



# FEMALE SEXUALITY

The Early Psychoanalytic Controversies

Edited by

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and Craig Smith*

KARNAC



## 2 Biographical Notes

acted as witness when she married the composer Mark Brunswick. On Monday 14 September 1936, she filmed the Freuds' golden wedding celebrations.

### *Helene Deutsch (1884 - 1982)*

Helene Deutsch spent her childhood in what is now Poland. In 1907 Deutsch enrolled at the University of Vienna to train as a doctor and went on to specialize in psychiatry. By 1918 she had joined the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society and shortly afterwards began an analysis with Freud. She rapidly came to prominence in the Society and in 1924 was appointed head of the Society's newly established Training Institute. In 1935 Deutsch migrated to the United States to take up a position in Boston, where she remained, teaching, writing and analysing until her death in 1982. Her later views on female sexuality are to be found in her two volume work, *The Psychology of Women*.

### *Otto Fenichel (1898 - 1946)*

Otto Fenichel was one of the younger members of the Berlin group. Analyzed by the Hungarian analyst Sandor Rado, Fenichel went on to establish himself as a highly regarded teacher and practitioner of psychoanalysis. His pedagogic reputation led to a number of positions in the 1930s, culminating in a training position in Los Angeles in 1938. Shortly before his premature death at the age of 48, Fenichel published what has been described as a 'classic textbook' of psychoanalysis, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis*.

### *Karen Horney (1885 - 1952)*

Karen Horney trained as a doctor at the University of Berlin and went on to train in psychiatry and psychoanalysis. She was in analysis with Karl Abraham and then Hans Sachs. In response to the rise of Nazism in 1932 Horney migrated to the United States, first to Chicago under the sponsorship of Franz Alexander, then to New York. In 1941 the New York Psychoanalytic Institute withdrew her name as a training analyst and instructor. Horney resigned and was active in founding an alternative group, the American Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis. In the United States her work came increasingly to emphasise cultural fac-

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tors in the determination of psychopathology. This is particularly evident in two of her late, popular works, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time* and *Neurosis and Human Growth*.

#### Ernest Jones (1879 - 1958)

Freud's biographer, Ernest Jones was a relentless campaigner for psychoanalysis. He was a major figure in the founding and subsequent running of the British Psycho-Analytical Society and the American Psychoanalytic Association and would later become president of the International Psychoanalytical Association for an unequalled term of seventeen years. Jones was a prolific writer and noted polemicist in psychoanalytic matters. He originally trained as a doctor and specialized in psychiatry before coming into Freud's circle around the same time as Karl Abraham. It was at his suggestion that Freud established the secret inner group known as the 'Committee', made up of the 'best and most trustworthy' of Freud's followers; and it was Jones that Freud described as 'a fanatic who smiles at my faint-heartedness'. On the other hand, Jones's writings on female sexuality represent a major break with Freud's position, rejecting what he was the first to term Freud's 'phallocentrism'. Jones's papers have been published in his *Papers on Psycho-Analysis* and *Essays in Applied Psycho-Analysis*.

#### Melanie Klein (1882 - 1960)

Klein has been one of the most influential, albeit controversial, figures in the history of psychoanalysis. The paper included here is from her early period, presented shortly after she had settled in London. Klein was born in Vienna, but moved to Hungary in 1909 and entered analysis with Sándor Ferenczi. After the counter-revolution in Budapest in 1919 she moved again, this time to Berlin, where she undertook a further analysis with Karl Abraham. Around this time Klein began developing the play technique in order to facilitate analysis with very young children. Klein also introduced new concepts and a new emphasis in orientation for psychoanalysts, especially in regard to the emergence of psychical processes in infancy. Her numerous publications have appeared in a four-volume edition, *The Writings of Melanie Klein*.

**The Dread of Woman: Observations on a Specific Difference in the Dread Felt by Men and Women Respectively for the Opposite Sex**

Karen Horney (1932)

*International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 13(1932):348-60

Karen Horney's paper starts with a meditation on poetry to foreground the ideas of woman as other and as primal element (water) that swallows up the man who is seduced. Horney suggests that man strives to free himself from the dread of woman by seeking objective grounds for it and she warns against the cultural consequences of this state of affairs. Thus Horney really asks two questions here: Why this dread of woman, which is kept secret as a strategy in support of male self-respect? And why this abhorrence, or fear, of the vagina that is so blatant in male homosexuality, fetishism and in the dreams of all male analysands, and yet so often concealed behind the dread of the father?

Her reply is that the masculine dread of woman as mother or of the female genital is more deep-seated and more strongly repressed than the dread of the father. Moreover, the father is more tangible and fearing him leaves male self-esteem intact.

Further questions follow from here: What is the origin of this anxiety? And what are its characteristics?

