

# Little Hans

## A Contemporary Overview

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*The case of Little Hans, an unprecedented experimental child analytic treatment, is re-examined in the light of newer theory and newly de-restricted documents. The understanding of the complex over-determination of Hans's phobia was not possible in the heroic age of psychoanalysis. Distance and de-idealization of the pioneer past have potentiated current reformulation of the case. Trauma, child abuse, parental strife, and the pre-oedipal mother-child relationship now emerge as important issues. With limited, yet remarkable help, Little Hans nevertheless had the ego strength and resilience to resume progressive development and to forge a successful creative career. The new knowledge about Little Hans, his family, culture and child development provides new perspectives and raises new questions and challenges to the century-old pioneer report and formulations confirming and largely limited to the child's positive Oedipus complex.*

### INTRODUCTION

LITTLE HANS'S PHOBIA CAN NOW BE ELABORATED AND REFORMULATED in the light of contemporary psychoanalytic thought. The newly de-restricted interviews of Max Graf (1952) and of Herbert Graf (1959) contribute to the new data and inferences, which add to, ex-

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tend, and modify the original case report and raise questions about the initial conclusions. Little Hans was written before many of Freud's major theoretical advances, for example, anxiety in response to danger, dual drives, structural theory, and non-defense ego functions. Counter-transferences to parent and to child were not yet appreciated during the treatment of Little Hans, January through April 1908. Contemporary theory and a longitudinal life perspective over the many years after the case report (1909) have afforded opportunities to update understanding beyond what was then possible. In particular, the relationship of Little Hans's mother with her husband and children began to emerge as a significant influence on her son's development and phobic disorder. In the light of new information her influence is seen as even more central to our understanding of Little Hans. The present reconsideration illustrates the value of historical reconstruction in the ongoing development of psychoanalytic theory. With all of its pioneering limitations, Little Hans then becomes psychoanalytic theory in progress rather than only of historical interest, a relic of a bygone era. Fascinating to generations of psychoanalysts, this reconsideration of Little Hans is particularly appropriate for the 150th anniversary of Freud's birth (1856–2006).

Freud's case history of Little Hans marked the inception of child psychoanalysis. Though child analysis was not then recognized, Freud later referred to "this first analysis of a child" (1909, p. 148). Psychoanalysis was then in its own childhood and psychoanalytic studies of infant and child development were just being contemplated. Freud's Wednesday night study group had been initiated in 1902, and Freud had asked his first students and adherents to observe their own children and to take notes about their development. Max Graf, one of the earliest members of the group, followed Freud's advice and with his notes provided the data for Freud's case history of his son's treatment. Freud assisted the father and in effect supplied the analytic principles, knowledge, direction and "supervision" that allowed the treatment to progress to a successful conclusion. The brief treatment, essentially from January through April 1908, was thus the first application of psychoanalysis to the understanding and treatment of a young child, the first supervised psychoanalysis (Glenn, 1980), a first form of analytic family therapy and child guidance.

Freud's reconstructions about the childhood origins of adult neurosis were now validated in a paradigmatic case report of "Little Hans." Freud could not be charged with suggesting, selecting, or fabricating the data since the clinical material was almost entirely pro-

vided by the five-year-old boy's father. This was important in the circumstances where Freud was treated with derision in academia and the media. Despite possibly distressing self-revelation, and anticipated public opprobrium, Max Graf gave his consent to Freud to publish the case.

