

EMBARKING ON THE ANALYTICAL ODYSSEY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL
EXPLORATION OF THE PSYCHOANALYTIC JOURNEY OF FORMATION

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the
North Dakota State University
of Agriculture and Applied Science

By

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major Program:
Counselor Education & Supervision

April 2024

Fargo, North Dakota

North Dakota State University
Graduate School

Title
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

This Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) study explored the lived experiences of Lacanian psychoanalysts undergoing formation. The research aimed to elucidate the subjective dimensions of the psychoanalytic journey by addressing three primary questions: (a) What are psychoanalysts' fundamental experiences and challenges during their formation and training? (b) How do psychoanalysts perceive the impact of their formation on their professional development? (c) What roles do supervision, personal analysis, and organizational support play in the formation of psychoanalysts?

Three participants affiliated with the Colorado Analytic Forum were recruited through purposive sampling. Data were collected through semistructured interviews and analyzed using IPA's six-step process, incorporating reflexive journaling and member-checking to ensure trustworthiness.

Four Group Experiential Themes (GETs) emerged: Challenge, Personal and Professional Growth, Effects/Acts, and Formation. Participants navigated clinical, conceptual, and personal challenges, with growth occurring through validating inner strengths and reconciling external ideals with internal truths. Pivotal turning points, catalyzed by adversity and realization, led to decisive actions that realigned developmental trajectories. Formation itself emerged as an ongoing process of reconciling theory and practice, external pressures and internal ethics.

The findings illuminate the transformative nature of the psychoanalytic formation journey, characterized by continuous self-reflection, immersion in the analytic method, and the pursuit of understanding the unconscious. Supervision, personal analysis, and organizational support played crucial roles, facilitating growth, providing guidance, and shaping the participants' evolving identities as analysts.

This study contributes to the understanding of the subjective dimensions of contemporary Lacanian psychoanalytic formation. The findings offer valuable insights for enhancing training practices, support mechanisms, and the ongoing development of psychoanalysts. By embracing the complexity and perpetual nature of formation, this research invites further exploration of the profound personal and professional odyssey undertaken by those dedicating themselves to the practice of psychoanalysis.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I want to thank my spouse, Amanda, whose enduring support and encouragement were my constant guide in these academic pursuits. No matter what, it has always been worth it, and time with you has been the best part of my life. Thank you to my children for their love along the way and patience with my studies as they interfered with story and bath times and meant long nights in the clinic. You bore the steepest cost unknowingly, and I will forever be grateful for your warm, welcoming embrace after a hard day. I want to thank my family, in all its multifaceted landscapes and diversity of association. To the Moyes and Henschens, who never gave up on me from childhood to parenthood. No matter how distant, your love and support always helped guide me through the darkest of times, especially my aunt Bonnie, my constant champion, and my father, Gray, who always tried and never gave up either.

To the men and women I served with in Afghanistan and the Global War on Terror who ultimately inspired this return to academia and odyssey into analysis, especially P. S. Kaye, who believed in me when no one else did; J. Beamer, who helped rekindle the love of learning and inspired me to try something new; and my “misfits,” whom I enjoyed leading and who taught me more than I taught them.

Thank you to the entire town of Craftsbury! Most especially Linda and Heidi; HORSE! I love and miss you and would not have come this far without your support. Thank you. Will, you are an honorary Craftsburian—my fellow Sterling alumnus. Thank you for the laughter and love, Flying Farmer! To my Brothers at Meridian Sun and the community of worshipers in the Church on the Common, you each have set an unwavering beacon of support and pillars of hope—thank you. Thank you to the veterans of Craftsbury who saw me when I barely saw myself as I transitioned out of the army, especially Cedric, who died with his boots on; Bob, who made

coffee fun again; Sonny, who was always quick with an army-navy joke; Doug, who mentored me through an intellectual renaissance; and JZ, who helped me learn to take life easy, like a beard in the wind on a spring bike ride. Finally, a HUGE thank you to the dynamic duo of Christian and Michael for all the laughs, edits, connections to editors, and updates. To this end, thank you to Lydia and Rachel at Elite Editing. I am grateful that you provided incredible guidance, encouragement, and support.

I want to extend a special thank you to Les and Lonnie, who were instrumental in my journey. I am forever grateful for your kindness and compassion. You entered my life at a difficult juncture and provided an alternative perspective. Taking the path less traveled, with your guidance and support, made all the difference. Your impact on my life and work cannot be overstated, and I am deeply appreciative of your presence during that critical time.

Thank you to the entire Congregation of St. Stephen's UCC, my first Church (as Pastor), and a rich community of love, laughter, and life. You all, every single one, living and deceased, are constantly in my heart and my prayers. I love you all dearly and miss you more than you will ever know. Your love and support in my transition into counseling and Pastoring will NEVER be forgotten, nor will our little ditty, "No Matter Who," and the ever mighty "chicken-wing!" DD, thank you for believing in me and taking a risk on an old salt like me.

To the Sanford Heart team, who saw me at the lowest point in my Ph.D. studies, thank you for not giving up. Especially the electrocardiologist and hospitalist, who spoke hope and optimism when everyone else had given up and urged me to face reality. This PhD seemed like a fool's errand then, but you helped rekindle life itself. To this end, Cassandra, Taryn, Mark K., and Casey S-H, thank you for your belief and support.

As a penultimate thank you, Nate and Michael, thank you for being my professors, mentors, and friends. It hasn't been an easy journey, but it has been profound and surprising. That said, Thanks to Rolf, my analyst, who at times filled these roles as well. You helped me navigate my own odyssey and rediscover the comfort of home—thanks.

Finally, thank you to my Chair, Dr. Jodi Tangen, for her constant support and kindness over these final academic years. Thank you to Dr. Danielson for checking up on me when I was away; you are the reason I came back, and I am forever grateful for your supervision, support, and silliness. Dr. Wachenheim, thank you for agreeing to be on this committee. It has been an honor to get to know you and to learn that a fellow GWOT vet survived academia. You have really helped ground me in ways I cannot rightfully express. Dr. Berg, HORSE! I am sad the equine route shifted for now. You and Bison Strides are forever in my heart, and I hope to return to the arena soon. Dr. Hill, thanks for agreeing to this madness and letting me pester you in Survey. You helped guide me in ways you may never fully know, but I am grateful for your comments and companionship along the way.

I also want to thank the Practicum students I had the pleasure of mentoring, supervising, and frustrating. You helped remind me about my passion for teaching and supervising, critical elements of this PhD—thank you!

DEDICATION

“The only journey is the one within.” (Rainer Maria Rilke)

To all those who seek light in darkness and choose to pursue their dreams in the face of adversity, to those who overcome stigmas and socioeconomic hardships and persist despite the challenges that life presents, you are the reason for advocating for change and upholding analytic traditions. Your resilience, determination, and courage to do something different inspire me daily. To my aunt Bonnie, whose unwavering love and support made education a reality for an entire generation. Your relentless encouragement and dedication to your children, my brothers, and cousins have inspired us all to pursue our dreams, no matter the obstacles. Because of you, each one of us born of this generation is college-educated, and two of us now hold PhDs. Your love and guidance have been the driving force behind our academic achievements, and for that, I am eternally grateful. This dissertation is a testament to the power of your love and the impact you have had on our lives. I dedicate this dissertation to that shared journey of self-discovery, growth, and the pursuit of knowledge. May we all support and uplift one another as we navigate life’s complexities and strive to impact the world positively.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------------|---|
| ABD..... | All But Dissertation: A status indicating that a doctoral student has completed all requirements for their degree except for the dissertation |
| CAF | Colorado Analytic Forum: A professional organization for Lacanian psychoanalysts based in Colorado, from which participants were recruited |
| ES | Experiential Statement: A phrase or sentence that encapsulates a specific aspect of a participant's lived experience |
| GWOT | Global War on Terror: A term used to describe the international military campaign launched by the United States after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks |
| GET | Group Experiential Theme: A theme that emerges across all or most participants' accounts, representing shared aspects of their lived experiences |
| IPA..... | Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: A qualitative research approach that aims to provide detailed examinations of personal lived experience |
| PET | Personal Experiential Theme: A theme that captures unique aspects of an individual participant's lived experience |
| POA | Professional Organizational Affiliations: Memberships or associations with professional psychoanalytic organizations or institutions |
| NDSU | North Dakota State University: The institution where the researcher is pursuing their doctoral degree |
| SPFLF..... | School of Psychoanalysis of the Forums of the Lacanian Field: A professional organization for Lacanian psychoanalysts with which the researcher is affiliated |
| UCC | United Church of Christ: A mainline Protestant Christian denomination in the United States |

LIST OF SYMBOLS

$\$ \diamond a$ Lacan's concept of fundamental fantasy represents the subject's unconscious framework for understanding and relating to the world, others, and themselves.

CHAPTER ONE: FOUNDATION OF FORMATION

In tracing the history of psychoanalytic training, it is imperative to acknowledge the enduring influences of Sigmund Freud (1856–1931) and Jacques Lacan (1901–1981), whose perspectives permeated their extensive writings rather than being confined to single publications. The evolution of their views, alongside contributions from later psychoanalysts, significantly shaped training methodologies within the broader psychoanalytic tradition. As a member of the School of Psychoanalysis of the Forums of the Lacanian Field (SPFLF), this researcher aligns with a Lacanian perspective firmly rooted in Freudian analysis.

Lacanian psychoanalysis, formulated by Jacques Lacan, builds upon Freud’s pioneering work, offering a refined understanding of Freud’s theories. Lacan emphasized a “return to Freud,” urging analysts to collectively investigate and revitalize Freudian theory within clinical contexts. Notably, at a gathering at l’École for La Cause Freudienne in 1980, Lacan stated, “It is up to you to be Lacanians if you wish; I am Freudian” (Evans, 1996).

The formation of analysts intentionally lacks a stepwise road map, with Freud’s and Lacan’s ideas scattered across their extensive works. Formation refers to the ongoing process of developing the necessary skills, insights, and self-awareness to effectively conduct psychoanalysis and views becoming an analyst as a continuous, transformative personal and professional journey. However, a synthesis reveals critical points of convergence in their tripartite approaches to psychoanalytic training:

1. **Personal Analysis:** Both Freud and Lacan stressed the importance of analysts undergoing personal analysis to foster self-awareness for effective clinical practice.

2. **Theoretical Study:** Integral to training, theoretical study is shared by Freudian and Lacanian traditions. Trainees delve into Freud's *The Standard Edition* and Lacan's seminar series and the *Écrits*.
3. **Supervised Clinical Practice:** Trainees engage in supervised clinical practice, applying theoretical knowledge in psychoanalytic sessions.

Diverse interpretations within Freudian and Lacanian schools of thought significantly shape the formation of analysts in terms of method, application, and perceived function. While emphasizing the importance of personal analysis and theoretical study, distinctions arise between the structured approach of Freud's concept of training and the more fluid, linguistically focused exploration in Lacanian psychoanalysis. Notably, Lacanian formation lacks a rigid road map, allowing for a dynamic and unique exploration of the unconscious. De Halleux (2020) stated, "Lacan told us that a formation of the analyst doesn't exist. 'There is no formation of the psychoanalyst, there are only formations of the unconscious.'" (p. 43). Despite these differences, the universal recognition of self-awareness as vital for effective clinical practice remains a common thread in psychoanalysis.

The term "analysand," introduced by Lacan, emphasizes the active role of the individual in analysis. A linguistic amalgamation of "analysis" and the French gerund "and," it underscores the dynamic involvement of the analysand in producing language from the unconscious, as the analyst assists in actively exploring and analyzing their unconscious through language (Evans, 1996; Fink, 1997).

The field of mental health and therapeutic practices has long been enriched by psychoanalysts, shaping the landscape of psychological well-being since the time of Sigmund

Freud. Psychoanalysis, rooted in Freud's theories and expanded upon by subsequent theorists, stands as a foundational pillar in understanding and treating various psychological conditions.

The journey toward becoming a psychoanalyst extends beyond academic pursuits. Unlike traditional disciplines, psychoanalytic training is inherently experiential and deeply personal. According to Lacan (1953), the analyst's subjectivity is intertwined with the analytic process, marking training as a unique voyage of self-discovery and transformation. "Lacan defines the psychoanalyst as the result of his or her own analysis" (De Halleux, 2020, p. 43).

In recognizing the profound impact of psychoanalysts on the mental health field, this research embarked on an IPA, aiming to disentangle the subjective experiences and perspectives of psychoanalysts in formation. The formation of the analyst begins with one's own analysis, where the analysand learns a new way of speaking and being, of being heard and listening (Fink, 1997).

The rationale for this exploration is grounded in the belief that a comprehensive understanding of training and formation processes is essential for advancing psychoanalysis. Despite the significance of this aspect, there is a noticeable gap in existing qualitative literature that specifically delves into the subjective dimensions of psychoanalytic training. This research seeks to bridge this gap, offering valuable insights that contribute to the existing body of knowledge in psychoanalytic studies and qualitative research within the broader field of psychology.

In the chapters that follow, this research will explore the psychoanalytic odyssey of those analysts in formation, shedding light on the intricate interplay between personal and professional development within the context of psychoanalytic training. Through an interpretive phenomenological lens, this paper seeks to understand the experiences, challenges, and support

structures that shape the formation of psychoanalysts by emphasizing the continuous, transformative nature of the psychoanalytic journey undertaken by those aspiring to become analysts.

Definition of Terms

In this study, certain terms are utilized to convey specific concepts integral to understanding the psychoanalytic journey, with particular attention to the framework of Lacanian psychoanalysis. As the researcher aligns with the Lacanian perspective, it is crucial to elucidate the distinct connotations inherent in the terminology used.

Analysand: An analysand is an individual undergoing psychoanalysis. Lacan introduced the term “analysand” as a neologism, emphasizing its derivation from the French gerund and highlighting its unique linguistic nature in the clinical context, characterized more as discourse than dialogue. This linguistic distinction is crucial, as Lacan aimed to depict the active role of the one in analysis—the analysand.

Analyst in Formation: The term “analyst in formation” is employed in lieu of “analyst in training” to encapsulate the depth and ongoing nature of the psychoanalytic journey (Evans, 1996, pp. 209–210). This terminology draws inspiration from Jacques Lacan’s original French expression, “formation des analystes,” which conveys a more profound and continuous professional development process. Embracing the Lacanian perspective, the phrase denotes an ever-evolving, transformative experience that extends beyond traditional notions of training. The formation of the analyst involves a perpetual engagement with self-discovery, theoretical integration, and the dynamic interplay between personal and professional growth.

Cartel: A Lacanian cartel, as defined by Jacques Lacan and elaborated by Evans (1996), is a small, autonomous working group consisting of four members and one “plus-one” (a fifth

person who serves as a facilitator). The cartel is designed to study and investigate psychoanalytic theory and practice, with each member working on their own unique project related to a shared theme. The cartel operates on the principles of personal initiative, collective effort, and rotation of roles, with the aim of fostering a deeper understanding of psychoanalytic concepts and promoting the transmission of knowledge within the Lacanian community.

End of Analysis: A concept in psychoanalytic theory, this refers to the conclusion of the therapeutic process. Sigmund Freud (1937) discussed the end of analysis in his paper “Analysis Terminable and Interminable,” where he explored the goals and limitations of psychoanalytic treatment. Freud suggested that an analysis might be considered complete when the patient has overcome their neurotic symptoms, gained insight into their unconscious conflicts, and developed a greater capacity for love and work.

Jacques Lacan further elaborated on the concept of the end of analysis, emphasizing the analysand’s subjective position and the traversal of their fundamental fantasy (Evans, 1996). For Lacan, the end of analysis is marked by a shift in the analysand’s relationship to their desire and a newfound ability to confront the lack inherent in human existence. This involves a move from a position of alienation in the symbolic order to a more authentic engagement with one’s desire. The end of analysis is not so much a definitive conclusion but rather a transformation in the analysand’s subjective stance and a greater acceptance of the ongoing challenges of living.

Formation of the Analyst: Building upon the Lacanian foundation, the “formation of the analyst” refers to the process through which individuals acquire the skills and insights necessary to conduct psychoanalytic treatments effectively. As Evans (1996) noted:

It is worth noting that the English term “training” is nuanced rather differently to the French term “formation.” Whereas the English term carries connotations of a formal programme,

or a bureaucratic structure, the French term (especially in Lacan's work) connotes a process which alters the subject in the very kernel of his being, and which cannot be regulated by set ritualistic procedures nor guaranteed by a printed qualification. (p. 211)

This fundamental distinction underscores the depth and transformative nature inherent in the psychoanalytic journey. The formation of the analyst encompasses a comprehensive learning journey, delving into the intricate dynamics of the therapeutic relationship and the continuous refinement of one's analytical skills. This term emphasizes the profound impact on the analyst's subjectivity, aligning with the Lacanian emphasis on ongoing professional development.

Jouissance: A complex concept in Lacanian psychoanalysis that refers to a form of enjoyment or satisfaction that is inherently linked to the subject's relationship with desire, transgression, and the Real (Evans, 1996). Lacan's notion of jouissance extends beyond the pleasure principle, as it is an intense, often unconscious enjoyment that can be experienced as both pleasurable and painful. It is related to the subject's encounter with the lost object of desire, the *objet petit a*, and the impossible pursuit of fulfillment.

Lacanian Psychoanalysis: Lacanian psychoanalysis, formulated by French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901–1981), is a distinct school of psychoanalytic thought that builds upon the foundational ideas of Sigmund Freud. Lacan's approach emphasizes the roles of language, linguistics, and symbolism in understanding the human psyche. Key elements include the concept of the unconscious structured like a language, the symbolic, imaginary, and real orders, and the importance of language in shaping subjectivity. Lacanian psychoanalysis places a strong emphasis on the unconscious as a realm mediated by linguistic and symbolic structures, and it encourages a return to Freudian principles while introducing unique concepts and

perspectives. The analyst's role in assisting the analysand to explore and analyze their unconscious through language is a central tenet of Lacanian psychoanalysis.

Pass: In Lacanian psychoanalysis, the “pass” (French: *la passe*) is a procedure proposed by Jacques Lacan as a means of verifying the end of an analyst's training analysis and their readiness to practice as a psychoanalyst (Evans, 1996). The pass involves the analyst in training (the *passant*) giving testimony about their own analysis to a committee of experienced analysts (the *passers*) who then report back to a larger committee (the *cartel of the pass*) responsible for deciding whether to grant the *passant* the title of Analyst of the School (AE).

The pass is not a standardized examination but rather a means of bearing witness to the transformative effects of the analyst's own analysis and their subjective position in relation to psychoanalytic knowledge. It is designed to ensure the transmission of psychoanalytic knowledge and to maintain the integrity of Lacanian training. The pass emphasizes the importance of the analyst's own unconscious and the traversal of their fundamental fantasy in the formation process.

However, the pass has been a subject of controversy within the Lacanian community, with some questioning its effectiveness and others proposing alternative models for recognizing the end of an analyst's training.

Personal Analysis: Within contemporary Lacanian psychoanalysis, the term “personal analysis” has superseded the notions of “training analysis” and “formation” (Evans, 1996, pp. 209–211). Lacan preferred this term, emphasizing that any analysis, whether initially framed as training or therapeutic, inherently contributes to the formation of an analyst. Lacan's perspective rejects the International Psycho-Analytical Association's rigid separation, arguing that “the

authorization of an analyst can only come from [themselves]" (Lacan, 1953, Seminar VIII; Lacan, 1964, Seminar XI).

School (*école*): In Lacanian psychoanalysis, the term “school” (French: *école*) refers to an institution founded by Jacques Lacan in 1964 to promote the study, practice, and transmission of psychoanalysis in accordance with his teachings (Evans, 1996). The school, officially named the *École Freudienne de Paris* (EFP), was established following Lacan’s break with the International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA) and served as a platform for the development and dissemination of Lacanian theory and practice.

The school was designed to be a new type of psychoanalytic institution, distinct from the traditional psychoanalytic societies and the university system. It emphasized the importance of the analyst’s training analysis, the study of Freudian and Lacanian texts, and the practice of clinical supervision. The school also introduced innovative structures, such as the cartel and the pass, to facilitate the transmission of psychoanalytic knowledge and to ensure the quality of analytic training.

In 1980, Lacan dissolved the EFP due to internal conflicts and founded the *École de la Cause Freudienne* (ECF) to continue the work of the school. Since then, various Lacanian schools have been established around the world, each with their own specific organizational structures and practices, but all dedicated to the study and transmission of Lacanian psychoanalysis.

