Too many kings in the castle: Art therapy with a 7-year-old boy negotiating the Oedipal phase and other normative developmental tasks

Shoshana Freedman

A Research Paper

In

The Department

of

Creative Arts Therapies

Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts
Concordia University
Montréal, Québec, Canada

April 2006

Abstract

Too many kings in the castle: Art therapy with a 7-year-old boy negotiating the Oedipal phase and other normative developmental tasks

A Research Paper by: Shoshana Freedman

This paper details the process of art therapy with a latency-aged boy experiencing mild to moderate adjustment difficulties and negotiating conflicts associated with the Oedipal complex. A discussion of Freud's Oedipus complex (as cited in Ellenberger, 1970) and associated theories is provided. The case study format, which includes descriptions of the client's sessions and artworks, is used to elucidate the use of art therapy in addressing developmental issues. The literature review explores potential links between Oedipal conflicts, object relations, and a related application of psychodynamic art therapy. While current literature emphasizes the use of art therapy with children facing more severe, pathological difficulties, it is contended that art therapy can provide an excellent means of addressing and supporting challenges and transitions associated with children's normative psychosexual development. It is proposed that three theoretical constructs, a Neo-Freudian approach, attachment theory, and object relations theory, may be used complimentarily to inform and enhance psychodynamic art therapy practice. Discussion of the client's therapeutic process focuses on his movement towards self-definition as he redefines his object world through creative expression and increased agency, facilitated by art therapy. His process points to the efficacy of a psychodynamic, developmentally oriented art therapy approach.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I would like to thank Dez, without whose unwavering support, patience, and love this paper would not have come to fruition.

This paper is dedicated to my father, Josef and to the memory of my mother, Cilia, both for whom my education was always a priority.

I would like to express my appreciation to Bonnie Harnden for her supervision and to Dr. Brian Greenfield for his mentorship.

Thank you to Heather McLaughlin and Sora Davis for their friendship and support throughout the program. Thank you to Lesley Salter for her most special and enduring friendship, for supporting me and inspiring me to explore art therapy.

A special thank you to Louise Lacroix, whose insights about art therapy with children is sure to continue to inspire and inform my own practice.

Finally, and most importantly, I will always be grateful to Luke, for allowing me to share in his process of continual discovery and growth, and for teaching me so much in the time we shared together.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents (continued)

List of Figures

Table of Figures (continued)

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

This case study details 19 art therapy sessions with Luke, a 7-year-old boy, referred to me for art therapy by a psychiatry team that services outpatients at a children's hospital. Luke's intake report did not specify a diagnosis but advised treatment based on the parents' primary complaint that he displayed excessive and sudden anger, most often directed towards his mother. It was also noted that he expressed resentment towards his sister, aggression towards other boys, and was socially withdrawn at school. He was also reported to stutter and display excessive fastidiousness. Based on his intake report, which I read prior to meeting with him, I determined Luke was having adjustment problems.

Purpose

This research seeks to explore how art therapy might facilitate a child's negotiation of the Oedipal conflict and associated developmental tasks. As well, it attempts to elucidate some of the symbolic and narrative themes that may emerge from a child's artwork and play as related to the Oedipal complex. It also documents developments in the child's object relations observed through his artwork and in his relationship with the therapist, as they pertain to this conflict. Finally, it strives to exemplify how the medium of art therapy might serve to facilitate reorganization of a child's object world and help him transit this developmental passage.

Participant

The focus of this case study is Luke, a 7-year-old boy (6 years old at the outset of therapy), referred to me for art therapy by an outpatient psychiatry team at a children's hospital in an urban centre. Luke's intake report did not offer a diagnosis, but advised treatment based on reports of angry outbursts at home, especially towards his mother, resentment towards his sister, aggression directed towards boys, and limited sociability at school. He was also reported to have begun stuttering and to display excessive fastidiousness. Based on his intake assessment, I believed Luke was experiencing adjustment problems.

I met with Luke on a weekly basis over a period of 5 months in partial fulfilment of my practicum requirements. Termination of his therapy coincided with the end of my practicum placement.

Assumptions and Biases

The basic assumption underlying this study is that in the process of achieving self-definition, children must negotiate a developmental task that encompasses the conflicts described by the psychoanalytic construct known as the Oedipus complex (as cited in Ellenberger, 1970). It is also assumed that this process is one of integrating self-objects and object-relatedness. Therefore this research presupposes the validity of psychoanalytic epistemology, particularly the constructs of object relations and the Oedipus complex.

Limitations

A limitation of this study is that, because it is a single case study, it may not be generalized to a wider population. Furthermore, duration of the therapy outlined within this study was delimited by the timeframe of my clinical practicum placement. Therefore it does not necessarily reflect an ideal duration of treatment.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Psychodynamic Approach

I have chosen to frame Luke's therapeutic journey in psychodynamic terms because I believe that the core conflict Luke was negotiating is aptly described by the themes found in various interpretations of Freud's Oedipus complex (as cited in Ellenberger, 1970). Furthermore, I tend to process what clients are working through in their sessions by applying concepts from object relations and attachment theories. Finally, with all child clients, it is vital to understand their processes in terms of universal developmental trajectories; therefore I will situate Luke's challenges and conflicts within themes drawn from developmental frameworks.

Developmental Perspectives

The two developmental models that I employ to understand Luke's developmental tasks and associated conflicts are Freud's psychosexual model (1923/1953) and Erikson's psychosocial model (1963), both of which are at the fore of the psychodynamic developmental psychology literature. The two models are compatible inasmuch as the stages of development from one can be seen to correspond with an analogous stage from the other. Both models conceptualize the possibility of recapitulation of conflicts and concomitant defences from preceding stages if earlier conflicts are not adequately resolved—Freud (as cited in Case and Dalley, 1992) terms this recapitulation regression. Thus while a chronological, linear succession of stages is assumed, it is understood that

these models rest on a continuum insofar as previous dynamics can be reactivated in response to overwhelming anxiety.

Freud

Freud's psychosexual model of development (1923/1953) encompasses five stages of development, each one seen to be a manifestation of sexual drive. Freud posits that during each stage the child's perceptions of self and interactions with his environment are organized around a specific area of the body, which becomes the focus of erogenous gratification. According to the chronological structure of Freud's model, Luke is negotiating the latency stage, which lasts from age six to puberty. Latency is defined as a period in which the child's efforts to attain instinctual gratification are suppressed, and his sexuality goes dormant as his libidinal energy focuses on integrating more external and pro-social dimensions. It is assumed that having achieved this stage the child has already traversed the Oedipal crisis, with or without successful resolution of its associated conflicts The latency stage is, however, preceded by three other developmental stages: the oral, anal and phallic, which are named to correspond with the focal erogenous zone that underlies the predominating drive for gratification. As we will see these preceding stages all played a part in Luke's way of being in the world, signifying his regression to unresolved conflicts embedded in prior stages. Luke displayed regressive tendencies typified by the oral, anal, and phallic stages. In particular, Luke enacted conflicts indicating a regression to the phallic stage, that developmental period in which the child struggles with Oedipal conflicts.

Erikson

According to Erikson's model (1963), which is more focused on the social dimensions of psychodynamic integration, Luke would be at the threshold of the school age stage (ages 6 to12), known as *industry versus inferiority*, in which he would be striving to achieve a sense of competence. Should he not achieve this, he would, as the name of the stage implies, experience compromised self-esteem. The preceding stage in Erikson's model, which also aptly pertains to Luke, is the early childhood stage of *initiative versus guilt*, (age 2-6), in which the child attempts to achieve a sense of purpose. The stage occurring in toddlerhood (age 1-2), which we will see is also very relevant to Luke's case, is *autonomy versus shame or doubt*, and it is in this stage that the child is focused on asserting his will, and where feelings of shame predominate when that will is repeatedly thwarted. Finally the infancy stage is known as *basic trust versus mistrust* (age 0-1), and is fairly self-descriptive. Successful negotiation of this stage is seen to culminate in the infant internalizing a sense of hope—therefore failure to trust is associated with an outlook of hopelessness. Erikson (as cited in Santrock, 1999) viewed successful completion of these first three tasks as a necessary prerequisite to relating to others positively and effectively throughout the life span.

Regression

Despite its negative connotations, regression (Freud, 1923/1953) is a normative developmental occurrence that, if temporary, serves to protect the ego from that which it cannot yet withstand. Almond (1997) notes: "regression to earlier types of defensive

activity bolsters a feeling of power by recalling a time when one could successfully win the approval of parents without danger" (p. 30).

Oedipus Complex

The Oedipus complex, a psychoanalytic term conceptualized by Freud in 1897 (as cited in Britton, 1989), describes a developmental process that boys undergo during the phallic stage. Freud's theory posits that the boy unconsciously desires and becomes cathected on his mother, desiring to possess her exclusively. Consequently he becomes murderously envious of his father's relationship to her. This triangulation provokes great anxiety as he simultaneously experiences intense desire for mother, frustration at the denial of this desire, hatred toward and envy of his father, and fear that the father, cognizant of his desires, will retaliate by castrating and destroying the child. This prospect triggers intolerable anxiety in the child and causes him to repress these desires. The Oedipus complex is not consciously apprehended by the child nor the parents (Feldman, 1989; Ikonen, 2001). As I will discuss later, this has implications for the usefulness of art therapy for the exploration of Oedipal conflicts.

Resolution of this conflict occurs when the boy's hatred and envy of his father transforms into identification, helping him to form a masculine identity and relinquish his dependency on mother. This process of identification with father is also a surrender of the fantasy of omnipotence following a successful transition through the anal stage, and correlates with the consolidation of the superego, which is ultimately seen to be an internalization of parental values and limit-setting (Freud, 1923/1953; Gomez, 1997; Novick & Novick, 1997), but more specifically *paternal* values and limitations (Kanzer,

1950/1988). The superego is deemed necessary for self-regulation arising from an internally derived sense of satisfaction (Novick & Novick, 1997).

Libidinal desire is then sublimated into socialization and non-sexual affection and eventually resurfaces at puberty. It is out of the Oedipal conflict that: "the full person, the social being, is born" (Gomez, 1997, pp. 21-22), and from its resolution that moral conscience emerges (Gomez, 1997).

The Oedipal process, if adequately resolved, is thus considered to be a healthy and normative developmental event that helps the child adapt to reality, with all its inherent losses and frustrations (Britton, 1989; Pollock & Ross, 1988).

If viewed from the perspective of psychosexual development, the child moves from the oral stage in which he "is looking for trust in himself and others," to the anal stage in which he "is grappling with power, control and self-worth," through to the Oedipal conflict in the latency stage in which he "is trying to assess whether he still counts even if he is not the center of the universe" (Gomez, 1997, p. 187).

The boy's drive to possess the mother, while largely depicted as negative, also demonstrates the child's capacity for "expansiveness, optimism, and creativity" (Loewald cited in Almond, 1997, p. 30), and lays the groundwork for an integrated self to engage in fulfilling relationships in the future (Feldman, 1989). Blanck (1988) believes that the capacity to deal with the Oedipal crisis requires and employs "initiative, courage, venturesomeness, [and] ambition", and an impaired ability to negotiate the crisis may arise from "indecision, hesitancy, timidity, [and] fearfulness" (p. 426).

Freud's theory has come under broad criticism from non -Freudians and neo-Freudians alike for being outdated, patriarchal and limited (Bross, 1988; Masterpasqua,

1997). Neo-Freudians reject the primacy of libidinal and sexual motivation, and of the biological over the environmental. Those espousing object relations theory and attachment theory criticize the Oedipal model for being too mechanistic and non-systemic (Fonagy, 2001; Hartocollis, 2001).

Some feel that the theory is flawed because it projects adult psychopathology onto children and ignores the parental behaviours that may range from possessiveness tinged with subtle seduction to more overt messages that activate and inform the child's engagement in Oedipal dynamics (Blum, 2001; Bross, 1988; Gammelgaard, 2001; Pines & Marrone, 2003; Pollock & Ross, 1988; Ross, 1988).

Despite criticisms, the Oedipal paradigm is still widely applied, often in modified form. Adherents of both object relations and attachment theories have expanded it to include a more inter-subjective dimension encompassing parental and familial affects and interactions, integrating the intrapsychic and the interpersonal dimensions (Fonagy, 2001).

Object Relations

As I will be applying the construct of object relations to deepen my understanding of Luke's Oedipal challenges, pertinent concepts from that theoretical body are outlined below.

Object relations theory, derived from Freudian concepts, assumes that interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics, in conjunction with intrapsychic mechanisms, shape our perceptions, cognitions and relationships from birth. The theory places particular significance on the mother-infant relationship, and posits that our earliest

interactions determine future relationships by establishing an internal object world upon which reactions to the external world are predicated, therefore forming a blueprint for relational dynamics (Goodman, 2002; R.S. Klein, 1990).

An object is an entity to which one relates and attaches emotional significance, and in which one invests libidinal energy, whether it is a person, place, or thing (Robbins, 1987). Libidinal energy is the life force of an individual, from which both aggression and sexuality derive. Robbins (1987) describes it as "what motivates us to reach out and invest in the world around us. . . it is the glue that binds all of us to each other" (p. 24).

Internal objects are mental representations of external objects, subject to distortion by anxiety-induced defences (Britton, 1989; Goodman, 2002; Klein, 1990; Mancia, 1996; Rascovsky & Rascovsky, 1988; Segal, 2001). Object relations theory assumes that from birth, the child uses inner fantasy to help define outer reality and, through the process of introjection, a feedback loop is formed between the two. Self-concept and identity are understood to derive from conscious and unconscious mental representations of self. These, in turn, are calibrated to the vicissitudes of the external object world, specifically in relation to significant others (Klein, 1945/1989). The object relations model is not a static one (R.S. Klein, 1990). An individual's object relations, though often entrenched, are changeable or reparable.

According to M. Klein (1945/1989), the child's "emotional and sexual development, object relations and super-ego development interact from the beginning" and "anxiety, guilt and depressive feelings are intrinsic elements of the child's emotional life and therefore permeate the child's early object relations" (pp. 81-82). Klein believed that the infant employs projection to externalize the intolerable anxiety caused by his own

anger and destructive impulses. Klein conceptualized the Oedipus complex as being driven by hopes, fears and wishes, not the physiological drives Freud proposed; however she did believe that these were expressed in and through the body (Gomez, 1997).

M. Klein and S. Freud (as cited in Gomez, 1997) both viewed the conflicting urges to love and destroy as central to the human dilemma. Klein characterized the Oedipal complex as evoking a sense of unbearable fragmentation as the child apprehends the reality that he and mother are not one and that he is not omnipotent (Britton, 1989; Gomez 1997; Klein 1945/1989; Segal, 1989). The Kleinian expectation of successful development entails the child's relinquishment of the illusion of omnipotence, acceptance of both his own vulnerability and that of his parents, and of dependence and interdependence and greater alignment with reality (Almond, 1997; Goodman, 2002). Consequently, the child gains greater autonomy from mother. The child's feelings of anger and hate, as well as the Oedipus complex itself, are seen to facilitate this goal, as they require "shifting from the passive to the active mode in relation to the object" (Blanck, 1988, p. 422). Klein considered the child's ability to enact reparation, and thus be assured that his hostile and violent fantasies would not destroy his loved objects, to be a vital part of development (Almond, 1997;Gomez, 1997; Segal, 1989).

Winnicott's approach to object relations is based on the idea that good –enough care or mothering, which involves being attuned with and reflecting back to the child accurately his inner states, helps the child grow into a creative entity whose feelings correspond accurately to their self-expression. If the child is enabled, he will ideally develop his true self, which is creative, spontaneous and authentic (Winnicott, 1971). If there is a lack of attunement between infant and mother and the child is not mirrored, he

learns that his true feelings are not met with understanding and acceptance and that in order to receive approval or have his needs met, he must present a false, compliant self, whose feelings and needs are submerged in order to accommodate others (Bollas, 1987; Winnicott, 1971). This can create an overwhelming sense of helplessness in the child, causing him to embrace passivity over initiative (Gomez, 1997).

Winnicott's child must also internalize a good mother imago to develop the capacity to achieve autonomous selfhood without untenable anxiety (R.S. Klein, 1990; Winnicott, 1965). This is done with the aid of transitional objects and spaces, which act as a soothing proxy for the mother's presence. "The transitional object . . .symbolizes loving and helps the infant to maintain the feelings of the internal, giving, nourishing breast" (Segal, 1989, p. 14). As we shall see in the case study that follows, art therapy is ideal for providing transitional opportunities to enable the emergence of a true and autonomous self.

Winnicott's model, as cited in Almond (1997), does not pathologize the child and views him as an active and creative entity. In this model, the infant's illusion of omnipotence is a healthy one that underlies a positive symbiosis between mother and child and points to a "good enough mother" who responds with empathy (Almond, 1997, p. 7).

Bion (as cited in Goodman, 2002) conceptualizes the mother as providing containment for a child's painful emotions and anxieties, and metabolizing these into a tolerable form that allows the child to withstand anxiety. The containing mother also provides a feeling of continuity and dispels the sense of fragmentation that can occur

when the child experiences overwhelming anxiety (Segal, 2001). The child is eventually able to internalize this ability to shift its own feeling states.

A more existentially focused interpretation of object relations is offered by Bollas (1987). He believes that as the mother helps the child move from an unintegrated to an integrated state, the child's apprehension of the mother-object (and choice of future objects) centres on the experience of transformation of self (Bollas, 1987). Therefore, for Bollas, the object is more of an existential process than a representational event or entity. He refers to this as the "transformational object" (p. 28). This has positive implications for the use of therapy in repairing damaged object relations, as the therapist can then be experienced (unconsciously), as a "generative transformational object" (p. 29)

Attachment, Loss, and Separation

"The child, aware of his separateness and yet frightened by his aloneness, wants to go in two different directions at the same time. The dilemma for the child is to separate while maintaining connection " (Robbins, 1987, p. 49).

The following discussion aims to touch on themes relevant to the process of individuation facilitated by the Oedipal conflict.

A vital component in healing Oedipal wounds is mourning the loss of the loved object so that one can liberate the libidinal forces for constructive and creative endeavours that promote self-growth and self-esteem, and access the whole self.

Attachment theory is predicated on the notion that "human beings are born with inbuilt patterns of behaviour which promote and maintain relationship" (Gomez, 1997, p. 155). Goodman (2002) believes that initial infantile anxiety, from which all future

anxiety is derived, is primarily related to separation and loss experienced by the child as the symbiotic relationship he shares with the mother is interrupted. Certainly the Oedipal crisis can be seen as a particularly powerful recapitulation of earlier interruptions, as it forces the child to confront the reality that he is "not the 'only one' to belong to and to whom mother belongs" (Britton, 1989, p. 84), precipitating a profound sense of loss and pain.

Attachment theory coincides with the object relations perspective inasmuch as it proposes that "unconscious defences against anxiety and painful affects are rooted in interpersonal events and that defence mechanisms influence a person's interpersonal modes of relating" (Marrone & Cortina, 2003, p. 9). Both the attachment and the object relations perspectives depict the Oedipal process as evoking feelings of pain, loss, abandonment, exclusion, deep existential insecurity, guilt, shame, vulnerability and a diffused sense of self in the child (Segal, 1989). The attachment literature, however, tends to downplay the sexual motivations of the child portrayed in the Oedipus complex and to emphasize the Oedipal challenge as an active process of individuation (Fonagy, 2001).

Integration of Models for Enhanced Clinical Insight into the Oedipal Dilemma

The ability to know where theoretical integration occurs, and when it is "mere eclecticism, can be of great help to professionals. It can establish boundaries, [and] acknowledge strengths and limitations" (Searle & Streng, 2001, p. 198).

Although Freud's model of psychosexual development (1923/1953) is still widely used today, it is often criticized for being outdated and limited (Masterpasqua, 1997). Various clinicians and theorists have attempted to address this by integrating theoretical

models, such as attachment theory and object relations theory, to enrich analysis of Freudian developmental issues. The following considers the relevance of applying a synthesized theoretical approach to investigate Oedipal issues.

While the Freudian model is focused on a more intrapsychic dynamic, object relations and attachment both privilege the intersubjective dimensions of existence. Therefore the Oedipal complex is often characterized principally as happening 'within' the child, whereas in reality it manifests intrapsychically *and* interpersonally, between the child and their significant loved ones (Blanck, 1988).

Freud's model is also largely focused on the instinctual drives as determining choices, behaviours, and outcomes, whereas object relations and attachment approaches encompass the instinctual but place more importance on the affective dimensions of internal and interpersonal processes (R.S. Klein, 1990).

Mancia (1996) writes that "object relations theory and the instinctual model of the mind theory need each other to explain why a relationship can give rise to frustration and gratification" (p. 35).

Kernberg (2001) points out that many prominent theorists previously addressed the synthesis of Freud's drive theory with object relations. According to Goodman (2002), Silverman (1991, 1993) is "the only psychoanalytical theorist to have conceptualized libido and attachment as belonging within one theoretical framework." (p. 282). However, Lieberman and Zeanah (as cited in Goodman, 2002), integrated attachment and developmental models in their approach.

