

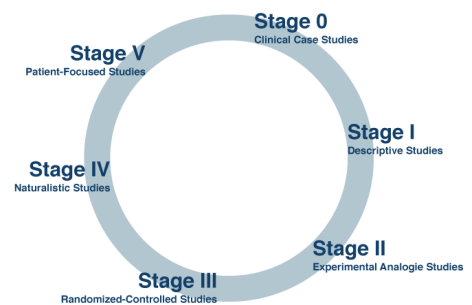
From Clinical Case Study to Single Case Research

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Stages of treatment research



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The Discovery of a Narrative Science

In "Studies on Hysteria" (1895) Freud wrote that he was surprised that his "case histories should read like short stories and that they lack the serious stamp of science". (p.160)

Psychiatrists in the era of Romantic Medicine:
„Some of their case reports remind one to the portraits of Kleist, Schiller and Jean Paul“. (Bodamer 1953, p. 520)

Bodamer J (1953) Zur Entstehung der Psychiatrie als Wissenschaft im 19. Jahrhundert. Fortschritte der Neurologie, Psychiatrie und ihrer Grenzgebiete 21: 511-535

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Charcot's Impact on Freud

“He used to look **again and again** at the things he did not understand, to deepen his impression of them day by day, till suddenly an understanding of them dawned on him.

In his mind's eye the apparent chaos presented by the continual repetition of the same symptoms then gave way to order; the **new nosological pictures** emerged, characterized by the constant combination of certain groups of symptoms”.

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Charcot's Impact on Freud

"The complete and extreme cases, the *types*, could be brought into prominence with the help of a certain sort of schematic planning and, with these types as a point of departure, the eye could travel over the long series of *ill-defined cases* — the *formes frustes* — which, branching off from one or other characteristic feature of the type, surrender to indistinctness. He called this kind of intellectual work, in which he had no equal, <practicing *nosography*>, and he took pride in it". (Freud 1893f, p. 12)

Freud S (1893f) Charcot. Standard Edition, III, 11-23.

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Freud as Historian of Individuality

"Freud and ourselves as latter-day observers are confronted by a single sick individual whose life story presents a variety of incongruities — events and attitudes demanding to be explained, to be brought within the framework of understandable human behavior. Freud, like the historian, is interested in a particular course of events, namely, an individual's history." (Sherwood 1969, p. 188)

Sherwood M (1969) The logic of explanation in psychoanalysis. Academic Press, New York

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Freud as Nomothetic Researcher

"In order to derive fresh generalizations from what has thus been established with regard to the mechanisms and instincts, it would be essential to have at one's disposal *numerous cases* as thoroughly and deeply analyzed equally to the present one". (Freud 1918b, p. 105)

Freud S (1918b) From the history of an infantile neurosis. Standard Edition XVII: 7-122

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Typological Research

Hempel (1952) following Max Weber initiated a debate on typology in social science.

Hempel, C. (1952). Problems of concept and theory formation in the social sciences. In American Philosophical Association - Eastern Division (Eds.), Science, language, and human rights. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. pp 65-86

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Hempel's Classification Type

The first and simplest type is designated by Hempel as the classification type.

It arises when the individuals to be classed by type are assigned to different categories.

The assignment is made according to the criteria of completeness, unambiguousness and exclusivity.

Hempel, C. (1952). Problems of concept and theory formation in the social sciences. In American Philosophical Association - Eastern Division (Eds.), Science, language, and human rights. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. pp 65-86

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Hempel's Extrem Type

A methodologically more demanding type, i.e., one belonging to a higher logical level, is designated by Hempel as the extreme type. This type is defined by two extremes that are rarely or never encountered in reality. Between the two extremes, subjects are characterized according to their closeness to or distance from one of the poles (see Rosch's (1978) "principles of categorization"). In practice, transitional forms are conceivable between classification and extreme types, but in theory there is no gradual transition.

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Hempel's Ideal Type

the ideal type is a model that unites observable phenomena and concepts in an interpretive or explanatory schema. And herein lies its difference from the concept of *gestalt*, which embraces only empiric-phenomenal aspects. With this type, occupying the highest logical level of the three, the issues surrounding the concept of type altogether now become visible. It makes evident the amount of theory that as a rule goes into conceptualizing such types: Thus it becomes clear that the concept of the ideal type leads to examination of theory — a demand that is implicit in psychoanalytic case study.