Training (formation, *didactique*): In Lacanian psychoanalysis, the concept of “training” encapsulates two distinct terms, “*analyse didactique*” (training analysis) and “formation” (professional training), initially introduced and formalized by the IPA (Evans, 1996, pp. 209–211). “*Analyse didactique*” refers explicitly to a psychoanalytic treatment undertaken to train

individuals to become analysts, distinguishing it from therapeutic analysis, which primarily focuses on treatment. Historically, the IPA delineated training analysis, requiring all its members to undergo such analysis conducted by senior IPA-affiliated analysts before practicing as analysts. However, Lacan criticized this institutional distinction, asserting that every analysis, regardless of its explicit purpose, possesses the inherent potential to form an analyst (Evans, 1996, pp. 209–211; Lacan, 1964, Seminar XI).

By adopting these specific terms within the context of this study, this research will honor the rich theoretical foundations of Lacanian psychoanalysis and emphasize the continuous, transformative nature of the psychoanalytic journey undertaken by those aspiring to become analysts. This approach acknowledges the dynamic interplay between theory and practice, self and other, central to the Lacanian tradition, offering a layered perspective on the formation of psychoanalysts in the contemporary therapeutic landscape.

Statement of the Problem

Within the dynamic realm of psychoanalysis, the journey of becoming a psychoanalyst is a multifaceted odyssey, entailing a profound and transformative process known as the “formation of the analyst” (De Halleux, 2020; Evans, 1996). This process, influenced by the multidimensional perspective of Lacanian psychoanalysis, extends far beyond the conventional boundaries of training, encapsulating an ongoing, experiential evolution (Evans, 1996; Fink, 1997).

Despite the foundational role of psychoanalysts in shaping mental health practices, there exists a significant gap in our understanding of the lived experiences and challenges faced by analysts during their formative years. The conventional term “training” may inadvertently overlook the depth inherent in the term “formation,” as articulated in the works of Lacan (Evans,

1996). This gap in qualitative literature represents a critical lacuna, hindering a comprehensive exploration of the intricate interplay between personal and professional development within the psychoanalytic journey.

Research Questions

In line with the overarching goal of exploring and investigating the lived experiences of analysts in formation, this study will unravel the subjective dimensions of the psychoanalytic journey by addressing the following research questions:

- a. What are psychoanalysts' fundamental experiences and challenges during their formation and training?
- b. How do psychoanalysts perceive the impact of their formation on their professional development?
- c. What roles do supervision, personal analysis, and organizational support play in the formation of psychoanalysts?

Through these research questions, this study endeavors to provide a comprehensive understanding of the experiences, challenges, and support structures that shape the formation of psychoanalysts. This exploration is not only vital for advancing theoretical knowledge in psychoanalysis but also for informing practical considerations in the continuous development and support of psychoanalysts in their professional journeys.

Purpose of the Study

This study will address the aforementioned gap in the qualitative literature by conducting an IPA of psychoanalysts in formation, utilizing the lens of Lacanian psychoanalysis. By exploring the lived experiences, challenges, and opportunities encountered by psychoanalysts

during their formative years, the study seeks to contribute meaningful insights into the transformative nature of the psychoanalytic journey.

Need for the Study

The need for this study is underscored by the complexity of the psychoanalytic formation process (Lacan, 1964), which goes beyond conventional notions of training and incorporates the profound changes occurring at the core of the analyst's being (Evans, 1996). Understanding the subjective dimensions of this journey is essential for advancing psychoanalytic studies and enhancing training programs. Additionally, recognizing the challenges and support structures that influence the formation of psychoanalysts is crucial for informing professional development strategies and ensuring the well-rounded growth of future analysts.

Brief Overview

The following research study embarks on an in-depth exploration of the transformative journey undertaken by psychoanalysts during their formative years, delving into the intricate process known as the "formation of the analyst." Comprising five chapters, each chapter contributes to a comprehensive understanding of this dynamic and profound experience.

The opening chapter provides a broad overview of the formation of the analyst, emphasizing the profound and continuous nature of this journey. Rooted in the perspective of Lacanian psychoanalysis, the chapter outlines the significance of understanding the subjective dimensions of psychoanalytic training.

Chapter two serves as a critical foundation, offering a meticulous review of existing psychoanalytic training and formation literature. Drawing from Lacanian insights and building on Evans's distinctions between the English and French terms, the literature review situates the study within the broader context of psychoanalytic studies.

In chapter three, the methodology unfolds, detailing the IPA approach. The chapter expounds the evaluation of questionnaires used to explore the lived experiences of psychoanalysts in formation. This methodological framework underscores the commitment to capturing the richness and depth of the participants' narratives.

Chapter four unveils the results of the IPA, offering a detailed exploration of psychoanalysts' fundamental experiences, challenges, and the impact of their training. The discussion delves into the findings and critically examines limitations, implications, and potential avenues for future research.

The concluding chapter synthesizes the study's key findings and implications for psychoanalytic training and practice. Limitations are acknowledged, and recommendations for future research are presented. The chapter serves as a platform for reflecting on the broader significance of the study and its potential impact on the ongoing evolution of psychoanalytic formation.

Through this comprehensive structure, the research study will contribute valuable insights to the field of psychoanalysis, shedding light on the lived experiences of analysts in formation and paving the way for further exploration and development in the realms of psychoanalytic training and practice.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF PSYCHOANALYTIC FORMATION LITERATURE

Becoming a psychoanalyst involves a profound developmental process termed “formation” rather than conventional training (Lacan, 1964). This literature review will explore existing research on analysts’ formation, elucidate gaps in understanding the subjective dimensions of this journey, and establish context for a proposed study using interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). Freud’s foundational work in *The Standard Edition* (Strachey, 1953–1974) profoundly shaped psychoanalytic theory and practice, warranting analysis of the Freudian foundations underpinning formation. Lacan advanced linguistic emphasis, and the creative friction between enduring Freudian insights while pushing theoretical frontiers parallels tensions at the heart of analysts’ formations.

By surveying primary sources and contemporary discourse, this review will situate the proposed IPA study to capture subjective experiences and clarify the impact of psychoanalytic training. Demonstrating continuity across generations of thinkers, the review ultimately aims to enrich comprehension of analysts’ developmental odyssey.

This review of the literature on psychoanalytic formation will situate the study of formation within existing Freudian and Lacanian discourses, surface gaps in understanding contemporary analysts’ subjective experiences undergoing this process, and ultimately provide context for interpreting future research findings on the impact of training. *The Standard Edition* offers extensive primary sources to frame current studies historically, while generalized textbooks supply additional foundational concepts. Weaving together these sources establishes the platform to advance knowledge on the unfolding processes of formation.

The review will demonstrate the continuity across psychoanalytic thinkers while recognizing Lacan's distinct linguistic contributions that parallel creative tensions at the heart of analytic formation.

Historical Foundations of Psychoanalytic Training

Freud's writings compiled in *The Standard Edition* traced psychoanalysis' evolution from treating hysteria to a universal "depth psychology" encompassing all mental functioning (Hardt, 2006, p. 377). However, Freud cautioned against overapplying psychoanalysis solely for clinical treatment, warning it would undermine appreciation of the broader scientific project.

Initial developments of psychoanalysis outlined in *The Standard Edition* (Vols 1–5) revealed Freud's correspondence with Wilhelm Fleiss (1887–1904/1905), sharing ambitions to fuse physiology and philosophy into a science of human understanding (Hardt, 2006). This initial framing aligned with Lacan's subsequent "return to Freud," which linguistically revitalized Freudian tenets regarding the unconscious, sexuality, and subjectivity.

The roots of contemporary training originated from perpetual tensions between psychoanalysis as a clinical technique versus an expansive scientific paradigm for probing multidimensional questions on individual and collective psychology (Hardt, 2006). This confusion of the scientific method with one specialized clinical method underpinned later problems in Germany, with analysts losing autonomy over training as health care systems regulated psychoanalysis purely as a medical treatment (Hardt, 2006). Hardt argued that reviving the original breadth of Freud's project offered a solution.

Indeed, Freud stressed, "The use of analysis for the treatment of the neuroses is only one of its applications" (1926, p. 351), hoping its future eminence would arise beyond psychiatry. However, the literature suggested that post-WWII professionalization in America ultimately

subordinated Freud's vision to institutional priorities of ego psychology and aligned training with psychiatric practice, which calcified the fluid identity between healing and discovery that fueled innovation from Freud through pioneers like Otto Rank (1884–1939). These works collectively traced how perpetual tensions between scientific creativity and professional necessity underpinned past and present debates over psychoanalytic training (Hardt, 2006).

Additional perspectives indicated that these tensions persisted regarding contemporary training innovations like supervision. For example, a roundtable discussion explored using telephone supervision in distance learning programs, which provided exposure to otherwise unavailable diverse viewpoints (Manosevitz, 2006). The panelists viewed telephone supervision as an essential, useful adjunctive training method requiring thoughtful implementation.

Furthermore, analysts worldwide believed openness to diverse models and cultural traditions to be fundamental, while narrow conformity impoverished understanding (Busch, 2021, p. 54).

Freud envisioned psychoanalysis spanning creative scientific discovery and effective clinical treatment, but perpetual pressures toward institutional standardization and professionalization sparked ongoing debates over optimum training delivery, scope, and priorities (Hardt, 2006). Contemporary disagreements highlighted the enduring tensions, summoning analysts to sustain psychoanalysis' fluid scientific identity amidst professional necessities.

The subsequent section will trace another offshoot, Lacan's model centered on linguistic dimensions, which diverged from Freud's structured training emphasizing delineated techniques. Core tensions persisted, but orientations have branched.

Psychoanalytic Training: Freudian versus Lacanian Approaches

While acknowledging continuity, critical divergences exist between Freudian and Lacanian orientations to psychoanalytic training. Freud's writings outlined structured training to impart core scientific and clinical techniques he formulated, with texts like *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Strachey, 1953–1974) teaching candidates to navigate the unconscious using his elucidated methods of dreams, slips, jokes, and transference (Fink, 2017). In contrast, Lacan rejected codifying psychoanalytic mastery through structured training and argued that the unconscious inherently escapes institutional capture (Evans, 1996; Fink, 1997).

However, Fink (2017) detailed a shared emphasis on personal analysis as a crucial preparatory experience, with Lacan having considered training analysis the portal for analysts “to learn a new way of speaking and being, of being heard and listening” (p. 116). Indeed, despite theoretical divergences, Fink's clinical companion unpacking Freudian practice demonstrated applied commonalities between Freudian and Lacanian praxes. Both recognized learning analysis as an odyssey of formation beyond neatly delineated training.

Additionally, an empirical study by Schachter et al. (2014) found no significant difference in satisfaction between training analysis and analysis by a non-training analyst. The results failed to support assumptions that training analysis is more satisfactory, putting the burden of proof on organizations claiming superior outcomes by using specific training analysts.

While Freudian and Lacanian approaches differed regarding linguistic dimensions, with Lacanians branching Freud's structuralist paradigm toward post-structural spaces, they overlapped in emphasizing personal analysis as a crucial preparatory experience (Fink, 2017). Applied commonalities thus endure despite conceptual shifts. Further research is needed to substantiate presumed differences in satisfaction with training versus non-training analysts.

Lacanian Formation: A Unique Journey

In contrast to classical psychoanalysis' structured training model, Lacanian formation is an open-ended journey of self-discovery (Fink, 1997). Without predetermined milestones or curriculum, Lacanian trainees must find their way in plumbing the unconscious's depths, as "the authorization of an analyst can only come from himself" (Diatkine, 2007, as cited in Fink, 1997, p. 116).

Rather than acquiring techniques, the goal involves reckoning with Das Ding's ineffable realms, the unconscious's intimate exteriority shaping desire and identity. Trainees must get lost in confronting this unknowable void to become adept at navigating analysis's twists and turns, realizing arrival's impossibility.

While specific paths differ, self-reflection remains essential for ethical, effective clinical work (Lacan, 2006). The Lacanian eschews prepackaged knowledge while relying on mentors, case presentations, personal analysis, and discussion groups. The endpoint is transformation through endless questioning, not information.

As Hillman and Rosenblatt (2017) summarized, the absence of standard milestones allows creative exploration while demanding great discipline in finding one's compass. This lack of rigid structure reflects the essence of Lacanian thought and embraces the unconscious's irreducible unknowns. When tempered by community ethics, such existential searching offers Lacanian formation unique power to produce analysts capable of genuine insight.

Lacanian Psychoanalysis: Concepts Shaping Formation

Central to Lacanian formation is the linguistic nature of the psychoanalytic process. As Lacan stated, "Psychoanalysis is the reign of speech" where "there is no other cure" (Dulsster, 2022, p. 3). The analysand produces language, bringing forth signifiers from the unconscious

structured like a language. This emerging speech, centered around fundamental fantasy ($\$ \diamond a$ —Lacan’s designation for the term), reveals the truth of desire and the contours of jouissance.

The interplay between Lacan’s three registers—symbolic, imaginary, and real—is crucial in this process (Dulsster, 2022). The symbolic structures the analysand’s narrative, speaking the trauma of the real through imaginary attempts to paper over the inconsistency. The analyst punctuates this speech, highlighting points of surprise that destabilize the ego’s grasp for consistency. This pushes the analysand to confront the opacity of the real, eliciting more elaborate speech to symbolically integrate the traumatic kernel.

Also vital is examining transference love toward the “subject supposed to know,” an idealized figure promising access to being. As analysis progresses, the illusion of this figure dissipates, confronting the analysand with anxiety and lack. Traversing this fundamental fantasy, the analysand transitions from neurotic desire (predicated on demand) to drive-based desire, no longer beholden to the Other’s ability to satisfy. This shift ripples through the analysand’s mode of jouissance, loosening rigid attachments.

Such immersion in Lacanian concepts shapes the formation process, emphasizing clinical attitude over standardized technique. Trainees thus learn to facilitate full speech without foreclosing on the unknown by intervening as transparent objects “a.” This speech itself engenders transformation, provided one can hear the resonances within the symbolic structure. The goal is not mastery but cultivating discipline to let this speech unfold expansively.

Existing Literature on Psychoanalytic Training or Formation

The subjective dimensions of psychoanalytic training remain relatively unexplored, as most research focused on perceptions of training analysis (Mackinnon & Michels, 1971), overall satisfaction with programs (Katz et al., 2012), or structural/curricular aspects (Cabaniss et al.,

2003). While essential foundations, few studies directly capture trainees' internal formation experiences.

In the Freudian tradition, training analysis is central to becoming an analyst by providing experiential immersion in the unconscious. However, research rarely details this encounter, instead relying on training analysis surveys rather than plumbing the analytic experience itself, which seems resistant to empirical study (Lombardi et al, 2023).

Lacanian training differs, oriented around elaborating fundamental fantasy ($\$ \diamond a$) until confronting opaque realms. However, empirical insights into Lacanian subjective training trajectories also remain scarce, awaiting articulation (Papadopoulos, 2020).

Across traditions, the importance of facilitating clinical attunement is recognized while methodologically capturing internal transformations proves elusive. However, Montan et al. (2022) provided an empirical qualitative study of a competencies training curriculum using interviews to elucidate subtle experiential shifts that enriched training and clarified aims. This exemplifies phenomenological approaches capable of rebalancing structural considerations and profoundly enriching understanding of analysts' formation. Further narrowing focus to subjective dimensions is critical.

Theoretical Framework for the Current Study

This study will utilize IPA as the theoretical framework to explore psychoanalytic formation's subjective lived experiences (Smith et al., 2009). As a qualitative approach examining how people make sense of significant life experiences, IPA aligns with this study's exploratory, open-ended research questions (Smith & Nizza, 2022).

IPA draws on phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiographic to understand personal lived experiences from an insider perspective (Smith & Nizza, 2022). The goal is to capture an

experiencer's meaning and common features while attending to each individual's unique subjective process. This will suit the aim of understanding both shared and distinct elements within psychoanalytic formation. As Smith and Osborn (2015) noted, "IPA is concerned with understanding personal lived experience and thus with exploring persons' relatedness to, or involvement in, a particular event or process (phenomenon)" (p. 41).

Additionally, IPA emphasizes the researcher's active sense-making role regarding participants' meaning-making (the double hermeneutic), engaging an interpretive dialogue with the text to elucidate meaning (Smith et al., 2009). This interpretive element will enable rich analysis of how formation encounters are subjectively constructed. Ultimately, IPA facilitates an idiographic analysis, preserving the particular while enabling theoretical transferability (Smith & Osborn, 2015).

Furthermore, as Montan et al.'s (2022) empirical competencies curriculum study centered on lived experiences using interviews, it aligns with and reinforces the proposed IPA approach to investigate psychoanalytic formation phenomena deeply.

Conclusion

This literature review has illustrated the historical trajectory of psychoanalytic training while underscoring distinct Freudian and Lacanian approaches. Tracing Freud's foundational correspondence revealed the tension between establishing psychoanalysis as a scientific paradigm beyond clinical domains versus the necessities of professionalization that ultimately confined training to specialized treatment methods. Lacan advanced Freudian insights through linguistic dimensions, but his rejection of codifying analytic mastery introduced complexities regarding contemporary training paradigms. Thus, gaps persist in understanding the lived experiences unfolding during analysts' odysseys of formation.

The review suggested that the field requires qualitative insights to balance extensive theoretical knowledge, particularly from a Lacanian perspective, probing subjective unraveling over delineated expertise. Utilizing IPA to illuminate analysts' internal navigation of self-discovery may expand comprehension of this profound developmental process. Capturing subtle experiential transformations can enrich training and clarify formative aims for future analysts.

This review has highlighted Freud's enduring influence alongside Lacan's paradigm-shifting contributions, revealed gaps in apprehending the experiential essence of contemporary training, and proposed a theoretical framework to elucidate analysts' intricate journeys of formation. Exploring this phenomenon and its impact may significantly advance scholarly and practical understanding of analytic development across diverse schools. Further phenomenological research can bridge theory with the unfolding lived experiences that profoundly shape psychoanalytic identity.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Previously, in chapter one, the background and rationale were established for exploring analysts' lived experiences within psychoanalytic identity formation, noting gaps in research on subjective dimensions of this journey, especially from a Lacanian perspective. Chapter two then extensively reviewed literature situating this exploration within existing Freudian and Lacanian discourses on training contours, surfacing unresolved curiosities around contemporary enactments of this developmental odyssey beyond past perspectives.

Building on this platform, the current chapter delineates the methodological framework implemented to address gaps through privileged participants' narratives. Specifically, the chapter outlines the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) foundation underpinning committed qualitative exploration of a narrowly defined phenomenon with a small homogeneous sample to balance depth and breadth. Details on recruitment, selection procedures, semistructured interview protocol design, data analysis following Smith's (2009) iterative approach, ethical provisions to support authentic sharing, anticipated limitations, and issues impacting trustworthiness aim to convey study parameters transparently. This scaffolding structurally situates forthcoming results as securely constructed on procedural intentionality through rigorous phenomenological commitments seeking resonance with readers' epoche around preconceptions over preexistence discoveries. The ensuing account aspires to revivify and extend comprehension of analysts' profound journeys of identity transformation through upholding scholarly rigors at each deliberate turn of the hermeneutic spiral.

Participants

Three participants were recruited for this study through a purposive sampling approach, specifically targeting individuals who identify as Lacanian analysts in formation per IPA's

commitments to ideography and understanding particular phenomena in contextually situated depth (Smith & Nizza, 2022). Ideography refers to the profound, meticulous examination and interpretation of individual, subjective cases and perspectives to understand the intricate nuances of how a person uniquely makes sense of personal experiences within their specific life context and situated frames of reference (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). This aligned with IPA recommendations for smaller, homogeneous samples between three to eight participants (Smith et al., 2012, p. 52) and includes individuals actively undergoing psychoanalytic formation within various Lacanian formation programs and practicing analysts who self-attest to being continuously engaged in their formative process, thus aligning with Lacan's conception of lifelong formation.

IPA research centers on interpretive meaning-making rather than objective meaning-discovery (Applebaum, 2012). These studies privilege rich, nuanced illustrations of lived experience over generalizability (Smith et al., 2009). Accordingly, IPA utilizes small, purposively selected samples to facilitate an in-depth, case-by-case analysis that moves beyond surface descriptions into a more profound elucidation of meaning within a particular phenomenon (Smith & Nizza, 2022).