#### BACKGROUND

Before Little Hans, Freud had relied on reconstruction from adult cases for his formulations of the infantile neurosis and childhood sexual conflict and trauma. Here was complementary data and verification of psychoanalytic findings directly from a child. "Surely there must be a possibility of observing in children at first hand and in all the freshness of life the sexual impulses and wishes which we dig out so laboriously in adults." (Freud, 1909, p. 6). Freud noted that the parents of Little Hans had been among his closest adherents, and he had received regular reports from them about their son. Freud had met Little Hans only once during the treatment and relied entirely upon the father to conduct the analytic work. He revealed that Olga, the mother of Little Hans, had been his patient for an indeterminate length of time. We learn from the Eissler interview of Max Graf in 1952, that two of Olga's brothers shot themselves to death, and one talented sister attempted suicide before the marriage. This information now confirms D. Abrams' (2005) identification of Olga as "the nineteen year old girl with almost pure obsessional ideas" whom Freud wrote that he took into treatment in the summer of 1897. Freud reported to Fliess, July 7, 1897, that her father died "before the child was 11 months old, but two brothers, one of them three years older than the patient, shot themselves." Her father's death and her brothers' suicides could well have traumatized Olga and her entire family. The youngest of five children, suicide and repeated object loss was a dark cloud in the life of "Little Hans's" mother, with possible biogenetic as well as traumatic determinants. Freud, therefore, had knowledge of the mother's personality and the disorder for which she sought his help, even before the birth of "Little Hans," on April 10, 1903. Analytic comments on Little Hans's earlier life had been published by Freud in his paper, "The Sexual Enlightenment of Children" (1907), in which the patient is referred to by his later English name of "Little Herbert." Little Hans is also briefly mentioned by Freud in "On the Sexual Theories of Children" (1908). These two papers were followed by the long 142-page report and discussion of "Little Hans." Later, Freud referred to the phobia of Little Hans in

his comments “On Animal Phobias in Totem and Taboo” (1913) and his discussions of anxiety after the introduction of the structural theory (1926). Freud thought that only a parent’s special knowledge of his own childhood would make it possible to correctly interpret the child’s remarks. Freud stated, “it was only because the authority of a father and a physician were united in a single person, and because in him both affectionate care and scientific interest were combined, that it was possible in this one instance to apply the method” (1909, p. 5). Retrospectively, we might attribute these remarks to the naiveté and then limited experience of the founder of psychoanalysis, except that in another decade, he would undertake the analysis of his own daughter. In the subsequent development of psychoanalysis, a deeper understanding of the interplay between transference and counter-transference and the real relationship between analyst and patient gradually evolved.

The analysis of Little Hans occurred in its own time, place, and culture. When Max Graf met his future wife, Olga Honig, circa 1897, he learned from her that she was in psychoanalytic treatment with Sigmund Freud. He was intrigued with her regular descriptions of her treatment sessions, which led him to personally meet Freud. (Max would later repeat the pattern and regularly report to Freud about his own treatment experience with Little Hans.) Max married Olga in 1898 and Freud became a friend of the couple, who were both violinists with shared musical interests. He went to dinner many times at their apartment and was personally acquainted with Little Hans from the time he was born. Freud would then see Olga in treatment as well as at home with Max. He saw Max also at the Wednesday Night Society meetings and for some individual chats. Moreover, Max had become an admired, popular music critic, evoking Olga’s envy. Actually, Freud’s remarkable pioneering essay (1905), “Psychopathic Characters on the Stage” foreshadowed Max’s applied psychoanalytic interpretation of music and Little Hans’s career as a stage director. Freud analyzed the relationship between forms of art, especially drama, and their effect on the audience. This paper was never published during Freud’s lifetime but was given by Freud to Max Graf. Max Graf then arranged for its publication in English in 1942. Freud then clearly had a high regard for Max Graf, and in 1909 suggested that Max work analytically on Mozart’s relationship with Don Juan.

When Max, like Dora, considered not bringing up his child as Jewish in an anti-Semitic milieu, Freud advised against conversion, emphasizing the value of a Jewish identity and not being intimidated. In a far reaching footnote pertinent to Little Hans’s castration anxiety,

Freud first connected circumcision to social anti-semitism. Freud (1909, p. 36) averred, "The castration complex is the deepest source of anti-semitism; . . . little boys hear that a Jew has something cut off his penis . . . and this gives them a right to despise Jews." In an uncanny foretoken of the boy's analysis, Freud bought a rocking horse as a gift for the third birthday of Little Hans (or possibly for a later birthday, according to the inconsistent memory of Max Graf).

