic composition. Tillich writes that "... the process of self-integration moves between the center and the manifoldness [of elements at the periphery] which is taken into the center."\(^{32}\) Where grounding is adequate so that new elements can be evaluated and assimilated without jeopardy to the self's history and ongoing projects, the movement away from center and the return to a new, enriched center proceeds rhythmically, without disruption to the self's sense of vitality. However, when core images are at stake, or when the self's concentrically "deeper" circles of incorporation.

\(^{32}\) Systematic Theology, Vol. 3, p. 33. Tillich continues, "... where there is a center there is a periphery which includes an amount of space, or in non-metaphorical terms, which unites a manifoldness of elements."
grounding in a useable history is insufficient, such non-disruptive decentering gives way to uncentering. In decentering there are momentarily alternative centers, but these serve to provide differentiated perspectives on the images of the self rather than to threaten the composition of the whole. The painful process of uncentering, by contrast, is the cost one pays for transforming core images, but such transformation can occur only when the self's history and prospects can provide a path for return.

The concept of centering has been fundamental to the collage method. Fortunately, the popular meanings which the words "centering" and "centered" tend to convey (authenticity, spontaneity, sensual immediacy—as for example in M. C. Richards' book, Centering: In Pottery, Poetry, and the Person) connect very closely with a more systematic definition of centering in formative theory. In thinking about centeredness, centering, decentering, uncentering and recentering it is useful to distinguish experiential and structural aspects.

Feeling centered means that one has a spontaneous focus, readily available energy, an immediate relationship to one's body and one's surroundings. It implies that one's awareness is neither dispersed nor conflicted, that sensual awareness and reflection are not at odds with each other, and that one feels one's responses emanating from
oneself. People say they are centered when the activity in which they are engaged is not at the expense of some other activity which they would prefer. One is centered when one is focused on an ongoing process and is not distracted by imagined alternatives.

Structurally, or compositionally, one can think of centeredness as the degree to which the constellation of one's images is organized around a unified and accessible core. If that organization is sufficiently direct and unmediated then one is able to respond easily and gracefully to change. Core images embody symbolization of what it means to be and feel alive. Centering means that one's energy flows from core images in a direct way, that one's day-to-day involvements reflect one's images of what it means to live fully.

Decentering involves the creation of multiple and competing centering processes. Decentering is necessary for critical thought, as one image is studied from the vantage point of another. A person becomes decentered when the images in tension are sufficiently central (salient to symbolic vitality) that no single path appears compelling and one is immobilized. Uncentering suggests not the presence of a competing center but rather than an established and relied-upon centering process has been radically infringed and jeopardized.
The experiential and structural aspects of centering come together around energy. One sees this most clearly in extreme situations when life is literally at stake. Experientially, centering has to do with a closeness of one's symbolic processes to one's visceral processes; structurally centering indicates the degree to which ultimate and immediate concerns are one.

The ultimate core image is life itself. From the description which Terrence Des Pres presents of life in the death camps one can see that when the physical circumstances of existence become sufficiently harsh then absolute centering on the life process is the only way one can survive.33 As Des Pres puts it, "When external props collapse, survivors fall back on life itself." For those in the camps the act of keeping the organism alive merged completely with the psychological process of renewing imagery of life. The requirement placed upon consciousness was that symbolization of past and future be obliterated—life, both biological and psychological, existed only in the present moment.

The death camp survivors Des Pres describes were forced to center their awareness completely upon the

physical process of remaining alive, rather than upon idiosyncratic notions of self. Biological and psychological motivation became one: any image which did not center one immediately in the actual present reality of one's organism and one's present circumstance wasted energy. In Des Pres' words, "... 'starting from scratch' is the survivor's permanent condition." In that situation hope and despair were equally deadly because both, in this extremity, were decentering, serving to locate one elsewhere in time and space, robbing one of precious energy: "That is a constant theme of survivors: to concentrate on this day, this five minutes, this small need or pleasure. ... In extremity life proceeds by refusing to consider the future." The mode of life Des Pres describes required a form of centering so radical that even sex was a distraction to the life process, perhaps partially because it was bound to symbolization and hence to expectation, but perhaps more fundamentally because sexuality attributes value to another being and consequently has a decentering aspect—it locates concern outside one's own organism.

34 Ibid., p. 186.
Conceiving centering in terms of symbolization around life and death make clear what is at stake in processes of image formation. In analyzing image composition under the broad heading of centering and valencing I consider four sub-categories: spiritual centering, and temporal, spatial and emotional valencing.

If following Tillich, one defines spirit as "the unity of power and meaning," then spiritual centering becomes a process of locating one's day-to-day activities relative to the core images (or ultimate commitments) which give them both power and meaning. In any actual collage this issue becomes very concrete and involves finding those images which embody transcendent vitality or ultimate threat, and understanding their place in the overall composition. Centering in any dimension implies that the tension provided by images will be animating rather than enervating and confusing. Spiritual centering means that one's immediate projects and relationships embody one's

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35 Systematic Theology, Vol. 1, p. 249. Tillich writes (Love, Power, and Justice, p. 44): "The more centered a being is, the more power of being is embodied in it."
sense of life and one's immortalizing aspirations\textsuperscript{36} sufficiently that each day, quite simply, feels worth living.

Spiritual uncentering implies that the relationship between immediate and ultimate commitments is unbalanced so that one can no longer move easily back and forth between them. If, for example, one's sense of self-worth becomes so literally embodied in one's immediate projects that creative risk with the possibility of failure invites images of oblivion, then one's tasks take on a quality of urgency and one either pursues them frantically or, conversely, pretends that they do not matter at all. If, on the other hand, one's relationships and activities seem devoid of ultimate value then one becomes bored, listless, withdrawn, inwardly desperate.

One can define spiritual centering as a relationship to symbolization of life and death (and their psychic equivalents: movement-stasis, connection-separation, integrity-disintegration\textsuperscript{37}) which provides access to a

\textsuperscript{36}See Robert Lifton and Eric Olson, Living and Dying, and Robert Lifton, The Life of the Self. In terms of the conceptualization which Lifton has employed in his work for relating what he calls ultimate and proximate involvements, one could say that spiritual centering occurs in all five "modes of symbolic immortality."

\textsuperscript{37}See Robert Lifton and Eric Olson, Living and Dying, and Robert Lifton, The Life of the Self.
sense that death need not be denied in order that the self may retain a feeling of aliveness. The vitality which results from spiritual centering thus depends upon imagery of continuity. Clearly, one is guilty of a dangerous sort of psychologizing if one locates this process exclusively within individual psychology. Spiritual centering has profound consequence for all aspects of individual psychic functioning, but the capacity of individuals to achieve and sustain such centering is contingent upon historically available symbolic modes as well as the idiosyncrasies of individual life experience. Therefore I think it is accurate to claim that spiritual uncentering is a fundamental characteristic of our times, a characteristic with profound implications for cultural, political and individual life.38

Significantly, the aesthetics of centering in the visual arts have undergone profound change in response to historical shifts which have vastly altered the relationship of individuals to sources of ultimate orientation and value. Rudolf Arnheim observes that:

38See, for example, Ernest Becker, The Denial of Death and Escape from Evil.
[The viewer of Renaissance art] sees . . . a world that contains within and by itself, i.e., quite independently of the viewer, a convergence toward a center. . . . Symbolically, such a centered world suits a hierarchical conception of human existence.\textsuperscript{39}

Paul Klee, articulating the new conception required for orientation on the surfaces provided by modern art, wrote in his notbooks:

The traditional concepts of linear perspective: foreground, middle-ground, and background are replaced by determinations of position: top-bottom, left-right.\textsuperscript{40}

And he added the notation: "To paint well is simply this: To put the right color in the right place." The New York collagist Budd Hopkins, reflecting our existential predicament as well as our aesthetic one, writes simply: "The world is a newspaper, not an Imperial decree."\textsuperscript{41}

The concept of a center suggests the geometric image of a static point equally distant from all points on the circumference of a circle. Though centering is a crucially important psychological process, such a literal definition of center is not of much help in understanding


\textsuperscript{40}Paul Klee, \textit{Notebooks: The Thinking Eye}, Vol. 1, p. 38.

\textsuperscript{41}Budd Hopkins, "The Collage Attitude."
what is taking place in the collage process. But as Tillich reminds us, psychological centeredness refers to a process of going out and coming back rather than to any fixed structural whole:

Personal life is always the life of somebody—as in all dimensions, life is the life of some individual being according to the principle of centeredness. I speak of my life, of your life, of our lives. Everything is included in my life which belongs to me: my body, my self-awareness, my memories and anticipations, my perceptions and thoughts, my will and emotions. All this belongs to the centered unity which I am. I try to increase this content by going out and try to preserve it by returning to the centered unity which I am. In this process I encounter innumerable possibilities, each of which, if accepted, means a self-alteration and consequently a danger of disruption. For the sake of my present reality, I must keep many possibilities outside of my centered self, or I must give up something of what I am now for the sake of something possible which may enlarge and strengthen my centered self. So my life oscillates between the possible and the real and requires the surrender of the one for the other—the sacrificial character of all life.42

As one moves in the collage analysis from the analysis of structure of images and constellations to the analysis of centering to the analysis of grounding and finally to the composition of formative images, one is, at each successive step, further away from anything that is

literally depicted in the collage. This does not mean that collages do not have centers, some more obviously than others, and that it is not important to recognize them. Nor does it mean that sources of grounding will not be quite precisely suggested in the pictures chosen for the collage. It implies rather that one enters increasingly virtual realms as one moves from structure (of images), to the perception of certain characteristic rhythms of assimilation (processes of centering), to the relationship of images to a history and an imagined projection (processes of grounding and thrust), to the patterns formed by constitutive formative categories as they relate to an actual collage.

I use the term centering to describe the processes whereby the self continually locates and re-locates itself relative to commitments having proximate and ultimate value. This is, of course, not the only dimension along which centering occurs, but within the broad function of centering I distinguish a more limited process of valencing which I think more aptly describes the self's centering process within temporal, spatial and emotional dimensions.  

43 The word valencing was given psychological currency by Kurt Lewin. See his Field Theory in Social Science, and Toward A Dynamic Theory of Personality. Hall and Lindzey (Theories of Personality, p. 253) point out that valence in Lewin's theory does not mean the same
Centering refers to a constitutive process whereby the self creates and sustains its own form. Valencing refers to kinds of tensions established by the images which compose that form. I use the word to describe the value or intensity of feeling associated with an image and the fit of the image within a composition. Intensity and fit are both properties of the tensions established by images within a composition; neither has any meaning in relation to an isolated image.

Temporal valencing has to do with the value placed upon and the use made of images relating to the past,

thing as it means in chemistry. In fact, the term valence never had a very precise meaning in chemistry, which is why it has been largely replaced by the term "oxidation state." The problem with the old term seems to have been that while ostensibly referring to the capacity of one atom to combine with another is also implied some inherent property of the atom itself. That is, the term valence never reconciled the degree to which it offered an assessment of inherent properties on the one hand or combinational ones on the other. Andrew Colb of the Wellesley College Chemistry Department discussed this issue with me, and provided clarification concerning the current status of the concept of valence within chemistry.

Valence as I use the term refers to the characteristics of images as they function in a composition, exhibiting in the tensions they sustain both relative value and degree of fit. This is consistent with the meanings--strength and capacity--of the Latin word valentia from which valence derives. The term valence shares with the psychoanalytic term cathexis the idea of interest, emphasis, attention and investment (though investment of the self's commitment--valorization in Bachelard's term--rather than libidinal energy) but it includes also this contextual notion of fit.

Lewin's work spawhed Festinger's research on cognitive dissonance, an implicitly compositional approach to personality change. See also Chapter VI, footnote 3; and Chapter VII, footnote 40.
present and future. Thus it includes the degree of felt remoteness of remembered or anticipated experience and the contribution made by such images to the acts in which the self is engaged. The act of carrying through a divorce, for example, may require a revalencing of old images of one's parents such that they now be seen as having contributed to the quagmire of one's current situation or, alternatively, as offering legitimate nurture in a difficult transitional time. How one's parents will be seen depends, in turn, not only upon the quality of one's actual experiences with them but also upon how one evaluates their potential contribution to whatever one imagines one's own prospects to be. For certain kinds of ideological transformations, it becomes necessary for long period to sustain an image of one's parents as enemies, the kind of people one will not become.

The issue of accessibility of memories and anticipations in connection with optimum vitality in ongoing formative processes offers a wide area for exploration. One's old enemies, one's old angers, fears and guilts can in fact offer substantial sources of formative energy when the tensions such images create do not become overly

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44 Robert Lifton's work on animating guilt, distinguishing it from various static forms, is extremely important in this connection. See his *Home From the War.*
charged with conflict, that is, when they can connect with transitional images beyond the old emotions themselves. These are questions which the psychoanalytic tradition, because of its reductionist approach to life history and its tendency to see emotions like guilt as inherently pathological, has made it difficult to pose. From a formative perspective the questions can be re-opened and the struggle for harmony of form in psychic life can be examined with a less prejudicial attitude toward the elements involved.

There is also a spatial valencing that takes place along the dimension of inner and outer. Here one's psychic composition strikes some balance of relative emphasis upon what Jung described as extroversive and introversive preoccupations. One of the findings of Rorschach research has been that over the life cycle discrepancies between the two tendencies diminish so that the psychic energies devoted to each move toward equalization. But again, formatively, one can begin to ask new questions. In an interview with a young scientist, for example, we explored the question of where images of brooding fit in her collage, and how they relate to images of her mountain climbing, her lab work, her political interests. In the collage story she told she was able to bring her introspective self into dialogue with her active, assertive self and to
explore the kinds of space inhabited by each. In other words, tendencies toward what is called introversion can be differentiated and can be seen not as static products of one's "character" or predisposition but rather as actions ensuing from certain kinds of images which have some specific place, some characteristic valence, in one's psychic composition in accord with form-making processes underway.

Emotional valencing refers simply to priorities of feeling which are established between various images. Such valencing can range from very clear hierarchies with definite centers, to rather monochromatic evenness of value, to many kinds of discordancy or incompatibility. A number of my collage subjects, for example, have insisted that they required several collage boards because their compositions involved differentiated areas which should not be part of a single continuous configuration. In the Buffalo Creek collage the panel dealing with childhood was kept separate, in consonance with a feeling that this area now needed to be sequestered and protected. This kind of formative sequestering involves a revalencing of major image constellations in which the incompatibility of certain forms is intensified so that one can preserve at least the illusion of grounding in limited spheres of one's life.

During the interviews in connection with the
"red-X collage" we not only explored emotional valencing but, in reconstructing the collage along the lines suggested by the dream, took steps toward re-valencing the images. As the composition changed to follow incipient impulses not carried through in the original construction, it became possible to feel the emotional force inherent in certain aspects of the collage which previously had seemed merely plausible. In effect we were re-connecting the schematic aspects of certain images to their implicit but truncated enactments. As this happened the collage-maker found himself seeing connections in the collage which he had not seen before. When a theater is provided for enactment of blocked images a shroud of numbing begins to lift. For this man, current struggles were given a new context of emotional legitimacy which altered the lattice of relevant memory and plausible extrapolation in which these struggles had been situated. New narratives, new images, began to appear.45

An experience like this, in which one sees the tenacity of certain patterns of valencing on the one hand, and their contingency, their susceptibility to alteration

45 This dialectic of emotional re-valencing through carrying through significant action which then alters the symbolic context has close affinities with psychomotor therapy. See Albert Pesso, Experience in Action.
on the other, leads to an appreciation of the relativity of grounding.

3. GROUNDING AND THRUST

Grounding has to do with the contribution to the current life of an image made by the symbolic web which sustains a particular valence, and especially with the relationship of an image to its own history. Grounding entails the situation of an image relative both to biology and to narrative. By biology I mean what I think Freud meant in saying that "The ego is first and foremost a body ego": one's symbolization of self begins with a symbolic relation to one's body, which establishes, in a sense, the first formative parameters.

Without such parameters or boundaries symbolization can take flight in any direction—anything becomes symbolically possible. In return for infinite possibility one trades actuality. Soren Kierkegaard recognized this condition long ago, and he diagnosed it as "the despair of infinitude." "The self is a synthesis," he wrote, "in which the finite is the limiting factor, and the infinite is the expanding factor. Infinitude's despair is therefore the

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46 Freud, The Ego and the Id, p. 26. See also Erik Erikson's chapter "From the Ground Up" in Dimension of A New Identity.
fantastical, the limitless. . . . [Imagination] is the medium of the process of infinitizing; it is not one faculty on a par with others, but, if one would so speak, it is the faculty instar omnium (for all faculties). What feeling, knowledge, or will a man has, depends in the last resort upon what imagination he has. . . . [The] intensity of [imagination] is the possibility of the intensity of the self."47

Kierkegaard's famous formula--"The self is a relation which relates itself to its own self . . . a synthesis of infinite and finite"--opens the question of grounding by positing the two constituent elements in which the self finds its foundation: infinite possibility and finite limitation.

Phenomenologically, self refers to those symbolic structures of which one is aware which mediate one's experience. The relation between experience and self, however, is circular because the nature of one's experiences determines those symbolic structures of which one becomes

47 Soren Kierkegaard, The Sickness Unto Death, pp. 163-64.

Kierkegaard's own life, one of the most and least Protean of all times, makes a fascinating study in continuity, transformation and managed presentation of self. See Kierkegaard's posthumously published book, The Point of View for My Work as An Author: A Report to History.
aware. And, as Kierkegaard puts it: "The more consciousness, the more self . . ." 48

Self is a relative term; like the relation between conscious and unconscious, the boundaries of the self shift both slowly, and, occasionally, very rapidly, as in instances when one's self—one's capacity for feeling and symbolization—suddenly seems unavailable. 49 That is why, in keeping with the collage perspective, I prefer to speak of the self's grounding not in a global sense but in terms of specific acts. At a given stage of life one may find in oneself quite adequate grounding for certain actions but may quickly find oneself ungrounded in another set of circumstances. The phenomenon referred to as "culture shock" provides an example of sudden and dramatic ungrounding. 50 Since the concept of the self is an abstraction

48 Kierkegaard, The Sickness Unto Death, p. 162.

49 The implications of the relativity of the unconscious have, I think, been too little recognized—that aspects of one's experience which one can call to mind in one situation can become totally blocked in another.

50 The experience, which adults frequently have when visiting their parents, of suddenly feeling a lack of self-confidence and an unclarity about what one has been about in one's adult life, is another example of a sudden and disconcerting ungrounding.
from the acts of the self, it is reasonable to return to a
consideration of those concrete acts when speaking of the
self's grounding. The self can become ungrounded with
respect either to the past or the future, in correspondence
with Kierkegaard's distinction between a "lack of finitude"
and a "lack of infinitude." But it is always in relation
to potential acts that one becomes ungrounded, acts in which
the footing provided by one's roots51 is no longer ade-
quate.

51For the discussion of grounding Simone Weil's
The Need for Roots is of fundamental importance. After an
inventory, early in the book, of what she calls "The Needs
of the Soul," Weil speaks of roots:

To be rooted is perhaps the most
important and least recognized need of
the human soul. It is one of the hardest
to define. A human being has roots by
virtue of his real, active, and natural
participation in the life of a community,
which preserves in living shape certain
particular treasures of the past and certain
particular expectations for the future.
This participation is a natural one, in
the sense that it is automatically brought
about by place, conditions of birth,
profession, and social surroundings.
Every human being needs to have multiple
roots. It is necessary for him to draw
well-nigh the whole of his moral, intel-
lectual, and spiritual life by way of the
environment of which he forms a natural part.
(The Need for Roots, p. 43.)

What Kierkegaard calls a "lack of finitude" is
closely related to what Otto Rank calls the need for
"participation." See Ernest Becker, The Denial of Death
pp. 77-81 and pp. 177-79.

See also Hall, The Hidden Dimension for a discus-
sion of culture shock.
Grounding is the aggregate of all of that in which one is rooted, and, though I mean by roots something symbolic—roots constructed by the action of mind—I do not mean to imply a subjective construction without real—meaning physically validated or socially corroborated—constraints. This is a logical extension, it seems to me, of what Freud meant in saying that the ego is first of all a body ego, a relation to the particularity of one's organism. One's social class, one's income, one's physical attractiveness, the synchronization between one's environment—mentally provided resources and one's developmental level, the degree to which one can count on support from family and friends: each of these establishes a parameter of grounding. None, however, constitutes an absolute imperative, because grounding is, finally, a symbolic construction of the place one has and can count on.

In Michael Harrington's chronicle of what he calls his "nervous breakdown" one can observe the consequences of progressive and unrecognized erosion of the self's grounding.52 As he recounts the story, his personal collapse resulted from the accumulated effects of a discrepancy, which evolved over several years in the mid-1960's,

52Michael Harrington, Fragments of the Century: A Social Autobiography, chap. 6, "Success."
between a self-image emphasizing a socially marginal Bohemian-radical style and an initially unacknowledged actuality of social prominence. "It was all very heady and exciting," Harrington writes, "to be arguing with Cabinet officers and indirectly presenting memos to the President. But how could an anti-capitalist radical play a role within a capitalist government, i.e., in that institution Marx had described as the 'executive committee of the bourgeoisie'? . . . I had been caught up, against my will, in the surge of upward mobility that followed World War II, and that is a difficult fate for a man who originally wanted to be a poet. . . . [In] this strange twilight of the bourgeois era I had my attack of social vertigo."\(^{53}\)

The intense anxiety which ensued from Harrington's ungrounding manifested itself originally and especially when he spoke in public. In approaching a lecture podium he would become faint, begin to sweat profusely and develop acute tremors. It was, in short, at times when the implicitly symbolized discrepancy between his public actuality and his individual imagery of place were most jarringly juxtaposed. Yet that is, I think, the essential

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\(^{53}\) Fragments of the Century, pp. 175-76, p. 194.
character of grounding; its form is always concrete and specific, and therefore adequate only to some limited range of self-involvements. Sexual imagery, for example, inevitably challenges (but also confirms) any established centering-grounding configuration. That is why the renewal of intimacy becomes, again, at each new stage of adult life, a "developmental crisis." But if intimacy challenges grounding profoundly it also provides grounding as nothing else can. So, for reasons that go beyond what Freud meant by libidinal expression, the exploration of sexual passion and intimacy, and their place in the composition which provides grounding and centering for the self, remain a prime concern of formative psychology.

The whole matter of grounding is, in turn, closely tied to what I call formative thrust, but not in any undialectical way. That is, ample grounding funds images with force and staying power, but the search for ground can also, for a time, stimulate self-assertion and exploration of the most intense kind. As with every other formative process, the whole composition is all-important. Perhaps the only general comment one can make with certainty is that the quest for and maintenance of one's ground is closely tied to every modulation in one's sense of vitality. I have come to believe too that innovative people have a special sensitivity to the kinds of grounding they require,
often acquired in childhood situations where one felt one's own agency called upon--and one's efforts not unremunerated--in maintaining the ground before one could conceptualize the sources of experienced precariousness. When they are not able to find what they require such people have a peculiar knack for turning their struggles over grounding to creative advantage.

Ultimately, as Kierkegaard, Tillich, Becker and Simone Weil have each said in their own ways, the self is grounded in its conviction of immortalizing continuity--that is, the connection between grounding and what Tillich called "the courage to be." And that is, I suppose, what my black notebooks have been about. They have provided, quite simply, a reserve of nerve (which I have sometimes felt otherwise unable to muster) to take risks, make imaginative extrapolations and keep going. They have been a way of virtualizing--thereby making more real and believable--the trajectory of my life.

In examining the grounding and thrust of collage images I consider four aspects of the relationship between the self and image history: access, breadth, adequacy, and flow.

By access to image history I mean the capacity to locate a present image in a sequential context, and to feel the impulses engendered by current images in relation to
earlier such impulses. Without sacrificing an immediacy of temporal centering, in the absence of which there can be no spontaneity, the self's symbolic constitution requires an at least implicit sense of historical context for its acts. Blocked access can take many forms, ranging from Freudian repression and lapse of memory to the kind of temporal sequestering I described in relation to the Buffalo Creek collage. Idealization of the past can be seen as a form of blocked access in the sense that any useful connection between old and current images is denied.

The whole matter of image access is extremely complex because, as Freud clearly perceived, the apparent thrust of an image can in fact be borrowed—or displaced—from another, somehow related, image. Without having to endorse the instinctual idiom in which Freud couched his observations, one cannot fail to recognize, and in collages cannot fail to see, what can be called displaced enactments. At the same time one has to be cautious in speaking too readily of displacement, because such a term presumes some assumption about a legitimate place which has been usurped or bargained away.\(^{54}\) Within Freudian libido theory—in which everything one does that is not sexual is,
in a sense, displaced—such judgments can become all too easy to make. From a formative perspective the symbolic movements of the self, no matter how circuitous or tortured, are seen as expressions of the quest for life-giving form. In seeking symbolic openings, ways to move that affirm the sense that the self is alive and minimize the threat of annihilation, the course of personal life takes turns in which avoidance of the ominous can become virtually indistinguishable from authentic search. In the collage one can trace a path of energy transformation in relation to key images, without conceiving any symbolic twists or fusions as displacement in an absolute sense.

**Breadth of image history** means the scope of the grid on which one’s actions are envisioned. Are there, for example, key areas of human concern in which one has a relative dearth of imagery? Is one able to connect one’s images to a wide range of personal experience and to see them in a cultural and historical context? Here again the analyses of grounding and centering become inseparable,

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55 Ernest Becker provides an ample store of illustrations of such processes in his analysis (which I regard as a formative analysis) of sexual perversions. See his Denial of Death, chap. 10. "A General View of Mental Illness." See also Roy Schafer, "The Mechanisms of Defense" for a discussion of the idea of love in defense. As Schafer says (p. 61), every defensive maneuver relies upon an id mode, meaning that "if there is 'fight' in defense, there is also 'love' in it."
because the breadth of one's imagery has little significance apart from one's way of situating oneself in it. But in connection with image breadth the absence of relevant images (rather than the problem of their profusion) becomes the major concern. Certain acts of the self become insupportable because one simply does not have useable images to sustain commitment. This is why the discussion of "female role models" has been such a significant preoccupation in the women's movement: many women simply do not have a range of imagery which includes examples of women whom one has known well who lead active public and professional lives. In the absence of such imagery one's own images of aspiration can suddenly feel terribly ungrounded, hence unfirm, unsteady, unreal.\textsuperscript{56} Then the question of "Whatever made me think I could do or be . . .?" can haunt and enervate one, quickly evaporating one's ebullient, determined spirit.