As a doctoral candidate facing organizational time constraints typical at this academic level (Smith & Nizza, 2022, p. 16), transparency regarding practical decisions is ethically vital. With dissertation timelines limiting extensive recruitment and data gathering, sample sizes are necessarily smaller to enable suitably rigorous exploration per IPA principles. Therefore, this researcher aimed to recruit three to eight participants affiliated with the Colorado Analytic Forum (CAF) and interviewed three for in-depth individual analysis. Bounding the inquiry to this

focused membership enabled detailed illumination of psychoanalytic formation experiences within the timeline confines of this academic program.

Given the decentralized nature of Lacanian practice, participants were screened based on their attestation of membership in a formative body of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Inclusion criteria for participants encompassed individuals who: (a) self-identify as analysts in formation, (b) affirm membership in a Lacanian body (such as the school, a forum, a cartel, or a clinical college associated with a forum within the school), and (c) either have engaged in or are currently undergoing their own analysis. This approach acknowledged Lacan's assertion that "the authorization of an analyst can only come from [themselves]" (Lacan, 1953, Seminar VIII and Lacan, 1964, Seminar XI).

The CAF represents an intensely shared context, with members pursuing formation guided by the same underlying Lacanian psychoanalytic ideology. This tight delimitation facilitated intensely detailed explorations of how progression toward authorization unfolds from within this sole definable phenomenon. Meeting Giorgi's (1994) call for faithful descriptions that transfer lived experiences into lucid psychological expressions, the insights gleaned aim to vividly capture participants' unfolding inner journeys as shaped by their distinctive formative odyssey within a unique interpretive community.

Research Design

The selected research design for this study harnessed the power of IPA, as meticulously outlined by Smith and Osborn (2008). IPA proved particularly apt for delving into the intricate and subjective nature of the psychoanalytic journey, with a specific focus on the formation of analysts within the distinctive framework of Lacanian psychoanalysis. This qualitative approach

placed a paramount emphasis on the lived experiences of psychoanalysts in formation and captured the profound depth and richness inherent in individual narratives.

The research design is characterized by a commitment to flexibility in data collection, recognizing and accommodating the varied schedules and unpredictable nature inherent in psychoanalytic formation. Reflexivity was seamlessly woven into the design, acknowledging the researcher's inherent positionality as a psychoanalyst and ensuring transparency regarding potential biases. Employing an interpretive lens, as advocated by Giorgi (2012) and Smith et al. (2009), the study not only documented but unraveled the transformative journey of psychoanalysts, aligning with Lacan's profound emphasis on linguistic, symbolic, and subjective dimensions within the unconscious (Lacan, 1964).

In summary, this meticulously chosen research design, rooted in IPA and intricately aligned with Heideggerian hermeneutics, furnished a methodologically sound and theoretically robust framework for delving into the formation of analysts within the unique context of Lacanian psychoanalysis. The design converged the emphasis on lived experiences, the adaptability of data collection, and the interpretive depth of analysis to provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychoanalytic odyssey. The integration of considerations from hermeneutic phenomenology accentuated this design, emphasizing reflexivity, thick descriptions, collaboration, and the iterative process of Heidegger's hermeneutic circle (Heidegger et al., 2008). This multifaceted approach, drawing from IPA and hermeneutics, unfolded the complex layers of the psychoanalytic journey, offering profound insights and making a meaningful contribution to the broader understanding of psychoanalytic formation.

Data Collection and Procedures

This study utilized semistructured audio and/or video interviews as the primary method for data collection, aligned with IPA principles (Smith & Nizza, 2022). Interviews lasted between 50 to 60 minutes and were conducted via secure Zoom links at mutually agreed-upon times.

An open-ended 10-question interview protocol mapped to the research questions guided discussion (Appendix E). Follow-up queries explored emergent themes through probing questions that elicited and enhanced greater depth and understanding of participants' stories (Smith & Nizza, 2022). As Smith et al. (2009) explained, interviews enabled building rapport vital for rich qualitative data disclosure. Questions derived from Heideggerian philosophy (Heidegger et al., 2008) facilitated personalized storytelling around personal lived experiences in Lacanian psychoanalytic formation.

Extensive ethical provisions integrated across procedures adhered to Smith and Nizza's (2022) guidelines for ethical qualitative interviewing regarding informed consent (Appendix A), confidentiality, rapport building, and participant rights. This researcher reviewed policies verbally at the outset and addressed questions and concerns before beginning dialogue. Interviews were recorded via video using Zoom transcription for precise transcription and analysis. Ongoing reflexive journaling helped monitor biases.

Post-interview member-checking procedures clarified meanings and validated trustworthiness of findings (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Participants reviewed initial analyses to confirm accurate, ethical representation of their lived experiences. This iterative approach fulfilled IPA commitments to flexible coconstruction of meaning.

Upon IRB approval (#IRB0005064 - Appendix F), this researcher collaborated with the CAF leadership to distribute recruitment materials with a study overview and eligibility screening survey link to their membership listserv (Appendices B & C). The logic-based Qualtrics survey allowed interested participants to confirm eligibility (Appendix D). Eligible participants could then optionally report their demographics (e.g., age, gender, education level, etc.) before scheduling interviews via their preferred contact method. In addition, participants had an opportunity to select a pseudonym of their choosing via the survey.

Collecting optional demographics promoted transparency in situating findings without compromising privacy. Recordings, transcripts, and documents were securely stored on encrypted drives. Pseudonyms protected confidentiality. The procedures emphasized ethical considerations to elicit candid personal narratives around experiences in psychoanalytic formation from a narrowly defined sample. In addition, this researcher utilized an informed consent waiver to further protect participants' anonymity. Interviews were video recorded with the participants' consent, but these recordings were assigned pseudonyms of their choosing unrelated to any identifiable information about the participants. Only the de-identified video files were retained by the researcher for analysis purposes. There were no specific documentation kept linking participants' real names or other identifiable details to their participation in this study.

Reflexivity

In my role as a researcher in this study, it was crucial to acknowledge my positionality as a psychoanalyst within the Lacanian tradition (Smith & Osborn, 2008). This background likely shaped my interpretation and understanding of participants' experiences during their psychoanalytic formation journeys.

As a middle-aged, lower-class, white, heterosexual, Protestant American male combat veteran and ordained minister pursuing a mental health doctorate, I bring a complex personal and professional background that profoundly shapes my positionality. My subjective experiences with trauma, marginalization, poverty, divorce, and reconciliation have attuned me to the impact of one's sociocultural context on psychological development. My insider status as a member of the Lacanian psychoanalytic community from which I am sampling brings invaluable proximity but also bias. My psychoanalytic formation and practice indelibly shape my interpretive lens. I am invested in the theory's principles while critical of tendencies toward institutional orthodoxy. As a doctoral candidate, I navigate tensions between obeying authority and pursuing my scholarly interests—these dual roles as insider and outsider, adherent and critic, student and expert color my approach.

My extensive clinical experience has oriented me toward understanding the complexity, uniqueness, and commonality of the human experience. As a psychoanalyst, I privilege depth over breadth, seeking meaning over measurement in making sense of subjective realities—my training as a pastor cultivated skills in creating space for raw honesty within reverent dialogue. My path has taught me that behind defensive posturing often lies vulnerability, loneliness, and a longing to be heard.

In undertaking this research, I carry my longing to represent marginalized voices and question assumed truths. My investigations have repeatedly uncovered gaps between espoused theory and lived experience. Such instances of disjuncture sparked my curiosity about the inner world of psychoanalytic formation, traditionally obfuscated by academic orthodoxy. My identity markers afford me insider legitimacy that may elicit candid disclosures. Concurrently, my dual

roles also elicit wariness regarding the sanctity of the container and process. I intend to create conditions for authentic narratives to emerge by building trust and emphasizing confidentiality.

Through reflexive journaling, I will continuously interrogate how my subjectivity may open up or constrain meaning-making. This meta-awareness will shape how I elicit and interpret participants' stories to minimize distortion. With a small, homogeneous sample, I aim to illuminate depth over generalizability. My affiliation with a specific psychoanalytic school introduces partiality regarding geographical scope. By embracing transparency regarding perceived limitations, I aim to conduct ethical, responsible research that voices rarely shared experiences. I aim to hold this complexity with care, humility, and faith that our formation odysseys transcend supposed divides.

Data Analysis

In analyzing the data gathered, the researcher employed a rigorous IPA approach, following the six-step process outlined by Peoples (2021, p. 59). The process began with transcribing the recorded interviews; then the researcher read each transcript as a whole and took general notes to capture the essence of the participants' experiences, as recommended by Smith et al. (2012).

In this study, I have adopted the updated terminology introduced by Smith et al. in the 2nd edition of their book "Essentials of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis" (2022, p. 76). In line with their revised nomenclature, the term "emergent themes" has been replaced with "experiential statements." An experiential statement encapsulates a specific aspect of a participant's lived experience. Furthermore, a collection of related experiential statements is now referred to as a "Personal Experiential Theme" (PET). This updated terminology better reflects the idiosyncratic nature of participants' experiences and the process of identifying patterns within

individual accounts before moving to cross-case analysis. By adopting this revised language, I aim to align my research with the latest developments in IPA methodology and maintain consistency with current best practices in the field.

To outline the steps the researcher took in more depth: First, the researcher thoroughly read each interview transcript, ensuring a comprehensive grasp of the participants' narratives. Second, initial meaning units were generated by extracting relevant and significant information from the transcripts, streamlining the data. Third, further refinement occurred through developing final meaning units and categorizing and organizing the data according to specific questions. Fourth, the researcher synthesized the last meaning units, constructing situated narratives tailored to each question. This step provided context-specific insights. Fifth, a higher-level synthesis then took place, amalgamating situated narratives into general narratives. This involved identifying and integrating overarching themes common across participants. The final step involved generating a comprehensive available description. This synthesis encapsulated the significant experiential themes, providing an overarching understanding of the psychoanalytic formation journey based on participants' experiences. This structured approach, guided by Peoples's (2021) data analysis flow chart (p. 59), ensured a methodical and thorough exploration of the data, facilitating a discerned understanding of individual cases and the collective psychoanalytic odyssey.

This researcher then repeated the meticulous process, outlined above, for each additional individual participant. After establishing Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) (Smith et al., 2022, p. 76) for each participant, the researcher then conducted a comparative analysis, identifying both similarities and differences in PETs across individuals. Finally, the researcher performed an overarching analysis, identifying Group Experiential Themes (GETs) (Smith et al.,

2022, p. 76) for the entire participant sample and scrutinizing for commonalities and distinctions between participants. The researcher then reviewed initial experiential statements (Smith et al., 2022, p. 76) with participants to ensure the findings accurately reflected their lived experiences. The iterative nature of this double-analysis process posited by Smith et al. (2009) ensured a detailed exploration of individual cases and a comprehensive understanding of the collective experiences within the psychoanalytic journey of formation.

A crucial aspect of this process was reflexive journaling, which was integrated to ensure transparency and understanding of the researcher's positionality. In alignment with the Heideggerian hermeneutic circle, this journaling practice aimed at constantly understanding the interplay between the whole and its parts through Dasein (Peoples, 2021). It served as a means to monitor and comprehend the researcher's opinions and feelings in relation to the research, in line with Smith & Nizza's (2022, p. 17) assertion that researcher reflexivity is an ongoing process. This reflexive approach was adopted for something other than bracketing, as proposed by Husserl, recognizing the impracticality of journaling every personal bias about a phenomenon (Peoples, 2021). Instead, it aligns with the iterative nature of the Heideggerian hermeneutic circle, acknowledging and integrating the researcher's background as a psychoanalyst into the interpretive process.

Hermeneutic phenomenology, emphasizing interpretation and understanding the context of human experiences, resonated well with the goals of this project, especially in exploring the lived experiences of individuals in psychoanalytic formation. Given the inherent challenge of fully bracketing personal experiences, hermeneutic phenomenology emerged to this researcher as a practical and fitting choice, acknowledging the importance of interpretation and allowing for a natural integration of the researcher's understanding as a psychoanalyst.

Trustworthiness and Credibility

Aligned with Yardley's (2000) foundational principles for assessing qualitative research, this study embodied a commitment to sensitivity to context. The complex landscape of psychoanalytic formation was navigated by weaving together theoretical insights from relevant literature, empirical data, the sociocultural milieu, and participants' perspectives. Methodological rigor was paramount, reflecting a dedicated and skillful engagement with the intricacies of the research topic. Thorough data collection and a comprehensive breadth of analysis upholds the study's commitment to depth and richness.

Transparency and coherence formed the backbone of this project endeavor. The clarity and power of descriptive and argumentative elements contributed to robust methods and data presentation. A seamless integration of theory and method ensured a cohesive and transparent research narrative. Reflexivity, an integral component of the study, further enhanced transparency by acknowledging and navigating the researcher's positionality throughout the research process.

Aligned with Yardley's (2000) principles, this project further integrated member-checking procedures to ensure trustworthiness. As Peoples (2021) detailed, follow-up member-checking interviews help validate interpreted findings against participants' intended perspectives, serving as an essential hermeneutic step, per Heidegger (1927). Accordingly, the researcher conducted interactive reviews of initial data analyses, providing space for participant feedback around remaining faithful to the uniqueness of their lived experiences. This contextually situated member-checking upheld Yardley's (2000) call for qualitative rigor and coherence. By confirming and clarifying emerging results with contributors through transparent dialogue, the project achieved impactful idiographic insight.

Lastly, beyond enriching theoretical understanding, the researcher sought broader sociocultural relevance and practical implications for the psychoanalytic community, policymakers, and health practitioners. By aligning with Yardley's (2000) essential qualities, using thick description and developing a codebook and auditing procedures, this study will contribute to academic discourse and make meaningful strides in the broader domains of psychoanalytic knowledge, community practice, and societal well-being.

Limitations

Inherent limitations were present in this project, predetermined by several factors. Primary among these was the researcher's choice to intentionally focus on Lacanian psychoanalysts in formation, thereby excluding all other analysts of other theoretical traditions and other mental health professionals from different theories. The research exclusively focused on interviewing analysts undergoing or recently completing psychoanalytic formation, omitting insights from the professional practicing psychoanalysts who could have enhanced the pool retrospectively. This limitation stemmed from the chosen design of IPA, known for its preference for small, homogenous samples to delve deeply into specific experiences (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

Additionally, the study grappled with limitations related to geographical representation. The researcher belongs to a psychoanalytic tradition stemming from an international school encompassing primarily French, Spanish, Portuguese, and other non-English speakers, and due to time and convenience, the research did not fully capture the diversity of experiences across different locations, limiting the generalizability of findings to a broader psychoanalytic context.

A further limitation arose related to assumptions regarding the experiences of psychoanalysts during their formation journey. The study presupposed that analysts face

challenges during their external training, particularly within academic institutions. However, identifying the specific nature of these challenges will prove intricate due to the nuanced aspects of structural factors. Analysts engaged in external training may encounter difficulties within their academic institutions. However, distinguishing these challenges from other factors contributing to negative experiences, such as counselor incompetence or disposition, can be complex.

Lastly, the findings of this study have limited generalizability beyond the specific sample of Lacanian psychoanalysts in formation interviewed. Caution should be taken in applying findings more broadly without further research. This recognition emphasizes the importance of a cautious interpretation of results and careful consideration of these limitations throughout the research process (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

Summary

In chapter three, the study establishes a robust framework for examining psychoanalysts in formation, utilizing IPA within the context of Lacanian psychoanalysis. The objective is to fill a gap in qualitative literature by exploring the lived experiences of psychoanalysts during their formative years.

Three participants identifying as Lacanian analysts in formation were recruited through a purposive sampling approach, ensuring a focused exploration of their unique experiences. The study employed semistructured interviews with ten open-ended questions, aligning with Heideggerian principles and emphasizing reflexivity to navigate potential biases. The research design, rooted in IPA and Lacanian principles, sought to capture the transformative nature of the psychoanalytic journey. Data analysis followed a meticulous six-step process, incorporating reflexive journaling and member-checking to enhance transparency. Trustworthiness was ensured through Yardley's (2000) foundational principles, emphasizing sensitivity to context,

methodological rigor, and coherence. Due to limitations, such as geographical constraints and assumptions about challenges faced by analysts, the project adopted a cautious interpretation throughout. Finally, reflexivity was a crucial component, with the researcher anticipating and addressing potential biases through continuous self-assessment in line with the hermeneutic circle.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

This study explored the subjective dimensions of analysts' identity transformation during Lacanian psychoanalytic formation. In chapter one, the researcher broadly explored the need for more research on the subjective dimensions of analysts' identity transformation during Lacanian psychoanalytic formation. The research questions focused on (a) psychoanalysts' fundamental experiences and challenges during their formation and training, (b) their perceptions of the impact of formation on their professional development, and (c) the roles of supervision, personal analysis, and organizational support in the formation process. Chapter two reviewed pertinent literature, situating this study within an existing discourse on the intricacies of contemporary training. Chapter three outlined an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methodology to deeply examine analysts' lived experiences within the Colorado Analytic Forum (CAF) community during their journeys.

Building on this foundation, the current chapter presents results elucidated from in-depth interviews with three participants regarding their encounters with personal analysis, clinical supervision, academic study, and organizational support during their odyssey of analytic development. The discoveries uncovered while exploring analysts' lived experiences aim to balance honoring unique nuances within each personal account while integrating common themes in their shared developmental journeys. Study implications regarding how to judiciously apply these insights to enrich future training practices are examined. This introductory exploration unveils meaningful discoveries that initially surfaced through collaborative dialogue with participants regarding the challenges, milestones, and turning points encountered on their self-transformative paths toward becoming analysts.

Setting

This exploratory IPA study was conducted entirely through remote online procedures, allowing location flexibility for both the primary researcher and participants. The researcher, situated in Fargo, ND, utilized the Colorado Analytic Forum (CAF) membership email listserv to recruit three to eight participants, only three of whom met the inclusion criteria of identifying as Lacanian analysts currently undergoing formation. These participants privately accessed an initial Qualtrics screening online to confirm eligibility criteria, review informed consent, and optionally provide demographics from a location convenient for them. The researcher then contacted the three eligible and willing participants to schedule 60–90-minute semistructured interviews over secure Zoom videoconference links at mutually agreed-upon times per participants' availability. All three participants followed this sequence, completing the informed consent and eligibility screening through Qualtrics, then engaging in confidential video interviews over Zoom coordinated around aligning schedules. The virtual setting afforded privacy and accessibility, given the geographic dispersion between the North Dakota–based researcher and CAF-affiliated diasporic participants. Conducting interviews remotely enabled candid sharing without travel burdens. Follow-up member-checking procedures similarly utilized Zoom videoconferencing for efficiency. Overall, the entirely online environment provided a practical context conducive to open participation for these analysts immersed in developing their practice.

Participant Demographics

Demographics were optional for participants to provide and used to promote transparency in situating findings without compromising privacy. Three participants were recruited for this study through purposive sampling, explicitly targeting individuals who identify as Lacanian

analysts in formation. The three participants in this study are identified throughout by the first initial of the pseudonym of their choosing: R, J, and B. Participants were sent a standardized recruitment email from the CAF leadership to all members and affiliates over the forum listserv, featuring an attached informational flyer (Appendix C) with a QR code linking to the IRB-approved Qualtrics eligibility screening. This survey confirmed that three of the four total respondents met all inclusion criteria: self-identifying as analysts in training who hold membership in a Lacanian body and have undergone personal analysis.

These eligible participants provided, or waived, consent and completed the subsequent IRB approved procedures entailing scheduling and engaging in 60–90-minute semistructured video interviews to share stories of their developmental pathways of formation, member-checking associated textual transcriptions as additional data sources from these conversations, as well as reviewing and validating interpretations of their narratives through member-checking discussions. Representing a narrowly defined phenomenon of transformation, this small yet information-rich sample afforded a uniquely in-depth understanding of the specific formative odyssey encountered within one particular psychoanalytic community.

At the time of the interviews, all three participants held graduate degrees, were in their thirties, and identified racially as Caucasian. Two were male, and one was female. Their professional backgrounds spanned academic and mental health disciplines, with two currently holding clinical licenses and one being a non-licensed analyst in training. At the time, all contributors were concurrently immersed in their analyses while retaining membership ties to Lacanian psychoanalytic organizations to support the development of their formation journeys.