Horney disputes Freud's idea that the vagina remains 'undiscovered' for the child and notes, along with Carl Müller-Braunschweig, that the phallic impulse as such is a desire to penetrate. She infers that the little boy imagines a complementary female organ. The 'undiscovered' vagina is therefore a denied vagina. The little boy's anxiety is linked to the prohibition of instinctual activities enforced by the mother, to his experience of sadistic impulses towards the mother's body and to the specific fate of the genital impulses. The masculine dread of woman is thus a narcissistic anxiety.

Finally, note too that Horney also disputes the equations male=sadistic and female=masochistic.

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In his ballad of *The Diver* Schiller tells how a squire leaps into a dangerous whirlpool in order to win a woman—at first symbolized by a goblet. Horror-struck, he describes the perils of the deep by which he is doomed to be engulfed:

Yet at length comes a lull o'er the mighty commotion,  
 As the whirlpool sucks into black smoothness the swell  
 Of the white-foaming breakers—and cleaves through the ocean  
 A path that seems winding in darkness to hell.  
 Round and round whirled the waves—deeper and deeper still driven,  
 Like a gorge through the mountainous main thunder-riven!  
 Happy they whom the rose-hues of daylight rejoice,  
 The air and the sky that to mortals are given!  
 May the horror below never more find a voice—  
 Nor man stretch too far the wide mercy of Heaven!  
 Never more—never more may he lift from the sight  
 The veil which is woven with Terror and Night!  
 Below at the foot of the precipice drear,  
 Spread the glowing, and purple, and pathless Obscure!  
 A silence of Horror that slept on the ear,  
 That the eye more appalled might the Horror endure!  
 Salamander—snake—dragon—vast reptiles that dwell  
 In the deep, coil'd about the grim jaws of their hell.

(Translation by Bulwer Lytton.)

The same idea is expressed, though far more pleasantly, in the Song of the Fisherboy in *Wilhelm Tell*:

The clear smiling lake woo'd to bathe in its deep,  
 A boy on its green shore had laid him to sleep;  
 Then heard he a melody  
 Flowing and soft,  
 And sweet as when angels are singing aloft.  
 And as thrilling with pleasure he wakes from his rest,  
 The waters are murmuring over his breast;  
 And a voice from the deep cries, 'With me thou must go, I charm the  
 young shepherd, I lure him below'.  
 (Translation by Theodore Martin.)

Men have never tired of fashioning expressions for this experience: the violent force by which the man feels himself drawn to the woman, and, side by side with his longing, the dread lest through her he might die and be undone. I will mention particularly the moving expression of this dread in Heine's poem of the legendary Lorelei, who sits high on the bank of the Rhine and ensnares the boatman with her beauty.

Here once more it is water (representing, like the other 'elements', the primal element 'woman') that swallows up the man who succumbs to a

woman's enchantment. The hero must in order to escape the riddle of the Sphinx can it forfeit their lives. The heads of the suitors who of the king's beautiful daughter of slain men. Samson, strength by Delilah. Jud: Salome carries the head because male priests fear Spirit' destroys every man particularly evil, but such instances is infinite self of his dread of woman dread her; it is that she of prey, a vampire, a woman sonification of what is self of the whole masculine conflict between the man's

To primitive sensibility the presence of the bloody woman during menstruation wither away, the fisherman involves the utmost danger of 'Virginity'; it is the husband Freud too objectifies this castration-impulses which sons why this is not a taboo itself. In the first part ration with castration-impulses probably confined to woman's attitude. And, secondly, even impulses in the woman in every individual and which make him view the perilous an undertaking impunity only by a man's life or his manhood for

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woman's enchantment. Ulysses had to bid his seamen bind him to the mast in order to escape the allurements and the danger of the sirens. The riddle of the Sphinx can be solved by few, and most of those who attempt it forfeit their lives. The royal palace in fairy-tales is adorned with the heads of the suitors who have had the hardihood to try to solve the riddles of the king's beautiful daughter. The goddess Kali<sup>1</sup> dances on the corpses of slain men. Samson, whom no man could conquer, is robbed of his strength by Delilah. Judith beheads Holofernes after giving herself to him. Salome carries the head of John the Baptist on a charger. Witches are burnt because male priests fear the work of the devil in them. Wedekind's 'Earth Spirit' destroys every man who succumbs to her charm, not because she is particularly evil, but simply because it is her nature to do so. The series of such instances is infinite: always, everywhere the man strives to rid himself of his dread of women by objectifying it: 'It is not', he says, 'that I dread her; it is that she herself is malignant, capable of any crime, a beast of prey, a vampire, a witch, insatiable in her desires. She is the very personification of what is sinister'. May not this be one of the principal roots of the whole masculine impulse to creative work—the never-ending conflict between the man's longing for the woman and his dread of her?<sup>2</sup>