#### MARRIAGE

There were problems in the parents' marriage to begin with, only hinted at in the case report, yet clearly stated in the Eissler interviews of Max and Herbert Graf. Freud stated that the parents would use no more coercion than necessary in their parenting. Freud, however, did not comment about the fractious marriage or the disturbed, unstable, dysfunctional personality of Olga Graf, the mother of Little Hans. Rather, Freud (p. 36) remarked, "We must say a word or two on behalf of Hans' excellent and devoted mother." What was Freud thinking when a statement about her parenting required much more depth? Freud was preserving the confidentiality of his patient, but the case report is indicative of unrecognized transference-countertransference complications involving the parents and Little Hans. As in all of Freud's case histories, the mother was in relative eclipse compared to the role of the father. In addition, the written data was entirely from the father with his own agenda, although Freud had other information from the mother. Currently, her very significant influence is apparent, in contrast to her minimal importance in the interpretations of the 1909 paper. The possible effect of the maternal black thread of depression and regression is overshadowed in the oedipal framework of Freud's formulations. In the interview of Little Hans in 1958, Herbert Graf confirms that his mother was always very nervous. This comment is a son's understatement of his mother's fragility and instability. Little Hans was exposed to threats of abandonment and rejection by his mother and to her actual rejection of his sister. In the case report, Little Hans heard his sister Hanna's screams as she was beaten by their mother. When Hans later states that he would like to whip horses, his father asked if he would like to do it as Mummy beats Hanna. Hans denied that the horses would be harmed, but when his father asked which person he really wanted to beat, Hans responded that he wanted to hit his mother. His father was transiently attuned to his son's aggression toward his mother, but mainly kept to Freud's and his own interpretation of the oedipal

son's rivalry and aggression toward the father. The rejection, neglect, and beating of her six-month-old infant daughter may well constitute unacknowledged child abuse. It was simultaneously emotional abuse of Little Hans. The implied maternal abuse and neglect of Hanna were not addressed by Max Graf nor by Freud. Freud's silence about Olga Graf's probable traumatic child abuse of Hanna, and seductive, intrusive over-stimulation of Little Hans is all the more remarkable in view of his previous emphasis on the pathogenic importance of "seduction trauma." Seduction trauma had been renounced as the exclusive basis of later psychopathology, but the importance of psychic trauma had been retained. While avoiding published criticism of his former patient, Olga Graf, Freud seems to have had an overriding interest at that time in establishing oedipal conflict as central to the etiology of neurosis. Anticipating later theory, Little Hans's experience of maternal seduction could be conceptualized as a phase specific oedipal trauma. Witnessing the abuse of his sister would likely have intensified the guilt of Little Hans's own hostile sibling rivalry. His own wishes to eliminate his sister were shared with his mother, and her abusive behavior would have exacerbated his father's conflicts with his mother. We do not have information about the pregnancy, delivery, or the pre-oedipal development of "Little Hans," but the developmental data suggest problems in both attachment and separation individuation. His mother was very likely distressed during her pregnancy with Hanna. Max Graf later reported that his wife had been upset after intercourse during the pregnancy. Her rejection of Hanna immediately after birth is compatible with an agitated post-partum depression, continuing pre-partum disturbance. In the interview, Max Graf described his wife as shy, not feeling well, and socially avoidant; she could not get along with anyone. She would tear up the professional manuscripts of her husband, an eminent musicologist, further indicating tantrums and jealous rage reactions. Given her own musical talents, her being socially disadvantaged as a woman and Jewish could well have intensified her envy of males.

Because of Little Hans's habitual masturbation, his mother directly threatened castration, warning that she would have the doctor cut his off his "widdler." His father also reinforced castration anxiety by indicating that Little Hans would not overcome his phobia unless he stopped masturbating, conveying that masturbation was indeed a bad, injurious activity which was forbidden. The view of masturbation as a noxious activity, a damaging "bad habit" was shared by Freud, his early adherents including Max Graf, and the medical profession. Prohibition and punishment for masturbation was then prevalent in the



