

2014

The desire to informally mentor : creative growth within the third space

Emily K. Porter

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.smith.edu/theses>

 Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Porter, Emily K., "The desire to informally mentor : creative growth within the third space" (2014). *Theses, Dissertations, and Projects*. 767.

<https://scholarworks.smith.edu/theses/767>

This Masters Thesis has been accepted for inclusion in Theses, Dissertations, and Projects by an authorized administrator of Smith ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@smith.edu.

Emily K. Porter
The Desire to Informally
Mentor: Creative Growth
Within the Third Space

ABSTRACT

This theoretical thesis endeavors to explore the unconscious benefits accrued by the mentor in informal mentoring relationships. It focuses on a significant gap in the theoretical and empirical literature by identifying and describing the potential benefit for the mentor beyond Erikson's (1950) notion of generativity within his framework of psychosocial development. This thesis employs both Drive Theory and Object Relations Theories in order to conceptualize a more dynamic understanding of why the mentor might invest energy and time as a participant in an informal mentoring relationship. Both Drive and Object Relations Theories are used to explore the hypothesized three-part relationship trajectory. The study identifies the potential for the most robust creative growth in the second stage of the mentoring relationship. I posit that it is within this stage that the mentor has the potential to gain deeper self-knowledge and self-expression as a result of the creative play that characterizes this portion of the trajectory. This theoretical framework is then applied to a case study of correspondences between a student and his teacher over the course of 30 years in the memoir *The Calculus of Friendship* by Steve Strogatz.

This analysis is premised on a belief that adult development is a dynamic process and is often intersubjective in nature. It recognizes the importance of understanding complexity within the Third Space of relationships as an essential part of understanding the deeper and unconscious meaning behind adult relationships. Echoing Winnicott's notion of the caregiver/infant dyad and coupled with Freud's conceptualization of unconscious drive, the thesis suggests that in order to

understand the proven empirical benefits of mentoring for the protégé, both individuals within the dyad—together with the Third Space they co-create—must be understood in a more nuanced manner than that which is currently articulated within the literature. Moreover, this thesis endeavors to honor a core ethical principle of the profession of social work: to value human relationships.

The Desire to Informally Mentor:
Creative Growth Within the Third Space

A project based upon an independent investigation,
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Social Work.

Emily K. Porter

Smith College School for Social Work
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063

2014

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“In our human need to create and re-create a sense purpose and hope, a certain beauty, nobility, a depth arises. Arises not only despite life’s transience (inevitable loss) but, precisely, because of it.”

- Malcom Slavin (2013, p. 297)

This thesis came about because of the mentors that I have had in my own life, though few have held that official title. When I look back over the last thirty years, it is these relationships that have help me create and re-create a sense of purpose and self-knowledge. Inevitably, these relationships took varied forms and expressions, but the theme common to each one was a strong sense of being seen. To the following groups and individuals, I offer my enduring sense of gratitude.

My Smith Community - It is the relationships that pull you through this program. Thank you. I laughed till my belly ached. Late night debriefs, early morning runs and whiskey on the dock. There was a lot of joy, there was grounding in how we stretched each other, and there was a willingness to sit with the unknown. I love that it is your voices I will continue to lean on as we support each other in this field.

My Family - Thank you for knowing me so well, for trusting my decisions, and for holding it all. Your support and love are staples in my life from which I know myself.

My Friends - You show up time and time again. This is a crazy program and yet there you are, finding yourself flying out to Seattle, driving me to the airport, organizing a cow parade. Somehow you know how to call me out when I need it, get me laughing hard when I least expect it and grounding me in what has come before while allowing room for what comes ahead.

Kathleen McNamara & Lisa Schnell - Both of you played instrumental roles, first in high school and then as an undergraduate. I know that the effects of your informal mentorship during those years have shaped and continue to shape me.

Cara Segal - Thank you for continuing to be such a tremendous advocate for this project. Your interest and guidance was a gift.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iii
CHAPTER	
I. Introduction.....	1
II. Conceptualization and Methodology.....	8
III. Mentoring: Defined and Reviewed.....	17
IV. Three Stages of the Mentoring Relationship.....	39
V. Creative Growth Within the Third Space.....	64
VI. Informal Mentoring Case Study.....	84
VII. Discussion.....	102
REFERENCES.....	121

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Gallup Purdue Index surveyed 30,000 adults who received their Bachelor's degree and found the following:

If graduates recalled having a professor who cared about them as a person, made them excited about learning, and encouraged them to pursue their dreams, their odds of being engaged at work more than doubled, as did their odds of thriving in all aspects of their well-being. (Ray & Kafka, 2014, par. 3)

The results from this poll stand as a testament to the power that mentoring can have on a protégé's success during and beyond college. Benefits to the protégé have been consistently demonstrated in academic and work environments and have inspired more formal programs that seek to capitalize on the benefits of having a mentor. If one is lucky enough to find and secure a mentor during pivotal times of life, whether as a student or in the beginning stages of one's career, there are clear personal and career advantages afforded to the protégé. For the institution or work place, these relationships play an important role in enhancing employee satisfaction and feelings of connection. However, what is much less understood is the experience of the mentor in these relationships. What motivates people to take on the role of the mentor, and what are the personal benefits associated with this role?

The following chapters explore the premise that informal mentoring has the capacity to create a powerful Third Space that is unique to the mentoring relationship. The relationship's boundaries, which anchor the dyad within the definition of a mentorship, serve to maintain this space and produce the tension that is necessary to fuel dynamic and creative growth for both

individuals. For the mentor, I posit that creative growth during the second stage of the mentoring relationship unconsciously benefits the mentor and acts as motivation for engaging in informal mentoring beyond Erikson's generativity.

Definitions of Key Terms

Mentorship. Mentorship is defined as a “dynamic, emotionally connected, reciprocal relationship” in which, over time, the mentor views him or herself as personally invested in the growth of the protégé beyond the acquisition of a specific skill (Johnson, 2007, p. 259). The protégé is understood to be engaged in the process of cultivating such a relationship, which is fueled by an emotional connection that is experienced as being beneficial to his or her development.

Informal mentoring. Informal mentoring is defined as a dynamic in which two people cultivate a relationship of guidance within an identified power differential. Both individuals select and pursue the connection. Conversely, in a formal mentoring relationship, the dyad is created either from outside the dyad (e.g., an institution assigning pairs) or when the mentor selects particular individuals to receive guidance as a result of a job or role expectations.

The Third Space. The Third Space will be defined in greater detail future chapters. However, in brief, it is a product of the unique dynamic that is created between the mentor and the protégé. It is an entity to which both members contribute; however neither member owns it. It holds tremendous potential to serve as a vehicle for creative and unconscious growth for both members of the dyad.

The Dream. The Dream is an entity or event towards which both the mentor and the protégé are consciously working (e.g., completion of a dissertation) that is fueled by an unstated and/or unconscious objective. For both the mentor and the protégé, the *explicit* and conscious

Dream must exist in order for the relationship to form and have boundaries; both members of the dyad mutually agree upon its structure. The unconscious or *latent* Dream, however, may be dramatically different for each individual in the dyad. Hendricks (1996) notes that “within the individual, the manifest task is pragmatic, whereas the latent task may be regarded as psychological or therapeutic” (p. 43). He is speaking to a duality of purpose for both the mentor and the protégé in the creation of the Third Space.

Ambiguity. Ambiguity is a necessary ingredient in the informal mentorship relationship because it allows the dynamic between the explicit and latent Dreams, as well as what is driving the latent Dream, to remain in an unconscious or preconscious state. This is an essential quality because it allows for the ongoing exploration of drives to be carried out within the boundaries of the relationship.

Theoretical Basis

This thesis is based on Erikson’s life cycle model (Vallery, 1992), which describes various stages of transition into adulthood that move toward generativity. It applies Erikson’s model as well as Object Relations and Drive Theories to informal mentoring as the mentoring relationship moves through the stages of identification, creative work, and termination. For the purposes of the thesis, the first stage is relevant to the psychodynamic theories of identification—dynamics that propel the mentor and the protégé to form a connection. From there, the dyad evolves within the ambiguity of the Dream into the second stage. This stage is characterized by the development of creative growth, which has characteristics of the depressive position but still maintains the fantasy. The Dream propels the work forward and a shift occurs unconsciously from “the work of the mentoring relationship and then the work of individuals within the relationship” (Hendricks, 1996, p. 49). The role of fantasy and play is instrumental to

the phenomenon of the mentor deriving benefits from this creative space. According to Yamamoto (1988),

Everyone yearns to be known, understood and respected, not merely for who one has been and who one is, but also, and probably more critically, for the emergent self—who one can be, who one is going to be. (p. 184)

The roles that play and fantasy hold in this stage are key to gaining a more nuanced understanding of why the mentor engages in the mentoring relationship beyond the benefits of generativity.

The final stage—termination—is relevant to this proposed thesis only in that fear of termination helps maintain the boundaries of the relationship, thereby allowing it to remain within the creative space. Termination is the result of the completion of the explicit Dream, the loss of fantasy for either member, or crossing boundaries that move the relationship outside of a mentoring dynamic, thus dissolving the tension that fuels the dyad. An exploration of the theoretical roots of this progression and the growth within the second stage for the mentor is at the heart of this thesis and is discussed in detail in the following chapters.

Identification of Needs as Presented by the Literature

Beyond studies that utilize a psychodynamic lens, there is a substantial body of literature that points to the importance and benefits of mentoring relationships (e.g., Allen & Eby, 2007; DuBois & Karcher, 2005; MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership, 2006; Rhodes, 2007). However, these studies have traditionally focused on benefits to the protégé (e.g., Green & Bauer, 1995; Russell & Adams, 1997). Some of the benefits to the protégé include “great productivity and eminence in the field, higher levels of skill development and competence, greater networking and engagement with colleagues, stronger professional confidence and identity, more career opportunities, and even higher levels of psychological health”

(Hollingworth & Fassinger, 2002, p. 324). Altogether, there is substantial empirical support for the benefits of the mentoring relationship to the protégé; however, this work also potentially perpetuates the illusion that the benefits associated with mentoring relationships are one-sided. A smaller body of research does point to the benefits that are derived by the mentor. Drawing primarily on Erikson's life stage model, it has been hypothesized that a key factor that motivates mentors to engage in mentoring relationships is the achievement of a sense of generativity (Barnett, 1984; Erikson, 1980; Calorosso & Nemiroff, 1981).

Although these studies have established the importance of mentoring from a personal and institutional perspective, they have been slow to apply a psychodynamic lens. Vallery's (1992) work, which applies Winnicott's Theory of Transitional Phenomena Experience (1998) to the mentoring relationship, has provided a basis for research that explores mentoring from a psychodynamic perspective in that it enables one to conceptualize the Third Space through the lens of Object Relations. Hendricks' (1996) seminal work also explores mentoring through a psychodynamic lens, specifically by applying Object Relations Theory. He deepens the conversation by applying Winnicott's theory of the "good enough" mother and the shared Dream as components of the mentoring dyad that benefit the protégé.

Both of these texts are referenced throughout the thesis, as this work seeks to contribute to the existing literature by shifting the primary focus away from the protégé and reflecting upon how a similar theoretical perspective could be used to understand the mentor. This is an important next step because it is unclear what fuels the informal mentoring relationship for the mentor. This deficit in the literature perpetuates a dynamic wherein deep personal attachment and growth on the mentor's part might seem negative or narcissistic. If the drives and motivations for the mentoring relationship are not fully defined or captured by the notion of

generativity, it is possible that we may fail to recognize or name the strong experience of mutuality that often arises in the genesis of an effective mentoring relationship. This failure to understand the complexity of the mentoring relationship could result in some sense of shame and subsequent reluctance for the mentor to retrospectively articulate their own growth within the relationship.

Connection to Social Work

This thesis seeks to engender a more dynamic understanding of the human connection that is present in the mentoring relationship from a psychodynamic perspective. Gaining a deeper understanding of the ways in which drives are expressed can inform a more complex understanding of the adult self and contribute to our understanding of adult development and growth within the field. Gaining a clearer conceptualization of what drives creative growth from a theoretical standpoint provides a foundation upon which empirical research can be conducted, further paving the way towards understanding mentoring relationships as important for both members of the dyad.

The mentoring relationship holds aspects of both the parental and the libidinal drives. However, if it is to stay within the boundaries that are necessary to define a relationship as a mentorship, then it never fully enacts these drives. The creation of a relationship in which these drives cannot be fully realized and are instead channeled into a creative play space may or may not inform the expression of these drives elsewhere. Therefore, this thesis suggests that future studies explore the possibility that the unique nature of the mentoring dyad can serve as the basis for complex exploration and growth among its participants. With numerous studies showing the benefits of mentoring for the protégé, this work holds the potential to further support academic and clinical efforts that encourage the formation of this type of informal relationship and that

view these relationships as valuable to both members of the institution.

In conclusion, this thesis explores, in a broad sense, how we continue to know ourselves anew through the relationships that we build. It seeks to understand how those relationships are constructed in connection to the relationships that we have had in the past, as well as the ways in which we seek relationships that are going to help us create something new. It recognizes that growth can happen for both people, not despite a power imbalance but rather within the mentoring dynamic, an outcome that may be the result of how different positioning opens up space to be creative. It discusses exploratory ideas around mentoring dynamics that we see represented in the public narrative time and time again. How we narrate the story of mentoring in the context of our desire to see both individuals within the relationship allows for a more complex understanding of the mentoring process. It is a story that seeks out continuing growth and evolution and that honors the ways in which we are always seeking that growth through varied and dynamic connections. Not everyone mentors, and this thesis does not propose that it is an essential part of gaining more evolved self-knowledge. Instead, this thesis acknowledges that mentoring is not only a way to give back, but also a way to move forward.

CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND METHODOLOGY

This thesis explores the mentor's growth within the informal mentoring dynamic. The foundational components of the thesis are laid out sequentially and provide a basis for the seminal argument that the mentor experiences a deeper sense of self-knowledge in the stage of creative growth. This reward is hypothesized as representing an additional motivating factor for the mentor's engagement in the mentoring relationship beyond Erikson's (1980) conceptualization of generativity.

First, this thesis reviews the current empirical and theoretical literature examining the mentoring dynamic and highlights the need for additional focus on the mentor's experience in future research. It then builds upon previous theoretical constructs of a three-step relationship trajectory that is traditionally focused on the protégé's experience and re-conceptualizes such a progression through the lens of the mentor. Utilizing this framework of how the mentoring relationship evolves for the mentor, it undertakes a more detailed examination of the creative growth stage in the following chapter.

Next, the proposed relationship trajectory and hypothesized creative growth experienced by the mentor is subsequently applied to a case study, a memoir entitled *The Calculus of Friendship*. This narrative documents in detail a mentoring relationship between two men using letter correspondences between them. The final chapter of the thesis discusses how the case study both supports and refutes the notion that the mentoring relationship evolves through a

three-stage trajectory and the hypothesis that the primary growth for the mentor takes place in the second stage. It also purposes potential avenues of further study relating to the growth of the mentor in the informal mentoring dyad.

The goal of the methodology chapter is to introduce Drive and Object Relations Theories and to describe the specific aspects of each theory as they relate to the mentoring experience. This chapter then moves into a deeper explanation of the underlying rationale for connecting the mentoring experience to Drive Theory and Object Relations Theory. The methodology section ends with a discussion of the thesis's strengths and limitations.

Overview of Theoretical Frameworks

This thesis attempts to discern and understand the ways in which the psychodynamic theories of Drive and Object Relations Theories support each other and contribute to a nuanced understanding of the factors at play within the mentoring relationship. It also seeks to highlight areas in which both theories fall short or contradict each other. Both theories are derived from Erikson's conceptualization of psychosocial development, specifically the stage of generativity, which is often cited in the mentoring literature as *the* reason that one would take on the mentoring role. This thesis does not aim to refute the idea that generativity is a source of gain for the mentor; rather, it suggests that there may be additional sources of benefits for the individual inhabiting this role. The following sections outline Erikson's psychosocial model and Drive and Object Relations Theories as they are used within this thesis.

Erikson's Model of Generativity

This thesis is based on research that asserts that adults continue to develop and evolve beyond childhood (e.g., Erikson, 1963, 1980; Vaillant, 1977; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & McKee, 1978). Erikson was one of the first to articulate the importance of conceptualizing

development as a lifelong process. He proposed that personality development takes place not only during childhood; rather, he argued that it is an ongoing, evolving process (Berzoff et al., 2011). Erikson's work is similar to Freud's in that his conceptualization of psychosocial development is based upon stages; however, unlike Freud, he conceptualized three stages beyond adolescence. His model is hierarchical, with each stage consisting of a task that must be mastered before one can move onto the next stage of development. It is possible for some individuals to not progress to the final stage. His conceptualization of generativity occurs in the second to last stage and is contrasted with stagnation. Berzoff (2011) describes the focus of this stage: "Generativity ultimately involves finding one's place in the life cycle of generations. The opposite of generativity is stagnation and self-absorption, pseudo-intimacy or self-indulgence" (p. 110). Thus, it is a stage of giving back once one has secured his or her own trajectory and is defined by the capability of being able to look outside of oneself and to attend to the needs of others. Fundamentally, it is a stage in which one experiences pleasure from providing for the younger generation some of the wisdom that has been accumulated over the course of the individual's trajectory. It is no surprise, then, that when a question arises as to what inspires the mentor to engage in relationship, research often posits the theme of generativity. According to Vallery (1992),

The predominant psychological issue in the mentor stage is characterized by increasing responsibility of the mentor to care for others through guidance and teaching, and by learning to derive satisfaction from the protégé's developing independence i.e. generativity. (p. 26)

Vallery connects Erikson's notion of adult development to mentoring as an explicit example of how such development may be expressed. Although this may provide a reasonable explanation as to why someone may be drawn to act as a mentor, concepts inherent to both Object Relations

and Drive Theories suggest the possibility that there may be additional reasons that underlie this decision which are connected to implicit and explicit gains for the mentor.

This thesis examines whether it is possible to both gain satisfaction by playing this altruistic role in another's life—satisfaction that can be reflected on and that can exist within consciousness—while also reaping benefits that are unconscious and that support adult development in alternative ways. Given that multiple studies (e.g., Hennig & Jardim, 1977; Clawson, 1979; Bogart & Redner, 1985) have found mentoring relationships to be emotionally important to both members of the mentoring dyad, it is important to reach for a more complex and nuanced understanding of the multiple additional dynamics that may be at play for the mentor when deciding to engage in an informal mentoring relationship. In sum, this thesis acknowledges the importance of Erikson's contention that development continues into adulthood and his concept of generativity. It uses his theoretical framework as a foundation to further our understanding of additional benefits received by the mentor.

Drive Theory

Erikson's generativity thus sets the stage for further consideration of the experience of informal mentoring from the perspective of the mentor. Drive and Object Relations Theories provide the lens through which the benefits of deeper self-knowledge within the creative stage of growth are examined.

Drive Theory puts forth the concept of the unconscious as well as the assumption that all humans are bound by drives (Freud, 1930). Freud posited that many drives experienced by people remain unconscious because they would become too threatening if one were to become fully aware of them. This thesis focuses on paternal and libidinal drives as being significant in providing the tension that is needed for creative exchange within the mentoring dyad. The thesis

holds as a tenet Freud's belief that "somatically rooted instinctual drives achieve mental representation in the form of sexual and aggressive impulses" (Berzoff, 2011, p. 46) and also argues that there is unconscious mental tension between these drives and what is socially acceptable to enact in society (Freud, 1900, p. 626).

The unconscious is significant to this thesis because the benefits of self-growth, necessary tension, and boundaries within the mentoring dyad that cultivate growth are theorized to exist within the mentor's unconscious. If the mentor were able to put into words what drives him or her to engage in a mentoring relationship, the tension of the unknown that the relationship represents and the motivation behind the drive to engage would likely dissolve. In sum, this thesis is based on Freud's contention that there are often drives that compel us to action but must be expressed alternatively in order to remain socially acceptable.

Freud believed that there are aggressive and sexual drives in which all humans are engaged. This thesis recognizes that both paternal and libidinal drives play an important role in the mentor's engagement. The paternal drive in the mentor is manifested in his or her unconscious desire to parent and take care of the protégé. The libidinal desire in the mentor is rooted in sexual energy and desire for the protégé. Because both drives are unconscious to the mentor, they can fuel the relationship without crossing the boundaries that define a mentorship. Both in examining the relationship trajectory and in theorizing the creative growth stage, the libidinal and parental drives are explored in depth in order to understand their roles in both fueling and maintaining the mentoring relationship. However, in keeping with the scope of this thesis, I do not explicitly explore the aggressive drive within the mentoring dynamic, other than to acknowledge that this area merits deeper theoretical study and consideration.

Object Relations Theory

Object Relations Theory is the second construct in which this thesis is rooted. Object Relations is an important framework for this thesis because it takes the one person model that is based on Freud's conceptualization of the ego and contributes to this discussion by exploring the ways in which the individual uses the objects (i.e., the people) of their world to meet his or her needs, focusing on the relationship as a vehicle to do so. Object Relations provides a lens through which to understand how the object is both internalized and projected within the third space of the relationship. It also helps speak to the tension between fantasy and reality through which the self navigates. Components of narcissism, idealization, identification, holding space, mirroring, rupture, and repair are defined and connected to mentoring as they are integrated into this thesis. Of special importance is Winnicott's (1957) understanding of the caretaker/infant dyad and the ways in which it serves as an important parallel to the dynamic between the mentor and protégé; this concept is expanded upon throughout the thesis. Finally, Winnicott's (1955) conceptualization of how one moves from the paranoid schizoid position to the depressive position within a developmental schema helps provide an understanding of change in the informal mentoring process.

Structure of Thesis

This thesis is organized so that Drive and Object Relations Theories are consistently referenced as each feature of the mentoring phenomenon is explored. This allows the ways in which these theories both support and contradict posited dynamics of the mentoring relationship to play out within the text rather than only existing in the discussion.

The thesis consists of three sections. The first section contains a review of the theoretical and empirical literature regarding the mentoring process. The second section contains a

theoretical exploration of how Drive and Object Relational Theories provide a more nuanced understanding of the mentoring relationship trajectory, with particular attention paid to the stage of creative growth contained within that trajectory. The final section of the thesis applies these theoretical models to a case study and includes a discussion of the ways in which the application of these theories is or is not supported by the case study.

Methodological Bias

One potential bias inherent in this thesis is my own positive experience with informal mentoring relationships as an undergraduate student. In the role of the protégé, this experience was significant in shaping my understanding of self at a transitional age. I am aware that this positive transference represents a potential impediment to the rigor of this work and that my positive experiences with a mentoring dynamic could compromise my ability to create theoretically rigorous, viable work. To address this issue, I used my advisor and outside readers to help me identify potential areas in which I may not have fully or accurately conceptualized certain dynamics in the examples described here as a result of my bias. In addition, within my literature review, I included studies that examined both positive and negative experiences in mentoring relationships.

Because I am focused on informal mentoring rather than on formal mentoring dynamics that are structured and assigned, there is a built-in control in my study design, as both the mentor and the protégé were free to disengage from their relationship if it was not providing them with any benefits. This is in contrast to formal mentoring relationships in which either or both members of the dyad may have felt pressured to remain engaged as a result of external expectations.

Finally, I chose case material that provides access to both an understanding of how the

dynamics in a mentoring relationship impact both participants while simultaneously allowing me to focus specifically on the mentor's experience in the relationship. This ability to access the experiences of both members of the dyad served to control for the possibility that the mentor was deriving benefits from the relationship at the expense of the protégé, an outcome that would not fit the definition of mentorship.

Strengths and Limitations

Among the strengths of this project is the significant amount of empirical research demonstrating the importance of mentorship. This includes work from the psychoanalytic tradition, beginning with the founding ideas of Freud and Winnicott and encompassing present day perspectives such as enactment, adult development, and the role of drives within dyadic relationships—an area of focus that is just beginning to explore the mentoring relationship. However, what do *not* exist in great abundance are analyses that provide insight into how the mentor rather than the protégé benefits from the mentoring process or literature discussing how the informal mentoring dynamic is different from clinical supervision or formal mentoring. Fortunately, the existing foundational literature together with these gaps in mentoring research create a clear area of focus for this theoretical exploration.