To primitive sensibilities the woman becomes doubly sinister in the presence of the bloody manifestations of her womanhood. Contact with her during menstruation is fatal;<sup>3</sup> men lose their strength, the pastures wither away, the fisherman and the huntsman take nothing. Defloration involves the utmost danger to the man. As Freud shows in 'The Taboo of Virginity',<sup>4</sup> it is the husband in particular who dreads this act. In this work Freud too objectifies this anxiety, contenting himself with a reference to the castration-impulses which do actually occur in women. There are two reasons why this is not an adequate explanation of the phenomenon of the taboo itself. In the first place, women do not so universally react to defloration with castration-impulses recognizable as such: these impulses are probably confined to women with a strongly developed masculine attitude. And, secondly, even if defloration invariably aroused destructive impulses in the woman, we should still have to lay bare (as we should do in every individual analysis) the urgent impulses within the man himself which make him view the first—forcible—penetration of the vagina as so perilous an undertaking; so perilous, indeed, that it can be performed with impunity only by a man of might or by a stranger who chooses to risk his life or his manhood for a recompense.

Is it not really remarkable (we ask ourselves in amazement), when one considers the overwhelming mass of this transparent material, that so little recognition and attention are paid to the fact of men's secret dread of women? It is almost more remarkable that women themselves have so

long been able to overlook it; I will discuss in detail elsewhere the reasons for their attitude in this connection (i.e. their own anxiety and the impairment of their self-respect). The man on his side has in the first place very obvious strategic reasons for keeping his dread quiet. But he also tries by every means to deny it even to himself. This is the purpose of the efforts to which we have alluded, to 'objectify' it in artistic and scientific creative work. We may conjecture that even his glorification of women has its source not only in the cravings of love, but also in his desire to give the lie to his dread. A similar relief is, however, also sought and found in the disparagement of women which men often display ostentatiously in all their attitude. The attitude of love and adoration signifies: 'There is no need for me to dread a being so wonderful, so beautiful, nay, so saintly'; that of disparagement implies: 'It would be too ridiculous to dread a creature who, if you take her all round, is such a poor thing'.<sup>5</sup> This last way of allaying his anxiety has a special advantage for the man: it helps to support his masculine self-respect. The latter seems to feel itself far worse threatened—far more threatened at its very core—by the admission of a dread of women than by the admission of dread of a man (the father). The reason why the self-feeling of men is so peculiarly sensitive just in relation to women can only be understood by reference to their early development, to which I shall return later.

In analysis this dread of women is revealed quite clearly. Male homosexuality has for its basis, in common indeed with all the other perversions, the desire to escape from the female genital, or to deny its very existence. Freud has shown that this is a fundamental trait in fetishism,<sup>6</sup> in particular; he believes it, however, to be based not on anxiety, but on a feeling of abhorrence due to the absence of the penis in women. I think, however, that even from his account we are absolutely forced to the conclusion that there is anxiety at work as well. What we actually see is dread of the vagina, thinly disguised under the abhorrence. Only *anxiety* is a strong enough motive to hold back from his goal a man whose libido is assuredly urging him on to union with the woman. But Freud's account fails to explain this anxiety. A boy's castration-anxiety in relation to his father is not an adequate reason for his dread of a being whom this punishment has already overtaken. Besides the dread of the father there must be a further dread, the object of which is the woman or the female genital. Now this dread of the vagina itself appears unmistakably not only in homosexuals and perverts, but also in the dreams of every male analysand. All analysts are familiar with dreams of this sort and I need only give the merest outline of them: e.g. a motor-car is rushing along and suddenly falls into a pit and is dashed to pieces; or a boat is sailing in a narrow channel and is suddenly sucked into a whirlpool; there is a cellar with uncanny, blood-stained

plants and animals, or one is falling and being killed.

Dr. Baumeier, of Dresden, tells of a case of hysteria which arose out of a chance of the vagina. The physician was ment-centred and, after a time, pulled the edges of the slit apart fast by the ball. Of 28 boys without fear and 8 could not pull their fingers in without a trace but none of them serious anxiety.

No doubt the dread of the father, which is a conscious, behind the dread of the

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From all this I think it probable (the mother) or of the female heavily and is usually more of a man (father), and that the end represents first and foremost a conscious sinister female genital.

Is there any ontogenetic element (in human beings) an integral Is any light shed upon it by mating which occurs frequently more closely bound up with in whom sexual union potential side by side with his desire to the act of reunion with the which underlies the 'death-in-it to it with anxiety?

