Preface

The most pressing questions in contemporary psychoanalytic theory and practice are, What do the vast array of different psychoanalytic schools and traditions have to do with one another? Do they fit together? If so, how? If not, why not? In one fashion or another, these questions haunt (and often excite) every member of the psychoanalytic community, from the beginning candidate to the most seasoned theoretician and clinician. The two most popular approaches for dealing with the burgeoning heterogeneity of psychoanalytic schools have been the adoption of a single theory—classical, neoclassical, or contemporary—to the exclusion of the rest, or the retention of all theories in a broadly encompassing eclecticism.

Orthodoxy (of whatever denomination) rests on the fiat that there is one true psychoanalytic path; all others are, by some arbitrary definition, excluded. Eclecticism rests on the fiat that all theories are true or useful and that it is possible simultaneously to maintain belief in and employ different theories for different patients, or different theories for the same patient at different times. The advantage of the single-theory approach is its continuity and simplicity; the disadvantage is the loss of richness and cross-fertilization with other traditions. The advantage of eclecticism is its inclusiveness; the disadvantage is its lack of conceptual rigor.

We are all dealing with the same reality, the eclectic argues, but with

different pieces of it from different perspectives. Various psychoanalytic theories are like so many blind men exploring different parts of the elephant. Each report is right; all can be contained in a larger framework. This outlook can be very misleading. Reality is not simply discovered, but is partially created by theoretical presuppositions. There are lots of blind men out there, but they are not all operating on the same premises, within the same reality; they are not all exploring elephants. Some may be grappling with giraffes. To try to contain all reports within the same framework may lead to strange hybrids: four stout legs; a long, graceful neck; four thin legs; a long trunk; and so on.

A third, less frequent approach to psychoanalytic heterogeneity—the one that characterizes this volume—entails an effort at *selective integration*. From this perspective, different theories and traditions are seen as enriching the field of analytic inquiry and providing valuable contributions, in some areas compatible with one another, in some areas mutually exclusive. What is called for is not simply the retention of these various contributions in an overarching ecumenicism, but a critical integration of them. Around what issues can different theories be fitted together? Around what issues do the different concepts require a new and broader framework to house them? Around what issues are they incompatible?

Amid the apparent conceptual disarray in contemporary psychoanalysis are two broad, competing perspectives, *Freud's drive theory* and a cluster of theories (including British object-relations theory, interpersonal psychoanalysis, and self psychology) which derive from a set of premises that Jay Greenberg and I have termed the *relational model*. Drive theory is unified, comprehensive, and outdated. It is preserved as a loyally maintained belief system around which innovative thinking is arranged, fitted in so as not to dislodge traditional principles. This process tends to inhibit and distort innovation, and to keep theory at some distance from the way most contemporary clinicians think and work.

On the other hand, relational theory is fragmented, diffuse, and developed by psychoanalytic schools that regard themselves as competing with, rather than complementing, one another. Although relational theory is much more consistent with the way most clinicians practice psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic therapy, it has never been developed into a coherent, comprehensive theoretical framework. This book aims at such a unification, by considering the major domains of psychoana-

lytic inquiry—sexuality, early development, fantasy and illusion, continuity and change—from an integrated relational perspective.

Part of what makes psychoanalysis such an exciting discipline is its heterogeneity and the infinite possibilities for integrating the diversity of its traditions into one's own personal view and clinical style. In that sense, this book represents my own unique vision. Yet the world of psychoanalysis is also a community of rich and complex relationships spanning different traditions and generations. No psychoanalytic position develops in a vacuum; each is in some sense a crystallization of many influences, some known, many unknown.

I want to give special thanks to my many patients, students, and supervisees, necessarily anonymous, who have stimulated and helped me refine much of the thinking found here.

Many colleagues have read and critically reacted to different portions of this book over the years of its development. They include Lewis Aron, David Brand, Peter Casey, Harold Cook, Emmanuel Ghent, Ruth Gruenthal, Susan Knapp, Joseph Newirth, Susan Robertson, Dennis Schulman, and Charles Spezzano. I want to express particular thanks to Margaret Black, Philip Bromberg, Jay Greenberg, and John Schmerler, all of whom read numerous versions of these ideas and cared enough to tell me when they thought I was barking up the wrong tree. I also want to express deep gratitude to Merton Gill, who repeatedly and incisively challenged this material, and in whose own work I have found a deep passion for ideas and an intellectual integrity which has served as inspiration for me.