Fonagy (2001) sees overlaps between Freud's theories and attachment theories. Goodman (2002), too, stresses that "the influences between attachment and psychosexual

stages are bidirectional" (p. 282), and that "oral-libidinal needs and attachment needs, though distinctly separate, are experienced simultaneously" (p. 237). The author also believes that the tendency to view the "oral, anal, and phallic clinical material as only a series of metaphors for relational concerns minimizes the subjective reality of pleasurable infantile bodily sensations" (pp. 252-253).

Goodman (2002) notes that research has indicated a definite empirical and theoretical conjunction between object relations theory and attachment theory, Diamond and Blatt (as cited in Goodman, 2002) write: "working models of attachment and object representations are overlapping if not identical, modes of conceptualizing the internalized cognitive-affective schemata that form the bedrock of the intrapsychic world, and that in turn shape interpersonal relationships" (p. 73).

Eagle (as cited in Fonagy, 2001) says that attachment and object relations theories coincide insofar as they both stress the importance of the subjective experience of the infant's feelings of security as influencing development throughout the lifespan.

Stern (1985) views infant mental life as deriving from a composite of physical needs, gratification of needs, affective regulation, object relatedness, self-esteem, and safety (Fonagy, 2001). This composite encompasses the biological, psychological and social dimensions of infant life, thus straddling the theoretical realms of the psychosexual, object relations and attachment models simultaneously.

Ross (1988) calls for "an open system with more variability than earlier developmental models imply" (p. 411). R.S. Klein (1990) proposes a meta-psychological paradigm that integrates intrapsychic and interpersonal phenomena into a model which underscores interdependence and reciprocal influence.

The Oedipal dilemma presents the child with a confluence of conflicting instincts, needs and desires. Many clinicians and theorists see value in understanding the complexities of this process by drawing from an integrative approach simultaneously encompassing concepts from psychosexual, object relations and attachment theory matrices. I believe that this multivalent approach is of value in exploring Luke's experience of the Oedipal complex.

Art Therapy

Art therapy provides an excellent medium for children to express, explore and transform difficult and anxiety-provoking feelings and experiences in a safe and contained environment. As Robbins (1987) states, art therapy offers individuals an opportunity for a subjective experience of the self, which can be supported and validated by the art therapist. Use of symbol and metaphor can circumvent self-censorship, providing access to expression of unconscious processes and content. Furthermore, symbolic and metaphorical expression transcend temporal limitations, facilitating a sense of continuity of self by connecting aspects of past, present and future (Searle & Streng, 2001).

Art is a means of expression for which children have affinity, as they "understand visual images before language" (Levens, 2001, p. 41). It may also allow greater access to expressing that which was experienced in pre-verbal or non-verbal realms (Levens, 2001; Searle & Streng, 2001). As Levens (2001) notes: "Because words do not transcend linear logic, they cannot move into the world of primary process where fantasy and symbols reign; and time, space, and inner representations merge, flow, and create their own truth

and structure" (p. 178). Because primary process thinking is neither spatially nor temporally ordered in a logical fashion, it tends to be experienced in pictorial forms and does not enter the realm of verbal representation. Schaverien (2001) refers to the "embodied image" as one for which words cannot be substituted "because it contains elements of (the) conscious and unconscious simultaneously" (p. 31). For young children working through the Oedipal phase, with all its unconscious conflicts and potential for regression, art therapy may be especially helpful in organizing and expressing the inner tumult.

Art-making, like play, also makes use of fantasy and therefore constitutes a natural means by which children explore and learn about themselves and the world. Case and Dalley (1990) note that "children often have difficulty expressing their feelings verbally" (p. 8); pictorial depiction, however is a common and universal means by which children express themselves. Furthermore, children tend to conceptualize and communicate the contents of their art creations in narrative terms. The narrative form can provide a child with a means to organize internally experienced chaos (Treacher, 2002), assert themselves, and recognize their uniqueness.

Art Therapy from a Developmental Perspective

Treacher (2002) argues that latency-aged children "have a strong desire to tell stories about their lives as a means of making sense of their lives" (p. 12). This resonates with the viewpoint that our subjectivity is formed through communication with others, as discussed earlier in this paper in the context of object relations. Levens (2001) notes that the art image allows for a condensation of content, collapsing time and space and thus

circumventing the limitations inherent in verbal expression, which is linear and sequential.

Art therapy is well-suited to the latency-aged child who "uses fantasies as part of the defensive structuring of the ego, to further the developmental process" (Joyce, 2002, p. 127). Levens (2001) underlines the value of art therapy in helping a child to learn to discharge tension and overwhelming affect in a more controlled and measured way, increasing their tolerance for strong emotions and allowing them a sense of mastery. Art-making engages the latency-aged child in an active stance, and can contribute to their developmentally appropriate desire for a sense of competence, skill and control.

The art medium offers a vital opportunity for integration, as one art work can hold symbolic expressions of conflicting feelings or fantasies that would not otherwise coexist in the child's consciousness (Case, 1990; Robbins, 1987; Searle & Streng, 2001; Treacher, 2002). This is especially pertinent to the Oedipal conflict, in which the child may vacillate between their love for, and destructive feelings towards, the "rival" parent. The "as if' or metaphorical nature of art therapy allows the child an opportunity to approach threatening unconscious material in a safe way; as Levens (2001) writes: "Frightening emotions can be tested out; unacceptable parts of the self can be recognized and reflected back" (p. 50). Furthermore, the creation of images externalizes objects of the imagination and allows them to be "grieved, attacked, separated from or transformed" (Holmes, 2001, p. 20) in a way that may otherwise be impossible. Art therapy facilitates the mechanism of projection, allowing the child to externalize feelings of fear, anxiety and emotional pain by giving these form in a bounded space (the art product) where it can be safely contained, and addressed on a more conscious level.

Art therapy can also, through both form and content, facilitate developmental objectives, primarily through supporting the development of an integrated ego, a cohesive and authentic sense of self. Treacher (2002) defines a goal of art therapy as helping the child to establish "an internal self that can be linked and coherent" (p. 183).

It can help the child concretizes diffuse and chaotic feelings by giving form and meaning to them, and alleviate the anxiety that comes from a fragmented sense of self. As Robbins (1987) writes, part of the developmental process is to "heal our splits, integrate opposites into symbolic form, and work toward individuation" (pp. 22-23). Much of the art therapy literature points to the value of art therapy as an integrative process (Case & Dalley, 1990; Joyce, 2002; Levens, 2001; Robbins 1987). Art may act as a "transitional bridge between affect and cognition" (Robbins, 1987, p. 197), and promotes a mind-body connection. Searle and Streng (2001) write: "art effects a change of state from unconscious to conscious and from undifferentiated to differentiated" (p. 5). This points to the value of art in facilitating the child's developmental imperative of individuation. Art therapy further promotes ego integration and superego consolidation by various mechanisms that reconcile polarities; Levens (2001) notes that art expression requires "reconciliation between the pleasure principle and reality principle" (p. 22). For Robbins (1987), such integration speaks to the developmentally oriented nature of art expression, and he believes that "the therapist is constantly trying to relate aesthetics to developmental issues as he seeks new and different structure to promote individuation and differentiation" (p. 28).

Therapeutic Value of Art Object, Art Process

The art object created in art therapy may have several therapeutic functions, as Searle and Streng (2001) point out: "Patients may use symbols and metaphor as transitional objects or as a container for their feelings" (p. 189). Holmes (2001) views the process of art making as constituting a form of containment in itself. He writes: "The capacity of the ego to contain, to hold things together, to create a mental space within which feelings can be expressed is crucial to artistic practice" (p. 18). However, like Case and Dalley (1992) and Robbins (1987), he also views the art *object* as serving a containing function, wherein the maker's affects are contained and processed much in the same way that Bion's mother holds and metabolizes the distress projected onto her by the infant in the process of projective identification.

A client's art production may also provide the therapist with a visual guide to their client's progress. This is especially true for children, whose drawings often indicate their developmental level. Robbins (1987) writes: "As a patient gains more self-definition or structure and his observing ego develops, the art form produced likewise shows more definition and dimensionality" (p. 106).

The art process provides many therapeutic opportunities. Johnson (1999), describing the various mechanisms at play in psychodynamic art therapy, notes that it "relies foremost on the process of *projection*, whereby aspects of the self are expressed in artistic products and processes (i.e. play)" (p. 139). Searle and Streng (2001) write: "The use of metaphor—the "as if" experience—can provide the point of aesthetic distance at which introjection of the projected parts is possible" (p. 190).

Johnson (1999) sees the processes of transformation and integration, so intrinsic to therapeutic experience, as formative parts of the process of self- individuation. Kramer (1998) emphasizes art therapy's ability to foster another important aspect of the child's developmental process: the consolidation of the superego. For Kramer, art therapy enables the child to sublimate unacceptable instincts and impulses into acceptable, pro-social forms, thus forging the aptitude needed to function in the extra-familial spheres that the child increasingly moves towards during individuation. Both of these functions have important implications for the child's ability to cope with and traverse the Oedipal dilemma.

Art Therapy and Object Relations

Art therapy provides an optimal vehicle to incorporate an object relations approach in therapeutic work, and, as underlined previously, the object relations perspective is very germane to Oedipal conflicts. Robbins (1987) notes that "often more frightening aspects of object relations, will express themselves in the artwork rather than in verbal communications" (p. 40), clarifying for the therapist what areas are causing difficulty for the client. Skaife (1990) notes that: "the art form . . . organizes object relations and mirrors them back to patients" (p. 36). For Bollas (1987), who speaks of the "aesthetic moment" as an experience whereby "an individual feels a deep subjective rapport with an object" (p. 16), art facilitates an experience of fusion with the object that "re-evokes an ego state that prevailed during early psychic life" (p. 16). He believes that these existential flashbacks "evoke a psychosomatic sense of fusion that is the subject's recollection of the transformational object"(p. 16). This regression to earlier ego states

provides opportunities for therapeutic reparation of impaired object relations by allowing the client a safe experience of moving from fusion with to separation from, a cathected object. Robbins (1987), describes an analogous phenomenon:

In essence the therapist facilitates the patient's reconnecting with what Winnicott (1971) calls primary creativity, or the early illusion of the infant that the world is his and that he can maintain a blissful state of oneness . . . such primary creativity is a prerequisite for individuation and growth (pp. 27-28).

Winnicott (as cited in Searle & Streng, 2001) defines transitional or potential space as: "an intermediate area between mother and child that is neither inside nor outside but lies somewhere in between, bridging subjective and objective realities" (p. 27). Much like art therapy, it is a space of play and interplay, and one in which symbolic expression dominates. Johnson (1999) describes the transitional space in art therapy as: "an aesthetic, imaginal, metaphoric space in which inside and outside, self and other are mixed" (p. 146). Art therapy facilitates transitional phenomena by connecting the pleasure principle, gratified through the achievement and embodiment involved in art production, and the reality principle, in which painful truths may be accepted and incorporated. Gilroy and McNeilly (2000) agree that art making facilitates and re-enacts the transitional space that, according to Winnicott, (1971) must precede individuation.

Gomez (1997) describes transitional phenomena as "belong[ing] to the border between the child's early fusion with mother and his dawning realisation of separateness" (p. 93), and further elaborates that "the transitional object or phenomenon is the emblem of the child's internal unity with a giving, accepting, nurturing mother . . . it is the

outward sign of the early, blissful union between mother and child" (p. 93). Robbins (1987) notes that "the aesthetic and therapeutic processes themselves reflect . . . [an] integration of fusion and separateness" (p. 22), providing a parallel experience to early, formative mother-infant interactions.

The process of a child's individuation and separation requires the use of transitional objects (Winnicott, 1971) and, Bollas (1987) would argue, transformational ones; he writes: "The separateness of the transitional object signifies the limits of the child's omnipotence" (p. 12). He adds that the transitional object offers the infant an opportunity to play with the illusion of omnipotence, as he can play out its destruction and yet see it survive his destructive impulses. Robbins (1987) also refers to the child's use of the transitional object in testing out the limits of omnipotence, and by investing it with a range of feelings from identification to love and hate. Feldman (1989), citing Winnicott, emphasizes that the child's use of transitional objects primarily engages unconscious and intrapsychic resources to engage in fantasies of destruction from which the object is able to survive. The art process and product in art therapy can be used by the child client for exactly these purposes; for a child like Luke, struggling with his Oedipal, aggressive impulses towards his parents, these transitional phenomena afford him an opportunity to discover that his anger and destructive impulses are not lethal and can indeed be survived.

Art Therapy and Attachment: Mirroring, Reflection and Transference

The therapist's reflection of the client's experience in therapy constitutes an important part of a psychodynamic approach to art therapy, providing a reparative

approach to attachment issues. The art therapist reflects back to the child the child's experience and affects. The metabolized affects, having been validated and given meaning, are then re-internalized by the child (Case, 1990; Holmes, 2001; Levens, 2001). Thus, according to Case and Dalley (1990), "the feelings, anxieties and concerns that surface through the [art] are worked through in the relationship between child and therapist"(p. 9). It is the art therapist's role to reformulate the client's inner chaos and help them reintegrate that material (Robbins, 1987).

Mirroring is an important means by which the art therapist helps the client. It "accomplish[es] the therapeutic task of repairing an unattended or neglected self" (Robbins, 1987, p. 52). The sequence of form, activity, and the child's reflection by another, and then their reinternalization of the reflection, are fundamental to the process of art therapy (Holmes, 2001). It mimics the early, "privileged dyadic relationship" (Mancia, 1996, p. 52) between mother and child in which the mother witnesses the child engaging in acts of creation, giving the child an empowering sense of achievement (Searle & Streng, 2001) and an experience of authentic self (Winnicott, 1965).

The mirroring art therapist and their child client, engaging together in the transitional therapeutic space, may experience what Bollas (1987) refers to as "a suspended moment when self and other feel reciprocally enhancing and mutually informative" (p. 31). This recalls the early attunement dynamics that are optimally experienced between child and mother, in which the mother acts as "an auxiliary ego" (Holmes, 2001, p. 19) helping the child to define himself. The reparative potential for re-experiencing this dyadic synchrony with the therapist, and then safely leaving it as the session ends, and then returning to it the following session, and so forth, has great

reparative value for the child dealing with the painful loss of the dyad during the Oedipal phase.

The transference process in art therapy, so vital to a psychodynamically oriented approach, is uniquely enhanced by the client's artwork. The art object can serve to mediate and illuminate transference phenomena (Levens, 2001; Schaverien 1992; Searle & Streng, 2001). As Levens (2001) writes: "The transference relationship not only occurs within the human relationship, but is expressed within the imagery as well" (pp. 53-54).

Art Therapy and the Oedipus Complex

Robbins (1987) describes therapy as a process by which "relationships that have been associated with loss, annihilation, pain, and love . . . are reworked so that the painful process of leave-taking can proceed" (p. 149). This is unquestionably germane to the child working through Oedipal conflicts, for whom attachment and separation have indeed been challenging and sometimes painful.

Art therapy, with its configuration of client, artwork, and therapist, is uniquely poised to embody the triadic dynamics of the Oedipal situation. As a creative and self-reflective process that helps the client move from states of fusion with the creative object to states of differentiation from the art work or imaginal representation he creates, it has the potential to re-orient the child's relational dynamics, enhancing his ability to address the Oedipal tasks necessary for successful development. As Kavaler-Adler (cited in Levens, 2001) writes: "self –reflection is a critical component in a developmental mourning process that proceeds primarily through the use of the creative process . . .

[this] involves self-insight, [and] an increasing awareness of differentiating relations between self and other" (p. 58).

Art therapy, as both a form and a process, has excellent potential to elucidate and reorganize object relations and has reparative potential for attachment issues. It can be an invaluable means to addressing Oedipal conflict and in helping a child move towards individuation and differentiation.

The Therapeutic Use of Play

From our very first session together, Luke chose to use play as a vehicle to communicate and work through his conflicts and difficulties. It was, in fact, through his playing in our first session that Luke communicated his foremost preoccupying theme to me, a theme that would repeat itself and evolve through his play up to the very last sessions: that of the Oedipal conflict. Therefore I believe a discussion of the therapeutic use of play, and the theories that support it, is warranted.

Like art therapy, "the essence of play involves being open to images and symbols that have their own logic and organization regarding time and place" while acting to provide "a synthesis of primary and secondary processes" (Robbins, 1987, p. 28) It is also a natural and instinctive means by which children engage in, explore and assimilate the world around them and their feelings about it (Winnicott, 1971). Play offers an optimal vehicle for "turn[ing] passive into active in order to gain mastery over painful life events" (Johnson, 1999, p. 150), providing children with a coping mechanism in which they can address problems at their own rate, in their own way, on a manageable scale.

Play fosters projection, a form of externalization that "reassigns a quality of the self to another person or object, usually in the service of protecting the ego from anxiety or pain" (Johnson, 1999, p. 143) allowing the child to address difficult feelings that might otherwise overwhelm him. "Fantasies . . . help the child to deal with unbearable wishes through the mechanisms of repression and displacement . . . the child's use of fantasy [is] a way of facilitating the developmental process" (Caldwell, 2002, p. 127).

On a developmental level, Robbins (1987) notes that the latency aged child who is enabled to freely play with his instincts gains an advantage in mastering his ego, and Axline (1947/1969) sees play as enabling growth and individuation.

The approach to play therapy that I subscribe to is largely a non-directive one. Non-directive play therapy is based on the belief that given the opportunity to do so, and with the appropriate support of the therapist, the child will instinctively solve his own problems. With this approach, "the responsibility to make choices and to institute change is the child's" (Wilson, Kendrick, & Ryan, 1992, p. 73). Wilson et al. see the goal of this approach to play therapy as enabling the child to gain mastery over their feelings (p. 2).

The role of the therapist is to listen, understand, reflect and respond to the child's play communications in their own terms, staying with their metaphors, so as to help the child achieve a greater awareness of his feelings, as well as a sense of acceptance for those feelings. It is also important for the therapist to foster a sense of safety through limit- setting and containment so that the child develops a sense of responsibility and the sessions are still anchored in reality (Axline, 1947/1969; Wilson et al., 1992).

Other traditional approaches to play therapy include the psychoanalytic approaches employed by M. Klein and A. Freud (as cited in Wilson et al, 1992), both of

which focused on interpretation, and the object-relations approach developed by Winnicott centred on the notion of transitional space and phenomena that was discussed earlier in this paper. Winnicott's approach, however, was also interpretive, because he responded to child's play by "articulat[ing] the link between manifest behaviour and hidden, usually unconscious feelings" (Wilson et al., 1992, p. 7).

Various research has confirmed the value and effectiveness of play therapy for troubled children. Case and Dalley (1990) cite quantitative research by Field and Reite in which it was demonstrated that children whose mothers went into hospital for the birth of a new sibling increased their use of fantasy play. They concluded that this was an active coping response employed by the children to deal with the stress of separation from their mother, as well as the stress brought by changes in their household and family dynamic with the arrival of the new sibling. An empirical investigation by Brandt (2001) to determine the effectiveness of play therapy determined that children with adjustment difficulties who received play therapy once a week for 7 to 10 weeks demonstrated a significant improvement in behaviour problems, as well as internalizing problems such as depression, anxiety and somatic complaints. She concluded that play therapy is an effective intervention for treating young children with a variety of emotional and behavioural problems.

Play therapy provides children with an opportunity to communicate and work through distressing and sometimes paradoxical feelings, to embody their experience and create distance between themselves and their problems by using projection to objectify their conflicts, to test out new roles and identities, to gain a sense of mastery and control.

It is an integrative therapy that helps the child organize or reorganize his object world and perhaps discover and consolidate a differentiated, more autonomous self.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Artistic approaches to truth are less concerned with the discovery of truth than with the creation of meaning . . . Truth implies singularity and monopoly. Meaning implies relativism and diversity. (Eisner, 1981, p. 9)

Introduction

The following research will be presented in a single-case study format and will primarily apply psychoanalytic theoretical perspectives. The study will explore the use of art therapy in helping a latency-aged child who has moderate adjustment difficulties to negotiate normative developmental transitions and achieve greater self-definition. Particular emphasis will be placed on the child's use of creative expression through art therapy and play to address conflicts associated with the Oedipal complex.

Data

Detailed notes were completed following each session with this client, and his artwork was documented in photographic form. As well, the client's hospital file was consulted.

The data used in this study is gleaned from a retrospective review and analysis of the therapist's session notes and the client's artwork. The session notes detail the client's art production, play activity, verbal communications, non-verbal presentation and displayed behaviours and affects, as well as any transference and countertransference I noted. Collection of this data was informed by a phenomenological approach focused on

the meaning elicited from the visual and play narratives as expressed to me by the client. The phenomenological approach "is discovery-oriented and offers a way of explicating the essential qualities and structures of art therapy phenomena as experienced by a client" (Quail & Peavey, 1994, p. 46).

Analysis of the client's artwork draws on comments and explanations offered by the client as detailed in the session notes, but I use a hermeneutic approach to elaborate and explore the symbolic meanings of these visual narratives. Analysis of countertransferential data is informed by a reflexive stance.

Theoretical Currents

This study employs psychoanalytic and developmental theories as well as attachment theory. It is informed by art therapy literature as well as writings on symbolism and aesthetics. I am embracing the paradigm of psychoanalysis because I believe it has the most interpretive value for the case discussed; however I recognize many contemporary thinkers are critical of this paradigm, finding it problematic from a feminist perspective, for example.