If we endeavour to understand genetic terms, we find ourselves Freud's notion that what dis



... discuss in detail elsewhere the reasons for their own anxiety and the impairment on this side has in the first place very much to do with the dread of the father. This is the purpose of the efforts to glorify it in artistic and scientific creative work. This glorification of women has its roots not only in his desire to give the father a more important position, but also in his desire to give the father a more important position, also sought and found in the desire to display ostentatiously in all their actions a sign of power. This signifies: 'There is no need for fear; I am beautiful, nay, so saintly'; that of displaying a dread of a creature who is so ridiculous to dread a creature who is so ridiculous for thing'.<sup>5</sup> This last way of allaying the fear of the man: it helps to support his own sense of power to feel itself far worse threatened—by the admission of a dread of a man (the father). The reaction is particularly sensitive just in relation to the experience to their early development.

... revealed quite clearly. Male homosexuality is indeed with all the other perversities a denial of the male genital, or to deny its very existence. A fundamental trait in fetishism,<sup>6</sup> in particular, is based not on anxiety, but on a feeling of powerlessness in the penis in women. I think, however, that the analysis is absolutely forced to the conclusion that the fear which we actually see is dread of the vagina. Only *anxiety* is a strong enough feeling in whose libido is assuredly urgent. Freud's account fails to explain the relation to his father is not an adequate one. Whom this punishment has already reached, whether there must be a further dread of the female genital. Now this dread of the female genital is not only in homosexuals and perversities, but in male analysis. All analysts are forced to give the merest outline of the fear and suddenly falls into a pit and is forced into a narrow channel and is suddenly forced to tell with uncanny, blood-stained

plants and animals, or one is climbing a chimney and is in danger of falling and being killed.

Dr. Baumeyer, of Dresden,<sup>7</sup> allows me to cite a series of experiments which arose out of a chance observation and which illustrate this dread of the vagina. The physician was playing ball with the children at a treatment-centre and, after a time, showed them that the ball had a slit in it. She pulled the edges of the slit apart and put her finger in, so that it was held fast by the ball. Of 28 boys whom she asked to do the same, only 6 did it without fear and 8 could not be induced to do it at all. Of 19 girls 9 put their fingers in without a trace of fear; the rest showed a slight uneasiness but none of them serious anxiety.

No doubt the dread of the vagina often conceals itself behind the dread of the father, which is also present; or, in the language of the unconscious, behind the dread of the penis in the woman's vagina.<sup>8</sup>

There are two reasons for this: in the first place, as I have already said, masculine self-regard suffers less in this way, and, secondly, the dread of the father is more actual and tangible, less uncanny in quality. We might compare the difference to that between the fear of a real enemy and of a ghost. The prominence given to the anxiety relating to the castrating father is therefore tendentious, as Groddeck has shown, for example, in his analysis of the thumb-sucker in *Struwwelpeter*: it is a man who cuts off the thumb, but it is the mother who utters the threat, and the instrument with which it is carried out—the scissors—is a female symbol.

From all this I think it probable that the masculine dread of the woman (the mother) or of the female genital is more deep-seated, weighs more heavily and is usually more energetically repressed than the dread of the man (father), and that the endeavour to find the penis in women represents first and foremost a convulsive attempt to deny the existence of the sinister female genital.

Is there any ontogenetic explanation of this anxiety? Or is it not rather (in human beings) an integral part of masculine existence and behaviour? Is any light shed upon it by the state of lethargy—even the death—after mating which occurs frequently in male animals?<sup>9</sup> Are love and death more closely bound up with one another for the male than for the female, in whom sexual union potentially produces a new life? Does the man feel, side by side with his desire to conquer, a secret longing for extinction in the act of reunion with the woman (mother)? Is it perhaps this longing which underlies the 'death-instinct'? And is it his will to live which reacts to it with anxiety?

If we endeavour to understand this anxiety in psychological and ontogenetic terms, we find ourselves rather at a loss if we take our stand on Freud's notion that what distinguishes infantile from adult sexuality is

precisely that the vagina remains 'undiscovered' for the child. According to that view, we cannot properly speak of a genital primacy: we must rather term it a primacy of the phallus. Hence it would be better to describe the period of infantile genital organization as the 'phallic phase'. The many recorded remarks of boys at that period of life leave no doubt of the correctness of the observations on which Freud's theory is based. But if we look more closely at the essential characteristics of this phase, we cannot help asking whether his description really sums up infantile genitality as such, in its specific manifestation, or applies only to a relatively later phase of it. Freud states that it is characteristic that the boy's interest is concentrated in a markedly narcissistic manner on his own penis: 'The driving force which this male portion of his body will generate later at puberty expresses itself in childhood essentially as an impulsion to inquire into things—as sexual curiosity'. A very important part is played by questions as to the existence and size of the phallus in other living beings.

But surely the essence of the phallic impulses proper, starting as they do from organ sensations, is a desire to *penetrate*. That these impulses do exist can hardly be doubted: they manifest themselves too plainly in children's games and in the analysis of little children. Again, it would be difficult to say what the boy's sexual wishes in relation to his mother really consisted in if not in these very impulses; or why the object of his masturbation-anxiety should be the father as the castrator, were it not that masturbation was largely the autoerotic expression of heterosexual phallic impulses.

