Building Bridges: Selected Psychoanalytic Papers. By *Helen K. Gediman*. New York: International Psychoanalytic Books, 2018, 376 pp., $35.00 paperback.

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In her most recent work, Helen Gediman has given us an account of more than fifty years in the evolution of her thought. An appropriate subtitle for the work would have been *Inside the Mind of Helen Gediman.* Her thinking over many years of psychoanalytic practice, teaching, and theorizing shows us her originality and flexibility of thought. In fact, her thinking shows several of the characteristics of the creative mind that I have described: "The ability to take the difficult path when there is a less anxiety provoking alternative and to 'own' one's work rather than view oneself as a passive receiver of ideas and the capacity to tolerate and maintain ambiguity and unclosure" (Nass 1993, p. 28).

Gediman has been able to allow contradictory points of view to coexist in her mind (and her writing), and to find imaginative ways to explain what would ordinarily seem a dilemma. The book takes the reader on a very personal journey into her evolution as a psychoanalyst, through her student days, through graduate school and analytic training, and to her current work and her manner of thinking as an analyst. She is forthcoming in sharing her thinking and dogged in maintaining her position in the face of criticism.

The book's introduction, by Fred Pine, offers a positive, yet critical review of the work and sets forth Gediman's ability to hold and deal with points of view in conflict with each other.

Readers must bear in mind that the papers collected here cover different periods in the writer's work. The book is divided into six sections: Trauma and Fantasy; Conflict and Deficit; Love and Death; Sex and Gender; Deceit and the Deceptions of Everyday Life; Treatment and Supervision. There is also an epilogue that contains a chapter titled, Cutting Edge Controversies.

The writing styles of the various chapters vary, reflecting the author's growth as a writer. The later writings tend to be crystal clear in their formulations and presentations, while some of the earlier ones, particularly those explaining complex concepts, must be read more than once to extract their full meaning. The book not only reflects Gediman's growth as an analyst and thinker; it is also a journal of changes in our field over the years. Gediman has not only kept up with those changes; she has also been instrumental in making some of them. For example, she debunks the myth of the silent analyst as a "blank screen," arguing instead that the analyst can attend to the relationship with the patient without losing focus on the drives. Viewing psychoanalysis as a constantly evolving field, she sees its vitality as resting on the ability to grow with new knowledge and to integrate the current thinking of many fields.

I heartily agree with Gediman's view of the evolving nature of psychoanalysis. The field grows organically, an open-ended theory with built-in room for expansion—often driven by concepts developed in adjacent fields. For example, in the 1890s, when current thinking in physics was based on a hydraulic model, that's where psychoanalytic theory took its position. Twenty-first-century developments in the so-called hard sciences, applied to psychoanalysis and to the therapy process, have yielded exciting observations regarding nonlinear, complex autonomic nervous system activity. By observing sequences of states and monitoring the dramatic, rapid changes that follow inter- or intrapersonal distress, researchers have shown that confronting painful feelings and thoughts decreases measured autonomic arousal. Recent findings in neurobiology have also confirmed what we have known developmentally for a very long time: that early mother-infant dialogue and interaction engage a neurological feedback system and stimulate development, resulting in increased brain activity. Our work attempts to reestablish this dialogue when it has failed, and to re-establish a sense of trust when it has been lost. The developmental point of view, which remains active and vital in psychoanalytic thought, connects to some of Freud's early work in neurobiology. We are moving toward the future in many ways, but we also have a strong tie to our roots, so that we can profit and learn from the insights and the errors of our predecessors and use them to move ahead. This is an overarching theme of Gediman's work.

Just as good educators maintained an individualized approach to teaching in an era of rigid curricula, so good analysts did not follow rigid

technical rules. Good clinical analysts have always employed some techniques not yet recognized in the theoretical canon of their time. For example, Edward Bibring's contribution to the Marienbad Symposium of 1936 was clearly ahead of its time and anticipated a good deal of the work of Hans Loewald (1960), who, some twenty-five years later, fleshed out what happens between analyst and patient in the psychoanalytic process. Analysts have rediscovered Loewald in recent years, and perhaps Bibring's work will also receive the recognition it deserves. In the mid-1930s Bibring articulated a distinct developmental perspective on the role of the analyst:

> Psychoanalysis achieves a loosening of fixation, removal of repression, weakening of repetition compulsions and a restoration of development. . . . I believe that the patient's relationship to the analyst from which a sense of security emanates is not only a precondition of the procedure but also effects an immediate consolidation of his sense of security which he has not successfully acquired or consolidated in childhood [1937, pp. 177–178].