An additional strength of this work is the manner in which this thesis is organized. It allows for the development of an overarching theory that is based upon the foundation of previous research and psychodynamic perspective. Based on this foundation, it works to provide a more detailed look at an important aspect of the relationship's development: creative growth. This structure allows the reader to follow the formulation of a hypothesis before it is applied to a real life, case study example. The ability of this theoretical hypothesis to hold up under scrutiny is subsequently evaluated. The reader is also taken through the clear and sequential

conceptualization, application, and discussion of the subject. From my perspective as the author, organizing the work in this fashion allows for a clear understanding of where the strengths and weaknesses are in terms of both the theoretical conceptualization and the case study selected.

A significant limitation of the thesis is its inherently small scope and, in consequence, its utility solely as a theoretical piece that invites further empirical research. To this end, the case material is not created but rather found; this opens the study to a selection bias that arises out of the fact that examples are limited to those which others have found sufficiently noteworthy to record. Related to and reinforcing the possibility that this limitation is real is my finding in reviewing the literature that there are a disproportionate number of examples highlighting mentorships comprised of participants from privileged populations in terms of race, class, and gender. Thus, in key ways, both within the literature review and within the case study, this thesis perpetuates a notion of a mentor or “guide” as white, middle-class, and male. Although this is discussed in some detail within the text, it is important to draw attention to this limitation.

In conclusion, this thesis calls for serious reflection and consideration about the ways in which psychoanalytic thinking can help make meaning out of adult relationships within an inherent power dynamic. It suggests that informal mentoring relationships may be pursued unconsciously as much for the dyadic connection that supports mentor growth as they can from the mentor’s drive to give back to the next generation. There are significant implications for understanding the ways in which we engage in these types of relationships that are unique and yet ubiquitous in terms of cultural experience and personal narrative.

CHAPTER III

MENTORING: DEFINED AND REVIEWED

This chapter seeks to define how the terms mentor, mentorship, and protégé will be used throughout this thesis. All three of these terms are defined in the context of a *process* that occurs in a dynamic that is theoretically assumed to be as important—if not more so—than the end result of the dyadic relationship. The chapter provides an overview of the available empirical research addressing the benefits of mentoring and acknowledges the reality that there are significant gaps in research addressing the mentor-protégé relationship. The majority of this research has focused on the benefits that mentoring relationships afford to the protégé. Thus, the analysis of a substantial proportion of the empirical studies cited in this chapter involves not only the studies themselves, but also the ways in which the existing literature addressing the impact of the mentoring dyad on the protégé establishes the need for a more complex and nuanced understanding of the benefits to the mentor.

This chapter also demonstrates that when appropriate boundaries are constructed and maintained in these relationships, there is growth for both individuals involved. Although I examine the limited research that points to the possibility of a negative impact on participants in the mentoring dyad, the perimeters of these studies are narrow and make it difficult to apply to the informal relationship dyads central to this work.

The final sections of this chapter focus on the ways in which the dynamics of race and gender are often overlooked in mentoring research. It also seeks to distinguish between research

based on formal and informal mentoring dynamics. Both defining the terms of this thesis and dedicating focus to empirical research within the field justifies the need for a more nuanced theoretical understanding that situates the mentors' drive and fantasy within the dyad.

Definition of Mentor and Mentorship

The concept of mentorship has roots in literature and Greek mythology and has come to be defined in present society as a relationship in which an older and wiser role model guides a protégé to achieving his or her potential. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus assigns Mentor to guide his younger son, and Athena wears Mentor's disguise when she encourages Telemachus to go and find his father. While the notions of power difference and guidance are foundational in defining the relationship between mentor and protégé, there is a wide spectrum of general understanding about what types of relationships the term mentorship applies to. One reason why there is such a wide spectrum of definitions is that the fields of education, psychology, and management have each amassed bodies of research examining the dyadic relationship, each using its particular lens (Jacobi, 1991). Thus, when empirical results are reported in any of the three aforementioned areas, they use substantially different understandings of who a mentor is and what his or her profile within the dyad should look like. Specifically, there tends to be divergence between definitions in terms of the emotional depth of the relationship, the duration of the relationship, the age difference between the two individuals who constitute the dyad, and the function of the mentor in the relationship (Allen & Eby, 2007).

The primary focus of this thesis is the emotionally laden and meaningful connection between both members of the dyad. There is not a specified time that must elapse, but the relationship must go through a phase of identification, creative discovery, and termination. Rather than focusing on the age difference between the individuals, there exists a definable

power difference between the mentor and protégé that originates primarily from differences in knowledge and competence. The protégé in the relationship consciously seeks to access both of these attributes.

The explicit function of the mentor within the relationship is to nurture the conscious Dream contained in the dyad. The concept of the Dream is defined in detail in the third chapter, but in brief, the conscious or explicit Dream is the objective towards which the protégé is working, with the support of the mentor. Both individuals are conscious of this goal. A Dream's function may vary significantly in appearance depending on the circumstances surrounding the formation of the dyad. Although the nurturance of the Dream is the central task at hand, there are likely multiple other functions at work in support of fostering the Dream. Although some benefits of the mentoring dyad may be conscious and quantifiable, other benefits are constrained to the internalized self-state and are thus harder to identify and qualify. For the purposes of this thesis, the term mentor is defined as an individual who occupies a position of power in relation to the protégé and has a mission inscribed by the dyad that is oriented towards achieving the protégé's Dream through a created third space. The third space is defined as a space that is unique to the dyad and stands outside of either's construction; rather, it is a product of subjectivities and is conceptualized as being a space in-between. Keenan and Miehl (2008) state that the "third space, therefore, is a concept that describes an openness and exploration of perspectives which can result in the emergence of new points of view" (p. 167). Together, the mentor and protégé create the expression of the Dream through their relational dynamic that renders a relational framework that neither explicitly owns nor controls. Finally, the concept of the mentor, when applied independently by both participants in the dyad, holds a positive connotation (Johnson, 2007). Although personal growth is a central objective, this does not

mean there are not times of challenge. The informal mentor relationship exists only as long as it fulfills a need, and when this need is no longer relevant, the relationship transitions or terminates. The reason for this termination can either be conscious or unconscious.

Definition of Protégé

Protégé is the most commonly used term in mentoring research. One rationale for this is that the word protégé aptly connotes a power differential, as articulated by Hendricks (1996):

Whereas “mentee” does indicate a semantic role complementarily and in a sense implies a hierarchical relationship, it does not adequately connote the differential in power between mentor and protégé, and this [is an important] dimension [that] requires reckoning. (p. 22)

Thus, the word protégé *does* adequately connote differences in power, as the French origins of the word mean to protect. The use of the word protégé therefore acknowledges the power differential that is inherent in the mentoring relationship and implies the flow of power from the mentor unto the protégé. Furthermore, in a sociocultural sense, the term also connotes a sense of capability and talent (i.e., the Dream and ability to achieve it), which are qualities that the mentor seeks to foster and be affiliated with.

Although the relationship exists within a power structure, the protégé is not powerless. The protégé’s power is situated in the potential that he or she holds and the mentor’s desire to be in relationship with this sense of promise. The protégé is understood as the individual in the dyadic relationship who holds an explicit Dream, though it is possible that there are subsequent latent Dreams that remain within the unconscious. The unconscious Dream of the protégé may be developed through the relationship. The protégé therefore exists in the context of the power dynamics at play and possesses both a manifest Dream (shared with the mentor) and a latent Dream (which differs from the mentor’s), the expression of which may be fulfilled through the

relationship. The protégé maintains the relationship as long as it fulfills a need or is terminated by the mentor.

Origins of Mentoring Research

Empirical studies that seek to understand how to best utilize mentoring within youth, academic, and corporate structures have accumulated in number over the last three decades (Allen & Eby, 2007). These studies have not been primarily linked to understanding the mentoring dyad through a psychodynamic lens, but have instead often focused on establishing and cultivating productive relationships that benefit the larger institution, consumer, and/or student. As a field of study, focus on mentoring was facilitated by Levinson's work (1978). He studied forty men over the course of their lifetimes, seeking to understand the emotional needs and growth that continues through adulthood. Levinson's (1978) initial study demonstrated that the mentor helps guide "the Dream" of the protégé and that this guidance benefits healthy adult development. Vaillant (1977) and Kram (1985) expanded the scope of Levinson's work in important ways. Through the Grant Study, which examined the lives of Harvard men over a significant period of their lives, Vaillant (1977) provided substantiation of Levinson's (1978) assertion of the importance of mentoring by concluding that those men who were most successful had been mentored in their young adulthood (Rowe, 2013). Vaillant's (1977) study linking success with mentoring was followed by Kram's (1985) study of 18 mentoring dyads, from which she hypothesized the phases and functioning of the dyad as well as the role of gender in the relationship. Taken together, these studies led to increased mentoring research in education, management, and psychology.

Mentoring in the field of education has focused primarily on informal interactions between faculty and students. Initial studies found that interaction between faculty and students

outside of the classroom positively impacted not only students' academic performance, but also their emotional and future career success (e.g., Astin, 1977; Wilson, Gaff, Dienst, Wood, & Bavry, 1975).

In workplace mentoring, research has focused on two primary areas: career advancement and psychological support. In both of these fields, benefits were understood as having the possibility of being objective (e.g., raises and advancement) or subjective (e.g., feeling positive about one's career, confidence; Allen & Eby, 2007). Although the research provided evidence in support of the notion that many mentoring relationships develop organically in the workplace and result in positive benefits for the protégé, a trend of constructing formal mentoring programs with the goal of capitalizing on the benefits of the mentoring relationship soon developed. Formal mentoring programs in the workplace frequently have timelines, goals, and guidelines (Eddy et al., 2001; Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). Overall, these workplace programs have tended to be less successful at promoting growth when compared to informally establish mentoring relationships (Ragins & Cotton, 1999).

Lastly, as research around attachment has become more popular, there have been some studies examining how attachment style impacts willingness to become part of a mentoring dynamic. Wang, Noe, Wang, and Greenberger (2009) conducted a study of 195 mentors and 195 protégés in a two-year formal mentoring program. Their results confirmed their hypothesis: highly anxious and avoidant individuals were less willing to engage in a mentoring dynamic, regardless of their role (i.e., mentor or protégé) within the dynamic. Those with secure attachment styles were more likely to be open to engaging in future mentoring. Although the study was impressive in sample size, it was based in China, and therefore, the impact of cultural norms must be accounted for when applying these results to Western mentoring dynamics.

Though there is need for more research examining the role of attachment style in the mentoring dynamic, Wang et al.'s (2009) study has made a significant contribution by demonstrating that some people may be predisposed to taking on the role of a mentor and finding success within this relational dynamic. This finding also serves as an important reminder that theory and research indicating a positive benefit for both mentor and protégé may be tapping into a population of people whose personalities make these individuals more likely to end up in a mentoring relationship in the first place.

Research Focusing on the Protégé

Studies of education and the workplace have traditionally focused on the benefits of the mentoring relationship to the protégé (Green & Bauer, 1995; Russell & Adams, 1997). This is a logical focal point given the reality that third parties such as institutions and corporations are primarily interested in the benefits afforded to the younger generation. These individuals represent either the customer (in the case of educational institutions) or the future leadership of the workplace—and sometimes both.

Although this thesis is focused on the experience of the mentor within the dyad, it is important to bear in mind that the bulk of the research in this area has focused almost exclusively on the benefits to the protégé. Some of the stated benefits for protégés include: “great productivity and eminence in the field, higher levels of skill development and competence, greater networking and engagement with colleagues, stronger professional confidence and identity, more career opportunities, and even higher levels of psychological health” (Hollingworth & Fassinger, 2002, p. 324).

Benefits to the Protégé in Academia

Although it has been established that mentoring, when boundaries are maintained, has a

positive impact on the protégé's adult development, mentoring between staff and student has been the focus of less empirical research, perhaps because of less profit incentive. In fact, most research has been at the graduate or Ph.D. level and has focused on students who are in psychology or counseling fields. The largest study to date was conducted in 2000 and included 787 clinical psychology graduate students (Clark, Harden & Johnson, 2000); they found that 66% of those students reported having a mentor. The majority of the respondents in this study were women (70%) and European American (87%), which does reflect the typical demographics of people seeking degrees in clinical psychology. Within the study, mentoring was defined as usually being received from an older individual who "acts as a guide, role model, teacher" and "provides knowledge, advice, challenge, counsel and support in the protégé's pursuit of becoming a full member of a particular profession" (p. 263). This is important to note because their definition of mentorship is broader than that which is used in the present paper. Thus, although their definition does not detract from their finding that a large proportion of students benefitted from a mentor's guidance, a more clearly defined focus on emotional attachment within the dyad might have resulted in a substantially lower number of protégés.

More recently, Erdem and Ozen's (2007) study of 89 graduate and Ph.D. students who were engaged in a mentoring relationship found that protégés' perceptions of mentoring were positive and were linked primarily with career advancement. Furthermore, as the mentoring relationship increased in duration, protégés described receiving more psychosocial benefits. This study also found that there were no significant differences in mentoring perspectives due to the gender of the mentor or the protégé. Although their work has been beneficial in demonstrating anew the benefits afforded to the protégé in an academic setting, Erdem and Ozen (2007) did not

consider the role of socioeconomic status or race. Thus, further research that accounts for these variables is needed.

When conducting research on mentoring relationships in academia, it is important to distinguish between role modeling, advising, and mentoring. Schlosser and Gelso (2001) note that the primary role of advising is to provide assistance and support in obtaining the degree that the protégé is seeking; expectations of the role beyond this objective have not been outlined. When the relationship takes on both a career and psychosocial role, it evolves into a more recognizable mentorship, and there is a clear objective with a delineated timeline. For mentoring to take place within the academic setting, reciprocated emotional connection between the mentor and the protégé is an important factor to consider.

Although there are visible gaps in the research that seeks to quantify the prevalence of mentoring in academia, numerous studies demonstrate the benefits that students receive as a result of taking part in a mentoring relationship with a faculty member. The work of Cronan-Hilklix et al. (1986) showed that “mentors serve supportive functions and promote professional productivity as indicated by research involvement, publications and conference papers” (p. 123). They highlighted a clear incentive for universities to promote these types of relationships between faculty and students. However, because the study involved such a specific field and is now dated, it is difficult to generalize this research to the larger current academic landscape.

Protégé Benefits in the Work Environment

The research that addresses mentoring in the academic sphere demonstrates empirical support for the benefits of the relationship to the protégé in terms of both academic and personal growth. However, one major drawback of mentoring research is that it upholds the illusion that the mentoring relationship is one-sided; this trend parallels mentoring research in the work

environment. Although this thesis focuses on the framework of academic mentoring, it is important to include research that addresses work place mentoring in order to compare these bodies of literature and to acknowledge the fact that substantial empirical research on the mentoring dyad comes out of this sphere. Research over the last two decades that has examined mentoring in the work place has demonstrated that those who are mentored experience lasting positive benefits in their chosen fields. Indeed, Orpen's research (1995) was consistent with a follow up study of 178 protégées in the engineering field that demonstrated that "the effects of mentoring on outcomes like income and organizational socialization endure over a long time" (Chao, 1997, p. 25). Although the motivation for these studies stem from profit objective, they have been instrumental in setting the stage for corporations and organizations to seek out ways to foster this positive effect.

Allen and Eby (2007) point out that one of the weaknesses associated with research that has demonstrated the positive correlation between mentoring and long-term impact on the protégé is that many of these studies depend on the self-reflection of those being interviewed. Allen's (2004) research lays the groundwork for this argument using a meta-analysis of current mentoring research in the workplace. Drawing on 24 studies on workplace mentorship, Allen's analysis (2004) demonstrated that there is a positive correlation between benefits and mentoring for the protégé, but she also notes that the flaws and minimal empirical research render this conclusion insufficient. Her call for additional research with fewer design flaws calls into question the degree to which the power of public perception has influenced the finding that positive outcomes are afforded to the protégé in the mentoring relationship. Allen points to the fact that in 1999, the existence of formal mentoring programs was one of the benchmarks used to evaluate the "Best Companies to Work For" (Branch, 1999). This may signify the larger

reciprocal role that social beliefs may play in influencing the perception and role of mentoring for the protégé as a valuable component of the work sphere.

Although it is important to note gaps in research examining both academic and workplace mentorship, it remains true that there is substantially more research focusing on benefits to the protégé in the workplace than on other subcategories in mentoring research. For this reason, workplace studies are incorporated in the framing of this paper.

According to current research, the gains afforded to the protégé by the mentor relationship can be divided into two kinds: objective gains (e.g., promotion or compensation) and subjective gains (e.g., satisfaction, commitment, or turnover; Allen, 2004). Although it may be natural to assume otherwise, these two outcomes are not significantly correlated with each other. Research demonstrates that in terms of both objective and subjective measures, protégés who are engaged in mentoring dynamics experience gain in their work environments.

It is also important to note that current research is primarily focused on outcomes as opposed to what actually occurs within the mentoring process that enables mentors and protégés to arrive at these outcomes. This is especially important to bear in mind when endeavoring to model a mentoring program for organizational benefit. Thus far, current research has done little to further our understanding of how processes within mentoring dyads create gains. Although this focus on outcomes makes logical sense in light of available funding for mentoring research, it is important to hold this outcome-driven objective when utilizing empirical workplace data since this objective might blind researchers to significant relational dynamics that are producing growth but are beyond the scope of what is being measured.

In summary, empirical research has focused primarily on benefits to the protégé. There are positive outcomes associated with being mentored in either an academic or workplace

setting, but these outcomes vary according to the objective of the mentoring dyad. Protégé research became increasingly abundant in the late '80s and '90s, but the number of studies published in this field appears to have declined in the last decade. Furthermore, the majority of this research is driven by results rather than gaining an understanding of the process of building and sustaining the mentoring relationship, and this further complicates the use of this research within theoretical frameworks. Because of these gaps in the literature, there is a need for more research examining how mentor growth and the dyadic process can be understood in the context of adult development.

Benefits of Mentoring to the Mentor

As demonstrated previously, research on mentoring relationships has focused on the benefits to the protégé. Although this research has significant gaps and there have been calls for more empirical studies, demonstrated benefits to the protégé stand in stark contrast to the dearth of empirical research focusing on the role of the mentor. The benefit to the mentor is often theoretically attributed to psychosocial growth, which is what this thesis aims to expand upon.

Limited research suggests that there are measurable career and social benefits to the mentor in a number of areas, including gains in human capital, movement capital, social/political capital, identity validation, and relational growth (Allen & Eby, 2007). However, many of the studies cited by Allen and Eby (2007) that demonstrate potential benefit to the mentor were conducted in the 1980s and 1990s and thus are flawed in terms of being outdated.

A recent meta-analysis conducted by Gosh and Rio (2013) did provide substantiation for some of Allen and Eby's (2007) claims. They found that "mentors were more satisfied with their jobs and committed to the organization" (p. 106) than were those who were not mentoring. Their analysis evaluated 18 self-report studies that examined job satisfaction, organizational

commitment, turnover intent, and subjective ratings of job performance. Although their work pulls together disparate empirical studies, they included multiple operationalization of the term mentor and incorporated studies that looked at both informal and formal constructions.

Bozionelos (2004) conducted a study at three universities in Northern England that included 176 administrators. According to his results,

The amount of mentoring respondents reported they had provided was positively associated with their objective and their subjective career success and with the amount of mentoring they reported they had received. (Bozionelos, 2004, p. 24)

This finding points to a connection between the mentor role and positive career success, as well as to the role that previous mentoring experience (i.e., if the mentor had once been in the role of the protégé) plays in the mentoring dynamic. Bozionelos's study (2004) drew on self-report data, used scales that were established in England to evaluate model traits, and did not distinguish between formal and informal mentoring. In addition, the subjective nature of the study and the fact that this study was conducted in England are further limitations. Despite these limitations, however, Bozionelos's work (2004) suggests that it is important for mentors to *feel* that their role in the mentoring dyad has personal benefit.

Research Demonstrating the Negative Impact of Mentoring

Although this thesis is focused on informal mentoring dynamics in which both individuals are making an active decision to be part of the dyad, some research has highlighted the possible downsides of the mentoring dynamic. Much of the research that has demonstrated the negative outcomes associated with mentoring relationships is based on the protégé's perspective. Eby and Ragins (2008) note "that some protégés report problems such as personality mismatches, mentor neglect, mentor sabotage and mentors lacking technical expertise" (p. 358). Although more research is needed to examine possible negative outcomes of the mentoring dyad, mentor sabotage and mentors lacking technical expertise are two problems

that seem most relevant to informal mentoring relationships, as both of these issues could conceivably take place without protégés realizing that these dynamics are affecting the mentoring relationship. With regard to the issue of mentor sabotage, differences in power and limited skill on the part of the mentor in allowing the relationship to transition through the stages toward dynamic success may lead to conscious or unconscious acts to prevent desired growth. Furthermore, the mentor may try to move the relationship beyond the established boundaries of the mentoring dyad.

Although it is also possible for the protégé to attempt to move beyond the boundaries of the mentoring relationship, the protégé's position of lesser power in the relationship may mean that it is possible to maintain the mentoring relationship depending on whether both members of the dyad continue to feel satisfaction with their own growth. In a situation where the mentor lacks technical expertise, it is also conceivable that both the mentor and the protégé feel that they can work toward the conscious Dream, only to realize their inability to do so because of the mentor's deficits in capability. In both instances, these events are likely to dissolve the fantasy of the Dream and bring about an earlier termination to the relationship than expected.

With regard to problems most often faced by mentors operating within a negative dynamic, Eby and Ragins (2008) note that problems tends to fall into three distinct areas: "protégé performance problems, interpersonal problems, and destructive relational problems" (p. 269). Although each of these situations result in strained dyad dynamics, conflict within the relationship is not necessarily a hindrance to growth for both individuals within the dyad. However, if the mentor no longer feels engaged within the dynamic (i.e., he/she feels that the conflict has rendered the relationship stagnant), this may also bring about early termination of the dyadic pair. The ability of the mentor and the protégé to acknowledge and work through

potential conflicts is also important to consider. Although more research is needed, communication style, the length of the mentoring relationship, and prior attachment patterns are factors that may affect the mentoring relationship's resiliency (Eby and Ragins, 2008).

Research Demonstrating the Role of Race in Mentoring

The influence of race on the mentoring dyad is also important to consider given that privilege and power play a direct role in determining who has traditionally had opportunities to be mentored in ways that are recognized and supported by larger institutions. Although the reality of power difference is inherent within the structure of the mentoring, it is also important to note how power structure shifts as a result of race dynamics (i.e., white privilege possessed by either member of the dyad, both dyad members identifying as people of color, etc.). In ways that have not yet been articulated, white privilege may impact the kind of support that helps sustain the mentoring framework and how the larger institution supports the mentoring dyad.

One of the first studies to look at race in the context of the mentoring relationship examined 104 protégés in a formal mentoring situation and found that same race pairings reported more instrumental support from their mentors (Ensher and Murphy, 1997). They also found that perceived similarities were strongly linked to protégé satisfaction, although these similarities were not necessarily limited to race. Due to the small sample size and the fact that the duration of these mentoring relationships was very short (approximately three months), the generalizability of these results is limited. Nonetheless, the concept of racial differences and perceptions of these differences and similarities successfully set the stage for future research.

In the following decade, most of the research examining the influence of race on the mentoring relationship was focused on Black and Asian students. Although there is essentially no empirical research examining other racial groups or the perspectives of mentors who are

people of color, one study on the mentorship of Latino children and adolescents found that a protégé was more likely to view another individual in a mentoring role if that mentor was also kin (Sanchez & Reyes, 1999). This challenges the way in which mentors have been traditionally defined, both in formal and informal relationships. In a more recent study, Phinney, Campos, Kallemeyn, and Kim (2011) studied a relatively small sample size of Latino freshmen at a large public university and found “improvement in psychosocial factors that underlie academic performance. [Hence,] results suggest mentors are of value in alleviating psychosocial risk factors” (p. 599). This study did not match all protégés with mentors of the same race and created a formal mentoring program in order to study the impact of such mentoring dyads. However, these results reinforce the importance of making mentoring opportunities available for racial minorities.

