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THE FAILURE OF GUILT: DEVELOPING A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

by

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis reports my original work, that no part of it has been previously accepted or presented for the award of any degree or diploma by any university. To the best of my knowledge no material previously published or written by another person is included, except where due acknowledgement is given.

[Signature]
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ABSTRACT

Guilt is the intrapsychic manifestation of the tension which necessarily exists between the individual and society. Its centrality to human functioning is reflected in both this conceptual definition and the multitude of contexts in which it is found. Given the significance of guilt to the human condition, the absence of a coherent theoretical framework for understanding guilt is alarming.

The primary difficulty in defining and conceptualising guilt is found in its inherent logical inconsistency. Guilt involves an intrapsychic conflict wherein both sides of the conflict are the self. For example, both the desire to do a specific act and the distaste for doing that act are representative of self. But which one is truly the self? This is a long standing logical problem which can be formulated in the question, "how can a disunity exist within a unity?" Any coherent account of guilt must be able to overcome the problem inherent to a unity of disunity.

Given that the conflict occurs within the self, the account of guilt must begin with a system of self which provides for the apparent existence of a disunity within a unity. One such system of self views the self as a function of the process of self-regulation. The process of self-regulation can be understood in terms of a negative feedback loop wherein an input (perception) is compared with a standard to produce an output (behaviour, cognition, and/or emotion).

In essence the output of the system serves to reduce discrepancy between the input and the standard. The self is an emergent property of this process and thus is reflective of the standard at any one time. Two component parts of the standard can be identified which represent the two sides of the guilt conflict, (viz., being-for-self and being-for-others).

A conflict within the standard leads to a situation wherein any input will be discrepant with at least one part of the standard. That
discrepancy will produce a discrepancy reducing output. However, if such an output is discrepancy reducing with respect to one part of the standard, then it will concomitantly be discrepancy producing with respect to a conflicting part of the standard. This process of maintaining discrepancy with respect to one part of the standard can be thought of as self-damaging inasmuch as both parts of the standard are representative of self.

The system outlined above overcomes the problem of a disunity within a unity by locating the disunity as existing between unities over time.

All the displays of guilt such as feeling guilty and doing self-damaging things are reflections of guilt in the same that military attacks are reflective of war. That is to say, the feelings and acts of guilt are not all there is to guilt but rather, are manifestations of guilt. Guilt itself is the disunity of self.

Escaping guilt involves the establishment of unity where there was previously disunity. This can be achieved either by denying one part of the self (self disintegration) which is the dynamic behind rationalisation, or by unifying the previously disunited parts of self (self-integration) which is the process of responsibility.
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Before embarking on this thesis, it is important to make clear its unique structure and style of presentation. Reading in the area of guilt can rapidly produce a sense of confusion because studies of guilt are to be found in so many different contexts. Guilt is to be found as a theme of literature, as a sociological construct, as a legal term, and as a topic for psychological study.

Having read material from all of these contexts, it seemed rather vacuous to then conduct psychological research into some specific aspect of guilt. Every beginning point seemed to neglect the depth and breadth of writing about the subject and in so doing made a mockery of it.

It was precisely this difficulty which inspired the work presented here. Guilt was almost undefinable. It was outside of the psychologist's reach and yet was to be found in humanity's every pursuit. The work here attempts to give some understanding to guilt by locating it in a system of self. That is to say, the self is used as a reference point for the explication of guilt.

As a consequence of discussing guilt in terms of systems, I have sacrificed much of the detail of guilt. This work does not intend to operationalise guilt at anything but a systems level. The nature of the thesis also prevents full discussion of issues related to guilt such as shame. Nor is there scope for the therapeutic issues of overcoming guilt although this does receive some attention in the final chapter.

In sacrificing the minutia, the possibility of adopting the typical format of empirical psychology is also foregone. A tightly controlled empirical study is not available to the theorist who focuses on systems.
As an alternative, I have made use of case study material to support the hypothesis which is presented. The cases are designed to illustrate the fundamental points which have been made as part of the hypothesis, viz., the process of discrepancy reduction; the internal conflict between opposing parts of the self which is inherent to guilt; the use of rationalisation as a means of denying guilt; and the role of responsibility as a way to overcome guilt.
"So Jesus called them and spoke to them in parables: 'How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. In fact, no-one can enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house. I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin.'" (Mk 3: 23-29)
1. THE FAILURE OF GUILT

It is an understatement of considerable magnitude to suggest that guilt is a common theme in literature. Guilt is the most powerful theme. It was guilt which served as the dynamic for Shakespeare's greatest tragedy, "Hamlet." And it was guilt which drove Raskolnikov in Dostoevsky's monumental work, "Crime and Punishment." Franz Kafka, surely one of the foremost twentieth century writers, was obsessed with guilt. From the guilt-ridden Gregor in "Metamorphosis" to the guilt-driven Joseph K. in "the Trial," Kafka's characters are dominated by the single theme of guilt. It does not take too much imagination to lengthen this already impressive list of works on guilt.

If we progress to the psychological literature, the dominating figure of Sigmund Freud demands that guilt be recognised as the central dynamic in man's living with others. He claimed that guilt is "... the most important problem in the evolution of culture." (1930). For Freud, guilt represented the inevitable tension created by the interaction of an instinctually driven individual with a society of instinctually driven individuals. The desires of each individual will necessarily be tempered, redirected, or repressed. While other writers in the psychological literature have described guilt within a different framework (eg. G. Kelly), the centrality of guilt to man's existence in society has not altered. Guilt is the process by which man controls the intrapsychic manifestation of the tension which necessarily exists between the individual and society. As part of this process, structures such as conscience, superego and ego ideal are formulated within the individual. This conceptual definition of guilt highlights its centrality to the understanding of mankind.

It is therefore surprising that definitions of guilt are rarely consistent and do not appear to share a common conceptual base. In
defining guilt, attention must be given to the variety of contexts in which it features. The moralists speak of moral guilt; the judiciary speak of legal guilt; the Freudians speak of neurotic guilt; the existentialists speak of existential guilt; the theologians speak of religious guilt; the personality theorists speak of dispositional guilt; the clinical psychologists speak of depressive guilt; and the mood psychologists speak of feeling guilty.

Such is the diversity of these contexts, it is difficult to discern the core characteristics of guilt. Nevertheless, it is the contention of this thesis that all these contexts share the uni-dimensional construct of guilt. The thesis aims at drawing the contexts together along with the theoretical foundations that each represents. An hypothesis will be proposed which can incorporate a variety of views as well as answer the questions raised by an initial discussion of the major theoretical approaches to guilt. An analysis of the hypothesis will then be presented with support from case study data.

The thesis is structured in four sections. Initially, prominent theoretical positions on guilt will be presented and discussed. The discussion will aim to highlight the inadequacies and inconsistencies of each position such that the objectives of this thesis are clarified. Secondly, a hypothesis will be formulated as a possible answer to the questions and inconsistencies which arise from that discussion. The hypothesis will take the form of a definition which is comprised of the various theoretical viewpoints presented in the first section. Third, aspects of the proposed definition will be explored with reference to the current literature. Finally, a number of case studies will be presented as illustrative tests of the presented hypothesis.
1.1 Freud and Guilt

Freud described guilt as a tension existing between the ego and the superego which is expressed, at the conscious level, as a need for punishment. An understanding of Freud's idea of guilt therefore requires an understanding of the ego and the superego; their development and their interaction. Each construct will be discussed in turn followed by a discussion of the system as a whole.

1.11 The superego

According to Freud, the origins of guilt are found in the genesis of the superego. He suggested that the superego emerged in resolution of the Oedipal Complex,

"The more intense the Oedipus complex was and the more rapidly it succumbed to repression (under the influence of discipline, religious teaching, schooling and reading) the more exacting later on is the domination of the superego over the ego in the form of conscience or perhaps of an unconscious sense of guilt." (1923, p.45)

The superego develops in response to helplessness and dependence and therefore can be represented as fear of loss of love. That is to say, the superego emerges through the adoption of the values of another person on whom one is dependent and of whom one is fearful. Therefore, guilt begins as the fear of loss of love from a more powerful other.

However, this equivalence ends with the establishment of the superego because the superego involves the internalisation of another's values. Those values which had previously been associated with the acquisition of love from another, become the values of the newly established superego and thereby represent the criteria for acquiring
love from one's own superego. Freud suggests that this process occurs in resolution of the Oedipal conflict whereby the child realises his inability to overcome the father, who stands between himself and the mother, and therefore forms an alliance with him.

The proposed link between the Oedipal complex and the onset of guilt proposed by Freud is not supported by other forms of psychoanalysis. For example, Melanie Klein (1965) suggests that guilt has its origin a long time before the Oedipal complex. Klein asserts that the origins of guilt are to be found in the child-mother relationship from as early as six months of age. From an early age, the infant associates both pleasure and discomfort with the parent according to his/her own feelings at a given time. Such ambivalence produces an anxiety which is the basis of guilt.

Regardless of the genesis of internalised values, however, the process is so complete that the previous external relationship has become internal. For example, the feelings of aggression felt towards another which previously produced an aggressive response from the other are now countered by feelings of aggression towards the self. In other words, the conflict which had existed between self and other has been relocated to a conflict between ego and superego. Consequently, one's own aggression towards the other is now countered by the superego and directed towards the ego. Freud claims that the superego aggression takes the form of "conscience."

Freud has been subjected to much criticism over the proposed fixedness of the superego. A rigid superego does not seem to allow for the changes to value systems which researchers in the area continually document, (see Westen, 1985 for a helpful review). Such documented changes are both permanent and temporary. The question of how value systems can change, either temporarily or permanently, requires
elucidation in a study of guilt because such changes can be interpreted as changes to the superego. That is to say, the change to a value system represents a change to one side of the guilt conflict and thus will affect the incidence of guilt.

1.12 The ego

The other half of the guilt conflict is the ego. Freud postulated that guilt occurs when the ego entertains thoughts, feelings or actions which are discrepant with the values that form the superego. Having briefly discussed the development and maintenance of the superego values, it is now appropriate to examine the ego and how it can fall into conflict with the superego.

The ego emerges from the id on the basis of interaction with the external world. Freud (1923) wrote, "It is easy to see that the ego is that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world..." (p.15 in 1962 English Ed). According to Freudian theory, the id is replete with aggressive impulses which constantly seek conscious expression. In response the ego is engaged in a never ending struggle to either give socially acceptable expression to those impulses or to keep them out of conscious expression altogether. To this end the ego employs defence mechanisms. Freud and other psychoanalytic writers, (particularly Anna Freud, 1936), have delineated a number of such mechanisms, used by the ego as a defence against the realisation of the unacceptable impulses of the id and thereby also a defence against the consequent wrath of the superego. Ego defences are to be found in all people to a larger or lesser degree and it is the extent of their use which indicates the power balance between ego, superego and id. For instance, Anna Freud viewed the neurotic ego as a handmaiden to the superego, (1936). Equally, the psychopath has traditionally been seen
as having no superego and an ego which is largely controlled by the id, (Kernberg, 1975).

Unfortunately, post hoc defences against the aggression of the superego seemed to be largely ignored. That is to say, the ego defences discussed above were proposed as a pre-emptive (i.e. pre-conscious) defence against the socially inappropriate acknowledgement of the unacceptable impulses of the id. However, once such impulses are acknowledged, or even acted upon, the ego seems to be vulnerable to the chastisement of the superego. This is guilt. Freud (1905; 1923; 1940) did speak of a store of "ego libido," which acts to preserve self and therefore can be construed as protection against the threat of punishment by the superego. Unfortunately, details of this self-protective process were not made clear. More recent authors (e.g. Bandura, 1986) have identified a number of defence styles by which the ego can evade the punishing superego. These will be discussed later.

In its role as mediator between the impulses of the id, and the punishment of the superego, the ego can be said to control the person. It has been proposed that such control is maintained through the use of defence mechanisms which act to redirect or overcome the impulses of the id and thereby to stave off retribution from the superego. However, if the ego is responsible for controlling the id and the superego, who or what is responsible for controlling the ego? Freud answers this question by reference to object cathexes. An object has some level of libido attached to it according to its previous association with impulse gratification. The ego is thereby said to be driven by the reality principle. That is to say, the ego mediates between the id and the external environment (i.e. reality) on the basis of past associations. Freud wrote of ego function in his inimitable style,
Thus the ego, driven by the id, confined by the superego, repulsed by reality, struggles to master its economic task of bringing about harmony among the forces and influences working in and upon it; and we can understand how it is that so often we cannot suppress the cry: 'Life is not easy!'" (1933, Lecture 31, p.110, 1981).

1.13 The dynamic system

Freud has proposed a dynamic structure of the mind wherein each construct has developed out of a prior construct, (ie. ego out of id and superego out of ego), and is driven on by interaction with the other constructs.

Within this system, guilt occurs when the ego fails to control the expression of the id impulses in accordance with the values of the superego. The guilt manifests itself in superego aggression against self.

The problem for such a system comes from the unity of the person. That is to say, the person regards the functions of all three constructs as "mine" - impulses, control and moral standards. It is surmised that Freud would identify this unity as consciousness, but consciousness is not a construct but rather is a functional relationship. In other words, objectives do not exist in consciousness but instead one becomes conscious of them. So what can be said for this new construct of unity? How does it relate to the other constructs? What role does it play in the production of guilt?

As the superego is said to be largely unconscious, the aggression of conscience produces an "unconscious sense of guilt" (1933). Freud also referred to the feeling of guilt (1933) and behaviour which expresses guilt (1916). Unfortunately, the mechanisms by which all these expressions of guilt are inter-related and/or individually produced were not specified. That is to say, Freud does not make clear the process by
which one person will have an unconscious sense of guilt; another person will behave in a guilty fashion; another person will simply feel guilty; and yet another person will experience a combination of feeling and acting guilty. Furthermore, how do each of these expressions/experiences manifest themselves?

It would seem that Freud has proposed the structure of a guilt system and highlighted the tensions and conflicts which often produce guilt responses, but he has not fully explained the specific mechanisms of guilt production. Any further theorising in the area of guilt must concern itself with these specific mechanisms.

Of course, many theorists will not accept the broad structures which Freud has proposed. For example, David Ausubel (1952) who is also a psychoanalyst rejects the need for a "superego" in theorising about guilt. Instead, he asserts that the ego and the id are sufficient to account for the processes of guilt production.