In the 'phallic phase' the boy's psychic orientation is predominantly narcissistic: hence the period in which his genital impulses are directed towards an object must be an earlier one. The possibility that they are not directed towards a female genital, of which he instinctively divines the existence, must certainly be considered. In dreams, both of earlier and later life, as well as in symptoms and particular modes of behaviour, we find, it is true, representations of coitus which are oral, anal, or sadistic without specific localization. But we cannot take this as a proof of the primacy of corresponding impulses, for we are uncertain whether, or how far, these phenomena already express a displacement from the genital goal proper. At bottom all that they amount to is to show that a given individual is influenced by specific oral, anal or sadistic trends. Their evidential value is the less because these representations are always associated with certain affects directed against women, so that we cannot tell whether they may not be essentially the product or the expression of these affects. For instance, the tendency to debase women may express itself in anal representations of the female genital, while oral representations may express anxiety.

But, besides all this, it is improbable that the existence of the 'undiscovered' can be concluded that everyone else has a phallic impulses surely by the opening in the female body lacks, for the one sex always is tary to it or of a nature. Freud's dictum that the sex on their own sexual connection that the boy, through phantasy a complementary infer from all the maternal masculine dread of the female.

It is not at all probable at the beginning of that period look behind the often very it. At puberty a boy's task incestuous attachment to dread of the whole female of all he turns his back on is fully awakened does it know that as a rule the *coitus dis*, conflicts belonging to the course they take is often er experiences. Moreover meet with it in the symbol unmistakably to the period.

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But, besides all this, there are various reasons why it seems to me improbable that the existence of a specific female opening should remain 'undiscovered'. On the one hand, of course, a boy will automatically conclude that everyone else is made like himself; but on the other hand his phallic impulses surely bid him instinctively to search for the appropriate opening in the female body—an opening, moreover, which he himself lacks, for the one sex always seeks in the other that which is complementary to it or of a nature different from its own. If we seriously accept Freud's dictum that the sexual theories formed by children are modelled on their own sexual constitution, it must surely mean in the present connection that the boy, urged on by his impulses to penetrate, pictures in phantasy a complementary female organ. And this is just what we should infer from all the material I quoted at the outset in connection with the masculine dread of the female genital.

It is not at all probable that this anxiety dates only from puberty. At the beginning of that period the anxiety manifests itself quite clearly, if we look behind the often very exiguous facade of boyish pride which conceals it. At puberty a boy's task is obviously not merely to free himself from his incestuous attachment to his mother, but, more generally, to master his dread of the whole female sex. His success is as a rule only gradual: first of all he turns his back on girls altogether, and only when his masculinity is fully awakened does it drive him over the threshold of anxiety. But we know that as a rule the conflicts of puberty do but revive, *mutatis mutandis*, conflicts belonging to the early ripening of infantile sexuality and that the course they take is often essentially a faithful copy of a series of earlier experiences. Moreover, the grotesque character of the anxiety, as we meet with it in the symbolism of dreams and literary productions, points unmistakably to the period of early infantile phantasy.

At puberty a normal boy has already acquired a conscious knowledge of the vagina, but what he fears in women is something uncanny, unfamiliar and mysterious. If the grown man continues to regard woman as the great mystery, in whom is a secret he cannot divine, this feeling of his can only relate ultimately to one thing in her: the mystery of motherhood. Everything else is merely the residue of his dread of this.

What is the origin of this anxiety? What are its characteristics? And what are the factors which cloud the boy's early relations with his mother?

In an article on female sexuality<sup>11</sup> Freud has pointed out the most obvious of these factors: it is the mother who first forbids instinctual activities, because it is she who tends the child in its babyhood. Secondly, the child evidently experiences sadistic impulses against its mother's body,<sup>12</sup> presumably connected with the rage evoked by her prohibitions, and accord-

ing to the talion principle this anger has left behind a residue of anxiety. Finally—and this is perhaps the principal point—the specific fate of the genital impulses itself constitutes another such factor. The anatomical differences between the sexes lead to a totally different situation in girls and in boys, and really to understand both their anxiety and the diversity of their anxiety we must take into account first of all *the children's real situation* in the period of their early sexuality. The girl's nature as biologically conditioned gives her the desire to receive, to take into herself;<sup>13</sup> she feels or knows that her genital is too small for her father's penis and this makes her react to her own genital wishes with direct anxiety: she dreads that if her wishes were fulfilled, she herself or her genital would be destroyed.<sup>14</sup>

The boy, on the other hand, feels or instinctively judges that his penis is much too small for his mother's genital and reacts with the dread of his own inadequacy, of being rejected and derided. Thus he experiences anxiety which is located in quite a different quarter from the girl's: his original dread of women is not castration-anxiety at all, but a reaction to the menace to his self-respect.<sup>15</sup>

In order that there may be no misunderstanding let me emphasize that I believe these processes to take place purely instinctively on a basis of organ sensations and the tensions of organic needs; in other words, I hold that these reactions would occur even if the girl had never seen her father's penis or the boy his mother's genital, and neither had any sort of intellectual knowledge of the existence of these genitalia.