child rearing practices of the wider culture. His father's disapproval of Little Hans's being in bed with his mother intensified his unconscious fear of castration. The mother of Little Hans would not only threaten him repeatedly with separation (and his little sister as well) but would also cuddle him in bed when he was upset about separation. Thus, Little Hans was threatened with both maternal seduction and desertion. His mother allowed him into the bathroom when she toileted and bathed with him, and told him she had a widdler. Significantly, two years before his phobic symptoms, Little Hans had asked his mother if she too had a widdler (p. 7). Her equivocal comments and exhibitionistic exposure were critical factors in his confusion and denial of reality, his assumption that she had a "widdler" like a horse." He asked his mother to touch his penis, and, exhibitionistic like his mother, he wanted little Berta and Olga to watch him urinate (p. 19). (Olga was also his mother's name.) Little Hans had fantasies of a phallic woman, both reassuring against castration, and overtly threatening castration. Hans later fantasied that his sister's widdler would be the same as his, but bigger. The apparent mis-information conveyed by his mother was compounded by his father's lack of clarity in response to his son's questions. His father explained that men and women had different "widdlers" (p. 62). However, if widdler is better translated here as wee-wee maker, then his mother may have correctly meant that she too had a urinary apparatus. In Freud's phallogocentric model of child development, females were defined by their lack of a penis, without indication of their own genital and urinary organs (Rudnytsky, 1994). Little Hans thoughtfully asked, "But how do little girls widdle, if they have no widdlers?" (p. 31). Certainly, enlightenment about sex was expected to be an important part of treatment, particularly about the anatomical difference between the sexes and the origin of babies. Little Hans was exposed to the pregnancy, delivery, and the pain and blood associated with the birth of his sister, which must have been a shock trauma for the three-and-a-half-year-old boy with persisting strain. In addition, he may well have been exposed to the primal scene since he was in the parental bedroom for almost the first four years of his life. Indeed, there is evidence that cumulative traumatic experience was a major determinant of Little Hans's phobic disorder. The tonsillectomy preceded by the mother's castration threat and an attack of influenza (which may have precipitated a pharyngo-tonsillitis), combined with a presumed lack of preparation for the surgical procedure, contributed to Hans's separation and castration anxiety. With the emphasis on the act of masturbation at that time, the significance of masturbation fantasies

and the associated anxiety and guilt were scarcely appreciated. Freud (1909, p. 28) concurred with Little Hans's parents that it was not right for him to be preoccupied with widdlers, even his own.

Although there were symptomatic phenomena prior to the appearance of the phobia of horses in January 1908, Little Hans's tonsillectomy resulted in increased distress (Slap, 1961). Marital strife, culminating in a divorce when Little Hans was a teenager, took its own toll on the early development of Little Hans. The parents of Little Hans did not agree about having children, rearing children, parental controls, roles, and responsibilities. When interviewed in 1952 Max denied the significance of his wife being socially avoidant and readily provoked in relation to the phobia of "Little Hans," Little Hans could well have been identified with his relatively reclusive mother. However, his mother did take him to the park and she did shopping and bicycling trips (pp. 56–57). Horses and horse drawn carriages were prevalent on the city streets and in the countryside and Little Hans's avoidance of horses of course kept him inside close to his mother, staying inside with her in the apartment. He lacked playmates, but that hardly explains his sitting for hours on the apartment balcony to observe and admire a seven- to eight-year-old girl below (p. 15). Did his mother leave him there, similar to a modern child neglectfully left watching television? Was his mother unable to engage him in play and conversation? The lonely voyeuristic behavior of Little Hans suggests inner conflicts between attachment and separation, between dependency and independence. Object constancy would have to be consolidated before Hans could firmly confront the challenges of the oedipal phase. The seductive, intrusive, and abandonment threats of Little Hans's mother were recognized by Fromm (1968) and Garrison (1978). Bowlby (1973) stressed Little Hans's separation anxiety and problematic attachment, further elaborated by Ornstein (1993) in the context of pathogenic parental influence. His ambitious, busy father appears to have been generally fond of his son, but often absent, especially during the summer prior to the outbreak of Hans's phobia. His father had little awareness of his own conflicts or of the impact of his wife's disturbance on the family. The Eissler interviews and the case report suggest that Max Graf was limited in his capacity to buffer and protect his children from their mother's dysfunctional behavior. The intense incestuous attachment and guilt of Little Hans suggested an oedipal victory since he joined his mother in bed while eliminating his father from the scene.

His father took Hans to visit his own parents without his wife because of strife between his wife and his parents. Perhaps it was hoped



that the employment of a Nanny for a time during Hans's second year would alleviate his mother's emotional instability. Max Graf seemed unaware of the effect on his son of the sudden departure of the Nanny to whom Little Hans was affectionately attached. Freud had noted the difficulty of delineating the precise content of a phobia, and was himself anxious at travel departure. It is of interest that just as the treatment of Little Hans was about to begin, Freud had declined the first invitation to travel to Clark University in Massachusetts for an honorary degree and lectures.