At the time of their interview, R was a licensed counselor residing in the Midwest who had earned a master's degree in mental health counseling. R stated having attempted doctoral

studies but found greater benefit in pursuing psychoanalytic formation autonomously outside traditional academia. In their time as an analyst in training, R held memberships in two separate psychoanalytic forums and worked with two different personal analysts.

At the time of their interview, J resided in the Northeast and had earned a master's degree in literature. J stated having attempted doctoral studies but left ABD (All But Dissertation) to pursue an alternate pathway toward their psychoanalytic formation by enrolling in a professional graduate program focused on social work. J identifies as an analyst in formation, working through their local forum while currently immersed in their analysis to support their developmental journey.

At the time of their interview, B was a licensed counselor residing in the Southeast who had earned a master's degree in mental health counseling. B stated having attempted doctoral studies but found more significant benefits in pursuing psychoanalytic formation autonomously outside traditional academia. As an analyst in training, B was affiliated with several Lacanian organizations nationwide while also being immersed in their analysis to support their formation and training.

Data Collection

In analyzing the data gathered, the researcher employed a rigorous IPA approach, following the six-step process outlined by Peoples (2021, p. 59). The process began with transcribing the recorded interviews, then the researcher read each transcript as a whole and took general notes to capture the essence of the participants' experiences, as recommended by Smith et al. (2012).

To outline the steps the researcher took in more depth, first each interview transcript was read in its entirety, ensuring a comprehensive grasp of the participants' narratives. Second, initial

meaning units were generated by extracting relevant and significant information from the transcripts, streamlining the data. Third, further refinement occurred through developing final meaning units and categorizing and organizing the data according to specific questions. Fourth, the researcher synthesized the last meaning units, constructing situated narratives tailored to each question. This step aimed to provide context-specific insights. Fifth, a higher-level synthesis then took place, amalgamating situated narratives into general narratives. This involved identifying and integrating overarching themes common across participants. The final step involved generating a comprehensive available description. This synthesis encapsulated the significant themes, providing an overarching understanding of the psychoanalytic formation journey based on participants' experiences. This structured approach, guided by Peoples's (2021) data analysis flow chart, ensured a methodical and thorough exploration of the data, facilitating a discerned understanding of individual cases and the collective psychoanalytic odyssey.

The researcher then repeated the meticulous process outlined above for each additional individual participant. After establishing themes for each participant, the researcher then conducted a comparative analysis, identifying both similarities and differences in themes across individuals. Finally, the researcher performed an overarching analysis, identifying themes for the entire participant sample and scrutinizing for commonalities and distinctions between participants. The researcher then reviewed initial data themes with participants to ensure the findings accurately reflected their lived experiences. The iterative nature of this double-analysis process posited by Smith et al. (2009) ensured a detailed exploration of individual cases and a comprehensive understanding of the collective experiences within the psychoanalytic journey of formation.

Semistructured Interviews

This study utilized semistructured video interviews as the primary method for data collection, aligned with IPA principles (Smith & Nizza, 2022). Interviews lasted between 50 and 60 minutes and were conducted via secure Zoom links at mutually agreed-upon times between researcher and participant. An open-ended 10-question interview protocol mapped to the research questions guided discussion, and follow-up queries explored emergent themes through probing questions that elicited and enhanced greater depth and understanding of participants' stories (Smith & Nizza, 2022). The researcher reviewed policies verbally at the outset and addressed questions and concerns before beginning dialogue. Interviews were recorded via video using Zoom transcription for precise post-interview transcription and subsequent analysis. Ongoing reflexive journaling during interviews helped monitor biases. Post-interview member-checking procedures clarified meanings and validated trustworthiness of findings (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Participants were given an opportunity to review initial analyses to confirm accurate, ethical representation of their lived experiences. This iterative approach fulfilled IPA commitments to flexible coconstruction of meaning.

Reflexive Journaling

A crucial aspect of this process was reflexive journaling, which was integrated to ensure transparency and understanding of the researcher's positionality. In alignment with the Heideggerian hermeneutic circle, this journaling practice aimed at constantly understanding the interplay between the whole and its parts through Dasein (Peoples, 2021). It served as a means to monitor and comprehend the researcher's opinions and feelings in relation to the research, in line with Smith & Nizza's (2022, p. 17) assertion that researcher reflexivity is an ongoing process. This reflexive approach was adopted for something other than bracketing, as proposed by

Husserl, recognizing the impracticality of journaling every personal bias about a phenomenon (Peoples, 2021). Instead, it aligned with the iterative nature of the Heideggerian hermeneutic circle, acknowledging and integrating the researcher's background as a psychoanalyst into the interpretive process.

Findings

The researcher initially identified distinct “experiential statements” for each participant using the updated IPA methodology (Smith et al., 2022, p. 76). Cross-case analysis derived higher-order “Personal Experiential Themes” (PETs) reflecting shared phenomena, and further comparison revealed overarching “Group Experiential Themes” (GETs) symbolizing collective identity transformation arcs despite nuanced variations in precise wording. For participant R specifically, statements spanned clinical experiences, critical tensions, evolution in ethical clinical orientation, frustrations overcome through supervision/control guidance, and shifts gained via layered mentorship.

However, aggregated GET analysis underscored confronting multifaceted challenges, ongoing personal introspection paralleling professional realignments, diverse effects stemming from varied, immersive activities, and the perpetual, nonlinear formation process itself as the ultimate catalysts for revelation across registers, irrevocably altering selfhood during psychoanalytic preparation. J and B showed distinct yet intersecting patterns within these broader GET categories. While divergence appeared across discrete codes, amalgamating codes highlighted deeper resonance regarding identity odysseys, revealing the unconscious through layered personal and structural mentorship.

Table 1*Experiential Statements, Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) and Group Experiential Themes (GETs)*

| Participants | Experiential Statements | Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) | Group Experiential Themes (GETs) |
|--------------|---|--|--|
| R | Clinical Experience Intellectual Growing Pains Personal Analysis Institutional Fit Professional ID Academic Training - Challenge Clinical Frustration Diversity Clinical Orientation - Ethics Supervision/Control Immersion Professional Organizational Affiliations (POA) Perspective Shift | Navigating Self-Concept Impact of POA Impact of Supervision/Control Ongoing Formation | Challenge Personal and Professional Growth Effect/Act Formation |
| J | Evolving Self-Concept Introspective Orientation Immersion Pre-Emergent Clinical Orientation Personal Analysis Perspective Shift Intellectual Growing Pains Academic-Clinical Tension - Challenge Organizational Frustration Political Disillusions - Ethics Professional Organizational Affiliations (POA) Diversity | Impact of POA Ongoing Evolution and Introspection Navigating Interdisciplinary Challenges Impact of Supervision/Control Developing Clinical Orientation Ongoing Formation | Challenge Personal and Professional Growth Effect/Act Formation |
| B | Supervision/Control Professional Organizational Affiliations (POA) Immersion Curiosity Orientation - Ethics Perspective Shift Personal Analysis Diversity Clinical Frustration - Challenge Intellectual Growing Pains Idealization Struggles | Ecumenical Diversity Impact of Supervision/Control Theoretical Conception Challenges Ongoing Formation | Challenge Personal and Professional Growth Effect/Act Formation |

* Experiential Statements and PETs arranged according to coded frequency and member-checked importance

**Smith et al. (2022) encourages new IPA researchers to use Experiential Statements and Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) in lieu of Individual and Superordinate Themes, respectively

GET-1: Challenge

The Group Experiential Theme (GET—*formerly superordinate theme*) of Challenge emerged as a pivotal catalyst in the analysts' identity formation journeys, spanning clinical, conceptual, and personal domains. All participants conveyed that they were grappling with the work-in-progress analyst identity against disciplinary superegos and institutional orthodoxies. They described confronting manifold frustrations stemming from perceived preparation deficiencies, struggling to comprehend theory, and reconciling idealized assumptions of effortless expertise against messy realities.

R vividly recounted the profound struggle of navigating risk when patients responded with suicidality: "Patients really responding with suicidal ... with suicidality, not like ... with patients that were really in danger at different points, or at least I assessed them to be, and how to respond to that."

This tension between pragmatic risk elimination through institutionalization versus faith in speech's power for psychic transformation catalyzed immense frustration yet taught much. Similarly, J expressed acute frustration fostering clinical investment within their institute, asking, "Why am I doing this if it feels like I'm constantly screaming into the void?" when seeking to spark desire yet finding few hear desire's call.

B conveyed profound challenges in understanding elevated Lacanian theory as a newcomer, saying, "I was a pretty smart student, but I can feel like, yeah, there's just insecurity, right, because of all this kind of high theory."

Despite these challenges, all participants discovered that confidence ultimately arises through validating inner strengths rather than external metrics. They found that challenge plays an essential role in forging theoretical abstractions into clinical skills while expanding self-

understanding. By transitioning rigid assumptions into capacious, creative possibilities better aligned with personal and professional values, the meaning crystallizing from turmoil illuminated a formation's very essence.

Personal Experiential Theme (PET—formerly subtheme): Impact of Professional Organizational Affiliations

Professional Organizational Affiliation was a significant source of challenge for both R and J. R experienced difficulties navigating institutional fit and immersion within their professional organizations. R vividly recounted their involvement in a school that took an “antagonistic tack toward other groups,” stating:

I was involved in one school which I felt took a really antagonistic tack toward other groups, other schools, uh, was literally formed out of a civil war, in a sense, and for a long time, I was, or saw myself, whether I was or saw myself is maybe irrelevant to the question, or maybe it's not, as a, you know, a lieutenant in this war.

R eventually realized that “the war was being waged under false pretenses” and decided to leave the “more authoritarian group for one that I felt allowed me to be a lot freer, um, in a lot of ways, in my clinical practice.” This transition had “huge effects” on R's life, as they had to “renounce that jouissance of fighting” and declare, “I'm done fighting. I've, I've given it up.”

R also faced challenges in navigating supervision and control within their professional organizations. They described a period of only controlling with a “small cadre” of analysts, which “got smaller and smaller,” until they “just started controlling with a bunch of people again.” R found this change “pretty satisfying” and noted that it “had real effects.”

Similarly, J experienced challenges in navigating the intertwining of their academic and clinical experiences within their professional organizational affiliations. J described attending

conferences and seminars with a professor who had relationships with people in the International Forums, stating:

I got to actually meet a lot of these people when I was in my undergrad, so I had no concept of how to differentiate between what I was doing in my literature studies and what they were doing from a clinical perspective. (laughs) I did not understand this.

J also expressed frustration with the lack of shared desire and engagement within their psychoanalytic forum, leading to a sense of stagnation. J struggled with fostering desire and creating spaces for encounters, often feeling like they were “constantly screaming into the void.”

J’s experiences highlight the challenges of navigating the complex interplay between academic and clinical domains within professional organizations. As J noted: “It took some years before I realized there was a split between literarian practice, so mostly I just ... I kind of do my own thing. I obviously can’t write clinically, yet, um, but I can write theoretically.”

These experiences from both R and J underscore the profound impact that professional organizational affiliations can have on the formation journey of psychoanalysts, presenting both opportunities for growth and significant challenges in navigating institutional dynamics, finding a sense of belonging, and reconciling different aspects of one’s professional identity.

PET: Navigating Interdisciplinary Challenges

J’s journey of psychoanalytic formation involved navigating complex interdisciplinary challenges and bridging gaps between literary studies, clinical practice, and institutional structures. J started with a background in “poetic analysis, um, structuralism, uh, philosophy” before pursuing graduate studies in English through a psychoanalytic lens. As J recounts:

I started with that along with poetic analysis, um, structuralism, uh, philosophy. And as a result of really, really enjoying doing that, I decided to go to graduate school. Um, I did

apply to one psychoanalytic program, but that wasn't really my, my thing, didn't get it anyway. Um, so I ended up going to a university that was primarily a theory-based English program. Studied British literature through a psychoanalytic lens.

Transitioning from literary and philosophical studies to the clinical realm presented challenges for integrating different disciplinary frameworks and epistemologies. J found that it “took some years before I realized there was a split between literarian practice” and clinical work. To bridge this divide, J had to find ways to connect theoretical insights to psychoanalytic concepts, even if not yet able to write from a purely clinical perspective:

I obviously can't write clinically, yet, um, but I can write theoretically. So I like to study ... Like the last paper I presented on, um, I was writing about Donne ... and doing a sociocultural analysis of the poem, but then I used that to talk about the Lacunae and the Aporia and cause ... um, which let me talk about desire and some other things.

An interdisciplinary challenge that arose for R involved the role of licensure and counseling frameworks concerning psychoanalytic practice. Initially, R “used to think of the licensure as kind of a hindrance, like, oh, this is really getting in the way. This is not something I necessarily want to do.” However, over time, J came to appreciate how working within those professional designations could actually serve as an avenue for bringing analysands into treatment who might not otherwise find their way to psychoanalysis: “But I have so many analysands who are in formation themselves or are interested in analysis, or even just know they're having an analysis, and that has an effect, who just came in as just “counseling patients.”

Navigating such institutional structures and disciplinary boundaries becomes integral to the formation process, requiring creativity and openness to reconcile different approaches. As the experiences of R, J and other analysts illustrate, the effort to bridge interdisciplinary gaps, while

challenging, can enrich both theoretical understanding and clinical practice. The creative tensions generated in formation ultimately serve to advance the transmission of psychoanalysis as a living body of knowledge.

PET: Theoretical Conception Challenges

For B, a significant challenge during their psychoanalytic formation was grappling with the complexities of Lacanian theory as a newcomer to the field. Despite being an intelligent student, B experienced insecurity when faced with the esoteric and enigmatic nature of Lacanian concepts. As B describes: “I was a pretty smart student, but I can feel like, um, yeah, there’s just insecurity, right? Because of all this kind of high theory, and, um, do I know what the hell they’re talking about?”

B’s journey involved confronting these intellectual growing pains and idealization struggles through immersive engagement with Lacanian texts and the psychoanalytic community. The process of understanding and integrating theoretical concepts proved to be a formidable challenge, as B recounts:

I used to think it was about insight, you know? Uh, I used to think that if you just understood, like, what was happening or what h— or why ... You know, I used to think that you could ... I used to think that you could, like, think and understand your way into transformation or wellbeing.

However, through ongoing supervision, personal analysis, and clinical experience, B’s conception of psychoanalysis evolved. They began to recognize the limitations of a purely intellectual understanding and the importance of the unconscious and the symbolic in the analytic process. As B reflects:

It seems now like it's this kind of piecemeal thing. Like, there's something about ... remembering and articulating, that you know, just makes a little bit of your neurotic self, just chips away at it, you know? (laughs).

B's journey highlights the profound challenges that aspiring analysts face when confronting the depth and complexity of Lacanian theory. The process of grappling with intellectual insecurities, the idealization of knowledge, and the gradual integration of theoretical concepts into clinical practice are central aspects of the formation experience.

As B's narrative illustrates, the path to theoretical understanding is not a straightforward one, but rather a continuous process of immersion, reflection, and transformation. The challenges encountered along the way serve as catalysts for growth, pushing the analyst in formation to question their assumptions, embrace uncertainty, and develop a more nuanced understanding of the psychoanalytic enterprise.

B's experiences resonate with Lacan's emphasis on the role of language and the symbolic in the unconscious, and the importance of the analyst's own subjectivity in the clinical encounter. As B navigates the challenges of theoretical conception, they are simultaneously engaging in a process of self-reflection and personal transformation, echoing Lacan's famous dictum, "the unconscious is structured like a language" (Lacan, 1973).

In summary, the GET of Challenge served as a crucial catalyst for growth and transformation in the participants' psychoanalytic formation journeys. Each participant encountered unique challenges that tested their intellectual, clinical, and personal capacities, pushing them to confront their assumptions, insecurities, and ideals. For R and J, navigating the complex dynamics of professional organizational affiliations (POA) presented significant challenges. R grappled with the tensions of institutional fit and the jouissance of fighting,

ultimately leading to a transformative shift in their clinical practice and a renunciation of the fantasy of the militant analyst. J, on the other hand, struggled with the intertwining of their academic and clinical experiences within POA, as well as the need for shared desire and engagement within their psychoanalytic forum. B's primary challenge revolved around theoretical conception, as they grappled with the complexities of Lacanian theory and the insecurities that arose from engaging with high theory. Through immersion in texts, supervision, and personal analysis, B confronted their intellectual growing pains and idealization struggles, leading to a more nuanced understanding of psychoanalysis.

While the specific nature of the challenges varied, all participants found that confronting and working through these difficulties was essential to their development as analysts. Navigating institutional dynamics, bridging interdisciplinary gaps, and grappling with theoretical complexities served as fertile ground for personal and professional growth. The GET of Challenge highlights the transformative power of facing adversity in the psychoanalytic formation journey. Through these challenges, analysts in formation are pushed to question their assumptions, confront their unconscious desires, and develop a more authentic and embodied understanding of psychoanalytic practice.

As the participants' narratives illustrate, the challenges encountered in formation are not merely obstacles to overcome but essential components of the transformative process. Through this crucible of challenge, analysts in formation emerge with a deeper understanding of themselves, their patients, and the psychoanalytic enterprise as a whole.

GET-2: Personal and Professional Growth

The GET of Personal and Professional Growth emerged as all participants depicted experiencing profound identity shifts when overcoming obstacles during their nonlinear odysseys

of psychoanalytic formation. They described renouncing rigid assumptions around standards of practice, care, and expertise, with greater maturity taking root after reconciling external ideals and internal truths. Participants transitioned from imagining the attainment of a flawless analyst identity to accepting endless becoming through repeatedly shedding certainty.

For R, this transformation involved moving from a “militant” approach to adopting greater openness and flexibility to meet patients’ needs, recognizing that “renouncing that fantasy of a military analyst, for myself, really changed a lot.” Similarly, J shifted focus from proving themselves to embracing ethical responsibility after a traumatic loss challenged previous investments, catalyzing increased maturity. B’s journey began with seeking analysis to process suffering. However, it led to frustration with imposed evaluative structures, feeling “there should be no pass or fail” given the deeply personal nature of the work.

Alongside personal evolution, participants described professional development unfolding through reconciling academic knowledge with supervision guidance to hone technique. R embraced pragmatism in recognizing licensure’s clinical value despite the previous denigration within university contexts. All participants emphasized supervision’s impact in “reigniting curiosity,” as B noted, and supporting specialized skill cultivation to navigate various dilemmas.

Ultimately, each depicted identity reconstitution personally and paradigmatic realignment professionally as quintessential for inhabiting the analyst role with humanizing integrity after traversing theoretical ideals, revealing psychoanalytic formation’s demand for profound recursive renewal to move from imaginary identity to authentic praxis.

PET: Navigating Self-Concept

For R, navigating self-concept was central to their personal and professional growth as a psychoanalyst. This PET encompassed R’s experiential statements of Personal Analysis-

Catalyst, Professional ID, Academic Training, and Clinical Experience, highlighting the complex interplay between these domains in shaping R's evolving sense of self.

R's personal analysis served as a profound catalyst for self-reflection and transformation. As R recounts, "I would say my own analysis was the big thing. Uh, that was the big, the big turning point for me." Engaging in their own analysis allowed R to delve deeper into their motivations, desires, and unconscious processes, facilitating a greater understanding of themselves and their role as an analyst.

Alongside personal analysis, R's professional identity underwent significant shifts as they navigated the tensions between academic training and clinical experience. Coming from a counseling background, R initially viewed psychoanalysis as a theoretical orientation within the counseling field. However, as they immersed themselves in psychoanalytic training, R began to recognize the distinct nature of psychoanalytic work:

I find a lot of people, uh, on the, in the psychoanalytic field kind of approach it this way. They're like, well, okay, well I'm in psychodynamic therapy now. Maybe I'll go into psychoanalysis, and maybe one day I'll write a paper, and I just, after a little bit of reading, and a little bit of analysis, really just a little bit of analysis, I was like, all right, jump in.

This realization marked a significant shift in R's self-concept, as they began to identify more strongly with the role of the psychoanalyst rather than that of the counselor. This process of differentiation was further reinforced through R's clinical experiences, particularly in working with patients in crisis:

It taught me a lot, to work ... I mean, you asked about a challenge in a formation. I was— I didn't have a problem with seminars, or control. Uh, if anything, I found control very

helpful. I was always happy to go to my own analysis, and still am. Um, or, or reading, or anything like that, or working with others. It was working with these patients that, uh, it's not in the training manual, so to speak.