Because of this reaction on the part of the boy, he is affected in another way and more severely by his frustration at the hands of his mother than is the girl by her experience with her father. A blow is struck at the libidinal impulses in either case. But the girl has a certain consolation in her frustration: she preserves her physical integrity; whereas the boy is hit in a second sensitive spot—his sense of genital inadequacy, which has presumably accompanied his libidinal desires from the beginning. If we assume that the most general reason for violent anger is the foiling of impulses which at the moment are of vital importance, it follows that the boy's frustration by his mother must arouse a twofold fury in him: first through the thrusting back of his libido upon itself and, secondly, through the wounding of his masculine self-regard. At the same time old resentment springing from pregenital frustrations is probably also made to flare up again. The result is that his phallic impulses to penetrate merge with his anger at frustration, and the impulses take on a sadistic tinge.

Here let me emphasize a point which is often insufficiently brought out in psycho-analytical literature, namely, that we have no reason to assume that these phallic impulses are naturally sadistic and that therefore it is inadmissible, in the absence of specific evidence in each case, to equate

'male' with 'sadistic', and the admixture of destructive genital must, according to anxiety. Thus, if it is first wounded self-regard, it will (anger) become an object of generally reinforced when.

Very often this latter attitude of man's attitude to women, a random from very different occurs regularly in all men not a *distinctive* characteristic of this sort strongly resembling with in women. When in a intensity, the subject is involved women has a markedly new

On the other hand I think respect leaves more or less general attitude to women in women's attitude to men words, it is no integral part

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According to my experience a typical ingredient in the a tality or the structure of hu stant reserve of the woman more clearly than they app opportunity to escape from calculated to evoke them of ic basis of this attitude is h concealed by a feminine or

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His typical reaction to which follows from it is ob concentrate it on himself and this process is doubly adva

is left behind a residue of anxiety. The focal point—the specific fate of the mother—such factor. The anatomical difference is a different situation in girls and boys. Their anxiety and the diversity of its origin. First of all *the children's real situation*. The girl's nature as biologically female, to take into herself;<sup>13</sup> she feels her father's penis and this makes her direct anxiety: she dreads that if her genital would be destroyed.<sup>14</sup> The boy instinctively judges that his penis is in danger and reacts with the dread of his being derided. Thus he experiences anxiety from the girl's: his original anxiety at all, but a reaction to the

Understanding let me emphasize that the girl is purely instinctively on a basis of organic needs; in other words, I hold that even if the girl had never seen her father's genital, and neither had any sort of knowledge of these genitalia.

Of the boy, he is affected in another way. At the hands of his mother and his father. A blow is struck at the girl's genital integrity; whereas the boy is hit by his genital inadequacy, which has pre-existed from the beginning. If we consider violent anger is the foiling of a vital importance, it follows that the girl arouses a twofold fury in him: first upon himself and, secondly, through his father. At the same time old resentments are probably also made to flare up. His impulses to penetrate merge with his own take on a sadistic tinge.

Which is often insufficiently brought to light, namely, that we have no reason to assume that the boy is naturally sadistic and that therefore the evidence in each case, to equate

'male' with 'sadistic', and on similar lines 'female' with 'masochistic'. If the admixture of destructive impulses is really considerable, the mother's genital must, according to the talion principle, become an object of direct anxiety. Thus, if it is first made distasteful to him by its association with wounded self-regard, it will by a secondary process (by way of frustration-anger) become an object of castration-anxiety. And probably this is very generally reinforced when the boy observes traces of menstruation.

Very often this latter anxiety in its turn leaves a lasting mark on the man's attitude to women, as we learn from the examples already given at random from very different periods and races. But I do not think that it occurs regularly in all men in any considerable degree, and certainly it is not a *distinctive* characteristic of the man's relation to the other sex. Anxiety of this sort strongly resembles, *mutatis mutandis*, anxiety which we meet with in women. When in analysis we find it occurring in any noteworthy intensity, the subject is invariably a man whose whole attitude towards women has a markedly neurotic twist.

On the other hand I think that the anxiety connected with his self-respect leaves more or less distinct traces in every man and gives to his general attitude to women a particular stamp which either does not exist in women's attitude to men or, if it does, is acquired secondarily. In other words, it is no integral part of their feminine nature.

We can only grasp the general significance of this male attitude if we study more closely the development of the boy's infantile anxiety, his efforts to overcome it and the ways in which it manifests itself.