In terms of research that has focused on Black students, Fruht and Wray-Lake (2012) note that formal mentoring programs have been beneficial to African American children and teenagers. Indeed, informal mentoring dynamics and academic achievement were correlated with positive “health and psychosocial outcomes” (Fruht & Wray-Lake, 2012, p. 1462). In regards to mentoring for Asian American students within the educational system, Eby and Allen (2007) note that stereotypes regarding the model minority, cultural expectations of what is discussed outside the family, and cultural values regarding power hierarchies are all factors that differentially influence the ways Asians experience the mentoring relationship. They also posit that when the mentoring dyad fails to meet the academic needs of this population, it is often the result of ignorance or an inability to consider the importance of the aforementioned dynamics within the dyad.

Research exploring mentoring and race in the work place has not been conclusive. Some studies show that that Black individuals are as likely as the White population to have a mentor in the work place (e.g., Blake, 1999), while other studies contradict this. Additionally, it has been shown that people of color who are mentored by White men are more greatly compensated than people of color whose mentors are also of color. It should be noted, however, that this study was published in 1996; thus, it is reasonable to speculate that the outcome of this research may have been different if the same study was conducted today in light of society's shifting attitudes toward race. Additionally, this study uses White men as the basis of comparison, speaking to the underlying assumption that the White standard dictates the possible benefits that might arise.

Based on the studies discussed here, it is difficult to arrive at a clear understanding of the way in which race impacts mentoring in both academia and in the work place. Research examining mentoring dyads needs to account for the intersection of race with other oppressed identities, including gender, orientation, and disability. This thesis seeks to include racial diversity not only in its case examples, but also in the research that it cites; it also endeavors to acknowledge where there is theoretical bias that may discount socio-cultural privilege. One weakness of this theoretical work, however, is its limited scope; this work cannot assume an ability to provide a comprehensive analysis of the dynamics of race within the mentors' experience of creative growth in the third space. Additionally, the psychodynamic theories upon which this thesis draws were created by White individuals who did not consider the role of race while developing their work. As a result, the ability of this thesis to generalize further discourse regarding the third space and potential growth for the mentor beyond generativity must always be considered in the context of its theoretical foundation in the White male standard.

Research Demonstrating the Role of Gender in Mentoring

Gender has received more attention in empirical studies regarding mentoring than has race. Clark and Harden (2000) surveyed 800 doctoral students and reported that men and women were equally likely to have a mentor and to have been satisfied with the experience. In addition, Black-Beard, Bayne, Crosby, and Muller (2011) found that women tend to prefer to be mentored by other women and feel that the experience was beneficial to them academically; however, their academic outcomes do not necessarily differ from those of women who received same-gendered mentoring. Institutions have started to evaluate different mentoring programs that support women and encourage them to stay in academic fields in which they have been traditionally underrepresented. For example, Washington State University reports that its voluntary mentoring program for women engineering students has resulted in an increase in women who stay in the field when compared with women who do not participate in the mentoring program (Poor & Brown, 2013). Although this study is limited to a single academic setting, it sets forth a model for how other academic institutions may start to address gender inequality in the fields of math, science, and technology.

Other research has been examined differences between same-gendered mentoring and mentoring across different genders. Ruff (2013) writes,

The benefits of women's mentor relationships include increased self-esteem, productivity, and career advancement while challenges include access to women mentors in male dominated fields and collusion in stereotypical roles. (p. 96)

Although Ruff uses empirical studies to back her claims, many of the studies she cites are from the 1990s. Moreover, she does not take into account more recent studies that suggest that gender has less of an effect on mentoring relationship than do the qualities possessed by the mentor. Liang, Tracy, Taylor, and Williams's (2002) research on the mentoring experience of 450

undergraduate women found that matching gender and ethnicity “[has] limited importance compared to the nature and the quality of the mentoring relationship” (p. 283).

Even though research examining the role of gender is mixed with regards to the importance of the mentoring dyad, the majority of this research has focused on quantifiable outcomes, such as promotion, staying within the field, and the protégé’s self-reported positive feelings. Almost none of these studies consider the relational experience within the dyad and the process of creative growth as factors that may contribute to successful mentoring. When mentoring is measured by its ability to create meaning and deeper self-understanding for both members of the dyad, questions of gender and race may be entertained quite differently.

Informal vs. Formal Mentoring Research

It is important to distinguish between formal and informal mentoring when examining the mentoring relationship. I am defining formal mentoring as a dynamic in which the mentoring relationship is not instigated through a mutual decision between both members of the dyad. This occurs most commonly as the result of the actions of a third party, usually by the leaders of an organization or institution. However, it is also important to note that formal mentoring can also occur when one member of the dyad—typically the mentor due to power differences—selects individual protégés. In these instances, there is not a clearly established, shared goal between the two members of the dyad due to the protégé’s initial lack of autonomy. Research examining mentoring dyads needs to increasingly investigate how mentoring relationships can be formally created. Many organizations have already established such programs. In fact, as of 2004, “some 60 percent of Fortune 1,000 companies [had] some sort of formal mentoring [program]” (Perry, 2004, par. 5). Thus, mentoring programs in the work place are highly prevalent, despite that fact that there is limited research examining the structure and impact of these initiatives.

In contrast, informal mentoring is defined as any mentoring dynamic in which both members of the dyad enter the relationship as a result of their own agency and desire. Although the relationship may or may not be defined as mentoring for the individuals, there is an explicit and conscious Dream to which both individuals are committed. It is possible that in informal mentoring, the relationship does not start out as a mentoring dynamic but evolves into one over time. Within the dynamic, there is a clear mentor and protégé, though the relationship is likely to evolve relationally over time. When there is no longer a power difference between the two individuals, it may be terminated or the dynamic may be redefined.

Formal and informal mentoring differ in several important ways. Ragins (2000) notes that in formal mentoring relationships, mentors may be less likely to receive rewards that benefit their personal development, and for this reason, formal mentors may not be as invested in their protégé. Another difference is that in formal mentoring, the average duration of the relationship is between six months and a year, and the amount of time the dyad meets may be sporadic (Murry, 1991). The artificially imposed nature of the timeline means that the trajectory of the relationship is likely to be significantly altered. In addition, mentors involved in formal mentoring programs are fulfilling their job expectations, and thus, they may encounter role conflict if what they determine is best for the protégé is not what is best for the institution or company. Role conflict can happen in informal mentoring dynamics, as well. For example, in the context of an informal mentorship between a professor and student, the professor may encourage the student to transfer to another institution. Although this outcome may be discomfoting for the institution, it does not go against the goals of a mentoring program as it would in a formal mentoring dynamic.

Because the dynamic of identification is not at the core of the dyadic bond in a formal

mentoring relationship, formal mentoring does not fulfill the focus of this thesis. However, it would be misleading to suggest that research has not demonstrated that there are benefits associated with these types of formal mentoring programs. For example, Bernier, Larose, and Soucy (2005) noted that universities often have programs that pair faculty members with incoming freshmen with the expectation that they will meet regularly with students to help them develop skills and provide individualized support as they transition to college and living away from home. These programs are based on studies from the 1990s that demonstrated that study skills, motivation, and academic and social adjustment improved as a result of this type of attention (e.g., Jacobi, 1991; Redmond, 1990). Bernier, Larose, and Soucy (2005) took this research one step further by studying whether protégés' attachment style determined how much protégés benefitted from formal mentoring programs. They found that students benefitted more from their mentoring relationships when they were placed with faculty members whose attachment styles were the opposite of their own.

Research regarding formal mentoring programs that focus on students of color is sparse. Hausmann, Schofield, and Woods (2007) argue that “how well a student adjusts to the academic environment of college is . . . closely tied to their developing sense of belonging with the college” (p. 129). They found that although African American students felt a sense of belonging similar to that of White students in the first year of college, their sense of connection to both their parents and peers were more significant factors than they were for White students. This possibility needs further research, as it is quite narrowly focused. However, it begins to clarify the role that formal mentoring can play for minority students in creating a sense of belonging that is specifically tailored to their needs. Louisiana State University has established a program aimed at benefitting primarily minority students who are underachieving as science, technology,

engineering, and math majors in recognition of the high dropout rates in these fields. Research examining the efficacy of this program has shown that minority students who had mentors were more likely to stay in their major (Wilson et al., 2012). However, this research did not examine how the other aspects of the program, such as academic support, influenced the final outcome of staying within the major.

Conclusion

Research examining mentoring relationships over the last three decades has served a multitude of functions. As a subject of study, mentoring is inherently subjective and is therefore challenging to examine objectively. Indeed, it is difficult to quantify the emotional depth and growth within this dyadic relationship. A relationship type unto itself, the gaps in empirical research regarding the benefits of mentoring relationships, the unclear impact of gender and race on the mentoring relationship, and the struggle to translate informal connections into well structured, quantifiable, and formal mentoring relationships all speak to a larger societal fantasy of what mentoring provides. The fact that so many people have voluntarily sought mentoring relationships throughout history demonstrates that this type of relationship is inherently compelling.

CHAPTER IV

THREE STAGES OF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

A naturally occurring mentorship must progress through a series of phases in order to achieve mutual benefit. This thesis defines three stages: initiation, creative growth, and termination. The second stage, creative growth, is the primary focus of this thesis since it is mainly during this time that the mentor experiences benefits such as generativity.

Although the focus of this thesis is on creative growth during the second stage, it is important to keep in mind the larger arch of the mentorship; creative growth is only one phase of the development within a trajectory. The trajectory of the three-stage relationship is defined by its ability to hold complexity and is similar to Winnicott's (1955) movement from the schizoid to the depressive position that will be traced through each stage. The mentoring relationship's developing ability to hold multiple truths and complexities as it progresses is what defines dynamic mentoring and allows for the dyad to hold ambiguity between the self and other.

The chapter is divided into three distinct sections that are rooted in the Object Relations and Drive theoretical underpinnings of each stage. The first section discusses the role of narcissism, mirroring, and self-object dynamics that fuel the projection and desire that establishes the mentorship. The second section of the chapter examines the roles of the explicit and implicit Dream and the role of fantasy vs. reality that constitutes the foundations of the creative stage. It does not look specifically at defining creative growth within the third space, as the next chapter is dedicated to the subject; rather, it discusses creative growth's place within the

overall trajectory of the relationship. The final section of this chapter concerns itself with termination and its importance in holding needed boundaries through the previous two stages. Additionally, this final section speaks to the ways in which the loss of fantasy and/or the crossing of the needed boundaries result in ending the relationship as a recognizable mentorship.

Overall, the chapter seeks to establish two interrelated dynamics within the trajectory of informal mentoring: first, the structural progression within the dyad that is conceptualized through Drive and Object Relations theories, and second, how this progression is conducive to creating a simultaneous shift within the mentor's self-concept that has some parallel to protégé's own progression. The trajectories of the mentor and the protégé are mutually dependent, and the mentor's experience of self must continue to evolve if the relationship as a whole is to progress. Without interpersonal growth, engagement in this type of mentoring relationship is limited in its utility for either the mentor or the protégé. One way to understand this evolution is in the initial framework of projection (i.e., you are me), which moves to creative growth (i.e., we create something outside of either one of us), and termination (i.e., we are two distinct individuals).

Initiation

Johnson (2007) writes that “one of the more consistent research findings within the field of mentoring is the fact that the vast majority of effective and enduring mentorships develop gradually and involve a certain degree of chemistry and repeated positive exposure before members of the dyad really commit” (p. 264). He is speaking to the process of building within relation to another. There are two aspects of Johnson's assertion that are important to deconstruct. First, the notion of positive exposure posits that we are drawn to what brings joy, which is not a surprising notion unto itself. However, when considered in the context of the concept of projection (i.e., that we seek in others what we like or desire in ourselves), it becomes

even more relevant. The mutual attraction of an informal budding dyad is founded in positive reinforcement.

The second part of Johnson's (2007) claim is that there must be a "degree of chemistry," a term that is often used to describe an unknown dynamic. I would argue that chemistry, whether romantic or platonic, is largely the result of a fusion between projection and fantasy. In this thesis, projection is defined as placing one's own thoughts and feelings unconsciously onto another. Berzoff (2011) writes that "projection makes it possible to fall in love, to care for children, and to empathize with people whose inner lives and cultural experiences are different from our own" (p. 79). This statement highlights that it is not only that which we do not want to acknowledge that is projected onto another, but also that we habitually project positivity that we want to see reflected back. It is this process—wherein the created and recreated sum of interpersonal experiences are constantly filtered through prior experiences—that provides for us the only lens we have through which to create our reality. Greenberg and Mitchell (1983) note that "the very stuff of experience, the ingredients of individual functioning is composed of relations with others, past and present, real and imagined" (p. 101). Again, they are suggesting that what we value as positive in ourselves is based upon the social landscape that we navigate through life. Thus, when we are drawn to someone upon meeting them, we are drawn to that someone because he or she is "composed of relations with others." They reflect back to us our projection of either what we value within our own character or the character that we aspire to attain. Our personality, as Greenberg and Mitchell note, is impossible to separate from "interpersonal configurations and it is this configuration through which we continue to understand ourselves" (1983). This process started through identification in early infancy and continues through adult development. Commenting on the complexity and ever-evolving nature

of human identity, Slavin (2013) remarks that “the core process of building a human identity requires complex adaptations for getting beneath the manifest level of influential relationships—from parents to culture—that will constitute and define the self” (p. 305).

Social identity and conceptualizations of “*you*” and “*I*” start in infancy, but they do not stop there. Slavin further notes that “. . . we navigate the tensions between our love for ourselves and our connections with the loved other; the self–other tensions . . . intertwine with our whole sense of meaning, faith, love, in face of existential terror” (2013, p. 299). Here, Slavin (2013) underscores the point that our personality is constituted from our continued socialization to a connected reality and that there is an ever present tension between our tenuous understanding of the self as separate and the self as connected to the Other.

In the mentoring relationship, there is a cultural expectation that the protégé emulates the mentor and that there are aspects of the mentor that the protégé desires to locate within him or herself. But what about the mentor? If we are to believe that projection is an ongoing and ever present process that allows us to make sense not only of our interpersonal lives but also of our personal constitution, what fantasy is the mentor in search of?

Identification is defined as “the ways in which the psychological attributes of one person are ‘taken in by’ or ‘made part of’ another person” (Ogden, 1982, p. 89). Thus, our personal identity is the result of the ways in which we understand and incorporate the Other into our own understanding of self. Vallery (1991) takes this sentiment and applies it to the mentoring process. “The identificatory process,” she notes, “creates a bond between the mentor and protégé and provides a means to fulfill important psychological needs related to adult development (1991, p. 87). In sum, this stage is central to healthy development for both participants within the dyad.

To understand that projection occurs at the beginning stages of the mentoring relationship

for both the protégé and for the mentor is to acknowledge that there is a portion of each individual that becomes a receptacle for the other by internalizing. Hendricks (1996) notes that “the mentor might be expected vicariously to reach a higher level of personal integration as well, vis a vis identification with the protégé. In other words, just as the child aids the parent’s development, the protégé aids the mentor’s development” (p. 48). This normalizes the duality of this often unconscious process. Although it seems logical that both members of the dyad would be projecting and identifying with each other as part of a healthy dynamic, the inherent power difference between members of the dyad means that this reality is often not acknowledged within the literature. To speak of being influenced and fantasizing about the other acknowledges a type of reciprocal vulnerability that sits uncomfortably within the social consciousness, and as such, it often remains unlabeled or undiscussed. The fact that the relationship is mutually chosen between the mentor and the protégé is to expect that there is both projection and identification taking place, and these forces are driving the connection forward to the second phase of the relationship. Although it is possible for there to be just projection, the other’s ability to take in the projection and subjectively identify with it allows for a continued and reciprocal dynamic.

One factor that has yet to be fleshed out in the context of projection and identification is the role of fantasy. Fantasy speaks to not only what we like about ourselves that we seek a relationship with, but also what we want ourselves to contain. It is the illusion of what could be, not only in the relationship but also in our character. Muller (1996) notes that “images of oneself and of others dominate the register, images that distort, that promise an illusory happiness, that camouflage basic human longing” (p. 23). He links longing with the promise of happiness, speaking very much in a language that is familiar to the process of falling in love. This is not to say that a mentorship is the same as a romantic relationship, but it is still worth noting that both

of these relationships share the role of fantasy and contain the possibility of something “bigger” than what currently exists. Each relationship is created within the third space of the dyad that comes into existence at least partially through similar drives.

The role of fantasy walks the line of both being about the other and being about the self. Rather than establishing a clear division that delineates fantasy of self and fantasy of the other, the desire for the other (often unconsciously) taps into desire for the self. Therefore, if we make sense of our identity through our interpersonal relationships, our fantasy of the other must always incorporate our own narcissistic desire. This is not to say, however, that our connection and draw to another is rooted completely in narcissistic fantasy. Conceptually, this theory finds evidence in the practical reality that humans are discerning and that they seek deeper connection and intimacy with some but not with others. According to Ogden (1991), “people do not project into a vacuum—there is always a kernel of reality onto which fantasies are hung” (p. 73). Thus, if fantasy is going to take root in relationship, our fantasy of the other and what the other symbolizes is co-constructed within our subjective reality. This co-construction of fantasy within the relationship is unique to that dyad and is considered to be the Third Space of the relationship. Simply defined, the Third Space is the dynamic within the dyad to which both individuals contribute, but is not owned by either individual. Rather, it is the relational space of how reality and fantasy are actualized within the relationship. The concept of the Third Space and its connection to the mentoring dyad is explored in greater depth in Chapter V, which is dedicated to the mentor’s creative growth.

Thus far, the terms fantasy and narcissism have been used to establish what brings the informal mentoring pair together in the first stage. It is important to note that the distinction between the theoretical perspective of these characteristics that often normalizes these dynamics

as driving human interaction and a more popular culture understanding which attaches a negative value to concepts of fantasy and narcissism. Additionally, it must be noted that there is a spectrum of fantasy and narcissistic expression. We cannot divorce our subjective worlds from our own self-interest. Acknowledging the existence of the spectrum, the functions of fantasy and narcissism find their pathology at the extremes of expression. Freud conceptualized narcissism as a negative force, seeing it as “a form of excessive self-love, which did not leave room for the love of others” (Berzoff, 2011, p. 43). Based on a limited economy model, Freud believed that self-love would tax a limited supply of energy, moving the subject’s focus inward rather than out. From this view, love of the other is therefore a sign of movement towards development. If one acknowledges that development continues throughout adulthood, and that we construct our worlds through a subjective filter, the possibility emerges that narcissism can be ever evolving as a continual tension between the self and the other in which there are no clear boundaries. To understand ourselves, we must continue to engage the other through multifaceted expressions that feed a continued desire to situate and stimulate the self. This conceptualization rejects Freud’s limited economy model and instead embraces the possibility of a healthy narcissism. Thus, narcissistically driven fantasy can produce growth if it is productively held in constant tension with the other and therefore simulates movement. The boundaries of the mentoring relationship and the explicit Dream serve to continuously channel narcissist drive into productivity by prohibiting it from acting out its true fantasy, which is never consciously known. From an object relational standpoint, Ogden summarizes Sullivan’s belief that “mental health can be measured in terms of balance between pursuit of satisfaction and pursuit of security” (1983, p. 100). We engage in a mentoring relationship to satisfy narcissism and fantasy within the security of role and boundaries. The first stage of mentoring echoes falling in love because

they both utilize projection and identification, which gain footing in the narcissistic fantasy of a potential, self-recognition through the other.

It is important to deconstruct this concept of “falling for,” which is posited to occur during the first stage. Both Freud’s libidinal drive and Winnocott’s maternal preoccupation find expression in this first stage of the mentoring relationship. Both concepts posit a self-state in which one does not clearly differentiate between the self and the other; rather, there is fluidity between the two states. The act of falling in love connotes a sense of mutuality in the context of the informal mentoring construct. Vallery (1991) describes the mentoring pair at the beginning stages of the relationship. “The emotional intensity of the mentoring relationship,” she writes, “is manifested in its use of superlative adjectives and its analogy to a love affair. When intense emotions and bonding exist in mentoring relationships, both the mentor and the protégé are affected psychologically,” (1991, p. 14). The emotional intensity of this stage of the relationship has an impact on both members of the dyad in the act of its expression. Thus, this conceptualization of love is rooted in emotional intensity and loss of self rather than the more popularly recognized romantic partnership.

Freud theorized that both sexual and aggressive drives are always seeking expression within the lived life. To accept that these drives exist is to acknowledge that their expression is multifaceted. Similar to the ways in which Freud’s belief that the sexual drive exists in children created public discomfort, the concept of sexual drive existing within the mentoring dynamic also holds the possibility of discomfort for institutions if it is assumed that the expression of this drive must be translated literally through a sexual act. Hendricks (1996) acknowledges this fear as well as the existence of these drives in the mentoring relationship when she writes that “the mentoring relationship [is] regarded as involving both libidinal and aggressive aspects requiring

careful management” (p. 8). This thesis does not dispute Hendrick’s (1996) assertion, but it is important to acknowledge that although a multitude of unconscious expressions of the libidinal drive exist, the majority of these are held in check by the super ego. In other words, although it is true that these drives’ desire for release is a fundamental component of human drive, boundaries—whether internal or external—mitigate the likelihood of their expression and allow them to often remain within the unconscious. The five psychosexual stages that Freud conceptualized to describe child development continue to influence our actions into adulthood where different stages can be enacted. A mentoring relationship in which both individuals are able to harness libidinal energy toward a creative end that furthers adult development is considered a more mature conceptualization of drive. Freud also speaks of libidinal drive as something that must be projected outward in order to avoid undue narcissistic focus; the act of falling in love with another thus saves one from oneself. However, this thesis proposes that the act of falling for the other is always in turn a narcissistic falling in love with the self. Through the use of fantasy, projection, and idealism, one falls in love with possibility of the other and of the self. In this early stage, it is very difficult to separate love for the other with love for the self or the dream of the self.

Along with the degree of libidinal drive that fosters the start of an informal mentoring dynamic, there also exists the framework of Winnicott’s theoretical framework of primary maternal preoccupation. Using Winnicott’s theoretical framework to conceptualize mentoring does not invoke a sexual component, and therefore, I theorize that his work would be more easily embraced by the mentoring literature. Additionally, Winnicott provides a theoretical structure for how the mentor/protégé dyad can parallel aspects of the mother/child dyad that simultaneously pays homage to the existent power dynamic (Hendricks, 1996).

Winnicott suggests that the “the mother functions as a mirror, providing the infant with a precise reflection of his own experience and gestures, despite their fragmented and formless qualities” (1971, p.134). Similarly, Greenberg and Mitchell note that “when I look I am seen, so I exist” (1983, p. 193). This process takes place at the beginning of the life stage in which both the mother and the infant become a world unto themselves. It is in this space that the mother provides every need for her offspring to the extent that the infant has the illusion of being omnipotent. The mother exists in this rapturous state for a short time, with her energy and efforts channeled completely in her connection with her infant. Although this phase of the relationship is necessary, Winnicott notes that it is not long lasting. In fact, from a developmental standpoint, it is very important that this complete attunement eventually ceases in order for the infant to successfully differentiate (1971).

In the mentoring relationship, both the mentor and the protégé enter the relationship unto themselves. The parallel is drawn not in creating the self through the other, but rather in creating the self anew through the other. The dyad moves through a similar space to “when I look, I am seen.” Hendricks remarks that within the mentoring dyad, “I am deemphasizing both the mentor and the protégé as discrete constructs, as neither the mentor nor the protégé exists in the absence of the other” (1996, p. 41). This could not be more apparent than it is in this first stage of the mentoring relationship when difference is obscured in the experience of captivation with the relational dynamic.

The mentoring literature often focuses on parallels between the protégé and the infant. Like infants, the protégé’s world is being created anew through his or her preoccupation with the mentor and what he or she symbolizes; this is the world that they are able to construct. Although this is an important theoretical comparison, it minimizes the psychological experience of the

mother/mentor. The transfixion in the child and the protégé means that there must be a release from the self and any needs outside of the dyad for a period of time. The mother/mentor gets lost within this consuming experience, and to a lesser extent, the original bond that it imitates.