Confronting the raw realities of clinical work and the limitations of theoretical knowledge, R was forced to grapple with their own sense of competence, sense of responsibility, and ethical stance as an analyst. These experiences served as powerful catalysts for personal and professional growth, pushing R to navigate the complexities of the analytic relationship and to develop a more grounded sense of their therapeutic role.

R's journey of navigating self-concept highlights the iterative nature of personal and professional development in psychoanalytic formation. As R engaged in the constant interplay between personal analysis, academic learning, and clinical encounters, their sense of self as an analyst continually evolved, integrating new insights, challenges, and experiences.

This process of self-reflection and transformation is echoed in Lacan's emphasis on the analyst's subjectivity and the importance of the analyst's own analysis. As Lacan states, "The analyst's desire is not a pure desire. It is a desire to obtain absolute difference, a desire which intervenes when, confronted with the primary signifier, the subject is, for the first time, in a position to subject himself to it" (Lacan, 1964).

R's navigation of self-concept exemplifies this process of subjecting oneself to the signifiers of psychoanalysis, both in theory and practice. Through the crucible of personal analysis, academic training, and clinical experience, R's self-concept as an analyst emerged not as a fixed identity but as an ongoing process of becoming, marked by the desire for "absolute difference" in the face of the unconscious.

PET: Ongoing Evolution and Introspection

A continuous process of evolution and introspection characterized J's journey of personal and professional growth. This PET encompassed J's experiential statements of Evolving Self-Concept, Personal Analysis-Catalyst, and Diversity, highlighting the dynamic interplay between self-reflection, personal analysis, and exposure to diverse perspectives in shaping J's development as a psychoanalyst.

Central to J's growth was the ongoing evolution of their self-concept. As J navigated the challenges of their formation journey, they experienced significant shifts in their understanding of themselves and their role as an analyst. This process of self-discovery was catalyzed by J's personal analysis, which served as a profound space for introspection and transformation. As J recounts:

Somewhere around there I remember that I have to actually ask that question, the why of it all. And also the who. And I guess I've moved away from what does it mean to be an analyst to what is going to be my responsibility as an analyst?

This shift from a focus on the identity of the analyst to a deeper consideration of the ethical responsibility of the role marks a significant evolution in J's self-concept. Through the process of personal analysis, J began to interrogate their own desires, motivations, and unconscious processes, leading to a more nuanced understanding of their subjective position as an analyst.

Alongside personal analysis, exposure to diverse perspectives and experiences played a crucial role in J's ongoing evolution and introspection. As J engaged with different theoretical frameworks, clinical approaches, and cultural contexts, they were pushed to continually reflect on their own assumptions, biases, and blind spots. This process of self-examination was further

enriched by J's participation in various psychoanalytic communities and organizations, as they recounted:

I think it's gonna be really important for me at least over the next several years to spend time exposing myself to different things, not just the IF, not just the NLS, not just the compass, not just, not just, not just, because I can't find myself in that same sort of knotting that I found myself in last year.

J's commitment to seeking out diverse perspectives and experiences reflects a deep understanding of the ongoing nature of personal and professional growth. By continually exposing themselves to new ideas and challenges, J recognized the importance of maintaining a stance of openness, curiosity, and self-reflection in their development as an analyst.

This process of ongoing evolution and introspection is echoed in Lacan's concept of the "formation of the unconscious" (Lacan, 1964). For Lacan, the formation of the analyst is not a linear progression toward a fixed endpoint but rather a continuous process of grappling with the unconscious, both one's own and that of the analysand. As J navigated the complex terrain of their own unconscious through personal analysis and engaged with the diversity of the psychoanalytic field, they embodied this Lacanian notion of formation as an ongoing process of becoming.

Moreover, J's emphasis on the ethical responsibility of the analyst resonates with Lacan's discussions of the analyst's desire and the position of the "subject supposed to know" (Lacan, 1964). As J reflected on their evolving self-concept and the implications of their role as an analyst, they were confronting the complex dynamics of transference and the ethical imperative to maintain a stance of openness and not-knowing in the face of the analysand's unconscious.

J's journey of ongoing evolution and introspection highlights the centrality of personal analysis, self-reflection, and engagement with diversity in the personal and professional growth of the psychoanalyst. As J navigated the challenges and opportunities of their formation journey, they embodied the Lacanian notion of the formation of the unconscious, continually grappling with their own subjectivity in the service of their analysands and the psychoanalytic enterprise as a whole.

PET: Impact of Supervision/Control

The impact of supervision and control analysis emerged as a significant factor in the personal and professional growth of all three participants—R, J, and B. This PET encompassed their experiential statements related to Supervision/Control, Personal Analysis-Catalyst, and Diversity, highlighting the transformative role of these experiences in shaping their development as clinicians and analysts.

Supervision played a crucial role in navigating clinical challenges and developing their ethical stance as an analyst for R. When faced with difficult situations, such as working with suicidal patients, R found guidance and support through supervision:

I would say, those are now some of the cases I've—and these are all ongoing cases, the ones I'm thinking of—that I would say were—are some of the most successful ones, in the sense of having an effect on the patient. Um, it, it taught me a lot, to work ... I mean, you asked about a challenge in a formation. I was—I didn't have a problem with seminars, or control. Uh, if anything, I found control very helpful.

R's experience highlights the importance of supervision in providing a space for reflection, learning, and growth, particularly when confronted with the complexities of clinical

work. Through supervision, R was able to develop a more nuanced understanding of the psychoanalytic process and their role as an analyst.

J also emphasized the significance of supervision and control analysis in their formation journey. As J navigated the challenges of integrating theoretical concepts with clinical practice, they found support and guidance through their supervisory relationships:

Um, I started writing. It was terrible. I mean as, as happens, like the first several drafts were nothing, just absolutely nothing. Um, and I was going back and forth actually in emails with my analyst, because I, like I was sending him drafts, again, that poor, patient man. (laughs) Uh, and I just flipped out in one of the emails. I was like, "I can't end this. I don't know. I've written so mu—like I've written seven pages and they're good and they're good standing, and I come on this question and I cannot answer this question." And he just kept leading me like through like basically back to where I started the question, just he's clearly leading me in some sort of repetition. And now he asked me ... I forget what question exactly he asked me, but he said, "So what does that produce?" And I said, "Well, desire." And I was like, "Oh, fuck." (laughs)

J's experience illustrates the role of supervision in helping analysts in formation bridge the gap between theory and practice. By engaging in theoretical discussions and case presentations with their supervisors, J refined their understanding of psychoanalytic concepts and applied them to their clinical work.

For B, the impact of supervision and control analysis was particularly profound, as evidenced by their experiential statements:

I would say supervision has made it, the biggest impact on my clinical work. Um, I ha—I had this one supervisor for about a year, uh, maybe a year and a half. I don't know, but,

um, it was amazing, because I, I would go to him, and I would expect him to give me the secret to my case ... and he would just ask me questions, and then the hour would go by, and I'd be like, "This motherfucker didn't tell me anything."

B's narrative highlights the transformative potential of supervision in fostering self-reflection, clinical intuition, and the development of a unique analytic style. By resisting the temptation to provide easy answers or prescriptive techniques, B's supervisor facilitated a deeper level of engagement with the psychoanalytic process.

Across all three participants, the impact of supervision and control analysis was enhanced by their personal analysis and exposure to diverse perspectives. As they grappled with their own unconscious desires, fantasies, and conflicts, R, J, and B developed greater capacities for empathy, attunement, and presence in their clinical work. Moreover, their engagement with a wide range of theoretical perspectives and clinical approaches allowed them to continually refine their understanding of psychoanalytic concepts and adapt their techniques to meet the unique needs of each analysand.

The PET of Impact of Supervision/Control underscores the pivotal role of these experiences in the personal and professional growth of psychoanalysts in formation. As R, J, and B navigated the challenges and opportunities of their formation journeys, they embodied the Lacanian ideals of the analyst's desire, the ethics of psychoanalysis, and the ongoing formation of the unconscious. Through the transformative power of supervision, control analysis, personal analysis, and engagement with diversity, these analysts in formation developed a deeper understanding of themselves, their patients, and the psychoanalytic process as a whole.

Transitioning from the GET of Personal and Professional Growth to the following theme, a critical pattern emerged across all participants' accounts: pivotal Effects/Acts representing

experiential turning points that profoundly impacted their developmental trajectories. These turning points, often precipitated by the challenges and realizations encountered during their formation, led to significant shifts in participants' self-understanding and approach to psychoanalytic work. As participants navigated the complexities of their personal and professional growth, they found themselves engaging in decisive actions that altered the course of their journeys, ultimately shaping their identities as analysts. This pattern of Effects/Acts, intimately tied to the processes of challenge and growth, emerged as a distinct GET in its own right, highlighting the transformative power of crucial moments and decisions in the psychoanalytic formation journey.

GET-3: Effects/Acts

Another GET resonating across participants' accounts encompassed profound Effects/Acts representing critical experiential turning points that realigned developmental trajectories by severing perceived constraints through decisive change enactment. Typically catalyzed after adversity or growth phenomena across cases, formative ruptures breached rigid assumptions by aligning overt deeds to participants' evolving orientation and ethics amid such transitional rupture/repair cycles.

PET of Impact of Professional Organizational Affiliations (POA)

The impact of Professional Organizational Affiliations (POA) was a recurring theme in R's narrative, appearing first in GET-1: Challenge and resurfacing in GET-3: Effects/Acts. This PET encompassed R's experiential statements of Supervision/Control, Clinical Orientation-Ethics, Clinical Frustration, and Institutional Fit, highlighting how the challenges associated with POA ultimately led to significant effects and actions in R's formation journey.

In GET-1, R described the difficulties they faced while navigating the dynamics of their professional organizations, particularly the “antagonistic tack” one school took toward other groups. This challenge reached a critical point when R realized that “the war was being waged under false pretenses,” leading them to make a decisive move: “I ended up leaving this, this, uh, more authoritarian group for one that I felt allowed me to be a lot freer, um, in a lot of ways, in my clinical practice. In my life, it had huge effects.”

This act of leaving one professional organization for another that better aligned with R’s values and clinical approach was a turning point in their formation journey. It demonstrated the profound impact that POA can have on an analyst’s development and the importance of finding an institutional fit that supports one’s growth and autonomy.

Moreover, R’s decision to leave the “authoritarian group” was not merely a passive response to challenging circumstances but an active, transformative choice. As R reflected:

I think leaving the first school has had an effect on the first school. ... Now, I think they are doing something with that. I don’t think it’s just a case of, “Oh, this guy left. Fuck him.” No. Surprisingly, I think they’re like ... I’m not sure how, because I’m not part of those conversations anymore, but from what I gather, people are reconsidering certain practices, not on like a school-wide level. This isn’t like, you know, that big of a change, but at least at the local level, I think people are reconsidering certain things, maybe.”

This passage highlights the ripple effects that an individual’s actions can have within their professional community. By making the difficult decision to leave an organization that no longer aligned with their values, R not only transformed their own path but also potentially catalyzed reflection and change within the institution they left behind.

The PET of POA in GET-3 underscores the transformative power of the challenges associated with POA in GET-1. For R, the difficulties they encountered in navigating institutional dynamics ultimately led to decisive actions that reshaped their formation journey and, in turn, had broader impacts on the psychoanalytic community. This narrative arc illustrates the complex interplay between the challenges analysts in formation face, the choices they make in response to these challenges, and the far-reaching effects of their actions on both a personal and institutional level.

PET of Developing Clinical Orientation

For J, the development of their clinical orientation was a transformative process marked by significant shifts in their personal and professional life. This PET is characterized by J's experiential statements of POA, Political Disillusions-Ethics, Organizational Frustration, and Introspective Orientation, highlighting the profound effects and acts that accompanied their transition from an academic to clinical Lacanian.

One of the most notable acts in J's journey was their decision to leave their literary PhD program, All But Dissertation (ABD), and enroll in a Master of Social Work (MSW) program. This shift was driven by a growing desire to engage with psychoanalysis on a clinical level, as J recounted:

I ended up dropping out of graduate school, um, finished my PhD course work, but I wrote a chapter of the dissertation. I was like, "No. No. Not doing this. Not into it." Um, so left that. And then eventually ended up linking up with one of the forums of the IF and started doing just clinical training here and there, um, and eventually got to a point where I'm starting my, my, uh, master's in social work in the autumn.

This decisive act of leaving academia to pursue clinical training demonstrates J's commitment to developing their clinical orientation and aligning their professional path with their evolving interests and values. It also highlights the transformative power of the formation journey, as J's experiences and challenges within their POA and academic institutions ultimately led them to make significant changes in their life.

Another notable effect of J's developing clinical orientation was their decision to ask for a divorce and move out, which they linked to their ongoing analysis: "Pretty shortly thereafter, I asked for a divorce and moved out and did (laughs) the whole life-changing thing, and I do—I don't quite know why I trace it from that but I do."

While not directly related to J's clinical work, this personal upheaval is nonetheless connected to their introspective orientation and the profound shifts in self-understanding catalyzed by their psychoanalytic journey. As J navigated the challenges of their POA and the political disillusionment they experienced within the Lacanian community, they simultaneously underwent a process of personal transformation that led them to reevaluate and reshape their intimate relationships.

J's return "home" and to dance also played a significant role in their developing clinical orientation, as these experiences provided new insights and reinforced the lessons of their Lacanian transformation:

I moved back in with my mother, so I'm back in my hometown, um, doing some of the stuff that I used to do when I was young. One of those is dancing. I was a dance teacher, uh, for years and years. Um, started when I was like 14 years old, which is probably a little too young to be responsible for kids but, eh, whatever, it's fine. They didn't die. Um, (laughs) and so I've been helping out with that again.

This return to familiar spaces and practices allowed J to reconnect with their roots and integrate their newfound clinical perspective into their long-standing passions. By engaging with dance and teaching once again, J was able to embody the principles of Lacanian psychoanalysis in a new context, further deepening their understanding of the transformative potential of the formation journey.

This PET highlighted the profound impact of J's transition from an Academic to a Clinical Lacanian on their personal and professional life. Through decisive acts such as leaving their PhD program, pursuing clinical training, asking for a divorce, and returning to dance, J demonstrated the transformative power of the formation journey and the far-reaching effects of developing a clinical orientation grounded in Lacanian principles. This narrative arc underscores the complex interplay between personal growth, professional development, and the ongoing process of self-discovery that characterizes the psychoanalytic formation journey.

PET of Ecumenical Diversity

This PET is best captured by B's expansive approach to psychoanalytic formation, characterized by their openness to diverse perspectives, theoretical orientations, and clinical practices. This PET is expressed through B's experiential statements of Curiosity Orientation-Ethics, POA, Diversity, and Clinical Frustration, highlighting the transformative effects of their ecumenical approach on their development as an analyst.

B's narrative is marked by a deep commitment to exploring and engaging with a wide range of psychoanalytic ideas and communities. This ecumenical orientation is evident in their involvement with multiple Lacanian organizations and their willingness to learn from analysts with different backgrounds and approaches:

So yeah, so, but, but I'm always ... like, I'm enrolled in a class with San Francisco. I like the clinic, right? So I'm in this clinical ... class, um, that San Francisco's doing, right? I'm a, I'm a guest, you know? I'm not in their school, um, but they allowed me because I did supervision with one of, with, um, with Stephanie Swales, who's a member of their school, and so, um, so they let me join, you know? And I'm in a Freud seminar once a month, with Fernando Castrillon. Um, I don't know how to pronounce his name. Um—

B's active pursuit of diverse learning opportunities demonstrates their curiosity and openness to growth as they seek out experiences that challenge and expand their understanding of psychoanalytic theory and practice. This ecumenical approach significantly affects B's formation journey, as it allows them to develop a more nuanced and comprehensive perspective on the complexities of the psychoanalytic enterprise.

Moreover, B's ecumenical orientation is not merely a matter of intellectual curiosity but also a reflection of their ethical stance as an analyst. As B reflects on the differences and similarities between various Lacanian groups, they express a desire for greater unity and collaboration within the psychoanalytic community:

I don't know. I just don't think they're as different as they think they are, you know? They think there's a huge difference in the way that they're oriented, you know? Um, but I've been in both. I've been immersed in both. It's not a prejudice for me. I've actually been here and been there, and y'all are saying the same shit, you know?

This passage highlights B's commitment to finding common ground and bridging the gaps between different psychoanalytic traditions. By immersing themselves in diverse communities and recognizing the fundamental similarities beneath apparent differences, B actively works to promote a more ecumenical and collaborative approach to psychoanalysis.

The effects of B's ecumenical orientation extend beyond their personal growth and professional development, as they also shape their interactions with analysands and their overall clinical approach. As B notes:

I used to think of love, it's something like that, you know? Love is something like not seeing people through your own narcissistic fantasies and desires, you know? Um, and that, uh, although Lacanian analysis seems very austere, the process, the product of recognizing your fantasies is you begin to recognize others, you know, more for their absolute ... and be curious about it, because people won't even ... show you who they really are. You have to really want to know how they really feel or what they really think.

This reflection demonstrates how B's openness to diversity and their willingness to challenge their own preconceptions translates into a more attuned and compassionate clinical stance. By recognizing the limitations of their fantasies and desires, B is better able to meet their analysands where they are and to support them in self-discovery and transformation.

The PET of Ecumenical Diversity underscores the transformative power of B's open and curious approach to psychoanalytic formation. By actively seeking out diverse perspectives, immersing themselves in different theoretical traditions, and promoting collaboration and unity within the psychoanalytic community, B demonstrates the far-reaching effects of an ecumenical orientation on both personal growth and clinical practice. This narrative arc highlights the importance of diversity, flexibility, and a commitment to ongoing learning in the development of a robust and compassionate psychoanalytic identity.

The GET of Effects/Acts emerges as a central pivot and critical thread weaving through the tapestry of participants' psychoanalytic formation odysseys. Following the crucible of Challenge and the transformative process of Personal and Professional Growth, each participant

reached a decisive juncture where they enacted profound changes that irrevocably altered the course of their development.

For R, this pivotal moment came in the form of transferring affiliations, a bold move that freed them from the confines of a rigid, “militaristic” approach to analysis. As R recounts, “sort of renouncing that fantasy of a militant analyst for myself really changed a lot of things not just in my cases but in me.” This act of renunciation, born from the challenges of institutional fit and the growth of self-awareness, opened up new vistas of possibility in R’s clinical work and sense of identity.

Similarly, J’s transformative act was one of courageous reorientation, as they chose to leave behind the familiar path of academia to pursue clinical training in the wake of personal loss. This profound shift, catalyzed by the challenges of navigating interdisciplinary tensions and the growth of introspection, allowed J to align their actions with their deepest desires and evolving sense of purpose. As J reflects, “I ended up dropping out of graduate school ABD ... I was like ‘No. No. Not doing this. Not into it.’”

For B, the decisive act was one of intellectual and practical diversification, as they voraciously explored different theoretical perspectives and clinical approaches. This expansive sampling, fueled by the challenges of theoretical comprehension and the growth of curiosity, led B to a more open and collaborative stance in their analytic work. B discovered that “supervision supported the ethics of an analyst oriented around perpetual discovery without imposition by fostering engagement exceeding presumption.”

These formative turning points, unique in their specifics yet united in their transformative power, epitomize the way in which Effects/Acts serve as the maelstrom upon which the entire formation odyssey pivots. Through these self-expanding experiential ruptures, participants not

only broke free from the shackles of their previous assumptions but also actively reoriented themselves with their deepest values and evolving sense of ethics. The result was a profound broadening of horizons, a fundamental reconstitution of what it means to be an analyst and a person in the world.

As R eloquently puts it, “taking up work with people outside the group, all kinds of things started shifting for me.” This sentiment, echoed in J’s and B’s accounts, underscores the way in which these decisive deeds, these Effects/Acts, consistently expand the realm of what is possible, both in the clinical encounter and in the ongoing project of self-creation.

Fundamentally, these turning points stand as a testament to the courage, resilience, and openness of these analytic sojourners who dared to enact change in the face of uncertainty and, in so doing, forever altered the trajectory of their personal and professional formation.