Whether one accepts the Freudian structure and concomitant terminology or not, the inherent conflict of guilt demands the postulation of structures which represent the various sides in that conflict. As Stein (1968) has noted at the outset of his work on guilt:

"If we would eliminate the term "superego" for any number of suggested reasons (anthropomorphic, superfluous, unobservable, etc.), then we must posit something (some function or dynamic element) in its place to account for the conflict of guilt..." (p.31).

However, as has been shown above, the acceptance of constructs which represent the various sides in the conflict leads to the need for a further construct which represents the whole within which the guilt conflict operates. Guilt is defined as anxiety over an internal conflict, thus raising the question of, "internal to what?". Freud writes as if the
ego is the person experiencing guilt but such an equivalence necessitates a separation between the person and the superego.

For Freud then, guilt involves a superego/ego conflict which operates primarily at the unconscious level although there exists a conscious correlate in feelings of guilt/conscience and a behavioural correlate in acts of a self-damaging type. Guilt itself is inescapable because it is the product of "individuals in society." Any measure of guilt which conforms to a Freudian framework cannot be concerned with issues of presence or absence, but rather, must focus on the extent of guilt in any one person, (ie. the degree of superego/ego conflict).

1.14 Overview

The discussion of Freud's theory of guilt has raised a number of questions which this study will address. Firstly and most importantly, the nature of guilt was found to be ambiguous in Freud's work. He spoke of it as an unconscious sense; a feeling and a style of behaviour. Which one is guilt? If all represent guilt, what can be said of guilt as a construct? This is the fundamental issue for theories in the area of guilt.

The second problem in Freud's theorising is conceptual. Freud has portrayed guilt as a conflict and consequently developed a number of constructs which represent the various sides of the conflict. However, in so doing Freud is unable to acknowledge the person as a unity. That is to say, Freud speaks of the constructs as if they represent part of the person, but does not elucidate as to how these parts form a whole such that the whole identifies with all the parts. Of course, if one adopted the alternative starting point of self as a unity, then internal conflict would be equally difficult to conceptualise. This is not to deny the existence of internal conflict, but merely to point out the logical difficulty in such a
phenomenon. The existence of a disunity within a unity is problematic because the unity identifies with both sides of the disunity. Thus, the person is simultaneously wanting to do behaviour "x" and not wanting to do behaviour "x." The philosophical background to this long standing problem will be discussed in section 1.62. This problem can be said to be the problem of guilt. How can disunity exist within a unity?

This conceptual problem creates an additional question of how a unity might defend itself against internal disunity. Freud spoke of a store of "ego libido" which protected the ego from the attack of the superego but he did not provide details of such a mechanism.

A third question arising from Freud's theory of guilt is how the constructs (especially the superego) change once they are established. What are the factors that effect such changes?

1.2 Existentialism and Guilt

The Existentialists also treat guilt as a central construct in their theorising. Existential guilt is guilt by virtue of existence. That is to say, by existing one is guilty. The Existentialists assert that both real guilt and neurotic guilt are driven by this fundamental existential guilt. Given the difficulty in identifying a common existential position, this work presents two viewpoints - Sartre's and Tillich's.

1.21 Existential guilt

The view put forward by Sartre (1943) and his followers suggests that existential guilt is representative of man's failure to achieve his fundamental project to become for-itself-in-itself being, (ie. God). This failure to achieve one's fundamental project is tantamount to guilt and therefore deserves punishment. Of course, the only punishment which can alleviate existential guilt (ie. guilt for one's existence), is the removal of existence, (ie. death).
The second approach to existential guilt is typified by Paul Tillich (1952) who suggests that man is guilty by virtue of his non-achievement of all that s/he has recognised as possible for him/herself. That is to say, every person is capable of imagining a course of action which would have been more "authentic" (see Bugental, 1965). This feature of mankind to dream of better actions is not matched by his ability to achieve such imaginings. Consequently, man is guilty. The guilt arises because of his/her existential ability to imagine a better self and his/her failure to alter his/her self in favour of those imaginings; usually because the event has passed. The only solution to this guilt, (ie. the only suitable punishment), is to stop imagining, which is nothing other than a living death since, for Tillich, "possibility" is a defining characteristic of humanity. While Tillich maintains that there is no solution to the presence of guilt short of death, he also asserts the possibility of "taking on" the failure of guilt and living courageously, (ie. the courage to live in spite of the failure of guilt). This is not a denial of the guilt, quite the opposite. For Tillich, courage involves accepting one's failure and living with it, in spite of it.

It would seem that such "courageous" being constitutes an overcoming of guilt and therein can be construed as an answer to the question posed to Freud earlier, viz., how can a unity defend itself against the disunity of guilt. Further exploration of what Tillich means by "taking on" is required as his meaning is not immediately apparent.

Whichever existential position one considers (Sartre's or Tillich's), the presence of existential guilt is inescapable except by death - physical or mental. Existential death does not requires events. It is by virtue of man's existence.

Existential guilt is distinct from, though not inconsistent with, the Freudian view of guilt inasmuch as both conceptualisations agree that
failure to realise one's ideal for self although the two approaches to guilt is found in the Freudian
two approaches to guilt is found in the Freudian
While Freud asserts that guilt is primarily an
theists argue that the conflict is necessarily conscious as the can only be understood as an emergent property of
The Existentialists cannot accept an unconscious
The resultant question for this study is how does un/consciousness relate to guilt.

In spite of this division between the two approaches over the existence of unconsciousness, the Existentialists conform to the Freudian expressions of guilt as internal conflict and guilt as an external expression such as feeling guilty or behaving in some self-punishing way. The Existentialists distinguish the conflict from the expression with reference to conscious ideals rather than an unconscious superego.

1.22 Real and neurotic guilt

Within the discussion of existential guilt, Keen (1970) distinguishes between real guilt and neurotic guilt. Real guilt results from the failure of specific behaviours, thoughts etc. to meet one's expectations for oneself in the given situation. In other words, real guilt is a failure for what one does, thinks etc. In contrast, neurotic guilt emanates from a failure for what one is. In Keen's terminology, guilt for what one is (ie. neurotic guilt) implies self-as-object.

Unfortunately, the nature of guilt itself remains unclear. Real guilt appears to be experienced as a feeling whereas neurotic guilt is a state of being (Yalom, 1980). The common factor in each is failure to match a standard even though the products of such failures are different. It is
tempting to conclude that guilt is therefore failure itself but such a conclusion flies in the face of statements in the Existential literature which assert that guilt "emanates from," or "flows from" failure, (Yalom, 1980, p276-7). Guilt must therefore be something other than the failure. Suffice to say, the precise nature of guilt is not clear from the Existential literature.

Unlike Freud, the Existentialists have not postulated constructs to represent the various sides to the conflict of guilt and in so doing they emphasise the unity of the person. As was noted earlier, the absence of such constructs begs the question of how a conflict can exist. Conflicts cannot exist in isolation of the terms/constructs/things that are in conflict. So what is it that is in conflict according to the Existentialists?

In real guilt, the conflict exists between expectations for self and specific behaviours. For the Existentialists, this conflict or disunity is an inevitable consequence of man's dual ability to be him/herself and observe him/herself. The conflict is between one's being oneself and one's observation of oneself. In Keen's terminology, the conflict exists between one's being-for-self and one's being-for-others.

These terms (ie. being-for-self and being-for-others) seem remarkably similar to the Freudian constructs of id/ego, and superego respectively. The central difference is that the Existentialists' terms represent functions whereas the Freudian terms are constructs in and of themselves. (NB The Existential use of a function (eg. a relation) as a term in a relationship has been the subject of much philosophical debate, (see particularly Maze, 1983 and Mitchell, 1984), but it is not within the scope of this work to include the various arguments. As a result, the Existentialist use of relations as constructs is accepted on face value.)
As a result of this difference, the Existentialists view their terms as having no essence. They are ever-changing. In contrast, the Freudian terms are relatively fixed inasmuch as they are said to have a certain nature.

At first glance the notion that the standard (being-for-others) by which we measure ourselves is ever-changing appears mutually exclusive to the existence of guilt. Guilt has been described as a failure to meet such standards but if those standards can change then there seems little reason for the conflict to be maintained. By changing the standard to be consistent with the behaviour which was initially perceived as aberrant will alleviate the guilt, (ie. there will be no conflict).

Therefore, it would seem that a semi-permanent standard is necessary to account for the conflict of real guilt. Sartre refers to the development and maintenance of an enduring being-for-others as “bad faith.” On the basis of his philosophy fixedness of self is not necessary and thus real guilt is not necessary. For Sartre, living in bad faith represented an inadequate means to the achievement of man's fundamental project (to become God). Living in bad faith is an attempt to be an in-itself being: a being which is fixed and can be nothing other than itself (eg. a chair).

Sartre’s conceptualisation of bad faith can be construed as consistent with Freud's hypothesised superego inasmuch as each performs the same function, viz., to give substance to the perception of what one should be. In other words, both the superego and being-in-bad-faith represent the ideal self as perceived by oneself. They are relatively stable constructs although the Existentialists emphasise the individual's ability to cast off one's bad faith by an act of 'be-ing'. The treatment model of Psychoanalysis is also suggestive of an overcoming
of the superego through making the unconscious superego conscious. Once again, the Psychoanalytic and Existential viewpoints seem compatible in spite of the difference in language.

An apparent problem area for both Freud and the Existentialists is attribution. As Bandura (1986) has emphasised, it is one thing to fail one’s ego-ideal but it is another to attribute blame for that failure to self. For guilt to be felt, the person must recognise the failure and attribute blame for that failure to self. This view has considerable support in the field of guilt, (Izard, 1977; DeRivera, 1984; Hoffman, 1976; Smith & Ellsworth, 1985; and McGraw, 1987). The Freudians and the Existentialists would counter by indicating that not all guilt is felt. Guilt is nothing other than self-directed aggression which is often realised in negative thoughts/feelings about self but is equally evident in so-called neurotic behaviour which itself is typically self-punishing. This discussion is central to this research because it highlights the confusion surrounding the nature of guilt. For the attributionalists, guilt is necessarily felt, (see particularly Weiner, 1986). It is a response to certain failures. In contrast, other groups such as the Freudians and the Existentialists also view guilt as a state which motivates actions and feelings. The guilt feeling is the same for each group but it represents a different stage in the whole guilt process. For one it is guilt and for the other it is a product, and therefore an indication of guilt.

The foregoing discussion of an Existential approach to guilt has raised similar questions to those which emerged from a discussion of the Freudian approach. Such questions form the basis of this work. Firstly, the nature of guilt has yet to be clarified. The Existentialists theorise about guilt as an existential given; as a state of being; as a failure to meet one’s ideals for self; and as a feeling which emanates from that failure. If all these are guilt in various contexts, what then is guilt?
Secondly, it was noted that Tillich (1952) has put forward a potential answer to the question of how a disunity can exist within a unity, but further exploration of his use of terms is required.

The third question raised in this section concerns the relation of guilt to unconsciousness. The Freudian assertion that self-damaging behaviours are reflective of unconscious guilt is impossible in the Existential conceptualisation and as such, an examination of how unconsciousness impinges upon guilt is warranted.

1.4 Kelly and Guilt

George Kelly (1955) proposed that a person’s "structure" is comprised of constructs which reflect the way in which the person construes him/herself in the world. The constructs are organised into a hierarchy of "loose" (ie. non-specific) superordinate constructs and "tight" incidental constructs. Within such an organisation, Kelly delineates the "core role structure" which is a construction of who a person is in relation to significant others. It is the departure from this core role structure which defines guilt for Kelly.

"Within one's core structure there are those frames which enable one to predict and control the essential interactions of himself with other persons and with societal groups of person. Altogether these constitute his conceptualisation of his core role. Taken separately they delimit the facets of his core role and explain a persons varicoloured reflections under changing social illumination. One's deepest understanding of being maintained as a social being is his concept of his core role. Perception of one's apparent dislodgement from his core role structure constitutes the experience of guilt." (1955 p.502).

Kelly asserts that his conceptualisation of guilt is not inconsistent with the Freudian view but has the advantage of freeing "the research
minded psychologist from ... the anthropomorphism of the Freudian superego." (1955, p.502). Dislodgement from one's core role (i.e. guilt) could occur in the resolution of the Oedipal complex as Freud suggests, but for Kelly this is merely one example of guilt and not a definitional necessity.

Unfortunately, Kelly neglects to explain the emergence of the core role structure. While it is clear that structure is eminently changeable inasmuch as it merely reflects the way in which one construes the world, it is unclear whether a person is able to perform such constructions from birth or if the ability develops over a period of time. If it is the latter, some explanation of the genesis of core role structure is required.

Furthermore, it is not clear why dislodgement from core role structure produces guilt when the core role structure is changeable. That is to say, guilt is founded in the conflict between core role structure and the perception of oneself in a given situation, but surely such a conflict is escapable with the appropriate alteration of the core role structure. What is it that stops the core role structure from changing in such a way?

Like Freud, Kelly has proposed a structure which identifies the tensions involved in the production of guilt, but also neglects to describe the specific mechanisms which make up such a process. In his definition, Kelly speaks of guilt as the "perception of apparent dislodgement" and then speaks of "feeling guilty" (p.502). Does this mean that the person is feeling a perception of apparent dislodgement? Such a statement is a nonsense. It appears that Kelly's theory of guilt is unable to distinguish guilt as deviance from a norm and guilt as feeling. The precise nature of guilt is ill-defined. Perhaps Kelly, like Freud, understands guilt as a process which has a feeling of guilt as its end.
product. Of course, Freud suggested that there were many other possible end products of the guilt process such as self-damaging behaviours. However, even if this is the case, Kelly is subject to the same criticism as was levelled at Freud, viz., a comprehensive theory of guilt must be capable of explaining the mechanisms which make up the guilt process.

Finally, Kelly argues that the link between guilt and punishment is nothing other than the adoption of a social construction. He suggests that punishment is "a measure taken primarily to protect the punisher from the threat of being like the punished person." (1955 p.506). Extrapolating from this argument, it is expected that the person who has a greater tendency to punish others for wrongdoing will experience greater degrees of self-punishing guilt than the person who has a lesser tendency to punish others for wrongdoing.

