in the next edition, and hope this edition of their book improves the abilities of their readers to engage in dialogue, so that they can turn around and help improve the book: 'And if your ability will develop far enough, you will be able to criticize and improve upon this handbook.' (129)

I take the authors at their own word and make the following suggestion: Given the risks and frustrations of challenging one's own society's norms and generally held fundamental beliefs through engaging those norms and beliefs or socially fundamental viewpoints in critical discussion, ask and discuss these questions: How can current day critics gain social encouragement to persist in their activities? Has this question been discussed – and if not, how can we begin the discussion?

Sheldon Richmond
askthephilosopher@gmail.com
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Wisdom Won from Illness: Essays in Philosophy and Psychoanalysis
By Jonathan Lear
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It is difficult to discuss, in a short format review, a collection of essays that examines in detail the points of contact between two distinct fields of enquiry. Doing so can be especially challenging for a reviewer – like myself – insufficiently versed in one of the fields. My located knowledge relates to the philosophical tradition of moral psychology; my understanding of psychoanalysis and its practice is more patchy.

A further dimension to reviewing Jonathan Lear's new book, *Wisdom Won from Illness*, concerns the style of the collection. There is no single line of argument on offer. One might imagine, for example, that Lear is straightforwardly making the case that contemporary moral psychology in the philosophical tradition would benefit from contemporary psychoanalytic theory, and from insights gleaned in the practice of psychoanalysis. This is certainly *one* of the central lines of argument running through the text (and one I discuss below), but there are others – including a framing historical argument situating psychoanalysis within a Western ethical project that Lear takes to have been variously sketched by Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.

According to Lear, these philosophers posed, at various points, a moral psychological challenge, a challenge that helps us to situate psychoanalysis in an ethical tradition concerning human health and flourishing. Lear understands this tradition as concerned with developing harmony between the parts of the soul – or, in more contemporary terminology, 'intraspsychic integration' (see ch.2 'Integrating the Nonrational Soul'). Within this tradition, Lear considers the question of what the appropriate relations between human reason and the other voices of the soul or psyche might amount to. Following insights gained through his experiences as a practicing psychoanalyst, Lear believes we have a solid lead in Aristotle's idea that the parts of the human psyche are *in conversation* with one another. The idea of the parts of the psyche as being in conversation, according to Lear's interpretation, is not straightforwardly a relation of domination whereby reason is conceptualized as strictly ruling desire. Linking Aristotle's idea with the Freudian psychoanalytic tradition, Lear takes Freudian theoretical and practical developments as illuminating otherwise unseen, misunderstood or neglected aspects of human nature. These contributions to our understanding of human nature have, Lear argues, the potential to reveal deeper complexities of operations between reason and the nonrational or unconscious parts of the psyche. In offering such a connection between these traditions, Lear marks a starting point for a long process of discovery to learn what we can non-deceptively mean by 'rationality' as our capacity for 'thoughtful guidance to the whole soul or psyche' (2), and what might count as fruitful ways of thinking about the dynamic relations of our evolving understanding of the unconscious or nonrational parts of the psyche.

Lear suggests that an – albeit ambitious – project like this could reciprocally benefit philosophers and analysts alike. Most relevant for contemporary philosophers are the insights into human nature and experience witnessed in practice and formalised in theoretical models by psychoanalysts. Such insights, Lear argues throughout the collection, have the potential to challenge many longstanding assumptions operating in contemporary philosophical theorizing – including what it can mean to hold a belief unconsciously or consciously, whether cognitivism of the emotions gets its account of emotion correct, and what it can mean to engage in philosophical reflection that questions our enculturated frames of interpretive meaning. Moral philosophers in particular may face greater explanatory challenges should they take seriously the unconscious and its dynamics as understood in psychoanalytic terms. Analysts, on the other hand, could benefit from learning more about the Greek

philosophical tradition and some of the modes of enquiry, reasoning and conceptual analysis found in philosophy.

Lear's repeated emphasis on the evidently fruitful areas of potential intersection, particularly between moral philosophy and psychoanalysis as theory and practice, is certainly a strength of this text (see ch.8, 'Technique and Final Cause in Psychoanalysis', ch.9 'Jumping from the Couch', and ch.10 'Eros and Development'). However, as Lear also points out, one of the obstacles to successful cross-pollination concerns whether Western philosophy, as currently practiced, can be said to be genuinely interested in wisdom and its development.