GET-4: Formation

Nevertheless, the formation odyssey itself persisted as the quintessential anchor point for all participants, weaving a unifying thread throughout their profound identity transformation accounts despite distinct tensions encountered. Each code circled back to this underlying motif, signifying a continuous oscillation between reconciling external evaluation pressures against unfolding internal ethics and self-understanding. Attempts at reconciling psychoanalytic theory and applied clinical practice transpired through immersive experiences often resolved through personal analysis and supervision/control.

R, J, and B each transparently conveyed liberation upon severing perceived constraints by enacting conviction over comfort through risks, renouncing restrictive assumptions while remaining immersed in the clinical method, whether through analysis, supervision, or scholarship.

PET: Ongoing Formation

The PET of Ongoing Formation unfolded through the shared perspectives of R, J, and B on the continuous and transformative nature of psychoanalytic formation. This PET is expressed through their experiential statements highlighting their understanding of formation as an open-ended, lifelong process of growth and development, which aligns with Lacan's view of formation as non-linear and ongoing.

R's narrative challenges the notion of a fixed endpoint in psychoanalytic training as they reflect on the ongoing nature of their own formation journey:

So I don't know what I think about being post-formation, because to me, or at least to a prior version of me, being post-formation would have implied that I was finished with something. And in many ways, I think I'm just beginning something in a different way. Um, I don't call myself an analyst in formation anymore. I call myself a Lacanian psychoanalyst, and for a long time, I did call myself an analyst in formation.

Similarly, J's perspective on ongoing formation emphasizes the lifelong nature of the psychoanalytic journey:

I can't even begin to imagine having a post-formation. I, I, I don't know if that like I'm speaking even in terms of like understanding that that is a thing for people. I cannot possibly imagine it being a thing for me. I think I'm gonna be in formation my whole life. (laughs)

B's account also highlights the ongoing nature of formation, as they recognize the importance of continuing to engage in personal analysis, supervision, and theoretical study:

Yeah, I won't. I don't anticipate anything changing, you know? I think I'm always going to seek out control, uh, and I'm always going to take seminars. Like, I love ... My

transference is toward the unconscious and toward ... psychoanalysis, you know? So, uh, unless that changes. That could change, right? I could get all ... Just, I could be like, uh, what, uh, Dylan Evans of the guy, you know?

These reflections demonstrate a shared understanding among R, J, and B of formation as a continuous process of learning, growth, and transformation. By acknowledging the interconnectedness of personal analysis, supervision, and theoretical study and recognizing their ongoing impact on their development as analysts, they embody a deep commitment to the formation process as a lifelong endeavor.

This perspective aligns with Lacan's view of formation as non-linear and ongoing. In his seminar on "The Formation of the Analyst" (1974–1975), Lacan emphasized that the formation of the analyst is not a matter of acquiring a set of skills or knowledge but rather a process of subjective transformation through the experience of analysis itself. He states, "The formation of the analyst is not a matter of teaching. It is a matter of the subject who engages in the experience of analysis, and who, through this experience, is led to occupy the place of the analyst" (Lacan, 1974–1975, p. 22).

Lacan's emphasis on the subjective experience of analysis as the core of the formation process resonates with the ongoing nature of R's, J's, and B's formation journeys. As they continue to engage in personal analysis, supervision, and theoretical study, they are not merely acquiring knowledge but are undergoing a profound transformation of their subjective position as analysts.

Moreover, Lacan's notion of the "pass" as a moment of transition in the formation of the analyst rather than a final endpoint further underscores the ongoing nature of formation. As Lacan states, "The pass is not a diploma, it is not a certificate of completion. It is a moment in

the course of an analysis where the analysand passes from the position of analysand to that of analyst” (Lacan, 1967, p. 256). This understanding of the pass as a moment of transition rather than a final destination echoes R’s, J’s, and B’s experiences of ongoing formation, as they continue to evolve and grow as analysts beyond any specific institutional markers or milestones.

Expressed in the narratives of R, J, and B and supported by Lacan’s theoretical perspective, this PET underscores the dynamic and transformative nature of the psychoanalytic formation journey. By embracing the ongoing process of learning, growth, and self-discovery, these analysts embody the spirit of lifelong formation, recognizing the complex interplay of experiences that shape their continuous development. This shared understanding highlights the importance of remaining open to change, embracing uncertainty, and recognizing the transformative potential of the formation journey, not only for oneself but also for the broader psychoanalytic community.

Across all participants, the odyssey of formation emerges as a perpetual process of reconciling external pressures and internal truths, theory, and practice through immersive experiences. Each analyst’s path is marked by decisive moments of renunciation and reorientation, guided by the unwavering pursuit of understanding the unconscious. As R passionately describes, “sort of renouncing that fantasy of a militant analyst for myself” allowed them to adopt much-needed flexibility and gain newfound liberation. Similarly, J persists in fostering desire, questioning, “Why am I doing this if it feels like I’m constantly screaming into the void?” Moreover, B rediscovers underlying unity, noting that despite presumed differences, Lacanian groups are “saying the same shit.”

These accounts illuminate the essence of formation as an ongoing, transformative odyssey, transcending the illusion of completion. By embracing the inherent uncertainties and

continuously engaging in the analytic method, these intrepid explorers of the psyche demonstrate the courage to confront the unknown, within themselves, with their analysands, and with their patients. In so doing, they embody the spirit of psychoanalysis—an unwavering commitment to the truth of the unconscious, forever unfolding and revealing new depths of human experience.

Connecting to the Theoretical Process: Hermeneutic Framework

Conducting interviews required a concerted effort to shift from my clinical role to a researcher perspective focused solely on participants' experiences. On days I typically counsel, the clergy collar I wear during the Lenten season (which overlapped this research period) reminded me of my oath to hold space reverently rather than interject. By actively listening and asking analytic clarifying questions only when organically arising during immersive dialogue, rich details emerged through collaborative meaning-making. During analysis, however, my identity as an analyst subtly permeated interpretive perception when discerning linguistic connections as I strove to bracket assumptions. However, journaling self-critique and consulting my chair helped distinguish participants' voices from my own tendencies.

Throughout my career, balancing competing priorities has awakened the acceptance of perpetual identity evolution across overlapping roles, like a Venn diagram shifting to a spiral staircase. My openness initially approaching psychoanalysis shifted through exposure, discovering compatibility between my values and variation tolerances and promoting creative growth amid constraints. By applying rigorous analytical skills, I aim to represent participants' perspectives fairly while scrutinizing bias in this high-stakes endeavor, given my membership in the communities under study. Fundamentally, despite aiming to purely portray contributors' authentically held truths, my underlying resonance, given overlapping experiences, likely silently

shaped the coconstructive process through inescapable invisible influence. This project reinforces the research's interpretive dimension, meriting transparency.

Overall, engaging in this research strengthened convictions by testing barriers. By reconnecting to scholarly authorities like Freud and furthering my comprehension, I found freedom in determining my direction guided by internal truth. I expanded my identity by celebrating analytical lineage while addressing problematic institutional gatekeeping. Thereby, despite complications introduced by my necessary situatedness, upholding ethics bolstered my personal maturity and professional priorities through awakening acceptance—the essence of formation itself.

Summary of Analysis

The essence of the psychoanalytic formation process, as revealed through the lived experiences of the three participants and illustrated in Figure 1 - Process of Formation, can be encapsulated by three core dimensions: Lifelong Commitment, Continuous Growth, and Cyclical Process. These core dimensions intersect and overlap, creating a dynamic interplay that shapes the analyst's ongoing personal and professional development.

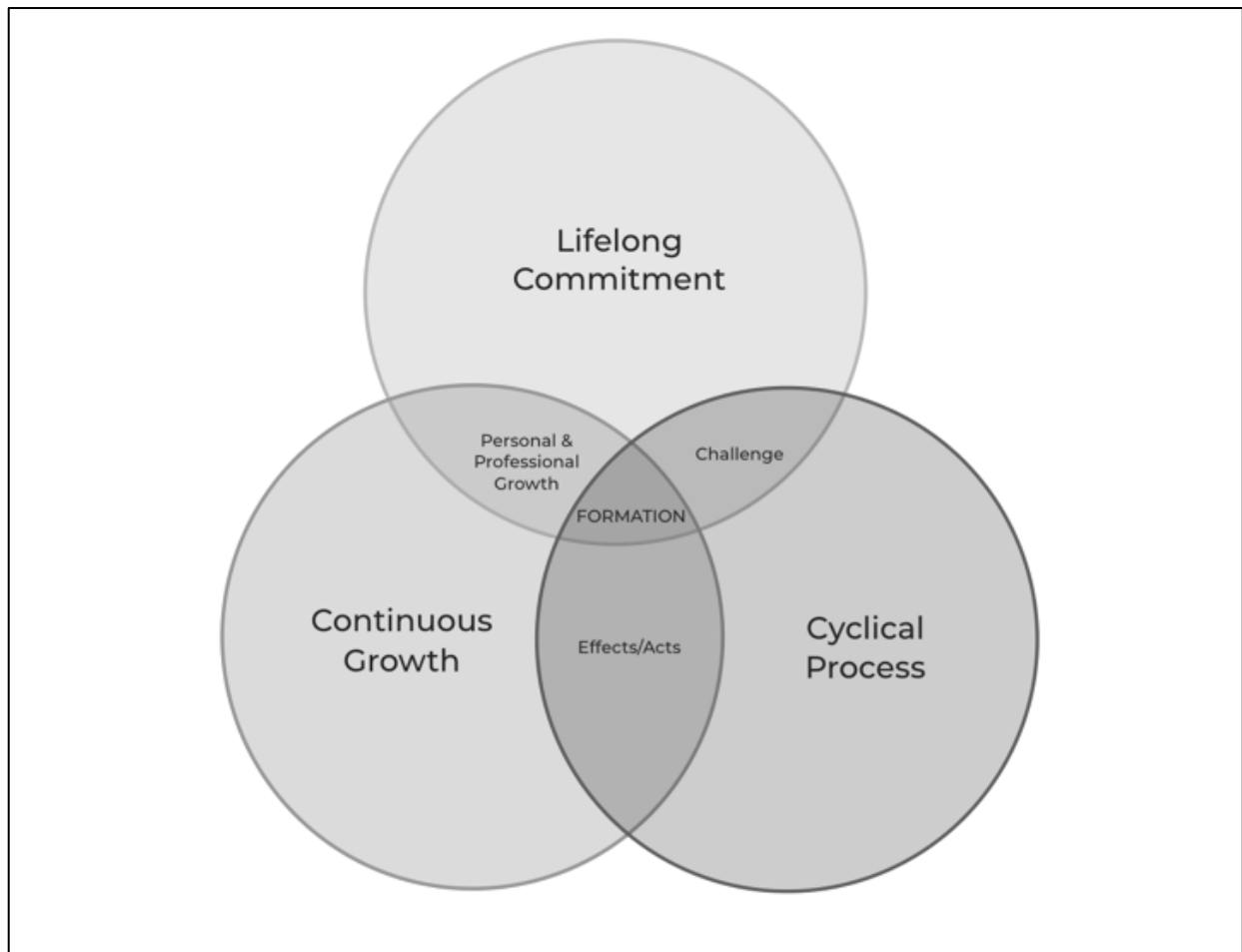
At the heart of the formation journey, as depicted in the center of Figure 1, lies the GET-4: Formation, representing the core of the analyst's odyssey. This central theme emerges from the convergence of the three core dimensions, highlighting the profound transformative power of the formation experience.

The intersection of the core dimensions of Lifelong Commitment and Continuous Growth, as shown in Figure 1, gives rise to GET-2: Personal and Professional Growth. Participants' narratives underscore the importance of embracing a lifelong commitment to growth and learning, recognizing that the formation process extends beyond any fixed endpoint. This

ongoing commitment to personal and professional development is characterized by a willingness to move beyond rigid assumptions of analyst identity and ideals of completion, instead embracing flexibility, fallibility, and perpetual learning.

Figure 1

Process of Formation



Where the core dimensions of Continuous Growth and Cyclical Process overlap in Figure 1, we find GET-3: Effects/Acts. Participants' accounts reveal the cyclical nature of the formation journey, where the effects and acts of the analyst are not linear but revolutionary in the sense of turning and returning as part of the ongoing growth and learning process. This cyclical process

involves navigating tensions between contrasting psychoanalytic schools, academic requirements, and clinical experiences and avoiding undue conformity, all of which emerge as pivotal rhythms in the formation journey.

The intersection of the core dimensions of the Cyclical Process and Lifelong Commitment, as illustrated in Figure 1, brings forth GET-1: Challenge. Participants indicated that the challenges encountered in their formation journeys never cease but continue to reappear or repeat. However, each new encounter with a challenge presents a fresh opportunity for learning and growth, underlining the lifelong nature of the formation process.

Across all three cases, the transformative role of personal analysis emerged as a consistent theme, shaping the analyst's motives and meanings, with pivotal moments catalyzing shifts in self-understanding and analytic perspective. Contrasts between academic proficiency and applied clinical development revealed the importance of lived training experiences. Quality mentorship through supervision and participation in collaborative, non-hierarchical communities of peer sharing and inquiry facilitated growth, in contrast to more restrictive milieus.

Participants' narratives also highlighted the internal struggles and fantasies around confidence, knowledge, and the analyst's role itself, underscoring evolving ethics and self-awareness around boundaries, maturity, and purpose. Fundamentally, the accounts illuminate psychoanalytic formation as a dynamic tension between external display and internal realignment on the infinite continuum of insight.

In conclusion, as depicted in Figure 1—Process of Formation, the participants' lived experiences reveal the formation process as a complex interplay of the core dimensions of lifelong commitment, continuous growth, and cyclical processes. The analyst's personal and

professional development unfolds through the navigation of challenges, the embrace of transformative experiences, and the ongoing pursuit of insight and understanding.

Validity and Reliability

Credibility

Aligned with commitments to Yardley's (2000) qualitative principles, the researcher cultivated methodological rigor through multiple credibility procedures to enhance transparency. This included collecting data from semistructured interviews, member-checking, and generating thick descriptions analyzed through a structured six-step IPA process adhering to Peoples's (2021) approach. Maintaining an extensive audit trail of raw recordings, verbatim transcripts, data analysis notes, theme categories, and detailed analytic memoing upheld coherence, allowing external scrutiny over interpretive logic underlying represented themes. Incorporating member-checking interviews permitted coinvestigating emergent findings against participants' lived experiences. Peer debriefing with the dissertation chair also evaluated plausible alternative understandings to foster representing participants' meaning-making fairly. Throughout the inquiry, the researcher maintained reflexive journaling practices, critically monitoring bias interference given overlapping identities demanding ethical sensitivity and upholding credibility commitments aimed to strengthen future study transferability and dependability regarding psychoanalytic formation phenomena through clear, consistent procedures aligned with Yardley's widely respected guidelines. The culmination proposes high-caliber qualitative exploration meriting community confidence.

Transferability

While this inquiry intentionally centered on an in-depth understanding of a narrowly bounded psychoanalytic formation experience within one particular professional membership

organization, logical extensions suggest additional conceptual areas where specific insights may relatively transfer. Specifically, discoveries around key developmental turning points navigating clinical frustrations, reconciling supervision feedback against rigid assumptions, and managing institutional policies' impact while retaining affiliation commitment likely bear similarity for other analysts undergoing formative journeys inside and outside higher education ecosystems. Likewise, the broader arc traced from romanticized theoretical ideals through pragmatic skill cultivation toward flexible identity negotiation may offer reflective touchstones when transitioning from concentric trainee toward eventually mentoring others on equally unpredictable trajectories. Ultimately, consonance across cases underscores specific, collectively encountered choice points on the nonlinear path to professional fruition within profound interpersonal domains—spanning health humanities, supervision praxes, and qualitative methodologies—potentially confirming meaningful patterns within related explorations. However, prudent discernment still merits respecting contextual bounds when attempting applications elsewhere.

Dependability

This inquiry thoroughly documented and then strictly adhered to rationalized methodological procedures aligned with IPA principles to allow study replication regarding the specific phenomenon explored. Detailed accounts captured data collection procedures, organization, analysis, and synthesis, providing extensive audit trails tracing verbatim interview materials through final theme representations to demonstrate analytical logic underlying interpretations. While participant narratives may vary, following the outlined protocols within comparable psychoanalytic formation contexts could elicit similarly revelatory discoveries given shared identity transitions fundamental to this developmental crucible. Ultimately, upholding

rigorous qualitative commitments regarding documentation and ethical application of consistent, coherent analysis techniques aimed to establish reader confidence in represented findings constituting one grounded understanding of this profound personal-professional odyssey.

Confirmability

Upholding confirmability mandates protecting inquiry from undue personal bias through transparently conveying reflections on potential preconceptions alongside processes enacted to consciously mitigate interference while concentrating solely on participants' lived experiences. Accordingly, extensive reflexive journaling critically monitored intrusive notions by making implicit expectations overt and then rigorously replacing unsuitable assumptions with understandings that were emergently guided by text-informed questioning. This demanded embracing hermeneutics' iterative stance and revising projections until coherent comprehension arose directly from compiled narratives. Interview queries exclusively adhered to protocol while balancing organic probes only when clarification authentically served representation. Significantly, through such dutiful dwelling with, then drilling into, primary descriptions rather than imposing extrinsic models, revisions surfaced participants' meaning-making mysteries rather than rigid rehearsals of researcher preconceptions. Ultimately, this systematic critical self-work upheld fidelity to the other's lived experiences by preventing distortion. Confirmability signifies this study's essential ethical orientation upholding phenomenology's ethos.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

In chapter one, the rationale was established for exploring the subjective dimensions of analysts' identity transformation during Lacanian psychoanalytic formation, noting gaps in research on lived experiences, especially from a Lacanian lens. Chapter two extensively reviewed literature situating this exploration within existing Freudian and Lacanian discourses on multifaceted contemporary training processes and persistent historical tensions. An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methodology outlined in chapter three aimed to address gaps by privileging participants' in-depth narratives regarding challenges, milestones, and support structures influencing development. Chapter four presented discoveries from analysts' accounts of personal analysis, clinical immersion, academic interfaces, and organizational dynamics shaping their profound journeys. Building on those results, this chapter discusses findings regarding the essence of contemporary formation in light of the literature, outlines study limitations, and offers practical implications alongside future research directions to advance psychoanalytic training and practice through understanding this complex developmental odyssey.

Interpretation of Findings: A Dialogue with the Literature

The findings are discussed concerning each research question: a) What are psychoanalysts' fundamental experiences and challenges during their formation and training? b) How do psychoanalysts perceive the impact of their formation on their professional development? c) What roles do supervision, personal analysis, and organizational support play in the formation of psychoanalysts? They aim to elicit thick descriptions of the lived experiences, challenges, and support structures that shape the formation of psychoanalysts. Four pivotal Group Experiential Themes (GETs), GET-1: Challenge, GET-2: Personal and Professional

Growth, GET-3: Effects/Acts, and GET-4: Formation, surfaced through analysis that deepened understanding of this profound developmental phenomenon and enlarged implications for formation processes. These encompassed facing multifaceted challenges across clinical, conceptual, and personal landscapes as the catalyst forging growth; profound personal evolution and professional skill cultivation amidst steep learning curves; critical experiential turning points spurring self-redefinition through decisive actions enacting internal realignments; and reconciling external evaluation pressures against intrinsic ethical drives throughout the recursive process of identity reconstitution that persists lifelong. As participants transparently conveyed the essence of their nonlinear odysseys through these resonant conceptual domains underscored by vivid, experiential examples, a profoundly humbling yet expansive vision of psychoanalytic formation as perpetual self-interrogation paralleling accumulative clinical competency through immersive self-reflection emerged. Thereby, participant accounts unveil twenty-first-century formation's enactment as an ongoing journey of deciphering analytic identity's elusive dynamics through courageous determination to mine ever deeper understanding along the infinite Möbius spiral of integrated personal and professional development.

What are Psychoanalysts' Fundamental Experiences and Challenges During Their Formation and Training?

All participants emphasized that their personal analysis formed the foundation of their formation, tying it to their experiences in both minute details and broad strokes. Consistent with De Halleux's assertion that "the formation of the analyst is a very special and complex subject" (Papada, 2020, p. 42), impossible to instill through academic proficiency alone, R and B described their professional counseling programs as outright forbidding questions or creative deviations despite their interest in pursuing psychoanalytic concepts, compelling them to merely

“complete the [degree] program requirements.” Similarly, J stated that they navigated intertwining their academic and clinical experiences “haphazardly,” encountering both opportunities and debates.