Although Kelly's argument possesses face validity and substantial literature support, it contains a fundamental problem, viz., guilt is punishing in and of itself. The experience of guilt is equivalent to the denial of self in order to protect the standards of self. In Freudian terminology, guilt involves the denial of the ego in protection of the superego. The punishment which is intrinsic to guilt creates the problem of how a disunity can exist within a unity. This "problem of guilt" was raised in the earlier discussion of Psychoanalytic and Existential approaches.

However, Kelly has developed a similar notion to Paul Tillich (1952) whereby it is possible to overcome guilt through the acknowledgement of responsibility. In arguing against the intrinsic link between guilt and punishment, Kelly has laid the groundwork for a distinction between responsibility whereby responsibility can be viewed as non-punishing guilt. Unfortunately, Kelly writes as if there exists an equivalence
between responsibility and guilt in spite of the common feature of punishment in the latter. The role of punishment in guilt is therefore integral to an understanding of the nature of guilt. It is hoped that his work will serve to separate guilt from responsibility and therein propose a way of overcoming guilt via the acknowledgement of responsibility.

As with the above discussion of Psychoanalysis and Existentialism, a number of questions have been raised in this section on Kelly. The first question which is common to all three approaches concerns the nature of guilt. Kelly speaks of guilt as a perception of dislodgement from one's core role structure and as a feeling. It was thought that he may follow Freud in viewing guilt as a process of one to the other, but this was not clear from Kelly's work itself. The mechanisms of such a process are unclear as is the role of punishment in the emergence of the feeling. The issue requires further clarification.

Secondly, the question of how self-damage (i.e. disunity) is possible within a person (i.e. a unity) was raised by Kelly's inability to explain why a core role does not change when it is in conflict with a particular input. Self-damage can only occur if disparate parts conflict, but in so doing the unity of the person is broken. If the core role structure is changeable, it is unclear why it does not change in order to preserve the unity of the person.

Thirdly, Kelly was not explicit about the genesis of the core role structure. When does it first appear? In what form? How does it develop? A full account of guilt must attend to these questions.
1.4 Mosher

Since the early 1960's, Donald Mosher has been one of most prolific researcher into guilt. He defines guilt as,

"a generalised expectancy for self-mediated punishment (ie. negative reinforcement) for violating, anticipating the violation of, or failure to attain internalised standards of proper conduct." (1965, p.162).

Despite this definition's lack of distinction between guilt as a personality disposition and guilt as an episodic affective state, Mosher asserts elsewhere (1971) that his measures are aimed at the "personality disposition of guilt" (1971, p.27). He suggests that feeling guilty is "only one of several potential referents for the personality disposition of guilt" (1971, p.27). Unfortunately, this assertion involves a problem. Dispositions are always toward something, (eg. a disposition towards behaviour A), rather than of something. If Mosher is speaking of a disposition towards guilt, then what is guilt? It can no longer be a disposition, lest we propose a disposition towards a disposition. This is not to disregard the possibility of a disposition towards guilt, nor to reject the above definition, but rather to clarify the nature of guilt.

Mosher's definition contains a number of inadequacies which take the form of errors of omission rather than errors of commission. The first such error, which has been outlined above concerns the nature of guilt. In his definition, Mosher infers that guilt is a cognitive state, although this is not made explicit, and indeed, is inconsistent with Mosher's work elsewhere, (see particularly Mosher & Cross, 1971). Guilt is a cognitive state in the definition inasmuch as it is described as an awareness of conduct violation, (anticipated or actual), and thereby warranting punishment. In contrast to Mosher's conceptualisation of
guilt as a disposition, Freud suggests that the feeling of guilt is only one such form of punishment. He describes the guilt feeling as an experience of anxiety with reference to a particular act. If guilt is a cognitive state, then each guilt exists within a frame of reference. That is to say, a person is not generally guilty as Mosher's reference to "disposition" might infer but rather, is guilty of a particular conduct violation, or the anticipation of such, at a particular time and place. The question which emerges from this confusion is whether guilt is a disposition, a cognition, a feeling, a punishment or some combination of them?

Secondly, there is no explicit mention of the role of attribution in guilt. Blame for the violation of proper conduct must be attributed to the person if guilt is to be realised. By way of a counter example, a person is not seen to be guilty of murder if s/he killed one of the enemy during a war. Mosher's definition is not inconsistent with the role of attribution, but it is inadequate because the importance of blame attribution is not made clear. The absence of attribution in Mosher's conception of guilt reflects the theory's inability to answer the question of who/what blames who/what in guilt? And on what basis is that blame made? In short, Mosher has not addressed the question of how a disunity can exist within a unity.

Likewise, Mosher's definition is inadequate because it contains no mention of levels of guilt. The definition suggests that a person is either guilty or not guilty, but this is inconsistent with Mosher's measures of guilt which attempt to quantify levels of guilt. This discrepancy appears to be based on Mosher's inability to define that which he is measuring: is it a state which is either present or absent, or is it a personality disposition which has various levels? The nature of guilt has to be consistent between the definition and the measure.
While Mosher asserts that his work on guilt is founded on Psychoanalysis, (1965, p.163), there is no evidence of this in the definition. For example, Freud (1916) was quite clear that guilt was not only a consequence of conduct violations, but it was also a motivator for the continuation of such behaviour.

1.5 Weiner and the Attributional Theory of Guilt

Following on from Kelly's (1955) man as scientist model, a number of theorists have attempted to explain behaviour by reference to attributions of causes. Weiner (1986) is one recent attributional theorist who has developed an account of how guilt is produced.

According to Weiner, emotions are a consequence of causal attributions for some event. For example, Weiner suggests that guilt results from the attribution of cause for some negative event to oneself, (1986, p.150-1). Such an approach to guilt is consistent with the empirical literature (see Wicker, Payne, & Morgan, 1983 for a review), although it restricts guilt to the status of an emotion.

Weiner asserts that an individual interprets an event on the basis of three attributional dimensions, viz., locus of control; stability over time; and controllability. Each dimension is said to have two values which represent either extreme of the dimension. Thus the cause is attributed to:

a.) an internal or external locus of control, (eg. self or other),
b.) a stable or unstable characteristic, (eg. lack of ability versus lack of effort), and
c.) a controllable or uncontrollable situation, (eg. lack of concern versus fatigue).

It is proposed that the onset of guilt is precipitated by causal attributions which conform to internal, stable, and controllable, (Weiner,
The key dimension is controllability. Weiner, Graham, & Chandler (1982) asked subjects to remember a particular situation in which they had felt guilt. Ninety-four percent of these situations were rated by the person as personally controllable (i.e., under the person's control).

Weiner neglects to provide a theoretical underpinning for his focus on three dimensions of causal attribution. He does not explain why controllability is central to guilt. Perhaps it is possible to view the three dimensions as representative of one's ideal for self inasmuch as one would ideally control that which is controllable.

However, what does control mean? The exertion of self over a situation seems necessary to any concept of control, but what is the basis of this self in Weiner's model? He does not say. Furthermore, what does it mean to talk of self controlling self? What are these two parts of self and how do they co-exist in the unity of self? Weiner does little to answer any of these broader, more theoretical questions, preferring instead to identify a relationship which finds strong support in his research results. Not only must a theory of guilt be able to account for such relationships but it must also be able to account for how such relationships come about. This work is concerned with the development of such a theory and thus seeks to formulate a theory which would explain Weiner's important result of a documented correlation between controllability and guilt.

In summary, the questions raised by Weiner's account of guilt are not dissimilar to those raised by earlier discussions of other theorists:

a.) What is guilt—a feeling, cognition, an attribution, a disposition, a state of being etc.? It should be noted that Weiner does assert that guilt is a feeling which is produced by a certain set of attributions. Although, having said this, it is equally clear that Weiner is unable to
give a structure to this feeling and its concomitant cognitions and behaviours. Consequently, his answer to the question is incomplete.

b.) how can the conflict (disunity) of guilt exist within the unity of a person? Weiner's lack of structure in attempting to answer the first question leads to his complete neglect of this central issue of how self-damage is possible.

1.6 Some Questions and Consequent Aims

The preceding discussion of various approaches to guilt has provided this work with a focus via the posing of a number of questions which no single viewpoint was able to adequately answer. Interestingly, those questions are fundamental to any discussion of guilt because they address the very nature of guilt. In posing the questions, therefore, this work has taken the first step towards its stated aim of establishing a coherent theory of guilt. The questions are:

1.61 What is guilt?

It has been suggested that guilt is a feeling; a failure; a disposition; an existential state; an attribution; a cognition; and even a style of behaviour. Which is/are correct? The variety of definitions can be divided into two groups; guilt as motivator and guilt as response, thereby producing the new question of whether guilt is a motivator, a response or both. A number of theorists have answered this question with a short answer but in so doing have failed to support their assertions with an explanation of the specific mechanisms which underlie the production of guilt. In other words, the answer to the question, "what is guilt?" requires a full account of the mechanisms or systems by which guilt is produced. The mere assertion that guilt is "x" is invalid without such an account.
This work proposes the notion that guilt is a process of the self over time and that various thoughts, feelings, and behaviours reflect this process. Consequently, the central concern here is support for this view by the postulation of a self system within which guilt can operate. A detailed hypothesis will be presented after the questions have been posited.

1.62 How can guilt exist?

The inherent contradiction of guilt has been ignored by all major theorists in the area. That contradiction has been stated and re-stated throughout the preceding discussion according to each theoretical frame of reference, but the central problem has remained the same: how can a disunity (i.e. a guilt conflict) exist within a unity (i.e. a person)? The difficulty lies in the fact that the person is involved in both sides of the conflict as well as being the unity in which the conflict is fought. In other words, the person identifies with the punisher, the punished, and the situation/environment in which the punishment occurs. The identity relationship is often such that the person disowns him/herself from the event which highlighted the conflict (e.g. "I had to do it"). An analogous situation would be two countries who are at war (i.e. in conflict) are also at peace (i.e. united). Such a situation is a nonsense.

The problem of the "unity of opposites" was first discussed by Parmenides around 500BC and has since provoked discussion by a variety of thinkers including Heraclitus of Ephesus, Plato (in the Sophist), the Greek atomists such as Empedocles, British empiricists such as Locke and Hume, and recent writers such as Engels (1925), Kitaro (1958), and Anderson (1962). Suffice to say that this is a long standing problem in philosophy to which there is no universally satisfactory answer. In the current context, the problem of the unity of opposites
can be expressed in terms of how can the self (unity) exist when it is comprised of conflicting parts (opposites)?

Each theoretical stance on guilt was shown to adopt a starting point of either unity or disunity (e.g. the Existentialists and the Freudians respectively), but none of them was then able to incorporate the other except by mere assumption that it existed. That is to say, no standpoint was able to argue from a starting point of unity or disunity to an endpoint of disunity or unity respectively. However, guilt is an experience which few would deny and therefore we all experience something which is logically incoherent.

This study has as its second aim the validation of the guilt experience via the unravelling of the above contradiction. In short, the method by which this aim will be approached is through an exploration of the self system. It is proposed that such exploration will unveil the fallacy at the root of the contradiction, viz., the assumed fixed nature of the self. It will be suggested that the self is an emergent property of the self system and thereby is constantly changing by virtue of the relations between its constituent parts. The theory to be presented is therefore able to distinguish between responsibility and guilt wherein guilt is self-disintegrating and responsibility is self-integrating.

1.63 What is the nature of the standard?

Freud was able to initiate an answer to this question by reference to the genesis, development, and maintenance of the superego. However, the superego was proposed as a fixed standard and thus further work is required to account for its changing role in the construction of the self. It was seen that the other theorists merely asserted the existence of the standard (being-for-others, core role structure, etc) with little regard for how it originated, how it developed
and how it was maintained. The nature of the standard is necessarily linked to the construction of the self and it is this relationship which needs elucidation if one is to understand the nature of the standard.

1.64 What is unconscious guilt?

Freud's assertion that certain self-damaging behaviours resulted from an unconscious sense of guilt rests on the acceptance of unconscious motivation. Other schools, particularly Existentialism, reject the concept of unconscious motivation preferring instead to focus on consciousness.

1.7 An Hypothesis

In response to the questions and aims set out above, a theory of guilt will be developed. Such a theory must begin with a system of self which is consistent with the co-existence of unity and disunity. The nature of guilt as a disunity is thus admissible. Further points of focus for the theory are the nature of the standard and how it functions to "control" the unity (person).

The first stage in the process of theory development is to propose an hypothesis which will serve as the foundation for the theory building. This work sets out to give support for the following hypothesis through argument and with reference to a number of case studies.

Guilt is the disintegration of the unity which we identify as a person. The disintegration is a result of an inability of that unity to control its constituent parts. Guilt is therefore the replacement of a unity with a disunity. The emergence of a disunity carries with it the establishment of open conflict between those constituent parts with the former unity left with the inability/reluctance to assume control over the parts on the basis that in so doing it will acknowledge a lack of
integrity of being and therein acknowledges one's impotence/contingency/emptiness/meaninglessness/powerlessness.

Guilt is a discrepancy within the person. Consequently, all the displays of guilt such as feeling guilty and doing self-damaging things are reflections of guilt in the same way as military attacks are reflective of war. That is to say, the feelings and acts of guilt are not all there is to guilt but rather, are manifestations of guilt. Guilt itself is the disunity of the self.

In an attempt to explicate the mechanisms involved in the disintegration of the unity, this study will begin with a self-regulating system of control. It is suggested that guilt begins by a failure to meet the standard (ie. unity) within a self-regulating system of control because those standards are in conflict (ie. disunited). The standard is comprised of two relatively stable component sub-systems which closely resemble the Existentialist being-for-others and being-for-self. Indeed, the likeness is such that those terms have been adopted. There is also a similarity between the sub-systems and the Freudian constructs of superego and an id/ego combination, respectively.

The functioning of the standard is affected by a variety of changing (state) factors which make up part of the input to the system.

The unification of the standard components and the state factors produces a third construct which is the unity of the person, (this is the Existentialist being-in-the-world and Kelly's core role structure).