The consideration of image breadth gives one a new appreciation of the function of social movements in the

\textsuperscript{56}For a close examination of the sense of personal de-realization in relation to the ungrounding of historical denial see Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich, The Inability to Mourn. (A condensed version appears in Robert Lifton and Eric Olson, eds., Explorations in Psychohistory. The Mitscherlichs connect psychiatric symptoms in their patients to incomplete mourning for Hitler on the part of the German people.
process of individual transformation. Such movements can provide images which compensate in part for deficiencies in the image repertoire available to individuals. This can be done most credibly when the absence of key images on the part of individuals can be connected with a broad social process which has, in a systematic way, created identical "image gaps" for large numbers of people with otherwise diverse backgrounds. Radical movements which have arisen in many professions, for example, have sought to legitimize new ways of teaching, being a lawyer, scientist, doctor or planner by formulating critiques of the existing profession and relating such critiques to analyses of elitism, sexism, racism, imperialism. At times these analyses can take on a deafening quality and, in appearing to undermine virtually all traditional professional and personal values, can contribute to their own kind of ungrounding and backlash retrenchment. Such movements become sources of new and potentially liberating images which coexist uneasily both in individuals and groups with older, more conventional ideas. The tensions of old and new images can make for considerable resentment and anger (not to mention confusion) but can contribute as well to revitalization by depicting unforeseen openings and making these feel personally plausible and legitimate for oneself.

Closely related to image breadth is the issue of
image adequacy. Here one can examine exactly those tensions between old and new images which can either be animating or debilitating depending upon the nature of the images involved and their place in the texture of the composition. "Old enemies," one's personal demons--old images relating to disliked or threatening parts of the self--can provide energy for many kinds of fights if one can find avenues for contemporary expression and confirmation. As part of the consideration of image adequacy the more general questions of style of memory and modes of image accumulation can be explored. Sartre's contention--that it is not one's past but what one makes of it that matters--suggests a crucial degree of formative leeway around the construction of personal history in connection with one's ongoing projects, an area that even existential psychology has left largely uncharted.

Relationships to transitional figures--people who provide even a fragmentary sense of who one might become--are extremely important as are transitional images of every kind. Transitional images are those that mediate between immediate and long range aspirations, thus contributing to spiritual and temporal centering as well as to imaginative grounding.
Implicit in the concept of the image as a schema for enactment is some sense of appropriate place. By place I really mean something quite inclusive, a symbolic context, "a local habitation" where "imagination [can body] forth the forms of things unknown," or barely known. What "habitation" comes to mean most of all is the presence of some other person or persons with whom one can unfold essential parts of one's being. These persons become for one what Erikson has called "counterplayers"\footnote{Dimensions of A New Identity. What I am describing has affinities as well with G. H. Mead's concept of "significant others."}--persons who in simply being who they are enable one to give expression to and to recognize that which one feels it is one's destiny to become.

In the collage process the question of one's counterplayers, or what I call the audience for one's enactments, becomes an important matter. The collage-maker, after all, spends many hours selecting, cutting, pasting--making the collage. For whom is all this being done? The two most obvious answers to this question--that the collage is being made for oneself, or that the collage is being made for the interviewer--each contain an element of truth. But those answers begin to dissolve as the interviews progress, yielding to the more complex insight that the
collage suggests a composition of images, each with its own relevant audience.

The word audience is not fully satisfactory for what I have in mind, though it does suggest an essential element, the attentive responsive listener in whose presence one finds one's voice. I use the term in the sense suggested by Walter Ong in an article called "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction." Ong speaks of the writer's imaginative task in writing letters:

Although by writing a letter you are somehow pretending the reader is present while you are writing, you cannot address him as you do in oral speech. You must fictionalize him, make him into a special construct. . . . The dimensions of fiction in a letter are many. First you have no way of adjusting to the friend's real mood as you would be able to adjust in oral conversation. You have to conjecture or confect a mood that he is likely to be in or can assume when the letter comes. And, when it does come, he has to put on the mood that you have fictionalized for him.

An important point here, at least from the standpoint of formative theory, is the power of symbolization to create mood. This power is such that in reading a letter in which one's mood has been fictionalized along the lines of what the writer takes to be one's characteristic posture as respondent, one is, indeed, very likely to assume that

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58 Walter J. Ong, S.J., "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction." I am indebted to Barry Lydgate for calling my attention to Ong's work.
mood. The receipt of a letter which alters one's day
because one remembers who one has been for the writer is a
common experience.
Commenting now on the diary writer, Ong continues:

The audience of the diarist is even more encased in fictions. What is easier, one might argue, than addressing oneself? As those who first begin a diary often find out, a great many things are easier. The reasons why are not hard to unearth. First of all, we do not normally talk to ourselves—certainly not in long, involved sentences and paragraphs. Second, the diarist pretending to be talking to himself has also, since he is writing, to pretend he is somehow not there. And to what self is he talking? To the self he imagines he is? Or would like to be? Or really thinks he is? Or thinks other people think he is? To himself as he is now? Or as he will probably or ideally be twenty years hence?

In the collage such questions have no global answers. The hours spent by oneself constructing the collage are both solitary and densely peopled, because one's images call forth one's fellows. In this sense I think Freud was right to conceive the depths of the self as inhabited by "fictionalized" persons; that is the conception that underlies the notion of transference, and that is what makes one a social being even in one's most isolated hours.

In the collage interviews one's counterplayers, the audiences for one's images, are given full imaginal enfranchisement, as indeed they must be if the motivational density which energized the collage construction is to be sustained in the talk about it. The collage provides for differentiations and disentanglements where the concept of transference invites fusions. Persons from various sections of one's collage can be brought into dialogue, and one can feel one's mood altering as one engages the diversely fictionalized personae of one's life. The place of the interviewer in the overall composition can be explored, as for example I tried to do in relation to the collage of the young poet discussed

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60 I find Ira Progoff's presentation of what he calls Steppingstones to be an extremely insightful discussion of the therapeutic value of acknowledging the images for enactments. (See his chapter, "The Life/Time Dimension" in At a Journal Workshop.) Stepping-stones are "markings" (the metaphor is Hammarskjold's, from the evidence of a route taken by a mountain climber left by the pitons in the rock) which indicate what one feels to be major points of turning in one's life.

Progoff's perspective is very consistent with formative theory, and is explicitly compositional. He sees stepping-stones, for example, as "threads of continuity drawn together from the vantage point of a particular present moment," forming a "tapestry" (pp. 107-08). One senses a Jungian influence in Progoff's awareness of the way in which altered contexts revalue images, modifying their "tone" (see p. 115), and in his emphasis on the importance of acknowledging the history of images, not to remove the effects of repression, but in connection with grounding ongoing acts (p. 117).
earlier.\textsuperscript{61} Without invoking the notion of regression the old and new aspects of one's ways of being with others can be acknowledged, as can the obvious necessity of one's fictionalized others for bringing one's images to life.

George Herbert Mead used the term "significant others" descriptively, to explain how the social self is consolidated around important persons who then serve as points of reference for one. These are the internal voices to which one listens with special vulnerability. This idea can be expanded, formatively, to include the process whereby one fictionalizes\textsuperscript{62} audiences for one's potential enactments in accord with that which one wishes to become or retain--thus creating leeway for oneself, or denying it.

\textsuperscript{61}D. W. Winnicott discusses the importance of the first interview, in which the "sacred moment" of the child's belief in the possibility of being understood provides a great opportunity for understanding. Something similar happens, I think, in the collage interviews which explains in part why so much happens so quickly in them. Winnicott speaks of finding himself in the role of "subjective object," and this is a better term than transference for understanding what happens in collage interviews. See D. W. Winnicott, Therapeutic Consultations in Child Psychiatry, pp. 4-5.

\textsuperscript{62}Ong uses the term "fictionalize" in the same way it is used by Peter Brooks: "The processing of the world by human consciousness I will call fiction-making because the word 'fictions' (cf. fingere: to fabricate, to feign) usefully compounds the fabricated and the feigned, the 'made-up' in the two senses that interest me." (Peter Brooks, "Symbolization and Fiction-Making," p. 214.)
A radical lawyer, a teacher in a large law school, said to me, "I choose my friends carefully, and then my friends keep me honest." A friend in his mid-thirties, in the process of making a major job transition which would entail geographical relocation and alteration of life-style, commented, "On a plane recently I suddenly began looking at other men about my age, wondering what range of responsibilities they had."

One imagines the audiences to whom one plays, and in so doing creates the social constraints within which one lives. One's fictionalized audiences, and the images to which they adhere, can serve to tie one into conventional patterns by criticizing one's deviations; they can maintain one's continuity with valued and vulnerable parts of the self, insulate one's integrity from the immediate pressures of one's environment, haunt one with voices of derogation and deprecation, or help one retain one's momentum—and keep moving.

The life of the images and the qualities of tension with which they endow the collage are in part a function of the compatibility of the counterplayers and the audiences whose participation they, enlist. The compatibility of image audiences is a fundamental aspect of grounding.
What is called "fragmentation of the self" and "splitting of the ego" can be seen as, in essence, the inner rehearsal of one's images before irreconcilable audiences. The inherent therapy of the collage metaphor is the acknowledgment of the self's polyphony.

A final aspect of image adequacy, no less important for the self's grounding, is the capacity of one's images to provide spheres of safety, refuge, protection. It is the dialectic of safety and risk that makes possible the re-centering essential for growth. Maintaining the imaginative life of the adult self depends, I believe, upon a capacity to distinguish areas of the self which require continuity, protection and nurture if in other areas one is to take new chances. Such issues can be confronted very directly in the collage as one aspect of its texture.

Grounded images flow. They engender aspirations in which one places confidence, and their enactments, whether imaginal or actual, stimulate fresh visions. The quality of flow which one's images sustain becomes the ultimate criterion of their grounding.

The notion of image flow raises the question of where one feels oneself to be with respect to one's images. Does one feel oneself to be their source or their target;
is one beneath them, above them, swamped by them, enticed by them, intimidated by them, anchored by them, overwhelmed by them, endorsed by them, accused and undermined by them? The rhythms of one's life—the modulations of allurement, retreat, attack, rest, opening, closing—mirror the life of one's images. In any one collage there are likely to be areas of assertiveness and areas of intimidation. To some degree such variations reflect the uneven tractability of one's life itself. But whatever may be the contribution of life's real problems, it is symbolization, the life of the image, that gives one the leeway of narrative, a place to begin, and the ground to stand on.

4. **FORMATIVE CATEGORIES OF IMAGES**

Langer's idea that "images . . . perhaps always fit more than one actual experience," and that, "consequently we tend to see the form of one thing in another"\(^{63}\) opens the problem of image-categories: What kinds of images are there? Any system of classification depends upon intent; if one would abstract from the actual texture of the phenomenologically given, then one must first have a theory.

From the perspective of formative theory, images provide the means of symbolic orientation; they keep the self alive by envisaging the course of potential movements. Images provide the link between the mind's capacity for symbolization and the self's requirement of a sense of growth. A set of formative categories of images can be constructed, therefore around the self's construal of movement. How is it that the self—meaning all of our selves—creates novelty while protecting established and crucial areas of symbolization? If, as Tillich tells us, all life is a dialectic between going out and coming back, between what we might call risk and maintenance, then we can begin to conceive a new collage not made of anyone's actual images but constructed from the forms of images whereby the self takes chances and takes care. To the degree that every actual self has a characteristic configuration of such forms we can speak of a "second order collage." The second order collage is a theoretical construction, fabricated not by ordering one's images along the lines of their felt connections but rather in accord with their fit in a formative grid of categories.

The discussion of collage analysis, in moving from the structure of images, to centering and valencing, to grounding and thrust, and now to formative categories of images has reached an apogee—the furthest remove from
phenomenology. The concrete application of these categories depends upon prior phenomenological spadework, and in that sense even here one remains close to experience. But now one takes the liberty of reorganizing the collage, taking characteristic personal images and relocating and revalencing them according to the contribution which they make to the self's essential project: keeping itself alive. 64

It is likely that each of the categories I have devised will find some relevant content in every actual collage. The categories are sufficiently general and ineluctable that they inevitably touch each person's symbolic constitution. The individual variation occurs in the significance of a given category in relation to others, and its place in the composition of a second order collage. That is, forms of imagery and experience which are in various ways paradigmatic for the symbolic constitution of individual persons will weight and locate the formative categories very differently in individual cases. As they stand in the present state of my work the formative categories of images—those that seem crucial for sustaining and impeding a sense of vitality and symbolic movement—are these:

64 See end of chapter for footnote.
1. Images of threat to the self; in ultimate form, images of personal obliteration

2. Images of safety, refuge and the day-to-day reliability of the world and an everyday sphere of life in which one feels competent and efficacious

3. Images of expansion of the self

4. Old images

5. Images of an alternative self

6. Transitional images

7. Images of sensuality and bodily passion.

1. Images of threat to the self

These are images which evoke a sense of personal menace. They are associated with a feeling of the self shrinking, shriveling—an almost literal bodily withering. Ultimately they connect with the possibility of personal obliteration, annihilation, oblivion; what Ernest Becker calls "extinction with insignificance." 65 Seemingly trivial images which have become lodged in a broader context of such images of personal extinction take on a kind of dread through association, and they can induce anxiety out of all proportion to their apparent importance. Michael Harrington's sudden dizziness and fainting upon

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65 Becker writes: "... what man really fears is not so much extinction, but extinction with insignificance." (Escape from Evil, p. 4.)
coming to a lectern illustrates this principle. His psychoanalysis, as he describes it, thus provided an opportunity for a symbolic expansion of grounding so that the re-centering required by his changed life situation could be undertaken more consciously. Harrington's symptoms decreased and gradually disappeared as images were re-valenced. Implicit connections between the apparently mundane acts of his life and ultimate images of extinction (which for Harrington included oblivion through bourgeois cop-out) could be altered because Harrington found a way to accept being both a Marxist and a political success.

The important point is that the power of symbolization is such that although images of extinction always connect with a conception of death, they do so in highly individual, idiosyncratic ways which reflect the unique history of individual grounding. Symbolic grounding, even when it becomes problematic, is extremely tenacious: one's ground may be shaky but it is, for the moment, the only ground one has. The finding of new ground—which must accompany any really fundamental re-centering if it is to take hold and provide the structure for new modes of symbolic assimilation—can occur only when one can find bridges, what I call transitional images which suggest symbolic openings, or when one's old ground is irretrievably demolished. This latter form of violent, catastrophic
ungrounding (which occurs routinely over the life cycle as one's body itself changes in ways which are experienced as abrupt) suggests the relationship between survivorhood and the creation of new form, the connection between what Peter Marris calls "loss and change." 66

2. Images of safety, refuge and the day-to-day reliability of the world, and of one's own competence

These are the anchors, what Simone Weil calls roots. It is here that the rather abstract notion of grounding touches everyday reality. Human beings and human communities create novelty as characteristically as they maintain tradition. But the tendency to resist change is, I believe, in one sense, more fundamental than the need to create it: without symbolic sameness there would be no world at all. 67

Images that in the aggregate provide for one a sense of personal safety are so numerous and ordinarily

66 Peter Marris, Loss and Change. See also Robert Lifton and Eric Olson, Living and Dying, chap. 6, "Death and Rebirth: The Survivor As Creator."

67 See Peter Marris, Loss and Change, chap. 1, "The Conservative Impulse;" Thomas S. Kuhn, "The Essential Tension: Tradition and Innovation in Scientific Research;" and (Langer), Mind, Vol. 2, p. 342. Langer writes "... it is only in human life that I think one can really speak of 'experience.' And it is experiences that make up human memory, a psychical background of each normal person's current consciousness and future envisagement. It is this structure that constitutes what we mean by the "life of the mind."
unquestioned that it is frequently only in their absence that their formative place is acknowledged, as for example when one moves to a new dwelling or a new city. Then the familiar objects and persons one has for a long period habitually encountered and which have collectively punctuated the rhythms of one's daily existence are dramatically recognized as the glue that holds one's world together.

The rhythms established around routine and self-initiated activities, like getting up in the morning and taking meals at regular times and places, and the ordinary forms of acceptance and recognition daily bestowed by one's environment—all of this collapses in communal disaster, and when it does there ensues a prolonged period of individual and collective despair. But in ordinary experience there is a reciprocity between taking care and being taken care of which enmeshes the self, particularly the adult self, in a fabric of responsibility and response.

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68 See Robert Lifton and Eric Olson, "The Human Meaning of Total Disaster: The Buffalo Creek Experience."

69 Erikson writes, "From the point of view of development I would say: In youth you find out what you care to do and who you care to be—even in changing roles. In young adulthood you learn whom you care to be with—at work and in private life, not only exchanging intimacies, but sharing intimacy. In adulthood, however, you learn to
Work, and the daily rhythms of preparation for work and return from work, make a special contribution to one's sense of the world's reliability, and to one's appreciation of one's own competence and place. In this sense the images of sharpening one's tools and organizing one's desk take on a kind of archetypal significance for the maintenance and renewal of the self. Lewis Mumford has described the formative role played by technics in symbolization and the development of culture. Paul Tillich defines culture, "cultura, as that which takes care of something, keeps it alive, and makes it grow." So we can speak of individual culture as those spheres within a social culture in which an individual takes care. The

know what and whom you can take care of." (Erik Erikson, Dimensions of A New Identity, p. 214.)

70 Robert Lifton writes, "Adult work is always tied in with a larger spiritual principle—whether that principle is the Protestant ethic, the deification of capital, or the revolutionary vision. Indeed, one way of defining adulthood is as a state of maximal absorption in everyday tasks subsumed to transcendent cultural principles, permitting minimal awareness of the threat of individual death." (Lifton, The Life of the Self, chap. 6 "Forms of Revitalization.) On the importance of a sense of "competence" see Robert W. White, Ego and Reality in Psychoanalytic Theory.


paramount significance of work in this connection could even induce Freud, who within his theoretical structure saw work only as a sort of libidinal blackmail wrought by the super-ego's extortionary methods, to write (in a footnote), "No other technique for the conduct of life attaches the individual so firmly to reality as laying emphasis on work; for his work at least gives him a secure place in a portion of reality, in the human community." 73 Alfred Schutz writes simply, "The world of working in daily life is the archetype of our experience of reality. All the other provinces of meaning may be considered as its modifications." 74

I think one can agree with Schutz's stress on the formative importance of work without recourse to Calvinistic ideas about labor and salvation. Rather, work understood as a paradigm for the individual and collective culture of care-taking establishes one, as Freud puts it, "in a portion of reality."

3. Images of expansion of the self

Here I have in mind every kind of experience in which the self seems to enlarge--tastes of what the Bible calls "abundant life." The conviction that full life is available, and indeed potentially abundant, constitutes the essence of hope. Everyday experiences of opening, broadening and deepening re-confirm one's hope and provide a kind of mundane,

73Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents, p. 80.
74Alfred Schutz, On Phenomenology and Social Relations, p. 256.
non-rapturous transcendence which renders existence alluring.

Ernest Becker writes of the organismic urge to maximal self-feeling and in so doing he traces the human capacity for violence to the implications of the human hunger for symbolic self-expansion. "Anything that reduces the other organisms and adds to one's own size and importance is a direct way to gain self-feeling," he writes. This is the impulse to make oneself count for more by making others count for less, a "morbid orientation to living" which Harry Stack Sullivan sought to explain through developmental "warps" and "malevolent transformations." "By the time we get to man," Becker continues, "we find that he is an almost constant struggle not to be diminished in his organismic importance. But as he is also and especially a symbolic organism, this struggle against being diminished is carried on on the most minute levels of symbolic complexity." 75

In becoming part of collective efforts, in loosening the boundaries of the everyday self in play, in making or learning something new, in forming a friendship or falling in love, one feels the self expand. 76 Again, such

75 Becker, Escape from Evil, p. 11.

76 Michael Balint's book Thrills and Regression is useful in this connection because of its presentation of the distinction between "ocnophiles" (broadly, those who cathect objects) and "philobats" (those who cathect spaces). This character typology is compatible with formative theory in that it emphasizes the importance of movement and the self's location in its own phenomenological space in terms of safety (refuge) and exploration.
universal forms of renewal become symbolized idiosyncratically in individual experience and then become paradigms or keys to how an individual characteristically creates novelty in his or her life. As one grows older, or when grounding is threatened in other ways, such paradigms can ossify into increasingly rigid norms as the self defensively centers around stereotyped self-conceptions. Ungrounded images of self-expansion are defended quickly, desperately and with subtle or explicit violence, because in the absence of fluid forms of self-renewal death anxiety is kept at bay only through assault and absolute retention of that which is regarded as one's own turf.

4. Old images

All the contents of memory are, in a sense, old images. But in speaking of "old images" here I have in mind a specific portion of biographical memory.⁷⁷ These are images which, quite simply, feel as if they have been around in one for a long time but, on the other hand, come quickly and frequently to mind (usually in a fragmentary, abbreviated and incomplete form) and that continually charge and recharge present acts with a specific kind of valence

⁷⁷Langer distinguishes five kinds of memory, of which biographical memory is one. She writes, "... biographical memory is about the most complex mental function of ordinary human life, running like a spine through each individual history, and concatenating the human agent's mental acts into a life of the mind." (Mind, Vol. 2, p. 344.)
and feeling tone. They are memories, but with a continuing
and very immediate formative function, so they are experi-
enced more as the self’s reference points than as memories
in a conventional sense. These images suggest (sometimes in
harsh and non-negotiable terms) what one must continue to
do and avoid doing if one is to continue to be who one
thinks of oneself as being.

I distinguish four kinds of old images: unresolved
projects, old enemies, old ideals, and sequestered history.
These tend to be bound up with each other and are perhaps
only theoretically separable.

Unresolved projects are simply those things which
linger as being somehow unfinished—a friendship never quite
resolved, an important task not fully done, some experience
one senses has been only partly absorbed. Certainly most
of one’s experiences remain unfinished in one sense or
another, and that no doubt has much to do with why dreams
occupy such an important place within human symbolic
processes. But some experiences retain a vivid and at
times poignant feeling of incompleteness, and these occa-
sionally begin to loom in the mind. In understanding
formative process—and in approaching a collage—it becomes
important to know which old images have recently emerged,
in connection with current undertakings, as unresolved
projects of the self.
Old enemies are those parts of the self against which one perpetually struggles. They are not entirely separate from the earlier category of threatening images, for indeed they are menacing. But old enemies are experienced as more internalized temptations in relation to which one must remain vigilant, rather than as sources of annihilation. The essential difference is the perpetual anger that old enemies mobilize in the self. The mixture of temptation, need for vigilance and ready anger associated with old images derives from their connections with situations, especially in childhood or adolescence, in which one experienced oneself as weak in relation to authority figures but in which, retrospectively, one can discern a degree of one's own collusion. That retrospective sense of having colluded derives, formatively, from a contemporary need to feel oneself as a source of one's own actions. One's contemporary sense of centering is undermined if one is unable to acknowledge one's own at least passive cooperation in prior submissions.78

Old enemies, usually persons such as teachers, parents, or earlier age peers, can be a source of fervent

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energy, especially around processes of self-transformation, a determination to make things different now in one's own life. What that energy is able to achieve depends upon how mired or how efficacious one feels and upon the kinds of confirmation and new openings one encounters.

Old ideals comprise those aspirations which it sometimes seems one has always had. Within ego psychology this category of imagery is spoken of as ego ideals. Gentler and less punitive than superego figures, these are images that comport reasonably well with one's sense of what is plausible for one; often they take the form of grandparents or other persons who have been non-disciplinary sponsors.

By sequestered history I mean those images which feel important to who one is but irrelevant to what one is presently doing. The childhood panel of the Buffalo Creek collage which I described in some detail provides an example.

5. Images of an alternative self

Sequestered history which is long sustained begins to constitute an image of an alternative self. Otto Rank speaks of "the double as immortal self." He writes that in ancient conception the double was thought of as a guardian angel whose function was to assure immortal survival to the self. In modern literature, however, "the double appears
as precisely the opposite, a reminder of the individual's mortality, indeed, the announcer of death itself.\textsuperscript{79}

Essentially, I think, the image of an alternative self is a conception of who one would be if one had made certain major choices quite differently. Thus the alternative self is an image of another plausible life path, less vulnerable than in one's actual life to all sorts of contingencies that seem like diversions. Though this image can be associated with considerable nostalgia and wistfulness it can nevertheless play an important formative function precisely because its exotic, at times daydream quality deliteralizes the hold of immediate circumstance on one's imagination.

It may be that the image of an alternative self has a life cycle too so that its envisagement of abundant life elsewhere evolves as one's own death approaches. Certainly there are times when one must confront such images directly. At moments of crisis or exhaustion of other projects these hold out an exotic alternative. Though my work with collage has taught me the importance of such constructions, much remains to be explored concerning the imaginative dialectic between the real and the possible over the life cycle, and the valencing and revalencing of images of an

\textsuperscript{79}Otto Rank, "The Double as Immortal Self," p. 76.
alternative self as one's life-situation changes.

6. Transitional images

Transitional images are those that embody in an immediate (even if partial and often not entirely satisfactory) form an important aspect of what one is trying to become. They fall between those aspirations that do not seem attainable for one and those that feel barely plausible—essentially they hold forth a part of the self that is too new and uncertain to be fully believed in. Some transitional images like one's mentors can serve one for a considerable length of time. Others, like acquaintances who for a time exert a potent force on one because of some special quality they possess and some immediate need of one's own, have a much briefer period of active valencing. A friend of mine speaks of "vanguard relationships," meaning those that touch and advance the forward edge of what one is becoming. Vanguard

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80 See Daniel J. Levinson, et al., "The Psychosocial Development of Men in Early Adulthood and the Mid-Life Transition." The authors write (p. 252), "The number of mentor relationships in an individual's life does not vary widely. Few men have more than three or four, and perhaps the usual numbers are none and one. The duration of the intense mentor relationship is also not extremely variable, perhaps three to four years as an average and ten to twelve years as an upper limit." The authors describe the crucial contribution of mentor to mentee as providing a "blessing."
relationships are volatile because they are as threatening to what one has been as they are confirming and enticing to what is emerging. Thus their duration is often brief, but their hold on one’s imagination can be substantial, leaving one with a feeling of indebtedness (including resentment and anger) long after the passing of their active phase. 81

The availability of transitional images and individual capacity to find and rely upon them is an extremely important aspect of formative process. Since they mediate between immediate and ultimate commitments they have great significance for spiritual centering. In the absence of viable transitional images one feels isolated and listless, having a potential energy without acceptable modes of expression. Creative and innovative people seem to have a special gift for utilizing transitional images. Creativity itself can be defined as the capacity for recognizing and transforming that which is available into that which has new and unsuspected value, the ability to devise transitional linkages.

Many forms of mental breakdown can be seen, by contrast, as involving an incapacity to recognize in

81 Lisa Buchberg shared with me her thoughts about vanguard relationships during a long conversation from which I learned a great deal.
immediate imagery any symbolic embodiment of a sense that the self is alive. Hence one feels trapped, held in a static form and endlessly vulnerable to despair and depression.