Freud discussed the importance of personal analysis for analysts in “Analysis Terminable and Interminable” (1937), stating that “every analyst should periodically—at intervals of five years or so—submit himself to analysis once more, without feeling ashamed of taking this step” (p. 267). He also emphasized the importance of theoretical education and practical experience in “Recommendations to Physicians Practicing Psycho-Analysis” (1912), advising that “anyone who wants to make analyses of other people must first himself undergo an analysis by someone with expert knowledge” (p. 117).

As Lacan established, “there are only formations of the unconscious” resistant to codification (Papada, 2020, p. 42). This is evident in R discovering newfound creative latitude and technique after transferring groups—enacted through professional realignment paralleling inner shifts of “renouncing fantasies” of the analyst’s identity. J, too, struggled with a lack of shared desire and meaning within their psychoanalytic organizational structure, leading to frustration with goals and witnessing political/ethical issues within the larger psychoanalytic field that temporarily led them to lose faith.

In Lacanian psychoanalysis, supervision, or “control analysis,” plays a crucial role in the formation of the analyst. Lacan emphasized the analyst’s own analysis and the development of their unique style rather than strict adherence to techniques (Lacan, 1964). He believed supervision should focus on the analyst’s unconscious processes and their impact on the analytic relationship, providing ongoing self-reflection and growth (Lacan, 1955). In Seminar XI, Lacan stated, “The only thing one can be guilty of is giving ground relative to one’s desire” (Lacan,

1964, p. 319), suggesting analysts must remain true to their desire. J experienced aggressive questioning at times as a challenge during formation, relying on their ongoing personal analysis to work through difficulties related to both material problems and intrapsychic issues from their experiences.

Fink (1997) detailed the intrinsic “desire of the analyst” rooted in ceaseless curiosity that sustains motivation amidst painful revelations. This manifested distinctly for B during poignant supervision exchanges compelling repeated admissions—“I don’t know”—to spur perpetual discoveries rather than seeking definite directives. As B stated, their supervisor facilitated getting “myself out of the way,” awakening B to clinical art through accepting not-knowing over mastery. Similarly, J pursued exposure to diverse perspectives through activities like clinical training and symposium participation and considered different orientations, maintaining an orientation toward ongoing introspection, intellectual exploration, and psychoanalytic discourse as a strategy for navigating challenges in an evolving way. This aligns with Evans’s (1996) emphasis on the importance of the analyst’s desire and the centrality of the unconscious in the formation process.

Across cases, steep learning curves were ascended by reconciling external expertise ideals against inner maturation through courageous exploration—a process Nobus (2000) describes as the “pass,” marking the transition from analysand to analyst not as “THE Pass” as understood by many in the Lacanian Field.

How do Psychoanalysts Perceive the Impact of Their Formation on Their Professional Development?

The participants’ experiences align with Dupont’s (Papada, 2020) assertion that individuals enter analysis to find meaning in their experiences. As Dupont states, “If there is one

thing that makes someone go into analysis, it is to find a meaning for what is happening to him” (pp. 13–37). This search for meaning is evident in R’s transformative personal analysis, which provided them with a deeper understanding of psychoanalytic concepts and motivated them to fully immerse themselves in the field.

Dupont also emphasizes the role of speech in analysis, noting that “an analysis is made of speech” and that “the signifier is the cause of *jouissance*” (Papada, 2020, pp. 13–37). This is reflected in J’s experience witnessing supervision and control analysis, which informed their approach to clinical practice and highlighted the importance of technique in the analytic encounter.

De Halleux (Papada, 2020) underscores the singular nature of each analyst’s formation, stating that “Lacan defines the psychoanalyst as the result of their own analysis” and that “no two analysts are alike” (pp. 41–53). This uniqueness is evident in the participants’ diverse experiences and the ways in which they have integrated their learnings into their professional identities. As De Halleux notes, “the psychoanalyst is always at work with his unconscious,” emphasizing the ongoing nature of the formation process.

Tassara (Papada, 2020) sheds light on the role of supervision in the formation of the analyst, stating that “in supervision, we learn to acquire the power of the word so that the analyst’s word can be creationist. We also learn to be quiet” (pp. 57–63). This resonates with B’s experience of supervision, reigniting their curiosity and desire to learn and helping them develop a more open and flexible approach to working with patients.

Tassara also emphasizes that “what is supervised is the analyst’s position and his act” (Papada, 2020, pp. 57–63). This is evident in the participants’ experiences of navigating challenges and continuously reshaping their perspectives through introspection and dialogue, as

Dupont (Papada, 2020) notes, “for the encounter only takes place if one believes in it without being duped by it” (pp. 13–37), highlighting the importance of remaining engaged in the analytic process while maintaining a critical stance.

The participants’ formation experiences reflect the complex interplay of personal analysis, supervision, and institutional involvement in shaping their professional development as psychoanalysts. De Halleux and Dupont emphasize the ongoing nature of this process, which is evident in the participants’ commitment to introspection, dialogue, and the continuous evolution of their understanding of psychoanalysis and their roles as analysts.

What Roles do Supervision, Personal Analysis, and Organizational Support Play in the Formation of Psychoanalysts?

The participants’ descriptions of the roles of supervision, personal analysis, and organizational support in the formation of psychoanalysts align with key concepts from psychoanalytic literature.

Freud (1937) emphasized the importance of personal analysis for analysts, stating that they should periodically return to analysis throughout their careers. This sentiment is echoed in each of the participants’ experiences, with personal analysis emerging as a transformative and essential component of their formation. For R, personal analysis was deeply immersive and motivating, while for J, it has been ongoing for over eight years, shaping their analytic approach and self-conception. B’s personal analysis has helped them confront fantasies, complexes, and neuroses, underscoring its significance in the formation process.

Lacan (1964) stressed the crucial role of supervision in the formation of analysts, focusing on the analyst’s own subjective position and unconscious processes. This is evident in R’s experience of supervision, which provided guidance, helped them navigate clinical

challenges, and facilitated exposure to diverse influences. B's account highlights how supervision reignited their desire to learn and helped them recognize resistance and get out of their own way clinically.

Fink (1997) elaborates on the "desire of the analyst," which is rooted in a ceaseless curiosity that sustains motivation amidst painful revelations. This desire is exemplified in B's experience of supervision, which reignited their passion for learning, and in J's pursuit of diverse perspectives through training activities to navigate difficulties and develop professionally.

Miller (1996) discusses cartels' role in forming analysts, emphasizing their importance in facilitating collective work and the transmission of psychoanalytic knowledge. This aligns with each of the participant's experiences of organizational support, which generally facilitated development through educational opportunities and a sense of community. However, as R and J experienced, political issues and rigid mentalities within organizations can sometimes hinder growth and cause bifurcations.

Dulsster (2022) highlights the ongoing nature of psychoanalytic formation, noting that the analyst is constantly working with their unconscious. This is reflected in each of the participant's accounts, with J's personal analysis and intellectual exploration continuing to guide their evolving orientation and R's current affiliation offering the freedom to draw their own conclusions.

Nobus (2000) and Evans (1996) discuss the concept of the "pass" in Lacanian psychoanalysis, which traditionally marks the transition from analysand to analyst. This transition is not a fixed endpoint but rather a continual process of becoming, as evidenced by the participants' ongoing engagement with personal analysis, supervision, and organizational support.

Lombardi (2023) emphasizes the importance of free association in the formation of analysts, which is facilitated by personal analysis and supervision. This is seen in B's experience of personal analysis, helping them respect their unconscious drives, and in R's account of supervision fostering variety in influences.

In summary, the participants' descriptions of the roles of supervision, personal analysis, and organizational support in the formation of psychoanalysts closely align with key concepts from psychoanalytic literature. These elements intertwine to shape each analyst in formation's unique and ongoing formation journey, facilitating the development of clinical skills, self-reflection, and the transmission of psychoanalytic knowledge.

Discussing the Researcher's Process Within a Hermeneutic Theoretical Framework

Conducting this study within a hermeneutic theoretical framework required continual self-reflection and engagement with the hermeneutic circle. As a researcher with a background in psychoanalysis, it was crucial to acknowledge my own positionality and its potential influence on the interpretation of participants' experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2008).

Throughout the data collection process, I found myself having to consciously shift from my clinical role to that of a researcher, focusing solely on the participants' narratives. The use of a clergy collar during the Lenten season, which coincided with the research period, served as a reminder of my oath to hold space reverently and listen actively rather than interject. This allowed for rich details to emerge through collaborative meaning-making and for one participant to acknowledge it as "extremely helpful in reminding them to be honest with themselves in reporting their answers."

During the analysis phase, my identity as an analyst subtly permeated my interpretive lens when discerning linguistic connections, despite my efforts to bracket assumptions. Engaging

in journaling and discussing emergent interpretations with my dissertation chair helped distinguish participants' voices from my own tendencies, aligning with the iterative nature of the hermeneutic circle (Peoples, 2021). This process also allowed for a robust exploration of associative connections I heard in a participant's speech during member-checking when they reported, "You know? I hadn't considered that, and it does make sense. Those themes are present and probably connected, so thanks. Since this is so fresh, I'll take that to analysis."

Balancing competing priorities throughout my career has led to an acceptance of perpetual identity evolution across overlapping roles, reminiscent of a Venn diagram gradually transforming into a spiral staircase or even likened to a Möbius. My openness to psychoanalysis grew through exposure, discovering compatibility between my values and the creative potential within constraints. By applying rigorous analytical skills while remaining transparent about my own membership in the communities under study, I aimed to fairly represent participants' perspectives while acknowledging the inescapable influence of my own experiences.

Engaging in this research strengthened my convictions by testing barriers and reconnecting with scholarly authorities like Freud and Lacan. I found freedom in determining my direction guided by internal truth, expanding my identity by celebrating the analytic lineage while addressing problematic institutional gatekeeping. Despite the complexities introduced by my positionality, upholding ethics bolstered my personal maturity and professional priorities through embracing acceptance—the essence of formation itself.

As Heidegger (1927/2008) noted, the complete bracketing of personal experiences is inherently challenging. Engaging in hermeneutic phenomenology allowed me to integrate my background as a psychoanalyst into the interpretive process, acknowledging the importance of context in understanding lived experiences. By embracing the iterative nature of the hermeneutic

circle, I aimed to arrive at a deeper understanding of the psychoanalytic formation journey while remaining transparent about my own subjectivity.

In summary, conducting this research within a hermeneutic framework necessitated continuous self-reflection, bracketing, and reengagement with the data. By acknowledging my positionality, utilizing journaling, and engaging in discussions with my dissertation chair, I sought to faithfully represent the participants' experiences while navigating the complexities of my own identity as a researcher and psychoanalyst.

Discussing Participant's Experiences Within a Hermeneutic Theoretical Framework

In this section, I will discuss the participants' experiences within the context of the hermeneutic theoretical framework, which emphasizes the importance of interpretation and understanding in the exploration of lived experiences (Heidegger, 1927/2008).

The hermeneutic approach acknowledges that individuals' experiences are shaped by their unique contexts and that understanding these experiences requires a process of interpretation (Peoples, 2021). Throughout the study, participants engaged in a process of meaning-making, reflecting on their own individual psychoanalytic formation journeys and the various challenges, growth experiences, and support structures that influenced their development.

R's account of their experience with navigating ethical dilemmas and clinical challenges, particularly in working with suicidal patients, highlights the hermeneutic notion of "thrownness" (Heidegger, 1927/2008). This concept refers to the idea that individuals are always situated within a particular context that shapes their understanding and experiences. R's struggle to reconcile their psychoanalytic approach with mainstream clinical expectations illustrates the influence of their "thrown" context on their formation journey.

J's experience of grappling with the intertwining of their academic and clinical pursuits, as well as their encounters with organizational politics and ethical issues within the psychoanalytic field, exemplifies the hermeneutic idea of the "hermeneutic circle" (Heidegger, 1927/2008). This concept suggests that understanding is a cyclical process, where the larger context informs the interpretation of individual experiences and vice versa. J's ongoing process of making sense of their challenges and growth experiences through personal analysis and naming it "a spiral staircase" demonstrates their engagement with psychoanalytic discourse, reflecting this circular process of interpretation.

B's journey of navigating the complexities of psychoanalytic theory, supervision, and personal analysis aligns with the hermeneutic notion of "interpretation as dialogue" (Gadamer, 1975/2004). This idea posits that understanding emerges through a dialogic process between the interpreter and the interpreted text or experience. B's engagement with their supervisors, analysts, and the psychoanalytic community at large, as well as their own self-reflection, exemplifies this dialogic process of interpretation.

The participants' emphasis on the ongoing nature of psychoanalytic formation and the importance of continuous self-reflection and engagement with the psychoanalytic community resonates with the hermeneutic concept of the "fusion of horizons" (Gadamer, 1975/2004). Understanding is a continual process of integrating new experiences and perspectives into one's existing framework of meaning. The participants' openness to ongoing learning, self-examination, and exposure to diverse ideas within the psychoanalytic field reflects this process of horizontal fusion.

Moreover, the participants' experiences of grappling with the challenges of integrating theory and practice, navigating institutional demands, and maintaining a commitment to their

own desire and ethics as analysts align with the hermeneutic idea of “authentic existence” (Heidegger, 1927/2008). This concept emphasizes the importance of individuals taking responsibility for their own understanding and choices, even in the face of external pressures or constraints.

In summary, the hermeneutic theoretical framework provides a valuable lens for understanding the participants’ lived experiences of psychoanalytic formation. By attending to the ways in which participants interpret and make meaning of their challenges, growth experiences, and support structures within their unique contexts, we gain a deeper appreciation for the complex, ongoing nature of the formation journey. The participants’ engagement in a continual process of self-reflection, dialogue, and integration of new perspectives aligns with key hermeneutic concepts and highlights the transformative potential of the psychoanalytic formation experience.

Limitations

While this study offers valuable insights into the lived experiences of psychoanalysts in formation, it is essential to acknowledge its limitations. One of the primary limitations is the small sample size, which included only three participants. Although this is consistent with the idiographic focus of IPA (Smith et al., 2009), it restricts the generalizability of the findings to the broader population of psychoanalysts in formation.

Furthermore, the study’s focus on Lacanian psychoanalysts in formation may limit its applicability to psychoanalysts from other theoretical orientations. The experiences of Lacanian psychoanalysts may differ from those of analysts trained in other schools of thought, such as Freudian or Jungian psychoanalysis (Fink, 2007).

Another limitation of this study is the geographical representation of the participants. All three participants were affiliated with the Colorado Analytic Forum (CAF), which may only partially capture the experiences of Lacanian psychoanalysts in formation across different geographical regions or international contexts.

The reliance on self-reported data through interviews and member-checking is another potential limitation. While this approach aligns with the aims of IPA in exploring participants' subjective experiences (Smith et al., 2009), it is possible that participants may have selectively shared or omitted certain aspects of their experiences, consciously or unconsciously.

Additionally, the researcher's own background as a Lacanian psychoanalyst may have influenced the interpretation of the data despite efforts to bracket assumptions and engage in reflexivity (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The researcher's familiarity with the subject matter and personal experiences may have inadvertently shaped the analysis and presentation of the findings.

The study's focus on analysts in formation or those who have recently completed their formation may also limit its scope. The experiences of more seasoned psychoanalysts or those further removed from their formation experiences may provide additional insights not captured in this study.

Lastly, the qualitative nature of this study and the specific methodological approach of IPA may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or populations (Smith et al., 2009). The idiographic focus on the particular experiences of a small group of participants may only partially account for the diverse range of experiences and perspectives within the broader field of psychoanalysis.

Despite these limitations, this study provides a valuable in-depth exploration of the lived experiences of Lacanian psychoanalysts in formation, shedding light on the challenges, growth experiences, and support structures that shape their professional development. The findings offer insights that can inform future research, training practices, and support mechanisms for psychoanalysts in formation while highlighting the need to explore this complex and multifaceted phenomenon further.

Recommendations for Future Research

Recommendation Based on Something Learned

The findings of this study highlight the transformative role of personal analysis, supervision, and organizational support in the formation of Lacanian psychoanalysts. Future research could delve deeper into each of these elements, exploring their specific mechanisms of influence and how they interact to shape the professional development of psychoanalysts in formation.

For instance, a longitudinal study could be conducted to track the evolving experiences of psychoanalysts in formation over an extended period, from the early stages of their training to several years post-formation. This approach would provide valuable insights into the long-term impact of formation experiences and the ongoing process of professional identity development.

Recommendation Based on Limitation of Research

Given this study's limitations, several recommendations can be made for future research. Firstly, future studies could aim to include a larger and more diverse sample of psychoanalysts in formation, encompassing different theoretical orientations, geographical regions, and cultural backgrounds. This would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of the formation experience and identify potential similarities and differences across various contexts.

Secondly, future research could employ a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative interviews with quantitative measures of professional development, competence, and other relevant variables. This approach would provide a more robust and multidimensional understanding of the formation experience and its outcomes (Smith et al., 2009).

Thirdly, future studies could explore the experiences of more seasoned psychoanalysts who have been in practice for an extended period to gain insights into the long-term impact of formation experiences and the ongoing process of professional development. This could be achieved through retrospective interviews or by conducting a cross-sectional study comparing analysts' experiences at different stages of their careers.

Lastly, future research could investigate psychoanalysts' specific challenges and support needs in formation within different institutional and cultural contexts. By examining the impact of organizational structures, training models, and cultural factors on the formation experience, such research could inform the development of tailored support mechanisms and interventions to promote aspiring psychoanalysts' well-being and professional growth.

In summary, future research on the formation of psychoanalysts could benefit from more extensive and diverse samples, mixed-method approaches, inclusion of more seasoned analysts, and a focus on specific institutional and cultural contexts. By addressing these limitations and building upon the insights gained from this study, future research can contribute to a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the complex and multifaceted process of psychoanalytic formation.

Implications

The findings of this study have several important implications for the field of psychoanalysis, particularly concerning the training and support of psychoanalysts in formation.

Firstly, the study highlights the crucial role of personal analysis in the formation of psychoanalysts. The participants' experiences underscore the transformative impact of their own analysis on their professional development, self-understanding, and clinical approach. This suggests that training programs and institutes should prioritize and facilitate access to personal analysis for aspiring psychoanalysts, recognizing it as a fundamental component of their formation journey and not an external obscure odyssey. As Fink (1997/2017) consistently reminds readers, access to Freud and Lacan is limited in mental health programs, and where they are found is widely found to be "dead academic discourse" or irrelevant and disproven. This severely limits access to theoretical material that could enhance academic discourse and increase clinical praxis.

Secondly, the study emphasizes the importance of supervision and mentorship in the formation process. The participants' accounts reveal the value of supportive and challenging supervisory relationships in fostering clinical skills, navigating complex cases, and developing a professional identity. This implies that training programs should ensure the availability of skilled and experienced supervisors who can provide guidance, feedback, and opportunities for growth to psychoanalysts in formation, as advocated for by Lacan (1964).

Thirdly, the study sheds light on the significant impact of organizational support and institutional dynamics on the formation experience. The participants' narratives highlight the potential for both facilitative and hindering influences within psychoanalytic organizations, particularly in relation to opportunities for learning, collaboration, and the navigation of political and ideological differences. This suggests that psychoanalytic institutions should strive to create supportive and inclusive environments that foster open dialogue, critical reflection, and the

respectful exchange of ideas or, at least, pay more particular attention to unconscious formations among groups, especially as they wax and wane over time (Nobus, 2000).

Fourthly, the study underscores the ongoing and multifaceted nature of the formation process, extending beyond the completion of formal training requirements. The participants' experiences illustrate the importance of continuous self-reflection, engagement with psychoanalytic concepts, and participation in the broader psychoanalytic community. This implies that the field of psychoanalysis should recognize and support the lifelong learning and development needs of analysts, providing both access and opportunities for ongoing professional growth and connection.

Lastly, the study highlights the potential for psychoanalytic formation to impact individuals' personal and professional identities. The participants' narratives reveal the transformative effects of their formation experiences on their sense of self, relationships, and clinical practice. This suggests that the field of psychoanalysis should attend to the development of analysts in formation, recognizing the interconnectedness of personal and professional growth (De Halleux, 2020).

In summary, this study's findings have implications for designing and implementing training programs, providing supportive resources and environments, and recognizing the lifelong nature of psychoanalytic formation. By attending to these implications and prioritizing the needs of analysts in formation, the field of psychoanalysis can foster the development of skilled, reflective, and ethically engaged practitioners who are well-equipped to navigate the complexities of clinical practice and contribute to the ongoing evolution of psychoanalytic thought.