This space within the mentoring relationship, which is created by preoccupation with the other and a struggle to differentiate one's needs and experience, can be situated within the framework of Winnicott's schizoid position. Vallery (1991) notes that "similar to the unique mother-child bonding, the mentor and protégé develop an intimate involvement with one another that echoes the merger of the mother-child pair in the schizoid position" (p. 83). Within this framework, the dyad is not seeking out fault or difference in the other. Rather, all energy is channeled into the merger and the fantasy of what could be and what is. There is no room for complexity or for tension. It is a state defined by immersion, which is supported by a fantasy created around the unknown.

There are, of course, differences in level and intensity of connection. We never return to the womb or to childhood, even though we may continue to enact dynamics of these first experiences throughout our lives. To feel held and known by the other and to unconsciously confuse the fantasy of the other with the fantasy of the self are central dynamics of the relational experience. Muller (1996) writes of the lived experience that after this initial preoccupation, "the want is a want-to-be or lack of being ('manque-à-être' [*sic*]) that gives rise to desire as an incessant series of displacements of this original want" (p. 132). He notes that the pattern of continual seeking defines the subjects' relational experience (Muller, 1996). Muller goes on to say that "the ideal ego is product of an imaginary identification, an identification with the image held by consciousness as a reflection of the mirror or the mirroring gaze of another" (1997, p. 141). This is an acknowledgement of the ways in which the original mirror within the infant

dyad, which provided a sense of initial omnipotence, serves as a foundation for us to continually seek our reflection in others in order to establish the self. This effort will never fully succeed. Indeed, the infant eventually realizes that he cannot consume the mother, and this impossibility results in a continual seeking and yearning to return to such a state.

Informal mentoring, which is sufficiently dynamic for both individuals to pursue, can be viewed as one expression of this seeking and fantasy. It holds the drive and relational experience of love and parental preoccupation. This is not to be confused with other expressions of connection that may hold more consuming fantasy and attention; it is not actually the lover, and it is not actually the child. If informal mentoring remains confined to the boundaries that define the relationship as a mentorship, this must remain true. Simultaneously, the tension maintained by the boundaries of the relationship fuel alternative expressions and growth for both individuals within the dynamic. Because of the boundaries that exist in the mentoring dynamic, there is space for other simultaneous attempts to know the self through alternative dyads. Actual lovers and real parent-child relationships create a model of relational enactments that the mentoring dyad is bound not to hold. These relationships must confront their own boundaries that fail the fantasy of oneness. In the mentoring relationship, as one might argue in all relationships, boundaries allow for play and creative growth and result in an ongoing, unconscious tension between the fantasy of oneself, what could be, and the other's embodiment of that fantasy.

Creative Growth

The first stage within informal mentoring is defined by fantasy of the self and the relationship driven by paternal preoccupation and libidinal drive, and the second stage is defined by creative sublimation of that energy in new and dynamic ways. This chapter posits that creative growth as experienced by the mentor provides both purpose and generativity for the

relationship. In this stage, meaning is created and recreated within the third space. This section situates the existence of the Dream in its explicit and implicit existence and explores how the dyad moves into Winnicott's depressive position, which allows the dream to have agency. The roles of fantasy and reality are very much alive during the second stage of the mentoring relationship for both participants in the dyad, but since there is greater individuation, a new type of tension enters into the space created by the relationship.

Slavin (2013) captures the transition from the experience of "falling for" that encapsulates the first stage of the dyad to a space of movement that translates the original fantasy within the relationship. According to Slavin,

Such "holding," in Winnicott's sense, transmutes itself—through, I think, some alchemy of the way we are designed by natural selection—into a creative space: A space where meaning is made—Winnicott's . . . "transitional space." A place where meaning is imaginatively created and empirically found. Created and found, over and over, throughout life. (2013, p. 304)

Slavin calls the space in the middle a "transitional space" and points out that the space is neither stable nor stationary. It is in transition between its creation and a more stable state. Its transitional nature is fundamental, for it requires that the dyad be in motion; this striving characteristic is fundamental to this stage (Slavin, 2013). Slavin also notes that this stage is "created and found, over and over, throughout life" (2013, p. 304). This echoes both Levinson's (1978) assertion that development continues throughout adulthood and Winnicott's (1971) notion of primary attachment, which informs the ways in which the self seeks out and engages in relationships as it moves forward. Slavin's (2013) work also emphasizes the notion that there is not necessarily one single expression or relationship that can fulfill a person's search for connection. Rather, the creative space occurs "over and over" in different expressions.

The question then becomes this: if the beginning stage is so all consuming and if the discovery of a new expression of self-fantasy is so comforting, what would propel the dyad into

a more ambiguous stage? Winnicott's (1971) framework of the child-mother dyad helps make sense of this necessary transition. The fantasy, which confuses the ideal of the Other with the unconscious ideal of the self, cannot be maintained because it depends on the Other to match this ideal perfectly. This goal is impossible to attain. To summarize Winnicott, Greenburg, and Mitchell (1983), the infant must learn about his external world, and this is only possible if "the mother's failure, little by little, . . . [shapes] the world according to the infant's demands" (p. 193). Significantly, this failure of attunement disrupts the fantasy enough that grounds for individualization emerge.

The failure of attunement allows for the reorganization of something outside of the self and moves the dyad into a constructive, co-created third space. There is an important distinction, however, between the original failure within the mother and infant dyad and its recreation later within the mentoring dynamic. As opposed to the conditions present at the creation of the original dyad, the mentoring space is entered with the mentor's and the protégé's previously constructed subjectivities. It is tempting to draw a parallel between the infant and the protégé because of the similarity embodied by the power difference within the dyad. However, unlike the infant, the protégé holds his or her fantasy in the context of many other experiences outside of the dyad. For this reason, both the mentor and the protégé have the ability to arrive at mis-attunement quickly since there are other historical referents (as well as current external relationships) that impinge upon the created space.

Moving into a space in which the fantasy of the Other is complicated by mis-attunement moves the dyad to Winnicott's paranoid position, a place characterized by ambiguity and creativity. Within the paranoid position, an infant is unsure that the mother can fully meet its needs; it oscillates between the safety of the holding environment and striving for self-

realization. The tension between these two desires propels the dyad into an unknown territory where the questions “can you meet my needs and how?” and “who am I in the context of you?” are pushed to the forefront. Winnicott and others examine this question from the infant/protégé’s perspective. In Winnicott’s framework, the infant moves from a state of omnipotence to one in which it strives to integrate objects in order to create a subjective experience. Within the mentoring literature, theory is constructed from the protégé’s perspective when the original fantasy must be integrated with the ways in which the mentor fails to live up to the ideal. Creative growth is the process of attempting to translate the self and its needs within this new context. In the process of navigating the unknown, the self is constructed.

It is also important to consider the mother/mentor within this narrative. Their role was also consumed in a fantasy of what could be possible for a brief period. As proposed in the first stage, there was also a Dream of self that drove the mentor’s engagement in the dyad. Within the framework of continually seeking the original attachment, and in reorganization of the self in response to the mis-attunements that failed to recreate the space, this half of the dyad must also navigate the primarily unconscious process of making meaning if they are to stay engaged. Thus, the failure of attunement must also breathe life and ambiguity into the mentor’s construction of the self if he or she is to stay engaged and propel him or herself into the third space. The ambiguity lies in the relational dynamic between the mentor and protégé, with the mentor and the protégé simultaneously experiencing the ambiguity of the fantasy between “you and I.” It may not be the only dynamic, but neglecting to acknowledge a parallel process of attachment trajectory is to disregard the ongoing process of adult development through relational attachment.

Thus, the construction of these two processes, which are navigating the chasm between

fantasy and mis-attunement, informs the construction of the third space. Vallery's (1992) work finds traction in the mentoring dynamic when she notes that "an 'intermediate area of experience' . . . is where previous feelings of omnipotence are converted into creativity. In the adult life this creativity is manifested in the arts, culture, communication, and playing" (p. 75). In the life of the mentoring dyad, the creativity is located in play and communication, which works as both an alternative for and the byproduct of the dyad's libidinal and parental drives. Creativity also energizes efforts to construct meaning between the fantasy of what could be and buffers failure to attain one's original loss.

In the second stage of the mentoring relationship, the explicit and implicit Dreams of the dyad come into play as they evolve within the boundaries of the relationship. The Dream is always present; in the first stage of the relationship, it was not challenged by the dyad's fantasy, as the relationship had not experienced mis-attunement. In the second stage, however, the Dream fuels creativity and exploration as a vehicle for expression in the third space of the relationship. In all self-selecting dyads, there is always the conscious and unconscious Dream that the relationship nurtures. The implicit Dreams within the dyad are the dreams that either individual holds about the relational potential of the dyad in connection to the self, but these remain in the unconscious. The explicit Dream is the dream of what the relationship will create and is consciously vocalized within the dyad. This Dream is commonly focused on the protégé and reflects the power structure in which the mentor provides guidance. Examples of an explicit Dream in a mentoring relationship may be the completion of a dissertation or increased competence in one's profession. Explicit Dreams give the mentoring relationship validity and structure.

Validity, both inside and outside the dyad, explains the existence of the relationship as

well as the structure of the relationship in regards to its expected time frame and socially constructed boundaries that accompany and support the explicit realization of the Dream. Thus, the explicit Dream is a fundamental component of the mentoring relationship. Without its existence, there is no framework. The explicit Dream, however, deals only with the level of consciousness. It is distinct from the unconscious fantasy of what expression of drive and object the self might be able to finally hold. Thus, the implicit Dream hovers in the shadows, holding incredible influence and power in shaping the relationship but never able to be fully articulated. The implicit Dream remains within the unconscious since it is partially linked to libidinal and/or parental desire; to consciously be aware of it is to threaten the boundaries that define the mentoring relationship. The implicit Dream can be situated in the needs of the mentor and not necessarily centered around the protégé's progress. Therefore, conscious recognition of this competing force would likely move the dyad out of a mentoring dynamic or terminate the relationship.

When discussing the dynamics of relationships, Richard (2006) says that “many aspects of a real relationship are there but never fully touchable. Like all taboos, the forbidden fruit of the real heightens the power of the situation and also makes the situation quite precarious” (p.104). In this conceptualization, Richard (2006) lends voice to the power of what is “never fully touchable” within the relational dynamic—that is, the unconscious. Richard (2006) is speaking about the dynamics at play within the clinical dyad, yet there is an analogy to the mentoring dynamic in that the realities of what the relationship can be contained by the boundaries of taboos regarding what it should never become. Richard (2006) is also speaking to the tension within the dynamic of what can never be held and therefore lends power or fuel to the interaction. He notes that this tension “heightens” the dynamics at play but also creates a sense

of instability (Richard, 2006). This instability is testament to the reality of the creative growth within the second stage that exists in a place of movement (Richard, 2006). The second stage inherently balances the tension of the *implicit* dream—which is seeking expression and is rooted within fantasy—with the *explicit* dream that justifies the relational dynamic and preserves the space of exploration (Richard, 2006).

Johnson (2007) speaks to the power of tension within the mentoring dynamic and builds upon Richard's (2006) work. "The mentor nourishes a dream and sets the student into creative flight, tempering idealism with the wisdom of experience," he notes. "The angst is the tension created in the attempt to balance the dance of dreams with discipline" (Johnson, 2007, p. 259). Johnson (2007) locates the tension as residing at the juncture between the dreams (i.e., fantasy, implicit) and discipline (i.e., explicit purpose/dream). He acknowledges the power difference between the mentor and the protégé in harnessing the explicit dream. The mentor "nourishes" and holds "wisdom," while the student takes "flight" with "idealism." The explicit Dream must hold forth this power dynamic. The dream that the protégé is working towards anchors the interaction until the relationship evolves out of a mentorship or else moves on to a new explicit dream. It is important to speak of power differences because they play an important role within the conscious dream. The student's explicit dream may be continually adjusted to say in synch with the mentor's own expectations of what will be accomplished.

Power informs the shape that the explicit Dream forms within the dyad. There is less potential for ambiguity, because the Dream resides in the consciousness of both individuals. The implicit Dream remains unconscious and is thus related differently to the external power structure. Johnson (2007) points to bias within the mentoring literature; most research focuses on the protégé's reality, positing that both members of dyad own the Dream. Hendricks (1996)

focuses on both the mentor and the protégé. “Implicit in the construction of a relationship is a task,” she writes. “That task manifests itself both implicitly and explicitly, and thus the constructive process involves both people” (p. 41). She reminds us that there are multiple levels of any task and that both individuals participating in the relationship are part of its construction (Hendricks, 1996). It is not just the protégé’s dream, but rather both the implicit and explicit Dreams that result from creation of the third space. Hendricks’s (1996) paradigm shifts the power to both the mentor and the protégé and acknowledges mutual creation; this allows for a deeper understanding of the fact that power dynamics are structured differently at the implicit level. Explicitly, however, the Dream is co-created, but the mentor holds a clear role in supervising its cultivation. Implicitly, the Dream never comes into language without being lost. Its power is contained in its ambiguity within the third space and within the individual. It is wrapped in desire for the self and other. Although it is co-constructed through the relational dynamic, it is also unique to each individual. Thus, Vallery (1992) describes questions that fuel the tension and ambiguity, which are needed for dynamic growth:

Unanswered basic question such as, “Is this my dream or is it yours?” “To what extent is the relationship professional or personal?” “Why am I special to you?” “Whom do I represent to you and whom do I represent to me?” (p. 83)

Each member of the dyad seeks answers to these questions, and the desire to be known by the self and the other is contained in the implicit Dream. The mentor and the protégé hold power over the ways in which these questions seek expression. The desire behind the Dream fuels alternative expression. It calls for engagement and creates anew. Its locus is the possibility for what can be known through the dyad.

Termination

The final phase of termination takes place when either the implicit or the explicit Dream

can no longer be pursued. This typically occurs due to completion of the explicit Dream, tangible and insurmountable obstacle to the Dream, the loss of engagement in the Dream, or crossing boundaries that nullify the Dream.

Kram (1983) aptly summarizes this stage in the relationship. “In all instances,” she writes, “this phase is a period of adjustment because career and psychological functions can no longer continue in their previous form; the loss of some functions, and the modification of others, ultimately leads to a redefinition of the relationship” (Kram, 1983, p. 618). Her observation draws attention to the fact that termination always incorporates redefinition. Therefore, termination connotes the end of a mentorship and the boundaries that define it. It does not necessarily mean the end to the dyadic relationship, which may or may not continue in another form. Additionally, termination is unlike the previous two steps in that there must be a mutual, though not necessarily identical, progression, which gives definition to the dyad. In this last stage, it is possible for termination to take place without the illusion of parallel process. Once an individual views him or herself as no longer being engaged in the dyad, it is impossible for creative growth within the third space to continue.

Termination that comes about as a result of a tangible obstacle provides a clear, external reason for why the relationship to came to an end. Thus, termination releases the dyad from constructing meaning that involves the intrapersonal dynamics of their relationship. It is possible that the tangible obstacle appears simultaneously with the awareness of some internal need for redefining the relationship, but that the external obstacle is the more easily approachable reason. It is also possible that the external obstacle prematurely disrupts the dyad’s period of creative growth and therefore instills a sense loss around the potential that the dyad held. Examples of

this include one member moving away, one of the member's death, termination of the program, or graduation.

Termination that is the result of crossing boundaries results when the safeguards required for the maintenance of the tension and dynamics of the relationship do not hold. Either the mentor or the protégé could transgress boundaries. However, because of the power dynamic involved, it may be easier for the mentor to transgress the boundaries that maintain the mentorship; such behavior would move the dyad outside of a stage of creative growth and end the relationship as a recognizable mentorship. Transgression may be defined as any action that jeopardizes possible realization of the explicit Dream. Because the creative growth stage depends on the inherent tension between the implicit and explicit Dream or reality vs. fantasy, the dyad moves outside of the unconscious dynamic whenever boundaries are crossed in effort to resolve this tension. A dyad that is no longer progressing through the stages of the mentoring relationship with a conscious objective of achieving an explicit Dream can no longer sustain or return to the preconscious space that was necessary in maintaining dynamic tension.

Termination of the mentoring dynamic that occurs when the explicit Dream is completed can be clearly defined and moreover celebrated. However, it is also possible that the mentoring dyad may accomplish the explicit Dream but still feel unresolved because the power of the latent Dream no longer has a clear vehicle for expression. It is equally possible that the internal resolution of the latent Dream for either the protégé or the mentor allows for the completion of the explicit Dream.

The last type of termination is one in which one or both participants are no longer invested in the relationship. There may be a shift of energy that does not provide the same sense of satisfaction that was originally the product of identification and projection in the first stage, or

perhaps the challenge and growth that was present in the second stage no longer holds dynamic tension. This loss of desire for the self and the other through the third space has its origins in the loss of fantasy; the comprehension of why this loss occurred may not remain in the unconscious.

In examining the ways in which a mentoring relationship may terminate, it becomes evident that the different types of endings can be categorized into fulfilling (i.e., a sense of accomplishment in connection to the Dream) or unfulfilling (i.e., unresolved Dream) termination. This possibility exists only in the final stage, because the self-selected nature of informal mentoring requires continual meaning making within the dyad in order for it to continue. Either type of ending, however, is self-asserting. Slavin (2013) notes that “we must become deeply attached to—and then, in some measure, differentiate, free ourselves from and re-establish—vital connections to others” (p. 297). He underscores the continual nature of changing relationships within the adult subjective experience. In the context of a continual search and an attempt at experiencing connection, termination becomes as vital and natural as the introductory stages, allowing for a new expression of “free” that is rooted in self-actualization outside of the other for both the protégé and the mentor. This reality of self-actualization must sit alongside loss. As Muller (1985) states, “Every boundary loss, then, is a dedifferentiation of self and nonself, and a loss in self structure and the individual’s subjective structure of the world. No boundary loss can occur without loss in the other” (Fast, 1985, p. 63). He brings forth the inherent loss that accompanies self-actualization away from the dyad, regardless of necessity.

This sense of loss points to perhaps one of the most significant roles that termination plays within the mentoring dynamic; the threat of the relationship ending, and not the actuality of its ending, maintains the boundary. Knowing the potential for loss within the dynamic provides

another way in which the relationship is checked, and the implicit Dream coming to consciousness remains a threat to the third space of the relationship.

Although the threat of termination helps maintain the boundaries needed for growth within the dyad, termination is also inevitable. The relationship must move outside of the mentorship dynamic in order for the protégé to ultimately achieve self-actualization, and this propels the dyad into a clear understanding of “you” and “not me.” Winnicott’s framework of the depressive position is valuable in understanding the need for termination in healthy mentorship. The protégé must reach the point where he or she is able to hold complexity, about their own capabilities, and that of their mentor. The ability to internalize what is useful allows the protégé to assert his or her subjective capability. Sustaining useful aspects of the mentorship has similarities with the original process that takes place between mother and infant. According to Ogden (1985),

The development of the capacity to be alone is a process in which the mother’s role as invisible co-author of potential space is taken over by (what is becoming) the child. In this sense, when the healthy individual is alone, he is always in the presence of (the self-generated environmental) mother. (p .56)

He notes that the dyad does not disappear; rather, it can become symbolic and internalized because the infant becomes self-sufficient. The potential growth within the dynamic has altered the individual such that he or she can carry the new self forward but must do so alone in order to create new space. Vallery (1992) makes a connection between the mother/child dyad to the mentoring dyad. “With respect to Winnicott’s ‘depressive position,’” she (or he) writes, “the essential ingredient for differentiation and successful termination is the mentor’s ability to allow the protégé to separate” (Vallery, 1992, p. 92). Thus, Vallery (1992) brings the mentor’s role within the process back into the framework. It is not only the child/protégé differentiating, but also the mother/mentor’s ability to let them do so. This ability to “let go” speaks to the

internalized growth that must also happen for the mentor. The mentor must unconsciously recognize the capacity of the third space within the relationship and be willing to release. The mentor's inability to recognize his/her own inability to differentiate and embody a depressive position during the termination process can be painful for both members of the dyad. Since the termination phase can be induced without parallel process, however, this is a possibility.

There is much less research examining the mentor's decision to leave the dyad before the protégé is ready or before the Dream is realized. However, conceptually speaking, to acknowledge the mentor's implicit Dream within the dyad is to recognize that the mentor may fulfill an unconscious desire or give up on the possibility of growth through the mentorship by bringing about termination before the protégé is prepared or able to self-actualize. This type of termination would likely be as difficult and painful as a situation in which the mentor is unable to release or transform the relationship when the protégé is ready to.

Conclusion

This chapter explored how Drive and Object Relations can be used to understand what moves an informal mentoring relationship through three distinct stages. I suggest that there is a parallel process for both the mentor and the protégé during the first two phases of that trajectory that allows for subjective growth, and I maintain that there are differences in the relationship due to role and power. Comparing the relational experience between the protégé and mentor to the attachment between a mother and her child, I theorize that because of an unconscious fantasy to know oneself again in the mother/child dyad, an enactment takes place. Enactment is most commonly used in the context of a therapeutic dynamic and for this thesis is defined as “emotionally intense joint creations stemming from the unconscious of both therapist and patient” (Pagano, 2012, p. 205). This type of yearning and reenactment is not special to the

therapeutic dynamic, and I work to demonstrate the ways in which it can be conceptualized within the mentoring relationship. What is unique to the mentoring relationship is the framework of boundaries that allow for a differentiated experience compared to relationships that can more easily act on paternal and libidinal drives. The informal mentoring dynamic allows for unconscious creative expression and play within these drives due to the fact that acknowledging or acting upon them terminates the mentorship as it is known. The draw to the growth that this play can produce, both for the protégé and the mentor, helps explain why mentors engage in this dynamic, above and beyond the benefits of generativity.

CHAPTER V

CREATIVE GROWTH WITHIN THE THIRD SPACE

The Third Space Defined

The Third Space is a co-creation of the dyadic relationship that exists apart from either member of the dyad. It represents the intersubjective dynamic between the two individuals and is always being created and redefined with meaning making.

According to Bebe (2005), “the dyad, rather than the individual, is treated as the system. Nevertheless, the individuals are the components, each with his or her own range of self-regulatory capacities” (p. 64). What is noteworthy in Bebe’s notion of a system is that the system is *both* outside of the dyad and yet utterly dependent on the dyad to exist. The dyad creates a system of knowing and relating based on the navigation of two distinct “self-regulatory capacities,” and the resulting dynamic is therefore unique to that relationship.

Common experience reinforces this concept, as it acknowledges that (a) all of our personal relationships look different from one another and (b) how we know ourselves within each relational context is unique. Our experience of the Other, and in fact ourselves, shifts in order to reflect the experience of their new subjectivity. Although the individual within both relationships is the same person, implicit and explicit ways of being and understanding must evolve in an effort to functionally navigate the other’s reality.

In his discussion of this sense of uniqueness, Bebe writes that “each dyad generates its own unique system in which both participants adjust their level of responsiveness to each other

in ways they do not necessarily display with other partners” (2005, p. 68). The unique nature of this system results from the responsive actions of each member of the dyad. The Third Space (also referred to as the Third) is in *this* essence of the relationship; it can never fully exist within language or consciousness and cannot be reproduced by any other situation. Moreover, the Third is never fully encapsulated in conscious language because it contains both the reality and fantasy of both members of the dyad. In the same way that our fantasy of the self and the Other are never fully conscious and thus cannot reside in spoken language (as was explored in the previous chapter) the Third Space can also never be fully tangible. As Muller (1999) notes, “the position of the Third we can never fill, we cannot be identical to it, but we can represent it as its delegate in our speech and our actions, we can claim our perspective as anchored there” (p. 477). Here, Muller (1999) suggests that although the Third cannot be held, owned, or named by the individual, it resides in our efforts to do just that. The Third “cannot be filled” since it does not fully reside within the self, and yet our attempts to fill it bring us into constant relationship with the other. The Third exists within the dyad as a witness to what is created within the relationship. We can never own it, yet we recognize ourselves within it.