7. Images of sensuality and bodily passion

Any image can become impassioned by becoming the vehicle for self's feeling of aliveness. But sensuality and sexuality have a unique place in formative process because they restore bodily centering and challenge the basis of symbolization itself. Sensual and sexual experience connect one's symbolizations around vitality to the actual bodily processes in which all else must be grounded: muscular exertion, breathing, touching, eating, drinking, excretion, relaxation, the giving and receiving of sexual pleasure, orgasm, health, pain, disease. 82

82 See in this connection Des Pres, The Survivor, esp. chap. 7.

Becker's analysis of anxiety in The Denial of Death stresses a fateful tension in the relation between body (one's creatureliness, one's mortality) and symbolization (the immortalizing dimension). In this context I think one can argue that Freud was right (and, as usual, for a non-Freudian reason) when he said in the Three Essays on Sexuality that sex is the "weak spot" in human evolution. Sex is the weak spot (meaning sexual expression is extremely vulnerable to symptoms) not because it is recalcitrant to civilized constraints, but more fundamentally because sexual motivation depends upon so precarious a conjunction between bodily process and symbolic mediation, while carrying so heavy a burden of immortalizing significance. On the one hand, sexual encounter provides the
Human symbolization in its infinite elasticity can center the sense of life around any bodily process, or, for long periods, can relegate physical processes to the status merely of organic functions. The experience of renewal inevitably involves some form of restoration of the body. That is why in any collage, in any person's composition of experience, one seeks always to understand where the body is.  

most intense and regularly available form of adult transcendence. Sexuality connects one's life not only symbolically but literally to that of the species. On the other hand, precisely because it is so bodily, sexual expression is readily impaired by every kind of anxiety to which conscious mortals are susceptible. The question of how the forms of such susceptibility may differ in men and women due to differing tendencies in centering and grounding is I think an interesting one. To this question Jung's speculation on female tendencies toward completeness and male tendencies toward perfection may have something to contribute. (See Jung, Answer to Job, p. 71, and Leslie Farber, "He Said, She Said.")

83 No one has explored the restoration of the body with more sensitivity to the complexities of symbolic transformation around organic process than has Norman O. Brown. See his Life Against Death and Love's Body.
The composition of formative images in any actual collage comprises what I have called the second order collage. The seven categories I have described are brought to the images and provide a means of abstracting and ordering them in terms of their contribution to the maintenance of the symbolic life of the self.

My experience is too limited still to enable me to compare second order collages in much detail, and this is an area I wish to explore further in the future. Specifically I am interested in what sorts of configurations permit and even encourage lives which include both risk and commitment. What sorts of tensions, for example, between images of threat and images of safety provide for grounded forms of imaginative risk? How far can images of an alternative self balance a feeling of stasis and connect with images of expansion to enable the self's full energy to re-emerge after periods of inactivation? What are the contributions which sensuality can make to overall formative vitality in widely differing collages? What kinds of configurations characterize the relations between old images, especially old enemies, and transitional images?

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84 See Kuhn, "The Essential Tension: Tradition and Innovation in Scientific Research."
I am now able to pose these questions because the formative categories of images provide a classificatory scheme. I am not yet able to answer them because I do not understand the compositional geometry of second order collages. Whitehead's observation (quoted in Chapter I) that classification is an intermediate position on the way to scientific specification\footnote{Alfred North Whitehead, \textit{Science and the Modern World}, pp. 33-34.} suggests that there is more to do, but serves also as a caution against premature precision.

There are many questions, enough I am certain for a number of lifetimes of committed exploration. But these questions at least seem like the right ones to ask, and they take on a quality of depth as they touch on earlier, also unanswered questions involving core images.

Individual second order collages are slow to change, and they do so convulsively and around fundamental psychic tensions long prepared. That at least is my hypothesis now, based largely on observing the evolution of collages I have made over five years. The content of these collages has changed, as have many aspects of valencing. But the composition of formative images, and the formative style which underlies it—forms of centering, uncentering,
decentering, recentering, and processes of grounding rather than any actual centering-grounding configuration—have held tenaciously.

Can I then speak of my own personal growth? I think I can, recognizing the intensity of struggle that has been involved in the re-valencing that has taken place in my own composition of formative images, and recognizing also the continuous psychic work required to maintain equivalence of form. Keeping things even roughly the "same" at the level of abstraction implied by the concept of a second order collage has required substantial symbolic transformation of elements which, at the level of their concreteness in my black notebooks, are strikingly diverse.

If, as my friends believe, I am a "character," I am only one character type. The collage method is too new to have provided for other people the accumulation of data that I have in various forms (including collages) for myself. So I am caught between a reluctance to generalize too far from knowledge of myself and an inability to generalize about a stream of collages done by others. Nevertheless I feel confident that the outlines of a new
approach to the study of personal life have been sufficiently established that I and others can work fruitfully within them for a long time.
The importance of "typifications," or category constructions, for creative work is beautifully suggested by C. Wright Mills in his discussion of "setting up a file." Describing the life of a scholar, Mills writes, 

... Scholarship is a choice of how to live as well as a choice of career; whether he knows it or not, the intellectual workman forms his own self as he works toward the perfection of his craft; to realize his own potentialities, and any opportunities that come his way, he constructs a character which has as its core the qualities of the good workman.

What this means is that you must learn to use your life experience in your intellectual work: continually to examine and interpret it. ... To say that you can 'have experience,' means, for one thing, that your past plays into and affects your present, and that it defines your capacity for future experience. As a social scientist, you have to control this rather elaborate interplay, to capture what you experience and sort it out; only in this way can you hope to use it to guide and test your reflection, and in the process shape your self as an intellectual craftsman. But how can you do this? One answer is, you must set up a file, which is, I suppose, a sociologist's way of saying: keep a journal. Many creative writers keep journals; the sociologist's need for systematic reflection demands it.

In such a file as I am going to describe, there is joined personal experience and professional activities, studies under way and studies planned. In this file, you, as an intellectual craftsman, will try to get together what you are doing intellectually and what you are experiencing as a person. Here you will not be afraid to use your experience and relate it directly to various work in progress. By serving as a check on repetitious work, your file also enables you to conserve your energy. It encourages you to capture 'fringe-thoughts': various ideas which may be byproducts of everyday life, snatches of conversation overheard on the street, or, for that matter, dreams. Once noted, these
may lead to more systematic thinking, as well as lend intellectual relevance to more directed experience.

You will have often noticed how carefully accomplished thinkers treat their own minds, how closely they observe their development and organize their experience. The reason they treasure their smallest experiences is that, in the course of a lifetime, modern man has so very little personal experience and yet experience is so important as a source of original intellectual work. To be able to trust yet to be skeptical of your own experience, I have come to believe, is one mark of the mature workman, this ambiguous confidence is indispensable to originality in any intellectual pursuit, and the file is one way by which you can develop and justify such confidence.

By keeping an adequate file and thus developing self-reflective habits, you can learn how to keep your inner world awake.

... Eventually, the files will come to be arranged according to several large projects, having many sub-projects that change from year to year.

All this involves the taking of notes ... You will take notes which do not fairly represent the books you read. You are using this particular idea, this particular fact, for the realization of your own projects.

It was several years after I began saving everything in my black notebooks that I first read these paragraphs by C. Wright Mills, and when I read them I suddenly found what I was doing illuminated with words I did not yet have.

Further along in the same essay Mills makes even more clear the collage analogy in the creative process of keeping a file. He writes:

There are definite ways, I believe, of stimulating the sociological imagination:
On the most concrete level, the re-arranging of the file, as I have said, is one way to invite imagination. You simply dump out heretofore disconnected folders, mixing up their contents, and then re-sort them. You try to do it in a more or less relaxed way. How often and how extensively you re-arrange the files will of course vary with different problems and with how well they are developing. But the mechanics of it are as simple as that. Of course, you will have in mind the several problems on which you are actively working, but you will also try to be passively receptive to unforeseen and unplanned linkages.

... In all work, but especially in examining theoretical statements, you will try to keep close watch on the level of generality of every key term, and you will often find it useful to break down a high-level statement into more concrete meanings. When that is done, the statement often falls into two or three components, each lying along different dimensions. You will also try to move up the level of generality: remove the specific qualifiers and examine the re-formed statement or inference more abstractly, to see if you can stretch or elaborate it. So from above and from below, you will try to probe, in search of clarified meaning, into every aspect and implication of the idea.

Many of the general notions you come upon, as you think about them, will be cast into types. A new classification is the usual beginning of fruitful developments. ...

For a working sociologist, cross-classification is what diagraming a sentence is for a diligent grammarian. In many ways, cross-classification is the very grammar of the sociological imagination. Like all grammar, it must be controlled and not allowed to run away from its purposes.

Mills concludes his essay with a paragraph that connects what Schutz might call public and private typifications in the interest of creative work and meaningful life:
Do not allow public issues as they are officially formulated, or troubles as they are privately felt, to determine the problems you take up for study. . . . Know that many personal troubles cannot be solved merely as troubles, but must be understood in terms of public issues—and in terms of the problems of history-making. Know that the human meaning of public issues must be revealed by relating them to personal troubles—and to the problems of the individual life. Know that the problems of social science, when adequately formulated, must include both troubles and issues, both biography and history, and the range of their intricate relations. Within that range the life of the individual and the making of societies occur; and within that range the sociological imagination has its chance to make a difference in the quality of human life in our time.

(From "On Intellectual Craftsmanship;" appendix to Mills, The Sociological Imagination.)

When I visited Susanne Langer at her home in Old Lyme, Connecticut in the winter of 1974 I was most impressed by what she said about her file system; that she had begun it when an undergraduate at Radcliffe College, and that it has been continuous from that time, with no-longer-useful sections stored in her attic. Langer was eighty years old in 1975, and the file system, and her intellectual life and craftsmanship, go on as she continues work on Volume 3 of Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling.
All of this has to do with depicting for a given person what I call "characteristic transformations of feeling" in terms which are generally as well as idiosyncratically applicable. This whole project I see as corresponding to what Gordon W. Allport spoke of as the need for a science of psychology to deal with "patterned uniqueness." He speaks of a "morphogenetic approach" and means by that something very similar to what I have called a formative approach. Allport writes:

Individual differences (or dimensions) are freely allowed for [in contemporary personality theory], but (personality is something more than an intersection of dimensions. That is to say, your personality is not simply your array of scores on achievement, ascendance introversion, intelligence, neuroticism, or on Factors A, B, and C. In point of fact these general or nomothetic dimensions, which are the psychologists present stock in trade, may not even be relevant to your personal structure. If some are relevant (in an approximate way) the question is not how do your scores on these variables differ from the scores of other people, but rather how do these qualities modify one another in your own functioning system.

Imagination is needed to provide us with methods appropriate to the pattern and growth of the single person. . . . To me it is not acceptable to argue that this challenge of uniqueness lies outside the domain of science, since science, it is said, deals only with general laws and never with unique occurrences. Whatever the dogma may be in the natural sciences, I insist that psychology is assigned the problem of human personality and that to handle it adequately it must focus on the morphogenesis of the single pattern as it exists. A psychologist is defined in the official ethical code of the American Psychological Association (1959) as a person "committed to increasing man's understanding of man." And man, I submit, exists only in concrete, specifiable, and unique forms. If you reply that every object in nature is unique---every stone, every tree, every bird---I remain unmoved. The fact is that the individual human system is so enormously complex and so amazingly varied in its transactions with the world, and
so intricate in its self-regulation, that one cannot shrug off the challenge of uniqueness by taking refuge in analogies with inanimate nature or lower forms of life.

The issue before us is not new. It has been discussed many times, for example by Meehl (1954), Sarbin, Taft and Bently (1960), and most recently by Holt (1962). If I am not mistaken most of the discussions conclude with an elaborate defense of dimensional analysis. We are told in a variety of ways that it is not possible for science to deal with patterned uniqueness, or are assured that in the last analysis there is no difference between molecular (i.e., dimensional) study and morphogenic study. Every biologist knows the difference between molecular and morphogenic biology, but psychologists are slow to recognize the parallel distinction in their own science.

As Meehl pointed out, there are two separate issues in this dispute. One concerns the process of understanding. How does the psychologist assemble into a unitary image all the fragments of information he obtains regarding a person . . .

A second issue in the dimensional-morphogenic dispute concerns the type of data needed for assessing individual behavior. Are scores derived from dimensional scales, from projective tests, or from questionnaires the only data we need? In general, this is the type of evidence with which we are now working.

The theoretical limitation of this prevalent approach is clear. When we assess an individual in terms of questionnaires or Rorschach scores, or anything similar, we are assuming that the basic constitution of his personality is qualitatively like that of all other people. The self-same dimensions are imposed on all subjects. They are allowed to vary quantitatively but only in respect to the dimensions imposed by the experimenter. But what if the cleavages in our own lives, our 'personal dispositions,' do not correspond to the slicing in terms of 'common traits'? Would we not then need a new baseline, a
new device for finding out the nature of these unique personal dispositions?

(From Gordon W. Allport, "Imagination in Psychology: Some Needed Steps," in Imagination and the University, The Frank Gerstein Lectures, pp. 69-71.)
CHAPTER XI

THE POWER OF COLLAGE: DIAGNOSTICS AND THERAPY

This shit works . . .
--Comment by a collage subject after making and talking about his collage

In this chapter I want to explore a question first posed during an interview by one of my collage-makers. The question put to me was, "Why is the collage so powerful?"

From the beginning my work with collage has raised every kind of theoretical, clinical and practical question, but I have sought, in Rilke's phrase, more to live with the questions than answer them. The questions have seemed sufficiently fundamental to justify repeated asking over time and in different contexts, and the answers I now have--the material I have presented in the preceding pages--seem believable chiefly because they illuminate slowly accumulated experience. The question of the power inherent in the collage method, however, seems to me to be the heart of the matter. It is the most inclusive question and the least answerable in a single response.

People love their collages. My subjects speak of their collages fondly both in the immediate interviews and
when they recall them long afterward. The people who have made collages have thanked me for the experience and have regarded the collage-making as an important event. Even when the collages manifest confusion and disturbance, as they inevitably do, the collage-makers find them comforting and love to return to look at them and show them to their friends. The young poet to whom I have referred called the collage-making an "ideal experience," meaning that it permitted a rare fusion of expressiveness and useful self-exploration. People who hear about my collage work are frequently eager to make a collage and to raise with me all sorts of issues about what the work means. Such discussions have been extremely valuable to me in clarifying my own thinking and in convincing me of the compatibility between the collage perspective and the way people intuitively comprehend their own lives.

An important aspect of the power of the collage method has to do with the reconciliation of diagnostics and therapy intrinsic to what one person called my process of "photo therapy." This I regard as an absolutely fundamental point, but it is one that is remarkably foreign to the psychodiagnostic tradition. In my own thinking it derives from Whitehead's insistence in his philosophy of education that, "the mind is never passive . . . whatever interest attaches to your subject-matter must be evoked
here and now."¹ If, for diagnostic or research purposes, one wishes to observe the ways in which another person characteristically creates form then one must provide a context in which the formative tendencies will be elicited and engaged in the matter at hand. If one does not do this it is not that the formative tendency will disappear, but that it will adhere to the actual situation, for example, the interplay between psychologist and client, rather than to the artifactual one which is to be evaluated. Even then the procedure may produce data of some value in personality assessment. But the prosaic quality of the diagnostic experience will have rendered difficult the subsequent task of estimating the strength, interrelationships and situational dependency of even those "traits" that have been accurately identified.

I began using collage as part of my research interviews. I thought that my research subjects would be able to share with me through this medium aspects of their own ways of combining and using images which would otherwise be difficult to observe. In that sense I saw the collage process as a "microsphere." But I also believed that individual formative capacities and style cannot be

exhibited without being, at least to some degree, existentially engaged. I thought the collage would provide a novel arena for self-exploration useful to the collage-maker himself or herself. I hoped that it would enable people, as I put it in the collage instructions, “to take a fresh look at what feels important in one’s life and how things fit together.”

In the course of my work I have come increasingly to see and to emphasize the therapeutic potential of the collage process. That potential resides in the opportunity which the method provides for acknowledging to oneself the form of one’s psychic composition of images and leads to a greater translucency of immediate to core images. That is, the process encourages a revalencing of images in accord with basic commitments of the self. It does this by providing one with a new symbol for the interrelationships between areas of feeling in one’s life.

I believe that the impingement of an unacknowledged image upon an ostensibly unrelated process of experiencing is perhaps the fundamental psychological source of human emotional difficulty. The human capacity for symbolization, and hence for abstractive memory and anticipation, means that certain experiences are not easily forgotten and left behind (most problematically those which evoke death anxiety due to their association with imagery of ultimate
threat to the self), and that concern about the future intrudes into present involvements. A related source of emotional difficulty is what might be called symbolic lag. By this I simply mean that developments among various spheres of one's psychic composition may be out of phase with one another. Imagery in a specific area of one's life (such as one's actual competence in work or in socializing) may change dramatically long before the change is subjectively recognized and inwardly believed—that is, long before one's whole psychic composition is revalenced in accord with that change. One's self-esteem or sense of potential may for long periods be quite out of kilter with one's actual accomplishments.

Human mentation, because it is symbolic in a far more pervasive and fundamental sense than is animal

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In the collages I have done myself I have found an interesting technique for exploring my own continual re-centering around presently active images, in the process revalencing my own image history. I photograph a collage after I make it, and then when I am making a new collage, say six months later, I try to use photographs of previous collages as elements in the one I am presently making. These photographs, like any other collage element, can be cut up and the fragments dispersed around the new composition, or an entire old collage photograph can be placed as a chunk in some appropriate spot. The process of locating the old collage in the new one becomes a way of asking Where is that bit of history now? How have I assimilated that experience? How am I using it, or being used by it? I have not yet tried this technique with other people, but I see it as a potentially fertile aspect of collage therapy.
intelligence, binds an individual human mind to the history of its images in a way that animal impulses are not bound. Those impulses derive from situational or visceral presentations and pass when those impingements change. Whatever the ethologists may demonstrate about the ingenuity of animal intelligence, what appears most characteristically human is that for human beings symbolization constitutes an autonomous motivational realm. It is this autonomy which liberates mind for creative leaps of imagination, and makes possible its disturbing inner cleavages.

Psychic partitioning in the human mind, functional at one level of abstraction and with respect to one set of intentions, can be readily betrayed at another. This tendency derives from the fundamental nature of images. An essential characteristic of images—their tendency to stand both for an instance of experience and for experiences of that kind, thus constituting abstractive categories—implies that there is an inherent tendency for one thing to be experienced in terms of another. In addition to conscious ordering processes, categories become established around aspects of the image which may not have been

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consciously salient at the time the image was formed. Such implicit categories may be established, for example, around non-verbalized (perhaps pre-verbal) childhood experiences, or around an unemphasized sensory modality or an aspect of a perceived object or of an experience which was scarcely noticed because it was not that aspect but some other one which was useful to the accomplishment of a consciously motivated act under way. Hence, one's psychic composition consists of a myriad of acknowledged and unacknowledged feeling-laden connective pathways. Unacknowledged pathways can nevertheless be keenly felt, not descriptively known as intellectually formulated relationships, but rather experienced as invasions of mood, lapses of attention, intrusive attitudes, eruptive enthusiasms, a mysterious, lingering persistence of irrelevant interests or feelings, the sudden emergence of strange notions, fleeting associations, old memories and unexplained inner hesitations.

All psychotherapy consists, I think, in some mixture of a two-sided process. The acknowledgment of unrecognized impingements—whether it is called "insight" when the context is psychoanalytic uncovering along the lines of a

4 See Ernest Becker, Revolution in Psychiatry (pp. 171-73), for a discussion of this way of looking at "unconscious bonds." See also Ernest Schachtel "On Memory and Childhood Amnesia" in Metamorphosis.
sexual-developmental theory, or "amplification" when the context is archetypal illumination in accord with assumptions about the growth and individuation of the adult self—is one side of the process of symbolic transformation. The other side is the formation of a new image which provides a new source of psychic energy and, as Erikson emphasizes, entails a new relation to the community.

As impressed as one must be by human capacity for imaginative extrapolation and vision, one cannot fail to be impressed as well by the laggardly persistence of old symbolic formations. These formations manage to insinuate their influence, meaning their incomplete momentum toward enactment, on current activities which may provide only the most muted kind of substitute fulfillment. The mind's capacity for symbolic displacement—both laterally across the range of one's current concerns, and temporarily in constructing immediate or future situations as roughly equivalent to prior ones—seems to me to be at the heart of the precariousness of human emotional adjustment.  

5The capacity for imposing on one situation a form derived from another is, of course, a vital component of human creativity as well. It is the importance of this kind of symbolic transport that makes the study of metaphor so fundamental for all forms of creativity. See for example, Owen Barfield, Poetic Diction. Susanne Langer's conception of the intrinsic abstractive power of images accounts for the fundamental importance of metaphor. She says (Mind, Vol. 1, p. 60): "... images ... perhaps always fit more than one actual experience.
The capacity for symbolic displacement is, I think, the connecting link between human creativity on the one hand and human susceptibility to psychological impediment on the other. It is the fundamental importance of this

We not only produce them by every act of memory (and perhaps by other acts), but we impose them on new perceptions, constantly, without intent or effort, as the normal process of formulating our sensory impressions and apprehended facts. Consequently we tend to see the form of one thing in another . . . " Though he employed the concept of displacement in the context of an instinctual rather than symbolic perspective, Freud considered displacement to be the fundamental process involved in the dream-work. He wrote " . . . a transference and displacement of psychical intensities occurs in the process of dream-formation, and it is as a result of these that the difference between the text of the dream-content and that of the dream-thoughts comes about. The process which we are here presuming is nothing less than the essential portion of the dream-work; and it deserves to be described as 'dream-displacement.'" (The Interpretation of Dreams, p. 308.)

6 Langer writes, "In the realm of plastic art, quite apart from symbolic intent, the intuitive seeing of one thing in another is an invaluable means of abstracting not only shapes, but nameless characteristics. The conception of one thing consciously or even unconsciously held in mind serves as a scaffolding for the envisagement of the other, so the main lines of representation of that other borrow their motivation from both; the resulting gestalt 'is and is not' its avowed object." (Mind, Vol. 1, p. 170.)

An interesting and I think plausible psychological example of this phenomenon is the play "Equus" in which Alan Strang's motivation for blinding the six horses is developed as a three-way displacement and conflating of three sets of images: those involving feelings for his parents; religious notions of Christ's suffering in which one may bear the suffering of another; and bodily, sexual feeling which early on had become attached to horses. The psychic interchanges that take place around these images are concretized in the exchange of a picture of the suffering Christ which hung in Alan's bedroom (a picture too maudlin even for his ultra-religious mother and which had always offended his father as well) for a head-on picture
function which accounts for the significance of composition in processes of emotional revitalization. I would argue that the significance of composition for psychotherapeutic work has been insufficiently appreciated, both in theory and practice, and that here the collage method may have a substantial contribution to make.

By composition I mean the formation of a complex symbol adequate to suggest the transactions and reverberations that take place between diverse areas of psychic life, and which, indeed, comprise that life. In recognizing the centrality of composition one must acknowledge the indispensable contributions of both Freud and Jung, as well as many contemporary therapies like Gestalt and psychosynthesis in which this idea is much closer to explicit articulation.

Commenting on Freud's "tactics of interpretation," Philip Rieff asserts that "the value of therapy is just

of a horse with large eyes. In the act of blinding the horses Alan makes an attempt--suicide-like in its desperation and futility--to enact simultaneously the conflated impulses deriving from the three sets of images. He attempts to assuage guilt (emanating from both parental and religious images) by annihilating vision; re-enacts Christ's passion by a variety of mortification--at the same time wounding and further deifying that which he loves; and makes a kind of ultimate bodily sacrifice: destroying the vision of the gods themselves in order to redeem the integrity of bodily passion.
its prolonged opportunity for the patient to formulate his emotions."⁷ Speaking of his own pilgrimage into his unconscious Jung writes, "To the extent that I managed to translate the emotions into images—that is to say, to find the images which were concealed in the emotions—I was inwardly calmed and reassured... I learned how helpful it can be, from the therapeutic point of view, to find the particular images which lie behind emotions."⁸ By "formulation" I take Rieff to mean the process of giving to one's feelings a specific articulation, essentially verbal expression. Jung moves closer to a compositional perspective, because his emphasis on connecting an emotion with an associated image (and, of course, connecting a personal image to an archetypal one) requires a shifting of one's frame of reference, a process of "seeing through" which James Hillman calls "psychologizing."⁹ The Jungian position has much to teach regarding the manifold relations between image, emotion and the overall life-project which Jung calls individuation. But one need not, I think, adopt

⁷Rieff, Freud: The Mind of the Moralist, p. 117.

⁸Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, p. 177.

⁹Hillman, Re-Visioning Psychology, chap. 3, "Psychologizing or Seeing Through."
the often confusing and obscure language of archetypal psychology in order to grasp what may be the essential point: that the life of the self requires the continual re-contextualizing of its images in connection with re-centering around primal psychological ideas.

Every major life transition requires the emergence of a new image, or, more accurately, a new composition of images which is in large measure a revalenced version of an older composition. Envisioning psychological change as a process of re-contextualizing images so that they receive new imputations of value and are established in fresh mutual proximities leads to an emphasis on what, in a sort of collage language, I have called the connective pathways between images. It is these connective pathways which accomplish alternations of feeling and which supply the occasionally malleable interstitial putty for re-valencing.

The kinds of self-conscious personal change which in this society are frequently sought in psychotherapy require an attention to usually unnoticed provocations of mood and attitude. Such provocations are a function less of specific images than of structural properties of a composition, and so they are difficult to observe because generally there is no vantage point within the self sufficiently disengaged, dis-identified, to provide a
perspective. Dreams can do this because they are at once experienced as both self and not-self. They are in a sense nature's way of giving to the self an ongoing virtual realm for the witnessing of symbolic transformations too elusive to be caught in the literal-minded web of diurnal self-scrutiny. Jung was more aware than Freud of the virtualizing property of dreams, hence his insistence upon "sticking to" rather than interpreting their images. Freud's virtual domain was the transference. The transference virtualized society in an asymmetrical diad, in accord with Freud's conviction that the self's guilt- and inhibition-producing mechanisms are social creations.

The collage, which is essentially an art of proximity, virtualizes the self's composition of images, its ways of establishing orientation. A collage provides an image of image relationships—a kind of meta-image—and so it readily yields all sorts of information about properties of an image-structuring, such things as preferred density, proximities, etc.—matters which are ordinarily too embedded in (and identified with) the immediacy of contact (in the Gestalt sense) to be


11For a discussion of "contact" see Perls, Hefferline
recognized. These structuring tendencies are fundamental for the forming of character, indeed one could argue that they actually constitute one's character. These tendencies are usually unconscious, but not for the Freudian reason. It is not that they are repressed—they evidence themselves all the time—but rather that consciousness presupposes structure which itself becomes ground rather than figure in a perceptual act.

In the collage process the issue of context is maintained as figure rather than becoming ground as occurs routinely in life. The diagnostic task of revealing the image merges with the latently therapeutic one of acknowledging it, giving it place. Then the way is open for re-contextualizing, which means both realignment and fresh endowments of feeling. The emergence of a new image is marked by a new potential for enactment.

and Goodman, Gestalt Therapy, pp. 227-35. On the importance of orientation and its relationship to therapeutic change these authors write (p. 150): "As one's orientation in the environment improves, as one's awareness of what one genuinely wants to do becomes clearer, as one makes approaches which are limited try-outs to see what will happen, gradually one's techniques for expression of previously blocked impulses develop also."