According to a self-regulating system, discrepancy between input and standard produces a discrepancy reducing output. However, in the guilt situation the standard itself is in conflict (ie. there is no unifying being-in-the-world) and therefore the output is only discrepancy reducing with respect to one part of the standard. Predictably, the subsequent input will be discrepant with the other standard and as such
will lead to a discrepancy reducing output with respect to that standard and then the process is repeated ad infinitum.

The only lasting solution to this endless compensation race is the unification of the component parts, although it is possible to evade the conflict by resorting to a rationalisation, (eg. Bandura’s methods for "disengagement of control" and Weiner’s "justifications"). A rationalisation is an evasion of the disunity inasmuch as it is tantamount to a denial of self involvement. That is to say, a rationalisation evades disunity and/or responsibility by removing self from the event except in the form of a puppet of circumstance.

Unification is possible by the acknowledgement of responsibility for self in the given event. Self-integration is the emergence of the responsible unity out of the disunity of conflicting parts.

Within this proposed system of self, the experience of guilt will begin with the failure to meet expectations (ie. a discrepancy between a given input and the prevailing standard). The structure of the self system is such that a self-punishing output will result from this failure if the emergent self is disintegrated by a conflict between its component parts, and such a conflict (discrepancy) cannot be overcome or reduced by rationalisation or responsibility.
2. FAILURE TO MEET EXPECTATIONS

Guilt begins with the failure to meet expectations. In this section, the nature of failure will be discussed together with the establishment and maintenance of self-expectations. In short, it will be shown that an understanding of one's failure to meet expectations can be achieved by viewing failure as impaired control and expectations as the standard by which one's control mechanisms are regulated.

This is in accord with Weiner's (1986) research data on guilt as a function of controllability. That is to say, without controllability, there is an inability to prevent the particular act and without the ability to prevent the act, one cannot be blamed and therefore one is not guilty. To be guilty of anything, one must first have control over it.

Of course, this is true of real guilt alone. As noted above, neurotic guilt is often devoid of the rationality required to discern the level of control over a given situation. Consequently, neurotic guilt can be experienced in relation to uncontrollable events such as earthquakes, because the event or the outcome is viewed as controllable by the person who experiences the guilt.

2.1 Control as a Self Regulating System

One way to conceptualise the failure to meet expectations is via a self-regulatory model of control. According to such a system, failure to meet expectations is equivalent to a discrepancy between input, (ie. one's perceptions), and a pre-set standard. This section describes the nature of a self-regulatory system as a precursor and aid for the following discussion of failure to meet expectations.
2.11 Control and agency

Within psychology, the very notion of control has had a problematic history. This is primarily because the word control seems to invoke a form of agency on the part of the controller over him/herself. For instance, the statement, "I control my own affairs" is suggestive of a self/ego which wields power over oneself. Such a notion begs the questions of what constitutes the source of such power and secondly, what can it mean to have power over oneself other than one is both powerful and powerless, and that is a nonsense. Typically, the use of agency in psychology has been associated with doctrines of free will which, by their very nature, negate the possibility of laws governing human behaviour.

2.12 The negative feedback loop

More recently, theorists in this area have proposed a mechanism known as the negative feedback loop to explain control. Carver and Scheier (1981) contend that control is an artefact of a self-regulatory system based on the continual comparisons of perceptual input with an internal "comparator." In their words, the function of a negative feedback loop is "to negate, or reduce, sensed deviations from a comparison value." (1982 p.112). The self-regulatory loop of control is presented in Figure 1. (From Carver and Scheier, 1982, p112).
Figure 1: The Negative Feedback Loop - the basic unit of cybernetic control.

This self-regulatory system of control overcomes the two questions posed earlier in response to the notion that one can control oneself. Control is not something which is done by someone to someone else, but rather it is an artefact of the changing nature of the self over time. In other words, the self is an ever-changing system which at any one point can be said to be in control or out of control by virtue of the presence or absence of discrepancy in the self-regulating system. Of course, this may not occur in an absolute sense as is suggested by language such as "in control" or "out of control." Rather the discrepancy reducing output (ie. the form of control) may only be partially adequate. It is therefore preferable to speak of impaired control.
2.13 Bandura's self-regulating system

Bandura (1986) has presented a sophisticated version of the self-regulating system wherein he proposes the subfunctions of self-observation, judgemental process and self-reaction. These subfunctions correspond to the stages of input, comparator and output in a negative feedback loop. For Bandura, the focus of the system is always oneself, (i.e. one's behaviour, one's cognitions and one's emotions). Unfortunately, Bandura's use of words leaves him open to charges of indeterminacy and explanation via the postulation of homunculi. A detailed argument against Bandura's system will be put forward later.

![Figure 2: Subprocesses involved in the self regulation of behaviour by internal standards and self incentives.](image)

The sophistication of Bandura's model is enhanced by the introduction of additional variables which influence the relevant subfunction. For example, at the self-observation stage of the self-regulatory system, Bandura identifies the dimensions of quality, rate, quantity, sociability, morality and deviancy as important influences on the observation of oneself. Self-observation is affected by all these
variables. Figure 2 is a diagrammatic representation of Bandura's model. (From Bandura, 1986. p.377).

2.2 Failure: A Discrepancy Between Perception and Standard

The hypothesis outlined earlier asserted that guilt begins with the failure to meet expectations and that this failure can be understood as a discrepancy between a given input and a prevailing standard. It will be argued in this section that failure can be located within a self-regulatory system as a discrepancy between the input, (in Bandura's terms; the self-observation), and the standard. As a consequence failure can be construed as some degree of impaired control.

However, in establishing this identity relationship between failure, discrepancy and lack of control, it is necessary to reject Bandura's separation of control from the self regulating system. Bandura asserts that discrepancies can occur in two ways: disengagement of control and the existence of overly harsh standards.

2.21 Disengagement of control as a source of discrepancy

The first source of discrepancy (disengagement of control) proposed by Bandura is the removal of control from a given situation such that the person ceases to self-regulate. According to Bandura, control must be activated and therefore impaired control involves a disengagement of internal control from behaviour, (p.375). He postulates the existence of a number of mechanisms which could facilitate the disengagement of internal control. These include: moral justification for reprehensible conduct such as is found when the end is seen to justify the means; euphemistic labelling of reprehensible behaviour such as referring to a murder as a contract; inappropriate comparisons of self-deplored acts like justifying petty crime by reference to a worse crime; displaced responsibility exemplified by blaming laws or authorities for individual
acts; diffusion of responsibility often found in the blaming of the collective; disregard or distortion of consequences usually associated with reprehensible conduct which leads to personal gain; dehumanisation of the objects of self-deplored behaviour common in inter-racial violence; and the attribution of blame to those being mistreated.

Although Bandura has obviously highlighted a variety of ways to understand conduct involving impaired control, it is as yet unclear how the cognitive states associated with the disengagement of control come about in the first place. In other words, who/what engages and disengages control? Bandura writes as if it is the person themselves, but if this is the case, what controls that disengagement and who is controlled? For Bandura to argue that it is the person who controls and the person who is controlled leads one back to the problem of internal relations, (ie. a person cannot be both in control and out of control).

An alternative explanation of how Bandura's facilitators of control disengagement operate is therefore required. This will be discussed later, but for now it is important to re-emphasise that an impairment of control can be understood as a discrepancy between a perception and a given standard. There is no need for homunculi to account for the engagement or disengagement of control.

It must also be remembered that failure does not presume the attribution of blame, and therefore failure itself is nothing more than the existence of a discrepancy. According to the system, a discrepancy, (ie. a failure), leads to an output which typically reduces the discrepancy such as a learned behaviour. Equally, the failure could produce a discrepancy reducing cognition, a discrepancy reducing emotion, a discrepancy reducing misinterpretation of the input, and/or a discrepancy reducing alteration of the standard.
It is unclear whether discrepancies can be both conscious and unconscious but the limitations of this thesis demand that the question be addressed elsewhere. Certainly, the role of the unconscious in self-regulating systems requires further investigation.

2.22 Unachievable standards: A second source of discrepancy

Bandura puts forward a second source of discrepancies in the self-regulating system in the form of unachievable standards, but this too must be rejected. It is argued that Bandura cannot account for the origin of such standards without reference to a controlling agency (i.e. an homunculus) such as was required in his notion of engagement and disengagement of control. Bandura proposes a theory of reciprocal determinism to explain the origin of unachievable standards but this will be seen to be logically flawed.

The second source of discrepancy (failure) proposed by Bandura is the adoption of harsh standards in the self-regulatory system. He refers to such systems as dysfunctional and quotes depression as a common example (1986, p.357). Unfortunately, it is not immediately obvious how these harsh standards come about. In response to this apparent lack of clarity, Bandura asserts that the origin of the standard is not in question because of reciprocal determinism. Reciprocal determinism suggest that there exists a reciprocal influence between the standard and the self-monitoring such that each determines the other. Consequently, in the above example of depression, the standard is a product of the self-monitoring procedure just as the self-monitoring is a product of the standard.

Despite its obvious face validity, reciprocal determinism is untenable in its proposed form. In short, reciprocal determinism
ignores time. Events do occur in temporal sequence in spite of Bandura's disregard of this limitation. This is not to deny reciprocal influence, but merely to assert the role of time in the world. Using the above example, the harsh standard which affects the self-monitoring procedure occurs prior to the harsh standard which is the product of that self-monitoring. The temporal distance between the two standards renders them integrally different. It is ludicrous to suggest, as Bandura appears to do, that the second of the two standards affects the self-monitoring because it does not exist until after the self-monitoring.

Bandura therefore has a problem over which comes first - the underrating of performances, or the harsh standard. His previous reference to reciprocal determinism in answer to this question has been shown to be untenable on the basis that it disregards time. Indeed, reciprocal determinism sends us into an infinite regress. In Bandura's own words, "... in the regress of prior causes, for every chicken discovered by a uni-directional environmentalist, a social learning theorist can identify a prior egg." (quoted in Yalom, 1980, p.271). This regress is not vicious if it conforms to a temporal sequence such that the cause occurs before the effect. If this is what Bandura has been arguing, then it must be noted that this is nothing new. The importance of the perceiver in the process of perception has long been acknowledged by adherents to unidirectional determinism, outside of Radical Behaviourism that is, (eg. Anderson, 1962).

As indirect support for reciprocal determinism, Bandura argues against the "adherents of unidirectional environmental determinism." (p.363). He correctly argues that to ignore the role of the perceiver in any behavioural sequence is tantamount to placing one's head in the sand. Unfortunately, Bandura does nothing other than knock down the "straw man" of Behaviouristic epistemology (ie. environmental
determinism) because in so doing, he neglects to argue against the construct of unidirectionality. As has been shown above, unidirectionality can co-exist with reciprocal influence whereby a perception is a function of both that which is perceived and the state of the perceiver.

The origin of an unachievable standard is thus in some doubt. This is not to deny it as a source of discrepancy and thereby of guilt, but merely to express the need to establish how such a standard might come about. A full discussion of the standard is therefore appropriate, (see Section 2.5).

2.23 Discrepancy equals impaired control

The two sources of failure put forward by Bandura have been discussed and internal problems were found in each. These difficulties can be viewed as a direct product of Bandura's separation of system dysfunction from the disengagement of control. The reasoning behind the separation is that Bandura does not view impaired control as a construction of failure. Rather, he argues that control must be engaged and therefore, failure, (defined above as a function of the self-regulating system), is a construction of control. That is to say, the discrepancy between input and standard may be a function of one's level of internal control but equally may be a function of one's standard. For example, Bandura suggests that the dysfunction associated with depression is a consequence of unachievable standards (1986, p.358) but the maintenance of such standards reflects the presence of internal control over self. Therefore, the failure associated with depression reflects a presence of control. This is in direct contrast to our conceptualisation that failure reflects a lack of control.
There are two resultant problems with Bandura's approach. Firstly, it is unable to account for the failure of the person to alter the standard such that it was achievable. If, as Bandura suggests, the person is separate from the standard and is able to exert some influence over the standard via the engagement and disengagement of control, then it is surprising indeed that the person does not simply alter the standard to make it more achievable. Such a change is not inconsistent with Bandura's notion of the standard as an evolving entity. Secondly, using Bandura's approach, the self-regulatory system cannot account for control, but rather, can only be the system within which control is imposed. This is the case because Bandura views control as a prerequisite to the operation of the self-regulating system.

An alternative to Bandura's approach would be to conceive of the discrepancy reducing output as the method of increasing control and therefore a failure to produce such an output is equivalent to a further impairment of control. Control can then be construed in behavioural terms, in cognitive terms, and/or in emotional terms. It is valid to argue that such discrepancies are representative of an impairment of control inasmuch as the "failure" of the discrepancy reducing output to satisfy the standard represents an impairment of control.

2.3 Other Agents of Control?

At first hearing, the above conceptualisation seems to ignore the environmental effect on the individual's output. For example, a person with a standard of winning on a poker machine may attempt to "control" his/her previous loss/discrepancy/failure by playing again. The new play is just as likely to end in a loss which means that the second play, (the attempt at reducing the discrepancy associated with the previous loss), is an impaired control output. The environmental effect (ie. the
effect of external factors) in this case is very strong. In fact the play is insignificant to the negativity or positivity of the outcome, and is expressed in terms of the stage between output and input, (ie. the impact on environment). Equally, the above conception does not appear to take into account any existing skill deficit in the person such that the discrepancy reducing output is ineffective.

Both these claims of apparent oversight suggest the need for a mechanism that allows for the apportioning of control according to the respective levels of influence displayed by the relevant factors over the given event. Such a mechanism will be proposed in the section on attribution (see section 3.2).

2.4 Failure : A Summary and a Paradox'

Thusfar, it has been noted that Bandura does not necessarily link the discrepancy between input and a pre-set standard to impaired control and as a result has difficulty in explaining just how control does come about. An alternative view has been put forward which asserts that failure is equivalent to a discrepancy between self-related input and a pre-set standard, and consequently can be construed as an impairment of control. Within this new conceptualisation, control can be reduced, (ie. failure can emerge), through the involvement of factors such as emotion, arousal, unconscious desires, etc. That is to say, control can be reduced through any dimension of input. The difficulty facing this viewpoint is the form of the interaction (ie. differential influence) between the various dimensions of input. It is proposed that the focal point of the various factors is the standard and therefore a discussion of the construction, development, and maintenance of the standard is required.
However, before launching into such a discussion, it is important to establish the philosophical limit to such an exploration. The self-regulating system operates on the tenet that each stage of the system follows the previous stage and leads to the next stage. It is problematic therefore to separate any one stage from the system and treat it as if it existed in isolation, lest we fall into Zeno's paradox of motion. The paradox has been described in the following way,

"If a man is to walk a distance of one mile, he must first walk half the distance or one half mile, then he must walk half of what remains or one fourth mile, then again half of what remains or one eighth mile, etc. ad infinitum. An infinite series of finite distances must be successively traversed if the is to reach the end of the mile. But an infinite series is by definition a series that cannot be exhausted, for it never comes to an end." (Hughes & Brecht, 1979, p.20).