On March 30, 1908, Freud saw Little Hans for the only time during his treatment. On the way to meet Freud, Hans had bumped his father and then his father slapped him. This is strongly suggestive of the reciprocal oedipal conflict of the father, as he approached the idealized father, Sigmund Freud. His son and wife competed with Max for Freud's therapeutic interest and affection. At the same time Max was aware of his wife's emotional lability, and tried to shield his son by opposing his wife's seductive, exhibitionistic behavior.

Identifying with his father, Hans also had idealized Freud. After leaving his meeting with Freud, Little Hans asked, "Does the professor talk to God?" Did Little Hans think that Freud, or his father, could read his mind? His idealization of the two fathers, his own and Freud, probably helped in the educational aspects of his treatment. Freud and Max Graf believed that enlightened education would not only be therapeutic but possibly prophylactic. Freud hoped that treatment of a constricting neurotic symptom in childhood would favor progressive development and possibly prevent more serious neurotic disturbance in later life. In a discussion of the case one year after termination, May 1909, in a discussion of sexual enlightenment, Freud paradoxically proposed that parents might not be best suited for such education of the child. He thought that children should have sex education in school. At that time, referring to the conditions in Little Hans's home, Freud (1967, p. 235) wrote, "not *that* many mistakes were made, and those that did occur did not have *that* much to do with the neurosis. The boy should only have been refused permission to accompany his mother to the toilet. For the rest, neurosis is essentially a matter of constitution." Max Graf was present during this Wednesday night group discourse. Anonymity, confidentiality, neutrality, and counter-transference were not then considered. Graf's (1909, p. 235) comments were reported, "about the case of [Little] Hans, that it is a progressive process of curiosity in the boy. Referring to Freud's remarks that [Hans's] enlightenment was not carried through without anything being left over, Graf says that the

boy should have been told the last fact too, with a certain degree of clarity. The child now feels that several pieces are missing and asks his father more and more for explanations of natural events. In the course of time this will accumulate and demand an answer. In matters of sexuality, he has detached himself from his parents. . . . Hans' illness developed, in Graf's opinion, on the basis of his strong sexual predisposition (*Anlage*), which awoke a premature need for love; this in turn became too strongly linked with his parents." His own role as father and therapist of Little Hans and that of Freud as supervisor and teacher permeated the affective atmosphere of the exchange.

Little Hans did become productive and creative in his chosen musical career. The stage manager of the Metropolitan Opera for many years, he held similar important positions in the operas of San Francisco, Salzburg, Geneva, Zurich, Prague, and others. His Godfather had been Gustav Mahler, and "Little Hans," Herbert Graf, was a friend of many of the great opera conductors and singers of his era. For a time Herbert and Max were together in Tanglewood in Massachusetts during Max's stay in America, safe from the Nazi terror.

Herbert's career was deeply influenced, though not overshadowed by the eminence Max had achieved as a musicologist, author, critic, and journalist. But his first marriage was deeply troubled as his parents' marriage had been. We know little of Hans's adolescence when his parents divorced, undoubtedly a very turbulent period in his life. There is confusion about the date of the actual divorce, but there may well have been a separation before the formal divorce. The strains were likely present early, even before the marriage, when Max vacillated and Freud encouraged him to marry Olga. Freud was repeatedly consulted about their having children, indicating their concerns about parenthood, especially on the part of Olga after Little Hans was born. If Freud advised in favor of the Graf's having another child or failed to recognize how internally conflicted Olga was about motherhood, whether he was neutral or took any position at all, may have been a factor in their subsequent ambivalent attitudes toward Freud. Olga appears to have remained disturbed and resentful regarding her marriage and expanded motherhood.

Very disappointed and dissatisfied with the results of her treatment, Olga distanced herself from Freud and befriended Alfred Adler. Max, too, was supportive of Alfred Adler and left Freud's group with Adler in 1911. Widowed after his second marriage, Max again remarried. Max's father had not gotten along with his own father, and this may have been a determinant of Max's proposal to write a play about oedipal conflict after his father died (possibly be-

fore the outbreak of his son's phobia). When Freud saw Herbert after his parents' divorce, the adolescent conflicts were hidden behind a friendly, curious, and thoughtful Herbert. Herbert Graf was hurt and disappointed by the parental quarrels and divorce. Regularly visiting his mother, there were periods when he was quite detached from his father. However, his endowment and identification with his father were always evident in the great musical and synthetic gifts utilized in his prolific opera productions. He was fond of including animals in some of his productions, not excluding horses on stage.