Theoretical Perspective

I believe, as did M. Klein (1945/1989), that "emotional and sexual development, object relations and super-ego development interact from the beginning" (p. 82).

Chronologically speaking, according to Freud's developmental model, Luke would be entering the latency period, during which the Oedipal crisis has been either successfully or unsuccessfully negotiated, and the child is investing his libidinal energy

in integration and learning, in social relations outside of the home, in cultivating same-sex friendships, in playing sports, etc. (Erikson, 1963). This stage corresponds to the industry versus inferiority phase of Erikson's model. It seemed apparent, however, that Luke was still negotiating unresolved conflicts at preceding stages of development, as he displayed regressive tendencies typified by the oral, anal, and especially the phallic stage. Within Erikson's model, these stages correspond, in that order, to the following phases: trust versus mistrust (which can also be characterized by the acts of getting and taking), autonomy versus shame or doubt (letting go or holding on), and initiative versus guilt. Erikson's model is especially helpful in suggesting some of the therapeutic goals that would be important in Luke's therapy.

It is important to note some characteristic elements of both the anal and phallic stages that are relevant to Luke. Erikson (1963), discussing the issue of anality and withholding in one of his case studies, notes that the act of withholding can be viewed as a defensive manoeuvre to protect against loss. He writes that the anal retentive child "entertains . . . violently hostile wishes of total elimination against selected individuals, especially those close to him, who by necessity are forced to make demands on his inner treasures" (p. 59). Guilt and fear of his own aggressive impulses drives him to withhold eliminative processes within his own body. As mentioned earlier, Luke's intake report had stated that he had had toilet training issues around retention, and as we see in the session descriptions, Luke's anxiety around mess and his frequently rigid ways of approaching his artwork pointed to regression to the anal stage. Erikson's comments about defensive anality resonate with the defensiveness that would be evoked by the threat of losses in the Oedipal arena. Erikson also writes that the genital (phallic) stage is

characterized by a preoccupation with themes of intrusion. We saw this theme arise repeatedly in Luke's play. It is interesting to note how this theme is relevant to both the Oedipal dilemma and the dilemmas inherent in the child's separation from mother as viewed from an object relations perspective.

M. Klein (as cited in Gomez, 1997) believed that a child's frustrated desire for the breast, heightened at weaning, coincided with an increased awareness of the bond between parents, thus interrupting a sense of a continuum between self and mother, or his perception of an absolute and singular love between himself and mother, creating a frightening, fragmented experience of self (Segal, 1989). Unlike Freud, who believed the Oedipal conflict was driven by love and desire for mother, Klein believed the primary emotions the child would experience in response to this disillusionment and betrayal would be hatred and resentment towards the mother. Klein's mother is the good mother/bad mother, a two-in –one entity subject to splitting (Segal, 1989). "According to Klein's theory of development, hate, anxiety, defence as well as love, are all active from birth and are an essential part of a (mother-child) relation that employs complex methods such as splitting, projective and introjective identification, denial and idealization of the object" (Mancia, 1996, p. 25).

Another important dimension of intrapsychic development and interpersonal reality, is the aspect of vulnerability and powerlessness that an infant experiences. The infant's survival, predicated on feeding, is completely dependent on an external force (the mother). The existential proposition of such powerlessness and vulnerability is intolerable, and therefore the reality constructed by the infant is one of fusion with the

mother, therefore allowing the infant a sense of control and omnipotence and dispelling the unbearable alternative of feeling utter powerlessness.

This process by which needs and gratification of those needs are embedded in fantasized wish- fulfillment corresponds to what Freud (as cited in Goodman, 2002, p. 17) termed primary process thinking (secondary process describes reality based awareness and thought processes). Disturbances in the continuum of need and satisfaction of need as experienced between mother and child can structure deep existential insecurity that will later inform the child's identity. In such cases when feelings of powerlessness and vulnerability resurface, as they often do in response to the dependency of childhood, the child may find such feelings too painful to tolerate, and it is then that the child may display emotional and behavioural dysregulation.

Developmental processes associated with separation, individuation and lessening dependency and fusion, such as the Oedipal phase, may trigger disruption in the sense of self so keenly felt as to cause intolerable anxiety (Ellman & Reppen, 1997, p. xiii). Further anxiety may also be caused by the increasing understanding during childhood that the parents themselves are not invulnerable (p. xiii). It can thus be assumed that much of therapy with a child who is experiencing difficulty with deep existential anxiety as they proceed through the developmental spectrum of forming an independent identity involves reconciling the fantasies of omnipotence with the realities of vulnerability, finite power and dependence or interdependence (p. xiii). Early experiences in the intersubjective realm are assumed to be recapitulated at later developmental periods involving separation and differentiation from a beloved object, therefore forming a blueprint for relational dynamics (Goodman, 2002).

Epistemological Approaches

The following discussion is intended to make explicit the philosophical motifs underlying my choice of research methodologies.

My use of a phenomenological approach in obtaining the original data reflects my use of a phenomenologically oriented, client-centred approach to art therapy practice, which emphasizes the client's experience in the present moment, as well as their understanding of that experience. A phenomenological approach allows the therapist to attempt to "discover and describe the art therapy experience at the level of the meaning that is lived by the client" (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 55).

I prefer to allow for spontaneous verbal expression wherever possible, but verbal commentary is sometimes elicited from the client by inquiring about affect or expanding on something the client says. In that sense I ascribe to the notion that phenomenological events are intersubjectively created. "The meaning and contents of experience are not *within* but *between* persons" (Polkinghorne, 1989, p. 47).

Luke's descriptions of and verbal responses to his artwork and his comments during play, as well as my observations of his behaviour and affect during the sessions form the core of my original data. Analysis of the data is being done retrospectively, which I realize lends itself to subjective reinterpretation and revision. Thus I will also need to account for subjectivity by including a reflexive dimension to the study.

My use of the case study format reflects my belief that our sense of ourselves is conceptualized in a narrative form, and that the narrative is a mutable one with multiple possible trajectories, the one being told at any given moment merely reflecting the most predominant preoccupations of the narrator(s). Meldrum (1999) writes: "How people

actually tell their stories, what they emphasize and what they leave out, whether they speak of themselves as heroes or as victims all tells us something of the way they construct their identities" (p. 185).

The case study enables a meta-analytical distillation of the therapeutic process, hopefully enriching the reader's insight into therapeutic process by "weav[ing] a number of behaviours together with such therapeutic insights that therapy makes sense to both the therapist and the reader at a number of different levels" (Aldridge, 1994, p. 339), as well as enlightening the therapist/researcher by increasing awareness of connected themes and emerging meanings in the therapeutic process.

However, this case study draws much from visual narrative, and visual iconography has a natural tendency to be apprehended through an interpretive stance, as the reception of images often reveals what may not be consciously seen in the production of those images. As such, while I intend to convey the overt meanings elicited from the client's visual and play narratives, by using the client's own descriptions and responses as a touchstone, I will elaborate on inferred meaning using a hermeneutic approach to explore the symbolic dimensions of the Luke's narratives. The hermeneutic approach is complementary to phenomenological representation inasmuch as it is a "symbolic representation of experience" (Tappan, 2001, p. 47) that works to unify that experience (p. 49). Although an interpretive approach, Tappan argues "that the process of interpretation itself is essentially a relational activity. The activity of relationship entails both the impulse to comprehend and the impulse to respond and connect—impulses that are central to the process of interpretation" (p. 54).

As well, the predominant theoretical framework I have chosen to structure this narrative with—psychoanalytical thought—is itself a hermeneutic enterprise

Therapeutic Aims and Approach

The therapeutic approach I subscribe to is the non-directive approach espoused by play therapist V.M. Axline (as cited in Herbert, 1984, p. 179) because I believe, as she does, "that the individual has within himself, not only the ability to solve his own problems satisfactorily, but also a growth impulse that makes mature behaviour more satisfying than immature behaviour". The play that was so vital to Luke's therapeutic process is an optimal vehicle for "turn[ing] passive into active in order to gain mastery over painful life events" (Johnson, 1999, p. 150). The transitional space in art therapy may also provide an important function by bridging the pleasure principle, gratified through the achievement and embodiment involved in art production, and the reality principle in which painful truths may be integrated. Art therapy can contribute to a child's "ego-mastery of his internal and external world" (Winnicott, 1971, p. 63).

Johnson (1999) underlines the importance of both attunement and purposeful misattunement within the therapeutic alliance, as well as within the child's relationship to the art or play materials or products, because: "discrepant interactions with the arts media or the therapist's behaviour (propels) the (child's) re-identification with the 'vulnerable Self.' Furthermore, the source of the discrepancy is likely to be the emergence of the Other in the arts media or the therapist," (p. 147) thus fostering vital differentiation and enhancing the capacity for self-regulation of affect.

Chapter 4: Client description

Introduction

The following case study summarizes 19 art therapy sessions with Luke, a 7-year old boy referred to me by a child psychiatry outpatient team in a large urban hospital. The team provides service for children experiencing moderate to severe emotional disturbances. The team's orientation is strongly psychodynamic. Where resources permit, parents and family of the identified patient are also followed by the team's social worker. The therapeutic intervention described below took place at the hospital on a weekly basis for 45 minutes per session. Sessions most often included both art-making and play. Luke had received no prior therapeutic interventions. The duration of the art therapy intervention was determined by the length of my practicum placement.

Information I received about Luke came via a written intake report and brief consultation with the social worker assigned to his case. As such, I was not fully informed about family history and certain nuances in family interaction. Therefore there are aspects of Luke's circumstances that I can only hypothesize based on incomplete information.

Luke comes from a traditional Italian family, and lives with his parents, his 10-year-old sister and his 5-year-old brother. His parents seem to employ an authoritarian parenting style, and to hold traditional gendered assumptions of what a boy Luke's age should be like. Luke's more sensitive, emotional character appears to challenge some of these assumptions and leave his parents at a loss as to how to respond. He appears to have

a close relationship with his grandparents, especially his grandfather, whom he identifies as an artist.

Luke's intake report states that he slept with Mom for his first 4 years, but did not elaborate further. This alerted me to the strong possibility that Luke might have conflicted feelings about separation from mother. The report also reported that he had difficulty with toilet training due to retention, and that he does not handle change very well. He has tended to be fussy about his clothing (everything has to match), and his mother reports that he likes everything to be in order, so that when he makes a mess he always wants to clean it up. I inferred from this information that Luke had difficulty negotiating the anal stage of the psychosexual developmental model (Freud, 1923/1953).

Luke's mother reports that he is affectionate, loving and giving, especially with women, yet he perceives his sister as a threat because she does everything well and he cannot match her standards. The social worker described the sister as being a "little mother herself" who was perfectly compliant with her mother. At the time of Luke's intake, his mother was being treated for depression.

Luke began school 3 months prior to our meeting. His mother says he tends to isolate himself and sit on the sidelines and observe. He also started stuttering when he began attending school. He appeared to me to be bright, and artistically inclined. My initial impression was that Luke is bright and creative and takes pride in his artwork. He seemed to attach well and readily engaged in both art and play. At the outset of the therapy Luke exhibited some poor motor co-ordination, but this noticeably improved during the course of therapy. He was a quiet child, lacking confidence, but he became more precocious and assertive over time. He often appeared anxious during our initial

meetings. This was evidenced by subtle bite-like movements he would make with his mouth as he drew or painted. Luke was able to make effective use of our time together to lessen or sublimate his tension, however, and this oral gesture diminished considerably over time. Luke also showed a marked decrease in his exaggerated concern about cleanliness over the course of the therapy. His stuttering, meanwhile, would come and go, presumably elicited in anxiety in response to affective experience that may have been difficult for him to tolerate, but did not appear to be a serious problem.

Luke was effective in expressing various themes of conflict through his art and play. I believe that Luke revealed his core conflict through play within his first session, and it was a theme that would develop over time: Luke was engaged in negotiating the vicissitudes of the Oedipal drama, and struggling to reconfigure his internal object world in the face of external relational stressors. Luke's art and play also revealed ambivalent feelings towards his siblings (mostly his brother, despite his mother's contention that his sister was the main source of his envy), and an attempt to comprehend the meaning of family in relation to the world at large. This latter exploration was often conceptualized in rigid, polarized terms which were an apt reflection of the Oedipal themes that seemed to preoccupy Luke. Many of Luke's explorations in the imaginal realm were underscored by danger, theft, conflict and injury, and a struggle between good and evil. This seemed to me to indicate his attempts to organize and integrate his object world as he moved forward through the sometimes threatening challenges of the developmental trajectory that lay before him, and through which he strived for self-definition.

I met with Like for a total of 19 sessions. Due to the limited scope of this paper, some of the sessions will be briefly summarized to indicate the main themes.

Luke, who was 6 years old when we began our sessions together, was referred for treatment because of his mother's concern about his angry behaviour. However, no such behaviour was reported to have occurred at school. Luke was described as yelling at mother, being aggressive with boys, and having temper tantrums during which he would sometimes break things. Luke was reported to have had difficulty with toilet training due to retention. He had also slept in his parents' bed until the age of 3. Luke's mother had a history of depression, however the incidence, degree and duration were not specified. Luke's intake also noted that he had a problem with stuttering.

Stuttering

According to the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (2000, text revision), stuttering is a communication disorder involving a "disturbance in the normal fluency and time patterning of speech" (p. 58). Although stuttering is a common and normal occurrence for children aged between 3 and 4 (Bloodstein, 1995), it is considered problematic in children beyond that age. It may be characterized by several symptoms. In Luke's case, it was manifested in monosyllabic repetitions of whole words, and was of an episodic nature. Approximately 1 in 100 school-aged children stutter, however the prevalence in male children is 4 times higher than that in female children (Bloodstein, 1995).

Various hypotheses are forwarded to explain the phenomenon of stuttering. These encompass neurological, physiological, genetic and environmental causes. As this paper focuses on the psychodynamic perspective, I will briefly discuss the prevalent hypotheses focusing on psychodynamic explanations for stuttering).

There is no singular, unique psychoanalytic theory of the etiology of stuttering—it comes under umbrella of neurosis (Bloodstein, 1995). Regardless of cause, it is commonly understood that environmental or external pressures causing psychosocial stress act as "precipitating agents" (p. 60) for episodes of stuttering.

The psychodynamic perspective views stuttering as "a neurotic symptom rooted deeply in unconscious needs and treated most appropriately by psychotherapy" (Bloodstein, 1995, p. 61). One hypothesis is that stuttering results from an attempt to

> satisfy infantile need for oral erotic gratification . . .the immature sexual pleasure of nursing, biting, and oral incorporation of objects that the person enjoyed as an infant is unconsciously perpetuated . . . and, concomitantly, the pleasure of complete dependence upon and identification with the mother (p. 61)

Another suggestion is that stuttering may be representative of hostile or aggressive impulses that the child may fear to express overtly. "Children may unconsciously fear that that in speaking they will reveal certain forbidden wishes and feelings"(Bloodstein, 1995, p. 62). The repression of these forbidden feelings or desires manifests in an inability to communicate freely, as expressed in the symptomatology of stuttering. The author writes: "stuttering may be related to the child's wish for the destruction of one or both parents" (p. 62). "Stuttering is also sometimes characterized as resulting from a conflict between opposing wishes to speak and keep silent" (p. 66).

Bloodstein (1995) also notes that stuttering may be associated with anality, as the "forcing out and holding back of words may represent a hostile expulsion and retention of

feces" (p. 62). According to the author, anal-sadistic fixation is the most frequently mentioned psychosexual fixation associated with stuttering in the psychoanalytic literature. Furthermore, he notes that various studies indicate a link between stuttering and compulsive cleanliness.

There have also been links made between stuttering and Oedipal conflict. Bloodstein (1995) writes: "In the Oedipal phase of psychosexual development, speech may be seen by the boy as an exhibitionistic kind of behaviour and as an act of competition with he father . . .the impulse to speak may be intermittently thwarted by guilt and anxiety"(p. 62). Plankers (1999) argues that stuttering is an expression of "intolerable experiences of separation from the primary object and a resulting catastrophic experience of the Oedipal situation" (p. 239).

Projective testing among children who stutter indicates a tendency towards greater anxiety as well as a fear of separation from mother (Bloodstein, 1995). Certain common personality traits have been noted in children who stutter, such as fearfulness, dependence, a tendency towards greater need for approval, perfectionism and a lower threshold for frustration (Bloodstein, 1995). With regard to the latter two, Bloodstein notes that "whenever we are faced with the threat of failure in the performance of a complex activity demanding accuracy or skill, we are likely to make use of abnormal muscular tension" (p. 67). With the traits described above, such a child would certainly be more apt to display such tension, and as we shall indeed see, this is true in the case of Luke, who often moved his mouth in such a way as to indicate the presence of some such tension while he worked on his art. In a related vein, "stutterers often report that their speech improves when they are calm and relaxed" (Plankers, 1999, p. 313).

Stuttering has also been investigated as an expression of familial dynamics and conflict. Some associated dynamics include rejecting, overprotective, dominating, ambivalent, demanding behaviour by parents towards the stuttering child, or a parent-child relationship "in other ways warped by anxiety, hostility, dependence or guilt" (Bloodstein, 1995, p. 262) as well as competition with siblings. Bloodstein also cites research by Kinstler which found that "mothers of stutterers. . .seemed to reject their children in subtle, hidden ways to a greater extent than did [other] mothers" (p. 263).

Siblings

According to a 1991 study by researchers Wedge and Mantle (as cited in Sanders, 2004), 80% of children have siblings yet there is a dearth of literature regarding the impact this may have on their developmental trajectories and processes such as the Oedipus complex. Rather, the literature focuses on parental influences as the key developmental environmental factor (Sanders, 2004). Nonetheless it would seem sibling relationships would be an important element of the Oedipal drama, given that siblings must often compete for parental love, affection and approval (Sanders, 2004). Freud (as cited in Sanders, 2004) recognized that the birth of a new sibling would cause a rupture in the preceding child's relationship with the mother. Furthermore, he did conceptualize the sibling as representing a rival in the Oedipus complex. Novick and Novick (1997) also point to the significance of sibling dynamics in complicating the Oedipal conflict, writing that "the affect-laden capacity to measure and compare feeds into the potential envy, jealousy, and drama of the phallic-oedipal stage" (p. 39). Siblings must share the one mother, who may already be perceived as a scarce commodity during the Oedipal

conflict. As Sanders (2004) points out, "Sibling relationships may be viewed as the first expressions of competitive relationships, competing in the first instance for the scarce resources of food and sustenance, and parental love, affection and approval" (p. 3).

O'Shaughnessy (1989), describes her sessions with an eleven -year -old boy dealing with an unresolved Oedipal conflict as follows: "His Oedipus complex was not the kind where sexual desire for mother and sexual rivalry with father are foremost. [He] started not with a parental pair, but with a menacing three—mother pregnant with a new baby and father" (p.139). Sanders (2004) points out that the arrival of a new baby evokes a state of enchantment between mother and infant, akin to being in love, which thus supplants the previous child, estranging him from mother and perhaps evoking hurt and anger. However, Sanders views this as creating an opportunity for the older child to seek out and develop or strengthen other object relationships, such as that with the father.

Kavaler-Adler (as cited in Sanders, 2004), referred to the supplanted position of an older child upon birth of a sibling as being a 'dethronement,' foreclosing any notions the older child might have of being omnipotent and in magical control (of course this is more relevant to younger children who experience the birth of a sibling). The language employed by the author has interesting implications from an Oedipal standpoint.

Sibling relationships can bring conflicting emotions to the fore, and for a child who cannot tolerate such conflicting emotions, this can be confusing and disturbing. A child may simultaneously experience both love and hate, envy and pride, rivalry and affinity towards their sibling (Sanders, 2004).

There are, however, many positive developmental dimensions associated with sibling relationships. Neubauer (as cited in Sanders, 2004) points to facilitation of

enhanced object relations as one such outcome, stating that the comparative mindset that characterizes sibling rivalry may "promote(s) differentiation of object and self" (p.59) for the child. The sibling relationship facilitates an early opportunity for children to experience separating and individuating (Sanders, 2004), and it doubtless contributes to determining emerging identity and object relationships

Chapter 5: Session Descriptions

Session 1

Luke appeared shy but curious as he entered the art therapy room. He seemed excited as he was shown the supplies and toys that would be available for his use. He decided to make a drawing, choosing oil pastels and sparkles from the various supplies laid out on the table. As he finished using each pastel, Luke meticulously replaced them in the box, just as he had found them. His approach to drawing was methodical and structured as well. Drawing five flowers (Figure 1), he began by systematically drawing stems and placing leaves on each one. He shook sparkles onto the page vigorously and said that it was raining. Next, he drew a sun and a rainbow. Then he paused, surveyed what he had done and suddenly said, "I forgot something" and added a dark blue cloud overhead. During this activity, Luke's body posture was rigid and awkward; he seemed to be holding a lot of tension in his body and to have some mild difficulty with large motor skill coordination. He also displayed repetitive tensing and loosening of his mouth.