Given the broadness of the framing project, it is helpful to home in on a more specific question: how might psychoanalysis, as focused on illness and pathology, contribute to the longstanding ethical project concerned with human health and flourishing? Lear writes, 'I want to argue that wisdom is about health *and* that psychoanalysis can be both an understanding *and a manifestation* of human health. Wisdom can be won from illness – and not simply in the sense that pathology lends insight into health, but in that it gives us direct and immediate insight into who and what we are' (12). In light of their import, I think it worth asking what Lear means by these two sentences. First, there is the strong almost constitutive link he seems to want to make concerning wisdom and human health. Second, I take him to mean that psychoanalysis, as an evolving field of theoretical interpretations concerning human experience, can tell us important things about human health *and* that psychoanalysis as a practice of self-other communicative exchange is also a means for developing wisdom and thereby coming to health. Third, the idea that 'wisdom can be won from illness' is not simply equivalent to thinking that our opportunities to learn from pathology strictly relate to constructing a better understanding of what human health amounts to. What I take Lear to mean is that *through* the experiences of illness and pathology as revealed in the psychoanalytic relationship, we can learn more directly – not just about what counts as human health or ill health but more deeply and broadly about human nature and experience as such.

The idea that psychoanalysis can help us to recognize that illness and pathology are not mere marginal partners in developing deeper understandings of human nature opens possibilities for philosophers engaged in constructing richer accounts of moral psychology. One of the most interesting possibilities within the collection is the idea that pathologies can be understood as historic models of interpretation about the self, others and the world that have outgrown their usefulness in interpreting, explaining and accurately tracking reality. As I

understand Lear, the first-personal reflective labour characteristic of interpersonal psychoanalytic practice is a form of ethical work directed to freeing oneself of previously useful illusions. Lear introduces a conception of psychological 'mourning' to capture a process by which coming to greater health and wisdom requires one to respect, yet relinquish, the often distorted illusion-filled interpretative models of one's past experience (see ch.11 'Mourning and Moral Psychology' and ch.8 'Technique and Final Cause in Psychoanalysis'). An important point I take from this is that in looking carefully at pathology we can discover, for example, that any process of developing wisdom and health whether from ill health to health or from healthy to healthier involves the shedding of personal and collective illusion-filled models of interpretation and explanation. Exploring this line of thought could be illuminating to moral philosophers in many ways. It could, for example, highlight the significance of internal *and* external illusions in shaping our ethical thought and action as well as encourage the expansion of our understanding of the unconscious and its operations beyond experiments in psychology. Most significantly, it could show that a consistent reflective process of uncovering illusions and distortions in the movement towards integration speaks to the relative absence in moral philosophy of the idea that human moral psychology can be best understood as *developmental*. And, in the Socratic spirit, that an essential part of any processes of ethical development going well is truthful dialogical engagement between self and others. These are certainly areas of enquiry any serious moral psychology in the moral philosophical tradition would do well to pay attention to.

Whether approached through a more or less philosophical, psychoanalytic or literary interpretative lens, the collection is replete with other complex interleaving themes. Some of the other themes include: a conception of *irony* that Lear finds differently expressed in Socrates, Shakespeare and Kierkegaard (see ch.4 'A Lost Conception of Irony', ch.6 'The Ironic Creativity of Socratic Doubt' and ch.7 'Rosalind's Pregnancy'); key facets of our illusions whether they take the form of individual fantasies or false pictures underlying our socio-cultural inheritances; the many ways art can disrupt our ways of thinking and experiencing; and how theoretical knowledge can be understood to relate to practical knowledge and vice versa. Many of these and other themes criss-cross or appear and re-appear in another guise or fragment or argument in a later essay. I take this structuring and style as significant with respect to another set of concerns Lear articulates throughout the text. Namely, that one of the aims in sequencing the essays and developing themes as he does is to prevent the reader

from straightforwardly assimilating the text. Put another way, I take him to be challenging the reader to challenge themselves to a level of engagement with the text that can itself be disruptive of one's individual thought in the manner he argues is essential to Plato's stylistic aims in his *Republic* (ch. 12 'Allegory and Myth in Plato's *Republic*' and ch. 13 'The Psychic Efficacy of Plato's Cave') as well as authors J.M. Coetzee (ch.5 'Waiting for the Barbarians' and ch.13 'The Ethical Thought of J.M. Coetzee') and Marilynne Robinson (ch.15 'Not Home in Gilead'). Coming to understand the ways that disruption of thought might be provoked in an analysand, interlocutor or reader, such that transformative thought may or may not be realised, is a common theme for Lear. Given this, I am inclined to think that disruption of thought is an aim of this text too.

If one were inclined to offer an overall framing argument for this collection it might be something like: psychoanalysis, in its continual renewal of its theoretical interpretative insights by way of close observation into the operations of human consciousness and experience, offers philosophical moral psychology deep insights into what it can mean to live an ethically good human life. However, this alone cannot represent many of the other significant dimensions of this text, which concerns the theoretical possibilities between these two disciplines as well as their various failures in altering human practice with respect to what Bernard Williams labels 'Socrates' question' – that is, 'how should one live?'. In this way, at the very least, I take Lear's collection to offer an engaging introduction to how psychoanalysis may offer us deeper insights into what is at stake in any serious attempt to speak to answering a question of such historical weight and magnitude.

E. Fetterolf
fetterolf@gmail.com
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This volume of papers about the metaphysics of relations and the history of the metaphysics of relations is dedicated to the memory