The influence of Freud and Max on each other did not simply dissipate and disappear. Max had preserved Freud's paper on drama and later published it. In 1911 Freud had kept and published the paper of Max's on an analysis of Wagner's "Flying Dutchman" opera. Retaining admiration and respect for his genius, Max also wrote an appreciation of Freud for Freud's 70th birthday in 1926. It is of interest that the year before, Herbert wrote "The Psychological Roots of the Art of the Theater" for his doctoral thesis. Herbert, no less than Max, appears to have been influenced by his treatment, by later reading about his treatment, and perhaps by reading additional Freud papers.

Max's conflicts with his own father were evident in relation to his son just after the end of World War II in 1946. Max was still in America as was his son Herbert, who had the foresight to immigrate to the United States in 1934. Uneasy with their Jewish identity, neither Max nor Herbert was vocal about the danger of Nazism. As a corresponding music critic, Max sent reports to the Vienna media that were critical of the Metropolitan Opera management and artistic performance. Since his son Herbert was stage manager of the Metropolitan Opera, the incisive criticism clearly included his son. Hurt and embarrassed at the time, Herbert Graf defended himself with the classic comment, "my father is responsible for me, but I am not responsible for my father."

Beyond the formulations in Freud's case of Little Hans, largely centered on the positive Oedipus complex, contemporary understanding would also include the negative oedipal constellation, pre-oedipal antecedents, and narcissism, which had not yet been conceptualized. The treatment of Little Hans occurred at the dawn of organized psychoanalysis. Freud's Wednesday Night Society eventually became the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. The year after the publication of the case of "Little Hans," Freud, with the help of Ferenczi and Jung, founded the International Psychoanalytical Association. The case belongs to the heroic period of psychoanalysis, when

all of Freud's adherents were novices, who interpreted each other's dreams, slips, associations, and fantasies. This spontaneous mode of analysis lacked anonymity, confidentiality, and a therapeutic alliance. Little Hans could be discussed by his father's colleagues and friends, sometimes in his father's presence. The pioneers attempted to analyze themselves, and sometimes their own children, and their own spouses. Max Graf is reported to have transiently engaged in self-analysis by associating to internalized melodies. Carl Jung initially supported Freud's findings in the analysis of Little Hans in a clinical report, which was actually an analysis of his own child. Jung's daughter also became symptomatic after the birth of a sibling rival.

The early relatively small contingent of psychoanalysts was actually an avant-garde movement. Dazzled by the insights that psychoanalysis offered, they were eager to promulgate analytic ideas and to win new Freudian followers in the service of the psychoanalytic "cause." Analytic practice could be an exciting adventure with a daring, experimental character. Intra-psychic boundaries, intra-familial boundaries, clinical boundaries, and the psychoanalytic framework were in statu nascendi, unformulated or barely delineated. Many patients identified with their analysts and psychoanalysis and became analytic therapists. Some analytic couples were formerly, or even simultaneously analyst and patient without formal recognition at the time of analytic or ethical contra-indication. Though Max Graf was an important pioneer of applied psychoanalysis, he never analyzed anyone before or after his own son. Thus his son's treatment was his sole clinical endeavor and accomplishment. After leaving Freud's Wednesday evening analytic group, Max Graf remained ambivalent to psychoanalysis and no longer wrote about applications of psychoanalysis to the arts. Max Graf later wrote (1942) that psychoanalysis was organized like a religious orthodoxy, alternately criticizing and praising Freud. The ambivalence is reminiscent of the behavior of Little Hans who could pinch his father and then kiss the point of impact on his father.