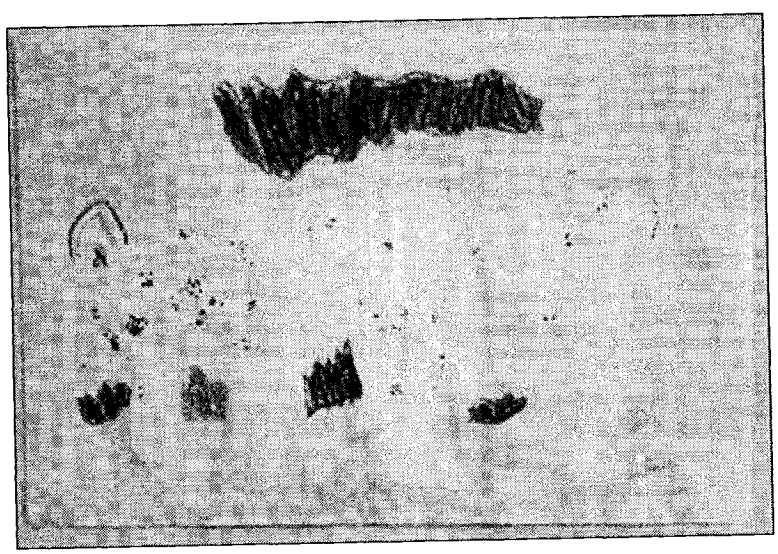

Figure 1. (12" x18")

I felt that this anxious oral gesture might be linked to his stuttering, and that both might somehow be connected to unresolved issues at the oral stage.

It occurred to me that the number of flowers corresponded to Luke's family of five: two parents and three children; however he did not say anything to indicate this correspondence. As Luke would do with many of his future drawings, he included a ground line. The grass or ground line seems to disappear between the first and second flower, creating the sense of a break, and then it darkens and elevates under the third flower, as if stressing its importance. It then resumes with a new brushstroke heading downwards, creating a sense of a distinct separation between the middle flower and the remaining two flowers on the right of the page. Klepsch and Logie (1982) note that children requiring a greater sense of security or support will often draw a line or grass under their figures. "Underlining represents structure and provides a secure base" (p. 87).

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Luke's first drawing was his last-minute yet well-considered addition of the heavy blue cloud. Di Leo (1973) notes, "It is unusual for children to add storm clouds and to darken the sun. These ominous signs have been seen in drawings by unhappy children" (p. 84), and he further elaborates that darkened clouds may point to "neurotic behaviour and feelings of inadequacy" (p. 36).

Di Leo (1973) also suggests that it is unusual for a boy of Luke's age to choose to draw flowers (p. 62), and that this may indicate some sex role confusion; Burns and Kaufman (1972) concur when they state "boys who use this symbol. . .are more prone to feminine identification and goals" (p. 188). With regards to the rainbow, B.G. Walker (1988) notes that in certain cultures, the rainbow is a symbol of creation, of the union between male and female.

Finally, Luke's preoccupation with orderliness and neatness, which would repeat itself and then subside in later sessions, often reflects "a concern or need for a structured environment," according to Burns and Kaufman (1972, p. 300). They add: "Over-concern with structure may be viewed as an attempt to control a threatening environment" (p. 300).

After finishing his drawing Luke was eager to move onto play. He asked me to retrieve a large moulded plastic toy castle that was sitting atop a cabinet. He then took the action figures, most of which were of the hyper –masculine variety, and proceeded to play with them. He fortified the castle with many guards holding many weapons. He said that they were protecting the castle from the "bad armies." In three of the four corner turrets, he placed figures he identified as three kings. No one else was in the castle other than the guards and the kings. Luke explained to me that the first king was the boss of the second king and that the second king was the boss of the third king. The third king, he went on, controlled the monsters. When I asked where the monsters were, he pointed to the box that had held the action figures. And there they stayed. The monsters never left the box, nor did Luke interact further with the box after describing its imaginary contents.

Luke then began to amass various toy trucks. He said he needed them to renovate the castle to make it bigger. When Luke was informed that the session would be ending soon, he became very concerned about cleaning up, wanting to do so himself. When I said I could clean up, it seemed to evoke some anxiety, and he insisted that he wanted to.

Quiet and shy at first, Luke's expressiveness had increased considerably as the session progressed. Both his art and his play had been very revealing. It seemed clear to me that there was some sadness, some dark cloud, hanging over his experience of family.

His play, meanwhile, indicated that he was shoring up his defences. I understood his reference to the three kings to be an expression of an Oedipal conflict, (but one involving a triadic rather than dyadic power struggle, of which I will speak more later), for supremacy over the castle, which I saw as representing the realm of the mother. But what about the monsters in the box? Klepsch and Logie (1982) suggest that children who use the symbol of monsters may be communicating "their poor self-concept as well as feelings of depersonalization" (p. 45). However, I was left wondering if the monsters represented internal impulses of hate and aggression, and perhaps even murderous ones—impulses that were too overwhelming and intolerable to be revealed in the light of day, or to even be acknowledged as part of the self, and therefore attributed to be under the control of a another, and this other was within the castle walls. Luke's fear of invasion seemed linked to forces both inside and outside of the fortified boundaries.

I found Luke to be a very likeable child and felt affectively connected to him within the first session. As I look back, now, I believe that I was also identifying with him, as I too had been a somewhat sad, rigid and awkward child. Like Luke, I too had a depressive mother, and parents with a more authoritarian parenting style. Given such identification it would be important for me to monitor myself for counter- transference tendencies within our future sessions together.

Session 2

When I greeted Luke from down the hallway just before our session began I noticed his mother had brought his sister and brother along. Luke stated that he was very happy to come to a place where he could do whatever he felt like. I sensed that such

freedom was not regularly available to him, and that he was pleased to enjoy a sense of control. I inquired whether those were his siblings down the hall. He said no. I understood from his denial response that it was important that this therapeutic play space belong exclusively to him, that his siblings not infringe on it, and that our emerging dyadic relationship be a privileged one that did not include or even acknowledge them.

Luke proceeded to make a drawing with pastels and paint. The image depicted a pyramid with a door that seemed to be made of bars or a protective grill, a cowboy, a camel, a tree, and notably, rain (Figure 2). As with his first drawing, Luke quickly and purposively added the rain after viewing his drawing, which he appeared to have completed. He used very strong pressure when colouring in the drawing, pointing to an underlying affective experience that was causing him tension. According to Klepsch and Logie (1982), heavy line pressure is associated with aggressivity, and Burns and Kaufman (1972) believe that using hard pressure to produce a drawing suggests an outward direction of impulse.

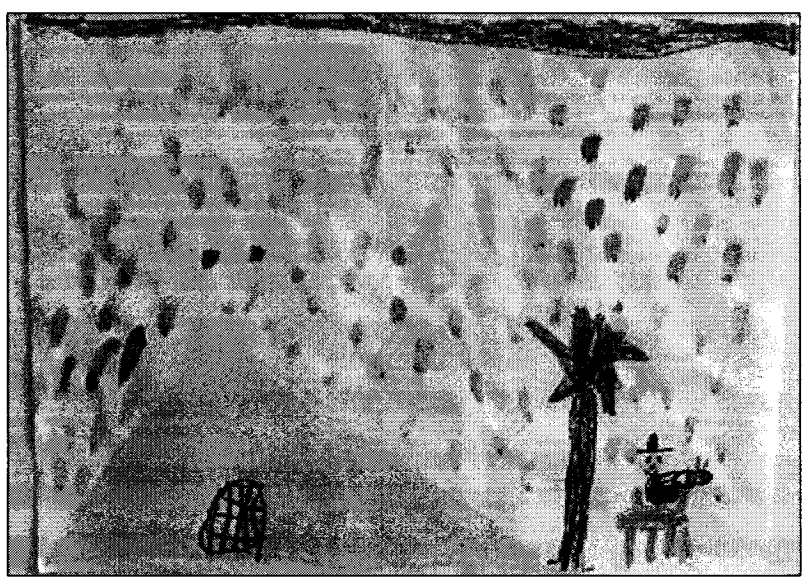

Figure 2. (18" x 24")

Luke also exhibited the same oral gesture and awkward coordination that had been evident in the first session, as well as some stuttering. As he worked on his drawing, Luke expressed great concern about wasting materials, and worried he might run out of yellow. He seemed to be expressing a fear of lack, of not having or getting enough. I reassured him that we had plenty more yellow in stock. He visibly relaxed and later happily pointed out that he had used up a lot of the yellow. It is worth noting that according to Klepsch and Logie (1982), extensive use of yellow in an artwork may be "suggestive of hostility, dependency, and infantile behaviour" (p. 35).

Luke asked me to guess what it was he had drawn. I correctly identified a pyramid and he was very pleased. Luke would repeat this guessing game in future sessions, although later on he made it clear that he wished for me to guess wrong sometimes. Luke described his drawing as follows: "It is the desert, in Egypt. There is not much food or water. A cowboy finds twenty-five dollars in the sand and buys a camel, but the cowboy is too heavy and the camel cannot carry him. So the camel exercises to become strong enough, and then he becomes the fastest camel." I wondered if Luke was telling me, and himself, a story about mastery and growth. I also wondered to myself whether he might feel he needed to grow stronger to bear the burden of his own feelings, his own life. Or perhaps he felt as though he was a burden too heavy to bear and needed to find support from someone who would not be overwhelmed by him? In any case, the environment he described was a hostile one, lacking in sustenance and nurturance. The choice of Egypt as locale, meanwhile, evoked various associations for me: the land of ancient and unfathomable mysteries, land of the mummy (an interesting wordplay on mother, as well), the birthplace and cradle of civilization.

The figure of the cowboy, (which I believe was meant to be self-representative), is a figure associated with solitude, with masculinity, with self-sufficiency and with a certain freedom from constraint. Klepsch and Logie (1982) note "cowboys are drawn by children who want to be masculine and tough" (p. 45). Once again, the word cowboy itself is interesting, when one considers that the "cow" is symbolic of the mother (Walker, 1983, 1988), so taken on an unconscious level of wordplay, one could say that it translates into 'Momma's boy.' The camel, meanwhile, represents endurance, but also discernment, due to its habit of only accepting on its back what it is capable of carrying (Cazenave, 1996).

As noted above, Luke said he was finished the drawing, but then he paused, rocked back and forth in his chair and then a clouded look passed over his face and he added rain, a lot of rain, with blue paint. Knowing that the depiction of rain by children in their drawings is "associated with depressive tendencies" (Burns & Kaufman, 1970, p. 250). I had a strong, visceral countertransferential reaction to Luke's final addition- I felt a pang in my stomach and my heart sank. In response to Luke's "exposure" of his sadness I felt a great moment of sadness myself, for Luke, and perhaps, now that I look back, also for the sad little girl that I had been at his age. I could easily recall the sense of helplessness that this feeling evoked in me as a child.

Luke then said that the cowboy and camel would try and go under a tree, but the tree wouldn't protect them from the rain. I envisioned the rain as his own tears, and the tree as a protective, sheltering entity that had failed to contain him and provide him with protection from the chaos of his own conflicting emotions. According to Cazenave

(1996), the tree symbolizes life. So, it seemed as if Luke was saying that life was not feeling safe and secure.

Next Luke said the cowboy and camel would have to seek shelter in the pyramid. I wondered to myself if this ancient tomb might represent the womb. He added a door, which he described as a trapdoor. As I now reflect on the meaning of the trapdoor, I am struck by the word trap, which connotes being uncomfortably caught.

He told me a guard protected the door, and that if people were bad, the guard would hit them in the head. For Luke this door, symbolically separating the sacred from the mundane, was a dangerous threshold to negotiate, and one to which he clearly felt denied access. If indeed the pyramid represented the womb, might the guard be his father? Might Luke believe, on some level, that he was refused re-entry into the safety of his mother's shelter, the inner sanctum from which he had been expelled because he was bad? Luke added that spies would try and steal the treasure but the guard would know they were spies because they would be wearing black and white.

Luke's narrative encompasses the theme of forbidden entry into a sacred space, wherein lies a forbidden treasure, guarded by a strong defender who presents danger to those who try to breach his authority, and to those whose eyes are set upon that which they are not meant to see (spies). It seems to suggest that Luke's own hidden and forbidden impulses, if acted on, might bring punishment and a threat to his selfhood. This theme is consistent with anxieties created by the Oedipal conflict.

Next Luke moved into play. He took out the large collection of animal figurines and sorted them all according to type. Once again, Luke was striving to create order in his world. He stated that animals have to stay together with their families, with their own

kind, because parents want them to. I wondered if this reflected a belief that had been transmitted to him by his own family. Then Luke said that the elephant was the king and enslaved other animals. He said that a poacher would come to kill the elephant and thus free all the animals. According to Cazenave (1996), the elephant is not only symbol of strength, but from a more psychoanalytic perspective, it represents the phallus. In light of Luke's Oedipal conflict, we can surmise that the elephant in his play narrative represents the father, who is killed by the poacher (in this case representing the son), he who engages in a covert and forbidden killing. Cazenave (1996) also presents the symbolism of the hunt as directly relating to the primordial drama of the Oedipus complex, with killing of the prey or game representing the murder of the father.

Next Luke piled up all the animals, one on top of the other, placing the cheetah on top of the pile. He said, "That's the Dada," then quickly corrected himself and said, "I mean Daddy." His initial language may have been an indication of some regression. Either way, the message was clear: father was king of the hill, at the top of the heap.

Luke requested to play with the castle again. He placed a guard in one of the turrets and then had another guard come and overthrow him. Once again, I believed that Luke's play had expressed efforts to communicate and work through Oedipal preoccupations. At the end of the session Luke again insisted on cleaning up.

He missed our session the following week as his mother forgot the appointment.

Session 3

In this session I requested that Luke draw a picture of himself with his family, doing something. My request was based on my knowledge of the Kinetic Family Drawing (KFD) developed by Burns and Kaufman (1970). Di Leo (1973) notes that:

> As the child grows older, interest and feelings are extended to include people outside the family circle. Outside factors become increasingly influential in shaping attitudes and behaviour, but the family or lack of it continues to be the basic, most determining influence because it was there that the child learned or should have learned how to deal with his own and other people's feelings. (p. 96)

He adds, "as a projective technique, family drawings are especially revealing during the child's latency period" (Di Leo, 1973, p. 105).

In response to my request, Luke chose to use pastels and said he would draw a picture of himself and his father playing chess. I thought it interesting that he should choose to depict himself and his father competing against each other in a game predicated on protecting the king and queen. Instead, after I clarified that I would like to see a drawing of him with his whole family, Luke depicted the family outside biking and walking together (Figures 3, 4, & 5). Throughout the time he was drawing, Luke moved his mouth the same way he had in previous sessions.

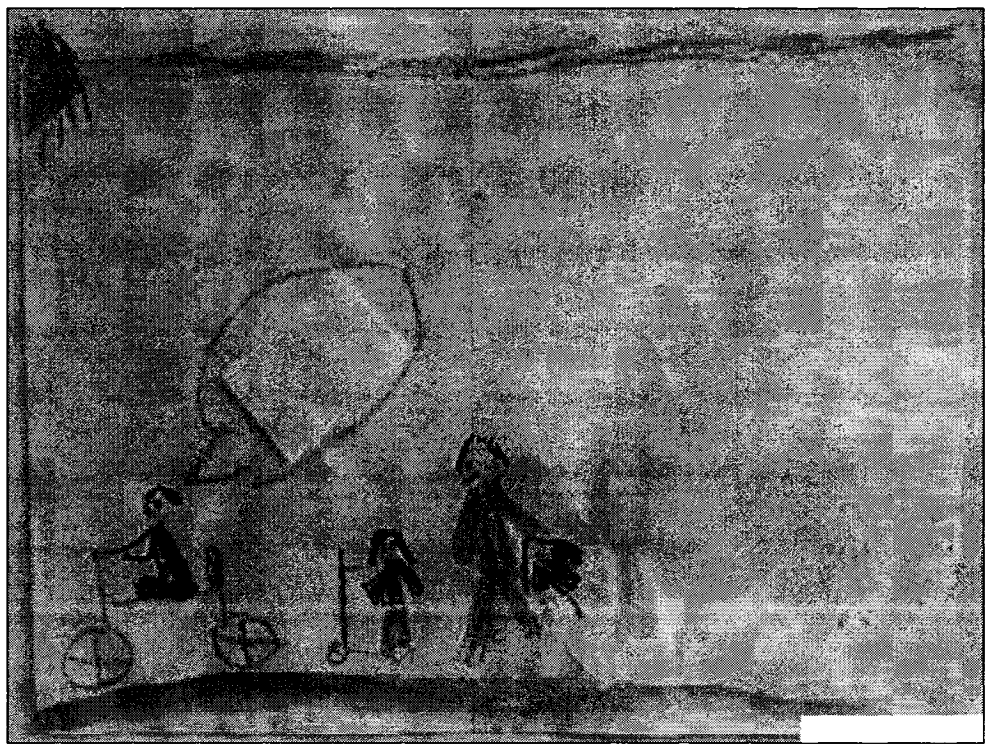

Figure 3. (18" x 24")

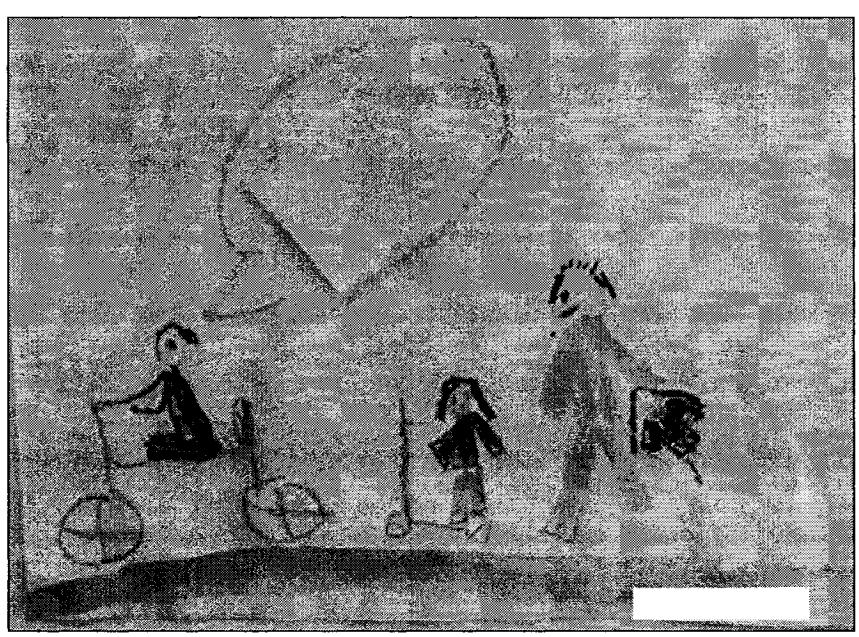

Figure 4. Detail of Figure 3

Figure 5. Detail of Figure 3

The most striking aspect of Luke's drawing was that he omitted his younger brother from the drawing and made no mention of him while describing it. Di Leo (1973) notes that it is so unusual for young children to omit persons from their drawings that it strongly indicates serious interpersonal difficulty with that family member (p. 82) and he adds that " 'forgetting' to include a family member is expressive of a negative attitude towards that person, rejection or symbolic elimination" (p. 108). Klepsch and Logie (1982) concur that omissions in family drawings "may indicate concern or poor feelings about or rejection of that person" (p. 86). Omission of figures frequently occurs when a new baby comes into the family and a child refuses to include him in the Kinetic Family Drawing, (Burns & Kaufman, 1970), perhaps indicating that Luke remains troubled by the birth of his younger brother.

Luke described the drawing as follows: he is happily taking the lead on a family outing, riding fast and shouting out his name (which he spelled backwards). His sister rides her scooter behind him. Behind her, Dad is running, telling Luke to slow down, and seemingly dragging a much smaller Mom by the hair as she tells Dad to slow down. The drawing contained several noteworthy elements. First of all, Luke has placed his mother farthest away from himself in this drawing, and she is the smallest figure depicted, as well as the most distorted. Di Leo (1973) notes that in family drawings, the importance of individual family members is expressed by size and location; the closer to the child and the larger the figure, the more important they are perceived to be . Klepsch and Logie (1982) agree that "distance is an important variable in the interpretation of group drawings" (p. 87), and that "those who wish to be away from a certain person may draw themselves at some distance from that person" (p. 87). Thus there is indication in Luke's drawing that he feels some ambivalence towards his mother, although in this particular drawing there is a definite bias favouring Luke's more negative and destructive feelings towards his mother.

Another very notable feature of Luke's drawing is that none of the figures have feet or hands, and Luke's bike has no pedals, Di Leo (1973) writes that "the omission of hands is certainly noteworthy because of their symbolic role as agents of aggression as well as a means for physically reaching out to explore the environment, to attack and to caress." (p. 34), and adds that "omissions of the hands suggest insecurity and difficulty in dealing with the environment (home, school, people)" (p. 44). Klepsch and Logie (1982), meanwhile, point to the omission of feet as signalling feelings of insecurity and

helplessness. With regards to Luke, Di Leo (1973) makes a further relevant point when he writes that:

> The body image is sensitively reactive to influences that disturb the emotional life. Insofar as human figure drawing represents a concept of body image as experienced at that time, it will tend to express, unconsciously and symbolically, the hurt that is making the child painfully aware of his feelings. (p. 36)

Both the sister's and mother's faces in Luke's drawing were coloured in. Klepsch and Logie (1982) note that such shading in "is always related to anxiety" (p. 46), and Burns and Kaufman (1970) further state that such shading in a drawing suggests "preoccupation, fixation or anxiety" (p. 300) relating to that figure. This would confirm the intake report that suggested that Luke was disturbed by the attention given to his sister by his mother.