As White (1963) has pointed out, the feature of the paradox which maintains its problematic nature is the division of one motion into component motions as if they existed in isolation. In the current context, it is problematic to separate off one stage of the self-regulatory system and discuss it as if it existed in isolation. That is to say, each stage of a self-regulating system only exists by virtue of the existence of all other stages.

2.5 The Standard

In Carver and Scheier's self-regulatory model of control, (see Figure 1), the "reference value" which gives rise to the standard is a function of a hierarchical system of goals, (based on Powers 1973). Such a system works on the basis that attainment of superordinate goals is a prerequisite to attainment of subordinate goals. In keeping with Power's approach, Carver and Scheier suggests that the so-called
superordinate goals are "principle" or "system" concepts. These concepts are content free inasmuch as they are applicable to a variety of situations and behaviours. An example of how a hierarchical system of goals operates is shown in Figure 3. (From Carver and Scheier, 1982, p.115).

![Diagram of Power's hierarchy of control]

**SYSTEM CONCEPT:**
Be a responsible person

**PRINCIPLE:**
Follow through on commitments

**PROGRAM:**
Drive over and return the notes

**RELATIONSHIPS:**
"Drivingness"

**SEQUENCE:**
Make a right turn

**TRANSITION:**
Turning of the steering wheel

**CONFIGURATION:**
Fingers around wheel rim

**SENSATION:**
Gripping

**INTENSITY:**
Muscle tensions

Figure 3 A concrete behavioural illustration of Power's hierarchy of control. (The behaviour is that of a young man making a turn while driving to a friend's house on an errand.)

This goal hierarchy was developed in answer to the question of where the comparator comes from, but unfortunately, it does nothing
more than displace the problem to a more primal level. That is to say, the same question of origins can be asked of the proposed "system concept" or "principle."

As mentioned earlier, it is not uncommon for theorists in the area of control to revert to a system of free will in an attempt to explain the motivation behind the production of the standard. Indeed, Carver and Scheier appear to do just that by proposing teleologically based motivators such as their super-ordinate goal of "wanting to be a responsible person." Kuhl (1984) also uses purposivism in his theory of action. This is not necessary.

While a negative feedback loop can be spoken of as a goal directed system, there is another, more preferable, viewpoint. The system does not seek out goals but rather acts in response to discrepancies. Such actions are learned. The sequence of events conforms to a push model of motivation whereby each stage leads to the next stage. This sort of system operates in a car thermostat. When the temperature reaches a certain level, the valve opens.

It does not open in order for the water to cool, it opens because the water has reached a certain temperature. The so-called purpose of the action did not motivate it, but merely describes the process. The water cooled because the valve opened and the valve opened because the water temperature rose. It is a nonsense to suggest that the water temperature rose in order for the water temperature to fall.

This trivial example sets out the operations of a simple self-regulating system. The added complexity of a system which can create seemingly unlearned behaviours from simple learned behaviours (eg. writing a letter) does not alter the basic operation of the system.
Additionally, the hierarchy of goals put forward by Carver and Scheier does little to enhance our understanding of the relationship between behavioural, cognitive, and affective dimensions of self. Are we to believe that cognitions are super-ordinate or subordinate to feelings? Certainly not. There is considerable evidence of the reciprocal influence existing between these three dimensions of humanity, (Bandura, 1986; Zajonc, 1980). Alternatively, are we to believe that each dimension represents its own complete hierarchy? If this is the case, then a theory of "standard" construction must attend to the interaction of the dimensions.

Nevertheless, the acknowledgement of interdependent self-regulatory systems which is implicit to the hierarchy of goals is an important advance. Self-regulating systems that are hierarchically organised can to be used to explain levels of apparent agency or control associated with the performance of new, unlearned, complex behaviours such as writing a letter. That is to say the compilation of simple learned behaviours to produce control which is explicable by virtue of their representation of one "principle."

It has been shown that Carver and Scheier's hypothesised goal hierarchy is somewhat deficient in its ability to account for the "standard." While it can aid in the understanding of "controlled" behaviours, it lacks the breadth to make plain both the origin of the standard, and the interaction of cognitions, feelings and behaviours.

Bandura (1986) explains the maintenance of the standard by asserting the self monitoring nature of the self-regulating system. According to Bandura, self-observation is not merely perception of what is happening, but it is also integral to the development of the standard to which it is compared. Carver and Scheier proposed the hierarchical system of standard setting but did not detail the interactive effect of the
observation with the judgmental subfunction whereby previous perceptions broaden the limits of the standard.

For Bandura the origin of the standard can be similarly explained. Within the judgmental subfunction of the self-regulatory system, socialisation processes act to continually alter the standard by which judgements are made. That is to say, there is no static body such as conscience or superego, but rather there is a functionally evolving entity which is defined by its current status.

Unfortunately, this view of the standard cannot endure reality testing. Indeed, it was Bandura himself who recognised that people do not make wholesale changes to their standards of behaviour so as to be appropriate to each new environment, (1986, p.335). This is not to deny the existence of environmentally appropriate change, but rather to point out that each person conforms to a given set of behavioural standards which are relatively stable in nature. Even Sartre, the arch-advocate of personal freedom, acknowledged that each individual adopted a certain set of limits which "controlled" his/her behaviour. Of course, Sartre saw this "facticity," as he called it, as evidence of bad faith.

Consequently, the standard can be described as a functionally evolving entity which maintains some level of facticity despite its ability to overcome those limits. One way of conceptualising the functioning of the standard in the self regulating system is as an interaction of stable "trait" factors and changing "state" factors. This dichotomy of function can be thought of as reflecting the changing nature of input to the system (ie. state factors) and the relative stability of the standard ("trait" factors). The following sections will discuss the nature of the standard and the impact of state factors on its function.

It is proposed that the trait standard is comprised of two relatively stable components which represent societal expectations and individual
expectations. Those components can be likened to the Existentialist constructs of being-for-others and being-for-self respectively, or alternatively, they can be likened to the Freudian constructs of superego and an id-driven ego.

2.51 Being-for-others

An integral factor in the psychoanalytic theory of personal development is the internalisation of societal values through the identification with a parent. As discussed earlier, Freud considered such a process to be motivated by, and to be in resolution of, the Oedipal Complex. However, Freud did not discount the notion put forward by other analysts (eg. Klein, 1965) that the process occurs over a much longer time period beginning as early as the age of six months.

Nevertheless, the analytic school appear united behind the contention that the standard, (the superego in their language), is basically a stable entity. It is established at an early age and is maintained without much change thenceforth. While it is necessarily individual, the standard will closely resemble the significant other, (typically the same sex parent), by virtue of its origin.

Other authors such as Bandura emphasise the role of social learning or socialisation.

"... standards are developed from information conveyed by different modes of social influence. They can be established by direct tuition, by evaluative self-reactions to one's behaviour, and by exposure to the self-evaluative standards modelled by others." (1986, p.340).

This viewpoint represents an advance on the psychoanalytic approach inasmuch as it proposes a broader set of "modals," it does not rule out the continued development of standards over one's whole life,
and it must therefore propose an alternative dynamic by which internalisation of others' values can occur.

It is this final advance which requires further elucidation. Bandura's literature review (1986) highlights the high level of empirical support for both his expansion of modelling influences and his lengthening of the time frame in which modelling occurs, (e.g., Reiss, 1965; Bandura & Kupers, 1964; Marston, 1965; Rakestraw & Weiss, 1981; Thelen & Fryrear, 1971; Thelen, Fryrear, & Rennie, 1971; Suls & Miller, 1977; Davidson & Smith, 1982; Akamatsu & Farudi, 1978; Grusec 1971). However, the dynamic which motivates the acquisition of models is often ignored. Having evolved out of Behaviourism, Bandura's social learning theory appears to concentrate on reinforcement, or anticipation of reinforcement, as a primary source of motivation. That is to say, a person adopts certain standards because they have led to reward for him/herself, or for another in the case of modelling, in the past. Of course, it was social learning theory which introduced the concept of self-reinforcement and thereby precluded the necessity for immediate environmental rewards. Reinforcement, whether it is self-based or environmentally-based, is the proposed dynamic by which learning occurs.

Unfortunately, this motivational "theory" holds little in the way of explanatory value because it leaves unanswered the questions of what is a reinforcer and how does it come to be a reinforcer. Questions of motivation call for the explication of primary cause via the postulation of a theory of being. This scope of this work does not permit a discussion of various theories of being but the point still needs to be made that dynamics of change and development are empty explanatory concepts without a supporting ontological theory. Reinforcement may exist as a motivation for further behaviour but unless it is couched in a
theory of being such that the nature of a reinforcer is made clear, it (reinforcement) is an empty concept with respect to motivation.

Having said this, it would be foolish to ignore the empirical evidence thusfar gathered in support of Bandura's conceptualisation of socialisation. It has been shown that standards are established through the internalisation of a variety of modelling influences. However, it is further accepted that such internalisation occurs as a compromise between the nature of the individual (ie. his/her ontological status) and the environmental reality which limits the expression of that status and its expressed needs. This conceptualisation incorporates the role of reinforcement (self and otherwise) while grounding it in a given reality, (ie. the ontological status of the individual). The given reality is nothing other than the other stable component of the trait standard, (viz., one's being for self). As will be seen in the next section, being-for-self can be thought of in terms of drive, instinct, etc.

In summary then, it is proposed that one's being-for-others develops as part of the socialisation process and thus is a relatively stable part of the trait standard. It closely resembles the Freudian superego although we have not discussed its establishment and development here. It seems to be established and maintained through reinforced learning but the ontological foundation of the learning requires further clarification.

In terms of function within the self-regulating system, one's being-for-others can be thought of as representing that which ought to be. In other words, being-for-others is manifest as "that which I should do, be, feel, think, etc." Consequently, it can be said to contain moral values of what is "good." The other oriented nature of the being-for-others means that good is understood from the other's (eg. society's) perspective, (ie. the common good).
2.52 Being-for-self

Freud described being-for-self in terms of instinctual drives which comprise the id, and the reality based expression of those drives via the functioning of the ego.

Other authors have put forward alternative, physiologically-based drives such as are contained in generalised drive theory and drive stimulus theory, (Hull, 1943).

More recently, drives/needs have been discussed in the domain of cognitive psychology rather than as a part of physiological psychology. Consequently, needs such as the need for achievement (McClelland, 1953) and drives such as self-actualisation (Maslow, 1970) have been postulated.

The one thing that all drives, instincts and needs have in common is the focus on self. all can be understood as forms of being-for-self. In other words, they are self oriented.

The Existentialists rejected the notion of drive or instinct but continued to work under the assumption that humans were self-oriented. Being-for-self is understood in the Existential literature as that which I think I am, (Keen, 1970). This is equivalent to the concept of drive inasmuch as the Existentialists equate the will to action with the construction of self (ie. that which I think I am). That is to say, the freedom inherent to Existential thinking demands that the person can choose how they will be. People can be said to drive themselves.

Regardless of which theory one adopts, there is invariably a being-for-self present. That being-for-self may or may not be founded in physiological drives, but only the non-cognitivist approaches would deny that it is manifest either symbolically or directly in the conscious
experience of self. In other words, my being-for-self is reflected in who I think I am, albeit perhaps symbolically.

2.53 Being-for-others separate from being-for-self

It was noted above that one's being-for-others can only be reasonably understood if it is grounded in some given reality and indeed, theorists such as Freud have suggested that the superego (being-for-others) grows out of the id which is the seat of instinctual drives. In this case, the given reality is the instinctual nature of the drives. However, if one's being-for-others is grounded in one's being-for-self, what can be said of the division between the two? That is to say, the grounding of being-for-others in being-for-self. This is problematic because it will be proposed that it is the conflict between these two constructs which produces the disunity of guilt. The answer to this difficulty is found in the process of internalisation. Freud (1923) maintained that although the superego begins as the fear of loss of love, it develops its own identity and becomes separated from its origins.

In the context of the problem of grounding being-for-others in being-for-self, the process of internalisation provides the means whereby they function as separate entities.

2.54 The emergence of a unified standard

Having discussed the proposed component parts of the standard, it is now appropriate to explore the ways in which those parts might be unified to produce the standard.

One possibility rests on the notion that the standard is a compilation of interdependent parts. It was noted earlier that the standard could be depicted as the product of a number of interacting systems and by virtue of being a product, the standard can be said to have no inherent characteristics of its own, but rather to be an emergent entity from the
conglomerate of constituent parts. This is not to deny the previously discussed components of the standard, but merely to restate their component status. In other words, the being-for-others component of the standard is not the whole standard. It is only one part of the whole.

The unitary nature of the standard necessitates the conformity of the component parts. That conformity can come about by an internal consistency of the component parts or by one part assuming the role of standard. Despite the purposive language used to describe the production of a standard, the process itself is consistent with unidirectional determinism. As an input enters the self regulating system, it is compared with the various parts which comprise the standard. These components can be thought of as sub-systems inasmuch as they may conform to a hierarchical structure as proposed by Carver & Scheier (1982). Such a hierarchy has not been proposed here as it falls outside the stated limits of the work, viz., to develop a coherent system in which guilt can be understood. The detailed functioning of that system requires further research.

A given input will either be discrepant with both sub-systems, discrepant with one sub-system but not the other, or discrepant with neither sub-system. Taking the latter situation first, the absence of discrepancy would produce no change to the current functioning of the self-system. Alternatively, discrepancy with one sub-system and not the other will produce a discrepancy reducing output with respect to the existing discrepancy. The final possibility is that the input is discrepant with both sub-systems. This being the case, it is suggested that a number of outputs will be produced at varying levels of intensity depending upon the relative degree of the discrepancies.