Forty years later, comparing his experience as an analysand with Fairbairn and Winnicott, Harry Guntrip (1975) made a similar statement from the patient's point of view: "To find a good parent at the start is the basis of psychic health. In its lack, to find a genuine 'good object' in one's analyst is both a transference experience and a real-life experience" (p. 156).

Gediman's consistent position has been to expand theory to allow room for contrasting points of view, moving from either/or to both/and. She is accepting of contradictory points of view, a true hallmark of the creative mind. She sees that Freud, in his changes to psychoanalytic theory, never disavowed his earlier theory; thus, the topographic stands alongside the structural theory, and other writers have used both to explain different kinds of data. Much in Gediman's thinking serves an integrative, unifying function. In writing of conflict and deficit, for example, she does not shift to an either/or position but allows them to coexist. She integrates the "actual neuroses" (arising from a build-up of undischarged tension, often with weak ego defenses) with the psychoneuroses. In a critique of Kohut, Gediman states—correctly, I think—that empathy is necessary in all treatments but does not constitute the basis for psychoanalysis.

The Love and Death section continues a long-standing work on what might be described as the Tristan theme: fantasies of resurrection and *Liebestod* (literally, "love death," the longing for eternal reunion in death).

In an excellent description of her work with a patient she calls "Dr. D.," Gediman points out that his wish to achieve immortality has been fulfilled through the publication of her case report.

In the Sex and Gender section, there is a fascinating chapter on the David Henry Hwang play *M. Butterfly*—an adaptation of the opera *Madame Butterfly* in which Gallimard, a male French civil servant, persists in believing, despite evidence to the contrary, that his male lover (Song, a Chinese opera singer) is actually a woman (rather than a man, cross-dressing in the tradition of the Beijing Opera). Gediman deals with the fact that though the audience may know the ending (when the fact of Song's maleness can no longer be denied, Gallimard kills himself), there is a tendency to disbelieve it. Wishful thinking triumphs over awareness of reality.[1]

In the chapter "Premodern and Postmodern Perspectives on Sex and Gender," Gediman counters Freud's view, which she distills as follows: "all that is active is masculine; libido is always active; therefore libido is always masculine. . . . Since passivity was equated with the feminine and activity with the masculine, women who are active and empowered had to be regarded as masculine" (pp. 203–204). As Gediman reminds us, David Rapaport moved beyond Freud in his "Theory of Ego Autonomy" (1958). Rapaport's idea was that action/nonaction was not the key issue; rather, what was important was the ego's position vis-à-vis the drives. The ego that was in control of the drives was active (even though there might not be action), and the ego that was overwhelmed by drive activity was passive (even though there could be a great deal of action). Here Gediman goes beyond both her theoretical predecessors, weaving postmodern feminist and contemporary psychoanalytic thinking to illuminate current perspectives on the intrapsychic experience of gender.

In "The Plight of the Imposturous Candidate," Gediman highlights the issue of a candidate who presents a "charade" and is not really working in an analytic fashion. The old analytic maxim about candidates applies here, that "the insights of the morning are told to the candidate's patient in the afternoon."

The Treatment and Supervision section highlights some truly original thinking. In a paper on parallel process, written with Fred Wolkenfeld,

[1]I have found this to be true in my own experience of the endings of two other Puccini operas. In Tosca, knowing that Cavaradossi is being executed, I always side with Tosca's expectation that it is a mock execution and he will arise after the departure of the firing squad. In Bohême, I am expecting Mimi to recover. This, despite having seen them numerous times!

their unique contribution in this area involves a shared enactment between supervisor and supervisee (independent of level of experience) that needs to be brought into awareness for a successful resolution.

The papers on anonymity and self-disclosure serve to broaden the traditional view of the "nonrevealing" analyst and show clearly that some disclosures are within the purview of a solid therapeutic alliance and serve to strengthen rather than interfere with it.

Chapter 17 deals with replies to several commentaries, apparently to a paper of Gediman's Unfortunately, that paper and the commentaries are not included, and I found this section difficult to follow. The chapter could have been omitted with no loss to our sense of the scope of Gediman's work.

In sum, this is a work that one reads selectively, rather than one that can be read through. There are many significant papers that offer invaluable information and reflect a career that is still vibrant. Helen Gediman is to be commended for producing such a vast and often groundbreaking body of work.

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