Luke had great difficulty in drawing his mother, especially the lower half of her body, and covered up his first try with an equally unsuccessful second try by taping a piece of paper over the first attempt and drawing on that, in lieu of erasing, which was not possible with the pastels. Di Leo (1973) lists "defacement" of a just-drawn human figure as an indication of a more "pervasive deviation" in the child's emotional state and behaviour (p. 36). However, Burns and Kaufman (1970) stress that such erasures are signs of conflict or denial. One thing is for certain, the attempt to draw his mother's lower half—the part of her including her genitalia, her sexual difference from him, and thus associated with his Oedipal strivings, caused him some distress. He also drew a black

vertical line in the genital areas, which he did not comment on, and which appeared to be a 'mistake.'

Luke described his mother as wearing shorts and then commented that she didn't look like a mom, but more like a nine-year-old sister, and then, delighted with his observation, he laughed. Mother lacked a mouth and nose as well as feet and hands. Klepsch and Logie (1982) note, "the nose is often viewed as a symbol of power-striving" (p. 44). The omission of the mouth meanwhile, appears to indicate that Luke feels his mother has things to say that he would rather not have to hear. Klepsch and Logie (1982) write: "Children concerned or anxious about specific body parts may omit them" (p. 44).

Both Luke and his mother wear black, a colour associated with depression and mourning in Western culture. It is as if Luke is pointing to an affective, empathic connection with his mother—that of feeling her depression, but perhaps too, the black they wear is meant to signify Luke's mourning for the lost exclusivity of their earliest relationship. But Luke's mother's 'shorts' are yellow, as is her face, and as mentioned earlier, yellow may denote "hostility, dependency, and infantile behaviour" (Klepsch & Logie, 1982, p. 35).

Another noteworthy aspect of Luke's drawing is that the bicycle wheels have xs in them representing the spokes, but his sister's scooter wheels do not. According to Burns and Kaufman (1972), such inclusion of Xs in a Kinetic Family Drawing denote strong superego inhibition of threatening impulses arising from their struggle for love.

The choice to depict a bicycle ride, meanwhile, although a normal activity, may in the case of a boy, indicate "significant masculine strivings" (Burns & Kaufman, 1970, p. 152), and this certainly fits in with Luke's themes of conflict. Finally, it is to be noted

that in this drawing, Luke has lined both the top and bottom of the page, the bottom line indicating a need for structure and security, as previously mentioned, and the top line signalling acute anxiety (Burns & Kaufman, 1970).

After he finished drawing, Luke asked if there were any new toys. Then he spotted a large model barn and requested to use it. He took out farm animals and played, describing the following story as he played: "The farmer is sleeping. One animal on the top floor is defecating on another animal below who says, 'Stop pooing on me.'" In reviewing this session, this seems to me to have been linked to Luke's anal regressive issues of control. In symbolic terms, defecation represents elimination, release, birthing and creation (Walker, 1988). Meanwhile, the farmer or 'guardian' sleeps, oblivious to what is transpiring in the barn. As he seemed to take great delight in acting out this scene, my sense was that Luke was expressing his desire to have the freedom to release his 'crap' onto, or anger and negative feelings towards one of his siblings without incurring punitive consequences.

Next Luke took one of the hyper-masculine action figures and had him ride a horse. The horse and rider jump into a plastic box but realize it's a cage full of bees, and the man gets stung. If we consider that the horse is a symbol of masculine power and vitality, even of the phallus itself (Cazenave 1996; Walker 1988) and it is thus a strong symbol of sexuality (Walker, 1983), we become aware that Luke may fear that his desire to 'take the reins,' so to speak, within the context of his Oedipal conflict, is a dangerous proposition that will bring punishment from the 'castrating father' and threaten his bodily integrity.

Luke then described the man's plight as incurring chicken pox. Upon reflection, I wondered if the word choice 'chicken' referred to fear, in the demeaning sense of someone who is a coward. Could it be that Luke was expressing a sense of lowered self-esteem, tied to a sense of powerlessness in competing for his mother's love against his father, who no doubt embodied omnipotent masculinity in his son's eyes? The word 'pox' meanwhile, may refer to a curse, as in the expression 'a pox on you!', perhaps another allusion to Luke's fear of Oedipal retribution from his father.

Luke's play continued, as he had the horse-rider kill the bees and shut them into a box; but then he made a hole in the box to see if they were really dead, only to realize that they had escaped and were now in his pants! I viewed this as further signifying Luke's fear that he was impotent and unable to protect himself from his father's castrating retribution for Luke's desire to possess his mother and "murder" his father. Furthermore it seemed likely to me that the man riding the horse represented Luke himself, who although he struggled with adversarial feelings towards and a fear of his father, was also expressing a normative dimension of the Oedipal conflict by attempting to identify with him. This underlines the complex ambivalence that characterizes this conflict, wherein the boy must simultaneously hold opposing (and confusing) feelings of love and hate for his father with successful resolution predicated on his identification with him. Luke's play narrative continued as the horse attacked and killed the bees and then a cow came along and sprayed milk on the man's bum "to make it hurt less." Luke then told me that his leg hurt, but quickly corrected himself saying, "I mean it's itchy." Luke's statement pointed to a somatization of his conflict, and I saw this as being linked to his oral gestures and stuttering.

The stinging bees appeared to me to represent the threatening phallic intrusion of the Oedipal father, and the cow's milk was the healing return of the breast, the all-protective, all-good mother, who would come to his rescue and ease his pain But Luke's drawing pointed to another perception of mother, a more sadistic portrayal in which the betraying, rejecting mother was punished by her own castration of sorts, a disempowering infantilization. Finally the glaring absence of the brother within the Kinetic Family Drawing pointed to a wish that the latter not exist, and may have been a more sedate expression of murderous and aggressive fantasies that Luke had towards his younger brother who had usurped Luke's place at mother's breast. I was beginning to realize that perhaps Luke's intake report had overlooked Luke's jealousy of his younger brother by assuming his sibling rivalry issues were primarily with his sister, but perhaps Luke's envy of his brother was so emotionally laden as to be dangerous for overt expression. Luke's Oedipal conflict now appeared to be a more complicated one, with various 'kings' vying for rule of the castle.

Session 4

This session was the last one Luke and I had together before taking a break for the holidays; we had one more planned, but he was unable to attend. He arrived with a gift: a journal and a pen. His mother suggested they could be used for writing my session notes. Luke told that he'd been wondering if I celebrated Christmas, and was concerned that I might not get presents. I was aware of his concern that I not be deprived, perhaps this reflecting his own fears of deprivation on some level.

Luke appeared noticeably more relaxed than usual, and for the first time he was displaying no signs of concern about wasting or running out of art materials, nor about messiness. However, his habitual anxiety around cleanliness resurfaced when, as he was decorating a folder he had made to hold his artworks, painting his name on it with big letters, encased by thick black lines (a protective gesture, perhaps) some paint dropped onto it. He quickly and tersely said, "I meant to do that." Eventually, with very forceful and methodical gestures, he covered the whole side of the folder in thick mauve paint splotches, completely obscuring his name (Figure 6).

Figure 6. (22" x 28")

I had a strong reaction of sadness as I watched him do this. While I realize in retrospect that Luke initiated problem-solving and expressed a capacity for reparation, at the time his actions felt to me as though he was directing his anger and disappointment in on himself, devaluing himself with this gesture. I also wonder now if perhaps he was hiding his identity, trying to cover up the fallible, vulnerable and imperfect self from the scrutinizing gaze of another. Furthermore, it was *my* gaze, the gaze of one whom he was now idealizing in a transference as he had once idealized his mother. Within this transference my approval and esteem were crucial, and equally crucial would be to avoid

the pain of rejection, which would reawaken intolerable feelings of rejection and abandonment he had felt from his mother in the wake of the Oedipal conflict as well as with her transfer of attention to his younger brother.

Luke continued to paint, and began mixing colours for the first time, seemingly deriving great enjoyment from the process, engaging in a very kinaesthetic way. However, he expressed concern that his mother would be angry (presumably for this 'messiness' that he was engaging in). The mixing of paints was in some way, a pushing of familiar boundaries and on another level integration. How would his mother respond to these shifts? He then went on to express his great need to be perceived as being good, and asserted that he had been good. He said he wanted to be "the best kid in the house." Then he said, "sometimes I am bad, but this year I am better." His mom had told him so, and his dad was telling everyone at work that he was the best. Then he stated that his brother didn't clean his room and his sister made a mess. Luke was expressing his very strong need to be the most loved, most cherished child—number one. Luke seemed to have great difficulty in ending the session. I attributed this to some insecurity he might be feeling about breaking for the holidays. I concluded that Luke's elaborate discussion of his need to be the best, and in some ways only child, the favourite beloved, might not only be an expression of his wishes around his parents/ mother, but also an expression of his desire to be perceived by me as the best and most esteemed kid, the only child within a mother's loving gaze, and his anxiety that he might lose his opportunity to maintain and recover any position of security and gratification he had achieved through/ within our relationship as we separated for the holiday break. It was my hope that the work we had done together

would have allowed him to internalize a cohesive sense of self through a reparative transference relationship, and that he would be able to tolerate the anxiety of separation.

Session 5

This was our first session after the holiday break, and, due to some personal stress, I came to it weary and preoccupied. I had debated whether or not I should cancel the session, but decided against doing so because I feared that Luke would believe I had abandoned him. Whatever the case, I found it impossible to be fully and openly engaged, and I have no doubt that Luke, a sensitive boy who was keenly alert for signs of rejection, and who had likely experienced his mother's emotional unavailability due to depression, was aware that I was not fully present. So there is no doubt in my mind that despite my best effort s to conceal my emotional stress, the following session description also encompasses Luke's reaction to my altered demeanour and receptivity.

Luke's return from the holiday break left him anxiously preoccupied about having enough time in our sessions, and from the outset of this session he regularly asked me how much time was remaining, and commented about not wanting to waste time. Was he telling me that I was wasting his time because the quality of my presence and responsiveness was compromised? He was more quiet than usual, but he was displaying a much more expanded gestural range, and he engaged me in a game in which I had to guess what he was trying to say with these gestures. I believe he was testing the waters to see whether our absence had affected our attunement. Did I still understand him like I used to?

Luke returned to mixing colours, which pointed to a continuation of integrative movement, but when he mixed too much paint and it spilled out from the mixing container onto his paper, he became frustrated, and as he tried wiping it up with a paper towel, he said to me, somewhat irritated, "you could help me." This seemed both an astute comment on my lack of complete presence within the session, as well as an apt analogy for our therapy together: he wanted to know that if his feelings spilled out beyond their usual rigid boundaries, I would be there to contain him, or help him through the fear of loss of control. I sat across from him without helping him wipe up the mess, leaving him to do so himself. After unsuccessfully trying to remove the stains (Figure 7), he tersely said, "No more art," and moved on to play.

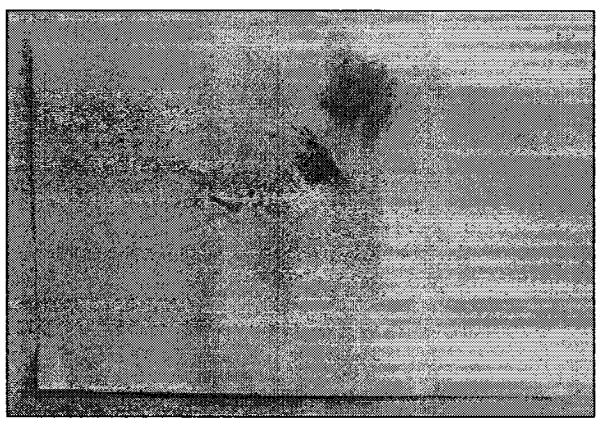

Figure 7. (12" x 18")

Playing with a group of duck figurines, Luke said they were a big family, and that it is hard to be a big family, because sometimes the mother is feeding one baby and there's a second baby who is hungry and crying and can't get fed at the same time, and then the mother and father get headaches. Luke's comments matched my hypothesis that that the birth of his younger brother had been experienced by him as a threatening intrusion into his exclusive dyadic relationship with mother, that his privileged place at her breast, whether logistical or merely symbolic at that point, had been irrevocably lost

forever upon the arrival of his brother. Already unable to accept the perceived supremacy of his father's relationship to mother, his brother's birth had replayed the pain, loss and rejection of being cast aside for another.

Luke then requested to play with the castle again and said he hoped that he would find within it the figures he'd left in there the last time (they were not). Then he requested that I get down a giant plastic football (a toy box) that was atop a high cabinet. He helped me lift it down and I thanked him. He said, "Anything . . . for you." What I heard in this statement was that in the transference I had become the idealized good mother, and he would do anything to stay in this protected dyadic relationship, where he could harbour the fantasy of being my 'only beloved,' the child whom I gazed upon with unconditional esteem and understanding.

Luke then built a high, intricate structure with the blocks, which he said would be his own castle. It seemed important for Luke to create a realm that was *his* domain. It fell, causing him upset, and he said that he had "meant to do that." Then he built another structure, told me it was a secret, and asked me to guess what it was. He told me it was a pyramid, and that pyramids are one of his favourite things. As in the first session, Luke appeared to be expressing his desire to re- enter the fused state with his mother, in the womb, which had now become a sanctified place in his fantasy world, but also a 'tomb' or place of mourning for the earlier, unrecoverable state of oneness he felt with his mother as an infant.

Session 6

Luke began the session by building a Lego structure that then fell apart, upsetting him and evoking his usual refrain of "I meant to do that." Shortly afterwards, he gave up the Lego, frustrated by the results he was getting. These failed building efforts in which Luke tried to build a domain of his own but failed, following which he would demonstrate frustration and disappointment, seemed to mirror the sense of impotence Luke felt in his relationship to his family. Perhaps, too, it also enacted a fear that he was unable to build a place of safety and protection that would not fall prey to destruction, or perhaps even to his own destructive impulses.

Luke then proceeded to draw a face, with glued-on googly eyes and a yellow tissue- paper nose, and declared it was a self-portrait (Figure 8). The smiling mouth, showing full teeth, seemed aggressive, and the face had an anxious expression. Next Luke drew an animal with arms outstretched, its right hand bigger, and a large tongue protruding from its mouth (Figure 9). The top of its head and its eyes form a shape that unquestionably resembles breasts. Luke worked quickly, using aggressive strokes. He wanted me to guess what it was. I could not guess. He told me it was mean, had big teeth, a tongue, and fur and that he hoped it wouldn't eat me. According to Walker (1988), the mouth showing full teeth is linked to the mother's breast, but also to breathing, eating and talking. Furthermore, the protruding tongue, which is quite distinctive in Luke's drawing, is symbolic of the penis (Walker, 1983). Luke told me it was a drawing of the monster, Bigfoot. It seemed to me that Luke was exploring whether his need and desire for me, a transference of his relationship to his mother and her breast, and thus linked to orality, would damage or destroy me. Perhaps he had experienced his mother's perceived

rejection of him as something that he had brought about with his own destructive impulses, and the result had been the idealized, all-good mother was destroyed, lost forever. Perhaps too, this was an expression of residual anger at me for having abandoned him over the holidays, or for our previous session, wherein I felt tired and somewhat disengaged, which, if perceived, may have been threatening, if it brought back familiar anxiety linked to his mother's depression. Now that he realized our relationship was still intact, he felt safe enough to express his anger towards me, at least in oblique, symbolic terms. Throughout the session, Luke once again expressed anxiety about not having enough time to finish what he was doing. His fear of not having enough continued to make sense in the context of the conflicts he was working through.

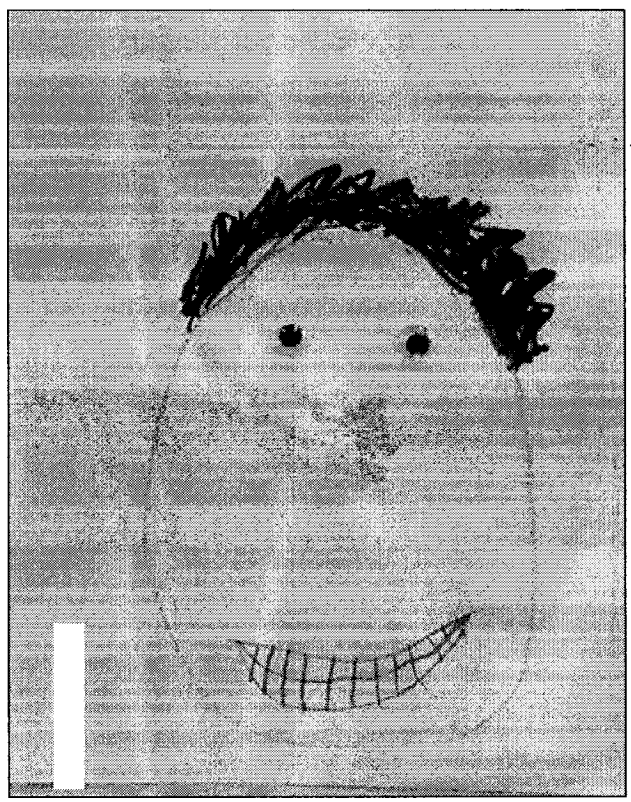

Figure 8. (12" x 18")

Figure 9. (11" x15")

Session 7

Luke began the session by using blocks to build a castle with a tower (Figures 10 & 11). I found the fact that Luke was now consistently attempting to build castle-like structures himself, rather than simply using the prefabricated castle he had played with in the first session, to be significant. It felt to me as though Luke was working through an attempt at restructuring his very perception, his object world, in these building attempts. Though they often ended in the structure falling apart, it seemed that his consistent efforts to try again were a heartening sign that he was working through something, and that he was invested in and committed to this process. This was Luke's first successful construction with the building blocks—it did not fall apart. Interestingly, Luke would not return to the building blocks again for another five sessions, and then only once again.

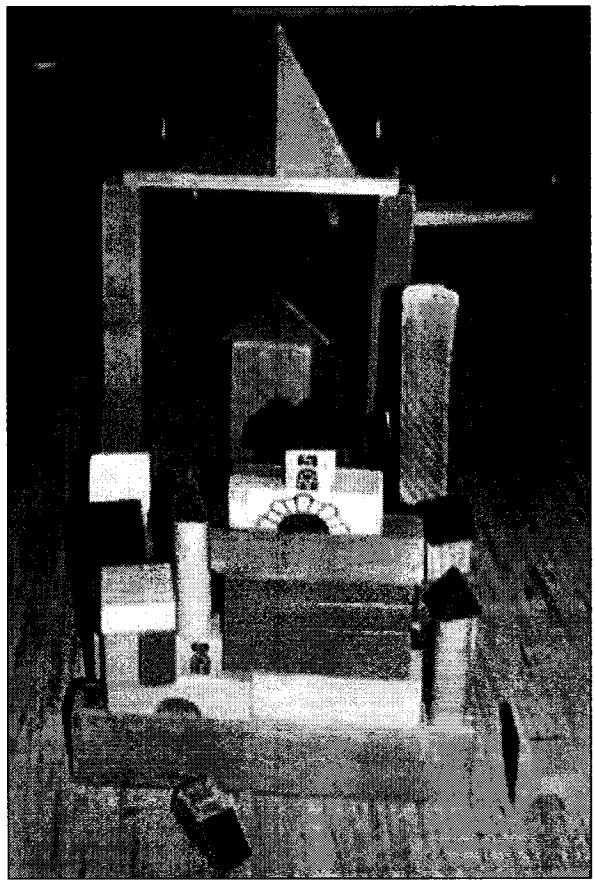

Figure 10. Front View

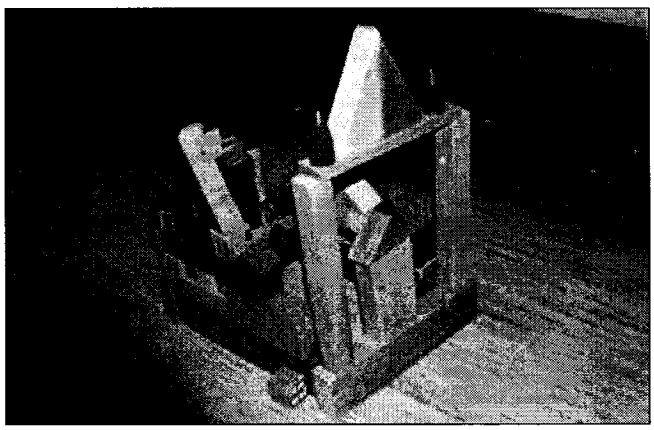

Figure 11. Side View

After building the castle, with its central tower, Luke lined up animal figures, organized according to type, and referred to the groupings as animal families lined up on their way to the castle. He then had a "Poppa" monkey climb up the castle and his babies

tried to follow him, but there was "not enough room." This again seemed to refer back to Luke's first play session, in which there were too many kings in the castle—but this time, it seemed Luke was accepting and acknowledging that the "Poppa" was king of the castle. Luke then added puppets to his play. The villain in his adventure was the elephant, and at one point he menacingly told me: "the elephants are going to spray you." According to psychoanalytic interpretations, the elephant symbolically represents the phallus (Walker, 1988). It seemed that Luke was expressing his desire to be the one in control, playing at being a menacing, masculine dominant figure. The timing of this enactment seemed linked directly to Luke's prior acknowledgement of the monkey father-king. I interpreted Luke's action as an attempt to regain a sense of mastery and control in the safe transitional space of play, where he could assert his fantasy of dominance without consequence, and perhaps equalize or counteract the frustration and humiliation of acceding to the father-king.