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Examples of Ideal-Type Research

in psychoanalytic follow-up research (Wachholz & Stuhr 1999;
Levander & Werbart (2012))
and
the understanding psychodynamics of suicidal men (Lindner & Briggs 2010)

Wachholz S, Stuhr U (1999) The concept of ideal types in psychoanalytic follow up research. Psychother Res 9: 327-341

Levander, S., & Werbart, A. (2012). Personality-related responses to the psychoanalytic process. A systematic multicase study. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 29(1), 1-16

Lindner R, Briggs S (2010) Forming Ideal Types by Understanding: The Psychoanalytic Treatment of Suicidal Men. *Forum Qualitative Research* 11: Art 13

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From Singular Events to Types

Still Meissner (1971) emphasizes:

“Psychoanalytic methodology is ultimately forced to rest upon the single case history”. (p. 302)

Yet the function of the case history as the explanation of singular events, the ideographic element of the psychoanalytic narrative, is connected to the hidden agenda of typology.

Meissner WW (1971) Freuds methodology. J Am Psychoanal Ass 19: 265-309

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Freud's Case Histories as a Methodological Paradigm

As Ernest Jones says regarding the Dora case:

“This first case history of Freud's has for years served as a model for students of psychoanalysis ... (Jones 1955, p. 257).

The close ties between therapy, research and training led to the creation of a traditional form of communication

so that the **short case report** came to seem a natural form.

Jones E (1953) The life and work of Sigmund Freud, vol. I. New York, Basic Books

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The Case of Dora as unfinished business?

2005 the journal 'Psychoanalytic Inquiry' presented a special issue: Freud and Dora:

Mahony features the Dora case history under the headlines:

terminable and **unterminable**.

Levine S (Ed) (2005) Freud and Dora: 100 years later. Psychoanalytic Inquiry 25: 1-115
Here especially:
Mahony PJ (2005) Freuds unadorned and unadorable: A case history terminable and unterminable. Psychoanalytic Inquiry 25: 27-44

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Rhetorics of a Literary Masterpiece

“The appeal of the Dora case and its undoubted standing as a **literary masterpiece** make us aware of the influence of what might be called rhetorical craft and the subtle power of the clinical narrative”. (Spence, 1987, p. 123)

Spence DP (1987) The Freudian Metaphor. Towards Paradigm Change in Psychoanalysis. W. W. Norton, New York London

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Freud's Archived Clinical Notes

Compare the Freud's report 1909 on the „Ratman“ and E. Zetzel's "Additional notes" (1966):

"In these clinical notes there are over 40 references to a highly ambivalent mother-son relationship, which were not adequately considered in the Freudian case history as it was published in 1909". (Zetzel, 1966)

Zetzel ER (1966) Additional notes upon a case of obsessional neurosis: Freud 1909. *Int J Psychoanal* 47: 123-129

The Schreber Case

Debated by a sizable number of psychoanalytic authors: Baumeyer, Bloch, Irael, Katan, Kitay, Lacan, Laffal, Lothane, Meissner, Niederland, Nunberg, Saks, White, etc.

And from outside

Canetti E (1962) *Crowds and Power*. Viking Press, New York

MacAlpine I, Hunter RA (Eds) (1955) D. P. Schreber: *Memoirs of my illness*. Dawson and Sons, London

Psa As a Narrative Science

Psychoanalysis became a narrative science using narration aspiring to narrative truth.

Forrester, J. (1980). *Language and the origins of psychoanalysis*. London: Macmillan.
Spence, D. P. (1982). Narrative truth and theoretical truth. *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 51, 43-69.

What is Wrong?

Oral tradition combined with loosely written case studies **instead of** systematic efforts for adequate sampling that could lead to a **representative corpus** of case studies

Glover's Achilles Heel

"Analysts of established prestige and seniority produce papers advancing a new theoretical or clinical viewpoint or discovery.

If others corroborate they tend to report that; but if others feel reason to reject it, this scientific 'negative' does not get reported.

So ultimately it is canonized as 'so-and-so has shown it'

Glover, E. (1952). Research methods in psychoanalysis. The International Journal of Psychoanalysis, 33, 403-409.

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Wallerstein & Sampson's Classic Paper

"The whole corpus of psychoanalysis.... comprehending the phenomena of both normal and abnormal personality development and functioning,

attests **brilliantly** to the explanatory power of the theory derived from data of the consulting room" (1971, p.11).

but

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Wallerstein & Sampson's Classic Paper

"We need at least to be equally cognizant of the **limitations of the case study method** as a source of prospective continuing knowledge" (p. 12).