According to my experience the dread of being rejected and derided is a typical ingredient in the analysis of every man, no matter what his mentality or the structure of his neurosis. The analytic situation and the constant reserve of the woman analyst bring out this anxiety and sensitiveness more clearly than they appear in ordinary life, which gives men plenty of opportunity to escape from these feelings either by avoiding situations calculated to evoke them or by a process of overcompensation. The specific basis of this attitude is hard to detect because in analysis it is generally concealed by a feminine orientation, for the most part unconscious.<sup>16</sup>

To judge by my own experience, this latter orientation is no less common, though (for reasons which I will give) less blatant, than the masculine attitude in women. I do not propose to discuss its various sources here; I will only say that I conjecture that the early wound to his self-regard is probably one of the factors liable to disgust the boy with his male role.

His typical reaction to that wound and to the dread of his mother which follows from it is obviously to withdraw his libido from her and to concentrate it on himself and his genital. From the economic point of view this process is doubly advantageous: it enables him to escape from the dis-

tressing or anxiety-fraught situation which has developed between himself and his mother, and it restores his masculine self-respect by reactively strengthening his phallic narcissism. The female genital no longer exists for him: the 'undiscovered' vagina is a denied vagina. This stage of his development is fully identical with Freud's 'phallic phase'.

Accordingly we must understand the enquiring attitude which dominates this phase and the specific nature of the boy's enquiries as expressing a retreat from the object and a narcissistically tinged anxiety which follows upon this.

His first reaction, then, is in the direction of a heightened phallic narcissism. The result is that to the *wish to be a woman*, which younger boys utter without embarrassment, he now reacts partly with renewed anxiety lest he should not be taken seriously and partly with castration-anxiety. Once we realize that masculine castration-anxiety is very largely the ego's response to the wish to be a woman, we shall not altogether share Freud's conviction that bisexuality manifests itself more clearly in the female than in the male.<sup>17</sup> We shall prefer to leave it an open question.

A feature of the phallic phase which Freud emphasizes shows up with special clearness the narcissistic scar left by the little boy's relation with his mother: 'He behaves as if he had a dim idea that this member might be and should be larger'.<sup>18</sup> We must amplify the observation by saying that this behaviour begins, indeed, in the 'phallic phase', but does not cease with it; on the contrary, it is displayed naively throughout boyhood and persists later as a deeply hidden anxiety about the size of the subject's penis or his potency, or else as a less concealed pride about them.

Now one of the exigencies of the biological differences between the sexes is this: that the man is actually obliged to go on proving his manhood to the woman. There is no analogous necessity for her: even if she is frigid, she can engage in sexual intercourse and conceive and bear a child. She performs her part by merely *being*, without any *doing*—a fact which has always filled men with admiration and resentment. The man on the other hand has to *do* something in order to fulfil himself. The ideal of 'efficiency' is a typical masculine ideal.

This is probably the fundamental reason why, when we analyse women who dread their masculine tendencies, we always find that they unconsciously regard ambition and achievement as attributes of the male, in spite of the great enlargement of women's sphere of activity in real life.

In sexual life itself we see how the simple craving of love which drives men to women is very often overshadowed by their overwhelming inner compulsion to prove their manhood again and again to themselves and others. A man of this type in its more extreme form has therefore one interest only: to conquer. His aim is to have 'possessed' many women, and the

most beautiful and mature of this narcissistic type are those men who, while they love a woman who takes their love for granted, are nevertheless grateful to her if she

Another way of adopting the attitude of the love-object.<sup>19</sup> If a man considers himself superior—may it be in accordance with the prostitute or the woman's demands in the sexual relationship to the superior.<sup>20</sup>

This brings us to a conclusion in its cultural context: the woman. I think that this attitude is based upon a deficiency rooted in the facts, as might be expected, obstinately maintained by creatures and, as such, the work of the masculine to satisfy such an attitude to really do correspond to the type of woman has a part of men. The importance, lesser calibre, from a amount of energy and the masculine principle of self-respect: of to choose a feminine and by so doing to e women.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> See Claude Daly's account (1927) 13:145-98.

<sup>2</sup> Hans Sachs explains the In this, I think, he is right since his explanation is, namely, the super-ego (G Verlag, 1924))

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most beautiful and most sought-after women. We find a remarkable mix-  
 ture of this narcissistic overcompensation and of surviving anxiety in  
 those men who, while wanting to make conquests, are very indignant with  
 a woman who takes their intentions too seriously, or who cherish a lifelong  
 gratitude to her if she spares them any further proof of their manhood.