Next Luke requested to examine all the artwork he had done up to that point, and took pride and delight in doing so, and expressed a desire to take art home with him. I saw this as a further indication that Luke was approaching some sense of resolution and integration, because he was able to conceptualize bringing together the therapeutic space and home/ family space that had seemingly been very separate for him until this point. Finally, shortly before the session was to end, Luke took all of the stuffed animals in the room and formed a large blockade in front of the door. Clearly he did not want the session to end. Perhaps the mention of bringing his artwork home had triggered anxiety about termination of therapy, because he had been told at the outset of the sessions that his artwork would remain in the therapy space until we had terminated therapy. In any

case, he had great difficulty in ending, and had an almost frantic, desperate anxiety to his play. At the end of the session I requested that he leave his castle standing, so that I might document it. It seemed difficult for him to not clean up, but I had the sense that the opportunity to not do so was also a little exciting for him.

Session 8

Luke had a very energetic/kinaesthetic demeanour throughout this session, and his spontaneity seemed to be increasing. His tolerance and even exploration of messiness was also increasing. I interpreted this as a good sign that the superego was loosening up enough to free up some very healthy libidinal energy for constructive, creative use. I wondered if this was in part a result of having been able to express some anger at me in recent sessions, and seeing that I could survive it.

Luke was very exploratory in his art making. He requested a "huge" piece of paper and once again took great enjoyment in mixing paints. His usual oral gesture was markedly absent. He mixed colours, and clearly enjoyed the kinaesthetic dimension of his creative process, working very quickly, and intently. He was very exploratory, scratching into the surface of the paint. He seemed deeply involved in the process. He asked me when he would be allowed to bring his art home, and said he liked to give art to his mom because it makes her happy. Once again Luke seemed to be preparing for the end of therapy. He commented on fact that he had filled up entire page, and then stated he was finished. He had created an abstract painting (Figure 12). In my experience of children's art, this is an infrequent occurrence for a seven year-old. It points to quite a sophisticated capacity for sublimation for a child of this age. Luke's hands were covered in paint and

he commented that his mother wouldn't be happy about it, yet he said this with a certain amount of pleasure. It seemed that although Luke was expressing a desire to please his mother he was also feeling more confident and autonomous from her. The freedom to be "messy" seemed to release him of the anxiety tied to the obligation to clean up.

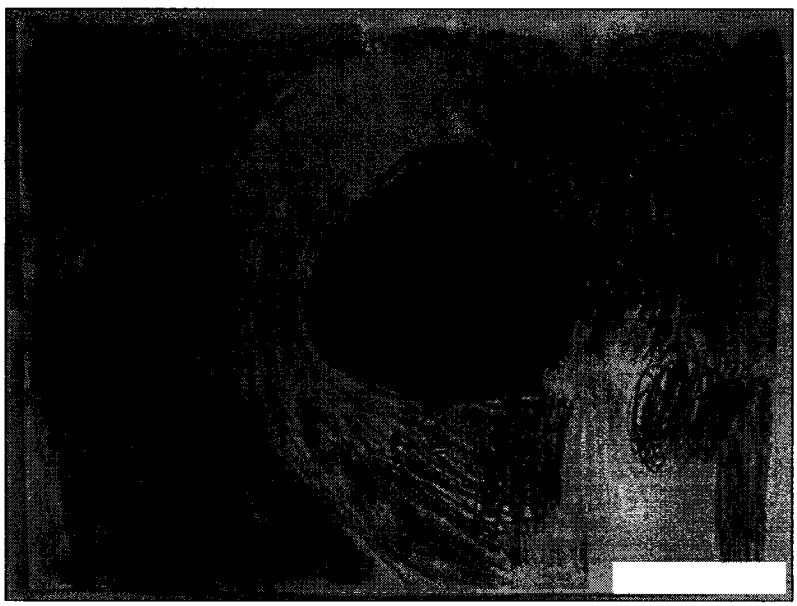

Figure 12. (18" x 24")

Luke then asked me to guess when he was born, and told me that his sister was younger (she is not). I wondered if he was really talking about the birth of his brother, but that it was less threatening for him to disguise it as his sister's birth. I asked him what it was like when she was born. He said his mom couldn't stop kissing her. This seemed to me to be a very strong indication of Luke's perception of the strength of love that had been expressed towards the new baby (and thus taken away from him) upon its arrival. Or perhaps it expressed Luke's desire to be that baby, in his mother's arms, whom she loved so much she could not stop kissing. Then he said he wasn't actually alive when she was born then, but had seen it on video. Then he said that sometimes he wished he were older. I was reminded of Luke's family drawing, where he was the leader. Luke seemed to want

to be in control so badly, perhaps not only of his family members and their behaviours, but also of his own overwhelming emotions.

Luke then set up a gym mat and started hopping and rolling around and laughing in a very playful and exuberant manner. Afterward he re-examined his painting and said that it reminded him of his Grandpa's paintings. He referred to his grandfather, as an artist, and said he was close to him. This was a positive indication of Luke's ability to engage in identification with a paternal figure, and in retrospect I wish I had explored this more. I asked him if he could tell his Grandpa things, like when he is sad. He replied that he did not, that no, when he was sad he talked to his "good angel." He explained that the good angel makes him do nice things like clean up without his parents asking him to do so. His good angel seemed to represent his superego. Then he said he has a "bad angel too," who is red, has big ears and carries a knife and tells him to do bad stuff, but he doesn't listen. His posture tensed up as he described his bad angel. His bad angel sounded very analogous to his id, with its primal and instinctive impulses. But perhaps most striking was how Luke's concept of his potential for good and bad demonstrated his need to project out and reject the bad parts of himself.

Session 9

Luke drew a picture of two structures on one page, which he described as his grandparents' chalet and the garage next to it (Figure 13). He described it as being a rather prohibitive environment. The image itself feels very impoverished, and the lines on the chalet, meant to depict wood shingles, are nonetheless reminiscent of a jail, furthermore the chalet has no windows. He has added a dripping faucet on the outside of

the chalet. He said his grandparents did not have a lot of things. He described being stuck inside the chalet when it rained, and of not being allowed to walk on the grass when the sprinkler was on. Once again, the theme of deprivation was resurfacing. Furthermore Luke's description of his time at his grandparents gave me a sense of the more authoritarian and prohibitive parenting ethic that might have been passes down to his parents, at least in part, and that may have been contributing to both Luke's anger and anxiety.

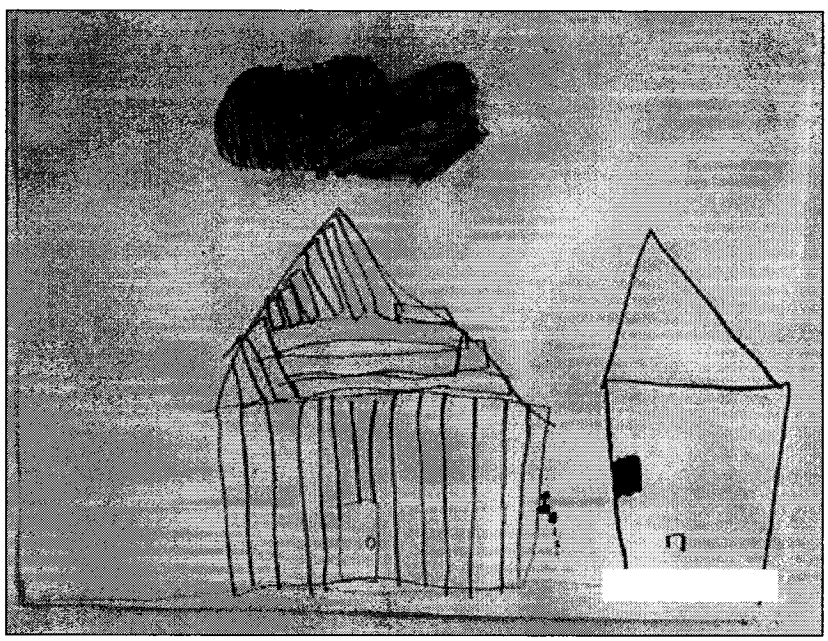

Figure 13. (12" x 18")

Luke then took play-dough and proceeded to make a pizza (his favourite food) with it (Figure 14). He then served it to me, pretending to be a chef in a restaurant. He made ice cream for dessert (Figure 15). He would not eat anything himself, and asked me to "pay for the food." I wondered if his feeding me was somehow expressing his relationship to his depressed mother, who may have unconsciously required him to nurture her, and to his perception of his grandparents as not having enough (to give, perhaps), and thus needed something to be given to them. Perhaps Luke had internalized

a message that he was required to feed others in order to ensure that they could love him. But in the play space enactment, Luke was asking for payment in return, and I saw this as a healthy sign of Luke's awareness of and ability to express his own needs despite catering to the "need" of another.

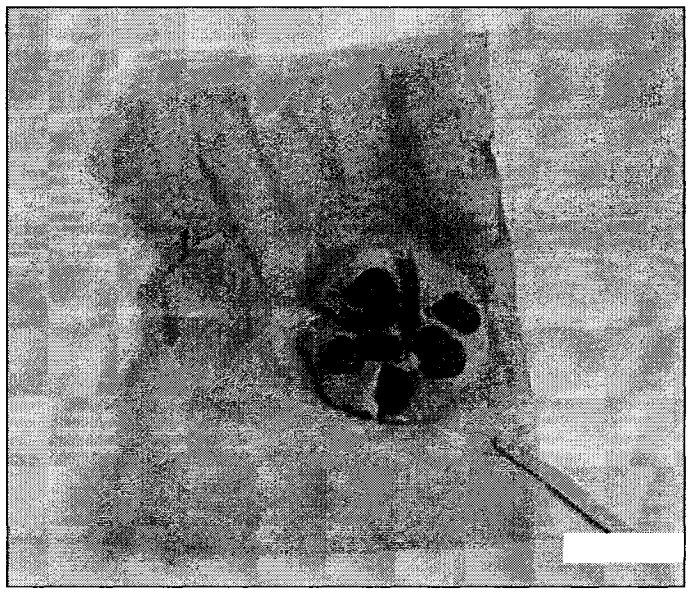

Figure 14. "Pizza"; Playdough

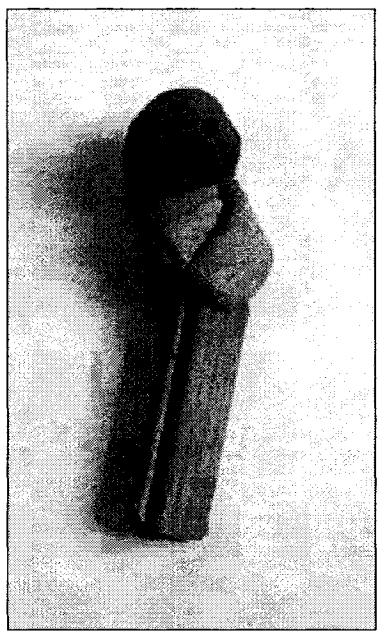

Figure 15. "Ice cream"; Playdough

Next Luke took out puppets and put on an elaborate puppet show all about magic spells and lovers. The realm of his play was now one of omnipotence, where magical thinking could procure power over others. He had "boyfriend" and "girlfriend" puppets that could not stop kissing because a magic spell had been cast on them. This reminded me of the earlier reference Luke had made to his mother's inability to stop kissing the new baby (his brother) when he was born. Perhaps it had been also easier to believe that his mother's actions had been caused by some magic spell rather than believe that she would willingly 'betray' him with another. Luke became deeply involved in his play. At one point the puppets were concealed behind the chairs that Luke was using as a stage, and the girlfriend puppet exclaimed, "Lie beside me, not on me!" Then Luke announced that they were brother and sister, so that they were "allowed kissing for sure." In this segment of his play, Luke seemed to be processing what proper boundaries of affection were—it seemed to be an active integration of his superego. When another puppet was introduced as someone who would destroy the boy and girl with his magic if they kissed, it seemed to be a direct reference to Luke's fear that if he acted on his wish to possess/love his mother (and be loved exclusively by her) as he wished for, that they would both be destroyed by his Oedipal impulses. Thus I interpreted Luke's narrative as another expression of his continuing struggle with the Oedipal dimension. I was incorporated into this drama as a surrogate for the idealized desired-for good mother when I thanked him for helping to clean up, and he responded with, "Anything for a woman like you."

Session 10

During this session Luke experimented with chalk pastels and said he really liked them. He used a lot of pressure as he drew. He did not blend colours, but smudging did occur, and Luke did not seem bothered by this at all. He drew an image he described as a rainforest (Figure 16). Jungles evoke a sense of danger, of a more primitive realm where creatures compete for survival, thus the expression "it's a jungle out there." However forests, traditionally, at least within the realm of children's fairytales, are often magical places where danger lurks and people lose their way, and heroes must overcome there fears to pass through them. . . "the forest is the realm of the psyche and a place of testing and initiation, of unknown perils and darkness" (Fraim, 2001). Luke's rainforest was comprised of three trees, each one different from the other, two different kinds of birds, (one of them a big, black bird), a sun and two clouds, a (black) bat, a crocodile or alligator with its mouth wide open, but lacking the characteristic rows of sharp, threatening teeth, and a beaver. There were also three flowers. The beaver, an animal not normally found in the rainforest, is perhaps most noteworthy for its ability to build its own home, the dam. The dam, in turn, is associated with blockage, as these structures often block the flow of water into lakes. I wondered- was this anomalous inclusion of a beaver in any way associated with a mental block of sorts? Both birds and bats are symbolically linked to notions of rebirth or reincarnation, although bats are also associated with demons (Walker, 1988). Finally, there was also a black monkey hanging precariously off of a tree branch, which reminded me of Luke's earlier play in which the baby monkeys attempted unsuccessfully to follow their father up the castle tower. As in Luke's previous drawings, he included a striking ground line. In retrospect this drawing

of the jungle, with its many elements strikes me as an attempt by Luke to make sense of his changing psychic landscape, which was perhaps, at times, feeling like a perilous tangle filled with dangers, illumination and obscurity, but like the jungles of many a story, invited exploration.

Figure 16. (18" x 24")

It was during this session that Luke asked me whether or not I saw any other kids. When I responded in the affirmative, he expressed that this made him sad. I assured him that despite this, every child I saw was very special to me in his own way, and that when we were together he was the only child I was focused on. Luke ended the session by drawing another drawing with the chalk pastels, which he described as a setting sun (Figure 17). The drawing has a sun setting on the ocean's horizon. Above there is blue sky, some of which is coloured quite forcefully, and in the centre of the sky is a big dark blue cloud. Luke used heavy pressure while colouring the cloud. The setting sun seemed to me to symbolize the ending of something, and with the dark cloud overhead I could surmise that it was an ending that brought a great sadness with it.

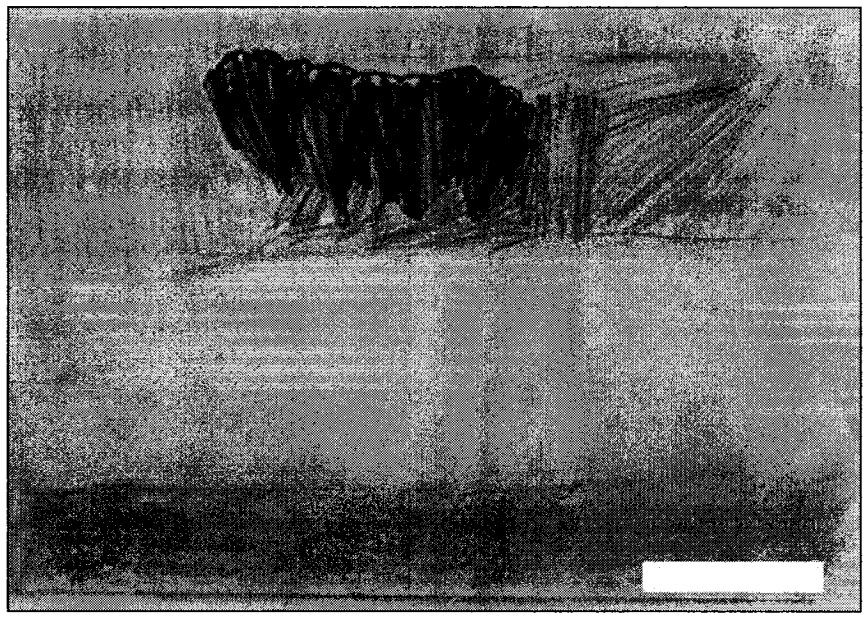

Figure 17. (18" x 24")

The ocean, meanwhile, is a symbol of the mother, of the deep "uterine abyss" (Walker, 1988, p. 351) from which life is born. I am not sure if Luke knew the French word for ocean, *mer*, but it is probable that he was learning French at school. The French word for sea is *mer* which sounds exactly like the French word for mother, *mère*, and according to Cazenave (1996), this is no coincidence, as the sea and mother and death and birth are all linked in the human imagination. The author further elaborates that the sea is linked to our primordial unconscious and he paraphrases Jung as he notes that in mythic, symbolic (and psychological) terms, to submerge oneself in the primordial chaos of the ocean deep can signify being swallowed by its depths (death of self) or to emerge into a newly individuated state (rebirth). The sea, in myth and in tales throughout Western history, like the mother, challenges the individual to undergo transformation and growth, or to be swallowed and sleep, unconscious forever in its depths. Freud (1930/2002) also coined the term "oceanic feeling," which he referred to as a feeling in which there is a sense of oneness felt between oneself and the external world. Although

he applied the term to describe religious experience, one can easily translate this state to the symbiotic continuum between infant and mother, wherein the infant has not yet distinguished himself as a separate entity from the mother. If the differentiation does not occur, then in psychological terms the individual's true self will die, or fail to emerge. Meanwhile the sun is a symbol that represents the father (Cazenave, 1996).

By confirming Luke's fear that he was not my "only child," I likely reactivated the pain he felt when he realized that he was not the only object of his mother's love. His drawing expressed that pain quite eloquently, and I felt myself feeling his sadness very keenly, as well, perhaps as my own sense of guilt that I could not provide him with protection from this pain (but of course to do so would have been antithetical to his therapeutic process). By asking me this question, Luke had initiated the revelation of a truth that the object world he occupied with me was more than two-dimensional. He had initiated himself into facing a reality that, once previously experienced with his mother had been intolerable, but which he was now prepared to face. But the process would still be one of tentative differentiation and retreat into old responses. Before the session ended, Luke turned over the sheet of paper he had drawn on and drew a little heart-shaped man with outstretched arms, wearing sunglasses and a top hat, and enclosed on each side by a blue line. He then wrote his name below it in large letters (Figure 18). This figure seemed to me like a plea for love, but a guarded one, because the eyes were hidden by sunglasses. Perhaps it was the top hat, but the heart figure reminded me of a performer- the kind that would do a song and dance with top hat and cane, and it made me think that there was a desperate desire to please embodied in this drawing, that perhaps Luke felt he needed to perform somehow to ingratiate himself to me, to regain

his sense of feeling special, as though he wished to recover the illusion that he was my only, and thus most special, client.

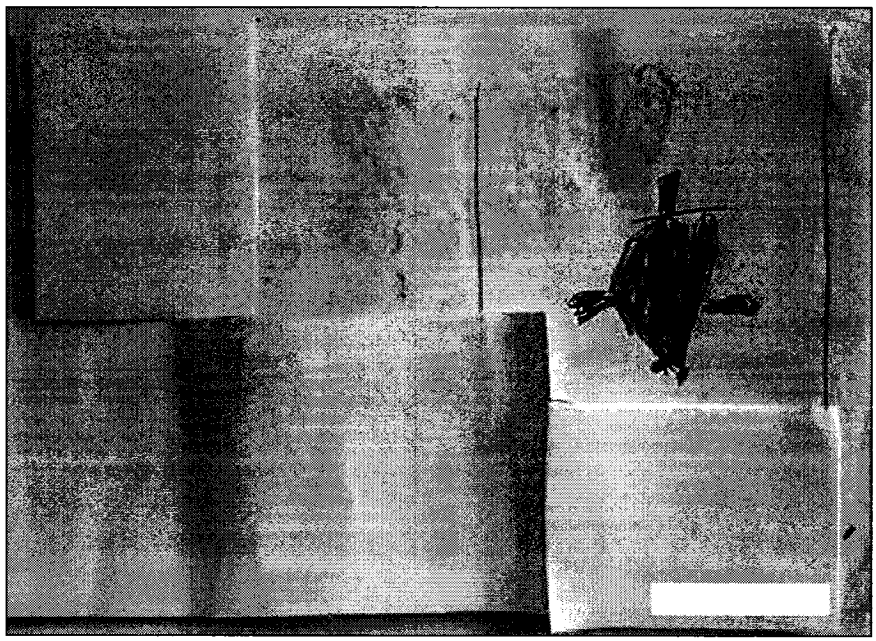

Figure 18. (18" x 24")

Session 11

Luke made three drawings during this session. The first of these he described as a tornado (Figure 19), and it seemed to express some internal chaos he was feeling when he entered the therapy room, for I had sensed some agitation and anxiety coming from him. The drawing has many elements- household furniture, appliances and family members all whirl in the air, and it is raining. Only the dog seems anchored to the ground. To the right a boy sleeps in his bed, separated from the other family members. The tornado itself almost gives the impression that it has originated from the house rather than alighted on it. My first intuition was that Luke had recently felt that his home environment was very chaotic and threatening.