Wallerstein RS, Sampson H (1971) Issues in research in the psychoanalytic process. Int J Psychoanal 52: 11-50

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Case Studies in Peer-Reviewed Journals

Desmet M, Meganck R, Seybert C, Willemsen J, Geerardyn F, Declercq F, Inslegers R, Trenson E, Vanheule S, Schindler I, Kirsner L & Kächele H (2013)

Psychoanalytic single case studies published in ISI-ranked journals: A review of basic characteristics of patient, therapist, therapy and research method.

Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics 82: 120-121

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Type of Data

In 80% of the cases, the type of data (therapist notes, audiotapes, videotapes, etc.) on which the case study was based was not mentioned.

Surprisingly, even 14 (out of 55) empirical case studies didn't mention the type of data.

Empirical cases used quantitative (13 cases), qualitative (11 cases), or mixed quantitative-qualitative (31 cases) data-analytic methods.

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Focus of the Article

In 52% **case description**;

in 48% as an **illustration** in the course of a theoretical paper.

In 64% focused **exclusively on the patient**;

in 48% of the cases, there was an additional focus on the therapist and/or the **therapeutic relationship**

In 91% unclear about **informed consent**

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Kohut's Case of Mr. Z

Recently a biography on Kohut (Strozier, 2001) clarifies that Mr. Z's second analysis was an artful invention, to illustrate how his second analysis should have been.

In 1984 Kohut reinforced his satisfaction with the **first fictive psychoanalysis** worldwide...

Kohut H (1979) The two analyses of Mr. Z. Int J Psychoanal 60: 3-27
Strozier CB (2001) Heinz Kohut. The making of a psychoanalyst. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, New York

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Kohut's Specimen Case

"The case not only highlights the way theoretical changes enable the analyst to see **new clinical configuration**, but further demonstrates how the analyst's apprehension of the self-object transference affects his handling of clinical material via the expanded empathy that results from the **new theoretical frame**.
" (Kohut, 1984, p. 91)

Kohut H (1984) How Does Analysis Cure? Edited by A. Goldberg. Chicago London, University of Chicago Press

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Oral History Research

The brothers Grimm, the two professors from Göttingen in Germany, systematically started out to collect orally transmitted fairy tales.

They started a field of **fairy tale research** which later established highly sophisticated methods to analyze the available large collections from all over the world.

Grimm's Fairy Tales (Germany, 1812–1857)

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Fairy Tale Research

V. Propp's „Morphology of the Folktale“ was published in Russian in 1928. Although it represented a breakthrough in both folkloristics and morphology and influenced Claude Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes, it was generally unnoticed in the West until it was translated in the 1958.

Propp, Vladimir. „Theory and History of Folklore“. Ed. Anatoly Liberman. University of Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1984

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Public Availability

There is nothing wrong with clinical process notes, as long as they are available for public scrutiny;

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this constitutes the essence of any scientific enterprise.

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Extensive Treatment Reports

„Up to 1980 I found 36 publications extending 20 pages of print in the psychoanalytic literature past Freud“

Kächele H (1981) Zur Bedeutung der Krankengeschichte in der klinisch-psychoanalytischen Forschung (On the relevance of case history in clinical psychoanalytic research). *Jahrb Psychoanal* 12: 118-177

Kächele H, Thomä H (2009) The significance of the case history in clinical psychoanalytic research. In: Kächele H, Schachtler J, Thomä H, The Uim Psychoanalytic Process Research Study Group (Eds) *From Psychoanalytic Narrative to Empirical Single Case Research. Implications for Psychoanalytic Practice*. Routledge, New York, pp 99-142

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GB - Examples

An artful account of a psychoanalytic treatment by Marion Milner (1969);
 Meltzer (1978) "The Kleinian development" re-analyzed
 M. Klein's (1961) „Narrative of a child analysis“ week-by-week;
 Marget Little (1990) provides a personal record of an analysis with Winnicott.

Milner M (1969) The hands of the living god. An account of a psychoanalytic treatment. Hogarth, London
 Meltzer D (1978) The Kleinian development: Part II, Richard week-by-week. Clunie, Perthshire
 Little M (1990) Psychotic anxieties and containment. A personal record of an analysis with Winnicott. Jason Aronson, Northvale NJ

US - Examples

Dewald 's (1972) voluminous 600 page long description - based on in-session careful notes.