Conclusion

This study has undertaken a deep dive into the lived experiences of Lacanian psychoanalysts in formation, illuminating the complex tapestry of challenges, growth, and transformation that characterizes their journey toward becoming practitioners of the unconscious. Through the lens of IPA and guided by the hermeneutic theoretical framework, this research has shed light on the profound and multifaceted nature of the formation experience and its lasting impact on the personal and professional lives of aspiring psychoanalysts.

The findings of this study have revealed the crucible of formation as a process of intense self-reflection, immersion in psychoanalytic concepts, and engagement with the clinical realm. The participants' narratives have painted a vivid picture of the trials and triumphs encountered along the way, from grappling with theoretical complexities and institutional dynamics to navigating the intricacies of the therapeutic relationship. Their stories have illuminated the transformative power of personal analysis, the guiding influence of supervisory relationships, and the role of organizational support in shaping their development as analysts.

At the heart of this study lies a testament to the resilience, dedication, and unwavering curiosity of those who embark on the odyssey of psychoanalytic formation. The participants' accounts have revealed the depth of their commitment to understanding the human psyche, bearing witness to the unfolding of the unconscious, and engaging in the ever-evolving dialogue between theory and practice. Their experiences have underscored the importance of embracing the unknown, tolerating ambiguity, and remaining open to the ongoing process of self-discovery and professional growth.

The implications of this study are far reaching, extending beyond the confines of the psychoanalytic community. By shedding light on the intricacies of the formation journey, this

research has the potential to inform the design and implementation of training programs, the provision of supportive resources, and the cultivation of nurturing environments for aspiring psychoanalysts. It calls upon the mental health field to recognize the holistic nature of analytical formation, attend to the interplay between personal and professional development, foster a culture of lifelong learning and collaboration to engage with the richness and depth of psychoanalytic thought, appreciate the unique contributions of Freudian and Lacanian theory, and recognize the transformative potential of the psychoanalytic encounter. It challenges us to question our assumptions, grapple with the complexities of the human experience and the unconscious, and remain open to the possibilities of growth and change within the therapeutic relationship.

In conclusion, this study has provided a rare glimpse into the inner world of Lacanian psychoanalysts in formation, illuminating the profound and transformative nature of their journeys. It has shed light on the challenges and triumphs, the moments of insight and uncertainty, and the enduring impact of the formation experience on their personal and professional lives. As we endeavor to explore the depths of the human psyche and the intricacies of the therapeutic encounter, may this research catalyze further inquiry, dialogue, and growth within psychoanalysis and beyond. May it inspire us to remain curious, embrace the unknown, and continue the ongoing work of understanding the complexities of the unconscious.

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APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT



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EMBARKING ON THE ANALYTICAL ODYSSEY: A PHENOMINOLOGICAL EXPLORATION OF THE PSYCHOANALYTIC JOURNEY OF FORMATION

This study is being conducted by: Rev. Steven R. Giddens – Doctoral Candidate under the advisement of Dr. Jodi L. Tangen – Chair/Advisor

Key Information about this study:

This study seeks to explore the lived experiences up to eight Lacanian psychoanalysts currently undergoing formation. Responses will be analyzed through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

We hope this research can uncover the depth of meaning in that process for those like yourself pursuing this path within the Colorado Analytic Forum community. Your views can help build knowledge to improve training practices.

Why am I being asked to take part in this study?

You are being asked to participate because you meet the inclusion criteria through your affiliation with the Colorado Analytic Forum (CAF) and current engagement with the psychoanalytic formation process.

What will I be asked to do?

Participation entails completing a 60–90-minute semi-structured audio and/or video interview consisting of 10 open-ended questions. This interview will ask about your experiences and perspectives related to becoming a Lacanian psychoanalyst.

Where is the study going to take place, and how long will it take?

This research study takes place fully online. You will first complete screening questions, informed consent, and optional demographics through Qualtrics from any location. The researcher will then contact you to schedule a 60-90 minute interview over secure Zoom at a mutually convenient time. The entire process happens remotely - you only need to access

surveys through Qualtrics and then have an online video interview via a secure Zoom link the researcher provides. There is no need to travel anywhere in person as it is conducted fully virtually for your convenience.

In summary:

- Study Location - Online/virtual
- Time commitment - Approximately 60 to 90 minutes
- Duration – Approximately 10 to 15 minutes for initial screening, review of informed consent, and optional demographics. Approximately 60 to 90 minutes for the interview on a mutually agreed upon date and time and approximately 20 to 30 minutes for follow-up checking after the researcher completes the transcription of the interview.



What are the risks and discomforts?

This research aims to pose minimal risk to participants. The questionnaire involves personal reflection which may bring up emotional considerations given it asks you to look inward at your own ongoing transformation. However, you retain full authority over what to disclose and can stop the study at any time should anything feel too uncomfortable.

Obtaining information through Qualtrics and conducting interviews via Zoom has its risks. However, your interview responses will remain confidential through de-identification practices. No personal details will be gathered or tied to you personally and data will be stored securely with encryption and password protection.

While not anticipated, any new findings that arise during the course of the research which may affect your willingness to continue participation will be promptly communicated.



What are the expected benefits of this research?

Individual Benefits: There are no direct individual benefits to you expected from participating in this research. However, some people find personal fulfillment in contributing reflections on their own development journey to advance scientific knowledge. Your involvement stands to enrich understanding of Lacanian psychoanalytic formation.

Societal Benefits: Your responses will provide integral windows into the experiential world of becoming a Lacanian psychoanalyst. Findings aim to directly inform improved training practices based on lived encounter, as well as theoretically expand conceptualization of analyst development.

Do I have to take part in this study?

Your participation in this research is your choice. If you decide to participate in the study, you may change your mind and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are already entitled.

Will it cost me anything to participate?

There are no costs to you for participating in this research study.

What are the alternatives to being in this study?

Instead of participating in this research study, you may choose not to take part.

Who will have access to my information?

This study will collect your responses to the formation interview protocol which may contain some indirect identifiers like specific formative experiences and milestone events. As part of this study, you will have the option to provide demographic information such as your age, gender, ethnicity, etc. Providing this information is fully voluntary and optional. Your interview responses will be kept confidential to the fullest extent possible by law. Your answers will be stored securely online through encryption and password-protection only accessible to the researcher. Any printed data will be kept secured in locked cabinets.

When analyzed and reported, all responses will be de-identified meaning presented anonymously without any original demographic or contextual details that may reveal your identity. Results may discuss participants' journeys in aggregate through emergent themes but never link narratives to individual contributors.

How will my information be used?

Your interview responses detailing personal experiences during psychoanalytic formation will be analyzed by the researcher to uncover key themes related to milestones, relationships, challenges and more within the formation process. The data will only be used for this specific research study aimed at better understanding and supporting analyst development.

Can my participation in the study end early?

You retain full autonomy to withdraw your participation from this research study at any time without penalty. There are no negative consequences for deciding to end involvement early.

We only analyze full submissions.

Will I receive any compensation for participating in the study?

You will not receive any direct financial compensation, monetary incentives, or other gifts/rewards for participating in this research study.

What if I have questions?

Before you decide whether you'd like to participate in this study, please ask any questions that come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact Rev. Steven R. Giddens at (701)730-XXXX or steven.giddens@ndsu.edu, or Dr. Jodi L. Tangen at (701)231-7676 or jodi.tangen@ndsu.edu.

What are my rights as a research participant?

You have rights as a research participant. All research with human participants is reviewed by a committee called the *Institutional Review Board (IRB)* which works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions about your rights, an unresolved question, a concern or complaint about this research you may contact the Research Integrity & Compliance office at 701.231.8995 or via email (ndsu.irb@ndsu.edu).

Documentation of Informed Consent:

You are freely making a decision whether to be in this research study. Continuing on with the questionnaire means that

1. you have read and understood this consent form
2. you have had your questions answered, and
3. you have decided to be in the study.

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT EMAIL TEMPLATE

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to let you know about an opportunity to participate in a dissertation research study I am conducting that explores the lived experiences of psychoanalysts undergoing Lacanian training and formation. This study is being done as part of my doctoral degree in counselor education and supervision at North Dakota State University in Fargo, ND.

I am recruiting 3-8 participants who:

- Self-identify as analysts-in-formation
- Are members of a Lacanian body (e.g. School, Forum, Cartel)
- Have undergone or are currently undergoing their own analysis

Participation would involve a 60-90 minute interview over Zoom where you would have the opportunity to share your unique stories and perspectives on your journey to become a Lacanian psychoanalyst.

This study [has been approved by our ethics board #####]. However, the decision to participate is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Data collected will be confidential, deidentified, stored securely using encryption and destroyed after the study.

If you are interested in learning more or scheduling an interview, please complete a brief eligibility survey here: [Qualtrics Survey Link]

The survey will provide more details on what participation entails. It will also allow you to provide your own pseudonym for the study, provide optional demographics, and provide details that will help coordinate scheduling an interview time and date that is convenient for you.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any other questions. I appreciate you considering this request and look forward to the possibility of including your experiences in this meaningful research.

Best regards,

Rev. Steven R. Giddens, M.Div., MA, LPC, NCC — “Steve”; *he/him/his*
steven.giddens@ndsu.edu | (701)730-XXXX

Doctoral Candidate | North Dakota State University

College of Health and Human Sciences | Counselor Education and Supervision

GA Clinical Supervisor | Community Counseling Center | Morrill 219

APPENDIX C: RECRUITMENT FLYER

Seeking Lacanian Psychoanalysts-in-Training for Research Study.

Purpose: This phenomenological study seeks to address a gap in understanding the essence of becoming a Lacanian psychoanalyst through your lived training experiences. By capturing your milestones, shifts, and discoveries while learning to analyze the unconscious, your first-hand insights can elucidate supportive structures to inform formation practices. You are invited to share your impressions within this profound personal and professional identity transformation during specialization. Your unique lens will expand knowledge on analysts' development.

Dates: 12 February 2024 – until filled, or 11 February 2027

You may be eligible to participate if you:

- Currently identify as an analyst-in-formation
- Affiliated with a Lacanian body (School, Forum, Clinical College, or Cartel)
- Have undergone/are undergoing Lacanian psychoanalysis

Participation involves: Participation entails completing a 60–90-minute semi-structured audio and/or video interview consisting of 10 open-ended questions. This interview will ask about your experiences and perspectives related to becoming a Lacanian psychoanalyst.

Benefits:

While there is no compensation, your insights can help enhance training practices/support for future analysts undergoing this deeply personal odyssey.

To respect confidentiality, all data will be deidentified and only reported in themes aggregating common experiences.



If you would like to contribute your perspective or have any questions, please contact the researcher, Rev. Steven R. Giddens, at steven.giddens@ndsu.edu or (701)730-XXXX

Thank you for considering sharing your transformative training path!

Qualtrics Screening QR:



APPENDIX D: QUALTRICS SCREENING

Giddens_Odyssey-Formation_Protocol #IRB0005064

Start of Block: S1



Q1 Do you self-identify as a psychoanalyst currently in formation or having recently completed formation?

- Yes (1)
- Unsure (2)
- No (3)

End of Block: S1

Start of Block: S2



Q2 Are you affiliated with a Lacanian psychoanalytic body, such as the School, Forum, Clinical College, or Cartel?

School (1)

Forum (2)

Cartel (3)

Clinical College (4)

N/A (5)

End of Block: S2

Start of Block: S3



Q3 Have you ever been in psychoanalysis or are you currently seeing an analyst?

Yes (1)

No (2)

End of Block: S3

Start of Block: ICD

IC
Counselor Education and Supervision
1230 Albrecht Blvd, Fargo, ND 58102
Morrill Hall Fargo, ND 58108-6050
(701)231-7676

EMBARKING ON THE ANALYTICAL ODYSSEY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL
EXPLORATION OF THE PSYCHOANALYTIC JOURNEY OF FORMATION - Protocol
#IRB0005064

This study is being conducted by: Rev. Steven R. Giddens – Doctoral Candidate under the advisement of Dr. Jodi L. Tangen – Chair/Advisor Key

Information about this study: This study seeks to explore the lived experiences up to eight Lacanian psychoanalysts currently undergoing training. Responses will be analyzed through Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). We hope this research can uncover the depth of meaning in that process for those like yourself pursuing this path within the Colorado Analytic Forum community. Your views can help build knowledge to improve training practices.

Why am I being asked to take part in this study?

You are being asked to participate because you meet the inclusion criteria through your affiliation with the Colorado Analytic Forum (CAF) and current engagement with the psychoanalytic formation process.

What will I be asked to do?

Participation entails completing a 60–90-minute semi-structured audio and/or video interview consisting of 10 open-ended questions. This interview will ask about your experiences and perspectives related to becoming a Lacanian psychoanalyst.

Where is the study going to take place, and how long will it take?

This research study takes place fully online. You will first complete screening questions, informed consent, and optional demographics through Qualtrics from any location. The researcher will then contact you to schedule a 60-90 minute interview over secure Zoom at a mutually convenient time. The entire process happens remotely - you only need to access surveys through Qualtrics and then have an online video interview via a secure Zoom link the researcher provides. There is no need to travel anywhere in person as it is conducted fully virtually for your convenience.

In summary:

Study Location - Online/virtual

Time commitment - Approximately 60 to 90 minutes

Duration – Approximately 10 to 15 minutes for initial screening, review of informed consent, and optional demographics. Approximately 60 to 90 minutes for the interview on a mutually

agreed upon date and time and approximately 20 to 30 minutes for follow-up checking after the researcher completes the transcription of the interview.

What are the risks and discomforts?

This research aims to pose minimal risk to participants. The questionnaire involves personal reflection which may bring up emotional considerations given it asks you to look inward at your own ongoing transformation. However, you retain full authority over what to disclose and can stop the study at any time should anything feel too uncomfortable. Obtaining information through Qualtrics and conducting interviews via Zoom has its risks. However, your interview responses will remain confidential through de-identification practices. No personal details will be gathered or tied to you personally and data will be stored securely with encryption and password protection. While not anticipated, any new findings that arise during the course of the research which may affect your willingness to continue participation will be promptly communicated.

What are the expected benefits of this research?

Individual Benefits: There are no direct benefits from participating in this research. However, some people find personal fulfillment in reflecting on their own developmental journey. Your involvement stands to enrich the understanding of Lacanian psychoanalytic formation.

Societal Benefits: Your responses will provide integral windows into the experiential world of becoming a Lacanian psychoanalyst. Findings aim to directly inform improved training practices based on lived encounter, as well as theoretically expand conceptualization of analyst development.

Do I have to take part in this study?

Your participation in this research is your choice. If you decide to participate in the study, you may change your mind and stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are already entitled.

Will it cost me anything to participate?

There are no costs to you for participating in this research study. What are the alternatives to being in this study? Instead of participating in this research study, you may choose not to take part.

Who will have access to my information?

This study will collect your responses to the formation interview protocol which may contain some indirect identifiers like specific formative experiences and milestone events. As part of this study, you will have the option to provide demographic information such as your age, gender, ethnicity, etc. Providing this information is fully voluntary and optional. Your interview responses will be kept confidential to the fullest extent possible by law. Your answers will be stored securely online through encryption and password-protection only accessible to the researcher. Any printed data will be kept secured in locked cabinets. When analyzed and

reported, all responses will be de-identified meaning presented anonymously without any original demographic or contextual details that may reveal your identity. Results may discuss participants' journeys in aggregate through emergent themes but never link narratives to individual contributors.

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What if I have questions?

Before you decide whether you'd like to participate in this study, please ask any questions that come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact Rev. Steven R. Giddens at (701)730-XXXX or steven.giddens@ndsu.edu, or Dr. Jodi L. Tangen at (701)231-7676 or jodi.tangen@ndsu.edu.

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You have rights as a research participant. All research with human participants is reviewed by a committee called the Institutional Review Board (IRB) which works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions about your rights, an unresolved question, a concern or complaint about this research you may contact the Research Integrity & Compliance office at 701.231.8995 or via email (ndsu.irb@ndsu.edu).

Documentation of Informed Consent: You are freely making a decision whether to be in this research study. Continuing on with the questionnaire means that

1. you have read and understood this consent form

2. you have had your questions answered, and
3. you have decided to be in the study.

I consent, begin the study (1)

I do not consent, I do not wish to participate (2)

End of Block: ICD

Start of Block: Demo Info

Demo Info As part of this study, you will have the option to provide demographic information such as your age, gender, ethnicity, etc. Providing this information is fully voluntary and optional.

Age What is your age?

Enter your age (1) _____

Prefer not to say (2)

Gen How do you describe yourself?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Non-binary / third gender (3)
 - Prefer to self-describe (4) _____
 - Prefer not to say (5)
-

Eth Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be

- White or Caucasian (1)
 - Black or African American (2)
 - American Indian/Native American or Alaska Native (3)
 - Asian (4)
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (5)
 - Other (6)
 - Prefer not to say (7)
-

Emp What best describes your employment status over the last three months?

- Working full-time (1)
 - Working part-time (2)
 - Unemployed or looking for work (3)
 - A homemaker or stay-at-home parent (4)
 - Student (5)
 - Retired (6)
 - Other (7) _____
 - Prefer not to say (8)
-

Edu What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Some high school or less (1)
- High school diploma or GED (2)
- Some college, but no degree (3)
- Associates or technical degree (4)
- Bachelor's degree (5)
- Graduate or professional degree (MA, MS, MBA, PhD, JD, MD, DDS etc.) (6)
- Prefer not to say (7)

End of Block: Demo Info

Start of Block: Pseud

Ps You may choose a pseudonym (fake name) to represent yourself in this study. This pseudonym will be used instead of your real name in any reporting or publications related to the study, in order to protect your anonymity. Please enter the pseudonym you would like to use in the space provided below.

CE Thank you for your time and for responding to these screening questions. If selected for an interview, how would you prefer to be contacted: email, text, or phone? Please indicate your email or phone number and any details about best times to reach you or permission to leave a voicemail message. You will be reached via your preferred method in the coming weeks to schedule the interview at a mutually agreed upon date and time.

End of Block: Pseud

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. Describe what initially motivated you to pursue psychoanalytic training. Please share the story of how you arrived at this specialization and what inspired you to immerse within this intensive journey.
2. Describe an ‘aha’ moment of deeper theoretical or practical insight/skill integration that profoundly shifted your analytical approach.
3. Describe your most prominent challenges that you’ve encountered during formation, and what strategies helped you navigate them.
4. Describe how your background or past experiences influenced your journey to become a psychoanalyst.
5. Describe in what ways your self-conception and conception of analysis have changed throughout your formation.
6. Describe how your formation has oriented your clinical work.
7. Describe how supervision/control has guided your professional development as an emergent psychoanalyst.
8. Describe how you have navigated the intertwining of your formation experience with your academic endeavors.
9. Describe how organizational affiliation facilitated or hindered your formative development as an analyst.
10. As you transition to post-formation practice, how do you envision sustaining the introspective, self-analytical orientation that initial formation cultivates?

APPENDIX F: IRB APPROVAL



02/12/2024

Dr. Jodi Leigh Tangen
Deans Office, Health&Human Sci

Re: IRB Determination of Exempt Human Subjects Research:
Protocol #IRB0005064, "Embarking on the Analytical Odyssey: A Phenomenological Exploration of the Psychoanalytic Journey of Formation"

NDSU Co-investigator(s) and research team:

- Jodi Leigh Tangen
- Steven Ryan Giddens

Approval Date: 02/12/2024

Expiration Date: 02/11/2027

Study site(s): The interviews will be conducted remotely via Zoom video conferencing links at mutually agreed upon times between the researcher (geographically located in Fargo, ND) and each participant.

Funding Source:

The above referenced human subjects research project has been determined exempt (category 2) in accordance with federal regulations (Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 46, *Protection of Human Subjects*).

Please also note the following:

- The study must be conducted as described in the approved protocol.
- Changes to this protocol must be approved prior to initiating, unless the changes are necessary to eliminate an immediate hazard to subjects.
- Promptly report adverse events, unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others, or protocol deviations related to this project.

Thank you for your cooperation with NDSU IRB procedures. Best wishes for a successful study.

NDSU has an approved FederalWide Assurance with the Department of Health and Human Services: FWA00002439.