By acknowledging that the Third exists in all dyadic pairings, we also must acknowledge that the mentoring dyad constructs the Third space uniquely, not just because of the new subjectivity of the other, but also because of the unique boundaries and objectives that characterize the mentoring relationship. Moreover, the reality that the mentoring dynamic may contain aspects of libidinal and parental drives but never can be a full expression of either drive, as well as that informal mentoring occurs around an explicit Dream, both place the Third in a distinct relationship category. The experience of the Third for both members of the mentoring relationship asks for a creative maneuvering through individual drives and the unconscious,

presenting itself as a vast landscape for knowing the self, the dyad, and the other.

Origins of the Third Space

Since the Third exists in all relationships, our first experience with it takes place in the child/caretaker relationship. In this relationship, where the other is constructed out of both fantasy and reality, a dynamic that originates from the ways in which tension is traversed emerges. As the child grows, the relationship begins to take on a pattern of language and rules, but not before the continuous and unavoidable experience of rupture and repair begins to influence the navigation of the caretaker's subjectivity.

Bebe (2005) proposes that this initial experience of developing the Third Space within dyadic relationships is similar to the dynamics of navigating the relationships that people encounter in adulthood. According to Bebe (2005),

We now have evidence that the timing of the adult communicative process is very similar to that of the infant-adult process. For example, the durations of vocal pauses are matched, the degree of control of various vocal rhythms is matched, and there is bidirectional influence where each partner's vocal durations are predictable from the other's. (p. 72)

It is not surprising that the infant learns this rhythm of connection from its primary relationship. According to Bebe (2005), however, we do this learning again and again within our subsequent connections. The Third is the essence of how both participants in the dyad must adapt and create a new system in the effort to be known by the other.

The infant/caretaker relationship is not one that is initially based upon connection through language; this develops later. Rather, for the infant, the Third in its first attachment is constructed through the gaze. As Benjamin (1992) notes,

The creation of this space within the relationship between infant and mother is an important dimension of intersubjectivity, a concomitant of mutual understanding. This space is not only the function, as Winnicott emphasized, of the child's play alone in the presence of the mother but also of play between mother and child, beginning with the earliest play of mutual gaze. (p. 57)

Benjamin's notion of play is important and will be further developed in this chapter. The idea that a space created in "mutual understanding" resides outside of language and within the gaze has important implications for why the Third itself can never be filled, despite our attempts to embody it (Benjamin, 2005). If our first experiences of connection are fueled by the tension of fantasy and reality that exists outside of language, then our efforts to capture and reside within it become false assimilations. The introduction of language removes us even further away from a sense of being known by the Other.

The caretaker's experience is often ignored in the context of the infant's first dyadic connection and the creation of the Third Space. The caretaker already possesses language and has already previously navigated relational spaces. The mutual gaze is therefore powerful, but one can hypothesize that it is not important in the same way that it is for the infant. Because the caretaker relationship is so fundamental to the infant's development, it has historically been easy to overlook the ways in which it can also be transformative for the caretaker. However, it is problematic to not value or explore the ways in which the caretaker comes to know him or herself uniquely within the third space of the infant/caretaker dyad, although theoretical work on this subject has become more common. By ignoring the complexity of the caretaker's navigation of fantasy and reality and the resultant growth within the infant/caretaker relationship, the caretaker's subjectivity and the ability to understand the magnetism of the dyad are overlooked.

The caretaker exists for the infant but also for the self; the caretaker's growth that arises out of the relationship is facilitated, but not owned, by the infant. Indeed, according to Benjamin (1992), "[the] mother's recognition is the basis for the baby's sense of agency. Equally important, although less emphasized, is the other side of this play interaction: the mother is dependent to some degree on the baby's recognition" (p. 48). Here, Benjamin (1992) is

acknowledging that one cannot exist without the other. The caretaker cannot know herself within the relationship or within the Third Space without being recognized by the infant.

As discussed previously, although the mentoring dynamic is not the same as the caretaker/infant relationship, they are similar in social, theoretic, and investigative arenas. Historically, the primary focus has been on the evolution and growth of the infant/protégé. This focus has not taken into account the Third Space of the relationship and how that space cultivates creative growth for the mentor. Additionally, the power differences between caretaker/mentor and infant/protégé share an important similarity, specifically in terms of the ways in which the dynamics between the two individuals structure the Third Space. In both relationships, the mentor and the caretaker have more previous experience. This history informs (a) the power dynamic between the two individuals in the dyad and (b) the sense of responsibility that the mentor/caretaker has within the dynamic.

There are also striking differences between the two types of dyads in terms of the ways in which the Third Space evolves. Within the mentoring dyad, both individuals enter with a history of navigating fantasy and reality within other lived connections. Unlike the infant/caretaker dyad, there are more moving parts informing the fantasy of what the mentoring relationship might fulfill. Beyond this, the mentoring relationship is constructed significantly through language. Muller (1999) notes that “the act of recognition by a human subject is mediated by language. To be more specific, recognition is an act of speech, and it is language that makes speech possible” (p. 473). In other words, once we enter the world of language, it is through this mechanism that we expect to know and be known. This system of communication may echo the infant/caretaker relationship in regards to structure, but there is not a period of knowing the other that is not somehow filtered through language within the mentoring relationship.

These differences are significant, but what is most important for the scope of this thesis is not comparing the Third Space between the two types of dyads; rather, it is important to underscore that the original experience of being known in the Third Space in the infant/caretaker relationship sets the template for the construction of the Third Space in the informal mentoring dyad. Although it is unlikely that the mentoring dyad will reach the level of intimacy that is commonly experienced by the infant/caretaker dyad, the unconscious striving of the mentoring dyad to recapture this original experience propels the dyad forward. In other words, through unconscious enactment, informal mentoring may in some ways be seeking to recreate and better understand relational dynamics that were at play within the original caretaker/infant experience.

It is important to note that neither the mentor nor the protégé fuels this movement forward; rather, the movement itself impacts both members. The movement and growth of the caretaker/mentor within the Third Space is essential to each dyad's existence.

The Third in Constant Evolution

A significant characteristic of the Third Space within the dyad is that it is in constant evolution and motion. It parallels the process of fantasy and reality that is always shifting between rupture and repair. As explored in the previous chapter, our fantasies of the other always exist within our fantasy of the self. That fantasy then must be ruptured by the object's subjectivity that stands outside of our projection. The Third Space is unique to that dyad and evolves because of this process. Tension results from a dynamic in which the other wants to be seen and acknowledged but not changed; this sets up an ongoing paradox, since to be seen is to acknowledge another's subjectivity and threaten one's unconscious desire for omnipotence.

One must release aspects of the fantasy in order to be known. As Benjamin (1992) states, "the ideal 'resolution' of the paradox of recognition is for it to continue as a constant tension

between recognizing the other and asserting the self” (p. 51). She is speaking to a continuing oscillation between the desire for independence and for dependence while also acknowledging that there will never be full resolution.

Where the dyad is within the relationship trajectory affects this oscillation of conflicting desires. In the first stages of the relationship, both members of the dyad are fueled by the fantasy of the other, and this blinds them to the ways in which the object or the other may disrupt their projection. In the second stage of creative growth, the dyad has moved into a more complex relationship that is navigating the implicit Dream between two different subjectivities. The resulting tension, which is primarily unconscious, creates a Third Space whose form is never fully settled. The Third Space is always straddling the line between what it is and what it is becoming, between independence and dependence, between fantasy of the Other and the reality of the Other. Benjamin (1992) notes that this is “ideal,” which may at first seem odd since it is in a state of instability. However, this instability allows for a state of growth between the mentor and the protégé, and this climate of tension is necessary for both creativity and personal growth. Benjamin (1992) emphasizes this importance: “Connection and separation form a tension . . . [that] requires the equal magnetism of both sides” (p. 49). She also notes that for oscillation between the self and the Other to occur, one must be drawn to the Other; there are elements of desire within the unknown (Benjamin, 1992). Thus, the first stage of the mentoring relationship is fundamental in transitioning toward the second stage of creative growth because it solidifies desire so that the relationship can withstand the inevitable instability that is to come.

The Third as Pleasure

The Third Space, particularly during the stage of creative growth, is unstable. This propels the dyad forward, and there is a role for pleasure within its construction. Benjamin

(1992) argues that other theorist's perspectives of the Third ignore "the pleasure of the evolving relationship with a partner from whom one knows how to elicit a response, but whose responses are not entirely predictable and assimilable to internal fantasy" (p. 46). This notion—the idea that the disruption of the fantasy by the other's unknown subjectivity brings pleasure—opens up new realities that are important to consider. The infant may be deregulated when she realizes that she is not omnipotent, but within this realization, the knowledge that there is something more—that is just out of grasp—can be stimulating. Benjamin (1992) describes the way in which the unknown is paired with what is known in order to mitigate a state of being overwhelmed. The partner knows how to "elicit a response," but the other's response is not "entirely predictable" (Benjamin, 1992, p. xx). In this second phase of the dyad's relationship, the Other is familiar enough that the risk of disrupting the fantasy of Self and Other does not necessarily mean loss of the object. Rather, this disruption and the resulting rupture and repair may actually feel pleasurable as a result of the ways in which the Third Space becomes more dynamic. The informal nature of the mentoring relationship is significant, as both individuals are attracted into forming a connection—the strength of which will be at times tested through the inevitable experience of frustration in the second stage. To withstand rupture and seek repair, the mentoring dyad must be able to locate pleasure within the dynamic.

Defining Creative Growth

Within the mentoring dyad, the greatest potential for creativity and growth for both individuals exists within the space of transition—that is, the middle stage where the dyad is fully immersed in achieving the explicit Dream. In the tension that exists within the Third Space during this period, when each participant oscillates between a fantasy and the reality of other, there exists the possibility of finding a way to express tension in new and unique ways.

It is vital that the concept of creativity be both defined in the context of how it is applied to the mentoring relationship and how it is understood in terms of its theoretical underpinnings.

According to Modell (1990),

Winnicott used the term creativity in a very broad sense as an attitude toward life and living. He believed that the creative attitude toward life arises in childhood as spontaneous play; that it is a creative attitude, which may or may not be accompanied by the talent that allows the artist to communicate to others. (p. 115)

There are several key components of Modell's (1990) exploration of Winnicott's conception of creativity. Winnicott conceptualizes creativity as broad, spontaneous, lifelong, resulting from play, and allowing one to communicate outside of the self; all of these aspects are connected to growth in the mentoring dyad. Winnicott's conception of creativity is also one that allows for a wide range of expression and focuses more on how one is positioned to interpret the world and communicate their interpretation to others. In reference to the act of communication, Winnicott points to the existence of the other. He establishes that creativity is the act of learning to communicate outside of the self, and the act of translating the self to another is an act of creation. Finally, Winnicott makes note of the role of play in simulating creativity and states that it can be located in childhood but then transcends into expressions outside of childhood. This echoes the common theoretical understanding that development and growth are a process that continues beyond childhood. Winnicott (1971) suggests that "we find either that individuals live creatively and feel life is worth living or else they cannot live creatively and are doubtful about the value of living" (p. 71). He also notes that one *enters into* creativity (Winnicott, 1971). Creativity is a way of living that gives meaning, and one can lose sight of purpose in life when they do not commit to a framework that inspires creative expression.

Although the notion of creativity as a lifelong, broad expression is fundamental to the way that creativity is conceptualized in this thesis, Winnicott's description of how fantasy is

connected to creativity does not align with this conceptualization. As Modell (1990) explains, “Winnicott is not talking about fantasy [when he defines creativity] but about the interpenetration of the subjective experience with the external world” (p. 117). The notion that fantasy can never be separated from subjective experience is theoretically challenging. If we believe that the subjective experience is built upon the ways in which our narrative experiences condition us to interpret our reality, and that our fantasies of the self and the Other shaped this narrative, then fantasy cannot be consciously removed from our subjective understanding of new stimuli.

Modell (1990) speaks to the differences between his and Winnicott’s definitions of creativity by using the word *illusion*, which operates in a similar capacity to the manner in which “fantasy” has been employed thus far in this thesis. Having explored Winnicott’s conceptualization of fantasy, Modell (1990) describes his own theoretical stance: “From the standpoint of the subject, the transitional object *symbolizes the interplay of separateness and union*. I believe this to be the essence of creativity; creativity cannot exist without this particular illusion” (p. 117). He explains that in his view, creativity can only exist in the context of illusion. The illusion is the result of *interplay* between the self and the other and the tension that results from this dynamic. In the context of a mentoring relationship, if the explicit Dream is the transitional object within the dyad, then it is over this construction of the Dream that the dyad can funnel creative drives resulting from the intersubjective tension between the self and the other.

Guided by the perimeters of Winnicott’s conceptualization of creativity and within the context of fantasy as inherent within the subjective experience, creativity in the mentoring dyad is defined as the capacity to seek expression of the self through the other in such a way that the

subjective position is altered. Using this definition, creativity is inherently producing growth because it resides in the ever-changing state of the Third Space that is both impacting the individual *and* impacted by the individual.

If creativity is the result of the unique interpretation of one's subjective experience as a result of being changed by contact with another, then the fact that the mentoring dyad is informal becomes essential to creative growth. In the previous chapter, the informal dynamic was noted to be fundamental to the relationship because of the role of that fantasy plays in the first stage to bring the dyad together. Exploring now the role of creative growth in the second stage, it appears fundamentally important that the mentor remains engaged within a context of tension resulting from rupture and repair.

Winnicott (1971) hypothesizes that growth through creative expression can be a choice in the adult life. Within the mentoring dyad, the protégé enters the relationship with the conscious expectation of developing an evolving self, and he or she is making a clear choice toward growth and change. It is through the explicit Dream that the protégé can articulate the desire and hope to advance on either a personal or professional level.

For the mentor, he or she also chooses to engage in the relationship, but there is not necessarily the same articulated understanding of personal growth. The mentor, however, must be an active agent in charging the tension of the Third Space. If energy and drive are coming from the protégé alone, the interpersonal space is not dynamic. Therefore, the second stage of creative growth must hold subjective engagement for the mentor, as well. Although this engagement may not be articulated in conscious form or in words, there is a clear choice to engage with the unknown and to engender tension—or, as Winnicott (1971) states, “to live creatively.”

Thus far, the focus of this chapter has been on creation, which is the product of (a) navigating the absolution of the self and needing the other and (b) expelling the resulting tension in creative, altering ways of being. I have not addressed why this tension creates rather than destroys as well as what allows this tension to remain non-threatening enough that the challenge to the self does not become overwhelming.

Understanding creation and destruction as being connected is an important step towards gaining an understanding of how and why the mentoring dyad can not only survive the tension between the self and the other, but also can grow as a result of it. However, if the boundaries of the relationship are not strong enough, or if the connection between the two individuals is not compelling, then the destructive end of the tension between the self and the other can terminate the productivity of the dyad. If these foundations are in place, the mentoring dyad must experience destruction in order to create. The destruction is in relation to the other. Every time an aspect of the unconscious fantasy is disputed by the other's subjective reality, it is forced to change. This notion rests on the belief that if there is something that still exists after the fantasy of the other has been broken down, then one can conceptualize it as truly existing outside of themselves. In recognition that the fantasy of the other can never fully be dismantled, this process happens again and again

The initial fantasy of the dyad, which originates in the first stage, cannot exist untouched if one is going to grow. Eigen (1981) and Ghent (1990), as paraphrased by Benjamin (1992), offer insight into this proposition:

When destructiveness damages neither the parent nor the self, external reality comes into view as a sharp, distinct contrast to the inner fantasy world. The outcome of this process is not simply reparation or restoration of the good object, but love, the sense of discovering the other. (p. 52)

In other words, one crucial outcome of surviving destruction is the capacity to love outside of the

self. Returning to the original infant/caretaker relationship, it is the infant's capacity to destroy the caretaker as an object that is constructed only for the infant's pleasure that allows the infant to dismantle an omnipotent self and learn to love the Other. To acknowledge the subjectivity of the external is a necessary destruction, and from this process arises the possibility of new creative growth through meaning making. It is possible for the mentoring relationship to enact this dynamic within the dyad if it can withstand the loss of (a) the original "inner fantasy world" of the first stage, (b) the possible unconscious and/or conscious aggression that results from this loss, and (c) the move to reorient in such a way that incorporates complexity. Neither the protégé nor the mentor can remain "all good," and this recognition forces an acknowledgement outside of the self and toward another's subjectivity.

The Role of Play in Creative Growth

When considering creativity as a product of how two individuals navigate within the Third Space, it becomes apparent that there is an element of play in this navigation. Winnicott viewed creativity and play as nearly interchangeable concepts (Modell, 1990). He saw creativity as a result of spontaneous play between infant and caretaker, which is then patterned as a lifelong behavior (Modell, 1990).

It is interesting, then, to examine the ways in which the mentor and the protégé learn to navigate each other through the language of achieving the Dream as a type of play. This playful navigation cultivates creativity. Play is a construct that allows for spontaneity because it remains somewhat buffered from the Real. It must be held in a framework that provides sufficient safe space for spontaneity in order for it to arise. Play is often thought of as being child's work, something that is transcended once adulthood is reached. Yet if play is defined as spontaneous exploration within a structure that mitigates the risk of such exploration, then play becomes an

important part of adult development, as well, albeit in a less traditional sense. According to Modell (1990),

Play must be kept within its own frame, a frame that proclaims that playing occurs within a level of reality apart from that of ordinary life. This separation from ordinary life can be established in a variety of ways: playing takes place in a certain space and has certain limitations in regard to its duration as in games that are “played out” within a specified time limit. (p. 117)

Modell is speaking to the ways in which a central feature of the definition of play is constrained by boundaries that allow for unknown freedom within the perimeter set. Applying this to childhood, the toddler can explore what it is like to inhabit adult roles through play since this represents a “level of reality outside of ordinary life” (Modell, 1990, p. 117). They can explore without experiencing the emotional toll of being older than one’s actual age.

This concept of play has exciting implications for the mentoring relationship and is fundamental towards arriving at an understanding of why the mentor in particular would be drawn toward the framework of play. Mentoring establishes boundaries and a clear space in order for the mentoring relationship to achieve its goal. The duration of the relationship is in line with the trajectory of reaching the explicit Dream. This is not to say that mentoring relationships do not survive once the Dream has been achieved, but it does imply that in order for members to remain in a mentoring dynamic, a new Dream must be established. Having a clear duration, a framework for the Dream, and boundaries that protect the relationship from experiencing tension all create a space that buffers the relationship against the Real. It is therefore open to conscious and unconscious explorations that do not have the same ramifications that they would for either participant in the “real” world, as long as the holding environment remains intact.

For the mentor, both caretaking and libidinal drives may fuel the fantasy of the other unconsciously. The mentoring dynamic allows space for unconscious enactment, and this energy

is channeled through spontaneous and socially inconsequential play. Because of the boundaries of the relationship, the mentor is not the mentor's lover or parent, and yet he or she exists within a space that allows him or her to experience aspects of both expressions without being in danger of actually acting upon either drive. The boundaries of the mentoring relationship allow for (a) an interface with another's subjective world and (b) the possibility of coming to know one's self differently as a result of the creative enactment that fuels the relationship. Mentoring can provide a space for play, where one may unconsciously explore these drives without any expectation that they must be acted upon. The fear of losing the space from which to know the self in a new light through the lens of another individual's subjectivity must be considered against the reality that the literal enactment of these drives would mean the end of the play the third space. This loss would result from transgressing boundaries and would also mean losing the protégé. Muller (1996) paraphrases Fast (1985, p. 63):

Every boundary loss, then, is a de-differentiation of self and nonself, and a loss in self-structure and the individual's subjective structure of the world. No boundary loss can occur without loss in the other. (p. 86)

The other that we "know" is held within the unique creation of the Third Space by boundaries that allow exploration; when the holding environment is disrupted, it is impossible to return to the prior state. Thus, although the protégé is not literally lost, he or she is lost as an object to the mentor. The dyad cannot return to the same creative space once the tension has been resolved. Consequently, the mentor's ability to utilize the protégé to navigate new ways of self-knowing no longer exists.

The implicit dream for both participants in the dyad is held in the unconscious desire for the self through knowing the Other. The creative space created by the tension between these desires has the transitional object of the explicit Dream, which allows for play to center around a

conscious objective. Because the source of desire and the resulting tension resides in the unconscious, it is never verbalized.

It is important to acknowledge that the mentor's play has different meaning and impact on the mentor than it does on the protégé. As Bebe (2005) notes, "transactional approaches propose that systems that function together are changed by their mutual activity; that is, they generate emergent properties" (p. 68). She is emphasizing that even though the activity (in this case, play) is mutual, the emergent properties of the activity may have very different implications for each individual. Benjamin (1992) takes Bebe's (2005) concept back to the origins of the relationship between the caretaker and the infant: "The parent is not literally sharing the same state, since the parent is (usually) excited by the infant's reaction, not the toy itself" (p. 48). For the caretaker and the infant, the transitional object is more literal; the shared experience is centered on the toy rather than on the Dream, but the play is similar in that it is eliciting different states induced not only by the Object, but also by observation of the Other's subjective experience of that Object.

If the mentor is likely to recognize libidinal and parental drives in their lives by having partners and/or children, why would one unconsciously seek out additional or alternative space in which to enact and channel these drives? According to Vallery (1992), "mentoring process sets up ambiguity that allows a creative process to occur" (p. 50). Ambiguity exists because neither individual can fully give voice to their implicit dreams for the relationship. The external boundaries within the relationship allow the dyad to echo the dynamics of the lover and/or the parent because they both can play with an alternative creative expression of the self without literally owning such roles. As Bateson (1990) writes, "life is an improvisatory art, about the ways we combine familiar and unfamiliar components in response to new situations" (p. 2).

Mentoring is one way in which the “familiar and unfamiliar” are combined in the unconscious. Ambiguous play opens new spaces from exploration.

Classical Drive Theory with Creative Growth

Although concepts from classical drive theory have been integrated and referenced throughout this chapter, it is important to pay explicit attention to how the theory is conceptualized in the stage of creative growth. It is particularly important to note the connection to the role of the unconscious and its place in maintaining tension between the self and other. Benjamin (1992) notes that “conflict between independence and dependence meshes with the classic psychoanalytic view in which the self does not wish to give up omnipotence” (p. 54). There is an important connection between object relations and drive theory in their conceptualizations of a human condition that desires the illusion of control. Freud speaks to this need for control in the five stages of psychosexual development (e.g., the infant’s belief that he has created the breast). A defining moment occurs when the infant is forced to recognize the caretaker as a separate subjectivity that may deny his demand. The subjectivity of the Other is both threatening to the self and alluring, as it forces the direction of energy outward. This direction of energy away from the self and onto the object moves development within a classical conception. It is significant in its connection to the mentoring dyad because it recognizes the individual’s tension between two self-states and its connection to development.

Secondly, Freud’s notion of the unconscious is significant in understanding the mentor’s ability to safely explore desire-related drives within the relationship. If one accepts that the mentor has libidinal, caretaking, and even aggressive drives, it becomes clear that in order for these drives to seek expression, they must remain outside of consciousness. The unconscious paves a clear way for creative expression since the drives seek fulfillment in alternative

expressions that are paired with the reality that they are never satiated, allowing for continued engagement with the object. If these desires move into a more conscious realm, the result is a fundamental alteration of the dyad.

The conceptualization of drive also plays a significant role. Both paternal and libidinal drives have been mentioned as possible unconscious motivators for the mentor's engagement in the dyad and his or her resulting ability to be changed by the dyad. Additionally, given the inevitable ruptures that will occur in the relationship between the mentor and the protégé, creative growth has the potential to bring repair and mitigate the role of aggression as an unconscious driving force. Although an aggressive drive can easily be conceptualized as an aspect of the mentoring dyad in the second stage, it has not been the primary lens through which the mentor's pull toward the object is understood. Berzoff (2011) writes that "Freud proposed that sexuality and aggression seek expression in the everyday lives of children" and that these drives continue into adulthood (p. 32). If we acknowledge the existence of these drives and our desire to enact them in socially appropriate ways as natural and important for continued growth and self-evolution, then the mentor's own development through the dyad is recognized as healthy, especially if it is maintained within the boundaries of the mentorship.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the connection between the Third as it has been conceptualized within this chapter and the ways in which classical drive theory provides a foundational structure for its conceptualization. Although Drive theory does not conceptualize the Third in the same manner that it is conceptualized intersubjectively, it does recognize the role of triangulation as necessary within dyadic experience. Indeed, Muller (1999) writes that "Freud had notion of third—I believe this notion is already present in Freud's delineation of the Oedipal resolution" (p. 471). When Muller mentions the Oedipal resolution, he is referring to the ways in

which the child's subjective experience of the dyad is mitigated in a manner that acknowledges a force outside of either and that ultimately forces change and growth. Although Freud may have applied this lens to the Oedipal triangle, he nonetheless constructed an understanding of the importance of a force outside of the dyad that both members are responding to and that creates movement outside of individual subjectivity. Within the mentoring dyad, the Third is the space created through navigating unconscious drive and the resulting tension that the boundaries and the Dream help move toward productivity. It plays a similar role of disruption and through that self-growth as the classical father.