Another way of averting the soreness of the narcissistic scar is by  
 adopting the attitude described by Freud as the propensity to debase the  
 love-object.<sup>19</sup> If a man does not desire any woman who is his equal or even  
 his superior—may it not be that he is protecting his threatened self-regard  
 in accordance with that most useful principle of 'sour grapes'? From the  
 prostitute or the woman of easy virtue one need fear no rejection, and no  
 demands in the sexual, ethical or intellectual sphere: one can feel oneself  
 the superior.<sup>20</sup>

This brings us to a third way, the most important and the most omi-  
 nous in its cultural consequences: that of diminishing the self-respect of  
 the woman. I think that I have shown that men's disparagement of women  
 is based upon a definite psychic trend towards disparaging them—a ten-  
 dency rooted in the man's psychic reactions to certain given biological  
 facts, as might be expected of a mental attitude so widespread and so  
 obstinately maintained. The view that women are infantile and emotional  
 creatures and, as such, incapable of responsibility and independence is the  
 work of the masculine tendency to lower their self-respect. When men jus-  
 tify such an attitude by pointing out that a very large number of women  
 really do correspond to this description, we must consider whether this  
 type of woman has not been cultivated by a systematic selection on the  
 part of men. The important point is not that individual minds of greater or  
 lesser calibre, from Aristotle to Moebius, have expended an astonishing  
 amount of energy and intellectual capacity in proving the superiority of  
 the masculine principle. What really counts is the fact that the ever-pre-  
 carious self-respect of the 'average man' causes him over and over again  
 to choose a feminine type which is infantile, non-maternal and hysterical,  
 and by so doing to expose each new generation to the influence of such  
 women.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> See Claude Daly's account in his article, 'Hindumythologie und Kastrationskomplex', *Imago* (1927)13:145-98.

<sup>2</sup> Hans Sachs explains the impulse to artistic creation as the search for companions in guilt. In this, I think, he is right, but he does not seem to me to go deeply enough into the question, since his explanation is one-sided and takes into account only part of the whole personality, namely, the super-ego. (*Gemeinsame Tagträume* [Vienna: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1924])

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Claude Daly, 'Der Menstruationscomplex', *Imago* (1928)14 and Winterstein: 'Die Pubertätsriten der Mädchen und ihre Spuren im Märchen', *Imago* (1928)14.

<sup>4</sup> Sigmund Freud (1918a), 'The Taboo of Virginity', SE 11:193-208.

<sup>5</sup> I well remember how surprised I was myself the first time I heard the above ideas asserted—by a man—in the shape of a universal proposition. The speaker was Groddeck, who obviously felt that he was stating something quite self-evident when he remarked in conversation: 'Of course men are afraid of women.' In his writings Groddeck has repeatedly emphasized this fear.

<sup>6</sup> Sigmund Freud (1927e), 'Fetishism', SE 21:149-57.

<sup>7</sup> The experiments were conducted by Frl. Dr. Hartung at a children's clinic in Dresden.

<sup>8</sup> Felix Boehm, 'Beiträge zur Psychologie der Homosexualität', *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, 11 (1925); Melanie Klein, 'Early Stages of the Oedipus Conflict', above, 'The Importance of Symbol-Formation in the Development of the Ego', in her *Love, Guilt and Reparation and Other Works* (New York: Macmillan, 1975), 219-32, and 'Infantile Anxiety Situations Reflected in a Work of Art and in the Creative Impulse', *Love, Guilt and Reparation* 210-8.

<sup>9</sup> Bergmann, *Muttergeist und Erkenntnisgeist*.

<sup>10</sup> Sigmund Freud (1923e), 'The Infantile Genital Organization', SE 19:141-5.

<sup>11</sup> Sigmund Freud (1931b), 'Female Sexuality', SE 21:281.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. the work of Melanie Klein, quoted above, to which I think insufficient attention has been paid.

<sup>13</sup> This is not to be equated with passivity.

<sup>14</sup> In another paper I will discuss the girl's situation more fully.

<sup>15</sup> I would refer here also to the points I raised in a paper entitled 'The Distrust between the Sexes' (1930). See Karen Horney, *Feminine Sexuality* (London: Routledge, 1967), 107-18.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Felix Boehm, 'The Femininity-Complex in Men', *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 11(1930):444-69.

<sup>17</sup> Sigmund Freud (1931b), 'Female Sexuality', SE 21:223-43.

<sup>18</sup> Sigmund Freud (1923e) 'The Infantile Genital Organization: an Interpolation into the Theory of Sexuality', SE 19:141-5.

<sup>19</sup> Sigmund Freud (1912d) 'On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love' SE 11:179-90.

<sup>20</sup> This does not detract from the importance of the other forces which drive men to prostitutes and which have been described by Sigmund Freud in his 'Contributions to the Psychology of Love', SE 11, and by Felix Boehm in his 'Beiträge zur Psychologie der Homosexualität', *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, 6(1920) and 8(1922).

## The Denial of the Vag

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In the present article, wh  
ming up Freud's early cu  
to the thesis of penis en  
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