Figure 19. (18" x 24")

His second drawing was another jungle chalk drawing, quite messy (and this did not seem to disturb him) (Figure 20), this time with one palm tree, one bird, the same black monkey hanging precariously off the tree, and seemingly possessing an extra appendage (a large phallus) due to an error in drawing one of the legs. This time the predominant figure appears to be the butterfly, symbol of change and hope (Walker, 1988), and there is also a large lion (king of the jungle).

Figure 20. (18" x 24")

Finally Luke drew a drawing of a bumblebee, ladybug, snail and butterfly (Figure 21), which seemed to bring him great satisfaction. This latter drawing struck me as noteworthy because these icons are more commonly typical of drawings made by girls (Burns & Kaufman, 1972; Di Leo, 1973). The bee reminded me of the earlier play session in which bees had surreptitiously gotten into the pants of an action figure, and stung him, and though I had previously thought of the bees as perhaps representing the intruding, castrating and phallic Oedipal father, I now was reminded of the expression 'queen bee' and wondered if the bee might relate to his mother. The ladybug, though, reminded me of an old children's nursery rhyme (author unknown) in which a ladybug is admonished to "fly away home" because her house is on fire and her children are all gone, and I wondered if Luke knew this nursery rhyme. As for the snail, it is a creature that carries its home on its back, thus self-sufficient, who retreats into its shell for safety, and who moves very slowly. Between the ladybug and the snail, there seemed to be a theme related to the uncertainty of/ desire for a safety. As for the butterfly, it is a symbol

classically representative of metamorphosis. B.G. Walker (1988) writes that the word *psyche* was used by the Greeks to denote both 'soul' and 'butterfly,' and stemmed from the belief that human souls became butterflies while searching for a new reincarnation.

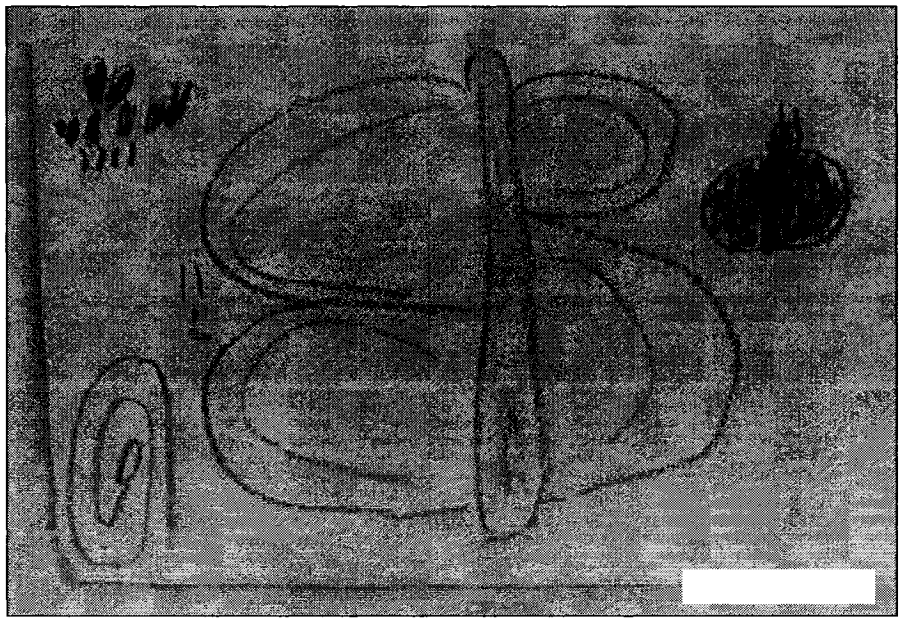

Figure 21. (18" x 24")

Luke then took the play-dough and made a strawberry and more pizza (Figure 22), but did not play with these imaginary culinary creations as he had previously. Luke's production was quick and continuous, and he was quiet as he worked. It seemed as if he was making use of the art making to calm his anxiety. However some of his apprehension remained throughout the session, and at its end, for the first time ever, Luke explicitly requested that I lock away his drawings in a safe place (the cabinet where they were habitually stored).

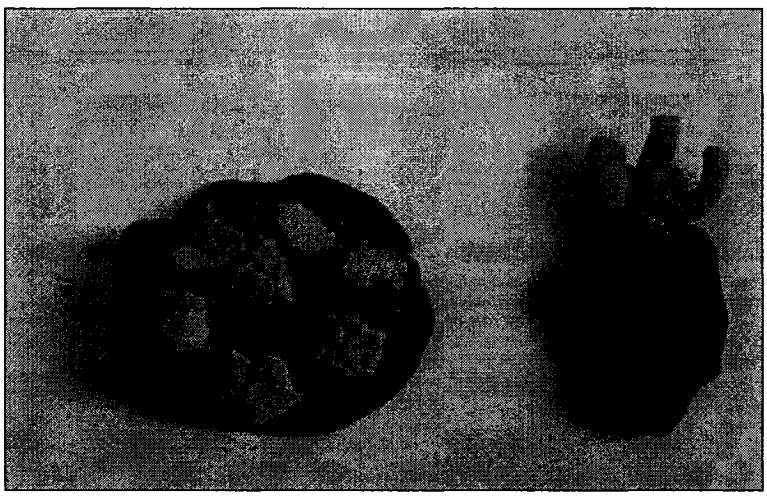

Figure 22. "Pizza" and "Strawberry"; Playdough

Session 12

Once again, Luke was exhibiting lots of stuttering and his oral gestures had returned. I was becoming aware that he was displaying some regressive tendencies since the session in which he had understood that he was not the only child I worked with. For the first time, I made black paper available to Luke, and he immediately chose some for his chalk pastel drawing of a rainbow with sun and rain, a bird, and a plane (Figure 23). The plane is drawn vertically, pointed up to the sun, which may represent the father (Walker, 1983) and which shines directly above it. It impressed me as perhaps having phallic connotations, which is all the more likely if we consider that the rainbow may represent the womb (Walker, 1988). The bird is caught in the rain on his way to the beach—he carries a shovel and pail, and directionally speaking he is heading down to meet the ocean, which may be symbolic of the mother (Walker, 1983). I wondered if perhaps this was a reference to something Luke wished to bury. Perhaps, too, the rain once again symbolized tears, and thus sadness or mourning, and that this was related to Luke's separation process from his mother. In terms of directionality, the drawing

seemed to indicate a movement in which the paternal identification was superseding maternal attachment, constituting an expression of active resolution of the Oedipal complex. Luke was very pleased with the effect achieved with black paper and pastels, taking pleasure in uninhibitedly smudging the chalk with his fingers, and then wiping them on his shirt, having declined my offer of a smock..

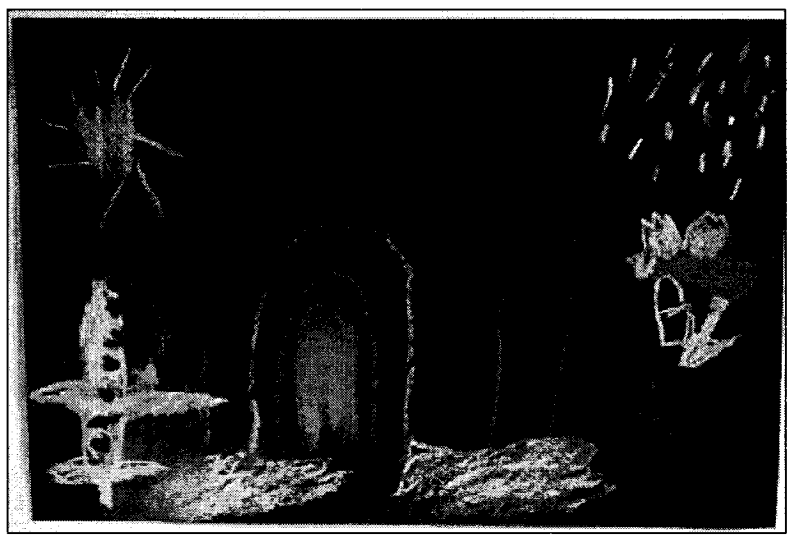

Figure 23. (12" x 18")

He engaged me in a guessing game, which was not unusual, but this time he made it clear that he wanted me to guess wrong sometimes. But as I did so, I soon detected some underlying anger and frustration, and he said, "You don't know (anything) anymore these days!" I wondered if this was part of his process of integrating a new conception of me as less than ideal, now that he knew our relationship was not an exclusive one, and I thought it was good that he was expressing his disappointment and anger, as this was part of the mourning that would need to take place.

Luke then played with blocks for the first time since he had successfully built a castle, but was easily frustrated as they kept falling down, and ended up moving on to play-dough. He made an object that he first identified as a bone, and then as a bowtie

(Figure 24). The bowtie reminded me of a knot, representing the binding or loosening of a tie to someone or something. Luke had difficulty ending the session and seemed angry about having to do so.

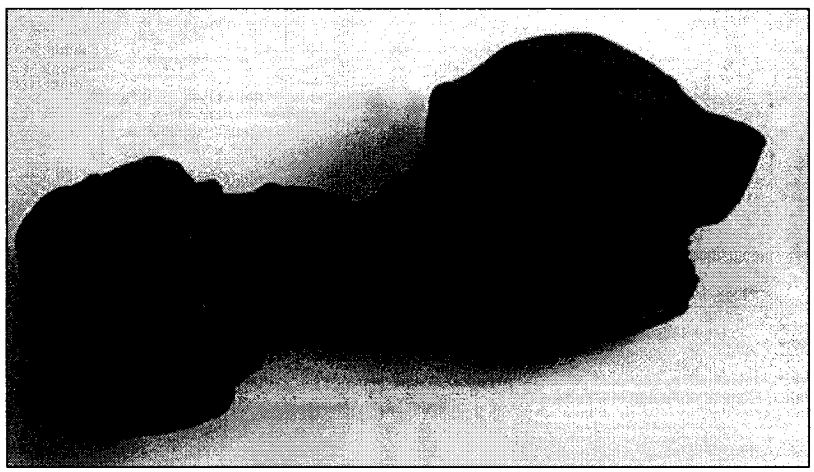

Figure 24. " Bowtie"; Playdough

Session 13

For the first time ever, Luke had been brought to his session by his father. When I came to get him in the hallway, they were sitting together in absolute silence and Luke seemed sad and subdued. It was as if his father's presence had an emasculative effect on his libidinal activation. I wondered if he was defending against a fear that his father would somehow permeate the therapeutic space and our alliance would be threatened. Luke could not decide what he wanted to do and became anxious and frustrated, and then exclaimed, "I'm wasting all my time!" Finally he drew trees, birds, the sun, a cloud and a big black butterfly that seemed weighted down and stuck between two trees (Figure 25). This seemed to be an apt representation of Luke's own process of transformation and the struggles it entailed. The black butterfly seemed significant, as certainly one of the

pleasures in drawing a butterfly is how colourful they are, and I thought this aptly reflected the state that Luke was in.

Figure 25. (12" x 18")

Luke made more food items (spaghetti and cheese) with the play-dough, and this time we both "ate" together. I thought it was significant that this time Luke was able to feed himself alongside me.

Session 14

During this session, Luke used black paper and chalk pastels to create a drawing of a house and dog with the sun and a cloud (Figure 26). I was struck by the sophistication he used in carefully blending the chalk colours together on the page, and I wondered if this ability was signalling a new level of psychic integration. As he blended the grass, he asked me how I liked it, and when I complimented it, he said didn't believe me. He expressed that he often thinks people say things they don't mean, but did not wish to elaborate further. Then he said, "I'm using my artist ways, so if you said it was ugly,

you'd be lying." Clearly Luke was expressing a difficulty trusting, and perhaps expressing having had the experience of receiving double messages. Perhaps too, he was still expressing a sense of betrayal at my disclosure that I saw other clients, and imparting to me that it had affected his trust in me.

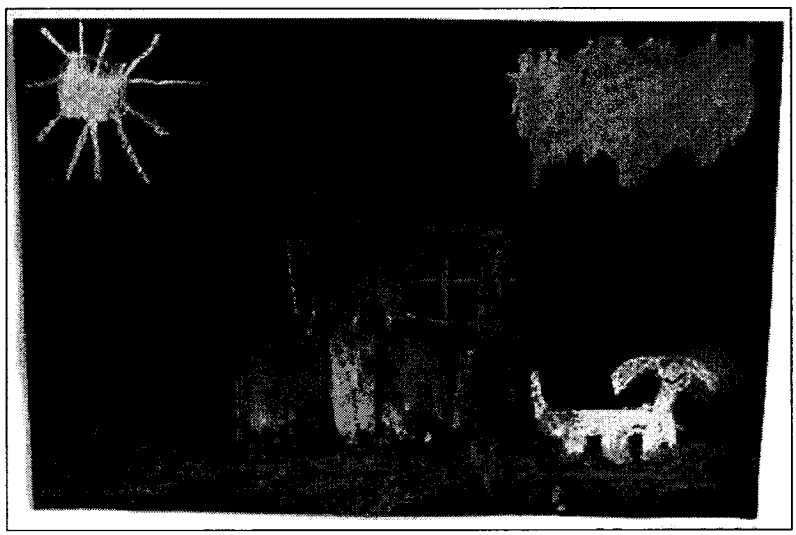

Figure 26. (12" x 18")

Luke said that the drawing was of my house and dog and that I was inside doing laundry, adding that his mother had done laundry earlier in the day, and that she was always doing laundry. I thought this was a possible reference to my role as therapist, which perhaps Luke perceived as helping him to clean up the disorder he felt inside himself. However, as I had recently begun to bring up the issue of termination, I wondered if this drawing was an attempt to internalize me. If so, I felt optimistic that Luke was bringing light to the darkness by placing bright colours on top of the black—and even lightening the cloud he had drawn; it seemed to bode well for the future.

I noted to myself that dogs are loyal friends, and wondered if the dog was meant to represent Luke, and I recalled the play-dough dog bone/bowtie that Luke had made in the previous session. I commented that the dog looked happy. Luke responded by saying

that everyone is always happy, but then added that sometimes they are mad (this strengthened my assumption that the dog was a stand-in for Luke). He went on to describe how he gets mad when his sister pushes him because he wants something that he has in his hand. I continued to be struck by the fact that Luke never explicitly expressed any negative feelings towards his little brother, nor did he even acknowledge him most of the time, and as a result I believed that his animosity towards his brother must be so great that he needed to repress or deny it. Towards the end of the session, Luke made some more play-dough pizza and this time he took pleasure in feeding it to me by hand.

Session 15

During this session Luke used chalk pastels and glitter on black paper to make an elaborate drawing of a rainbow (Figure 27). The drawing reminded me of a highly idealized expression of a longed-for womb. According to Drachnik (1995), the rainbow may also represent protection. Luke stuttered throughout the session. When I reminded him gently about the upcoming termination again, he seemed surprised and emotional, but tried to hide this. He decided to play with an oversized ball and proceeded to pretend to bowl. He whipped the ball at me with some force, and I assumed this was because of his anger about termination. He also initiated a game of basketball, which would be repeated in upcoming sessions, in which he took great pleasure in winning. During this session he also mentioned, with some sadness, that he didn't have a lot of friends at school. Finally, he ended the session engaging me in play with animal puppets. He gave me a seal, an owl, and a polar bear and he took a cheetah. The cheetah ate the other animals and they died. I wondered if, in response to the impending termination, this

enacted a need to be active in destroying rather than passively experiencing a loss that would invoke earlier painful losses where he had felt he had no control. Luke missed our next session, as his mother had another appointment to go to.

Figure 27. (12" x 18")

Sessions 16 and 17

A large part of these sessions were taken up by 'basketball games' with the oversized ball, in which Luke always won, and other very kinaesthetic activities where he was able to practice mastery. During session 16 he revealed that his father sometimes hit him, and that this made him feel as though his heart was "cracked." He also said that his mother yelled at him, and that it made him nervous and sad when people yell at him, especially if he hadn't done anything wrong. I thought it was very significant that Luke was able to express his distress and pain so directly, and verbalize how these experiences affected him, and I was very touched by his sadness and vulnerability. I realized that the strength of my reaction was in part based on my identification with Luke's pain; I too had been a child of very authoritarian style parents who would hit me on occasion, and it was easy

for me to recall the sense of outrage, humiliation and pain that that had brought me. At the same time I understood that in both my case and Luke's case, our parents were operating from a certain fundamental cultural ethos that, above all, meant that you respect and obey your parents without exception. Although I planned to address the issue of Luke being hit and of the rigid authoritarian parenting style that seemed to be present in his household with the social worker who worked with the family, I realized that it would be difficult to shift Luke's parents' approach through education and support. Therefore it seemed vital to me that Luke continue to be supported to develop his ego strength and to support development of more healthy defence mechanisms such as sublimation, as well as to foster his creativity which obviously fed his self-esteem, and to offer him a safe venue for expression of his feelings. It was at this point that I decided that it would be beneficial for Luke to continue art therapy with another therapist after our termination, if possible.

Part of our play during that same session involved Luke killing me and then having me reborn. I believe that Luke was beginning to realize that his negative feelings towards others would not destroy them, and were thus not unbearable. Furthermore I believe this enactment of killing me and having me reborn may have been part of the very important process of internalizing me as part of his changing object world, so that once we had terminated therapy, he could continue to access the aspects of himself that he had experienced with me as part of both the transference and our real relationship.

During this period, Luke's father once again brought his son to therapy, and before we entered the therapy room, Luke asked me if I wasn't forgetting something, and reminded me to ask his father to sit further down the hallway, away from the door, to

ensure confidentiality, something that I had requested of his mother at the outset of Luke's therapy. I said, "You're absolutely right, Luke," and I explained to his father that I ask all parents to sit away from the therapy room door to respect my clients' right to privacy and confidentiality. His father complied without any protest or negative reaction, and Luke appeared to be delighted, grinning from ear to ear as we watched his father walk down the hall.

One of Luke's play enactments as we moved closer to termination was to dress up as Julius Caesar (a symbol of autocratic power), to dress me up as a princess, and, "upon order of the king" to set out to find me a prince to marry, which he even went so far as to clarify would not be him. I was excited to think that Luke was trying out a different resolution to the Oedipal problem, one in which he actively relinquished his desire for the queen/ princess, and accepted that she would be coupled with another.

Session 18

Luke was very energetic during this session with a slight tone of aggression underlying his communications. I attributed this to his feeling angry that we would be ending his therapy the following week. He also seemed slightly more chaotic and disorganized.

Luke chose some markers and announced he was going to draw some party hats. He told me he would draw a birthday party, and when I asked whose birthday it would be, he said "yours." He described how he and I were at the party with friends and we are dancing. He is much taller than any one else in the drawing, and is the only person with feet. I am wearing a crown, and I have no mouth. Perhaps he wanted me to keep silent

about all that he shared with me in our sessions together, or perhaps he did not wish to hear what I would have to say, especially since I was bringing up termination of the therapy lately, and gently talking about the different and sometimes conflicting feelings that can bring up for a child. Unfortunately I do not have a photographic record of this drawing, as I did not access a camera before Luke brought it home.

It seemed to me that we were indeed celebrating the birth of something, even as we were saying goodbye. I felt that Luke had made some very important progress in addressing his Oedipal conflict, and that we were now seeing the beginnings of a more integrated and differentiated self—so I believe that it was the birth or re-birth of Luke that was actually the subject of celebration in this drawing.

This session was striking in that Luke overtly articulated how he was feeling about different aspects of his life. He expressed a clear wish to be the only child, to have his parents all to himself. When I suggested he draw this wish, he declined, and I understood that he had some guilt and fear attached to this wish, and did not want anyone else to see it. Even when I told him I could keep the drawing for him, he declined. I also heard in this statement a wish that Luke had that he could also be my 'only child,' and that our privileged dyadic relationship would continue indefinitely. It was during this same session that Luke stated that our hair colour was the same (although in fact his is brown, and mine is black). I expressed that I realized that our ending might be bringing up all kinds of mixed feelings for him and named some possibilities. Luke had been playing around with the oversized ball as I was talking to him, and at this point he started kicking the ball at me with some forcefulness. When I suggested that it was perfectly normal to feel angry or abandoned when such endings take place, Luke denied feeling

either and said in a defensive tone that he was excited. I told Luke that he had done a lot of good work in these sessions, and that he could take pride in this, that I was proud of him and all the great work he had done, he responded, "Work: that's what I do," and then mentioned that he had had to vacuum at home earlier in the day. For Luke 'good work' meant working hard, and doing so, to please the parents, something that evoked resentment in him.