Object Relations within Creative Growth

The theoretical framework of object relations has been significant in conceptualizing the mentoring dyad as an enactment phenomenon that originates out of the first dyad between the caretaker and the infant. According to Slavin (2013),

The almost miraculous nature of this meaning-making process initially lies in the collection of “spontaneous gestures” and recognizing interactions—the wordless, bodily experience of pleasure, warmth, a momentary sense of oneness and joy. Such “holding,” in Winnicott’s sense, transmutes itself—through, I think, some alchemy of the way we are designed by natural selection—into a creative space: A space where meaning is made—Winnicott’s [*sic*] “transitional space.” A place where meaning is imaginatively created and empirically found. Created and found, over and over, throughout life. (p 304)

It is important to consider this passage carefully, because it refers to many of the significant aspects of Object Relations that have been traced through the creative growth of informal mentoring.

Slavin (2013) first draws the reader’s attention to the role of recognition and the role of “oneness” in its connection to joy and pleasure. He notes that this experience is wordless, evoking a sense of being known outside of symbolism (Slavin, 2013). Slavin (2013) goes on to acknowledge that this original “holding” as conceptualized by Winnicott moves us toward a

creative space, if creativity is defined as the ability to create new meaning. In the second stage, the mentoring dyad is able to create new meaning in the Third Space, and a sense of joy is experienced if a strong holding environment is constructed within the first stage of the relationship. Then, Slavin (2013) acknowledges the fact that this “transitional space,” which is defined in this thesis as creative growth, is both created and found throughout development. Winnicott’s notion of how development takes place—that is, that it does so in relation to another through the navigation of a subjectivity outside of the self—is central to understanding how and why the mentoring dyad exists within the Third Space (Slavin, 2013). Furthermore, Winnicott’s notions of creativity and play are nearly synonymous and result from the exploration of the self in relation to other (Slavin, 2013). This exploration can hold both tension and evoke pleasure and helps construct an understanding of how creativity can be conceptualized in the making of meaning.

Lastly, Winnicott’s notion of the transitional object makes the explicit Dream relevant in the creative stage. The Dream is a tangible base that both individuals in the dyad can use as an anchor. It stands as the conscious purpose of their work together and remains consistent as the objective, even as the tension and dynamics within the dyad shift. The Dream transitions the dyad from the first to the second stage and creates a sense of alignment between the individuals that helps maintain a foundation of purpose in the midst of the ambiguity. Winnicott’s original notion of the transitional object allows the infant to move beyond the caretaker’s presence out of an expanding sense of security. Within the informal mentoring dyad, this conceptualization is altered as the transitional object creates a sense of safety not only for the protégé, but also for the mentor. It continues to be a harbor that both members can return to, focus on, and allow for drive and desire to remain in the unconscious.

CHAPTER VI

INFORMAL MENTORING CASE STUDY

The last several chapters have explored how the theories of Object Relations and Classical Drive can contribute to an understanding of the benefits a mentor may derive from the mentoring relationship beyond generativity. This understanding was first cultivated in exploring how the mentoring dyad progresses through a relationship trajectory. From this foundation, I expanded on the second stage of creative growth and hypothesized that it is in this stage that the mentor experiences self-growth. This potential for growth engages his or her desire to engage in mentoring. This thesis hinges on the conceptualization that to know oneself through creative play within the third space compels the mentor, who is unconsciously seeking an alternative expression of libidinal and/or parental drives.

This conceptualization of creative growth is now applied to a case study. Much of the dynamic interplay theorized as being inherent to the mentoring relationship exists within the unconscious. This poses a challenge to any analysis of these forces. However, I believe that by looking at written correspondences between a mentor and a protégé, there is an opportunity to explore some of the dynamics at play within the third space even if we cannot access the full complexity of these drives. *The Calculus of Friendship* (Strogatz, 2009) is the documentation of a 30-year relationship between a high school teacher and his student that spans the student's eventual tenure as a Math professor at Cornell and his teacher's retirement from Loomis, the prep school where they met. The narrative is written from the perspective of the protégé, Steve

Strogatz. The teacher is Dan Joffray, and his correspondence supplements the narrative of their relationship.

The case study demonstrates the ways in which communication in the dyad evolves through its utilization of the explicit Dream. I attempt to use the text of their letters to theorize the existence of both paternal and libidinal drives inherent in the third space of their relationship. This chapter uses the language of their letters to examine the trajectory of this dyad's relationship and their utilization of an explicit dream as well as components of both play and ambivalence in creating the tenor of the intersubjective space of their relational dynamic.

Initiation

When Steve and Mr. Joffray first connect, their relationship is not characterized by an absorption in fantasy in one another. Although they were drawn to each other through their shared love of math, their relationship does not seem unique. It is not separate from Mr. Joffray's other relationships with Steve's classmates who are also strong in math. It is not until after Steve has left high school that the two men start writing letters to each other that show evidence of projection and desire. Although their relationship becomes more complex over time, and although there are periods of disengagement, language characterized by connection and unconscious fantasy echoes between them throughout the thirty years that they correspond.

In reflecting on their connection while he was still in high school, Steve writes that “[Mr. Joffray would] sometimes watch me and Ben, the tortoise and the hare, with a look of such admiration, almost awe, and happiness too” (2009, p. 6). This excerpt indicates that the draw between teacher and student was coupled with the reality that Steve was not necessarily viewed differently from other students at first. Provocative word choices such as “admiration,” “awe,” and “happiness” all provide a clear indication that the protégé felt recognized for his talent,

setting the tone for the unique nature on which their mentoring dynamic ultimately capitalizes. It is important to note, however, that these are the protégé's words, and thus, they represent his fantasy regarding the impact that he had on his mentor. His language does not necessarily demonstrate Mr. Joffray's own projection and fantasy.

In the early stages of their relationship, there is not much original documentation of Mr. Joffray's perspective, both because they do not start writing in earnest until Steve is mostly through college and because Steve does not keep track of many of Mr. Joffray's correspondences until later in the relationship. It is not until 1989, when their correspondence is in full swing and well over ten years after Steve has graduated from high school, that we have Mr. Joffray's perspective to ponder. This does not mean, however, that aspects of their connection cannot be understood indirectly. For example, Steve's relationship with his former teacher evolves over time, as deduced through the less formal language that he uses to address his mentor. By 1989, Steve has stopped calling him Mr. Joffray and has switched to calling him Joff, indicating a growing closeness between the two men and a shift away from the highly structured student-teacher dynamic that was characteristic of the relationship when Steve was in high school.

Although their correspondence is not fully documented at the beginning of their relationship, there is evidence of the role of the explicit Dream from the beginning of the correspondence as it channels the fantasy of the other. There is not a clear marker indicating that the dyad has moved into the second stage, which is characterized by more complexity and creativity. Rather, this evolves within the relationship; as the reader of their letters—and I suspect in a similar fashion to the relationship itself—I noticed evolution taking place through small changes that are cumulative in their impact. In other words, there is not a single moment or turning point that stands on its own as an indication that the dyad has entered a new stage.

Their love affair with each other is evident in the Third Space of their written correspondence, which is grounded by the explicit Dream of mathematics. As the dyad's attraction continues to intensify and become more complex, it is most consistently and continually expressed through the language of the Dream.

In the first stage of cementing a connection, the mentor is understood as engaged and committed to the dyad based on his willingness to develop a shared relational experience through correspondence. Early in their relationship, Mr. Joffray writes to Steve, "It was great to talk with you the other night. I was feeling a might lonely" (p. 49). Later on, he tells Steve that "in the meantime I am sending you my admiration and gratefulness" (2009, p. 66). These two statements demonstrate the interpersonal impact of their relationship. It is around this time in the development of their relationship that Steve shares an article with Mr. Joffray that is couched within the Dream. "As you can see," he writes, "there are some enclosures with this letter. One is a short note about how to use Love Affairs to 'arouse' students' interest in differential equations and their solutions" (2009, p. 50). Although his reference to being aroused refers to a teaching strategy, it also connotes the possibility that he is echoing his own arousal within the explicit Dream as a former student himself.

It is important to note that although there are clear undertones of love in these early correspondences, this love cannot be separated from the third space. For this reason, an unconscious drive remains within the boundaries of the holding space that the mentoring relationship provides. The dyad participants are not explicitly trying to move the relationship away from its anchoring origin. They are not consciously seeking to enact a literal libidinal or parental love; their letters never move entirely away from the directed object of math. It is interesting that both men's literal relationships with their respective partners and children are not

fully explored in their correspondences in this beginning stage of the relationship. It is not until later in the mentoring dyad that important connections outside of their relationship are fully acknowledged and explored.

Creative Growth

Dream. *The Calculus of Friendship* focuses on correspondences between Mr. Joffray and Steve. Even when the letters become more personal and explore events in their lives, mathematics is the constant theme of all of their conversations. In the prologue, Steve notes, “Our correspondence, and our friendship itself, is based almost entirely on a shared love for calculus” (2009, p. iv). Here, Steve demonstrates a clear awareness of the ways in which this shared passion has acted as a conduit for connection. Steve describes the relationship as a friendship when he summarizes their 30-year long relationship. The explicit Dream is expressed through working for a greater understanding and sense of play around calculus problems. How the two men relate to the Dream and the nature of the Dream itself shift during the tenure of their relationship, and his summation speaks to its end state. Steve makes a connection between math as an explicit Dream and its ability to facilitate relationships as a dynamic that is familiar to mathematicians. “For them,” he writes, “it is more than a science. It is a game they love playing together—so often the basis of friendship between men—a constant while all around them is in flux” (2009, p. xii).

There are several important aspects of this quote. First, Steve invokes the concept of play; there is give-and-take and creativity within the dyad. Secondly, Steve implies that the Dream provides a basis for stability that is distinct from the instability of the world beyond it. The Dream acts as a refuge. It also important to note that Steve asserts that the Dream of mathematics is a stable, creative basis for “men.” Although it is likely true that he knows more

male than female mathematicians, his comment reminds us of the subjectivity that is inherent to all first-person narratives. He demonstrates the role of the explicit Dream, which is to provide both a common language that allows members of the dyad to understand how to relate to one another as well as a justification for their play.

Throughout both the text and the trajectory of their relationship, the language of the Dream continues to act as a conduit for their relationship. Steve recalls that,

In January and February of 1991, Joff and I corresponded frenetically, volleying letters back and forth faster than any time before or since. The trigger was a cryptic statement about a limit that Joff had come across in Carl Boyer's classic book *A History of Mathematics*. (2009, p. 95)

Here, Steve is describing an aspect of the explicit Dream, which has them both fully engaged as they work to solve an exciting aspect of the unknown. In the context of this quote, it is important to note what is going on in their personal lives during this period. During this time, Steve had become engaged to a woman despite having significant doubts about the relationship. He does not explore these concerns in the context of his relationship with Joffray. He also does not mention to his mentor their subsequent divorce soon after the marriage. Joffray, too, is going through a hard time. In 1991, he tells Steve that "the Joff family has been sweating out a problem since Christmas. Our youngest son Jeff (24) has been operated on for cancer and has just completed 3rd stage chemotherapy" (2009, p. 106). Several sentences later, he notes that, "a chance to recharge my batteries and fuss with the forgotten Fourier coefficients methods looms brightly. . . . I am deliberately holding off reading your explanation hoping for some last minute neuron stimulation" (2009, p. 106).

As the mentor, Joffray is more open to the realities of his life outside of the boundaries of mentoring. He more quickly and easily integrates a more complex self in his letters to Steve. However, it is important to note that he quickly returns to the safety of the Dream whenever he

ventures too far away from their explicit connection. Their correspondence around a math dilemma leads to them “corresponding frenetically” at a time where there are major stressors in both of their lives. I hypothesize that this is not coincidental; rather, it further illustrates the power that the Dream holds as an alternative and perhaps less threatening space.

Another clear role that the explicit Dream takes on in the context of this case study is that of a metaphor for the ways in which the mentoring relationship evolves. In speaking about his love for calculus and the dynamics and rules of the math, Steve makes several noteworthy observations. “Calculus is the mathematical student of change,” he writes. “Its essence is best captured by its original name, ‘fluxions,’ coined by its inventor, Isaac Newton. The name calls to mind systems that are ever in motion, always unfolding” (2009, p. xii). Later on, he asserts that “all pushes and pulls nudge the system to be some new condition, or some new place, where the forces are different again” (2009, p. 9). Lastly, he notes that “the most fundamental notions of calculus are all phrased in the terms of limits” (2009, p. 95).

In all three examples, Steve speaks to evolution, change, conditions, and limits, and all of these notions are relevant to dynamics in the mentoring dyad. Steve discusses his appreciation for the ways in which calculus is always in reaction. It is through the Dream, therefore, that language is discovered and provided—language that is emotionally riveting without being overwhelming (e.g., by directly referencing the mentoring relationship). There is predictability in its limits, and these limits allow for the exploration of new conditions and ways of being.

Paternal and libidinal drives. The pride and interest that Joffray takes in Steve’s career have parental undertones. In addition, Joffray’s desire for validation and connection take on elements of libidinal energy, especially after he moves into retirement. Both forces seem to

power his correspondence, and the boundaries of the mentorship provide a sense of intellectual holding, even as the nature of the relationship evolves.

In exploring unconscious paternal drive, it may be helpful to deconstruct some of Steve's comments. "In my case," Steve writes, "[Joffray] was more a fan than a teacher, always marveling at what problems I could invent and solve" (2009, p. x). Steve is referring to the numerous calculus problems that he would send to Joffray over the years as his protégé. In the aforementioned quote, Steve recognizes that as his mentor, Joffray quickly became more than a teacher; there is a clear current of pride that runs through their dynamic. The mentor's pride arises from the protégé's ability to take what was learned in the original classroom setting and to make it his own, using the mentor's framework to construct something new. Joffray shares his pride in Steve with others. For example, in a letter to Steve, he writes, "Your name, even to the ones new to me as a teacher, has long since become a household word (I doubt if one of them knows who Spiro Agnew is)" (2009, p. 86). This is a sentiment that comes up again and again throughout their correspondence. Generativity is also evident in their relationship, as Joffray passes down his love and knowledge to his protégé. However, I would also argue that there is something more than just generativity at play here; Joffray feels pride in what he has created and therefore feels connected to how their dynamic of correspondence fosters its evolution into something more.

The reader knows that Joffray lost a son Steve's age when he was in his mid-twenties. However, the reader does not know how his son died, and Steve avoids this subject until the end of the text. There is never a point where Joffray expresses a desire for Steve to be his literal son. We know only that Joffray has loved and lost one of his sons and has forged a relationship with Steve that has elements of the paternal drive; there does not appear to be an unconscious drive

that threatens the literal space that one might hypothesize would exist for the mentor as a result of the death of his son. The mentoring dynamic provides a space, in the form of his connection to the protégé, where the mentor can continue to note strengths, encourage and ask after him, question whether he is prying too much, and provide comfort.

As the protégé, Steve consciously makes a connection between Joffray and his own father. He notes that,

I did not write back to Joff after his stroke. Or call him either. Maybe it was a kind of exhaustion. My dad had died a few months earlier, in October 2003. Watching him deteriorate had been awful. . . . I don't know if that had anything to do with why I didn't write back to Joff. (2009, p. 131)

This quote highlights an explicit expression of the emotional landscape that a mentorship can take, especially in connection to parental overtones recognized by the protégé. Joffray's mortality in the consciousness of this connection is linked too closely to the death of Steve's literal father. The protégé does not write back to his mentor shortly after the news of his mentor's stroke in part because the paternal drive has become too close to becoming literal for him and would therefore threaten the mentoring dyad. For Joffray to continue to safely exist within a creative space that influences his paternal drive, the protégé must create space away from the mentor by drawing the line at creating a conscious connection. That Joffray does not take the same space when his son dies perhaps speaks to the power difference. If a child loses its parent, independence may be tested; in these situations, grief is connected with forced self-actualization. For a parent, however, the loss of a child does not solidify the individual's independence. This may be an oversimplification of the impact of loss, but in the correspondence between the two men, it is clear that loss in their literal paternal/caretaking relationships impacts the mentoring dyad and informs the ways in which the third space is maintained.

Although paternal undertones can be seen in the ways in which Joffray communicates with Steve (e.g., in the pride Joffray takes in his protégé's accomplishments and in the ways that both men react to losing the literal embodiments of these roles in their own lives), the libidinal drive is also evident in their letters and in the ways in which both men work to catch each other's attention. Throughout their letters, their play with mathematics and their marvel at each other's energy creates joy and exclusivity that take on the tone of a new romance. As Steve recalls, "I'm smiling—he's in such a philosophical mood, riffing about the state of math education, cheerfully wrestling with his calculator, blushing about not having studied more math in college" (2009, p. 44). Beyond the literal summation of what Steve is saying, there is an underlying tone of amusement at his mentor's exuberance, and the use of words such as "smiling," "cheerfully," and "blushing" convey a sense of youthful energy and attention to each other's emotional state. There is trust that is expressed as vulnerability, which allows Joffray to indulge in philosophical musings and to blush at what he views as his shortcomings within the third space of their relationship. Similar to navigating a literal love affair, the desire to be known completely is in competition with posturing the fantasy of one's best self. The tone of much of their correspondence is infectious and playful. The libidinal drive within the mentoring relationship is understood as the desire for the other. However, this desire remains within the unconscious and is instead expressed through a sense of wanting to be seen and noticed, in the form of feelings of love, and as coming together to create a metaphoric offspring, or Dream. These elements are captured in their correspondence. Steve later reflects,

These old letters make me smile. Not so much because of the math they contain but because of the Joff I see once again on the pages—his cartoon drawings, his self-flagellation and outbursts of happy exasperation, his pure pleasure in the logic of the argument. (2009, p. 143)

Here, Steve is connecting to the emotional reaction (e.g., his smile) rather than the Dream and to the ways in which the mentor becomes alive and playful (e.g., cartoon drawings, self-flagellation, happy exasperation, pure pleasure) in their written correspondence. The exchange between the two men is charged and exciting. It is built on a desire to be connected. It seeks affirmation and engagement.

It is not until late in Joffray's life that, as the mentor, he explicitly labels their relationship as holding love. In one of his last letters to Steve, he also acknowledges the ways in which the unknown and the ambiguity of their connection created both excitement and nervousness. As Joffray recalls, "I confess being nervous about seeing you. Our friendship/correspondence has meant so much to me over the years. Just the thought of you braving the drive up 95 from New York City for a visit is overwhelming" (2009, p. 139). Then, shortly after that correspondence, Joffray writes, "I love you Steve" (2009, p. 152). This is one of the last letters that he able to send. It is important to note that the literal expression of love comes closely after his acknowledgement of the impact of the other (i.e., his nervousness). His confession speaks to the depth of the relationship (i.e., "has meant so much to me") and demonstrates that the intensity of their connection is mutual (i.e., Steve "[braved] the drive up"). The vulnerability that comes with acknowledging the impact of the other allows Joffray to also make another vulnerable move—that is, identifying that impact as love. It is also in this act of naming (i.e., giving voice to their emotions) that the relationship transitions once again. This is a transition that Joffray, late in his retirement, wants to define as love as he seeks to clear their relationship of any ambiguity.

Ambiguity within their dynamic has been important for the purposes of fueling the Dream. Yet in Joffray's inability to stay connected to the Dream because of his advancing age,

ambiguity no longer has a clear role within the third space. Unconscious libidinal drive is fueled and maintained by the ambiguity surrounding what the other can evoke and provide. The ambiguity is held in the pleasure and excitement apparent in the other. It does not hold the complexity of loving someone in an explicitly conscious way that is incorporated into the full complexity of his or her strengths and limitations. Within the boundaries of the mentoring relationship, both Steve and Joffray can remain in the beginning stages of attraction, close to the unconscious and less complicated drive. Thus, in ways that are similar to a young love affair, seeing one another can create “nervous” energy that thrills in its capacity to overwhelm.

Ambiguity. As noted above, in order for parental and libidinal drives to stay within the space of creative expression and play, they must remain in the unconscious, always contained by the boundaries defining the relationship. In the relationship between this pairing of a mentor and a protégé, it is often the mentor who pushes against unspoken boundaries, an act that produces tension between what is and what can be. Steve reflects on his mentor’s desire to move the relationship into new territory:

First with his gentle question about my engagement, and later with the news that his youngest son was being treated for cancer, Joff seemed to be trying to change the unspoken rules between us, opening a new door in our relationship, or at least nudging it ajar. Whereas I, consciously or unconsciously, seemed to have been determined to stay in the well-ordered world of mathematics. Perhaps it was not an accident that this round of our correspondence was devoted to limits and infinity. With mortality on our minds, maybe we were both seeking refuge in one place where infinity becomes real. (2009, p. 97)

Here, Steve explicitly identifies the tension between Joffray’s desire to evolve their relationship and his own desire for their relationship to stay focused on the Dream. He recognizes that there is a draw to know Joffray outside of the world of mathematics, but he also acknowledges that world of the Dream allows the mentorship to act as a safe harbor away from the reality of their lives. Steve also acknowledges the ways in which his desires and needs within the third space of

their dynamic are different from those of his mentor. Joffray is pushing for more complexity and seems to be inviting his protégé into new spaces within their relationship. However, Steve seems to derive comfort from the known boundaries of their relationship. These competing desires over which direction the relationship is headed create uncertainty as to whether or not the unconscious and implicit Dreams that each member of the dyad holds can be met within the third space. This dilemma can either (a) bring the dyad together in seeking alternative expressions (and creative play) within the relationship to meet their divergent needs or (b) change the course of their relationship away from its mentoring nature if these discordant needs cannot find expression within the relationship's existing boundaries.

The aforementioned excerpt is the only time that this tension and ambiguity are explicitly identified. However, this does not mean that it is the only time that the dyad finds language to express ambiguity in their relationship. Rather, they do so consistently through the veil of the Dream, which is focused on mathematics. The language of math provides incredible metaphors for the themes present in Steve and Joffray's relationship. In explaining dynamical systems, Steve writes:

All along, the implicit assumption was that the moment-to-moment predictability of dynamical systems meant they should be predictable forever. . . . now we know that is not true. Some dynamical systems can be chaotic. Here chaos does not mean utter confusion. It means that even though the systems evolve according to definite rules, you still can't predict what it'll do in the long run. (2009, p. 108)

Here, the protégé gives voice to the unpredictable evolution that exists in their relationship, even though their system has a clear sense of purpose, boundary, and structure. As a metaphor for their relationship, this evolution speaks to the ways in which both the mentor and protégé's implicit needs and sense of the Dream are always in a state of flux. To acknowledge the unconscious drive that each member brings to the mentoring dyad is to also acknowledge the

reality that despite the structure inherent in a mentorship, “you still can’t predict what it’ll do in the long run.” This uncertainty coupled with the desire to evolve prevents the dyad from becoming stagnant. There are boundaries and rules implicit in the definition of the mentoring relationship, and these rules allow the dyad to tolerate confusion or ambiguity.