12 For a discussion of the "varieties of unconscious" see Kenneth Burke, "Mind, Body, and the Unconscious."

13 Roberto Assagioli makes Law I of his chapter on "psychological laws" the following dictum: "Images or mental pictures and ideas tend to produce the physical
Assessing symbolic displacements is the central concern of psychodiagnostic work undertaken in preparation for psychotherapy. Conventionally the assumption is that the testing procedure will locate the testee's personality in a grid of descriptive categories which will indicate his or her range and depth of impairment and susceptibility to treatment. In keeping with notions of medical responsibility and professional privileged possession of theoretical knowledge, the diagnostic information is elicited for institutional and professional purposes and is not intended to constitute part of the testee's educational or therapeutic program. Certainly the testee learns a great deal in the course of taking a battery of conditions and the external acts that correspond to them." He explains, "This law has been formulated also in the following way: 'Every image has in itself a motor element.' Every idea is an act at an initial stage. William James was one of the first to call attention to 'ideo-motor' action, in which a central idea releases, triggers, and gives life to the waiting muscular system." See The Act of Will, chap. 5, "The Skillful Will: Psychological Laws," p. 51. See also Assagioli, Psychosynthesis, and "The Synthetic Vision" by Sam Keen. The current popularity of psychosynthesis represents an interesting return to an earlier psychology of will.

In Chapter 27, "Will," of The Principles of Psychology (p. 526) William James writes, "We may lay it down for certain that every representation of a movement awakens in some degree the actual movement which is its object; and awakens it in a maximum degree whenever it is not kept from doing so by an antagonistic representation present simultaneously to the mind." This is essentially Langer's idea of competing acts, here equating images with what Langer calls impulses.
psychodiagnostic tests and establishes predispositions and expectations of both him or herself and the therapeutic institution's methods as a result. But that learning is a largely unintended consequence, the assumption being that there is a continuity between diagnostic process and therapeutic procedure from the perspective of the test-administering institution.

I have already suggested that such a process isolates the test experience from the testee's self-conscious efforts to reform his or her own psychological situation. It objectifies the testee, assuming that information relevant to conceiving his or her motivational processes can be obtained even in a context which tends to be mystifying and disruptive of conscious and purposeful action. The testor and testee encounter each other from radically different symbolic perspectives.

I would emphasize also the discontinuity produced for the testee between the test experience, which produces essentially a series a labels of presumed use to one's therapist rather than oneself, and the therapeutic experience which must consist of some form of symbolic transformation taking place as information about oneself becomes part of one's operative image.

Ideally the client's initial encounter with the therapist takes place within a symbolic setting construed in
compatible ways by both, with the emphasis on a diagnostic experience that elicits rather than subverts the client’s initiative in making change in his or her own life.\textsuperscript{14} This requires that the client’s formative capacities be engaged from the beginning in ways that make sense to the client, and that the information and experience issuing from the diagnostic procedure be maximally available to the client in a form usable for his or her own process of recentering.\textsuperscript{15} I believe that a formative depth psychology

\textsuperscript{14}For a discussion of the influence of the initial contact between client and therapeutic institution on likelihood of premature termination of therapy see Mack Davis, “Therapeutic Dyads: A Study of Premature Termination Among Low Income Clients in an Out-Patient Clinic.”

\textsuperscript{15}George Kelly, whose work I find as compatible with my own as that of any academic psychologist, lists what he considers to be the purposes which a good clinical test should serve. These test functions are (a) to define the client’s problem in usable terms, (b) to reveal the pathways or channels along which the client is free to move, (c) to furnish clinical hypotheses which may subsequently be checked and put to use, (d) to reveal those resources of the client which might otherwise be overlooked by the therapist, and (e) to reveal those problems of the client which might otherwise be overlooked by the therapist. All of these worthy objectives are specified exclusively from the standpoint of the therapist even though Kelly writes that “[the psychology of personal constructs] recognizes that it is the client who is the primary object of the psychologist’s investigation and not the test.” It does not seem to have occurred to Kelly that the test experience itself be directly useful to the client. See George A. Kelly, The Psychology of Personal Constructs, Vol. 1, pp. 204-08.
based on the notions of image and composition helps to provide such a shareable symbolic setting for therapist and client.

I see the process of personal change, facilitated by psychotherapy but by no means limited to that context, in terms of a three-stage sequence: acknowledgment of the prevailing images, revalencing of the composition and recentering of the self around the emergent form.16 A psychology of the image emphasizes the compatibility between the therapist's need for phenomenological entree and the client's need for acknowledgment of prevailing images. The therapist's analytic rubrics—esthetic criteria, centering and valencing, grounding and thrust, and formative categories of images—will not be those of the client. But these rubrics derive from and cohere with what I believe to be an inescapable, if implicit, assumption by the self about its own viability: that the strength of one's psychic life flows from the groundedness and reach

16Robert Lifton speaks of "open personal change" in a three-step process of confrontation, reordering and renewal in the final chapter of Thought Reform and the Psychology of Totalism. The steps I describe here are put forth in a similar spirit, but derive from a more explicit psychology of the image and work with collage. On therapy as revalencing see Herbert PIngarette, The Self in Transformation, pp. 21ff.
of the path one can imagine for oneself. This assumption about the connection between symbolic movement and vitality in turn forms the ground for what is explicitly shared between therapist and client: the images themselves.

By acknowledgment I mean the process of letting the images one lives with from day to day be experienced in relation to a broader image structure in which they play a part. One discovers where one is "really at." Readily

17 I think it is very significant that the term "path" has become such an evocative word for Westerners pursuing Eastern forms of spirituality: being "on the path" means being spiritually oriented.

18 Langer makes a broader but closely related point in discussing the implicit function of images relative to signs and discursive symbols. She writes (Philosophy in A New Key, p. 283), "Signs and discursive symbols are the stock-in-trade of conscious intelligent adjustment, and they are telescoped into such small cues of perception and denotation that we are tempted to believe our thought moves without images or words. By such signals we steer our course through the world of sense, and by one-word contacts we throw whole systems of judgment, belief, memory, and expectation into action. Yet all these familiar signs and abbreviated symbols have to be supported by a vast intellectual structure in order to function so smoothly that we are almost unaware of them; and this structure is composed of their full articulate forms and all their implicit relationships, which may be exhumed from the stock of our buried knowledge at any time. Because they do fit so neatly into the frame of our ultimate world-picture, we can think with them and do not have to think about them; but our full apprehension of them is really only suppressed. They wear a 'cap of invisibility' when, like good servants, they perform their tasks for our convenience without being evident in themselves."

One implication of this close fitting of images into "the frame of our ultimate world-picture" is that when something in the adequacy of that world-picture goes awry
available symbolizations find a place in a larger network of connective pathways, but the integrity of one's conscious images is not infringed. Revalencing begins spontaneously on the heels of acknowledgment because the widening of one's experiential frame leads to reattributions of feeling among immediate images. In the term revalencing—the new imputation of value and realignments in felt proximity within the composition—I mean to emphasize that there is continuity as well as alteration throughout the process of change. The psychic energy for transformation is potentially available now, even if presently deployed in connection with images of unacknowledged power.

The self is always doing something\(^\text{19}\) always symbolizing so as to maximally evoke the feeling of life. The leverage for change resides in the discrepancy between one's immediate modes of experiencing and one's persistent yearnings—in the tension between outer and inner. That is why what I spoke of earlier as double-fidelity, fidelity to picture and to image, initiates a movement from

\(^{19}\) On the "inherent activity of the self" see Ernest Becker, The Revolution in Psychiatry, p. 150.
acknowledgment to revalencing. Simultaneous fidelity to
the external collage pictures and to the inner composition
of images creates both a continuity and an opening. If
there were no continuity between picture and image then the
self's formative process would be stymied; if there were no
opening, no gap between the two, then a sense of possibility
would not energize the emergence of a new form.\footnote{I am indebted to Fred Marchant, one of my collage
makers, for help in formulating this connection between
double fidelity and personal change. Much of learning
theory of course supports the notion that change, or learn-
ing, takes place when there is a lack of fit, when an experi-
ence is sufficiently novel that it cannot be readily
assimilated within one's existing categories. This is the
kind of fundamental learning, resulting from a discrepancy,
that Piaget calls accommodation.

The idea that personal change takes place in the
opening between the double fidelities is a bit reminiscent
of Rauschenberg's statement that he wanted to work "in the
gap between art and life," a statement I find very helpful
in looking at his combine paintings. See John Russell,
The Great Divide, 1950-70, p. 10.

\begin{center}
Ernest Becker, in the concluding sections on "love
and esthetics" of The Revolution in Psychiatry makes a case
(analogous to my discussion of double fidelity) for regard-
ing perception, in its relations with loving, as vital for
changing the self. He writes:
\end{center}

\begin{quote}
\ldots a major function of the love object
is \ldots to carry one, by means of new per-
ceptions, somewhat beyond himself, his old
rules, his old world. \ldots In order to be
carried beyond one's accustomed perceptions
one has to look at the uniqueness of the loved
object. But this requires some flexibility
because fuller vision of the object is pos-
sible only when the old rules do not monopolize
perception.

Perception is fundamental to love, which
is the reason why the notion of beauty is
inseparable from it. The old rules, after
The tension established by double fidelity can be pursued at various levels of abstractness and with varying degrees of inclusiveness and depth throughout the collage.

all, stamp the world with sameness; they outline the expected perception. . . . Perception of the existentially unique draws us directly into the world. The object is a bridge. [Compare Fairbairn's well-known formula: "The function of libidinal pleasure is essentially to provide a sign-post to the object." An Object-Relations Theory of the Personality, p. 33.] We don't desire the unique object in itself, so much as we aim to use it to take hold of the world, to draw ourselves into it. . . . The perception is the point of contact, the locus of momentary unity. . . . Human love is a sentiment for life of a peculiarly alienated animal, an animal who has to urge himself into the world. . . .

I suppose the reason that love is one of the principle sources of anguish in the higher primates is because it stands at the threshold of a this-wordly liberation. It pinpoints the great contradiction we noted above: The new perceptions lead one beyond the old rules, to a broader life, a different object, a new commitment. But in order to perceive the uniqueness of the loved object, in order to see it and accept it more in terms of what it is, one must already possess some flexibility, some disposition to be weaned away from the stale old rules and perceptions. Otherwise the object is painted in the pale grey of one's own familiar world. . . .

Every single object we meet is a potential wedge into a new world, or a potential link into the old chain. The love object, especially, promises much, but depending on it and on ourselves it may give little or nothing. (The Revolution in Psychiatry, pp. 244-47.)
Gradually the composition is imaginatively recreated in a kind of controlled, contextualized decentering. The re-centering of the self around the emergent form then involves exploring the new images so that they take on inner credibility and outer plausibility. One then senses a return to that which is fundamental and deeply rooted in oneself. Recentering is essentially the recognition of formative continuity in the transformed image. The feeling of return (and sometimes of rebirth) brings with it the comfort of renewed closeness to core images and so it involves, as well, the reestablishment of grounding. The need for re-grounding arises commensurately with the profundity of decentering which has taken place.

After this excursus into a theory of psychic function, malfunction, and a collage-based compositional-model of emotional revitalization I want to return to the question of the power in the collage experience. I will make a number of points rather quickly, trusting that the context provided earlier removes the need for detailed exposition.

I think the collage method is powerful first because it combines diagnostic and therapeutic aspects. Second, it produces a novel context, a virtual sphere, in which to explore one's current orientation among images and to tell one's story. Telling one's story is an inherently powerful
and intimacy-creating experience. The "flow experience" quality that people describe in making their collages derives from the fusion of awareness and activity which the process elicits. One explores one's inner images actively, in making and telling, not in introspective rumination. Making the collage and then talking about it enables one to connect again with the personae of one's life, and the process tends to open the self outward toward society.

The novel context which the collage process creates enables one to come to that which is old, or at least familiar, in a new way. As Buber suggests in his discussion of "distance and relation," holding the elements of one's life at a distance provides the possibility of then entering into a new closeness with them. In the collage experience these movements of distance and closeness combine with what Jung calls acknowledging the shadow. The shadow includes those aspects of oneself that have been pushed aside, perhaps disparaged and despised. I believe that, ontologically, there must always be a shadow. In creating form in one's life one inevitably focuses on certain goals and emphasizes certain capabilities and

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certain favored attributes. ^22^ Parts of oneself which threaten to subvert the consciously sought form are neglected and shunted to the side. One then becomes one-sided (Jung's definition of neurosis), prematurely foreclosed. Periodically, in rhythms which have, I think, a profound connection not only with the depths of the soul but also with the supposedly superficial concerns of mental hygiene, one must reacknowledge the neglected parts of oneself. As the shadows emerge from the ground to again become figures the self expands, alternatives appear. There is produced a "tension of opposites, without which," as Jung says, "no forward movement is possible."^23^

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^22^ Tillich's discussion of "Life, Its Ambiguities, and the Quest for Unambiguous Life" supports this view. See his Systematic Theology, Vol. 3, Part IV, "Life and the Spirit."

^23^ Jung, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology, p. 53.

This is perhaps a good place to comment on the possibility of what a friend called the "dishonest collage," that is, a collage in which one idealizes oneself and in which there is no shadow. As I argued earlier, I think that is possible, in principle. But the three aspects of the collage process which mitigate against a dishonest collage are the often unrealized power of photographs to elicit feelings, the fact that configurational meaning emerges spontaneously, and the impulse which I believe people have to take chances and explore themselves if they feel the context provided is a safe, potentially healing one. In addition, it is significant that in the interviews I pursue the degree and kind of isomorphism between form in the collage (at various levels of abstraction) and form in the collage maker's life. As one observes, for example, a specific use of density in a collage one can ask the collage
A third source of power in the collage method is the bringing together of the psychology of scanning with the psychology of photography. Scanning has the power to touch places of great depth in the self (because it adumbrates values in advance of object recognition), and photographs have the power to elicit and hold dense sequences of narrative and feeling. In the collage method these characteristics combine to create excitement and an impulse toward profound self-exploration. Photography, as I argued earlier, contains an intrinsic tendency toward imaginative re-combination, hence toward collage composition. Encountering a wealth of good unlabeled photographs, largely for cultural and historical reasons, heightens this excitement and conveys a sense of subjective enfranchisement. The result is that in making a collage one tells more than one knows, while knowing, or at least sensing, that this is what one is doing.

This touches on a fourth source of the method's power: it respects the subject's integrity. The assumption
that someone can make a collage is already an affirmation. It presumes that regardless of how constrained one may feel in one's life, how buffeted by forces and influences beyond one's control, still the capacity for centering is available. One can choose the number and kind of pictures one wants to work with, the size and color of background that seems appropriate, and one can begin to form a composition. Another message which I have sought to communicate is an interest in entering the world of the collage maker's life. The collage instructions essentially mean, "I want you to show me how it feels to move among all the things that currently concern you." That kind of invitation, when it is meant, is extraordinarily powerful. 24

The collage method acknowledges the collage pattern of the mind. This is a fifth source of its power. It recognizes not only the human need for meaning, but also that meaning depends upon context, upon a composition. Verbal communication is essentially linear, and the proximities it establishes are sequential. In moving

24 Another way of saying this is to say that authentically phenomenological methods have great appeal because of their openness. The currency of communication will be that which the subject of study wishes to employ. Henri Ellenberger writes, "In fact, it is surprising how accessible uneducated or very sick patients are to phenomenological considerations. Here lies a wide open field for research and discoveries." See Rollo May, et al., eds., Existence, p. 123.
beyond projective psychology to the compositional emphasis of collage one seeks to virtualize the experience of multiple and simultaneous image proximities. Commenting on work with schizophrenics, Manfred Bleuler writes:

The remarkable result of existential analytic research in schizophrenia lies in the discovery that even in schizophrenia the human spirit is not split into fragments. . . . All of a schizophrenic's expressions (linguistic, kinetic, illusory, etc.) have an unmistakable relationship to one another, just as the various parts of a Gestalt are unmistakably interrelated. . . .

If the mental life of a schizophrenic, as existential analysis shows, is not merely a field strewn with ruins but has retained a certain structure, then it becomes evident that it must be described not as an agglomeration of symptoms, but as a whole and as a Gestalt. . . .


Because I see the collage method as a way of exploring psychic composition, I have thought that the method holds promise as well for therapeutic work with couples. The compatibility of a couple derives from the compatibility of their image compositions, the ways in which this meshing inhibits and encourages enactment of various impulses. This is a common-sense idea, but one can connect it with the object relations work of Henry Dicks at Tavistock. (See his Marital Tensions.) In a joint collage done by a couple one could explore the feelings surrounding nine different subsets of images within the collage. First, there would be the set of images jointly found and jointly placed in the composition. Then there would be eight other significant subsets: a set for each of images initiated by one and agreed to or actively supported by the other; a set for each of images selected and placed by one and ignored by the other; for each a set of images selected and placed by one in spite of resistance from the other; for each a set of images selected by one, resisted by the other and
I do not think that psychology has, as yet, a very powerful or subtle language in which to describe what Bleuler calls "the Gestalt of mental life." We are quite accustomed to thinking of mental life developmentally, much less so to thinking compositionally even though that is the nature of each person's subjective experience: many things simultaneously in mind, some more important, others less so; all comprising a characteristic texture which dictates the true answer to that most universal greeting—"How are you?"

As I have emphasized, the collage one makes is by no means isomorphic with the collage of one's mind. In pasting pictures on a board felt relationships are schematized violently. Nevertheless the collage provides a sort of map which enables the collage-maker and the interviewer to develop between them what I have started calling "an algebra of feeling." I am not certain that algebra is the right word for this, but what I am talking therefore not represented in the actual collage. In individual interviews one could also explore another hypothetical pair of image sets: those which, due to the collaboration, did not even come to mind at the time of the collage-making.

26 Langer speaks of "isomorphy" as a component of symbolic projection in which there is a "sameness of logical form in the visible phenomenon and the more elusive one it represents." Mind, Vol. 1, p. 76.
about is the combination of emotional shorthand which continued reference to the phenomenal field indicated by the collage can establish, and the abstraction of emotional form which the relations of collage elements permits. Once it has been phenomenologically explored, an individual fragment of a photograph, then a cluster of such fragments, and then a whole section of the collage can be referred to telegraphically in the interview. One can ask about the relationship of the lower left to the center to a single element in the upper right, fully aware of the complexity of what one is doing but not getting lost either in a thicket of interrelationships. The fact that this can happen is a vital source of the method’s power.

As I suggested earlier, the collages people make in this connection are a kind of implicit art. They permit a process of virtualization to take place but they do not present an image of feeling in purely artistic terms. As Langer says, "An idea that contains too many minute yet closely related parts, too many relations within relations, cannot be 'projected' into discursive form; it is too subtle for speech."27 There is sufficient virtuality

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27 Langer, Philosophy in A New Key, p. 93. Rudolf Arnheim makes the same point in his essay, "Perceptual Analysis of a Symbol of Interaction," in Toward a Psychology of Art.
within the frame of a collage that complex interdependencies can be portrayed in their simultaneous interconnections, a basic capacity of presentational symbolism. "Relations within relations" can be suggested, if not depicted, with concrete referents. But the virtuality is not self-sufficient, partly because the people I have worked with are not artists and cannot achieve that, and partly because the collages are a means of exploring feelings rather than giving an elegant expression to them in a realized artistic symbol. Therefore the interview is inherent to the overall process. The back and forth in the interview, between the partly virtualized field of the collage and the shared symbolic vocabulary--almost a code language--which soon develops in the talk, relies upon having a concrete thing which both interviewer and subject can see. This creates a feeling of intimacy because the subject can speak to the interviewer in a way that more closely approximates the way one talks to oneself than does ordinary discourse: rapid flip-flops of feeling, quick substitutions of one image for

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28 As Langer insists, art permits abstraction of form while remaining specific and concrete, rather than moving toward generalization as occurs in scientific abstraction. In this important sense the collages are art. See Langer's Philosophy in A New Key, p. 96, Problems of Art, appendix entitled "Abstraction in Science and Abstraction in Art," esp. pp. 177 and 180, and Mind, Vol. 1, esp. p. 154.
another with only slight revalencing,\textsuperscript{29} jumps from one highly abbreviated image to another with the assumption of potentially articulate intermediate images. It is the capacity for rapidly coming to share aspects of all of this that I refer to as the algebra of feeling in the collage interview.

Finally, I think the collage method is powerful because it is based both theoretically and practically on a psychology of the image. I want to comment first on the contribution which I believe this theoretical orientation makes to the collage experience and then conclude this thesis by describing the outlines of a depth psychology based on the image. It is this inchoate psychology which has guided my thinking and my work on collage.

One of my collage subjects made a comment which I have found very helpful. This was a man who several years earlier had completed his own psychoanalysis. During our interviews about his collage he compared his experience in analysis with the collage by saying, "In therapy you begin

\textsuperscript{29}Langer writes \textit{(Mind, Vol. 2, p. 348)}: "Another extraordinary fact is that when language is used covertly, i.e., as an instrument of thought, words do not seem to be simple, 'assigned' elements of a code, but to mark the center of a wide range of related ideas; so that in case the exact word for a concept is somehow blocked, and another word presents itself in its place, that other word is not a completely arbitrary substitution, but usually denotes something in the same conceptual range."
with a feeling and then try to connect it with the relevant images; with the collage you begin with the images that contain the feelings." I do not think the distinction can really be made as simply or as absolutely as this. The concept of double fidelity arose as I attempted to clarify what one does begin with (the pictures) and what one comes to (the images) in making and talking about a collage. And yet, there is something that does seem correct and important in the distinction between beginning with a feeling and beginning with an image. The difference is, essentially, in having in one's collage an external symbol or manifestation of feeling.

The acts involved in making a collage—scanning and composition—enlist a wealth of feelings (many of which are only vaguely felt initially) but they do so with a configurational frame, a broad design.\(^{30}\) This design is more inclusive than would be a purely verbal account of how one's life is going at the moment. The collage immediately

\(^{30}\)What we call intelligent acts are those which reflect the choice of a particularly appropriate path of action from among the possible alternative paths (the context) which one can conceive. Because the collage method (at least in principle) invites one to exhibit both one's range of imagery and one's ways of combining images and ways of moving among images, it is, in a profound sense, a test of intelligence. Neurosis, as an artificial narrowing of one's range of responsiveness, can thus be viewed as a special form of stupidity. (See Becker, The Revolution in Psychiatry, p. 181.)
goes beyond what one might have been telling oneself about how one is feeling. The feelings evoked by the collage process, however, have a specific context: they adhere to specific pictures or other collage elements and these in turn have a place in a configuration one is making. Though I do not think it is accurate to say that with the collage one begins with the images, I do think that the collage interviews begin with two valuable resources—a collection of elements which the collage maker feels are significant and a composition which he or she feels is right. Both the elements and the composition as a whole connect with various essences, or essential features, of one's psychic images, so in that sense the images, if not there from the beginning, are at least relatively accessible. As with dreams in individual therapy or a technique like family sculpting in family therapy, the collage provides a kind of incarnation, a virtual realm, in which the form of the relationships between significant elements in one's life can be depicted. Thus it helps one to consider such elusive matters as subjective scale (how big or looming is one kind of feeling relative to another) and subjective enfranchisement (how much legitimacy or place is one giving to various inner elements; what kinds of internal competition or "inner deals" are going on to the disadvantage of shadow elements).
The fact that the collage presents elements that feel significant in a composition that feels right encourages one to take risks with the self, because there is a context, and one senses the potential of arriving at a new synthesis. In the terms I used earlier, what I think the collage maker implicitly feels is the potential for acknowledging and revalencing images. The context of course goes beyond the literal frame of the collage; it includes everything in the experience which makes the collage maker feel both safe and hopeful. But the collage itself helps to convey the impression that if this process is very loaded it is also bounded, meaning concretized and focused.

Gaston Bachelard speaks of "image hunger," Herbert Hendin speaks of a "contemporary voraciousness for experience" and James Hillman describes the infinite need of the soul for experience. I think there is a bifocal quality to this imaginal and experiential hunger. On the one hand there is what Hendin suggests in calling his recent book *The Age of Sensation*. This is the desire for stimulation of every kind, novelty in all spheres of one's life, the feeling that options and possibilities remain open. No single thing that one does defines or limits one; this is

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31 See end of chapter for footnote.
infinite hunger for becoming. The other side of this hunger is not so much a desire to stop becoming as it is a hunger for expressive form that one can hold, contemplate, return to.

I find both aspects of this image hunger reflected in the immense contemporary fascination, especially among young people, with the potency of photographic images (including those of film) and of dance. On the one hand there is the attraction to process flow and awareness; on the other the quest for significant expressive symbols in what one sees and for forms of bodily-centered enactment.

Both aspects of this image hunger come into play in the collage process. Schematically one can distinguish them as scanning and composition. Interestingly, I have noticed among all the people who have made collages a kind of awkward pause between these two phases, a kind of interim inertia as if existential gears had to come to rest before being re-engaged. Indeed the two phases are experientially quite distinct, though, it seems, equally strongly motivated, and neither is without its own specific anxiety. The first involves the excitement of being enticed by a novel idea--making a collage--and then being drawn in so many directions at once in pulling out all the pictures one would like to use. One savors all the choices but is often on the verge of feeling overwhelmed and dispersed. The second
involves the inviting prospect of putting it all together in a way that will mirror and concretize one's experience of oneself. If one can do it then one will have a symbol through which one can approach oneself, and let oneself be known by others.

The compositional phase touches on a terribly powerful form of image hunger: the hunger for external symbols of the self. The appeal of astrology reflects the strength of this hunger in an inauthentic form; astrology provides in the form of a birth sign a static, ready-made symbol for one's self and one's prospects. The astrological symbol becomes a guide to one's struggles but is available without struggle, like an oracle.

Ernest Becker speaks of "the hunger and passion of everyone for a localized stimulus that takes the place of the whole world."

Becker rests his whole analysis of transference, essentially a formative analysis, on this universal hunger. "The transference object always looms larger than life size," he writes, "because it represents all of life and hence all of one's fate." Becker's critique of classical psychoanalytic ideas of transference connects with and broadens my own critique of projection. He continues:

\[32\] Becker, The Denial of Death, p. 147, also pp. 157-58.
. . . [transference] infects us with the significance of our own lives if we give in to it. . . . No wonder . . . that transference is a universal passion. It repre- sents a natural attempt to be healed and to be whole, through heroic self-expansion in the 'other.' Transference represents the larger reality that one needs, which is why Freud and Ferenczi could already say that transference represents psychotherapy, the 'self-taught attempts on the patient's part to cure himself.' People create the reality they need in order to cure themselves. . . . If transference represents the natural heroic striving for a 'beyond' that gives self-validation and if people need this validation in order to live, then the psychoanalytic view of transference as simply unreal projection is destroyed. Projection is necessary and desirable for self-fulfillment. . . . Technically we say that transference is a distortion of reality. But now we see that this distortion has two dimensions: distortion due to fear of life and death and distortion due to the heroic attempt to assure self-expansion and the intimate connection of one's inner self to surrounding nature.

Becker's conviction that "People create the reality they need in order to cure themselves" raises what he calls "the largest philosophical question about that condition": "How big a piece of 'reality' can man bite off without narrowing it down distortingly?"

That was Tillich's question too. Tillich attempted to answer it by formulating the "ambiguities in the self-actualization of life" in the final volume of his Systematic Theology. The dialectical movements of the spirit he described there are invaluable for an understanding of
centering, and for understanding the urgency which motivates the spiritual centering of transference. Tillich, who drew in his theological work so heavily upon depth psychological writers, has now a contribution to make to the revitalization of depth psychology which I think Becker has most profoundly grasped.