Though the treatment of Little Hans by his father with Freud's supervision was clearly limited and soon outdated, it was remarkably innovative and therapeutically effective. Even in contemporary clinical child analysis, extra analytic contact between parent and analyst is essentially unavoidable and in many respects desirable. Provided that the focus is on the child's problems and for the benefit of the child, the parent may be the source of important data. The parent may supply vital information concerning endowment, development, and traumatic experience. Through contact with the parent the analyst

may infer how the parent may participate or collude in the child's difficulties. Relevant to Little Hans, what is enacted at home may not appear in the transference, especially since the child's defenses and gratifications are shared with the original objects. Further, Little Hans was exposed to parental discord, parental nudity, primal scene, pregnancy, and aspects of childbirth. He was witness to the traumatic abuse and neglect of his infant sister by his mother. Hans had trouble with toilet training, which was stormy from the very first (p. 55). His anal pre-occupation and anal birth fantasies were fortified by his mother giving him enemas and laxatives, although possible constipation was not elaborated. His father did not enlighten Little Hans about pregnancy or childbirth, and told him that his baby sister was born like a lumpf, that is, a fecal object. His mother wanted to eliminate her upon birth, if not in utero. (His sister Hanna's suicide as an adult can be interpreted as an acting out of the internalized maternal abuse and rejection. The early death of Olga's father and the suicides of her brothers were likely determinants of her own conflicts over separation and traumatic loss.) The case of Little Hans's sister illuminates what could not likely have been reconstructed in the adult analysis of a suicidal patient—the maternal rejection and aggression toward the patient from birth.

Currently, parents would be questioned about the child-rearing practices depicted in the case report, for example, permitting the child in the parental bathroom or bedroom, the enemas, and the indications of child abuse. The traumatic potential of surgery such as "Little Hans's" tonsillectomy would be discussed. Parents could be helped to prepare the child for surgery and to assist the child's psychological recovery from surgery. Hans's play with the rubber doll in which he pushed a knife through the doll (p. 84) between her legs, probably referred to his tonsillectomy, and his retaliatory rage at his parents for their castrating, punitive threats. Overdetermined, the assault on the doll also represented an attempt at mastery through play of his castration, impregnation, and birth anxieties.

Little Hans apparently had fantasies of being impregnated by a domineering phallic mother, as well as by his father. This presumably intensified his feminine fantasies of bearing and caring for children. The negative Oedipus complex had not yet been formulated, so the case stresses the positive Oedipus complex. Complementary constructions regarding Hans's bisexuality are found in the case report, and in the later literature on the case (Silverman, 1980). His father was a vital object of love and identification, providing a far more benevolent, alternate relationship to that of his mother. During the



treatment, Max Graf benefited from the relationship with Freud, a benefit transmitted to his son.

For Freud and Max Graf, the biting horse was almost always the feared father, the falling horse was the dying, killed father. Little Hans was afraid to touch a horse because it might bite his hand, but his father interjected that he meant “widdler” rather than horse. Hans objected that a “widdler” doesn’t bite, but the father responded, “Perhaps it does, though” (Freud, 1909, p. 30). The interpretation that the horse-cart and coal cart (the “stork cart”) were the pregnant mother was not entirely overlooked. Freud inferred that the loaded carts or stork carts and Hans’s anxiety about defecation were related to his mother’s past pregnancy; the fallen horse also referred to birth. The horse making a row and the horse threatening to ride away would now also be interpreted as the angry mother who threatened abandonment, the quarrels between the parents, and his mother’s beating of his sister. The horse was also Little Hans himself who made a row and stamped his feet during toilet training. Hans used the giraffe, a reference to the family name, as a substitute horse, which was again regarded as a father figure. However, as Max departed, he said to Olga on at least one occasion, “Goodbye, big giraffe” (Freud, 1909, p. 40). The giraffe then also represented mother and the crumpled giraffe, Hans’s rejected sister. When Hans proposed his own active separation and non-incestuous erotic choice of sleeping downstairs with his little girl friend, his mother inveighed, “If you really want to go away from Daddy and Mummy, then take your coat and knickers and good-by” (p. 7). Her response was seemingly jealous and possessive, as well as determined by her own narcissistic needs. She could be punitive and vindictive, rather than empathically sensitive to her son’s needs and interests. Her reaction resembles her apparent jealousy of her husband’s writing instead of his attending to her. For Little Hans, her narcissism, seduction, and instability would have impeded separation-individuation and added to fear of his own hostile impulses. Her aggression provoked Hans’s conscious and unconscious rage as well as regression (Frankiel, 1992). Hans was over-controlled and over-stimulated, with induced loss of control of bodily functions through enemas given over an indeterminate period of his childhood. Hans had also abruptly lost a Nanny to whom he was attached for an indeterminate time. His mother could not be described as calm, cheerful, and tolerant, a mother who was oriented to the developmental challenges of her children.