This is clearly a simplistic account of how a self regulating system of self might function but is worthwhile on the basis that the system
itself is theoretically sound. The nature of the sub-system itself is theoretically sound. The nature of the sub-system hierarchies has not been discussed, nor have the intricacies of discrepancy levels but nevertheless, a coherent system structure is in place and merely awaits this sort of detail.

The integration of the self-standard (ie. where the component sub-systems are consistent) is equivalent to the taking of responsibility wherein the "I" has emerged from the consistency of its constituent parts. In contrast, a conflict within the emergence of such a self-standard is the disunity of guilt, (eg. inconsistency between the trait standard and the state standard). Responsibility (integrated self-standard) is therefore the antithesis of guilt (disintegrated self-standard). This conceptualisation raises questions about the relationship between the self-standard and guilt which will be dealt with in section 2.6.

In answer to how the component factors affect the standard, it has been demonstrated that the standard is not only affected by those factors, but it is also constituted by them. The standard is a functionally evolving entity which, at any one time, represents the unitary product of its interdependent parts. The parts include a being-for-others component which develops through the ongoing internalisation of others' values, and a being-for-self component which is somehow reflected in one's experience of self.

The self-standard is therefore more than the superego, more than the ideal self, more than the cognitive self, more than the ego and id, and more than the affective self. It is all of these combined to produce a single consistent entity, viz., the self. This is not deny the inconsistencies which exist within the self but merely to assert that the self incorporates all the above facets and its integrity is reliant on the
internal consistency of the product. At any one time, the self which emerges from the functioning of the self-regulating system may be more reflective of one of the component subsystems, (ie. the subsystem which is most discrepant from the input and as such produces the most intense discrepancy reducing output).

2.55 State factors

The previous section proposed that those factors which one experiences as relatively stable characteristics of self are located in the standard of the self-regulating system. It was suggested at the outset of that discussion that the more transient factors of self (eg. affective states) serve to alter the functioning of the standard. This section is concerned with how this alteration to the standard comes about.

The notion of a trait standard has been roundly criticised via the gathering of evidence which supports a more transient standard. It has been pointed out above that the argument for a flexible standard is not necessarily an argument against a trait component of the standard. Nevertheless, the standard does display a flexible nature whereby the same stimulus will produce two different responses. This section attempts to explain how this could come about.

The standard is inherently difficult to examine because the only evidence for its existence is its effect. Without a response the status of the standard is unknown. It is therefore on the basis that responses differ in similar situations that the effect of 'state' factors on the standard is established. The effect of affective states on behaviour is one example of the ability of state variables to alter the standard. Such effects are well documented in the depression literature wherein induced mood changes lead to behavioural and cognitive changes, (articles from the 1980's include: Writh & Mischel, 1982; Gotlib, 1981;

Zajonc (1980) has also argued for affect as a precursor to cognition on the basis that "... affective reactions can occur without extensive perceptual and cognitive encoding, are made with greater confidence than cognitive judgements, and can be made sooner." (p.151).

Likewise, cognitive patterns have been shown to alter behaviour, affect, and perception. Studies carried out to test Beck's theory of depression are particularly supportive of the importance of cognitions to emotional states, (eg. Krantz & Hammen, 1979; Beck et al, 1979; Beck, 1985).

Another theory of depression, (viz. Seligman's learned helplessness model), presents support for the notion that cognitive patterns alter behaviour and affect, (see Seligman, 1981; Peterson & Seligman, 1984). Further work has indicated the importance of expectations, (which is a cognitive state), to response, (Abramson, Seligman & Teasdale, 1978).

The effect of arousal level on behaviour is an established piece of psychological data, (Hebb, 1955). Specifically, it has been shown that the relation between performance efficacy and arousal level can be represented as an inverted "u" whereby the optimal performance is achieved at a mid-level of arousal, (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908).

The interdeterminant nature of cognition, affect, and arousal offers some indirect support for the affect of state factors on the standard in a system of self-regulation. It must be noted that the existence of a trait standard suggests that the state factors act to alter the function of the standard rather than to alter the standard itself, lest the trait components be as changeable as the state factors. If the state factors are not part of the standard, but rather, act to alter its functioning, then it is reasonable to align them with the input to the self-regulating
system. That is to say, state factors enter the self system as parts of the input to that system and as such are subject to comparison against the standard. In this way, the state factors can affect the functioning of the standard.

However, the state factors all belong to the "self" inasmuch as it is the "self" which is seen to produce/create/reflect/own them. The situation has been created whereby the same factors which affect the functioning of the self-standard. This situation is a source of some difficulty because it suggests that the self is both the standard and the input to that standard. In the previous section the self was equated with the standard and now the self is being equated with those state factors which make up part of the input to the system.

This difficulty is only problematic however in a static system. The system proposed here is operating continually lest it fall into Zeno's paradox outlined earlier. Because of this constant movement, the self standard which is expressed in a discrepancy reducing output at one moment is an input to the system at the following moment. The self is therefore both the standard and the input.

2.6 Guilt and the Self

Having established the nature of the standard in the previous section, it is now appropriate to discuss the relationship between guilt and that standard. In so doing, the problem of how a disunity can exist within a unity is raised and an answer is offered.

Guilt begins with the failure to meet expectations within a self-regulating system of control. The failure takes the form of a discrepancy between a given input and a standard. However, the preceding discussion of the nature of that standard has shown it to be a construct which emerges from the interaction of its component parts
and thus, if those parts were to be inconsistent then the input would be compared against two, conflicting parts of the standards. The input must therefore be discrepant with at least one of the parts. The result is guilt.

This conceptualisation of guilt production appears to make the same mistake as other approaches to guilt by asserting the existence of a disunity within a unity. In this case the disunity is the conflict within the standard and the unity is the self which is the standard. However, this central problem to the existence of guilt can be overcome in the present conceptual framework because the disunity can be shown to occur between self rather than within the self. That is to say, at any one point of time the self is the standard and although the standard's component parts may be in conflict, the nature of the standard itself is that which emerges from the interaction of the component parts. This may change but will only represent one side of the parts at any one time. To put it simply, the disunity can exist because it does not occur within the unity but rather it exists between a series of unities over time. This can only be the case because the unity is an emergent property of interacting parts.
3. EXPERIENCING GUILT

Having proposed a new way to conceptualise guilt, it is appropriate to indicate how such a conceptualisation becomes manifest in a person's experience. This section deals with three major forms of guilt experience: cognitive, affective and behavioural. It will be seen that the theme of that experience is self damage. Whichever form the manifestation of guilt takes, the disunity of guilt is founded on a conflict in the construction the self such that the self experiences itself as in conflict with itself, (ie. self damage).

Before dealing with the specific forms of guilt experience, it is important to account for how guilt experiences flow from a self regulating system of control.

3.1 Guilt Experiences in Self Regulating Systems

The experience of guilt, irrespective of how it is manifest (cognitively, emotionally, or behaviourally), can be thought of as a discrepancy reducing output of a self regulating system of control. Of course, given the above conceptualisation of guilt as a disunity of the standard within that system (ie. the self), the discrepancy reducing output can only reduce the discrepancy between the input and one part of the standard. That prevailing standard component, (ie. the component part which is dominant at the given time), is adopted as the self on the basis that it constitutes the standard at that time. The other part of the standard is disunited from the self to the extent that the self views it as alien or separate from itself.

An example of this can be given using the terms being for others and being for self as the two component parts of the standard. The example is presented diagrammatically in Figure 4.
Starting with an input of a being-for-self act (e.g. the assertion of one's power over another), the standard which is most discrepant with that input is the being-for-others component. Thus the output regulates control of the system by reducing this discrepancy with some experience (cognition, emotion, and/or behaviour). An example of a discrepancy reducing output in this case would be the feeling of guilt. That feeling of guilt now forms part of the new input to the system and is most discrepant with the being-for-self part of the standard. As a result, the discrepancy reducing output will reflect this standard, (e.g. a self enhancing output such as repeating the initial behaviour, viz., exerting power over another).

Each of the outputs described in this simple example can be thought of as self damaging inasmuch as they all reflect a disunity of self. This was evident from the fact that each output was only discrepancy reducing with respect to one part of the standard.

The foregoing example raises the question of how can it be otherwise? That is to say, the two component parts will always differ and as such the outputs will only conform to one component at a time. How is it that the self can comprise both parts at the same time? It is
proposed that the unity of self is equivalent to the emergence of responsibility and this will be discussed briefly in the final section. The primary task of this work is to account for a disunity of self as is found in guilt and that focus serves to set the limits of the study.

3.2 Cognitive Experience of Guilt

This section relies heavily on attribution theory because recent psychological literature seems to identify guilt with a particular style of attribution, viz., the attribution of responsibility or blame, (McGraw, 1987; Shaver & Drown, 1986; Weiner, 1986). After a brief account of causal attribution, the discussion will turn to the suggestion that cause, responsibility and blame are distinct attributions (Shaver, 1985). However, Shaver's model is dismissed on the basis of conceptual problems and recent research results, and the hypothesis presented here is discussed in the light of these problems and results.

3.21 Attribution of causes

In 1958 Fritz Heider proposed that people attribute causes to events on an everyday basis. Three years prior to that, George Kelly had put forward his "man as scientist" model whereby individuals were depicted as scientists constantly seeking explanations to events. This tradition has continued under the title of "attribution theory" in such a fashion as to warrant the claim that, "Attribution theory has come to dominate research in social psychology." (Jaspars, Hewstone, & Fincham, 1983).

The present conception of guilt will incorporate attribution theory inasmuch as it is assumed that people do attribute causes to events. In particular, people attribute varying levels of causality to self and others for given outcomes. The specific form of attribution which is of interest here is self-attribution, (ie. the attribution of self as cause to an event).
Heider proposed five levels of "responsibility" which form a continuum between the points of most responsible to least responsible. In keeping with the attribution literature, we shall adopt the names suggested by Sulzer (1971) for those levels:

1.) Association is the lowest level of responsibility and it refers to an attribution which has no causal link with the event, but is associated with the cause in some way.

2.) Causality is an attribution which ascribes the person to be a necessary though insufficient element for the event to occur. There is no intention or motivation present.

3.) Foreseeability adds the ascriptions of "negligent" or "careless" to the causality level of responsibility. The person is seen as more responsible because s/he should have foreseen the effect of their action. As with the causality level, intention and motivation are not present.

4.) Intentionality represents an attribution in which a person is seen to have intended the event and thereby maybe both necessary and sufficient for its occurrence.

5.) Justifiability is the final level of responsibility and assumes all other levels have been met, (ie. the person is seen as both necessary and sufficient for the event), but there exist circumstances which somehow justify the action.

It must be asked whether these levels of responsibility correspond to levels of guilt but before such a question can be properly answered, there are a number of inadequacies with the proposed system of responsibility levels which require attention.

It is the final level of justifiability which has been the focus of most problems because it does not fit easily into the uni-dimensional scale of responsibility. An attribution of justifiable responsibility does not represent greater responsibility as Heider's system suggests. Rather, it
somehow detracts from the responsibility. Fishbein and Ajzen (1973) proposed a reversal of the intentionality and justifiability levels to overcome this problem and this found empirical support through the establishment of a Guttman scale based on the new order. (Fincham and Jaspars, 1979). Unfortunately, the Guttman scale was constructed on the basis that the new order of Heider’s levels were attributions of blameworthiness. When the levels were depicted as attributions of causality, a Guttman scale was not forthcoming. It has therefore been suggested (Shaver, 1985) that responsibility does not conform to a unidimensional scale, but rather is multi-dimensional in nature. Such is the subject for the following section.

3.22 Causality, responsibility, and blameworthiness

Until recently, attribution theory had treated responsibility as a unidimensional construct whereby cause was the same as responsibility which was the same as blame. This is in accord with Heider’s model which proposes levels of responsibility on a single continuum, (Heider, 1958; Brewer, 1977; Fishbein & Ajzen, 1973). Kelly Shaver and his colleagues (1985) have argued that this conceptualisation is inadequate and that responsibility, causality and blame should be treated as distinct attributions.

According to Shaver, a causal attribution does not imply responsibility, which in turn does not imply blame. However, Shaver accepts that the implications do operate in the opposite direction. That is to say, blame necessarily implies responsibility, and responsibility necessarily implies cause. Figure 5 depicts Shaver’s sequential model of the attribution of blame. (From Shaver, 1985, p.166).

The model incorporates many of Heider’s levels of responsibility as named by Sulzer (1971) but goes further. Shaver’s system begins with
a negative or unexpected outcome - a not dissimilar starting point to the previously proposed model of failure. The attribution of causality begins with a determination as to how many causes exist for the outcome. A single cause is a prerequisite to later blame whereas multiple causes can only lead to attributions of negligence.

Figure 5. Shaver's sequential model of blame attribution.

The second decision to be made concerns the level of causality. Shaver adopts four of Heider's levels of responsibility to act as the levels of causality, viz; association, causality, foreseeability, and intentionality. Intent must be attributed if the process is to end in the attribution of blame, and association must be attributed if the cause of the outcome is to be seen as without responsibility. The other two levels of causality can only produce an attribution of varying negligence dependent upon
the attributed level of knowledge of the outcome. The causal level of intent assumes the first two dimensions of responsibility; knowledge and intentionality. The third dimension (i.e., coercion), therefore, represents the next determination in the attribution process. The cause must be seen as voluntary, (i.e., without coercion), if blame is to be attributed. Equally, the eventual assignment of blame requires the capacity to appreciate the moral wrongness of the cause, (i.e., the final responsibility dimension). An absence of this capacity or the presence of coercion in the cause leads to various levels of responsibility, but not blame. Having therefore established that the cause was single, intended, knowing, voluntary, and possessed the capacity to appreciate its own moral wrongfulness, the question of blame is finally asked. That question relates to Heider's fifth level of responsibility, and involves the decision whether there exists some justification for the cause. The attributor determines the acceptability of the justification and/or the excuse. Blame is assigned if, and only if, the justification/excuse is not accepted.

Shaver does not explicitly mention the relationship between his system of attribution and guilt, although it would seem linguistically consistent to link guilt with the attribution of blame. Investigation of the link between attribution of blame and guilt led McGraw to conclude, "... these studies provide empirical support for the intuitive appeal of the guilt theorists' assumption that guilt is a linear function of responsibility, as long as responsibility is conceptualised in terms of self-blame." (1987, p.254).