Play. The letters exchanged between Joffray and Steve are almost entirely comprised of mathematical problems; sometimes the details of their lives are featured in the sidelines, and sometimes they are not. However, there is energy and play contained in their discussions about math. They fire different ideas back and forth, they challenge each other’s thinking, and they have fun. For the purpose of this thesis, play has been defined as activity that facilitates creative growth and is held in the third space of the dyad’s interactions. It is a mode of exploration, which is situated in connection with the other. Steve unknowingly provides an example of the energy behind this play: “Not only did we revel in the infinite series he asked about but also in Fourier series, Feynman’s discussion of differentiating under the integral sign, the gamma function, and a host of related topics. We had a blast” (2009, p. 48). There is a sense of delight in the ways in which they are able to explore these concepts and push each other. Play encompasses anything that promotes exploration and creation and not necessarily just the more generally recognizable forms of traditional childhood play. Here, Steve’s description of their work demonstrates how closely play and joy are aligned in the mentoring dyad.

Joffray also demonstrates play in his exchanges with Steve. “So you have given me a boost by pushing me into Fourier work,” he writes to Steve. “The jigsaw puzzle pieces just get compressed [in an] accordion fashion and suddenly I’m seeing them as a camel’s humps. Humph! Here is my artistry for $k=3$ ” (2009, p. 67). Joffray includes a drawing of a camel that connects the different aspects of his math equation. The connection to creativity in this letter is

not necessarily the drawing itself. Rather, it is the way in which the cartoon exclaims “Humph!” and in the tone that Joffray takes on in exploring the Dream, which communicates engagement and curiosity. Here, the protégé is engaged in the explicit Dream, and the mentor is delighted, not necessarily as a result of the protégé’s work, but because of how their exchanges are impacting his own thinking as the mentor.

In hypothesizing that play within the dyad has the capability to evolve the relationship, it is interesting to see how the mentor connects the explicit Dream of exploring mathematics into his lived life. Unlike the protégé, who wishes to stay more strictly grounded within mathematical formulation, he notes of his mentor that,

Joff’s creative outlets drew inspiration, as always, from the world around him. He started decorating his letters with color sketches of animals, plants and people. He concocted math problems about the birds he’d seen or the boathouses he’d built. (2009, p. 123)

In a similar fashion to the previous excerpt, which demonstrates Joffray’s desire to move into the more personal elements of their lived experience, Joffray’s play within the explicit Dream is more robust than that of his protégé, as he incorporates aspects of his creativity and his additional interests outside of the Dream. Unlike the protégé, who is just starting his career in mathematics, it has been Joffray’s career for decades. His desire seems to be to take the Dream of exploring math and of seeking new ways to understand it in a context that is much more personal. Within the third space of the relationship, the mentor’s approach to achieving the explicit Dream seems to be, in part, to know it anew through connecting it to aspects of his own life.

Termination

In this case study, the literal termination of the mentoring dyad occurs when the

mentor is no longer able to write letters. Joffray brings up his own mortality often throughout their correspondence, especially after retirement. He writes to Steve,

I feel as though the gods are setting me up for some less than attractive event, but I'm not so superstitious as to throw my most treasured possession in the ocean. Besides, Sue doesn't like swimming in the Long Island Sound when the water temperature is barely 50F. (2009, p. 117)

He is referencing a myth that they had been discussing in a prior letter that says that the most valuable thing that one owns must be thrown in the ocean. In response, Joffray jokes that he could not throw his wife into the ocean. However, his humor masks his apprehension over leaving teaching. This is one of the first times that Joffray acknowledges that his career is coming to a close. He also brings up the vulnerability that he feels about this upcoming shift in his life in a subsequent letter to Steve. "Retirement from Loomis hasn't been a complete separation," Joffray writes. "In my dreams (NIGHTMARES?) I struggle to find my classroom as the time for the bell to ring approaches!" (2009, p. 132). It is through this process of transitioning into retirement and in Joffray's later references to having less time and ability to accomplish all the things that he wants done in life that the concept of ending is introduced into the dyad. At this point in their relationship, the dyad begins to move away from the Dream. Although math is still central to their letters, Joffray begins to write to Steve less. With Steve's new job as a professor and a newborn, the energy in their correspondence shifts.

Conceptualizing this shift in energy in the mentoring dyad is an interesting exercise. There is not a literal termination, because they stay connected through an explicit Dream even though how they relate to the Dream has changed. Additionally, the Dream no longer engages each member of the dyad equally. The power structure that once characterized the relationship has also shifted, changing the third space powerfully. The protégé no longer looks to the mentor or to the mentoring relationship as the primary container for the Dream. Their identities are no

longer structured by clear power dynamics. Steve is moving toward engaging in the Dream more deeply in the context of his career, even as his mentor is starting to move away from math as the central part of his lived life. As they shift away from the previous structure of their relationship, they start to move out of a mentorship and into a different type of relationship. However, it is important to note that there is no single moment when the mentoring relationship ceases to exist. Up until the very last letter, there are moments that echo their previous dynamics, even though it is clear that the third space has evolved.

In this case study, termination manifests itself as a move toward interpersonal growth as it moves away from the explicit Dream. Steve writes,

I suppose it's pretty obvious by now that I'd lived much of my life in my head. Most of it really. But on this day, I told myself I'm going to open my eyes and see Joff for the first time, and listen to him. (2009, p. 134)

Steve makes this observation in reference to his decision to ask his mentor about the death of his son, a topic that, until this moment, they had not discussed. In many ways, Steve is revisiting the time when his own father died, and he was unable or perhaps unwilling to connect to and “see” his mentor in the lived life. As the “center of gravity” of their relationship shifts alongside changes in the needs of their relationship, the protégé desires to know the other outside of the existing structure and boundaries that have previously restricted him. It underscores the notion that termination can be a source of significant growth for the dyad, even though participants are moving away from the drive and tension that originally compelled the mentorship.

Overlap Between Stages

It is important to note that in theorizing the three stages of mentorship and the functions that they play in facilitating the explicit Dream, it is easy to create an illusion that the three stages of the mentoring relationship are entirely separate. However, this case study does a good

job of dispelling this notion by highlighting the ways in which transitions from one stage to the next are achieved by the accumulation of small moments, some recognizable and others not. The role of fantasy takes center stage within the initiation stage, yet it is vital in propelling creative growth in the second stage. Because fantasy exists within the unconscious, it is possible to retrospectively hypothesize about the ways it was expression. The case study demonstrates that due to its inherent complexity, stages within a mentoring relationship cannot be definitively organized.

It is also easy to conceptualize the stages of the mentoring relationship as fixed. However, in Steve and Joffray's relationship, the intensity and quantity of their correspondences waxes and wanes. Theoretically, it is possible to see these fluctuations as types of termination. The cyclic nature of their relationship demonstrates that the mentoring dyad is ever fully out of one stage and functioning completely in the next. In fact, each time the explicit Dream shifts, one could hypothesize that the new romance of the initiation stage is renewed. It is important to acknowledge that the stages of a mentoring relationship are only a useful framework if it is also acknowledged that these stages can never fully contain the complexity of mentoring relationships' growth and evolution. The model of change provides language for the evolution that the mentor and protégé are working toward, but it is an inherently flawed system.

In the following discussion, I will examine the ways in which the relationship between Steve and Mr. Joffray hold strengths and significant limitations to conceptualize the framework and growth outline in chapters IV and V. I also entertain whether the critique of ill fit is better situated not in the case example *The Calculus of Friendship*, but within the theories of Object Relations and Drive Theory. I examine the ways both theories may fall short in grasping the complexity of the informal mentoring dynamic regardless of case example selected.

CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION

This thesis posits that there are additional benefits beyond generativity that compel mentors to engage in informal mentoring. I propose that these benefits enhance the mentor's potential to cultivate a deeper sense of self-knowing and that these benefits help explain his or her engagement in the dyad.

In its early stages, this work was influenced by Gretchen Hendricks's (1992) study on the coming of age of the protégé, specifically in terms of the framework that the protégé provides for conceptualizing stages and some of the relational dynamics at play within the mentoring dyad. This thesis seeks to contribute to this discussion by focusing attention on the mentor's experience and engagement within the dyad, specifically by identifying the primary growth of the mentor in creative play during the second stage of the relationship. Both Drive Theory and Object Relations Theories were used to guide the conceptualization of the mentor's own growth in the mentoring dynamic. The concept of the mentor's creative growth during the trajectory of the relationship was then applied to a case study based on the memoir *The Friendship of Calculus*, which describes an informal mentoring relationship between a teacher and his student over the span of thirty years.

This project is the result of an empirical and theoretical literature review of mentoring relationships, from which I conclude that there is very little focus on the benefits that mentors derive from mentoring relationships and that a more complex understanding of the mentor would

represent a significant step towards understanding the relational dynamics of this type of dyad. The articulation of a more complex and nuanced understanding of the benefits derived by the mentor is intended to advance the understanding of the role that mentoring plays for both members of the dyad and to create additional rationale for institutions to support and nurture these types of relationships. The theoretical design of the project speaks to its focus on internalized self-states and unconscious motivation, which, due to their very nature, may exist beyond the full articulation of the scientific method.

This discussion seeks to better integrate the case study into the concepts of both the proposed mentoring trajectory and the notion of the creative growth of the mentor. It seeks to illuminate both the positive and negative aspects of the proposed theoretical framework that are highlighted in the case study and to note issues that may represent fruitful areas of future research. The first section of this discussion examines in further detail the trajectory of the mentoring relationship and considers the dynamics of power, the transition between stages, and the mechanisms that enforce boundaries and idealization within the dyad. The second section discusses the concept of the explicit Dream and explores whether the Dream may be more co-constructed than was originally posited in the initial framework. It then examines the strengths and weaknesses of the case study, considering the ways in which the example of the mentoring dyad does, or does not, serve its intended capacity. Additionally, it proposes that some of the ways in which Object Relations and Drive Theory serve as valid conceptualizations of the mentor's experience in the dyad and suggests additional theoretical frameworks that may be needed to understand the full complexity of the experience. Finally, the discussion chapter concludes with a consideration of how this manuscript serves to advance social work practice and outlines further opportunities for research.

The Trajectory of the Mentoring Relationship

Although *The Calculus of Friendship* contains many of the elements conceptualized within the theoretical framework of this project, the dynamics between Steve and Joffray are more complex than the traditional types of mentoring relationships that Object Relations and Drive Theory seek to capture. The case study demonstrates this by providing additional considerations related to fantasy, transition, boundaries, power within the dyad and, in particular, how these elements may impact the mentor.

Fantasy within the mentoring dyad. I have noted the roles of fantasy and identification in drawing together the mentor and protégé during the first stage of the mentoring dyad. The fantasy is often unconscious and is related to the desire to experience not just what the dyad might produce, but also to the fantasy of the self and of falling in love that is projected onto the other. In support of this premise, Muller (1996) argues that “images of oneself and of others dominate the register, images that distort, that promise an illusory happiness, that camouflage basic human longing” (p. 23). In the context of the mentoring dyad and considering the historical focus on the protégé, Muller (1996) is arguing that the protégé sees within the mentor the promise of who he or she may become. This thesis takes this argument one step further by positing that the mentoring relationship also enables the *mentor* to know him or herself anew and introduces to the mentor the possibility of play with libidinal and parental drives and the thrill inherent in the fantasy of what the mentoring relationship might produce.

In Joffray’s relationship with Steve, the hypothesized fantasy is what the Dream may allow them to create together by exploring their love of math. However, Joffray tells Steve that he wishes that he had studied more math in college. He became a high school teacher and did not attain the same level of expertise of Steve, who is a tenured mathematics professor at Cornell

University. In this context, the conceptualization of fantasy is shifted beyond how the Other may see oneself or the vision of what one may become. Instead, the fantasy of what *might* have been is enacted through the protégé. In a manner that is similar to the traditional parental fantasy that one's offspring will do better than his or her parents, Joffray has provided Steve with the requisite knowledge and skills to advance beyond his own accomplishments. Steve's success in their shared career allows for Joffray's projection of his self in a dream of what he could have achieved in his past. Indeed, Steve reflects that,

Our correspondence was about to take off like never before, right at the point where our careers began to cross, his descending and mine on the rise. We were now at the same place at the same time, though taking different journeys. (2009, p.74)

In looking toward the role that Drive Theory plays in connection to the mentor's fantasy, this thesis has focused on the drive toward life. Both parental and libidinal impulses are rooted in this context. The process of Joffray "descending" toward his own mortality, however, makes these drives more complex when hypothesizing the internal tensions with which they may exist. This part of the fantasy does not include what might be created in the future; rather, it encompasses what might have been created in a different past.

For the mentor, the fantasy may be partially situated in the denial of his or her mortality. This possibility presents an opportunity to examine Freud's work regarding the death drive; Joffray's fantasy of unconscious rejection of such would result in significant internal tension. According to Mill (2006),

What we know or profess to know epistemically as mediated inner experience is always predicated on our felt-relation to death, that is, to the primordial force of repetitive negation, conflict, and destruction that alerts us to being and life, a dialectic that is ontologically inseparable and mutually implicative. What we call a life force, drive, urge, pulsion, or impetus is intimately conjoined with its opposition. (p. 375)

For the mentor, this tension surrounding the acknowledgement of his or her protégé's advanced experience might be hypothesized to be even greater. The mentor may have a fantasy to know

oneself through the play of creative growth in part to defy his or her inner experience of mortality. Thus, mentoring provides a fantasy in which mentors can escape this heightened tension. If Joffray can project the fantasy of what his own career may have become onto Steve, he can mitigate this tension. He can play with what could have been through Steve's accomplishments rather than focusing on the harsh reality that his own mortality has robbed him of the opportunity to achieve Steve's success.

Transition between stages. The case study significantly contributes to the framework of the three-step trajectory of the mentoring relationship by demonstrating the nature of unconscious processes. If these stages are conceptualized as separate and distinct, to believe that informal mentoring moves through predictable, predetermined stages while also believing that the timing and expression of the mentoring trajectory are unique to the third space is paradoxical. It is equally problematic to consider the stages of development in a similar fashion. In his discussion of Freud's stages of psychosexual development, Garcia (1995) notes that "the psychosexual stage conceptualization does not depict a clean, unidirectional progression, but rather a more or less sequential, yet oscillating evolvement of developmental motifs" (p. 498). Freud's model of libidinal movement in childhood and his conceptualization of regressive states in adulthood are dynamic and ever-shifting. One is never fully in one stage or the other.

Freud's stages of psychosexual development are also unconscious; clearly, a baby never thinks to itself that it has reached the oral phase. The mentoring dyad is based on a concept in adult development that recognizes a similar construction. We are continually evolving, but it is not a unidirectional and fixed process. For example, the case study demonstrates that it is difficult to define when the mentoring dyad has left the initiation phase and entered the stage of creative growth. As such, it is easier to acknowledge the possible evidence of fantasy and

hypothesize its purpose, but harder to acknowledge how fantasy is transforming and being utilized, especially because this transformation and utilization takes place within the unconscious.

Additionally, the case study shows that Joffray and Steve move through the three stages of a mentoring relationship over the trajectory of their connection. However, it does not outline the progression of these three stages (i.e., initiation, creative growth, and termination). These stages may have been repeated multiple times throughout their relationship. At times of major transitions (e.g., Joffray's retirement, Steve's tenure, Steve's first child, Steve's divorce), in what ways does the mentoring relationship fall back into primary narcissistic fantasy? In what ways can these events be viewed as hypothetical terminations, with the utility of the Dream unconsciously conceptualized anew?

Maintenance of boundaries within the dyad. *The Calculus of Friendship* describes a mentoring relationship that evolves over thirty years. The relationship is not held by external boundaries of a company or an institution that has expectations of what the relationship should look like, and yet the relationship between the two men does not devolve into an enactment of either parental or libidinal drives such that the explicit Dream of math exploration loses its centrality to their connection. Thus, maintenance of the tension created by the boundaries that define the relationship falls primarily on internal regulation.

Freud's concept of the superego may help explain how an internalized sense of societal expectations stands in the place of the literal institutional regulation that normally guides the boundaries of the mentoring relationship. In the example of Joffray and Steve, it is Joffray who pushes at the boundaries of the relationship by speaking about his lived life outside of the Dream—something that the protégé is unwilling or unable to integrate into their relationship for

much of its trajectory. It is unknown whether Joffray would have moved the dynamic further away from that of a mentorship if he was supported by his protégé, but either way, he accepts the boundaries of that have been established. This example illustrates the possible ways in which informal mentors may stimulate the expression of their own unrealized drives into creative growth while still unconsciously maintaining the relationship's boundaries—even if there are not any external expectations to do so—in order to achieve the unique channel for self-growth that mentoring provides. “Policing” or restraining oneself from fulfilling one’s desires in order to achieve a more integrated self would not be possible without an internal ability to both desire and deny in the same moment.

Power within the dyad. Finally, in looking at the framework of the three-part trajectory of informal mentoring, it is helpful to revisit Winnicott’s (1971) caretaker/infant dyad, in which the caretaker is considered “good enough” to provide a holding environment that allows the infant to achieve its capabilities of connection and exploration. This conceptualization of the caretaker/infant dyad is relevant to this thesis in that the mentoring relationship echoes the need for a “good enough” holding environment; however, the mentoring relationship also has a significant power differential. Although this focus on environment has been attributed to the needs of the infant/protégé, Benjamin (1992) notes that,

Mother’s recognition is the basis for the baby’s sense of agency. Equally important, although less emphasized, is the other side of this play interaction: the mother is dependent on some degree on the baby’s recognition. (p. 48)

This echoes the mentor’s experience. Like the mentor, the caretaker has agency that the infant does not have, even though a mentor is dependent to some degree on the protégé. In the mentoring relationship, the protégé is thought to need something from the mentor—often his or her experience and insight. This is true of Joffray and Steve at the beginning of their relationship. In light of their Dream of math exploration, it is the mentor who has power. In addition, in the

cultural context of the narrative, Joffray has the title of a teacher and has the experience that comes with his older age. Yet as Steve progresses in his own career, his ability to access and understand the Dream more complexly surpasses Joffray's level of skill. It is possible that the balance of power in the dyad shifts when Steve no longer needs guidance from Joffray to access the Dream or to build his career. It is the mentor who starts to ask for clarification and who struggles to understand some of the math problems that they discuss in their correspondences; the power has shifted.

However, if there is not a clear power difference in their relationship, the question then becomes how to accurately conceptualize the mentorship. Their relationship moves away from the caretaker/infant dyad, with the Dream as a primary factor in holding the power difference between the protégé and the mentor. When the power shifts, does the relationship no longer constitute a mentorship, even though the Dream and the boundaries that it created still exist?

Towards the end of text, Steve reflects on their trajectory of their relationship:

. . . Somehow he knew that's [the act of the Steve teaching Joffray] what I needed most. And he let me, and encouraged me, and helped me. Like all great teachers do. But now I also see that I did learn something from him—something profoundly mathematical, about how to live . . . the orderly and the chaotic. The changes that calculus can tame, and the ones it cannot. (2009, p. 142)

This is Steve's answer to the question of how the dynamic still manifests characteristics of mentorship, even after the power shift. Steve becomes an expert, but the Dream maintains its relevancy even in the absence of a clear power structure. There is an implicit, unconscious force that maintains the "memory" of the power difference; for example, Joffray models for Steve "how to live." The explicit Dream is needed to define the purpose of the relationship, but the implicit Dream for the protégé—to learn from his teacher's example outside of mathematics—kept the old power dynamic. The question of whether or not the power dynamic can be maintained as a result of the *implicit* Dream that is held unconsciously by one or both members

of the dyad even when the *explicit* Dream no longer contains the caretaker/infant, mentor/protégé dynamic requires further study. However, it is notable that Steve is able to recognize the implicit Dream when he looks back at their relationship; he does not discuss Joffray's influence and the role in his own becoming outside of math until it is an act of retrospection.

Construction of the Explicit Dream

In the literature review, I write that,

. . . it is conceivable that both the mentor and protégé feel that they can work toward the conscious Dream—only to realize the inability to do so based on capability. . . . These events are likely to dissolve the fantasy of what could be and bring an earlier termination to the relationship than expected. (p. 30)

This case study seems to argue against this premise for reasons that were previously discussed regarding shifts in power. At some point in the relationship, Joffray is no longer able to guide the explicit Dream around math due to his own limitations. The protégé surpasses his knowledge within the explicit Dream, and yet their relationship continues to center around the explicit Dream of math and continues to be a space of exploration for both men. It is possible that they are no longer engaged in a mentoring dynamic or that the Dream is still relevant as a mutual, co-construction, even in the context of the shifting power dynamic. It may be that the implicit Dream continues to hold the needed power structure, or that the power structure is less elemental to the definition of mentor than has been posited in this thesis.

The Dream is a vehicle for the mentoring relationship and over time it can come to represent a symbolic connection between the two individuals within the dyad. It provides purpose and a language through which members of the dyad are able to connect. As their relationship progresses, Joffray and Steve are still able to access this language and purpose, but it has evolved over time to a place of mutual collaboration rather than being driven by the needs of the protégé. What seems to prevent the members of the dyad from becoming simply friends,

however, is the fact that even though the power dynamics within the Dream have shifted because it is within the tension that the desire lives on the boundaries and tension within the dynamic are maintained. Joffray is no longer the sole holder of knowledge, and yet Steve and Joffray still refrain from speaking intimately about their lives outside of math until much later in their relationship. They use the creative energy contained within their exploration of math as their primary fuel for relating, escaping, and connecting. The case study demonstrates that a more nuanced conceptualization of how the explicit Dream and the implicit Dream maintain the mentoring relationship as the protégé evolves is necessary.

Critique of the Case Study

In exploring the ways in which this case study supports or calls into question aspects of the theories outlined in my discussion of the creative growth of the mentor, it is important to examine the ways in which the case study itself is an appropriate tool for this kind of analysis.

The positive aspects of the case study include that the mentoring relationship is informal, that there exists an explicit unifying connection through math, that it contains examples of creative play, and that the mentor's own emotional experiences are relayed first-hand at a number of points throughout the narrative. However, there are also ways in which the case study falls short. For example, the relationship is not always tied to an institution, both participants are White and male, and unlike other studies examining the mentoring relationship, these findings do not indicate that mentoring can advance the mentor's own career path. Although the positive aspects of the case study have been explored in detail, it is important to return to the literature review to make sense of how Steve and Joffray's relationship does or does not support existing conceptualizations of mentoring dyads.

Ensher and Murphy (1997) used 104 formal mentoring dyads to examine protégé

achievement, and they found that protégés who were the same race as their mentors received more “instrumental support” (p. 474). Although this study is dated and small, it is notable because there is a dearth of research exploring mixed-race mentoring dyads, especially in a formal or institutional context. Considering the increased number of students of color attending institutions of higher education and the small numbers of teachers of color available to provide the same opportunities for same-race dyads, this paucity of research is very problematic. Although this case study does not further this goal, one way to draw attention to privilege in current research on mentoring relationships is to use case studies that stretch beyond the boundaries of unspoken normalization. This case study describes the relationship between two upper-class, White, educated men. Thus, we must acknowledge its failure to contribute to our understanding of mentoring in minority groups.

Another limitation of the current study is that Steve and Joffray do not remain connected as members of the same institution for much of the relationship. While Joffray continues to teach at Loomis, Steve moves on to college and then to a career elsewhere. Thus, the external mitigator of maintaining boundaries outside the dyad does not exist. If unconscious drives were acted on, Joffray would not lose his job. Although it is possible to argue that society provides external tension that prevents the boundaries of the relationship from being crossed, there would not be the same literal consequences. The boundaries between Joffray and Steve are maintained by their own internal regulation instead of a sense of external expectation. What allows for this internal regulation even when there are no outside expectations that the framework be maintained? It is possible that the relationship between Joffray and Steve speaks to an unarticulated recognition of the importance of the internal boundaries (i.e., the superego); they

may be denying their desire in service to a unique type of growth within the third space. This possibility requires further exploration.

