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Conundrums

A Critique of Contemporary Psychoanalysis

JON MILLS

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Psychoanalysis



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*"This extraordinary work by one of the most scholarly psychoanalytic thinkers of our time is a welcome and much-needed reappraisal of the relational perspective in contemporary psychoanalysis. Mills brings his rich philosophical background to bear in this detailed and illuminating critique of both the pros and cons of relational psychoanalysis that will be invaluable to those who embrace the contemporary perspective as well as those who find some of its tenets wanting. This is by far the best and most original book of its kind. Essential reading!" - M. Guy Thompson, Ph.D., Supervising Analyst, Psychoanalytic Institute of Northern California, and author, *The Ethic of Honesty**

This is the first book of its kind to offer a sustained critique of contemporary psychoanalytic thought favoring relational, postmodern, and intersubjective perspectives, which largely define American psychoanalysis today. *Conundrums* turns an eye toward the philosophical underpinnings of contemporary theory; its theoretical relation to traditional psychoanalytic thought; clinical implications for therapeutic practice; political and ethical ramifications of contemporary praxis; and its intersection with points of consilience that emerge from these traditions. Central arguments and criticisms advanced throughout the book focus on operationally defining the key tenets of contemporary perspectives; the seduction and ambiguity of postmodernism; the question of selfhood and agency; illegitimate attacks on classical psychoanalysis; the role of therapeutic excess; contemporary psychoanalytic politics; and the question of consilience between psychoanalysis as a science versus psychoanalysis as part of the humanities. The historical criticisms against psychoanalysis are further explored in the context of the current philosophical-scientific binary that preoccupies the field.

Jon Mills, Psy.D., Ph.D., ABPP is a philosopher, psychologist, and psychoanalyst. He is a Diplomate in Psychoanalysis and Clinical Psychology with the American Board of Professional Psychology, Fellow of the American Academy of Clinical Psychology, Fellow of the Academy of Psychoanalysis, and is past President and Fellow of the Section on Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Psychology

of the Canadian Psychological Association. A Professor of Psychology and Psychoanalysis at the Adler Graduate Professional School in Toronto, he is on the editorial board of *Psychoanalytic Psychology* and is the editor of two book series as well as the author of 11 books, including *Origins: On the Genesis of Psychic Reality* (McGill-Queens University Press, 2010), winner of the 2011 Grady Award. He maintains a private practice and runs a mental health corporation in Ontario, Canada.

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Philosophical Presuppositions of Relational Psychoanalysis. The Problem with Postmodernism. Illegitimate Attacks on Classical Psychoanalysis. Therapeutic Excess. Contemporary Politics. Psychoanalysis and its Critics. Approaching Consilience.

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