Freud actually supplemented and concluded the May 1909 discus-

sion in his Wednesday night group with a very different emphasis from the incestuous conflicts of Little Hans. He then asserted the pathogenic importance of the child's unconscious aggression toward the mother in the phobia. Freud's overlooked addendum has emerged as a critically important dimension of the case. The hostile aggression of Little Hans may now be regarded as exacerbated by the reciprocal aggression of his mother toward her children as well as her husband and herself. Little Hans was fond of his parents, but because of his mother's ambivalent threats of desertion he was anxious that if his father left he would not return. Father and Little Hans played horse and little Hans's play and playfulness with selected associations were interpreted in a restricted, conflicted paternal sphere. His father could direct the child's attention and supplied verbal expression. From a contemporary viewpoint, Hans's fear of his father was partly a displacement from his fear of his mother's aggression, and his aggression toward his mother.

Awareness of pre-oedipal problems of attachment and separation-individuation enrich the reconstruction of pathogenic determinants as well as sources of resilience. Bowlby (1973) postulated that Little Hans was anxiously attached; this remains a significant open question, not suggested by the available data of his adult life. Herbert Graf was able to travel internationally and frequently to opera houses and concerts. However, the current designation of insecure attachment would apply to Little Hans's sister. Impaired attachment would be entirely consistent with the severely disturbed relationship of his mother and sister, culminating in his sister's later suicide.

#### OUTCOME

Little Hans became involved in the treatment effort with growing curiosity, increasing grasp of cause and effect, and integrative capacity. When his father admonished him for expressing death wishes toward his baby sister, Hans replied that he could think it. Unlike his father, he made the crucial distinction between thought and act. He used his preoccupation with "wee-wee machers" to differentiate animate from inanimate, since he deduced that only the living urinated. He sensed parental evasion and hypocrisy when he was misinformed. His powers of observation, cognition, reality testing, and affect expression progressed during the treatment, despite the phobia. When Little Hans arrived at this imaginative solution to his incest conflicts by proposing that he and his father each marry their own mother, he was not afraid of paternal prohibition and punishment. In his second

plumber fantasy, the plumber had finally given him the phallic equipment symbolic of being prepared for mature attainment of his adult life goals. Hans appeared to be on track for progressive development without phobic interference (A. Freud, 1980). Freud and his father supported the little boy's desire to understand and be understood. There was an unarticulated therapeutic alliance of patient, parent, and analyst-supervisor. Hans had joined his father in dictating the near verbatim notes sent weekly to Freud. Alongside interpretation and education, the inter-relationship of Freud, Max Graf, and Little Hans importantly contributed to the treatment progress. His father, Max, was a very important love object with whom Hans was strongly identified; his father provided a crucial alternate relationship to that of his mother. Considering the historical context, the brief treatment, and the parent/therapist's lack of any formal psychoanalytic education, the case was an inevitably flawed, yet most impressive pioneering proto-analytic experience. Little Hans remained free of phobia and led an extraordinarily productive and innovative professional life.

Would Little Hans have become Herbert Graf, a prodigy of opera production in his early twenties and later stage manager of major opera houses throughout the world, without his treatment? The very fact that it is a treatment case report, first analysis of a childhood phobia, and a prototype of child analysis, appropriately focuses on pathogenesis, as well as emerging psychoanalytic theory and technique. Though ambivalent, his mother had a sustained affection for her son, and she wrote to Freud of her joy at her son's recovery. But an overview of the case must also encompass the resourcefulness and resilience of Little Hans and the bold therapeutic innovation of "Little Hans's" father, and Professor Freud. Both Max and Herbert Graf made valuable contributions to musicology, to music and song, and to the music and words of analytic therapy integrated by Freud. Studied by successive students of psychoanalysts, the newly enlarged picture of Little Hans in the context of his family, his work, his culture and new theoretical perspectives, builds on prior formulations and inspires further psychoanalytic inquiry. Little Hans will remain on stage in the science and art of psychoanalysis.

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