The collage is a self-made, phenomenologically derived symbol for one's inner life. Thus it ought not seem surprising that it becomes the locus of such care, attention and concern. For a while it permits one to explore, in a kind of serious play, the question Becker considers so fundamental: How big a piece of reality can one bite off without narrowing it down distortingly? I would hesitate to say that the collage becomes a transference object in Becker's sense. The collage is not one's life project (unless one is Narcissus, preferring the image of oneself to all offers of love) but rather a virtualization of it. Hence it borrows from the energy of one's actual commitments by providing a bounded space for their virtual reflection.\(^{33}\)

\(^{33}\)Within the Jungian perspective, for example in James Hillman's writings, it is accurate to say that the collage itself—meaning soul-making—is one's life project. Hence Jungian thought can become a universal subjectification, a denial of otherness. When that happens it is ultimately more hostile to genuine religious life than even Freud's vociferous atheism. This is the judgment
At the same time, the collage becomes a special sort of vehicle for communication, a cogitation in Schutz's terms. This is another source of its power, the final one I will mention in this discursive list. Henri Ellenberger has written about the power of a phenomenological approach to psychiatric patients, and I think his words are apt in this connection as well:

Reconstruction of the subjective world of a patient is more than an academic exercise. . . . [If] it is done with genuine interest in the patient himself, the patient feels understood. He will be like the miner imprisoned under earth after an explosion, hearing the signals of the rescuers; he does not know when they will arrive or whether they will be able to save him, but he knows they are at work, doing their best, and he feels reassured.  

which Philip Rieff makes in his chapter "Jung's Language of Faith" in The Triumph of the Therapeutic. And it was also the burden of William Sloan Coffin's ironical question to James Hillman at the conclusion of Hillman's Terry Lectures at Yale in 1972. "Yes, Brother Hillman," Coffin remarked, "I think your archetypal gods are very important. But do they love me?"

One might also say acknowledging and revalencing impulses, the term Stanley Keleman uses in *Your Body Speaks Its Mind*. I think the term impulse is useful but I prefer the more cognitively weighted term image for general usage where I want to emphasize density and complexity of feeling rather than specific vectors of incipient action.

Jerome Singer argues that encouraging a flow of images is itself therapeutic. Commenting on Robert Désolille's technique of "guided daydream" Singer writes ("The Vicissitudes of Imagery in Research and Clinical Use," p. 171), "The journey itself, the very process of exploring this preconscious realm through the succession of images is intrinsically therapeutic. [Emphasis Singer's] The major therapeutic element, sometimes carried out over dozens of sessions, entails the active exploration of one's own flow of images and the working through of blocks in the natural use of imagination." (See also Singer's *The Inner World of Daydreaming* [New York: Harper and Row, 1975], esp. pp. 213-15.)

An astonishing testimony to the power of photographs to elicit not only images but the associated enactments is contained in the article "My Daughter Lucy" by Maurice K. Temerlin (Psychology Today, November 1975). I have no way of evaluating the credibility of Temerlin's report of his experience with a female chimpanzee which he and his wife raised as a member of the family. But his description of two incidents involving photographs is so impressive that I cannot help but report it. Temerlin writes (p. 103):

Lucy's sex life at the moment is limited to masturbation, which she does freely and unself-consciously--just the way human children would do if they weren't subject to the rules, scrutiny and moralizing of their parents. Once when Lucy was in estrus I got an idea for an experiment. Remembering how I felt about looking at nude women when I was a teenager, I bought Lucy a copy of *Playgirl*, which has photos of nude men.

Lucy accepted my gift nonchalantly at first, then became increasingly excited as she leafed through the pages. She stared at each picture of a male nude and made low, guttural sounds like those she utters when she sees something delicious. She stroked the penis with her forefinger, cautiously at first and then more rapidly. She completely ignored Jane and me and was totally absorbed in the magazine. She did not caress or scratch any other part of the photographs.
When she came to the centerfold she carefully unfolded it, studied it for a moment or two, and then got off the sofa and spread the large picture of an aspiring young actor on the floor. She stood on two legs over the photograph and positioned herself precisely to lower her bright pink genitals onto the penis. She rubbed her vulva back and forth for 15 or 20 seconds, maintaining contact with the picture. Then she changed her movements and started bouncing up and down. The bouncing movements were of even shorter duration, maybe 10 to 15 seconds, although Jane and I were too fascinated to tear our eyes away and look at a watch. Then, abruptly, she stopped bouncing, stood up, and walked around the room.

Lucy masturbates unexpectedly and with a most imaginative range of objects. One afternoon we watched her leave the living room, take a glass from a kitchen cabinet, get a bottle of gin from the cupboard and pour herself two or three fingers. Then she came back to the living room with her drink, picked up a copy of *National Geographic* and sipped her drink while leafing through the magazine.

Suddenly she stopped, as though an idea had hit her. She jumped up and went to the utility closet at the far end of the hall. She opened the door, took out the vacuum cleaner, brought it back to the living room and plugged it in. She removed the end brush from the long aluminum tube to which it was attached, turned on the machine, and applied the pipe to her genitals. She continued to masturbate with the suction from the machine until she had what I inferred to be an orgasm. Then she turned off the machine, picked up her glass of gin and her magazine, lay back on the couch and continued to drink and contemplate the pictures.

(See also Temerlin, Lucy: *Growing Up Human* [Palo Alto, California: Science and Behavior Books, Inc., 1975].)
CHAPTER XII

A FORMATIVE DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY

What we know of the beginnings of image making confirms the continuous link between finding and making.

--E. H. Gombrich

"The life of the mind," writes Susanne Langer, "is so complex and many-faceted that practically no categorizing or systematizing principle holds without qualification."¹ And Jung, writing from the perspective of the healer, says, "The overworked practitioner of our day has learned to his sorrow that the psyche remains completely refractory to all methods that approach it from a single

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¹Langer, Mind, Vol. 2, p. 354. Langer goes on to say that even the distinction between inner and outer cannot always be simply applied: "Even the elementary distinction between impulses to action felt as impacts, usually starting peripherally, and those felt as autogenic acts arising within the organism, and taking shape more slowly before they are overtly consummated, has some exceptions. A thought, a recollection of some forgotten fact or intention, though centrally produced, may break in on the rest of one's thinking with a suddenness and force that can only be classed as impact. . . . our autogenic mental acts usually run their normal courses, unless suddenly a thought from an entirely different line of thinking breaks in on them with a shock much like that of a real, external blow delivered to the organism. Such a thought is a 'realization,' which clashes with the rest of the brain's work and is felt as impact. The human brain is so elaborate, and functionally so departmentalized, that one act may impinge on a whole system of other processes; and one word may be the symbol that triggers such a mental and even physical emergency."
exclusive standpoint. 2

Collage takes complexity as the starting place. Deferent to the mind’s refractoriness to exclusive standpoints, collage takes as its subject matter precisely the mind’s struggles in achieving and re-achieving orientation amid the profusion of its images. Now, near the end of a prolonged meditation on my work with collage, I want to draw together and schematize the principles of a collage psychology—a formative depth psychology based on imagery and composition.

I begin with image, because imagery links the feel of experience, phenomenology, on the one hand, and the process of symbolic transformation, dynamics, on the other. It is images and the succession of images one after another which constitute experience. Langer writes, "... human experience is a constant dialectic of sensory and imaginative activity—a making of scenes, acts, beings, intentions and realizations such as I believe animals do not encounter." 3 The capacity to produce and symbolically elaborate images makes experience possible, but it does something else as well: the autonomy of the human

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imagination constitutes the realm of psychological motivation. Our images hold for us our notions of life. Transformation of images transforms the feeling of life. Certain kinds of images make one feel that life is contracting, shriveling, closing down. Others suggest expansion and openings for movement. What I will call images of opening convey on the level of self or community the sense that life is available—that one is entitled to feel alive regardless of the state of one's health, the physical danger in which one's body has been placed, or the relationship of one's genital activity to maintaining the life of the species. If we explore someone's images we come to see for that person how the world feels, and we come to understand what lures that person on.

Formative theory is defined in large part by the prominence it gives to symbolization of life and death as the heart of psychological motivation. I believe that

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4 It is striking that the discipline of psychology has managed to isolate the study of motivation as one specialty among others, separable from the rest of the field. Commenting on the work of Abraham Maslow and Robert White, Langer writes, "... it is interesting to find that the generalization of 'motivation,' when it is systematically pursued, leads to a basic concept that applies impartially to the generation of all sorts of acts, so that 'motivation psychology' as the study of a particular psychological phenomenon becomes more and more tenuous, until its very name seems redundant, indistinguishable from 'psychology' pure and simple." (Mind, Vol. 1, p. 280.)
the study of psychological processes, especially in academic psychology but in depth psychology as well, has suffered profoundly from a failure to connect the symbolization of life and death to motivational theory. In the absence of such a connection I do not think one can speak of psychological motivation in any significant sense. From a formative perspective what academic psychology calls "motives" can be seen as diverse transformations of the fundamental psychological motivation: maintaining the feeling that the self is alive. The "needs" which the TAT, for example, is frequently employed to identify--needs for dominance, affiliation, achievement, aggression, etc.--appear atomic, abstracted and are difficult to knit into the fabric of an actual life (the unit which, after all, Murray believed to be the appropriate one for psychology to study) unless one has such a perspective.

Nor does Freud have much to offer here. Psychoanalytic psychology takes instinctual expression and inhibition as the fundamental conceptual building blocks. Psychic process in Freudian thought is seen in terms of instinctual urges, their repression and control. Freud's psychological turf is borrowed from biology; hence the significance within ego psychology of the idea of
"neutralization of instinctual energy." Until libidinous energy has been neutralized it is not available in a purely psychological form for the work of reality testing, and even then the ego's hold remains precarious. With Jung, for whom the organizing ideas are archetype and psychic complex, the matter is more complicated. In Jungian thought psychic process is seen in terms of compensation—unconscious contents constellated as shadow elements in response to one-sided conscious (and cultural) preoccupations.

In a certain sense I think it is fair to say that neither Freud nor Jung had a theory of psychological motivation. For Freud psychological motivation derived its energy from instinct, from biology. But in Jungian thought too the sources and processes of psychological motivation remain obscure: archetypes move us, restore personal, historical and transhistorical balances, but the way in which they achieve this is never clear. The seemingly willful obscurity of Jungian thought becomes an inseparable aspect of its appeal as a depth psychology, and this is (in its affinity with the occult) no doubt one source of its contemporary popularity. In part that obscurity derives from the exotic expeditionary lengths to which Jung could go

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5See, for example, Robert A. White "Ego and Reality in Psychoanalytic Theory: A Proposal Regarding Independent Ego Energies."
in his "antiquarian shopping" (as Rieff puts it), compiling an inventory of traditions and becoming a "curator" of a vast cultural warehouse which he exhibited to illustrate his conviction that the unconscious is collective.

But whatever one may say about the peculiarities of method and style in Jung's work, one must remain impressed by his extraordinary sensitivity to the soul's hunger for primal, archetypal, experience. In fact I think the archetypes can be seen as those recurrent images which suggest the varieties of relationship which the soul can have to life, death and growth. Thus Jung saw death as psychologically constitutive in a way that Freud did not, at least not in his central theoretical formulations.  

Jung regarded death as the goal of life (in a teleological sense), and believed that "from the middle of life onward, only he remains vitally alive who is ready to

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6In his letters and in occasional comments in his essays Freud could, of course, show a powerful awareness of the symbolic importance of death for psychic life. In his "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" (Standard Edition, Vol. 14, pp. 290-91) Freud wrote, "... this attitude of ours towards death has a powerful effect on our lives. Life is impoverished, it loses in interest, when the highest stake in the game of living, life itself, may not be risked. It becomes as shallow and empty as, let us say, an American flirtation... It is an inevitable result of all this that we should seek in fiction, in literature and in the theatre compensation for what has been lost in life. There we still find people who know how to die—who, indeed, even manage to kill someone else."
die with life."\(^7\) In his description of the process of individuation, symbols of death, birth and rebirth have fundamental importance. But Jung never really connected the power exerted by such symbols with a general theory of psychological motivation. (Nor did Jung ever abandon instinct theory.\(^8\)) The sources of psychological motivation--apart from the lure of archetypal images and the need for religious belief--interested Jung less than the forms


\(^8\) As with Erikson's use of the term "instinctive" rather than "instinctual," so Jung too softens but retains a language which is bifocal and includes a bodily, biological referent. For a discussion of Erikson's theory in this regard see Lifton, The Life of the Self.

For a discussion of Jungian instinct theory see Hillman, Re-Visioning Psychology, pp. 244-45. Hillman writes, "I follow Jung in placing instinct on a continuum with archetypal imagery, that is, in connecting the archetypal persons of the imaginal with bodily experience and the idea of physical necessity. The unbroken continuum between instinct and archetype suggests both an inescapable determinism and an unbounded freedom in the body-imaginal relationship: our fantasies are limited by body and our bodies freed by fantasy--and also vice versa."

For a profound discussion of the whole question of symbolic versus biological reference in psychoanalytic language and interpretation see Paul Ricoeur, Freud and Philosophy. Ricoeur writes, for example (pp. 93-94):

".. overdetermination, stated in the language of meaning, is the counterpart of processes stated in the language of force: condensation means compression; displacement means transference of forces." Ricoeur calls this sort of use of language "mixed discourse."
which transformation takes, especially the universality of those forms. Jung's reliance upon alchemy to mirror the transformations of the psyche, and his use of mandalas to depict them, suggest the essence of his psychological genius: Jung was a taxonomist of transformation. Soul-making was, for him, its own "finality."  

Yet I believe that one can learn an indispensable lesson from Jung about the transformative power of imagery and can then go on to articulate a formative depth psychology in which the motivational power of imagery around life and death is specifically, and compositionally, explored. The building blocks of such a psychology are these: the human capacity for symbolization and abstraction as the essence of mentation; symbolization of life and death as the underlying principle of psychological motivation. The specifically psychological struggle is that of maintaining the feeling that the self is and will remain alive. This symbolic struggle enters into complex relations with, but is never wholly reducible to, the biological struggle to maintain the life of the organism and species. The two come closest to merging where, as with the death camp survivors described by Terrence Des Pres,  

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9Jung speaks of the "finality of dreams and contrasts this with Freud's causal approach to interpretation. ("General Aspects of Dream Psychology," p. 243.)
circumstances require an absolute centering of the organism on biological imperatives. The struggle to maintain the feeling that the self is alive valences memory and anticipation, both individual and collective. This struggle is irreducible psychological turf, and its vicissitudes are the central concern of a formative depth psychology.

Feeling alive, as contrasted with merely evincing the organismic biochemical processes of life, depends upon access to a symbolic conception of life, however crude and implicit such a conception may be. This conception evolves slowly and cumulatively over the life cycle, and, in the very early stages of human development when the capacity for symbolization is negligible, it is essentially indistinguishable from the quest for organismic nurture and exertion. Though I cannot prove it, I believe that as soon as this conception begins to evolve, as soon as images of threat and enhancement begin to congeal, the configuration thus formed has the character of a uniquely individual composition. It is this composition of formative images which from very early childhood grounds individually characteristic centering processes. Hence the functions which make for "equilibration," which Piaget describes as assimilation and accommodation, become as individually particular as a fingerprint—because they reflect
idiosyncratic responses to risk and individual ways of maintaining symbolic vitality.

That some such composition of formative images is operative in adult experience I have come to believe as a result of my work with collage. How the composition begins to take shape I do not know. Perhaps initially it consists of little more than a customary response to distance and closeness, a feeling of comfortable proximity to other people and physical objects. If this is true it would involve all the sensory modalities—responses to light, sound, touch, taste—though they might be unevenly accentuated. Michael Balint has described a character typology based on such tendencies to seek characteristic distance from objects. The kinds of "ego-splitting" which Laing and the object relations theorists describe could be seen too as deriving from the establishment of characteristic distances between images of threat and enhancement in one's inner composition.

The idea that the primary psychological motivation is the preservation of the feeling of aliveness or vitality has been expressed by Tess Forrest in connection with a theory of childhood psychopathology. Forrest writes:

10 See Michael Balint, Thrills and Regressions.
To the various theories of self and identity formation... I would like to add that the infant is born with a vital self, which is his drive to preserve the unconditional value of his life and of his self-experience. This psychic energy will ultimately find its outlet in vitality or be transformed to violence.11

Eventually, and perhaps from very early on, some images within evolving constellations come to stand for the rest. They become representatives of patterns of perception and action at the core of one's being, symbols of the viability of one's existence which can rapidly mobilize vast reservoirs of feeling and energy. The mystery of exactly how this process takes place forms the plot of Peter Shaffer's play Equus. An adolescent boy has blinded six horses and Dr. Dysart, a child psychiatrist, attempts to unravel the symbolic sources of this violent, passionate act. In the opening scene of Act II Dysart mediates on the mystery of Equus, the powerful god that resides in horses. Like Freud, resigning himself to the inability of


Forrest's position connects closely with that of Becker who relates the struggle for self-expansion to the potential for violence. See his Escape from Evil. Becker relies too on Jung's notion of the shadow and quotes Erich Neumann's summary of the Jungian view (p. 94): "The shadow is the other side. It is the expression of our own imperfection and earthiness, the negative which is incompatible with absolute values [i.e., the 'horror of passing life and the knowledge of death']."
psychoanalysis to offer any but retrospective explanations.
Dysart contemplates the punyness of his art next to that
which he is called upon to divine:

Now he's gone off to rest, leaving me alone
with Equus. I can hear the creature's voice.
It's calling me out of the black cave of the
Psyche. I shooe in my dim little torch, and
there he stands--waiting for me. He raises
his matted head. He opens his great square
teeth, and says--'why? ... Why Me? ... Why--ultimately--Me? ... Do you really
imagine you can account for Me? Totally,
infallibly, inevitably account for Me? ... Poor Doctor Dysart!'

Of course I've stared at such images before.
Or been stared at by them, whichever way you
look at it. And wierdly often now with me
the feeling is that they are staring at
us--that in some quite palpable way they
precede us. Meaningless, but unsettling ... In either case, this one is the most alarming
yet. It asks questions I've avoided all my
professional life.

A child is born into a world of phenomena
all equal in their power to enslave. It
sniffs--it sucks--it strokes its eyes over
the whole uncomfortable range. Suddenly
one strikes. Why? Moments snap together
like magnets, forging a chain of shackles.
Why? I can trace them. I can even, with
time, pull them apart again. But why at the
start they were ever magnetized at all--just
those particular moments of experience and
no others--I don't know. And nor does anyone
else. Yet if I don't know--if I can never
know that--then what am I doing here? I
don't mean clinically doing or socially
doing--I mean fundamentally! These questions,
these whys, are fundamental--yet they have
no place in a consulting room. So then, do I? ... This is the feeling more and more
with me—No Place. Displacement . . .
'Account for me,' says staring Equus.
'First account for me! . . .'12

Dr. Dysart's despair suggests a worthy theoretical
project—that of building a depth psychology which accounts
more fully, both experientially and dynamically, for the

12Peter Shaffer, Equus, pp. 87-88.
Freud inserted into one of his case studies a caveat
concerning the limitations of psychoanalysis as a predic-
tive theory. He wrote (in 1920):
So long as we trace the development from
its final outcome backwards, the chain
of events appears continuous, and we
feel we have gained an insight which
is completely satisfactory or even exhaus-
tive. But if we proceed the reverse way,
if we start from the premises inferred
from the analysis and try to follow these
up to the final result, then we no longer
get the impression of an inevitable
sequence of events which could not have been
otherwise determined. We notice at once
that there might have been another result,
and that we might have been just as well
able to understand and explain the latter.
The synthesis is thus not so satisfactory
as the analysis; in other words, from a
knowledge of the premises we could not have
foretold the nature of the result. . . .
But we never know beforehand which of the
determining factors will prove the weaker
or the stronger. We only say at the end
that those which succeeded must have been
the stronger. Hence the chain of causa-
tion can always be recognized with
certainty if we follow the line of analysis,
whereas to predict it along the line of
synthesis is impossible ("A Case of Homo-
sexuality in a Woman," pp. 167-68.)

In the Concluding Unscientific Postscript
Kierkegaard put it more simply: "Life is lived forward,
but understood backwards."
life of our images. By dynamics I do not mean to imply, as psychoanalysis would, a particular emphasis on unconscious forces. Rather, I mean the process of change broadly considered. How do our images form, become valenced in particular ways and then, eventually, become transformed or replaced by new ones?

I want to state the question in this bold form because, even though I agree with Dr. Dysart that no one can answer it, I think it really is the ultimately interesting psychological question. If one can live with this unanswerable question one can remain open to contributions from a variety of sources, and one has a criterion against which to measure the adequacy of whatever principles one may have to propose.

However one conceptualizes the processes through which individual psychic compositions develop and evolve, the crucial point is that these compositions are continuously exerting their motivational force in the present by determining the ways in which an individual construes openings and life chances. In this stress on the action of the composition in the present I am in close accord with a view expressed by Gordon Allport:

The view of motivation that I am here proposing says that the important thing is the person's systematized design for living. This design--not his hypothetical instincts--is the dynamic force in his life. Whenever
an adjustment confronts him he will make it with his present equipment—with his current prejudices, attitudes, sentiments.¹³

The phenomenological approach is to consider the question of the causes and sources of images an illegitimate and unworthy problem. Bachelard defines the phenomenological attitude well when he writes:

For a phenomenologist, the attempt to attribute antecedents to an image, when we are in the very existence of the image, is a sign of inveterate psychologism. On the contrary, let us take the poetic image in its being. For the poetic consciousness is so wholly absorbed by the image that appears on the language, above customary language; the language it speaks with the poetic image is so new that correlations between past and present can no longer be usefully considered.¹⁴

The movement of existential phenomenology in psychology has, of course, compromised with this stern view. Henri Ellenberger's important essay on psychiatric phenomenology and existential analysis, for example, concludes with this quotation from Manfred Bleuler:

. . . there is hope that a systematic psychotherapy can be built upon the basis of a thorough existential analytic examination of the patient. At the same time, as Ludwig Binswanger himself stressed

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¹³ Quoted by Ernest Becker, Revolution in Psychiatry.

¹⁴ Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, p. xxv. See also Rollo May, et al., eds., Existence, p. 117.
again and again, such a psychotherapy will never suffice, for practical reasons of methodology alone, without illumination of the patient's entire life history, especially in the psychoanalytic sense.\footnote{Henri F. \textit{Ellenberger}, "A Clinical Introduction to Psychiatric Phenomenology and Existential Analysis," in Rollo May, \textit{et al.}, eds., \textit{Existence}, p. 124.}

I agree with Bleuler that a phenomenological illumination of images is not adequate for psychological purposes. I do not agree, however, that phenomenology can be grafted onto psychoanalysis because, as I have emphasized earlier, psychoanalysis disparages the image. Dynamic theory based on existential phenomenology has relied largely on ontology, a description of the processes of emergent being. Such work, especially that of Tillich, has created a new context for understanding the relationship of anxiety to the threat of non-being, hence to symbolization of life and death. But in depth psychological terms such work has never really crystallized into a broad and systematic theoretical position.\footnote{In this assessment I am in agreement with Ernest Becker. See \textit{The Revolution in Psychiatry}, p. 186.}

The task of creating a depth psychological theory both systematic and experientially sensitive lies ahead. Though the materials for such a project are at hand as never before, the task cannot simply be a grafting of one
thing onto another, but must be a radical and fundamental rebuilding. What we require is a theory which accounts for the transformations of our images while respecting both the integrity of the images themselves and the processes of image formation. For it is the formative, form-making, symbolic process of image creation that makes experience possible and gives rise to the feeling that the self is alive. 17

The recent upsurge of popular and scientific interest in imagery and symbolization helps to create a new context for the theoretical work involved in building, with the concept of image, a bridge between phenomenological and dynamic points of view. 18 The power of the image


18 In addition to work already cited I would add, on the popular side, Mike and Nancy Samuels, Seeing With The Mind's Eye: The History, Techniques and Uses of Visualization.

Rollo May sees the concept of "intentionality" as the bridge between subjective and objective reality. If one means by intentionality the fundamental intent to keep the self symbolically alive then this position is close to my own way of reconciling a phenomenological view with a dynamic one. See Rollo May, Love and Will, p. 225. Also, see David Holbrook's review of Love and Will. Holbrook attempts to link Rollo May's work with that of the object relations theorists, especially Fairbairn, via the concept of intentionality. Fairbairn's revision of Freud is in the direction of formative theory, because in arguing that libido is object-seeking rather than pleasure-seeking
has, however, in one sense, been nowhere more strikingly recognized than in the writings of Freud. Dreams were, after all, his "royal road to the unconscious." Though he relegated imagery to the undignified realm of primary process, Freud nevertheless believed that "thinking in pictures . . . is older than [thinking in words] both ontogenetically and phylogenetically."¹⁹ And though he regarded the sphere in which their principles hold sway as the "Realm of the Illogical,"²⁰ Freud nevertheless believed that the free play of primary process permits unexpected symbolic condensations, displacements, novel combinations of divergent ideas—in short, creativity itself.

¹⁹Freud, The Ego and the Id, p. 21. Also, of course, Freud emphasized that dreams consist mainly of visual images. He wrote, "We experience it [a dream] predominantly in visual images; feelings may be present too, and thoughts interwoven in it as well; the other senses may also experience something, but nonetheless it is predominantly a question of images. Part of the difficulty of giving an account of dreams is due to our having to translate these images into words. 'I could draw it,' a dreamer often says to us, 'but I don't know how to say it.'" (Freud, New Introductory Lectures, p. 90.)

Of Freud's psychoanalytic followers it was the Italian Roberto Assagioli who accorded imagery the most prominent place, in both his theory and clinical work. The recent growing interest in Assagioli's psychology—which he called "psychosynthesis"—no doubt owes much to the fact that psychosynthesis is, essentially, a psychology of the image. In a chapter called "The Skillful Will: Psychological Laws," a book written late in his life, Assagioli describes his principles of image-action. All ten of these laws have to do with the tendency of impulses toward expression, either directly or in some symbolic or transmuted form, and with images as the immediate agents of psychic action. Law I, for example, states that "Images or mental pictures and ideas tend to produce the physical conditions and the external acts that correspond to them." Assagioli paraphrases this law in a way reminiscent of Freud's assertion that an idea is a trial action: by saying that "Every idea is an act at an initial stage." 21 I will return to the connection between image and act when discussing Langer's "act concept" and Roy Schafer's "action language for psychoanalysis" in relation to the principles of a formative depth psychology. For the

21 Roberto Assagioli, The Act of Will, p. 51. See also Assagioli's Psychosynthesis and "The Synthetic Vision" by Sam Keen.
moment what is important is that seeing images as actions suggests a textured, temporal view of mind in which, as Assagioli puts it, "... ordinarily, numerous mental pictures crowd in on us at the same time or in rapid succession, conflicting with and hindering each other."