If this is the case, then levels of guilt are founded on levels of blame, but according to Shaver's model blame has no levels. For Shaver,
blame is qualitatively distinct from responsibility and thereby exists as a binary attribution, (ie. it is either present or absent).

3.23 Three dimensions or sequential development

The difficulty with Shaver's sequential model is the apparent contradiction involved in proposing a sequence of supposedly qualitatively distinct items. Shaver accepts that blame includes cause and responsibility, but rejects the notion that blame is an extreme type of responsibility attribution. If blame implies responsibility, then a person who is to blame must also be responsible. Blame therefore is responsibility plus the non-acceptance of the offered justification. Within Heider's system, blame represents nothing other than the highest level of responsibility.

By connecting causality, responsibility, and blame in sequence, Shaver has identified each attribution as somehow related to the other. This relationship needs to be clearly defined. Currently, it is difficult to view Shaver's system as anything but a meta-continuum which has absorbed the previous responsibility continuum as its second stage. In other words, Shaver seems to have extended the responsibility continuum in both directions. Certainly, the proposed dimensions must be misnomers if they conform to some additive style relationship whereby a prerequisite to blame is the highest level of responsibility.

A second problem with Shaver's three dimensional model is the inability to qualitatively distinguish the three dimensions, (ie. causality from responsibility from blame). Indeed, the example he uses to differentiate the two attributions could equally well be used to differentiate responsibility from blame. The example used is that a six year old child is unlikely to be attributed responsibility for shooting another person dead regardless of whether they caused it or not. By
replacing the word responsibility with blame and the word cause with
responsibility, the above example could be presented in support of a
distinction between responsibility and blame. McGraw (1987) did find
support for the causality/responsibility distinction, but interestingly
found little support for the responsibility/blame distinction. Using the
measure of guilt for example, causality yielded a negative correlation
whereas responsibility and blame both yielded non-significant
correlations. Other measures (ie. anger, future behaviour, past
behaviour, and victim responsibility) produced the same pattern of
results : responsibility and blame differing from causality. The only
measure which aligned all three variables was intent. Further, the
correlation existing between responsibility and blame was the second
most significant correlation produced by the study, (r=.59, p<.001).

Perhaps only two dimensions are necessary. Alternatively, it is
possible that each attribution (intentionality, foreseeability,
justifiability, and association) represents a dimension. This being the
case, the cognitive experience of guilt could be understood as a
combination of attributions.

3.24 Guilt : intentional or accidental'

In addition to the conceptual problems set out above, Shaver's
model has not received empirical support. McGraw (1987) found that
accidental transgressions often led to blame - a finding which is
diametrically opposed to Shaver's sequential model of blame. In the
same study, McGraw also found that the highest level of guilt was
produced when the negative outcome was seen as foreseeable. An
intentional cause (justified or unjustified) produced significantly less
guilt. If guilt is to be associated with the attribution of blame, then this
result rejects Shaver's sequential model because the model treats intention as a prerequisite of blame.

The problems with Shaver's three dimensional approach to responsibility attribution do not discount the import of his claim that responsibility is not a uni-dimensional construct. The initial criticism of the uni-dimensional approach still stands. That is, levels of responsibility must be tempered by levels of justification to realise levels of blame. This thesis is primarily concerned with understanding the production of guilt and therein seeks to identify the style of attribution which is associated with guilt.

McGraw has highlighted some inadequacies of Shaver's model. In an attempt to explain her results, McGraw stated that the absence of correlation between intent and post-outcome guilt may be a function of the time that guilt is experienced with respect to the incidence of the intention and the act.

"... it is reasonable to propose that the harmdoer will feel guilty when the intention to violate the norm (standard) is formed (that is, prior to the actual negative outcome)." (McGraw, 1987, p.254)

The temporal location of guilt therefore differs between intentional and accidental acts. While guilt is located between the intention and the act in intentional negative outcomes, it is located after the act in accidental outcomes.

McGraw postulates that intentional acts of transgression are subject to "psychological justification" (1987, p.254). This postulation is consistent with our hypothesis that guilt begins with a failure to meet expectations. An intentional act (regardless of the negative outcome) represents a success in meeting expectations and thereby cannot initiate the conscious guilt process which typically leads to feelings of guilt. Of
course, the harmdoer will still be subject to the attributions of others which occur within the context of the observers expectations. Consequently, the harmdoer may not experience guilt for an intentional transgression for which an observer regards him/her guilty.

The inability of intentional acts to initiate the conscious guilt process and thereby produce a feeling of guilt does not deny the possibility that such an intentional act may produce an unconscious guilt via the presence of a discrepancy between the unconscious standard and the negative outcome. In other words, the conscious standard may be different from the unconscious standard. (NB. the term "unconscious" is being used here in the operational sense, ie. I am unconscious of "x," rather than in the structural sense, ie. "x" is in my unconscious.) If this is the case, a form of rationalisation is adopted which serves to divorce the event/act from oneself. In other words, the self is constructed on the basis that the act/event did not include self.

McGraw's research on attribution of responsibility and guilt demands a rethinking of Shaver's model of attributional style. It has shown that a subjective experience of guilt is more likely to occur following an accidental, though foreseeable negative outcome than following an intentional negative outcome, (justified or unjustified), or an unforeseeable accidental negative outcome.

While such a finding is contrary to Shaver's conceptualisation of blame as unjustifiable responsibility, it is consistent with our previous theorising which asserted that guilt (ie. self-blame), began with a failure to meet one's expectations. If failure is a prerequisite to guilt then intentional acts rarely lead to guilt because behaviour that is intended does not involve failure as it is defined above (p.35). Of course, it is feasible that the outcomes of intentional acts could be unintended. This
being the case, the focus of the conflict (ie. disunity) would be the inability to predict the outcome of the action.

3.25 Guilt as an attribution not the result of an attribution

Before going on to discuss how attribution theory can be understood in terms of self regulating systems and the conceptualisation of guilt presented here, there is one alteration which must be made to McGraw's notion that guilt is more likely to follow an accidental though foreseeable negative outcome. In short, guilt does not follow the given attribution but rather is experienced as that attribution. McGraw seems to treat guilt as the negative emotion which follows a particular style of attribution but such a view overlooks the dimensional status of cognitions. This is not to deny their interaction with and effect upon emotion but simply to assert that guilt can be experienced as cognition irrespective of the emotion which may also be present. The cognition that one could have prevented a given negative event involves the disunification of self.

The link being made here between attributions and consequent emotions and/or actions is somewhat artificial as it did not feature in Shaver's theorising. Another theorist has explicitly connected emotions to attributions, (Weiner, 1986) and this will receive attention in the section on guilt experienced as an emotion.

3.26 Attribution and self regulating systems

It has been proposed that guilt is a disunity of self which can be understood with reference to a self regulating system of control whereby self is an emergent property of that system. Further, it is suggested that such a disunity can be experienced as a self damaging cognition in the form of a specific attributional style, viz., accidental but
foreseeable. The question is how can specific attributions be understood in terms of a self regulating system?

The key word in this problem is control. The self regulating system is a system by which a person is seen to control him/herself. It has been argued that the disunity within that system is equivalent to an impairment of control. The attributional style which is associated with the cognitive experience of guilt can also be understood in terms of control: accidental but foreseeable is the same as uncontrolled but controllable. Such an understanding brings McGraw's (1987) work in line with Weiner (1986) who asserted the link between guilt and the attribution of controllability. In other words, an accidental action can be viewed as an uncontrolled action and a foreseeable outcome can be understood as an outcome which could have been controlled. In McGraw's own work (1987) accidental is defined as unintentional and foreseeable is defined as "... due to carelessness or negligence on the part of the harmdoer" (p.249). Carelessness presupposes the possibility of carefulness, and as such foreseeable (carelessness) presupposes controllability (carefulness).

Guilt attributions are discrepancy reducing outputs which act to control that which is discrepant with the standard (ie. out of control). As discussed earlier (section 3.1), the standard which produces self damaging output (in this case cognitions) is necessarily in conflict with the other component part, and consequently it is quite possible that the output from the prevailing standard will be discrepant with the output from the other standard.

3.3 The Experience of Guilt as Emotion

The most common understanding of guilt is as an emotion. This work views the experience of guilt as an emotion as merely one
manifestation of the guilt process. The experience of guilt as an emotion is a discrepancy reducing output of a self regulating system of control. This section explores some popular conceptions of guilt as an emotion and relates them to the understanding of guilt proposed here.

3.3.1 Emotion and cognition in the emotional experience of guilt

There are no current theories of emotion which ignore the relevance of cognitions to emotion (Scherer & Ekman, 1984). However, the precise role of cognitions in emotion is subject to "marked disagreement" (Scherer & Ekman, 1984).

Probably one of the more influential cognitive theories of emotion is Weiner's attributional theory (1986) which was discussed in section 1.5. In summary, Weiner asserted that the emotion of guilt resulted from a specific set of attributions for a negative outcome. The key attribution to the onset of guilt was controllability, although the attributions of an internal locus of control and an unstable characteristic over time were also required.

The proposed interface between cognitions and emotions does not necessarily disagree with the theory presented here as a division between cognition and emotion has yet to be made. The self regulating system proposed is envisaged to operate at the level of self and as such does not divide the person into various functions. The focus on the self rather than on one part or function of the self is based on the earlier discussion of the reciprocal influence of all "parts" of self on each other.

As indicated earlier, the difficulty for any cognitive theory of emotion is to explain the origin of the cognitions without resorting to either the problems of Bandura's reciprocal determinism or the infinite
regress of an homunculus. One way to overcome these difficulties is the adoption of a process theory such as a self regulating system.

3.32 The guilt emotion as an urge to action

Another common approach to emotion suggests that all emotion can be best understood as an urge or readiness to action, (Arnold, 1960; Frijda, 1988). Within such a system, the emotion of guilt follows an action and, "makes one restlessly want to undo the deed or tends to paralyse one's actions and lets one impotently suffer." (Frijda, 1988, p.351).

The notion of guilt emotion as a change in action readiness is consistent with the hypothesis posited here inasmuch as discrepancy reducing outputs (eg. the experience of guilt as an emotion) are the foundation of new input to the system which will lead to a new output. That is to say, the experience of guilt as an emotion serves to maintain the process of the self regulating system and thus can be understood as a change in action readiness.

3.4 The Experience of Guilt as Behaviour

There are only a small number of authors who link guilt to a particular form of behaviour - the majority of whom find the basis for that connection in a form of psychoanalysis. For example, Freud (1916) suggested that crime is committed as a consequence to a "sense of guilt."

"Paradoxical as it may sound, I must maintain that the sense of guilt was present before the misdeed, that it did not arise from it, but conversely - the misdeed arose from the sense of guilt." (Freud, 1916, p.332).

Bergler (1958) asserted the link between pathological gambling and guilt although this too was first mooted Freud (1928). The connection between alcoholism and guilt has a long history which continues to find
empirical support. (Viney et al, 1985). Other so called additions to have been linked to guilt include; excessive eating, excessive sexuality, and excessive drug taking (Orford, 1985).

3.41 Guilt behaviour: out of control and self damaging'

The behaviours connected to guilt have two things in common besides their relation to guilt; an impairment of control and a self damaging nature. Interestingly, these same two features are fundamental to the definition of addictive behaviours. As a consequence, the precise interaction between guilt and addictive behaviours is worthwhile of further research, but is beyond the scope of this work.

The first commonality between the behaviours discussed above is the involvement of impairment of control. Indeed, the DSM III-R (1987) lists all of these problems as "Disorders of Impulse Control." The ICD-9 (1975) indicates that the integral feature of addictive behaviours is an impairment of control over the behaviour. By adopting the self regulating system of control as a model of self, the hypothesis presented here has equated guilt with impaired control and thereby offers a conceptual understanding of how "guilt behaviours" involve an impairment of control.

The association between guilt and impaired control appears to contradict the popular notion that guilt is a method of control (Levy, 1984; Bandura, 1986). However, the disagreement is founded on merely a difference in model. The model which asserts that guilt is a method of control is purposive in nature. That is to say, guilt serves the purpose of controlling. The alternative suggestion that guilt is equivalent to an impairment of control is based on a push model such as the self regulating system. According to a push model, it is the system that
controls and guilt is reflective of breakdown in that system (ie. a disunity). The breakdown of the control system is an impairment of control. The equivalence between guilt and impaired control does not deny that the action following guilt (ie. the next output from the self regulating system) restores the unity which guilt had broken. If that is the case, then guilt could be seen to lead to a restoration of control.

The second commonality of the "guilt behaviours" is their self damaging nature. The notion of self damaging behaviour has experienced a torrid time in the psychological literature. The dominant paradigm for psychology during the 1970's (ie. Behaviourism) is founded on the impossibility of self damaging behaviour inasmuch as behaviour is viewed as a function of previous reinforcement (see particularly the S-R conflict theory of Dollard & Miller, 1950). Consequently, behaviours which gave the appearance of being self damaging such as addictions were explained with reference to habituated learning via partial reinforcement schedules (Skinner, 1953). Although Skinner's conceptualisation continues to receive empirical support (Dickerson et al, in press), there has been little in the way of theoretical discussion of so-called "self damaging" behaviours. In contrast, this thesis has concentrated on the theoretical basis for self damaging behaviours. It has been shown that, in essence, the problem in postulating the existence of self damaging behaviour is the problem of how a disunity can exist within a unity. That is to say, self damage reflects a disunity of self which cannot co-exist with a unity of self (self enhancing behaviour). This work has been concerned with an account of how a disunity might come about and as such represents an attempt to overcome the problems inherent to the existence of self damaging behaviours. It is proposed that self damaging behaviours are reflections.
of a disunity of self inasmuch as the standards which control output (including behaviour) are in conflict.