Finally, the fact that the mentor is not affiliated with an institution means that one of the traditional benefits for the mentor—career advancement and satisfaction—does not serve as a driving force for Joffray. A significant moment in the dyad’s relationship transpires after Joffray has retired from Loomis; even when the duo was collaborating around the Dream of math exploration before his retirement, Steve was no longer a student at the school. Gosh and Rio (2013) found that “mentors were more satisfied with their jobs and committed to the organization” (p. 106) but also pointed out that “the most important challenge [for future research] would be to control for mentors being already high performers or having higher commitment towards their organizations and greater satisfaction at work” (p.113). This certainly seems to be a strong possibility for Joffray. Over the course of his relationship with Steve, he wins two distinguished awards for teaching. Although his relationship with Steve may have provided some fuel for his work, it is also clear that Joffray championed many of his former students’ accomplishments. Furthermore, he was already a popular and dedicated teacher before entering his relationship with Steve. There is no evidence to suggest that Joffray’s mentoring of Steve provided him with career benefits, and yet it is evident that Joffray has found his relationship with Steve to be important and beneficial beyond a professional capacity. This is demonstrated by the fact that he reaches out and maintains contact with his protégé and in his statements of nervousness and love that he conveys to Steve. Thus, it is possible that Joffray locates more growth and benefit interpersonally than from his professional growth.

In summary, a significant way in which Joffray and Steve’s relationship pushes the framework of this thesis is that there is no external third entity that helps them maintain

boundaries and that directly capitalizes on professional benefits for the mentor. The absence of an external mediator in their relationship also means that there is no clear timeline established for the relationship to evolve or transition, as there would have been if Steve was graduating or finishing a dissertation.

Finally, Steven and Joffray do not characterize their relationship as a mentorship, although it holds an explicit Dream, has boundaries that maintain the Third Space, and holds a power differential between the members of the dyad. In recognizing that the relationship was constructed informally, this may be unsurprising. I hypothesize that many relationships similar to that of Steve and Joffray's are not named other than in a retrospective fashion. Thus, an important question that merits further study would be to explore the power of language and formal definitions in the mentoring relationship as well as what impact this has on the way in which the Third Space evolves.

Contribution to Social Work

Gosh and Rio (2013) state that "most of existent research on mentoring benefits has focused on the protégés with the mentors' benefits receiving comparatively much less attention. Only recently, some studies have started exploring the benefits of being a mentor" (p. 106). Although renewed interest in the mentor is noteworthy, there has been very little work exploring the mentor's experience through a psychodynamic framework. I believe that psychodynamic theory is particularly well suited for this inquiry in its attempt to understand the internal and unconscious process that compels the mentoring relationship. Such work could lead to a deeper appreciation for the dynamics within the mentoring relationship that would not otherwise be quantifiable.

The informal mentoring relationship is unique. The relationship is neither that of a parent

nor a lover and one in which both individuals enter freely. Lastly, its trajectory is determined by the explicit Dream. Yet informal mentorships are very common. When doing background preparation for the thesis, the word mentor never failed to evoke stories; people always wanted to speak about the importance that a guiding force had in their life. Part of what evokes such a strong reaction may be the ability of informal mentorships to engender creative growth as a result of its unique nature. The social work Code of Ethics (NASW, 2008) lists one of its guiding principals as the importance of human relationships, and we must recognize the central importance of these relationships:

Social workers understand that relationships between and among people are an important vehicle for change. Social workers engage people as partners in the helping process. Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities. (par. 21)

Indeed, this profession is rooted in the acknowledgement of the importance of human connection. Social workers must seek to “promote, restore, maintain, and enhance” connection out of the belief that it is through connection with another that change occurs.

This thesis posits that to better understand the dynamics of informal mentoring—from the experience of the mentor in addition to that of the protégé—it is important to understand the power behind the connection and how this connection promotes dual growth and self-understanding. It argues against the notion that only one member benefits from the relationship and hints at a more complex perspective that recognizes the ways in which people influence each other even within power structures. It acknowledges that humans are continually involving themselves in dynamics that require them to grow as people by understanding themselves in the context of another. Informal mentoring is one such dynamic where this dual growth is not fully accepted or acknowledged. This thesis theorizes that knowing the self is a process that is often

facilitated through coming together with what is outside of oneself. In observing the therapeutic dyad, Muller (1999) states that,

Desire is understood as a lack, a want, an experience of incompleteness, the act of recognition provided by the therapist is the act whereby the patient's lack is recognized as the therapist recognizes the desire of the patient. (p. 472)

Between the clinician and the client, Muller (1999) is defining recognition as the ability to see another person's desire as speaking to what that person lack. This lack, this sense of incompleteness, only holds shame if it is understood as unique or as a weakness. Muller (1999) draws an important connection between incompleteness and desire and shows that this connection is witnessed by another. However, Muller (1999) fails to recognize that the client, too, is witnessing incompleteness in the clinician.

Incompleteness and its resulting desire are seen as unique if they are not conceptualized as being both outside of ourselves and also always within ourselves. The caretaker gaze contextualizes the infant, but the infant also contextualizes the caretaker. It is not the same process; rather, there is more than one process unfolding in this connection between caretaker and infant. The same can be said of the client and clinician, and I argue that it can also be said of the protégé and mentor. To acknowledge desire in the mentor for the protégé as being rooted in the protégé's ability to support the mentor's creative growth is to also acknowledge the role of interconnection. As a profession, social work values human relationships because it acknowledges that they are vehicles for change. The danger comes when one expects to enact change without being changed themselves.

Contribution to Psychodynamic Theory

This thesis focused on Object Relations and Classical Drive Theory because they complement each other by explaining first the pull towards mentoring and then the theorized growth that can happen within the Third Space.

Classical Drive Theory provides a basis for situating the role of the unconscious within the mentoring dyad. The unconscious permits the relationship to move through its various stages and to be self-serving. The theory uses drive to explain what compels the mentor to connect to the protégé and the ways in which both parental and libidinal drive may fuel growth and interaction within the connection. Finally, drive theory provides the basis for boundaries within the relationship regardless of whether they are put there as a result of internal or external force, and in this way this, mitigates behavior that is not in accordance with the roles of the mentor and the protégé.

Object Relations Theory supports the findings presented in this thesis by examining the role of growth through attachment to the Other. It provides a deeper understanding of the ways in which the mentor creates a necessary holding space and the ways in which the relationship mirrors aspects of the caretaker/infant relationship. Winnicott's (1971) notions around growth and play were instrumental in conceptualizing the ways in which the mentor and the protégé enact play within their own framework. Finally, the conceptualization of a Third Space, which neither member of the dyad owns but both construct, is essential to understanding the mentoring relationship and its subsequent growth as a co-construction rather than something that is only defined by what the mentor provides the protégé.

Although Object Relations and Drive Theory are the basis of this work, there are clear weaknesses in the ability of each of these theories to explain the basis of the mentor's growth. Drive Theory is a model of economics; it encompasses the belief that energy can be used up and that it must be projected outward or else bring destruction inward. It is a primarily narcissistic model that focuses on the individual system. Although this is certainly part of what play is in the mentoring dyad, Drive Theory on its own fails to explain the complexity of what is created in the

mentor and protégé's co-construction. In addition, Drive Theory does not place the person in context of environment. It does not explore how social constructions influence the individual and therefore subsequently influence how the dynamic between mentor and protégé evolves. Thus, other theories are required to address this gap. Lastly, Classical Drive Theory originally sought to explain stages of growth, and so it does not conceptualize a continuation of evolution and adult development. There can be regression to previous developmental stages, but progress is measured through autonomy. This model does not allow for the possibility of understanding connection as a more evolved state.

Similarly, an Object Relations lens also falls short in conceptualizing the mentoring dynamic and the mentor's growth. There is an interesting parallel between the mentoring dyad and the caretaker/infant relationship. In Traditional Object Relations Theory, Winnicott posited the concept of the "good enough" mother, which is a basic need that the infant requires to thrive. When this theory is applied to the mentoring dyad, the mentor is to blame if the space created is not one in which the explicit Dream thrives and the protégé benefits. However, this thesis has also posited that the protégé must also be responsible for creating and maintaining the boundaries within the mentoring relationship, and this raises the question of whether it is only the mentor's fault if the relationship fails. Moreover, Object Relations has historically not explored the mother's own subjectivity within the initial attachment, and it does not provide a framework for explaining the ways in which the mother uses the relationship with her infant for personal growth. It does not outline the impact of how failing to be a "good enough" mother might impact subsequent adult development, or the ways in which over time the caretaker understands his or herself as the infant moves towards autonomy. Does growth in the infant through missed connections and repair release more flexibility in the caretaker for the depressive position, and is

this related to heightened creative growth between the mentor and the protégé in the second stage? In many ways, Object Relations highlights the weaknesses of current mentoring research. It does not concern itself with the caretaker's subjective growth, and thus, it cannot account for the true complexity of the relationship.

Future Research Directions

This thesis sought to fill a gap in the mentoring literature by using psychodynamic theory to investigate the impact that an informal mentoring relationship can have on adult development in the mentor. In exploring what future research directions the literature might take, there seem to be two important areas of focus: (1) the expansion of existing theory or the development of new theories to address the gaps inherent in the application of Drive and Object Relations Theories to the mentoring dyad, and (2) the need for better conceptualization of how to apply theories that draw on unconscious processes to empirical research.

In exploring the first possible research direction, asking how the mentor is understood in the context of an informal mentoring relationship needs to be further explored using more current theoretical models, such as Attachment and Intersubjective Theories. Additionally, it is also important to develop a more complex understanding of informal mentoring from both Feminist and Postcolonial frameworks where the roles of gender, race, and class disrupt notions of who mentors are and what mentoring looks like. Finally, there needs to be more discussion of the ways in which growth can be seen as moving toward connection rather than moving toward autonomy. It is also important to note that this thesis examined mentoring in an academic environment with a nod to mentoring in the work space, but what happens when this concept is removed from these frameworks? How can mentoring be understood outside of a dyadic model? Are there ways that mentoring can take place as a larger collective? These theories may start to

help inform the answers to these questions.

Future research must also seek to clarify how theories can be used to measure unconscious processes and resultant growth. With regards to the protégé, growth is often seen in the ways that the explicit Dream is achieved. However, this measurement does not take into account the additional benefits that the mentoring dynamic may have provided for the protégé and mentor alike. Presently, studies examining mentoring relationships are often based on self-report, qualitative data. This method relies on the mentor and protégé to be sufficiently aware of their own internal processes to put them into words. Thus, it may be valuable to explore additional and more nuanced ways of quantifying and evaluating how meaning is derived from the mentoring relationship. This is an important and necessary inquiry that will help illuminate the benefits that mentors derive from informal mentoring relationships. This is also the necessary next step to inspire focus and support from institutions in cultivating environments that encourage deeper connections between mentors and protégés.

References

- Allen, T. D. & Eby, L. T (2007). Overview and introduction. In *The Blackwell Handbook of Mentoring* (pp. 3-7). Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing. Retrieved November 2, 2013, from http://www.blackwellreference.com/subscriber/tocnode.html?id=g9781405133739_chunk_g97814051337391
- Astin, A. W. (1977). *Four critical years: Effects of college on beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge*. San Francisco, CA: Wiley.
- Barnett, S. K. (1984). The mentor role: A task of generativity. *Journal of Human Behavior and Learning*, 1(2), 15–18.
- Bateson, C. (1990). *Composing a Life*. New York, NY: Plume.
- Bebe, B., Jaffe, J., & Lachmann, F. (2005). A dyadic systems view of communication. In J. S. Auerback, K.V. Ley, C.E. Schaffer (Eds), *Relatedness, self-definition, and mental representation* (pp. 23-42). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Benjamin, J. (1992). Recognition and destruction: An outline of intersubjectivity. In N. J. Skolnick & S. C. Warshaw (Eds.), *Relational perspectives in psychoanalysis* (pp. 43-60). Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press, Inc.
- Bernier, A., Larose, S., & Soucy, N. (2005). Academic mentoring in college: The interactive role of student's and mentor's interpersonal dispositions. *Research in Higher Education*, 46(1), 29-51. doi:10.1007/s11162-004-6288-5
- Berzoff, J., Flanagan, L., & Hertz, P. (2011). *Inside out and outside in: Psychodynamic clinical theory and psychopathology in contemporary multicultural contexts*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

- Blake-Beard, S., Bayne, M. L., Crosby, F. J., & Muller, C. B. (2011). Matching by race and gender in mentoring relationships: Keeping our eyes on the prize. *Journal of Social Issues, 67*(3), 622-643. doi:10.1111/j.1540.2011.01717
- Bogat, A. G. & Redner, R. L. (1985). How mentoring affects the professional development of women in psychology. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice, 16*(6), 851-859.
- Bozionelos, N. (2004). Mentoring provided: Relation to mentor's career success, personality, and mentoring received. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 64*(1), 24-46. doi:10.1016/S0001-8791(03)00033-2
- Calwson, J. (1979). Superior-subordinate relationships in managerial development. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from University Microfilms International. (No. 7922200)
- Chao, G. T. (1997). Mentoring phases and outcomes. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, (51)*1, 15-28. doi:10.1006/jveb.1997.1591
- Clark, R. A., Harden, S. L., & Johnson, W. B. (2000). Mentor relationships in clinical psychology doctoral training: Results of a national survey. *Teaching of Psychology, (27)*4, 262-268. doi:10.1207/S15328023TOP2704_04
- Colarusso, C. A. & Nemiroff, R. A. (1981). *Adult development*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.
- Cronan-Hillix, T., Gensheimer, L. K., Cronan-Hillix, W. A., & Davidson, W. S. (1986). Students' views of mentors in psychology graduate training. *Teaching of Psychology, (13)*3, 123-127. doi:10.1207/s15328023top1303_5
- Dixon-Reeves, R. (2003). Mentoring as a precursor to incorporation: An assessment of the mentoring experience of recently minted Ph.D.s. *Journal of Black Studies, (34)*1, 12-27. doi:10.1177/0021934703253680

- Dreher, G. F. & Cox, T. R. (1996). Race, gender and opportunity: A study of compensation attainment and the establishment of mentoring relationships. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 81*(3), 297-308. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.81.3.297
- DuBois, D. L. & Karcher, M. J. (2005). *Handbook of youth mentoring*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Eby, L. T., Durley, J. R., Evans, S. C., & Ragins, B. (2008). Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences: Scale development and nomological validation. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*(2), 358-373. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.93.2.358
- Eddy, E., Tannenbaum, S., Alliger, G., D'Abate, C., & Givens, S. (2001). Mentoring in industry: The top 10 issues when building and supporting a mentoring program. Technical report prepared for the Naval Air Warfare Training Systems Division (Contract No. N61339-99-D-0012), Orlando, FL.
- Eigen, M. (1981). The area of faith in Winnicott, Lacan, and Bion. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis, 62*(4), 413-211. doi:10.1002/j.2167-4086.2013.00065.x
- Ensher, E. A. & Murphy, S. E. (1997). Effects of race and gender, perceived similarity, and contact on mentor relationships. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 50*(3), 460-481. doi: 10.1006/jbbs,1996.1547
- Erdem, F. & Ozen, J. (2003). The perceptions of protégés in academic organizations in regard to the functions of mentoring. *Higher Education in Europe, (28)*4, 569-575. doi:10.1080/0379772032000170543
- Erikson, E.H. (1963). *Childhood and Society*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Erikson, E. H. (1980). *Identity and the life cycle: Selected papers*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Co.

- Freud, S. (2005). *Civilization and its discontents*. (Strachey, J., Trans.). New York, NY: Norton.
(Original work published in 1930)
- Freud, S. (2010). *The interpretation of dreams*. (Strachey, J., Trans.). New York, NY: Basic Books. (Original work published in 1900)
- Fruht, V. & Wray-Lake, L. (2013). The role of mentor type and timing in predicting educational attainment. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 42(9), 1459-1472. doi:10.1007/s10964
- Garcia, J. L. (1995). Freud's psychosexual stage conception: A developmental metaphor for counselors. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 73(5), 498-502. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6676.1995.tb01785.x
- Ghent, E. (1989). Credo: The dialectics of one-person and two-person psychologies. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 25(2), 169-211. doi:10.1080/00107530.1989.10746289
- Ghosh, R. & Reio, T. R. (2013). Career benefits associated with mentoring for mentors: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 83(1), 106-116. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2013.03.011
- Green, S. G. & Bauer, T. N. (1995). Supervisory mentoring by advisers: Relationships with doctoral student potential, productivity, and commitment. *Personnel Psychology*, 48(3), 537-561. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6570.1995.tb01769.x
- Greenberg, J. R. & Mitchell, S. A. (1983). *Object relations in psychoanalytic theory*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hausman, L., Schofield, J., & Woods, R. (2007). Sense of belonging as a predictor of intentions to persist among African American and White first year college students. *Research in Higher Education*, 48(7), 802-839. doi:10.1007/s11162-007-9052-9
- Hendricks, G. (1996). Between subject and object: Object relations and intersubjectivity in the mentoring relationship. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 35,

- Hennig, M. M. & Jardim, A. (1977). *The managerial woman*. New York, NY: Doubleday.
- Hollingsworth, M. A. & Fassinger, R. E. (2002). The role of faculty mentors in the research training of counseling psychology doctoral students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 49(3), 324-330. doi:10.1037/0022-1674.49.3.324
- Jacobi, M. (1991). Mentoring and undergraduate academic success: A literature review. *Review of Educational Research*, 61(4), 505-532. doi:10.3102/00346543061004505
- Johnson, W. B. (2007). Transformational supervision: When supervisors mentor. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 38(3), 259-267. doi:10.1037/0735-7028.38.3.259
- Keenan, E. & Miehl, D. (2008). Third space activities and change processes: An exploration of ideas from social and psychodynamic theories. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 36(2), 165-175. doi:10.1007/s10615-007-0117-1
- Kram, K. E. (1985). *Mentoring at work: Developmental relationships at work*. Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman and Company.
- Kram, K. E. (1983). Phases of the mentor relationship. *Academy of Management Journal*, 26(4), 608-625. doi:10.2307/255910
- Levinson, D. J., Darrow, D., Levinson, M., Klein, E. B., & McKee, B. (1978). *The seasons of a man's life*. New York, NY: Knop.
- Liang B., Tracy A., Taylor C., & Williams L. (2002). Mentoring college-age women: A relational approach. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 30(2), 271-288. doi:10.1023/A:1014637112531
- MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership (2006). Legislative history. Retrieved September, 2013, from http://www.mentoring.org/take_...n/funding/legislative_history.php

- Mills, J. (2006). Reflections on the death drive. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 23(2), 373-382.
doi:10.1037/0736-9735.23.2.373
- Modell, A. H. (1990). The roots of creativity and the use of the object. In P. L. Giovacchini (Ed.), *Tactics and techniques in psychoanalytic therapy: Volume 3, the implications of Winnicott's contributions* (pp. 113-127). Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson.
- Muller, J. P. (1996). *Beyond the psychoanalytic dyad: Developmental semiotics in Freud, Peirce, and Lacan*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Muller, J. P. (1999). The Third as holding the dyad: Commentary on paper by Margaret Crastnopol. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 9(4), 471-480. doi:10.1080/10481889909539337
- Murray, M. (2001). *Beyond the myths and magic of mentoring: how to facilitate an effective mentoring process*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- National Association of Social Workers (2008). Code of ethics of the National Association of Social Workers. Washington, DC.
- Ogden, T. H. (1982). *Projective identification and psychotherapeutic technique*. New York, NY: J. Aronson.
- Ogden, T. H. (1985). The mother, the infant, and the matrix: Interpretations of aspects of the work of Donald Winnicott. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 21(3), 346-371.
doi:10.1080/00107530.1985.10746091
- Pagano, C. J. (2012). Exploring the therapist's use of self: Enactments, improvisation, and affect in psychodynamic psychotherapy. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 66(3), 205-226.
- Perry, G. (2004, January 18). Executive life; Putting a formal stamp on mentoring. *New York Times*, p. 10. Retrieved from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/01/18/business/executive-life-putting-a-formal-stamp-on-mentoring.html>

- Phinney, J. S., Torres Campos, C. M., Kallemeyn, D. M. P., & Kim, C. (2011) Processes and outcomes of a mentoring program for Latino college freshmen. *Journal of Social Issues*, 67(3), 599-621. doi:10.1111/j.1540-4560.2011.01716.x
- Poor, C. J. & Brown, S. (2013). Increasing retention of women in engineering at WSU: A model for a women's mentoring program. *College Student Journal*, 47(3), 421-428.
- Ragins, B. R. & Cotton, J. L. (1999). Mentor functions and outcomes: A comparison of men and women in formal and informal mentoring relationships. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84(4), 529-550. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.84.4.529
- Ragins, B. R., Cotton, J. L., & Miller, J. S. (2000). Marginal mentoring: The effects of type of mentor, quality of relationship, and program design on work and career attitudes. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(6), 1177-1194. doi:10.2307/1556344
- Ragins, B. R. & Scandura, T. A. (1997). The way we were: Gender and the termination of mentoring relationships. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82(6), 945-953. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.82.6.945
- Ray, J. & Kafka, S. (May 6, 2014). Life in college matters for life after college. Retrieved June 1, 2014 from <http://www.gallup.com/poll/168848/life-college-matters-life-college.aspx>.
- Redmond, S. P. (1990). Mentoring and cultural diversity in academic settings. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 34(2), 188-200. doi:10.1177/0002764290034002007
- Rhodes, J. E. (2005). A theoretical model of youth mentoring. In D. L. DuBois & M. J. Karcher (Eds.), *Handbook of youth mentoring* (pp. 30–43). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Richards, A. D. (2006). Review of “Relational psychoanalysis: Volume 2, innovation and expansion.” *Journal of The American Psychoanalytic Association*, 54(4), 1413-1422.

- Rowe, J. (2013). Triumphs of experience: the men of the Harvard rant study. *Health Affairs*, 32(9), 1685-1686.
- Ruff, J. J. (2013). Sisters of the heart along the way: The power of the female mentoring relationship. *Women & Therapy*, 36(1-2), 86-99. doi:10.1080/02703149.2012.720907
- Russell, J. E. A. & Adams, D. M. (1997). The changing nature of mentoring in organizations: An introduction to the special issue on mentoring in organizations. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 51(1), 1-14. doi:10.1006/jvbe.1997.1602
- Sanchez, B. & Reyes, O. (1999). Descriptive profile of the mentorship relationships of Latino adolescents. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 27(3), 299-302. doi:10.1002/(SICI)1520-6629(199905)27:3<299::AID-JCOP4>3.0.CO;2-H
- Schlosser, L. Z. & Gelso, C. J. (2001). Measuring the working alliance in advisor–advisee relationships in graduate school. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 48(2), 157-167. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.48.2.157
- Strogatz, S. H. (2009). *The calculus of friendship: What a teacher and a student learned about life while corresponding about math*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Slavin, M. (2013). Meaning, mortality, and the search for realness and reciprocity: An evolutionary/existential perspective on Hoffman’s dialectical constructivism. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 23(3), 296-314. doi:10.1080/10481885.2013.794643
- Vaillant, G. E. (1977). *Adaptation to life*. Boston: Little, Brown, & Company.
- Vaillant, G. E. & Milofsky, E. (1980). Natural history of male psychological health: Empirical evidence for Erikson’s model of the life cycle. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 137(11), 1348-1359.

- Vallery, S. K. (1992). Mentoring in clinical supervision of psychodynamic psychotherapy: Application of Winnicott's theory of transitional phenomena experience. *Dissertation Abstracts*, 87.
- Wang, S., Noe, R. A., Wang, Z., & Greenberger, D. B. (2009). What affects willingness to mentor in the future? An investigation of attachment styles and mentoring experiences. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 74(3), 245-256. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2008.12.002
- Wilson, R. C., Gaff, J. G., Dienst, E. R., Wood, L., & Bavry, J. L. (1975). *College professors and their impact on students*. New York, NY: Wiley.
- Wilson, Z. S., Holmes, L., deGravelles, K., Sylvain, M. R., Batiste, L. Johnson, M., . . . Warner I. M. (2012). Hierarchical mentoring: A transformative strategy for improving diversity and retention in undergraduate STEM disciplines. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 21(1), 148-156. doi:10.1007/s10956-011-9292-5
- Winnicott, D. W. (1955). The depressive position in normal emotional development. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 28(2-3), 89-100. doi:10.1111/j.2044-8341.1955.tb00884.x
- Winnicott, D.W. (1971). *Playing and Reality*. Oxford, England: Penguin.
- Yamamoto, K. (1988). To see life grow: The meaning of mentorship. *Theory Into Practice*, 27(3), 184-189.