Stoller (1974) publishes a voluminous case of female masculinity.

Goldberg (1978) compiles a casebook „The Psychology of the Self“.

Dewald PA (1972) The psychoanalytic process. A case illustration. Basic Books, New York London
 Goldberg A (1978) The psychology of the self. A casebook. International University Press, New York
 Stoller RJ (1974) Splitting. A case of female masculinity. Dell, New York

German Examples

Argelander (1971) reports in details about the treatment of a narcissistic business man

Moser (1974) a gifted young analyst - portrays his couch experience - Heinz Kohut writes an enthusiastic foreword.

Argelander H (1971) Der Flieger (The pilot). Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main
 Moser T (1974) Lehrjahre auf der Couch. Bruchstücke meiner Psychoanalyse. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt

French Examples

F. Dolto (1971) publishes the marvellous cure of a psychotic adolescent and

Anthony (1974) writes a quite critical review.

Dolto F (1971) Le cas Dominique. Ed du Seuil, Paris
 Dolto F (1973) Der Fall Dominique. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt
 Dolto F (1973) Dominique: Analysis of an adolescent. Outerbridge and Lazard, New York
 Anthony EL (1974) Review of F. Dolto: Dominique. The analysis of an adolescent. New York 1971. Psychoanal Quart 43: 681-684

The Pioneers of Tape Recording

End of the sixties:

USA: H. Dahl, M.M. Gill,

Germany: A.E.Meyer, H.Thomä

By now it has been accepted that some analysts feel comfortable with tape recording analytic sessions and that we do not have strong evidence on detrimental aspects.

Obviously recording does change, but does it matter to the goal of analysis?

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Luborsky & Spence's Complaint About Paucity of Primary Data

- data accumulated during actual analytic sessions.

"Ideally, two conditions should be met: the case should be clearly defined as analytic....., and the data should be recorded, transcribed, and indexed so as to maximize accessibility and visibility"(1971, p.426).

Luborsky, L., & Spence, D. P. (1971). Quantitative research on psychoanalytic therapy. In A. E. Bergin & S. L. Garfield (Eds.) *Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behavior Change* (1 ed., pp. 408-438). New York: Wiley.

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Ulm Textbank

a computer based archive with built- in tools for retrieval and text analysis

Mergenthaler, E., & Kächele, H. (1993). Locating Text Archives for Psychotherapy Research. In N. E. Miller, L. Luborsky, J. P. Barber & J. Docherty (Eds.), *Psychodynamic Treatment Research - A Guide for Clinical Practice* (pp. 54-62). New York: Basic Books.

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More Archives

The Psychoanalytic Research Consortium (Waldron 1989)

The Penn Psychoanalytic Treatment Collection: A set of complete and recorded psychoanalyses as a research resource (Luborsky et al. 2001).

The Harvard Psychodynamic Tape Collection (Jones & Ablon)

The German Collection of Case Reports (Kächele 2009)

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Single Case Research

Single case research repeatedly has been called the most suitable approach for evaluating psychoanalytic treatments.

f.e. Edelson 1988

Edelson M (1985) The hermeneutic turn and the single case study in psychoanalysis. *Psychoanal Contemp Thought* 8: 567-614

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Individual Case Studies

"The observation of variability across time within a single case combines a **clinical interest** to respond appropriately to changes within the patient,

and a **research interest** to find support for a causal relationship between intervention and changes in variables of theoretical interest" (Fonagy & Moran 1993).

Fonagy, P., & Moran, G. (1993). Selecting single case research designs for clinicians. In Miller NE, Luborsky L, Barber JP, Docherty JP (Eds) (1993) *Psychodynamic Treatment Research. A Handbook for Clinical Practice.* (p. 62-95). Basic Books, New York

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Positive Features of Case Studies

- # a case study may cast doubt on a general theory
- # a case study may provide a valuable heuristic to subsequent and better controlled research
- # a case study may permit the investigation, although poorly controlled, of rare but important phenomena
- # a case study can provide the opportunity to apply new principles and notions in entirely new ways
- # a case study, under circumstances, can provide enough experimenter control over an phenomenon to furnish "scientifically acceptable" information.
- # a case study can assist in placing "meat" on the "theoretical skeleton"

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