Within academic clinical psychology I find the work of George Kelly, the "psychology of personal constructs," most compatible conceptually (less so temperamentally) with the theoretical position I am developing. Kelly's is an optimistic psychology which he calls "constructive alternativism," meaning that "no one needs to be painted into a corner"--"all of our present interpretations of the universe are subject to revision or replacement." 22 Kelly sees human nature as being essentially that of the scientist: "Man looks at his world through transparent patterns or templates which he creates and then attempts to fit over the realities." 23 To these patterns that are tried on for size Kelly gives the name constructs. The place of constructs in Kelly's theory is given by his Fundamental Postulate: "A person's processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events."

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23 Ibid., p. 9.
People anticipate events, as Kelly says in his Construction Corollary, by "constructing their replications;" that is by making constructs which distinguish events as either being similar to or different from other events.

Kelly begins with a very rich definition of construing as "placing an interpretation." He emphasizes that what he means by construing is not to be confounded with verbal formulation. By the time he identifies construal with the establishment of constructs, however, the notion has become schematic, dichotomous—a construct being an interpretation which identifies something as being either A or not-A.

Kelly's emphasis on construal is much like the emphasis on symbolization which comprises the basis of formative theory. What he calls "dimensions of transition"—threat, guilt, fear and anxiety—are then defined in terms of the experienced adequacy of one's formational structures. "Threat is the awareness of imminent comprehensive change in one's core structures;" guilt is the "perception of one's apparent dislodgement from his core role structure," fear is the perception that a "new incidental construct, rather than a comprehensive construct," is about to take over; "anxiety is the recognition that the

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24 Ibid., pp. 50-51.
events with which one is confronted lie outside the range of convenience of one's construct system.²⁵

In Kelly's personal construct theory symbolization is in no sense an epiphenomenon; the form of one's constructs determines the form of one's experience. As in my own emphasis on core images, Kelly too recognizes that certain constructs exert a more pervasive and profound influence than others. "Core constructs," he writes, "are those which govern a person's maintenance processes—that is, those by which he maintains his identity and existence."²⁶ Kelly is aware, as well, of the importance of symbolization for abstraction. In a manner very similar to my own discussion of image and abstraction in the collage process, he writes, ". . . constructs are usually symbolized by invoking one of their elements. The element stands not only for itself but also for the whole construct with which it is customarily construed."²⁷

²⁶Ibid., p. 482.
²⁷Ibid., p. 459.

Another important resemblance between Kelly's work and my own is to be found in the corollaries to the Fundamental Postulate. For example, Kelly's Range Corollary states that "A construct is convenient for the anticipation of a finite range of events only." This is the equivalent of what I called stimulus latitude in discussing images.
The therapist's task, in Kelly's view, is that of "helping the client to revise constructs" so that they will offer a more adequate interpretation of experience. 28 How difficult that task is depends upon the "permeability" of the client's constructs. Kelly emphasizes that a construct is a process, not a "geographic concentration of ideas." 29 By involving himself in the way in which the client elaborates and enacts his or her constructs the therapist can, perhaps, exert an influence on the constructs, loosening or tightening them, altering their permeability and range.

Kelly's work is important because more than any other approach of which I am aware it develops the relationship between symbolization and experience. His discussion of the unconscious, for example, in terms of processes of symbolization (in which he uses expressions like "submergence," "suspension" and "impermeability")

The Fragmentation corollary--"A person may successively employ a variety of construction systems which are inferentially incompatible with each other"--is analogous to my own stress on image fragments in the collage. For a brief presentation of the corollaries and a discussion of Kelly's psychology see Anthony Ryle, Frames and Cages.


29 Ibid., p. 1089.
helps to replace mechanistic explanations with ones emphasizing formulation and configuration. Ultimately, however, Kelly has little to offer concerning the issues which I regard as most fundamental and most problematic in the development of a formative depth psychology: motivation and composition.

The essential problem, I think, is the term which plays the central part in Kelly's psychology. "Construct" is not a very rich word, either in its inherent connotations or in the definition which Kelly has given it. Semantically it suggests architecture and static form. Kelly has actually encouraged that association by employing the term construct as an either-or category. Construct suggests neither history nor forward trajectory, and in fact Kelly has frequently been criticized for failure to include any sort of developmental theory within his overall conceptualization.

Diagnostically Kelly's construct theory is employed

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30 The Psychology of Personal Constructs, Vol. I, pp. 465-76. See also Eugene Gendlin, Experiencing and the Creation of Meaning.

31 Anthony Ryle writes, for example, "[Kelly] was interested in men as cosmologists of their own universe, but not much concerned with the history of their individual cosmological theories." (Frames and Cages, p. 16.) See also Ray Holland, "George Kelly: Constructive Innocent and Reluctant Existentialist."
to map a person's constructs on a "grid." A grid is a two-component graph on which important elements in the subject's life can be located. The elements are placed in relation to each other according to how strongly their attributes correspond to the continua represented by the axes. The grid is made by the psychologist, not the subject, but on the basis of the subject's ratings on the repertory test. This test, however, is itself problematic in relation to the goal of eliciting constructs important to the subject. The test presents fixed categories of relationship to other people—father, mother, friend, employer, etc.—which the subject is asked to fill in with specific names. These categories are, in a sense, Kelly's equivalent of core areas of formative process, though personal construct theory seeks to make no a priori assumptions about core areas, preferring to let these areas be structured idiosyncratically by the individual constructs which are elicited. (Kelly doesn't make a distinction like the one I have drawn between core areas and core images.) I suspect, however, that many kinds of fundamental

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symbolization, for example images having to do with one's relationship to nature or to transcendent experience, would be only obliquely perceptible from Kelly's viewpoint.

The people named by the subject from his or her own life are then sorted by the subject according to their similarities to and differences from each other. The subject's constructs are then abstracted by the psychologist through an examination of the sorting criteria which the subject has employed. Since the grid is comprised of dichotomous constructs it reveals proximity of elements only along the dimensions of the axes. Hence it shows clusters of association in terms of those variables, but suggests very little about psychic composition.

One is not in a position to trace a path of feeling transformations within a construct grid because the constructs mapped have been abstracted from the images to which they adhere. The resulting chart is therefore too schematic to permit an exposition of subtle and paradoxical transitions around mutable features of images. One can speak of a composition of images, both in the collage and in the self, but one can speak only of a grid of constructs.

Constructs, in Kelly's words, "channelize psychological processes." The degree to which they also constitute a realm of motivation is not clear because Kelly uses such pallid language in describing their evolution. In his
Organization Corollary (the place in his theory where he speaks about what I am calling psychic composition) Kelly writes: "Each person characteristically evolves, for his convenience in anticipating events, a construction system embracing ordinal relationships between constructs." And the Choice Corollary states, "A person chooses for himself that alternative in a dichotomized construct through which he anticipates a greater possibility for extension and definition of his system." Kelly's words--"for his convenience;" "extension and definition of his system"--make it difficult to know how much he feels is existentially at stake in the matter of establishing constructs.

Image, by contrast, suggests a dense response in which mode of appearance, tone of feeling and tendency toward enactment are all implicated. Motivationally, the continual reformulation of the image derives from the human need to establish orientation through symbolization, but the image establishes its own impulses as well. Images constitute symbolic openings and closures--they suggest ways to move which evoke and maintain the feeling of aliveness.

In the end, Kelly's psychology is cognitively weighted, and is the poorer for it. (One understands, after reading Kelly, why Freud held to his instincts so tenaciously.) Kelly's personal construct theory seeks to
account for emotional response in terms of problems of construal and re-construal, but, lacking any notion of the centrality of symbolization of life and death for psychic life, the process of feeling becomes a sort of by-product of misfitting constructs. Kelly's perspective provides a frail context in which to understand the passion inherent in human symbolic processes.

The images we have are a life and death matter because they provide access to life not simply as organismic sensation but as experience. Images are the vehicles through which we assert and maintain the feeling of life. Centering and grounding involve the continual revalencing of symbolic material, the re-contextualizing of images and the re-emergence of the self. These processes transcend the sort of labeling (or even hypothesis testing) suggested in Kelly's model of man as curious scientist imposing constructs on experience; they are more constitutive than that, meaning that in their vicissitudes more is existentially at stake.

Centering and grounding involve the human organism's delicate processes of selectively ingesting--assimilating and ordering along many dimensions--the symbolic material which comprises the self. Thus the acts involved in composition are not a trivial matter to be dealt with by assembling constructs monotonically along the lines of
salient features. Doing that may have some use in providing a rough, schematic, mathematically tractable chart of a few significant interactions. But psychic life itself—the dialectical valencing processes which exchange value between the composition and the images which comprise it—is too subtle and multifaceted to be caught in so crude a diagnostician's net.

In thinking about imagery and psychic composition it is interesting to look again at the things Hermann Rorschach chose to say, on the very first pages of his book, about what he took his work to be about. Rorschach explains why he used symmetrical inkblots, commenting that asymmetrical figures and ones which show poor composition could add new factors to the results of the experiment. Then he says, "... [that] problem cannot be further discussed here. The examination of individual sensitivity to composition is a problem in itself." 33

The context of this remark suggests that Rorschach had in mind composition in the Gestalt sense of form perception and not the process of psychic composition. But

33 Hermann Rorschach, *Psychodiagnostics*, p. 15.
one wonders what Rorschach might have been led to pursue had he not died at the age of thirty-seven, just nine months after the publication of *Psychodiagnostics.*

While emphasizing that his test does not include response to composition he is at equal pains to disclaim that his is a test of the imagination:

... the interpretation of the figures actually has little to do with imagination, and it is unnecessary to consider imagination a prerequisite. It is true, however, that those gifted with imagination react differently from those not so gifted. On the other hand, it makes little difference whether one encourages the subject to give free rein to his imagination or not; the results will be little changed. Those who have imagination show it, those who do not have it may apologize for the lack, but the results may be compared without taking richness or poverty of imagination into account.

The interpretation of chance forms falls in the field of perception and apperception rather than imagination.

If one seeks, as I do, a new depth psychology with a new scientific and existential credibility, then one must, I think, reopen the closely related subjects of image and composition. I believe that if the complex

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34 For a discussion of Rorschach's brilliant and in many ways puzzling life see Henri Ellenberger, "The Life of Hermann Rorschach (1884-1922)."

problems surrounding image and psychic composition could be adequately formulated then the perennially troublesome questions of psychic energy and motivation could be seen in an entirely different light. One virtue of the collage method is that it does reopen fundamental questions about the function of imagery in psychic life. In doing so it may perhaps contribute to a greater fluidity of exchange between the clinical encounter and the building of theory. 36 Any scientific theory is only as good as its procedures of abstraction and categorization; scientific work is determined, constrained as well as guided, by the categories employed to recognize and locate data. Certainly if a new depth psychological theory is to emerge it can only happen through finding new ways of confronting, exploring and systematizing the kind of data with which depth psychology works—psychic images in relation to life process. 37

36 Frederick Crews (in "American Prophet," p. 10) chastises Erik Erikson for holding forth a notion of psychoanalysis as a science while suggesting that the forms of proof pertinent to the psychoanalytic situation "may be worked out several generations from now." See also Benjamin B. Rubinstein, "On the possibility of a Strictly Clinical Psychoanalysis: An Essay in the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis," and George S. Klein, Psychoanalytic Theory: An Exploration of Essentials.

37 I resist the idea of Lacan and others that the data to be accounted for is essentially words, language, and that models derived from linguistic work can therefore be employed here. That approach I find overly semanticized,
Building such a new perspective entails questioning of one of the most entrenched of the psychoanalytic procedures for categorizing images—Freud's structural theory. Basic to theoretical and clinical work within the psychoanalytic paradigm is the assumption (to which, in fact, Freud came relatively late) that a useful way of categorizing images is according to whether they express id, ego or superego functions. Put very schematically the assumption is that all the images with which psychoanalysis deals can be put in three groups: those that express instinctual, bodily hungers; those that have to do with reality testing and a tendency to balance one thing against another; and those that evoke guilt and striving. As Marshall Edelson writes:

"In interpreting semiotic phenomena in psychoanalysis, the psychoanalyst regards id, ego, and superego as organizations of acts each giving priority to different considerations, rules, standards, principles, or values."

formalistic and hostile to the root of the problem which is that of finding new ways to look at imaginal processes, including non-discursive ways.

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38 Marshall Edelson, Language and Interpretation in Psychoanalysis, p. 37. Edelson is sensitive to many of the compositional issues which I am discussing. He writes, for example (p. 89), "Since value is not only a question of cathexis but of relative degree of cathexis, then a development of linguistic features that foregrounds, focuses upon, or emphasizes one element or relation of elements among others makes some aspect of the sense more important than another or, in other words, distributes value. The
The call for a reconsideration of Freud's structural assumptions has been made before, but so far as I can see the work undertaken in this cause has borne relatively little fruit. Yankelovich and Barrett write that, "Nowhere, perhaps, has the influence of Freud's borrowed philosophy so weakened psychoanalysis as in leading to false assumptions about how psychic structures are formed and interconnect."39 David Shapiro makes a closely related point in arguing that psychoanalysis requires a revised picture of the "forms of mind."40

The forms of mind can be nothing else than the forms of images, images themselves being the products of the mental activity of symbolizing. The development of a formative depth psychology requires that a conception of image-making as the process of sustaining symbolic life be combined with a stress on what Langer calls the "act-form

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of all life."⁴¹ With that dual perspective, psychic structure can then be seen as psychic action: the continual composing of images. The interpretive categories in which this compositional activity can be studied systematically—the formative categories of images—derive from the life-maintaining function of symbolization itself. These categories, or "forms of mind," emerge from an attempt to sort out the varieties of contribution which various kinds of image—acts make to maintaining the life of the self, the feeling of vitality.

Over the last five years Roy Schafer has published an important series of papers with the aim of formulating what he calls an "action language for psychoanalysis."⁴² In these papers Schafer argues that the metapsychology of psychoanalysis has been unnecessarily burdened with reifications, mechanisms and anthropomorphisms. The real


⁴²These papers are now available in a collected form: Roy Schafer, A New Language for Psychoanalysis. Ernest Becker builds his psychology too around the concept of action: See The Revolution in Psychiatry, esp. chap. 5. See also Jean-Paul Sartre, Imagination: A Psychological Critique, p. 146.
subject matter of psychoanalysis is, he insists, the analysis of human actions. Therefore, in a purified psychoanalytic language, "We [should] speak only of what a person is doing and how he or she is doing it."\textsuperscript{43}

Schafer's work provides a crucial caveat for my argument that psychic composition ought to be a key area of concern for psychology. Composition suggests an arrangement of elements in various places, and Schafer emphasizes that the notion of inner places in the mind is a residue of a mechanistic psychology of forces, entities and locations.\textsuperscript{44} The collage process of composing is the spatial analogue of the self's continual orienting acts. We can speak of a place called a center in a visual composition (as I have done in discussing "visual criteria of image structure"), but psychologically we can only speak of centering: acts of assimilating and valuing selectively. Schafer considers Erikson's identity model an intermediate step between a mechanistic and an action language, because the notion of identity is liable to imply "a new mover--

\textsuperscript{43}Schafer, \textit{A New Language for Psychoanalysis}, p. 348.

\textsuperscript{44}Ibid., especially chap. 14, "Reworking Emotional Language," chap. 15, "Emotion Undergone or Enacted?" and especially his comments on p. 322 concerning "displacement."
now called 'identity'—hidden in the mental apparatus."\textsuperscript{45} At the same time, Schafer recognizes Erikson's contribution and the appeal of his writing on the basis of "Erikson's helping the psychoanalytic therapist to feel that it is alright once again to think about oneself and others as people who do things rather than as organisms or apparatus with functions—while yet retaining Freudian insights!"

The things that people "do," psychologically speaking, involve symbolizing (symbolic abstraction) and composing (giving varying emphases and priorities to different image-acts). If Schafer's work reminds us that all of this is action and chastens us about the dangers of reifying the image, Langer's work on "the act concept" provides a way of conceptualizing the form and texture of competing image-acts. Since Langer's philosophy aims to provide a background for a unified conception of processes underlying all life, she does not emphasize the sense of agency in the way Schafer does in developing a specifically psychoanalytic notion of action, though she does see the act as purposive movement. For Langer, an act is "the formal unit, or modulus, of living processes," a unit characterized by its form: an impulse followed by phases of

\textsuperscript{45}Ibid., p. 115.
incipience, acceleration, consummation and close. An impulse is a potential act, and an impulse arises from (is motivated by) a situation—a constellation of other acts in progress. 46

It is the stream of advancing image-acts which is the mind’s collage process. Some acts are sustained over long periods and "entrain" many other lesser acts whose forms are then subordinated to the broader, more inclusive ones. The entire life cycle of an individual is one act; so are the developmental stages identified by various biological or psychological criteria of phasic growth. Image formation is an act too, and it is the texture of a multitude of image-acts, competing with and enhancing each other, which comprises what we know as experience. Many image-acts are never consciously known because our situations (other acts in progress) prevent them from developing to a level of intensity at which they might be felt distinctly. Such submerged acts are nevertheless part of the texture of psychic process; they impinge on other, stronger image-acts, altering their forms and become implicitly known through their influence. 47


47 Here Langer and Schafer would concur. Schafer writes, for example (p. 310), "Logically and unequivocally, a potential affect can only be one which would be experienced consciously were the situation different in some crucial respect (e.g., less threatening)."
The life courses of various images are known subjectively as strands of experience. Viewed externally and over long intervals of time these strands become something close to what Anna Freud called "developmental lines"—the trajectories of particular kinds of image-acts. Compositional and developmental perspectives come together around the concept of an act, because the form taken by an image-act is determined in large part by the points during the life-course of the image at which it is impinged upon by other image-acts simultaneously in progress. The influence of those other acts is then a combined product of the relative strengths of all the acts involved and the phasic vulnerability of the specific act in question. By emphasizing in this way the relationship of ongoing acts to each other, particularly in adulthood, the compositional perspective of collage may contribute to the creation of more subtly differentiated and clinically useful developmental theories.

For purposes of phenomenological examination we abstract images from the flow of imaginal acts, and explore them from many perspectives. The I Ching, for example, is filled with such abstracted images, as are the poetry and prose passages upon which Gaston Bachelard reflects. In pursuing this kind of study we reify the images. We give them the kind of palpable substantiality which they seem to
have in our experience of them, as for example in dreams. In a formative psychology there must be a place for confronting that phenomenal substantiality, as well as for recognizing the psychological activity out of which images issue: maintaining through symbolization the feeling of life.

In this thesis I have proposed collage-making as a clinical method and the collage-model as a metaphor of the mind's multifarious image acts. I believe that this method and this model, by stressing image-making, composing, and the quest for symbolic vitality, provide a broad theoretical perspective in which insights from many psychologies and many therapeutic modes can be included.\textsuperscript{48} Three principles are fundamental to the formative depth psychology I advocate.

\textsuperscript{48}I am particularly interested in experimenting with a therapeutic mode in which working with the image compositionally (in collage) would be combined with working with the image in bodily expression (in movement). I suspect that such a combination of enactments would be therapeutically extraordinarily powerful. (See M. A. Secheyse, Symbolic Realization: A New Method of Psychotherapy.) Much of the work in this thesis I hope can help strengthen what I regard as the woefully inadequate theoretical underpinnings of art therapy. Many exciting things are being done clinically in art therapy which are constrained theoretically by the psychoanalytic psychology which purports to justify them. (See Margaret Naumburg, Dynamically Oriented Art Therapy: Its Principles and Practices, one of the best books in this field.)
I. Principle of Symbolic Life:

The continuous creation and re-creation of images maintains the life of the self.

The fundamental project of the self is that of finding symbolic openings, ways to move which preserve the feeling that the self is alive and viable while minimizing the threat of the self's annihilation. This principle draws together the concepts of core areas, core images, and formative categories of images.

II. Principle of Composition and Psychological Change:

The self changes as its images are re-contextualized.

This principle is the analytic analogue of the concrete acts orienting the self through processes of centering (uncentering, decentering, recentering). Each new act of centering alters the processes of memory and anticipation, thus affecting the trustworthiness of that which one has taken for granted. Hence, recentering alters the self's grounding. This principle accounts for the compositional stages of change: acknowledging the prevailing images, revalencing the composition, and recentering around the emerging form.
III. Principle of Act Form:

The life of images takes the form of acts; new situations give rise to new impulses, hence to new acts whose trajectories are determined by the interfering and sustaining impingements they encounter.

The life of the mind is comprised of a dense texture of simultaneously proceeding acts, most of whose tensions are only partially spent overtly because their act forms are impeded or subsumed by other acts which take precedence. The assumption of the existence of such unconsummated symbolic acts defines a depth psychology. New situations derive from the impingement of sensory and symbolic stimuli and are recognized by the forms, both physiological and symbolic, available to the organism.

Sometimes symbolic acts are initiated and concluded dramatically, as in the theater, but frequently it is difficult to distinguish exactly when a new symbolic act has begun or an old one has been played out. Each new day can initiate a significantly new act, or days can run together for prolonged periods in a kind of sustained act linked by a prevailing unresolved tension or preoccupation.

The obscurity of act form inherent in symbolic acts leads to disorientation, and this is what makes virtualization so important psychologically. Psychological vitality requires perceptions by the self of the form of
its own trajectory, meaning the form of its acts. Life involves "beginning something and at a certain point remarking that it is finished," as Trilling put it. Virtual forms assist us in recognizing beginnings and endings. Seeing the form of one experience refracted in another renders in clear relief the living form of an act.

The spirit of the collage method is that of acknowledging the images which are explicitly and implicitly guiding our lives. Doing this enables us, in Tillich's words, to "really have what we have," hence to be what we really are. It was in that spirit, though I scarcely sensed it at the time, that I long ago began putting things I value into black notebooks. I hoped those things might aggregate to provide a more believable basis, or grounding as I would say now, for new and fragile images taking shape in me. I have now come to know that other people do similar things in their own ways, and for similar reasons.

Allen Wheelis, a West Coast psychoanalyst, has

49 Lionel Trilling, Sincerity and Authenticity, p. 172. See also Frank Kermode, The Sense of an Ending.

written something I like about his attempts to find a way to live:

The objective mode is not for me, the detached voice rings false. I must work from the formlessness of my own life, speak in my own voice, however faltering and unsure. What I seek is not to be found in my past, is not to be found at all but achieved, if at all, from the debris and clutter of a flawed and limping life. I admonish myself: Give up this longing for a past of brave adventure from which to work. Heroic experience is hearsay, is not your own. Don't just stand there in lamentation before the junk heap of memory, the fears and evasions, the missed opportunities, the cautious advances. Wade in. Pick up the pieces. Don't expect to find anything of value. This is ore, not metal. Expect only to come upon something--slingshot, love letter, rusted foil, ancient condom, broken knight from a chess set--from which with effort and courage something of beauty might be made.\(^5\)

The materials are at hand, the collage begins to form.

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\(^5\) Allen Wheelis, *On Not Knowing How to Live*, p. 50.
APPENDIX A

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING A COLLAGE

The process of making a collage and then talking about it can help people explore ways in which they give form to what they see and experience. The term "collage" simply means a composite image made of materials pasted together. The process of choosing and assembling those materials enables one to take a fresh look at what feels important in one's life and how things fit together.

To help you get started I have listed seven steps in making a collage. They are meant as no more than a guide and as you begin to get involved you will no doubt develop your own variation of them. You will notice also that the following steps--differentiated here for clarity--actually overlap considerably and are really aspects of a single process.

1. SCAN AND SELECT

1. Sit in front of the large panels and scan all the pictures and materials. As you scan let your attention move to whatever seems to attract you.

During this preliminary scanning you will find that you feel attracted to some pictures,
dislike others, and that many will not hold your attention at all. Note those pictures that seem especially interesting or significant, whether beautiful or ugly—whether you feel drawn to them or mildly irritated or even repelled by them—and write down the panel letters and picture numbers on the small pad (e.g., F-19) so that you can locate those images in the folders. You can also include pictures that, for no particular reason, you just think might be useful. You may choose some pictures because they connect with things especially on your mind now or with certain memories, struggles or anticipations.

As you scan the panels you will also get a sense of the other assorted non-picture materials available to you for the collage.
2. PULL

2. Pull from the folders the pictures you have noted and put them on the table or floor. (The pictures are arranged in the folders in numerical sequence.) Add to them any of the materials from the basket that lend textures that you like or in any other way contribute to your collage. If you have brought any materials of your own place them among the pictures and materials you have chosen.

3. CHOOSE THE BACKGROUND

3. Choose a sheet of tagboard of whichever color you prefer for a background. Later, when you begin to arrange your images on this board you may want to cut it to make it smaller or paste it together with an additional board to provide the amount of space you need to work on.
4. Focus your attention on each of the pictures and materials you have accumulated, keeping the ones you wish to use and putting aside the others. Cut or tear them in any way you want so that you retain what is most important for your collage. You can use anything from an entire picture or piece of material to the smallest fragment of either.

Right up to the time of pasting you can make additional cuts and tears, or reconsider your choices and discard any of the elements you wish, or return to your discarded pile or to the panels for additional pictures and materials.

5. Arrange the elements you have chosen into a form of some kind—whatever form looks and feels right to you. Let your feelings play freely with the
images—do not hesitate to respond to what the images seem to want to do.

You can space or overlap your materials in any way you please. Certain elements may complement others so that they take on qualities not present when they are isolated. You may want some images to be more central or dominant, others more peripheral or muted.

6. **FINAL TOUCHES**

You can fold or crumple, further cut, tear, mutilate or even burn any of the images or materials for the purposes of your collage. And you can make use of the magic marker or poster paints for additional markings or color.

7. **PASTE**

Paste the thing together and that's it.

After you have finished we can talk briefly about the collage you have made, and then have a more extensive discussion about it within a day or two.
APPENDIX B

THE BUFFALO CREEK COLLAGE INTERVIEWS

First Interview, December 19, 1974:

"HOW I'M TRYIN' TO PIECE MY LIFE TOGETHER"

I met Charlotte* in the trailer at the head of the Buffalo Creek hollow where she lives with her husband and three children. I had interviewed her nine times before during the preceding two years, and we felt comfortable with each other. I explained to her the idea of the collage process and she quickly grasped what I was getting at. "I see," she said, "you want me to show you how I'm tryin' to piece my life together."

Since the pictures were in folders rather than on panels, Charlotte had to look at each picture one at a time. Her method was to go through the pictures, pulling the ones she wanted and putting them in piles around themes that seemed to come automatically for her. There was a pile for the flood, one for family, one for serenity, one for her childhood in Lincoln county and one for, as she put it,

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*Names and distinguishing personal characteristics have been altered. The Buffalo Creek flood occurred at 8:00 A.M., on Saturday, February 26, 1972. This interview took place nearly three years after the flood. Twenty-six close relatives of Charlotte's husband were killed in the flood; no one in her own immediate family was lost. See Robert Jay Lifton and Eric Olson, "The Human Meaning of Total Disaster: The Buffalo Creek Experience."
"How I feel sometimes." That initial sorting process persisted in the final linear arrangement she made on the collage boards so it obviously reflected fundamental formative constellations.