During this session Luke spoke of his anger, sadness, loneliness, and happiness. He said that he had no friends at school and was very lonely, and this made him feel sad. He said he always felt sad or angry. He expressed that his anger was confusing for him (and I sensed overwhelmingly so, at times), because sometimes he did not understand why he would feel angry. But he did describe feeling angry with his sister at his sixth birthday party because she bossed him around and was stealing his friends. He said that the only times he was happy was when it was his birthday and when he came to see me.

We ended with our routine basketball game, and I sensed that Luke was using this kinetic activity to work through the anxiety and tension he was experiencing. Throughout the session Luke had displayed some regressive tendencies. The level of his artistic ability seemed noticeably declined, and he was engaging in a rather chaotic nonsensical commentary as he was drawing. I attributed this regression to the anxiety brought on by my discussion of our imminent separation.

Session 19

This was to be Luke's final session and I found myself feeling very sad about our parting. I had become very fond of Luke and I realized I would very much miss our time

together. I realized it would be important to monitor myself within the session, so as not to compound Luke's termination with my own feelings of difficulty around ending. I did however want to relay to him that our time together had also been important to me, that I valued the work we had done together, and that I would remember him with much positive regard.

Luke noticed upon entering the art therapy space that the oversized ball was not in the room (it was in a room across the hall where another therapist had been using it), and he requested to play with it. He immediately engaged with the ball with his entire body: he lay on it, he sat on it, and he bounced it while looking up at the ceiling. We played a game of basketball, and Luke repeatedly enacted a strong need to win, even resorting to cheating, which he had never done before, but which he now seemed to take great delight in. When he tired of this he said, "Game over," and I thought this statement was referring to it also being the last session. Luke drew some abstract designs on black paper. Regrettably, once again, I missed the opportunity to document this artwork, due to lack of a camera, and therefore no image is available. His drawing style and approach seemed somewhat regressed. He was very messy, and used lots of pressure while drawing in heavy, thick strokes of colour.

Luke declared that he was okay with ending, and said, "I have no choice." He then said, "The social worker always asks me questions, but you make me happy." He asked me if he would continue art therapy with someone else, and seemed amenable to the possibility. Then he told me that even after he left I'd always know what he was doing, because he'd be doing art. It seemed as if the very activity of art would serve as a transitional object through which he assimilated the value of our therapeutic relationship.

He expressed pride about his artwork, and later, as I said goodbye to him with his entire family in the hallway, just after our session ended, his parents expressed their pride in him too. Luke had brought me a small parting gift: some scented drawer sachets. I told him thank you, and assured him that I would remember him always, gift or no gift. After Luke had ended the session, there was a knock on the door; he had returned to give me a hug, which he had wanted to do in our session, but had obviously been to shy to do so. His sister and brother ran down the hall and requested hugs too. I looked at Luke and said, "What do you think?" and he smiled and nodded letting me know it was okay, so I did, but then I said, "One more hug for my special guy," and offered Luke another quick hug. Perhaps this was unnecessary, as I believe that through the process of art therapy with me, Luke had indeed managed to integrate a more whole self-object in his internal world, and I believe he left knowing that he was indeed someone special.

Chapter 6: Discussion

Luke made excellent use of his therapy in exploring, enacting and creatively sublimating the various psychosexual developmental conflicts that he was struggling to integrate within his object relations. Our therapeutic alliance served an important reparative function in this regard, affording him an opportunity to reconfigure his responses to a maternal entity that was previously a source of love, loss, pain, rejection, and hatred into a new relationship in which both parties survived intact. Moreover, he had discovered new creative and regenerative abilities and a sense of mastery of self and accessed an increased spontaneity and range of self-expression. The termination process was especially vital to Luke's ability to repair damaged parts of his self and to properly mourn the loss of a loved object without sadistic or masochistic defences taking over.

A vital component in healing Oedipal wounds is mourning the loss of the loved object so that one can liberate the libidinal forces for constructive and creative endeavours that promote self-growth and self-esteem, and access the whole self.

One of Luke's favourite imaginary spaces was the pyramid, and he conceptualized this as a place where secret, hidden treasure needed to be heavily guarded from bad, intruding forces. However, the reality that was never spoken by Luke is that the primary function of a pyramid is that it is a tomb, a place where someone dead rests. For Luke, the pre-Oedipal mother, his unshared counterpart, lay symbolically within that tomb, and the pain of this loss was so unbearable to him that he needed to keep it hidden, secret and guarded even from himself. But Luke also engaged in rituals of death and

resurrection, and I believe in so doing, he was invoking the capacity to identify with his love object anew, in a form that was no longer contingent on his own invulnerability, but rather with which his vulnerability could be acknowledged and honoured.

The increased sophistication in Luke's artwork, which was expressed in blending and mixing colours, as well as the narrative themes that unfolded in his play, were indicative, I believe, of a profound integrational process. Certain symbolic and narrative themes surfaced repeatedly in the context of Luke's Oedipal conflicts. A future area of study could involve investigating whether other Oedipal-conflicted children express similar themes when engaging in art therapy. Luke's ability to express emotionally difficult elements and to re-internalize them in a more processed form, with the help of my mirroring him, as well as the artwork he produced, attests to the value of art therapy in helping to surmount the sometimes painful and troubling developmental journey that children face.

The process of achieving self-definition is one in which children must negotiate various developmental tasks, not least of which are those encompassed by conflicts associated with the Oedipus complex. This process requires integration and refinement of the child's object world and their object relatedness. Art therapy and associated play explorations offer children opportunities to do so in a format towards which they already naturally inclined. The transitional space created through play expression as well as the created image or art object facilitates the child's discernment of the boundaries between internal and external realities and redefines his relationship to both. The externalization of feelings that may have been unconsciously deemed too threatening may also help the child realize that his impulses will not destroy those he loves. The therapeutic

relationship provides the child with a secure base from which to express aspects of self and feelings that may be acknowledged, and self-defeating or self-negating behaviours may be reoriented towards more pro-social and self-fulfilling expressions. Artworks, in their unique ability to hold and display back conflicting or competing feelings, may also help the child to develop a tolerance for ambivalence, so that he no longer needs to resort to splitting good and bad, and so that he may accept that neither he nor his beloved parents are omnipotent, but rather humanly fallible, and loveable nonetheless.

The child can then move forward to the next stage of developmental demands, which will require him to focus his libidinal energies on the social arena of the wider, extra-familial world and consolidate his evolving identity therein. Most likely, as with Luke, and as with all of us, in times where the burden of his new challenges become overwhelming and induce anxiety, he may revert to shades of his former self and defend himself against this anxiety by subtly or not-so-subtly slipping into a familiar stance from a previous developmental period. Hopefully, however, having already navigated the vicissitudes of discovering and asserting himself through the Oedipal phase, and having consolidated a more stable internalized object world, he will face his new challenges with increased confidence and hope, and move forward towards greater engagement with the world and his true self.

References

Aldridge, D. (1994). Single-case research designs for the creative art therapist. *Arts in Psychotherapy, 21*(5), 333–342.

Almond, R. (1997). Omnipotence and power. In C. Ellman, and J. Reppen (Eds.), *Omnipotent fantasies and the vulnerable self* (pp. 1-37). North Vale, NJ: Jason Aronson.

American Psychiatric Association. (2000). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (text revision). Washington, DC: Author.

Axline, V.M. (1969). *Play therapy* (Rev. ed.). New York: Ballantine Books. (First published in 1947)

Blanck, G. (1988). The complete Oedipus complex. In G.H. Pollock and J.M. Ross (Eds.), *The Oedipus papers (pp. 419-434).* Madison, CT: International Universities Press. (Reprinted from *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 1984, vol. 65, pp. 331-339)

Bloodstein, O. (1995). *A Handbook on stuttering* (5th ed.). London: Singular Publishing.

Blum, H. P. (2001). Matricide and the Oedipus complex. In P. Hartocollis (Ed.), *Mankind's Oedipal destiny: Libidinal and aggressive aspects of sexuality* (pp. 209-228). Madison, CT: International Universities Press.

Bollas, C. (1987). *The shadow of the object: Psychoanalysis of the unthought known.* London: Free Association Books.

Brandt, M.A. (2001). An investigation of the efficacy of play therapy with young children. Abstract obtained from *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences, 61*(7-A), Feb 2001, 2603.

Britton, R. (1989). The missing link: parental sexuality in the Oedipus complex. In R. Britton, M. Feldman, and E. O'Shaughnessy., *The Oedipus complex today: Clinical implications* (J. Steiner, Ed.) (pp. 83-102). London: Karnac Books.

Bross, M. (1988). Oedipus and Jocasta: A re-examination of Freud's drama of destiny. In G. H. Pollock and J. M. Ross (Eds.), *The Oedipus papers* (pp. 317-337). Madison, CT: International Universities Press.

Burns, R.C., & Kaufman, S.H. (1972). Actions, styles and symbols in kinetic family drawings (K-F-D): An interpretive manual. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Caldwell, L. (2002). Introduction. In L. Caldwell (Ed.), *The elusive child* (pp. 1-14). London: Karnac Books.

Case, C. (1990). Our lady of the queen: Journeys around the maternal object. In C. Case & T. Dalley (Eds.), *Working with children in art therapy* (pp. 15-54). London: Routledge.

Case, C., & Dalley, T. (1992). *The handbook of art therapy*. New York: Tavistock/Routledge.

Cazenave, M. (1996). *L'encyclopédie des symbols* [The Encyclopaedia of symbols]. Paris: LGF

Drachnik, C. (1995). *Interpreting metaphors in children's drawings*. Burlingame, CA: Abbeygate.

Di Leo, J. (1973). *Children's drawings as diagnostic aids*. New York: Brunner/Mazel

Eisner, E.W. (1981). On the differences between scientific and artistic approaches to qualitative research. *Educational Researcher, 10,* 5–16

Ellenberger, H.F. (1970). The discovery of the unconscious: The history and evolution of dynamic psychiatry. BasicBooks. (place of publication unknown)

Ellman, C. S., & Reppen, J. (1997). Introduction. In C. S. Ellman & J. Reppen (Eds.), *Omnipotent fantasies and the vulnerable self* (pp. xiii-xv). Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson.

Erikson, E. H. (1963). *Childhood and society* (2nd ed.). New York: W. W. Norton.

Feldman, M. (1989). The Oedipus complex: Manifestations in the inner world and the therapeutic situation. In R. Britton, M. Feldman, & E. O'Shaughnessy, *The Oedipus complex today: Clinical implications* (J. Steiner, Ed.) (pp. 103-128). London: Karnac Books.

Fonagy, P. (2001). *Attachment theory and psychoanalysis.* New York: Other Press.

Fraim, J. (2001). Symbolism of place: 2 Natural Places. http://www.symbolism.org/writing/books/sp/2/page5.html. Accessed March 20, 2006.

Freud, S. (1953). Three essays on the theory of sexuality. In J. Strachey (Ed. & Trans.), *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud* (Vol. 7, pp. 125-243). London: Hogarth Press. (Original work published 1923).

Freud, S. (2002). *Civilization and its discontents.* D. McLintock (Trans.). London: Penguin. (Original work published in 1930)

Gammelgaard, J. (2001). The Oedipus complex and the "third position." In P. Hartocollis (Ed.), *Mankind's Oedipal destiny: Libidinal and aggressive aspects of sexuality* (pp. 171-186). Madison, CT: International Universities Press.

Gilroy, A., & McNeilly, G. (Eds.). (2000). *The changing shape of art therapy: New developments in theory and practice.* Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley.

Gomez, L. (1997). *An introduction to object relations.* London: Free Association Books.

Goodman, G. (2002). *The internal world and attachment.* Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press.

Hartocollis, P. (2001). Preface: An overview of the Fourth International Psychoanalytic Symposium at Delphi. In P. Hartocollis (Ed.), *Mankind's Oedipal destiny: Libidinal and aggressive aspects of sexuality* (pp. vii-xix). Madison, CT: International Universities Press.

Herbert, M. (1984). Psychological treatment of childhood neuroses. In V.P. Varma (Ed.), *Anxiety in children* (pp. 172-194). Sydney: Croom Helm.

Holmes, J. (2001). Freud, psychoanalysis, and the arts therapies. In Y. Searle and I. Streng (Eds.), *Where analysis meets the arts: The integration of the arts therapies with psychoanalytic theory* (pp. 13-26). London: Karnac Books.

Ikonen, P. (2001). Oedipal problems, phallic universe. In P. Hartocollis (Ed.), *Mankind's Oedipal destiny: Libidinal and aggressive aspects of sexuality* (pp. 55-75). Madison, CT: International Universities Press.

Johnson, D.R. (1999). On the therapeutic action of the creative arts therapies: The psychodynamic model. In *Essays on the creative arts therapies: Imagining the birth of a profession.* Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas. [Reprinted from the *Arts In Psychotherapy, 25*, 85-89, 1998]

Joyce, A. (2002). Prince Blackthorn and the wizard: Fantasying and thinking in the psychoanalysis of a ten-year-old boy. In L. Caldwell (Ed.), *The elusive child.* (pp. 113-132). London: Karnac Books.

Kanzer, M. (1988). The Oedipus trilogy. In G. H. Pollock & J. M. Ross (Eds.), *The Oedipus papers* (pp. 85-95). Madison, CT: International Universities Press. [Reprinted from *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* (1950) *19,* 561-572]

Kernberg, O. (2001). The concept of libido in the light of contemporary psychoanalytic theorizing. In P. Hartocollis (Ed.), *Mankind's Oedipal destiny: Libidinal and aggressive aspects of sexuality* (pp. 95-111). Madison. CT: International Universities Press.

Klein, M. (1989). The Oedipus complex in the light of early anxieties. In J. Steiner (Ed.), *The Oedipus complex today: Clinical implications* (pp. 11-82). London: Karnac Books. (Original work published 1945)

Klein, R. S. (1990). *Object relations and the family process.* New York: Praeger.

Klepsch, M., & Logie, L. (1982). *Children draw and tell: An introduction to the projective uses of children's human figure drawing.* New York: Brunner/Mazel

Kramer, E. (1998). *Childhood and art Therapy: Notes on theory and application* (2nd ed.). Chicago: Magnolia Street.

Levens, M. (2001). Analytically informed art therapy. In Y. Searle and I. Streng (Eds.), *Where analysis meets the arts: The integration of the arts therapies with psychoanalytic theory* (pp. 41-60). London: Karnac Books.

Mancia, M. (1996). *From Oedipus to dream.* London: Karnac Books.

Marrone, M., & Cortina, M. (2003). Introduction: Reclaiming Bowlby's contribution to psychoanalysis. In M. Cortina & M. Marrone (Eds.), *Attachment theory and the psychoanalytic process* (pp. 1-24). London: Whurr.

Masterpasqua, F. (1997). Toward a dynamic developmental understanding of disorder. In F. Masterpasqua & P. A. Perna (Eds.), *The Psychological meaning of chaos* (pp. 23-39). Washington, DC.: American Psychological Association.

Meldrum, B. (1999) Research in the arts therapies. In A. Cattanach (Ed.), *Process in the arts therapies* (pp. 179–190). London: Jessica Kingsley.

Novick, J., & Novick, K. K. (1997). Omnipotence: Pathology and resistance. In C. Ellman & J. Reppen (Eds.), *Omnipotent fantasies and the vulnerable self* (pp. 39-78). North Vale, NJ: Jason Aronson.

O'Shaughnessy, E. (1989). The invisible Oedipus complex. In R. Britton, M. Feldman, & E. O'Shaughnessy, *The Oedipus complex today* (J. Steiner, Ed.) (pp. 129-150). London: Karnac Books.

Pines, M., & Marrone, M. (2003). Empathy and sensitive responsiveness. In M. Cortina & M. Marrone (Eds.), *Attachment theory and the psychoanalytic process* (pp. 42-61). London: Whurr.

Plankers, T. (1999). Speaking in the classroom: The psychodynamics of stuttering. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis, 80,* 239–256.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1989). Phenomenological research methods. In R.S. Valle and S. Halling (Eds.), Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology: Exploring the breadths of human experience (pp. 41-60). New York, Plenum Press.

Quail, J. & Peavey, V. A. (1994). Phenomenological research study of a client's experience in art therapy. *Arts in Psychotherapy. 21*, 45–57.

Rascovsky, A., & Rascovsky, M. (1988). On the genesis of acting out and psychopathic behaviour in Sophocles' Oedipus: Notes on filicide. In G. H. Pollock & J. M. Ross (Eds.), *The Oedipus papers* (pp. 169-178). Madison, CT: International Universities Press. [Reprinted from *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* (1968) *49,* 390-394]

Robbins, A. (1987). *The therapist as artist.* New York: Human Sciences Press.

Ross, J. M. (1988). Oedipus revisited: Laius and the "Laius complex." In G. H. Pollock & J. M. Ross (Eds.), *The Oedipus papers* (pp. 285-316). Madison, CT: International Universities Press. [Reprinted from *The psychoanalytic study of the child,* A. Solnit, R. Eissler, A. Freud, & P. B. Neubauer (Eds.) (1982) *37,* 167-200, New Haven: Yale University Press).

Sanders, R. (2004). *Sibling relationships: Theory and issues for practice.* New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Santrock, J. W. (1999) *Life-span development* (7th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill College.

Schaverien, J. (1992). *The revealing image: Analytical art psychotherapy in theory and practice.* London: Tavistock/Routledge.

Schaverien, J. (2001). Art and analytical psychology. In Y. Searle & I. Streng (Eds.) (2001). *Where analysis meets the arts: The integration of the arts therapies with psychoanalytic theory* (pp. 27-40). London: Karnac Books.

Searle, Y., & Streng, I. (2001a). Introduction. In Y. Searle & I. Streng (Eds.), *Where analysis meets the arts: The integration of the arts therapies with psychoanalytic theory* (pp. 1-12). London: Karnac Books.

Searle, Y. & Streng, I. (2001b). Integration and complementation. In Y. Searle & I. Streng (Eds.), *Where analysis meets the arts: The integration of the arts therapies with psychoanalytic theory* (pp. 189-198). London: Karnac Books.

Segal, H. (1989). Introduction. In R. Britton, M. Feldman, & E. O'Shaughnessy, *The Oedipus complex today* (J. Steiner, Ed.) (pp. 1-10). London: Karnac Books.

Segal, H. (2001). New perspectives on the Oedipus complex. In P. Hartocollis (Ed.), *Mankind's Oedipal destiny: Libidinal and aggressive aspects of sexuality* (pp. 25-36). Madison, CT: International Universities Press.

Skaife, S. (1990). Keeping the balance: Further thoughts on the dialectics of art therapy. In C. Case & T. Dalley (Eds.), *Working with children in art therapy* (pp. 115-142). London: Routledge.

Stern, D.N. (1985). *The interpersonal world of the infant: A view from psychoanalysis and developmental psychology*. New York: Basic Books.

Tappan, M.B. (2001). *Interpretive psychology: Stories, circles, and understanding lived experience in subjects to subjectivities: A handbook of interpretive and participatory methods* (D.M. Tolman & M. Brydon-Miller, Eds.). New York University Press.

Treacher, A. (2002). "I like my life, I just like my life": Narratives of children of latency years. In L. Caldwell (Ed.), *The elusive child* (pp. 177-192). London: Karnac Books.

Walker, B. G. (1983). *The women's encyclopedia of myths and secrets*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco.

Walker, B. G. (1988). *The women's dictionary of symbols and sacred objects*.

San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco.

Wilson, K., Kendrick, P. & Ryan, V. (1992). *Play therapy: A non-directive approach for children and adolescents*. London: Bailliere Tindall.

Winnicott, D. W. (1965). *The maturational process and the facilitating environment*. London: Hogarth Press.

Winnicott, D. W. (1971). Playing and reality. London: Tavistock.

Appendix

Consent Information

Art Therapy Student Shoshana Freedman
Master's in Art Therapy ProShosgram
Concordia University

Practicum Supervisors Louise Lacroix, MA, ATR
Master's in Art Therapy Program
Concordia University

Bonnie Harnden, MA, ATR
Department of Psychiatry
Montreal Children's Hospital

I, _____, give permission to Shoshana Freedman, art therapy intern at _____, to use photographs of the art work produced by my son _____ during his creative arts therapy sessions, in a research paper. This paper is to be published as part of the requirements of the Master's in Art Therapy program and will be accessible to the public for viewing at the Concordia Library. I also give permission to consult my son's medical file for a period of one year.

I understand that both my child's identity and the setting where the creative arts therapy sessions take place will be kept strictly confidential, and that no identifying information will be given. I understand that agreement to this request is voluntary and that I can refuse without effect on my son's treatment and involvement in art therapy. I also understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time before the research paper is completed, without explanation, simply by contacting Shoshana Freedman. This decision will have no affect whatsoever on my son's therapy.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the implications of this consent, and am satisfied with the answers I received.

I have read and understood the contents of this form and give my consent as described above.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____