Once she had the piles together she sort of stopped, and was hesitant to go further. She wanted to tell me about her sorting process and talk a bit about each of the pictures. She insisted that each pile was "unto itself" and that they "wouldn't go together." So we talked some about the piles and the pictures and gradually she moved into arranging them into a collage composition. But during that process as well she wanted to talk as she went along. She sensed completely how closely the compositional task I had given her to do mirrored the formative struggles in her own life and there was not a little anxiety associated with putting those pictures together. But she was very willing to do it--she trusted me, and she liked me, and our having a dialogue as she made the collage seemed to help. She would try a picture in one place and quickly know whether it was right or not. Usually by the time she moved it twice it would have found its proper place in the composition. And when a picture seemed to be in the "right" place she knew it and left it there. The following quotes are taken from our talk as Charlotte told me about the piles and about some of the images she had chosen:
Looking at the big rock picture, which eventually wound up in the serenity part of her collage: "... it's cozy and it's just nice, you know ... a place where you'd just want to go and sit down and stay there for hours."

"This here [the atomic bomb cloud] is how I feel sometimes—like exploding. This one [the vultures at a carcass]—somebody's all the time digging into you, or [looking at the picture of the person alone in open, endless snow], you're alone and you're lost. It's just what I thought of when I seen them. Or [looking at volcano fire] what hell's really like. This [the blue night scene with lighthouse and sea] is really eerie; this is loneliness [Joan Baez]; this [the barn door] is locking everybody out. This [Pollock painting]—you could just tear up all hell, you know ... [laugh]. Just do whatever you want to do; just go wild."

Then she started with pictures of the family. "This [baby birds with open mouths] is the kids; they're all the time hungry. This [black man with white and black kids on his lap]; well ... I'd like for my kids to be friends with people like that, colored people, because I always was. And this [girl combing other girl's hair]—Valerie always does this to Barbie. This baby looks just like my babies. This [the boxing] is me and Donald [her husband] having it
out. And it seems like I'm all the time doing this--running. This one is birth--my kids. This one [mother chimp and baby]--is me with the kids; you could just smother them with love. This [little girl by herself in grass] is a peaceful scene for the kids; which come very seldom, but they have them. This one [kid in baseball suit looking angry] is Donnie's way of standing."

"These are just everyday things, the things I think about . . . I'm just here today and today and today, and a lot of tomorrow is with me. These nature pictures; I don't know why I picked these, but sometimes I like to be alone."

Then I explained again the process of putting the pictures together. Charlotte sighed . . . "You got a big order haven't you? . . . ."

"These pictures stuck with me more than anything . . . these family pictures."

I mentioned a mountain picture that reminded me of the Buffalo Creek mountains, and asked Charlotte if she'd thought of using it. "Well," she said, "if it had some strip mines around; the mountains are too high, too long, too wide; too much pine, not enough maple. I've lived here so long." (This little interchange is extremely interesting in terms of stimulus lattitude. The picture Charlotte was talking about was one I had once used in a collage to symbolize Buffalo Creek, but for her, someone
who really knew the details, it wouldn't do. Oddly, she could more readily symbolize her family with pictures of other people than she could use an Adirondack mountain picture to symbolize the West Virginia mountains.)

"Oh, Eric, I don't know how I'm going to do it . . . it's so much . . . This one here [man tending a wound on a baby's head]—it really stuck with me. All the little kids that was hurt; babies that was dead. How the water first started coming out, then how it swelled, and then after the flood [devastation picture]—there wasn't that many bodies all close together like this. But it seemed like this. Water all over the place: cars, pets, chickens, everything lying on the ground. People walking, just looking around. It was like this, it was all gray and black. Puddles of water and everything floating in it—parts of houses, boards . . . just terrible. I really identify with that. This one [baby in coffin]; I just thought of those funerals and those little babies, newborn babies. I think of this person [the man tending baby] taking care. This is the way those camps at Lorado looked; and we just imagined how the water went in and kids floating by in houses screaming. There were some in there [pictures in the folders] that were scenes, but they were either too heavy or they wasn't heavy enough."

I asked Charlotte how it felt to look at the
pictures of the flood now. "It's a sickening, hurtful feeling, you know . . ." I said, "But it's almost as though something in you wants to look at them." She replied, "You have to look at them. It's not just that you want to.* A lot of pictures in there reminded me of something or seemed funny, but they weren't all that important." [This was, I think, Charlotte's way of saying that she chose pictures that connected with core images in a particularly immediate way.]

I said, "You've got some pictures here that really suggest the most important things to you." Charlotte replied, "Well, I guess it is--the only important things."

When she got to the picture she wanted to represent her relationship to another man, a truck driver she is presently seeing [a picture of a couple walking on a snow-covered frozen pond], she said, "It's all wrong; it's two people but it's in the winter; I just hate winter." I suggested she could put the people in some other scene if she liked. "Maybe so," she said. She pasted the couple in an autumn field and said, "That's just us; there's nothing but us and nature. And maybe I'll just put this door on

*This fascination with the holocaust image is what Robert Liften calls the "survivor's thralldom" or "death spell." Lifton connects this phenomenon to the "indelible image of the death encounter." See Robert Jay Lifton, Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima, p. 482.
top, to lock everybody out."

As she got to the point of seeing how the separate boards which she had filled up would fit together she said, "But see, they just won't go... I think maybe I want a cigarette. That part of my life [serenity] don't go with that part [the family]. This part here is all to itself [Lincoln County--childhood]; it don't go with anything."

"When I think about the kids I think about this [the classroom filled with kids]. And this here [little girl combing other girl's hair] is the quiet ease of the evening. And this one [little girl with pig tails in grass] is just Barbie—all the time by herself, not with the other two. She gets that way sometimes; she'll just play in one spot and tell herself a story or something. And this is her kindergarten [little girl painting]."

"This [the bomb] is how I feel when I explode, how I feel when I get mad at the kids and he won't make them mind or behave. This [the boxing] is what I feel like doing to him [Donald]—just knocking him flat."

Then she started describing each of the kids and their very different personalities. Later she said that the flood had made her more aware of each child as a separate person, and from the particularity of each of these descriptions I think that may be true:

"Valerie's sort of a loner. She goes off by herself,
she'll sing herself a song and eventually go to sleep. And Barbie; we never have to hold her--she's very independent; she's two years old today. She was born natural childbirth. She was always very independent. Donnie's the monster of the bunch. He's always picking at her, but he's pretty good. Barbara--she's not so rough, but she's sort of her own person. But Valerie! She can be rough and mean sometimes!" As Charlotte described all this I almost had the feeling she was rehearsing her conceptions of her children.

Looking at the third panel [her "feelings" panel] she said, "This right here [many children in classroom] always causes me to do this right here [run]; and that makes me want to do this [Pollock making an action painting] . . . just turn loose and do whatever I want." Charlotte's comments here made me think of how often the collage process, either in tracing image pathways or just describing the composition, leads to an exploration of "characteristic transformations of feeling."

I asked Charlotte if it would be easier for her if she finished putting the thing together alone while I went for a walk. She said no, she wanted to continue to talk about it as she worked. She continued to paste and talk. Then she paused and said, "I guess that's it, but it just don't seem to be there some way. It just don't seem to go
together good, but it does in a way, in a big way." I asked where she felt things not fitting together. "... all over ... this right here [the second panel--family] does go with the way we live. But it doesn't go with that over there. [Lincoln County--her childhood] but in a way it does. Because when I have that over there I'm without this over here. And I have to get without this over here before I can be thata way over there. So it still kinda goes together, don't it? Maybe I'm just a nut. It all goes together, it's the way I feel. The pictures that I picked out is the ones that stuck with me the most, you know, in this sense."

I commented: "You know, it goes together in terms of where you are in your life now, but where you are in your life now there are certain things that are having difficulty fitting. And this is sort of a picture of all that." Charlotte agreed.

"In a way I'd like to forget those [Lincoln County] but those, the flood pictures, are part of our every day any more. Those others are not a part of me--they're part of my mother, things that she's got. It's not really all there with me--it just stuck with me, you know when I seen those pictures, it's pictures that I'd seen at home. Or they're things that I'd see at Grandma's and laugh at or make fun of or say, 'God, that's old.' And, really, it was
a piece of our life. But it's not a piece of my life."

Charlotte did say that things she had learned from her mother were part of her "every day": "the way she showed me how to scrape dishes, to make them drain well, that kind of thing really sticks with you. That way it's with you—when you use something like that."

"I'd like Donald to take me and the kids away from these coal fields, but then again I'd be takin' them away from everybody they know, stickin' them into something that they don't know."

"This picture here [doorways] makes me think of Lincoln county, because that looks like the upstairs of our house, one of the small rooms, and there's a sort of a hall and then you walk into a bigger room." I thought it interesting that the first picture she spoke of in connection with the childhood panel was the one with open doors leading into a "bigger room." Her voice conveyed a feeling of expansiveness. "The Church; it was really like that, it was on a hill. This is my grandma—always collecting roots [her mother's mother]." She talked about other specific aspects of various pictures that reminded her of the Lincoln County experience. I encouraged her, saying, "Whatever it is about a particular picture that makes you feel the same, even though it doesn't look the same, you can just use that little bit..."
Still pasting as she talked, Charlotte then jumped over to the serenity panel and said, "That's the way I'd like for a while, not all the time, but for a while, but some peace for a while. That up there [family panel], that's how things are today, yesterday and probably be tomorrow and the next day, but that over there [serenity] ... it's just the thought of it I guess ..."

Interesting the sequence there: from her childhood and its serenity, to that element of her present life that offers serenity [her affair, nature] to her own family now and her own children, their lives and her responsibility for them. Charlotte knows that she can't indulge her fantasies too much, because she has real obligations. But she does have a strong urge to connect that open, serene image of her childhood with present possibilities both for herself and her own children.

"I think I want this [the serenity panel] at the bottom, because this would be the way I'd want to feel, just to turn loose ... you know. To turn to something like that after all this ... [the flood; hassles with the family]. That would have to be it, I guess. But that [Lincoln County] would have to be it [off to the side]. That's more a memory."

"This one here [mother chimp with baby] is my huddling over the kids all the time. That's the way I thought about
it. Maybe it's just to stop huddling and start doing what
you want. But you can't do that though . . ."

"This rock . . . it's just sort of all alone.
Nothing's there but you and your thoughts. Maybe it
belongs off to the side. This one [blue night sea]: this
is eerie but it goes with this [the other serenity
pictures]." I'm not sure what Charlotte meant by that,
except that her serenity seems almost haunted, eerie,
fragile, night-like, dangerous and not fully dependable.

"The flood goes up here with the kids; it's a big
part of the kids--it made me see the kids more. Black is
the best background for the flood."

"Does it [the collage] feel like it's pretty much
together now?" I asked. "Yea," Charlotte said, "it feels
like it's pretty much together." At that moment Donald
walked in the door, looked at Charlotte on the floor
pasting and said, "When you gonna put it together . . .?"
Charlotte laughed.

Then Charlotte said to me, "You mentioned pictures;
I've got one for you I thought you might like." She pulled
out a big psychedelic poster of a three-masted sailing ship.
"When I seen that I said, 'Well that's just like Eric.'
You can have that, but don't let nobody tear it up for a
collage."

By this time Donald had gone out again and I
commented that he had looked amused. Charlotte replied, "He'd never know where to begin, you know, on what I'm thinkin'."

Charlotte then started talking about how she never saves things, "I just don't never hold on to too much stuff; I'd rather throw stuff away. I don't have anything. I don't like to hold on to things for long periods of time. When I think they're no longer necessary to keep I throw them away."

Charlotte said she never made a collage before: never did "anything like this before"--though she liked art in school.

After she finished pasting, Charlotte and I talked briefly about the whole collage. I asked her how she felt now about the whole collage. "I just know I put together the biggest part of my life almost in front of a total stranger, and I don't know why; that's the way it feels, because the pictures is none of us and then again it represents all of us. I'm in it. I'm in every bit of it. Mostly it's just of me and how I am in it.* It's me at the

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*Here Charlotte was really expressing the central idea of the collage method--exploring the self in relation to the images that compose the self.
top, what I saw in the flood; me in the second one what I go through with Donald and the kids; me in the third one how I'm always running and how I'd like to be a little freer than what I am. Me in the fourth one—serene, and him [John, the truck driver]; and me over here [Lincoln County] because that was a big part of my life. It's just me, and the kids, but mostly it's all about me."

"In one way that [Lincoln County] doesn't connect at all with the kids, with the flood, with John or any of it. But then again it's all me and it's the biggest part of my life."

I asked her what kind of feeling she got as she looked at the whole thing now. "Drudgery. Just a sense of really not belonging, and then belonging, too, but really not just being here but being all over the place at one time. I guess that's hard to understand, but that's the way it makes me feel. That I'm not just one certain person, but I'm three or four and doing three or four different things at one time. That's why it was hard to get this together."

I asked her which part, if any, seemed most like the center. "Yea, the second one. Just me, the kids and Donald. The flood, it's not the center any more. It's more in the outgoing past. It's just a mental block that you don't forget, but then you don't remember all the time
either."

I think what Charlotte meant by that was that the flood and images associated with it have a powerful impeding effect on other potentially animating images in her life. They are, in this sense, competing acts. She knows that is true, even though now those flood images, even as they block the emergence of new concerns, are not themselves in her mind all the time.

"... if Donald had seen that squirrel he would have known right off what it was all about." [The picture in the family panel that represented Donald consisted of a man in a plaid shirt with a squirrel on his shoulder.

Donald loves to hunt squirrels.]

I said I thought if she had done the collage last summer the flood would have been more in the center. "Yea. I believe it would have, because back then that was all we thought about. And you could look around and it was all around you. It's the second one [family panel] and this last one [serenity] that are more the center now. I believe that's the center."

I asked her why she decided to put the flood on top. "I believe the flood is what led me into all this; into seeing the kids more as individuals, and myself connecting with 'em as much. Before the flood they was just babies to take care of; now they're Barbara; and they're Donnie
and they're Valerie. And they're not just little objects
that was just to be took care of and loved. They're more
individual. They're themselves. They're not just my kids.
They're, I don't know . . . people. I'm more of an
individual person to myself too. I think more about myself,
more about what I'd like to be into and what I'd not like
to be into, instead of just going into it first. I think
more of myself; not thinking only of myself. I'm not that a
way. I think we do live a little too much for the kids."

In saying she was living too much for the kids,
Charlotte was articulating the feeling contained in her dream
of six months before of her beating one of the kids to death
with a hoe in the yard full of snakes. The kids are a
reason for living, but now, after the flood when all of
life has become so difficult, they also impede Charlotte's
process of re-centering around her own feelings of inde-
dependent value and autonomy. This seems to me to be a
particularly feminine form of a centering-grounding dilemma.
Partly because of her close ties to and strong feelings of
responsibility for her children—much closer and stronger,
it seems, than are Donald's ties to them—Charlotte has
remained more grounded than Donald since the flood. That
very source of grounding, however, prevents the modulated
de-centering and new self-exploration which Charlotte
knows she requires in order to emerge with a renewed
commitment to living.

I asked Charlotte why she had this new appreciation of the kids as individuals. "It's because they're there when they might not have been. That's the way I feel." In this sense the flood as a trauma brought about an almost total un-centering and in the struggle for re-centering and re-grounding—which is what all the post-flood months have been about—Charlotte's centering has become more differentiated. It is certainly not that the kids are not of central importance to her. But in saying that she has a new awareness of them as separate individuals (that her consciousness has changed) she is really saying that she sees them less in terms of their being simply parts of an undifferentiated environment. As the flood made her more aware of the contingency of their existence, and her own as well, the boundaries of her self had to become more articulate.

I would define consciousness very much as L. L. Whyte does, in terms of a capacity to perceive difference and thus to have a context for the perception of events.*

The flood emphasized the most fundamental kind of difference—that between being alive and being dead. So one might assume that two related influences were at work in making

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Charlotte more aware of her kids as individuals separate from herself. First, she could imagine her children not existing. Hence, their actual existence took on more meaning—it became a difference from a possible outcome. Second, I think she had an impulse to locate her being more fully within her own body as a kind of protective maneuver. Everyone in Buffalo Creek pulled back from outside contacts: family "huddling" as James Titchener calls it*—a word Charlotte herself used in exactly that connection. As Charlotte also emphasized, however (in talking about the image of the mother and baby chimp), her closeness to the children is experienced ambivalently. She spoke of "smothering them with love"—meaning enclosing them totally and herself with them, and on the other hand extinguishing them so as to free herself to do and be wild things, to be whatever she wants without having always to respond to others [the Pollock picture]. So it is a complex struggle for re-centering, not fully grounded either in images of herself as an autonomous person or in a family situation that might allow leeway or what Erikson calls Spielraum.

"I think a little too much of the kids and not

*See "Family and Character Change in Buffalo Creek," by James L. Titchener and Frederic T. Kapp, unpublished paper presented at the special section on "Disaster at Buffalo Creek" at the May 1975 annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association.
enough of myself, that's where that [the picture of Pollock painting] comes in. You've got to have a part of yourself with you at all times or you're just going to be your children for the rest of your life. That's the way I look at it anyhow. It may not sound just right, but that's the way I feel about it. I can't live all of my life for my kids, or Donald. I've got to have some time for myself and that's it—that's where the door comes in. To keep it to myself and not spread it around and let it aggravate Donald and aggravate the children. Just keep it to myself. That's a way it's more a part of me, and not a part of them."

This whole trend of thought helps to clarify how a death and rebirth experience can be understood as re-centering around core images, a losing of one's life in order to find it in a newly centered self-awareness.

I asked Charlotte what kind of feelings she got as she looked now at the serenity panel. "I feel nice; I'm glad I put it together the way I did because it's the way I'd like for it to be, and when you look at it it could be that way but then again it can't because of... the kids, Donald."

"The rock is just there; it's just alone, by itself. It's not nobody or anything; it's just there and by itself. The way I feel—you know. The way I'd like to feel, but the way that I can't feel on account of I've got the kids and
Donald. And I wouldn't turn to something like that and drop three of my babies . . ."

"... even though once in a while you may want to," I asked.

"Yea . . ."

Valerie came in from school then and the interview wound down. I then told Charlotte about the idea of having a dream, and suggested that she let the images from the collage swirl around in her mind before she went to sleep. "Oh, I won't forget any of the pictures," she said. I told her that if she had a dream and we talked about it in connection with the collage it would help her to put things together.

Valerie's class had had a Christmas party at school that day, and Charlotte asked if the kids had liked the cookies she had sent. "They didn't even eat none. They liked the others." Charlotte laughed and said, "We're not all perfect, as you can tell."
Second Interview, December 20, 1974:

"IN THE MIDDLE IS ALL I CAN DO"

We began the interview with Charlotte telling me that the previous day's collage-making had given her a headache--"looking at all those pictures; straining my eyes." Actually, as her collage dream implied, I think the headache had to do mainly with the anxiety of the overall formative task. I was aware of that anxiety as Charlotte made her collage. There was anxiety about whether her five piles would go together, and there was further anxiety as she made her collage, indicated by her insistence that we continue to talk as she put the pictures together.

"But I like what I've done, I mean I've put it together the way I thought it should go. To anybody who would walk in it's just a bunch of mumbled up pictures with nobody at all in 'em, but to me they're . . . after I thought about 'em in the way that I thought about 'em, they mine--you know."

I asked her if she thought about the collage after she made it. "Yes indeed, I could remember every picture I picked out and put on those posters. I could just see them after I looked at them for so long yesterday, and the way that I thought about them and put them together made it easier for me to remember them. I thought especially about
these down here [the serenity panel]."

"I thought about them all and remembered them all, but I didn't dream about them last night. You know what I dreamed about? I went to bed with this headache and I dreamt that Donald kept walking around with a bottle of aspirin in his hand taking one about every two minutes." We got into so many other things that we never pursued that dream image of Donald taking aspirin. But I think it is legitimate to assume that the dream was part of the act of making the collage. Charlotte associated her own headache with having looked at so many pictures, but in the dream it is Donald, not she, who has the headache. I think one can see in this dream an impulse to repudiate her own survivorship, to see Donald, rather than herself, as the one who suffers, the one who needs aspirin. At the same time I think the dream suggests in a way that she and Donald are both in the same boat—the dream is making an identification between her and Donald. In any case, I think the headache itself and the dream about it reflect the great tensions associated with focusing, as we did, on precisely the formative process ("piecing my life together") that Charlotte has so much trouble with. Charlotte was very aware of how the collage task mirrored her own process—as she indicated in saying that she couldn't put those five piles together because they didn't go together in her own life.
I asked her what feelings she got as she looked at the serenity panel [the only one, other than Lincoln County, with any color at all]: "... just the color—I like that one, the way I put it together. It made me feel serene when I was pickin' the pictures out. The loneliness of it all, the quietness. It's not really, you know, serene, but if I was there, in those places, it would be serene because I'd be in there. That's the way I looked at it yesterday. They're all warm pictures. The serene pictures was the only ones with color in them. If I was standing by one of those lakes it'd just be breezy and warm; it'd be summer and spring. I'd be standin' there on one of those hills or down close to the lake. It's like the lake we go to at Beckley."

"I'd like to take the kids and just go walking through the hills up there—wild flowers is all over the place. The grounds are covered with pine needles just like a carpet."

"I always love roses, and they were just there by theirself—that's why I picked the roses [Charlotte had a picture of roses in the serenity panel]. The smell of them, and just standing there alone ... We have roses growing along the fence."

I asked her about the red bird, a cardinal, in one of the pictures. "He's just alone, serene—it's there by
itself and it looks satisfied. Just alone, looking around, with nothing to bother it. Nothing to jump at it real quick or anything." Here one senses Charlotte's desire to be the source of her own movements, not having always to respond to other people.

I asked about the blue seascape. "I don't know why I put that. It don't look real quiet; it does in a sense but the water doesn't look quiet. But the color makes it look serene. It's eerie and quiet, and lonely. I never did like the ocean. It's alone and by itself— that's why it fits with the others. I guess I picked it because of the blue, and the lighthouse alone in the back. No boat or anything on the water . . ."

"And that rock formation, I don't know about that. It's very solid. There's nothing going to erupt, like a volcano, or anything. It's easy to imagine myself there. But I think if I could be anywhere it'd be more by the lake, with the little white tree there. It looks quiet and deserted. And the field down there; no water around— I'm kind of afraid of water anyway. I've always been afraid of water. Down at Lincoln County there are boulder formations that you can walk on for hundreds of feet. It's beautiful. When I walked around there I never used to get too far away 'cause I was always afraid I'd get lost. But now sometimes I feel like I'd like to get lost, for at least
a week."

I said it seemed to me that the rock had the feeling of something solid. "... and firm," Charlotte added. "It looks like a big hill of rock, that you can stand there, you know. Not just a little rock that you could hold in your hands."

I asked Charlotte what came to mind as she thought about that kind of rock: "Just a solid firm life, you know. That's what I think about mostly. But the lakes. It kind of goes with the rock because of the serenity and the firmness of it all. It won't give way on you or anything. And, like I say, that would never be possible, but it's just the thought of it..."

I then pointed out how in the whole composition of the four panels the serenity panel goes on the bottom, like a "foundation." "It's more like a dream," Charlotte objected. "It's what I'd like to do, places I'd like to see, and places I have seen." I said it seems like the kind of place that's important in your mind, even if you don't actually go there. Charlotte agreed and added, "It's just a place you'd like to be alone, or with somebody close, and just lay down there and think all day, or just look around. Even the ocean there, that'd be beautiful, even if it was dark and I'm scared of the dark. Even now I have to leave the bathroom light on." Charlotte laughed. As she spoke
of all this I thought of the idea of grounding, how that idea is always a metaphorical extension of being rooted, having a place to stand, a relationship to firm ground that one can count on. And I thought how this part of Charlotte's collage, concerned with serenity but perhaps more fundamentally with grounding—with having a firm place to stand—is very literally about grounding: she ties the idea directly to a firm piece of earth or, even better, a rock. And I guess, after the flood, it is not at all surprising that for Charlotte as for many others in Buffalo Creek, grounding means, literally, firm, solid ground.

Charlotte said if she could be in any of those scenes now it would be the one by the lake with the white tree, where she could just "sit, and be there all day, not have to jump up all of a sudden, just to sit there either by myself or with somebody, just to talk or think. It'd really be nice."

Clearly this was an image that had to do with love, self-love and basic aspirations of the self, which involved basic themes of the collage and lent itself readily to personification. So I helped Charlotte to move into a kind of story or fantasy around that image.

"I'd probably look around for a while and then sit there and think till I went to sleep. I'd think about nature, and maybe about the kids, about what they're doing.
Thinking of the kids and somebody takin' care of them and them having a good time. It would be late spring, when the trees have a little bloom but not much. Before I'd do something like that I'd know the kids would be okay. I'd probably go to sleep. When I go on a picnic with the kids I show them some birds and they get serene too, and then they doze off and go to sleep. It don't take them five minutes."

"It's not quite the same if the kids are there because you have to stay alert, in case one of them wakes up and starts wandering off. It'd be a good feeling to be there by myself--I'd rather be there by myself than I would with the kids. That's why I put the door there. To lock everybody out. That's the way I felt when I threw it down there."

"Later I'd stand up, and maybe walk around the lake. I wouldn't be afraid even if I was alone. I don't think anything would interrupt it. I've got confidence in myself. Fear comes when you lose your confidence."

I mentioned that a door keeps certain things in and other things out, and I asked what things her door was keeping in and out. "Aggravation, and trouble and kids, and running all the time after 'em. Just me there alone or with somebody, without there being any sudden surprise."

Again the idea of a sudden surprise, an intrusion,
an eruption. The persistent apprehension that she will be startled is an extremely fundamental negative image for Charlotte. One can see it both as the wish to be in control and be the initiator of action and not just the recipient of the actions of others, and a persistent legacy of the trauma of the flood, the great intruder—the great disruption of serenity which makes all subsequent serenity seem precarious.

I asked Charlotte if moments like that, being by herself, was something she needed often. "Not real often—just every now and then." I asked what the feeling is like if she's with somebody close. "Just quietness, nobody talkin'. If you talk about anything it's just about what's around you, nothin' else . . . . When you're sittin' around here just talking about it or thinking about it you can feel yourself there."

Charlotte was in a kind of daydream state, and I asked her how she felt. "Pretty good, just quiet, natural. Except for the ocean part. I can't feel myself being into that. It's not that quiet, but it's still by itself, alone."

I mentioned my own association to Charlotte, that her time with John, although it is quiet, is exciting, even dangerous. "I believe it's just the slipping around, having to make all sorts of arrangements. I don't know what you'd say, a little exciting—a little overbearing, you know."
I told her that as she talked about the serenity part of the college I found myself drawn to the Lincoln County part of the college, and she said she did too.

"The tree, the flowers . . . the house--the quietness of the house," she said as she began to look at that panel. The day before she had said that that panel was off by itself because it didn't have anything to do with the rest. "[Our old house] was eerie like that, and quiet all the time. Upstairs it was cool, even through the summer. When nobody was around, maybe on a Saturday night when Mom and Dad would go to church and the boys would be out fishing, I'd be there by myself. Everybody around was our friend. It was quiet. You never hear nothing except a rooster or a dog bark." Charlotte went into a kind of reverie and then said, "You have to wake yourself up sometimes don't you? You feel like you're there. We used to play in the attic all the time; it was dark, scary and exciting. There were bird nests up there. The house had a tin roof and when it rained you could just go to sleep from the sound of the rain on the roof." I thought of Charlotte's image in connection with the serenity panel, of falling asleep next to the lake. "It was an old house, on a log foundation. It was cold in the summer and cold in the winter, but there was still a warm feeling there. The coziness of it all; the way Mom had it all fixed out for us. We fixed the
house up; we tore all the old wallpaper off—it was at least a half an inch thick. We got filthy, but we enjoyed doing every bit of it. It was old, but it was nice. We heard recently that it burned down."

"Donald and Daddy built the porch on this house here... Donald started on it, and got the lumber, but after we figured out how big the porch would be and realized how small it would be I told him to go back and get more lumber. I wasn't going to have a little small porch like that. Because in the summer and spring, I like to sit out on the porch and prop my feet up on the banister and drink a cup of coffee or a cold Pepsi, and to have the kids out there. They'll take a nap out there if the trucks aren't running and stirring up so much dust that you can hardly see yourself. It's really nice to have a porch. You don't have a home until you've got a porch. It's just a part of a home. It seems like a necessity to get out and sit on it at night, or in the daytime when it's warm and breezy instead of being cooped up in the house. You can sit there and talk with friends. People just stop and talk. Everybody up through here sits on a porch. That's the way it's been up through here ever since I can remember. I wouldn't live in the city at all."

Then Charlotte began to talk about her grandmother's house [her mother's mother] back on a mountain in Lincoln
County. Charlotte had tremendous admiration for her grandmother, and the way she lived, in a little house surrounded by chickens and dogs "way back in a hollow. . . . After Grandma washed her dishtowels nobody was to touch 'em. She would scald them and wash them, then nobody was to touch 'em. You didn't go to the table with your little fingers dirty around her. One kid would wash and then pour out the water and get water for the next kid, and it would go on and on like that. Oh, she was particular. She was really bright in her ways, and strictly religious. You never said even a little dirty word around her. She used to hunt, she'd kill snakes, she'd go coon hunting at night. She was a little rough around the edges, but then she was gentle and tolerant. She could do anything--she could go plow up a field if she wanted to."

"When she washes her dishes she washes them in a dishpan of hot spring water. She'll scald them. The water she washes her dishes in never does come through a pipe, because a pipe is nasty to her. She wouldn't use plumbing for her dishes. . . . For her, cleanliness was next to Godliness, and she was going to make it to heaven, you know. She was reassuring herself and everybody else around her too. She still makes her own soap. Store-bought soap wasn't clean enough for her. She's in her early seventies now and she still does it."
"She really dug into my impressions. She was all lady to me. She was just fine. She wouldn't pick up one of the kids if its hands was black or it had a runny nose. 'You wipe it off and I'll hold it.' She was just thata' way. That tree there [Charlotte pointed to the picture of the tree with the kids swinging]; she had a tree like that, with tires hanging on ropes. We'd always be swinging out there."

As Charlotte talked about her grandmother's fanatical cleanliness I thought of her own struggles with dirt and dust after the flood. And I began to realize that endless mud, dirt and dust was death-linked beyond its associations to the flood. I suspect that something of Charlotte's grandmother's concern with cleanliness as an expression of purity lives on in Charlotte--and certainly Charlotte's house has always been extremely neat and clean when I have been there.

"If Mom was ever sick, which I can hardly ever remember her being, she would wash clothes all day and then iron all that night, and everything would be neat. She'd never let a wrinkle be in our clothes. She wasn't as particular as my grandmother. But we was a clean bunch of kids. One day Mom was cleaning out the pockets of our clothes and Johnny had had fishworms in a box in his pocket for over a week. Me and her just about gagged."

"When I moved up here from Lincoln County for high
school I felt lost. It was heavy. I didn't know anybody as close people like we had down there. After we moved up here there were kids every night to spend the night with us. In one night I brought Anne, and Wanda and Peggy, Linda and Anita and Carolyn stayed all night—and we just had two bedrooms in that house. And we all fit in two bunkbeds."

"Even though my grandmother was very clean, she always had a little dog around. But she loved that dog. I guess it gave her a feeling of somebody being around to take care of. That dog was bathed every other day, and baby oil put on it."

"... All Donald does around here is drink a beer around here now and then—he never goes out and shoots pool or any kind of recreation. Sometimes I wish he would; that would get him off my neck now and then. He's always working, and that's his life—working. But hunting—that's something else to him. It's sort of like a sacred ground for him that he walks on. Deer hunting he don't care about too much, but squirrel hunting! Now he likes that. Every hunting season he's always got his license a couple months before. He's always ready. He buys shells all through the year, and cleans his gun every other week. He wouldn't miss a weekend hunting in Lincoln County for nothing. And it used to be I'd quarrel at him 'cause I didn't like to be alone
all that much. But now I don't say a thing to him, because I know he needs it, and I need to be away from him a lot too. When he's not around things are kind of peaceful, and the kids are not as mean."

Then I asked Charlotte about the differences in the way she and Donald have responded since the flood, and about the degree to which she sees herself and Donald equally as survivors. "A lot of his relatives that were lost—they felt like my relatives. Even though it was only by marriage, they felt much closer to me . . . But Donald grew up with them."

"Donald is a very jealous man. When I'm sitting around reading a book he don't want me reading that book. He wants me to be there, with him. Sometimes he's even jealous of the kids. Or when the miners are going up the road and I'm out in the yard hanging up some clothes, Donald will yell, 'Hey, come in the house.' That I don't like. It seems to smother me. It seems to smother me to death, and I just can't stand that."

I said that it seems that Donald has some insecurities, and Charlotte continued: "He needs to have some insecurities on account of what I've done, but he doesn't know it. He doesn't know nothing about it, and he'll never know nothing about it."

"Donald and I are different in every way. Like I
want to do this [make a collage] but he didn't want me to. He didn't want all this time consuming on me." Then Charlotte talked about how Donald wants her to be there to find things for him, but she said that she herself is always forgetting where things are. "I can't remember nothing. I put something down, and I can't find it. Somebody will call me and tell me to bake the cookies for Barbie's party; I couldn't remember that. I can't remember stuff like that. But past things that's happened to me I can remember, things that really stick with you."*

Then we talked about where Donald is in the collage. "Just mostly with the kids," Charlotte said adamantly. "That's it. In this down here [the serenity panel] he's not. And over there in the Lincoln County thing he's not. And up here in the flood he's not. Just with the kids and the racing and the going backwards and forwards and me taking care of him. And even in a part of this he's not. Just in this upper righthand corner."

Then I pointed out that the image of Donald is very close to the darkness of the flood, and I asked whether he gets connected with that. "Yea, he does, in a way. But mostly with the kids; the aggravation that they put on both

*See Langer's discussion of "current" versus "biographical" memory. (Mind, Vol. 2, pp. 335-39.)
of us. And he won't take the responsibility. And he gets angry if I go shopping and stay thirty minutes longer than I should have stayed. When I get interested in something he wants me there, with him."

I asked about how Donald is connected with the flood. "Well, mostly with the deaths. His family, the deaths he really hurt over. But other than that, that's about it. That's all he's connected to." I asked Charlotte how that made her feel. "Well, sort of alone. If he should go tomorrow he would be missed, of course. But other than that I could still survive with the kids. 'Cause I've been with them a lot more, and I know them better than he does, and I know their ways better than he does. He'll say that his self."

"What struck me about this picture, the little birds [Charlotte pointed to a picture of little open-mouthed birds in a nest, a picture she hadn't used in her collage], that's the way my kids are sometimes. They're either all wanting to eat at the same time, or they're all crying."

"Before the flood the kids were quiet, adjusted. They was into it with us. They was never dissatisfied or crying. But after the flood, with all the shifting around they sort of got more disattached to us. They got a little louder, a little meaner, cried a lot. And Donald over here
wouldn't take his responsibility, to help me with the kids. That why the fight [Charlotte pointed to the boxers, next to the picture of the atomic bomb mushroom cloud]. The explosion is me exploding with anger at him. When the babies were first born he always wanted to be a part of whatever was going on. But right now he don't seem that interested. I feel angry at him for not being with us, but still being with us. Being there physically, but not mentally.

I asked where Donald was mentally. "He's either in the mines, or he's at the flood, or he's hunting. Those are the three main things with him."

In all of this one can see not only a kind of death taint that hangs over Donald as a residual contamination, but also a deep resentment at his emotional abandonment of the family because of his total absorption in himself. Charlotte views Donald as not only emotionally undependable, but as not even really there emotionally. She regards him as just one more emotional burden on her. No wonder that she and Donald's mother could see him as a child and cooperate together in arranging for keeping the children when Charlotte spends time with another man. Somebody has to be adult; somebody has to keep the family going, and Charlotte knows the kind of emotional sustenance she requires to do this. She has dispaired of ever getting it
from Donald.

Then I asked Charlotte to begin with the flood and trace a pathway down through the explosion to the other images. "It goes on down, from the flood to Donnie. He got a little meaner afterwards. And he was by himself and a little stronger, from being more alone. He's a little more rougher. And that makes me mad when he's onto the girls, and Donald is never there to do the disciplining on him. The kids get real serene when Donald is not around, and they can go to bed easily. When Donald is around they can't get his attention and they're always saying, 'Mommy, Daddy won't talk to me.' And I'll say, 'Donald, the kids is trying to talk with you.' His favorite is Saturday morning cartoons. Me trying to deal with the kids and him sitting there with a cup of coffee and his feet up watching cartoons. Sometimes he can be watching something and not even know what he's watching."

Then she pointed to the picture of the black man with the kids on his lap. "They're sort of at ease when somebody else is with them besides Donald. Like Barbara sitting there by herself [picture of little girl with pigtails sitting in a field]; she's always willing to get into something by herself to learn. Or like the picture with the girl brushing the other girl's hair. Barbie will let Valerie comb her hair before she'll let me do it, and lay
down with Barbara and go to sleep. And over here [pictures of birth and small child] I started thinking of Barbara and what she was like when she was born."

Just then the tape ran out, and as I was changing it Charlotte started telling me how sometimes she and her niece have taperecorded Donald without his knowing it. "He gets madder than hell at that," she said. I commented that she seemed to have Donald coming and going. "Yea, I really put it on him sometimes. He's got to get into it one way or the other, and you know. Sometimes he laughs at what he says. When Debbie [her niece] is here he'll play with her and tease her. I like that. I like for people to be open and say what they want to say and do what they want to do."

I asked if Charlotte ever got the feeling that Donald wanted her to take care of him like a kid. "Just like a kid. He is in many ways like a kid that he can't do things for himself. When he does things for himself I have to reassure him, you know, that he can do it. That makes me feel disgusted, that he is a man and he won't take responsibility on hisself and won't do nothing for hisself. But all the men in his family are like that. His brother Kenny—I have read letters to him and even when there's an 'X' on it, he'll ask me, 'Where do I sign?' They don't really care that much about themselves."
"Right after we got married it was more him taking care of me. Then it was, 'Honey, we better go now before the store closes.' Now it's more like, 'Honey, what time do you think the store will close? When can we go here? When do we have to start?' I think if anything was to happen and we was to separate or divorce he'd be a lost cause. I'm like a mother to him, but I don't want to play that role. He works for us and that's the only way he takes care of us."

"The flood gave him the feeling that he couldn't keep things together. 'Cause after the flood he was not with it all. I can't stand it when somebody, some doctor or something, starts telling me what to do and acting like he is a superior human being. Donald will never say nothing, except for once with Zane Grey Staker."

I asked Charlotte where she would put the picture of vultures eating the carcass, a picture she had mentioned but not actually used in her collage. "I'd put it down here between the chimps and letting myself go, because someone is always eating at me. All the kids and Donald on top--Donald always eating at me to get something done."

I asked about the picture of the volcano. "That would be next to the explosion, 'cause that's the way I feel. But I used the explosion and not the volcano because that's running free after it exploded. But not me. That right

*Staker was a lawyer for the coal company in the suit after the flood.
there is a kind of running free explosion but not me. I don't run free. I have to stand my ground. I can't get away."

"I believe I should have put the picture of Barbie and Valerie [combing hair] down here with the other serene pictures, and put the running picture up there. But this other one [kids with black man] is of how peaceful they are afterwards, how strung out they are."

I mentioned how it was interesting that she used the word "strung out," because the whole collage seemed strung out. "It's hard to get things to fit together because there's a lot more needed than just the expressions of the kids and how they act and the hustle and bustle of it all and how many kids I feel like I've got sometimes. There's so much more needed, but not enough room to express yourself, not enough room to really let yourself tell it all; not enough time, or something like that.* More anxiety is needed to show how the kids react, and act when someone else is there, how playful they get and lovable they get and sometimes mean they get, and how much more they sort of entwine together. I need more there with the kids: more fighting, more loving of each other, and how they get sometimes. It should be bigger and more clear; it doesn't

*Here Charlotte is re-valencing the collage in accord with what I earlier called subjective scale.
put itself forth as much as it should. Things are more bound together than they are here: there's still the race to be run even when the kids are serene. The serenity and franticness are mixed up together. Because even when the kids are quiet you've still got other things to do, like how to take care of them when they are asleep, like preparing the meal for the next day, and things like that. And then maybe them waking up in the middle of the night crying. It needs more explaining. Everything should be around the running, I guess, or apart from the running. When they're serene I'm still going. That's where the door comes in—I can lock everything out for me to be serene."

As she said all this I thought about the story she had told in connection with the serenity panel in which there was always some intrusion, some resistance even to fantasizing about a really peaceful moment.

"This picture here [kids in classroom] is like it feels like there are more kids than there really are. The running thing is an all-the-time thing: it's with 'em, without 'em, when they're asleep or awake. I'm all the time running just to keep things together."

"This picture of the chimps— that's the mothering of it all. I do too much of that. I feel like I should stop sometimes and just let myself go, when you can't really do that 'cause you have to keep the ship afloat, even if
you have to hold it up by yourself."

"The picture with the wild painting [Pollock] gets me out of that [the running] into that [the serenity]. I feel like I should be set free and do what I want, and down there's what I want. But you can't do it; you really can't do it. You never are able to turn loose."

I asked Charlotte how she felt about the whole collage now, now that we had talked about all the images in some detail. "Nothing's there that really goes with me, but still again every bit of that is me. It's like a symbol of what's happening. But then again there's nothing there that I know; nothing there that really I see; but still it's me: I've seen it, I know it and it's me. The whole arrangement is all there, all us, all me."

I said it's as if the collage shows the boundaries of her life. On one side is the flood and on the other side is serenity. "How far you can go and how far you haven't . . . and how far you can't, and how far you've been. How far you've been, how far you can go and how far you can't go. This is where I've been [Lincoln County] and down there's where I can't go. And in the middle is all I can do--that's today, this is yesterday and that's what I'd like to have for tomorrow."

Then I asked Charlotte to think about what she really would like to have "for tomorrow," knowing that there
are lots of difficulties and many things that would not be possible to have. "What I would like to have is maybe when Donald gets his summer vacation for him to take a week for squirrel hunting and me to take a week for something like this. Which is possible, but which he would never agree to. He thinks I'm not wanting to be with him. He doesn't have enough trust. Which, in a way, he shouldn't trust me, but he really can because he's never known anything. He knows that I have never been with anyone. He trusts me in that sense, but he doesn't trust me that far."

I said it didn't sound like it had much to do with trust, but rather with his needs. "We're two different people. We're nothing alike. He goes out and hunts but he always comes back the same day. If I was down there I know that he'd stay. But there's no way that I'd go down in that boredom, which I'm already in. It like a halt, a standstill between us, as I've said dozens of times. There's no way to tell him that we need time apart, time to miss each other."

"All of it [this collage] is part of my boredom—not getting out, not being away from the kids or Donald for no certain length of time. Always sitting here doing the same thing each day. Every day is the same thing. That's what I mean by boredom—it's a drag. You have to drag yourself up, you have to drag yourself to do what you
have to do; you have to drag yourself in and drag yourself out."

"If it wasn't for the kids I would leave Donald; for that [the serenity]. The only boundary I have between me and Donald is the kids. That's the level truth. But I won't do it, not until the kids is gone."

"You can read Donald like an open book when you get to know him. That's all he is is an open book. When the whole family was over on a picnic in Lincoln County swimming, Donald would just sit on the bank watching. But he wasn't watching the way we thought he was watching. He was making sure we wasn't really into anything."

"I wanted to take a test for secretarial school, but there was never no time. No way. And really I do have a lot of responsibilities to take care of the kids. But I believe if I could get something like that in I believe I could take care better."

"I can think quick when it comes to finding a way to have the kids taken care of when I want to see John. But other things, like schooling, when Donald gets mad, I can't think at all. I'm always fuzzy up here." As Charlotte described that difference I thought about the difference between grounded and ungrounded imagination. "Before you go into something like that [her affair] you got to think quick and think clear. It's more of a
challenge, because there's more at stake. Taking care of the kids is at stake." I said that the kids were only part of what was at stake. Taking care of herself was also at stake. "But I think more of the kids than I think of myself. If the kids was to grow up with that in their minds it would hurt them with me. But my kids will never know nothing about it. Donald will never know nothing about it. Only me. And I'll take the headache by myself and be glad to do it." As she described her absolute certainty that the kids will never know I thought she was really saying that her symbolic immortality was at stake in what her kids become and what they are able to absorb from her. In her saying, "and I'll take the headache," I thought about her dream in which, after having a headache herself all day she dreams that Donald is the one with the headache.

"There's a great amount of guilt in it, but there's also--you've done something and you've done it smart and you've done it quick and you've done it honest with yourself. There's a lot of pride in it too. But there's guilt in it too--thinking you darned fool what are you doing maybe losing your home and your kids and everything else."

"But if you take care of yourself and you're feeling serene within yourself, you're more able to give some calm to the kids. You've gotten a little of this
behind the door,* to a certain extent. But in another way you've had more of this running up here, because you've had to lie about it, think quick about it and you've really had to do it on yourself. There's a certain part of being with him [John] in this [the running]--the aggravation of it all. Both these parts of the serenity, with the kids and with him, are in with this running. And sometimes I say to myself it's not worth it all. Hell, I'm doing the same thing just to be with him for a few minutes, where I really don't need to be with him. I can do it all on my own anyway. That's the way I've handled it for seven years." I commented that the more she looked at the collage the more the running image became the center of it all.

As Charlotte talked I thought not only about her wish to be sufficient unto herself, but also about the contamination of her central constellations. Donald contaminated by the flood; the kids contaminated by Donald; the affair with John contaminated by the kids; her feelings about her own trustworthiness contaminated by the affair; the serenity contaminated by the constant running and the fear of being startled. And looming above it all like a black cloud, or as she put it, "a black mountain," the flood

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*In this part of our talk the power of the collage to facilitate what I call emotional shorthand is evident.
and the images of death associated with it. Tensions everywhere and all traceable, at least in her mind, to the flood. Everything contaminated by the feeling that she can get no real rest; that she can't ever fully get what she needs.

Then I tried to pursue the place of the flood now in Charlotte's psychic composition. She had said that the center now was the family panel and the serenity panel and that the flood had moved off center a bit. So I asked whether the flood was continuing to move off. "Not really. It's still there; you still got the thoughts of it, and the aggravation of it all. And everyday there's some little something like a piece of clothing that you pick up to throw away, or something the kids have picked up at school which brings the whole thing up. Or Donald saying something about the old car Johnny used to have, or that looks like this that Deli used to have, or Atlee* talking about it constantly. Holly wrapping paper—that's what Wanda liked the best. That came up just day before yesterday when I was wrapping a gift for Atlee. It just takes a little thing to bring up the whole incident and then everybody wants to talk about it, where I had just resigned myself to not talking about it."

Here one thinks of Langer's idea of an unfinished act, sustained by present impingements, and of course that is what grief is. There will always be things that remind

*Atlee is Donald's mother.
people in Buffalo Creek of the flood, just as there are always things that remind one of someone close who has died. In that sense mourning is, by definition, a permanently incomplete act. But I think one can distinguish what Charlotte describes—a situation where a very wide variety of events and associations so readily become elements in the incomplete act—and one in which memories are simply evoked and pass. What Charlotte describes is a kind of hunger to return to the act, an appetite for associations involved with the unfinished process. This is precisely what Freud described by the repetition compulsion, and one can easily share his puzzlement about the motivation for such persisting rehearsals. For me though the clue lies in the ideas of valencing and centering. Above all else, the flood was simply a momentous event—that is what is meant by trauma, or what Freud speaks of as the "quantitative factor." The flood is perceived as both extraordinarily real and yet totally unreal, but from either perspective it dwarfs all previous and subsequent events. It becomes a vortex, or a prism through which all else is seen. All other images receive a much less intense valencing and take on a sort of triviality by comparison. That is key to understanding the boredom so pervasive in Buffalo Creek. If as Laing says in Self and Others we are reborn or recreated in every new act then the new act must
be viewed as potentially significant, on a scale commensurate with other important acts in one's life.*

But for Charlotte and the others the flood meant massive uncentering. Now the struggle is to regain a sense of being the source of one's own acts; that is, to re-center oneself in one's own acts so that one's acts will count again. That is why Charlotte speaks so often now of wanting to go off and do what she feels like doing, and says she doesn't want to apologize to anybody. She is struggling to make herself a kind of center, and she is at odds about how much to include even her children within that center. She speaks of wanting to smother them with love—that is, of wanting to include them completely and of wanting to extinguish them.

So far it has not been possible for Charlotte to re-center herself sufficiently that her present actions have importance equal to that of the trauma she endured. When the self is not sufficiently grounded to re-center and again become the source of its own acts, then the old acts will be re-played, rehashed in chronic attempts to extort new life from them. That is what Charlotte describes, and that is why so many small events and objects have become

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elements for the repetitive act of once again telling and reliving the story of the flood.

"Like I tell Atlee, it's over, it's happened and it's done with, and there's nothing you can do about it. But she don't listen to me. She's set in her ways; she's kinda of old, and she's lost a great deal of her love you know, she's lost that. Lost the affection that she showed toward people. She's not got that to show any more. I can understand that, but I'd rather just forget about it myself. But it's brought up in everyday life."

Charlotte looked down at her hands and was embarrassed to see them fidgeting and moving nervously. "My hands—they're busy all the time. I don't know whether it's my nerves or I'm just so used to it—but they just need to go."

I asked Charlotte how it felt to have talked through all these things. "Well, it feels better. You've got somebody that you can talk to who's honest with you and then honest with themselves about the reaction of it all. Because you are, you're open. You talk about it." I told Charlotte that I felt like I'd gone through a lot of the whole experience now myself, even though I didn't live through it. "It gets into your . . ."

She finished my sentence for me: "... into your head. And you can't forget it. You know."
I said, "That's why I took that picture from Kelly Mountain for my Christmas card."

"Yea," she said. "There it is. I been there. And I know it now."

I told her that once I had begun to share in this experience it was hard to make it be just a little thing, because it was such a powerful thing. "It's an obsession too in a way," Charlotte added.

Then I said I was glad we had been able to talk for four days because it seemed it had really taken that long to get a real feel of what was going on. "We've talked about the same thing," she said. "But then again it's not the same thing. We've been over it and over it and over it, but there's always a little more added into it."

I said, "It's like the shale above a coal seam, in layers. Every time you return to the same thing you see a little more. Like when we first talked about Lincoln County it seemed to be pretty disconnected from everything else. But as we talk about it more it relates more and more to things about the family and the serene parts of your life."

Charlotte was quiet, looking in a relaxed way at the flowers in the picture on the lower left on the Lincoln County panel. "You ever walk through a field of flowers like that? I love fields of flowers like that. I've gone
through 'em dozens of times. Going to Grandma's house it'd be a sidetrack just to pick flowers to take to her. Oh, and that was the joy of her life, somebody picking wild flowers and wild violets and things like that that would really smell. She was crazy about that, and we always did it. Still today, if we walk and we go there and we stop on top of the hill before we get there, it's another two hours of driving after we begin to go down hill and get to her house, we get out to stretch our legs and I'll pick flowers. Usually I'll find quite a few snakes too, but I can run, like I said."

I told Charlotte I would send her a picture of the collage and she said, "I'd really like to have one of those." Then I said that probably things would look and feel a bit different in a couple of months but that still this collage would be interesting to have and to remember. "No," Charlotte said, "this is the way it will always be." I said that if she had done this collage a couple of months back the flood would have been more central than it is now, and that the various things in her life will no doubt continue to re-arrange themselves. She agreed: "Then it would have been the whole thing." She talked about how once in a while she gets a little distance on things and begins to see that sometimes other people, including Donald, were right and she was wrong. "You can never know how you're going to feel
in years later, or months later, but right now I feel that I'm right."

"But this over here [Lincoln County] will always be off to the side, because that's a happier memory. It's sad in a way because I had to leave it, and happy in a way because I liked it so well and had so much fun at living there, being with those people. And this [the second panel--the family] is a sort of a sad-happy memory, even though there is the running, the fighting, you can look back on it in years and see some of your mistakes and some of your failures, and some of your real ways and the things you've tried to learn and to show--looking right at you, you know [meaning "looking right at you" in the collage]. Charlotte sequesters the Lincoln County time. She didn't even want it to be part of her main composition, and now she says explicitly that it will always be off to the side, "because it's a happier memory."

"But right now looking at this I can see that I'm right and I've told it the right way and I've put it together right. There needs to be more explaining, and more to convey out than just to look at the posters. But it's there and that's the way I feel."

At the end of the interview, right after I turned off the tape-recorder Charlotte continued to talk. After I got in the car, I wrote down as well as I could remember
what she said: "I think it's a great accomplishment to have put this together, and in so short a time. I'm amazed at myself for having done it. And it's really true; there are no lies. The whole thing is completely true and completely me and it's my life. I think my headache and the dream have to do with how hard I concentrated putting this all together."

"If you were to leave me some pictures like this and some boards I think I could fill this room wall to wall in a few days. It feels very good to have put all this together and explained it all. I can understand now why this must be very helpful to you, because it makes you able to see."

After I was back in the motel in Logan I wrote a letter and I talked a little about the interview with Charlotte. I wrote that "Often after a second college interview I feel almost tearful, as if I have seen something very close to the heart of someone, and seen that something at the same moment that they did. There's a sentence in Erikson's *Insight and Responsibility* where he says (as I remember it), 'The clinical method implies that

*Erik Erikson, Insight and Responsibility, p. 229.*
you can't learn anything about someone unless you are doing something with and for them.' Often after the second college interview I feel I have shared in some process in which I was able to see with another person their own center. Often too the feeling is the same even with different people, of seeing something exquisitely vulnerable and imperishably resilient and hopeful. That was how it was with Charlotte today. And as I walked to the car, having spent ten hours with her in four days, she waved and said, 'Come back when you get time.' Something very beautiful had passed between us. The collage, her 'posters' as she called them, had become a strange and mysterious 'it' that enabled us more fully to be I and thou for each other."

Later I thought about Charlotte's description of her collage, her saying that it was about "how far you've been, how far you can go and how far you can't go." I thought about what Gauguin wrote on one of his large paintings in 1897, "Where have we come from? What are we? Where are we going?"
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