This thesis developed here has been concerned with guilt at the level of broad structures. As noted at the outset, this approach was adopted after gaining an appreciation for the diversity of literature on guilt, and after experiencing the confusion which surrounds the examination of any contextually diverse concept. The subsequent theory of guilt can be understood with reference to seven major points:

a) guilt involves an internal conflict;

b) the conflict is between two parts of the self standard which can be represented as being-for-self and being-for-others;

c) the self can be characterised as a self regulating system whereby the output of the system aims to reduce the greatest discrepancy between the standard parts and the input;

d) the dominant part of the standard at any one time is identified as the self;

e) as a consequence of the conflict within the standard, the output of the system will necessarily reduce the discrepancy between the input and one part of the standard, and concomitantly, increase the discrepancy between the input and the other part of the standard. This can be understood as a see-saw effect;

f) rationalisation reduces the conflict inherent to guilt by denying one part of the conflict;

g) responsibility overcomes the guilt conflict by the re-unification of the self.

Having reduced the thesis to seven major points, it is now possible to find direct representation of the theory by identifying those points in the actions and functioning of people. The following section seeks to highlight the points in the framework of two case illustrations.
3.5 An Illustrative Case

This case is an empirical study of the theory of guilt presented here. It must be emphasised that the major part of this thesis is the theoretical conceptualisation of guilt. It is not an empirical work. Empirical support is preferred on the basis that it illustrates the theory.

The systemic nature of the theory is not conducive to traditional models of validation (e.g. controlled testing for statistically significant relationships), but rather, demands an alternative means of support such as an illustrative case study. Further detail is required before such traditional models of validation are relevant.

3.51 The client

The client is a 35 year old man whose name is not Bruce. At the time of seeing him, he had served one year of a four year prison term in the NSW Prison system after having sexually assaulted his niece. It was Bruce's first time in prison and his first conviction. He was housed in a "protected" part of the gaol because of the expected violent reaction to his crime by other inmates of the gaol.

Bruce had been married for six years and had two children. Bruce came to Australia from Burma aged nineteen. He is of Chinese extraction and his wife is anglo-saxon. Bruce speaks fluent English and prior to gaol, had been employed as a computer programmer.

3.52 The offence

Bruce pleaded guilty to all charges. The offence had occurred over two years with a fourteen month break between two "active" five month periods. Bruce's niece was twelve years old when the first five month period began. She had moved in with Bruce and his family after she had been raped by two school colleagues. She had initiated the move
because her own home was the site of the rape and her parents were undergoing a trial separation. Both couples (ie. her parents and Bruce and his wife) agreed to the move.

Bruce's "relationship" with his niece ended for the first time when she move back home to live with her mother, although the niece returned after fourteen months for a further five months. The "relationship" ended for the second time when the niece told her mother. She was immediately removed and Bruce was charged soon after.

The offences included sexual intercourse between Bruce and his niece on a twice weekly basis during the two five month periods.

3.53 Impaired control and guilt

From the outset of my contact with Bruce, he continually reported an overwhelming sense of guilt for his offence. Further questioning of this "sense" revealed an underlying "astonishment" for his behaviour. Quite simply, he was unsure of why he did it. Bruce reported that this astonishment had featured in his thinking during the offences. At that time, he had perceived his behaviour as "out of his control." Immediately after each act he would make a promise to himself to never do it again and yet a few days later he would be actively involved in repeating the same behaviour. The degree to which Bruce did perceive himself as "out of control" is evidenced by his initial refusal for the niece to return. In his words, "I knew it would happen again and wanted to stop it." The niece was allowed to return when Bruce refused to give reason for his refusal. Looking back on this time, it was clear to Bruce that he did in fact have the control to stop both his behaviour and his niece's return to the house. At the time, he perceived himself as having control over neither. The presence of an internal conflict is
consistent with the first major point in the theory of guilt proposed here. In Bruce's case, the internal conflict was evident in his inability to control his own behaviour.

It is proposed here that the key dynamic to this impaired control behaviour is guilt. The system set out above indicates that guilt is a form of impaired control inasmuch as both represent a disunity of being. In the context of the self-regulating system of control, that disunity is located between the component parts of the standard (i.e., being-for-self and being-for-others). The consequence of the disunity is perpetual discrepancy between input to the system and one of the component subsystems.

In order to use the proposed system to understand the present case, it is necessary to explore Bruce's disunity.

3.54 Disunity: being-for-self versus being-for-others'

There are a number of ways to explore the disunity which is reflected in impaired control behaviour but our aims here are to identify the two conflicting parts of the disunity and to discover the nature of each. In this case, I asked Bruce what was the "meaning" of the each side of the conflict (i.e., his impaired control behaviour and his feeling bad about it).

This is a difficult question because it requires the acknowledgement of self in both sides of the conflict. That is to say, until the time of questioning, Bruce had hung on to the conflict as a single entity and not as two parts. Bruce's benefit in doing this was that it allowed him to view himself as not wanting to do the act. The conflict served to distance his "self" from the behaviour. The separation of the two parts of the conflict requires the self to be located in the behaviour as well as in the feeling bad about it.
Over a number of sessions it became clear that, for Bruce, the behaviour meant love, closeness, affection, sexual gratification, power, and most importantly, it meant "being a man." In contrast, feeling bad about doing the behaviour meant, for Bruce, penance, justice, and being "good." The two sets of meanings are consistent with our conceptualisation of being-for-self and being-for-others respectively. The identification of being-for-self and being-for-others as the two sides of the presented conflict supports the proposed conceptualisation of guilt as a disunity of being inasmuch as it is consistent with the second major point listed above, (p.75).

However, it is thusfar unclear what initiated the conflict such that the outputs were so extreme.

3.55 The origin of the conflict

It was noted above that Bruce associated the offence with "being a man." The exploration of this association revealed one possible origin of the conflict.

The session after Bruce first made this association, he began by re-establishing the confidentiality of our discussions. Having done that, he recounted what he regarded as his greatest shame.

Sexual contact between Bruce and his wife tapered off during her first pregnancy. After the birth of the child, sexual contact restarted but on a much less frequent basis. By the time the second child was born, sexual contact had been reduced to a six monthly event. Bruce and his wife often discussed the lack of sex in their relationship but no effective change was implemented. Not long before their niece moved into their house, Bruce's wife declared that her sexual preference had changed from men to women. In spite of this, she wanted to stay in the relationship so as to not hurt the children.
Bruce attributed his wife's change in sexual preference to his own failing. In his words, "I failed as a man." It must be emphasised that this misinterpretation bore no relation to what Bruce's wife had said. It was all his own "work."

The association had become clear. In desperation to re-assert his manhood, Bruce committed the offence against his niece. Using the terms of the self regulating system, the input that his wife had altered her sexual preference was extremely discrepant with his being-for-others which was "goodness." For Bruce, homosexuality is bad. The resultant discrepancy reducing output was the thought that "I failed as a man" which served as the subsequent input. The thought of failing as a man was extremely discrepant with the being-for-self which was defined as manhood. The consequent output was a gross assertion of his manhood, (in this case against his niece). This process is presented diagrammatically in Figure 6. The fundamental structure of the diagram is consistent with the previous representation of a self regulating system, (p.59), and therein illustrates the third major point of the thesis, viz. that the self can be represented as a self regulating system whereby the output of the system serves to reduce discrepancy between input and the standard.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 6.** The process of Bruce's offence as a self regulating system.
There are many suggestions about why someone like Bruce selects a child in such a situation, (eg. a child is available; or a child is easy; the chosen child is the most loved; previous learning through being molested as a child oneself; or the child is symbolic of the spouse). However, it is not within the scope of this thesis to validate any or all of the possibilities. In Bruce's case, he mentioned all of the above suggestions.

Having found one reason that might account for the origin of this disunity, it remains to be seen how that disunity is maintained.

3.56 Maintaining conflict behaviours

To stay clear of Zeno's paradox, it is important to remember that the self-regulating system cannot be divided into distinct parts. Every output also acts as a subsequent input. In this case, the output is the offence and as such the following input included the offence. When questioned about what he though of such an act, Bruce expressed loathing to the point of hatred for anyone that did such a thing. This response can be understood as reflective of Bruce's being-for-others which would have acted as the standard to the offence input, and coincides with point number four (p. 75) which asserts that the dominant part of the standard at any one time will be seen as identical with the self. In this case, Bruce's being-for-others was the self.

The discrepancy between the offence input and the expressed standard will in turn produce a discrepancy reducing output. Bruce had already expressed this output in terms of a feeling of self-loathing to the point of hatred. This output serves as the following input and is discrepant with Bruce's being-for-self. The consequent discrepancy reducing output will aim to re-assert his "self" which previously had
been achieved by committing the offence. The cycle will doubtless continue. This process has been described as if each step immediately followed the previous step but this need not be the case. It is feasible, for example, that the output of self-loathing occurred many times before it was sufficiently discrepant with the standard to produce such an extreme assertion of self. The complete process of Bruce's offence behaviour is presented in Figure 7 and reflects the see-saw effect discussed in the fifth major point (p. 75).

![Diagram of Bruce's offence behaviour](image)

**Figure 7** The process of the maintenance of Bruce's offence behaviour depicted as a self regulating system.

3.57 The continuation of self punishing behaviours

Bruce first made contact with the psychological services within the prison after he had been raped by his aged cellmate. He was very
distressed and had begun to exhibit a number of obsessive symptoms such as the compulsive washing of his genitals.

Using the same form of questioning as described earlier, it became clear that:

a) washing his genitals meant cleansing or purifying,

b) being raped meant punishment for his sins, or justice (Bruce later revealed that he had allowed his cellmate to rape him because he perceived it as deserved punishment), and

c) other symptoms (which included a refusal to touch his penis, suicidal thoughts, recurring nightmares about the rape, insomnia, loss of appetite, loss of energy, stomach sickness, distrust of others, and "guilt" feelings) meant a further loss of manhood.

Interestingly, all these behaviours and their respective meanings are consistent with Bruce's being-for-others. It would seem that Bruce's being-for-self had disappeared. The standard has become entirely a being-for-others. This situation resembles the existential notion of neurotic guilt wherein a person is guilty for what one is rather than for what one does. In the system proposed here, neurotic guilt can be understood as an absence of being-for-self and as such, reflects a denial of one part of the standard. This has been described as the essence of rationalisation and therefore, Bruce's adoption of being-for-others as his self standard is illustrative of the sixth major point (p 75). That is to say, rationalisation is a denial of one part of the standard. This conceptualisation was explored by asking Bruce to identify occasions of self-indulgence or enjoyment. He knew of none.

Bruce revealed that he felt "guilty" if he ever enjoyed himself in any way. One day he agreed to play a game of squash with another prisoner and after a few minutes realised that he was enjoying the game. His response was to go to his cell immediately and make himself
cry until he felt depressed again. He made himself cry by reading letters and looking at photographs of his children.

In short, Bruce was unable to express his being-for-self.

3.6 A Second Case Illustration

3.61 The client

The client is a 29 year old man whose name is not Harry. He is currently in a NSW prison serving a sentence for the sexual assault of a twelve year old girl. Harry is married with three children and he receives regular visit from his wife and children. This is Harry's first criminal charge.

3.62 The offence

Over the months leading up to the offence, Harry had regularly engaged in extra-marital sexual contact although he did not enter a stable relationship with any of his partners. It was usual for Harry to spend Friday and Saturday nights away from home and with his "mates." On these nights it was usual to get drunk and take some other drug (often marijuana and occasionally cocaine or heroin), and then search for a partner for the night.

On one of these nights, after getting drunk and smoking marijuana, Harry and two friends began the 'search' The person they picked up was taken out of the town to an isolated spot and eventually raped after refusing to volunteer sex.

3.63 Impaired control and guilt

When Harry presented for counselling, he described the offence in terms of not being in control of his actions. Indeed, he suggested that the theme of his life at that time had been one of impaired control. The theory proposed here understands impaired control as a discrepancy
between input (in this case one's own behaviour) and a standard. Guilt is a form of impaired control inasmuch as guilt reflects a disunity of being whereby the component parts of the standard are in conflict, and consequently input will be discrepant with at least one part of the standard.

This being the case, it is expected that the impaired control behaviour and the expression of not wanting to do that behaviour will represent the two component parts of the standard.

3.64 Exploring the disunity of the standard

As with the previous case, the two sides of the presenting conflict were explored with questioning as to their meaning for Harry. The difficulty of this form of question needs to be re-emphasised. In order for Harry to answer the question, he must separate the sides from one another. In so doing, he acknowledges his role in not only the distaste for the offence but also in the doing of the offence itself.

For Harry, the meaning of the impaired control behaviour was freedom, power, and aggression. In contrast, the meaning behind his rejection of responsibility for the offence behaviour was being "a good bloke," and "keeping his family." The two sets of meanings are consistent with the proposed component subsystems of being-for-self and being-for-others respectively, and therefore offer tentative support for the hypothesis that the two sides of the conflict represent the two component parts of the standard.

The basis for the extreme nature of the discrepancies and subsequent outputs was not forthcoming in further discussions with Harry. The relative strengths of the two component subsystems may have been a function of one or many events. In Harry's case, the latter seems more likely because he reports a long history of guilt feelings (ie.
reflecting a very active being-for-others) which date back to blaming himself for his parents separation.
4 RESPONSES TO GUILT: RESPONSIBILITY OR RATIONALISATION

Guilt has been conceptualised as a disunity of being which can be located in the standard of a self-regulating system. It is proposed in this section that the opposite of guilt is responsibility inasmuch as responsibility is a unification of being. Rationalisation, on the other hand, overcomes guilt through the denial of self in the given action.

The disunity of guilt is often revealed through an impaired control behaviour. The perpetual nature of the self-regulating system results in that output being a subsequent input to the system. The consequent output is often an experience of guilt as an emotion. The cognitions associated with the guilt emotion typically reflect both sides of the conflict. For example, I did behaviour "X" but I did not want to. This was the situation in both the case illustrations presented in the previous section.

There are ways of overcoming this guilt, both of which involve the replacement of the disunity with a unity.

4.1 Rationalisation: Denial of the I'

The first possible way of overcoming the disunity of guilt is through the adoption of a rationalisation. The use of the term adoption is misleading because it implies the existence of an "adopter." The model presented in this thesis attempts to escape this sort of implication via the postulation of a self-regulating system of self. That is to say, the rationalisation is nothing other than a product of that system, (ie. an output).

Nevertheless, it is possible to overcome the disunity of guilt by rationalising one's involvement in the disunifying act. That is to say, a rationalisation is designed to remove self from the act. In the case of
Harry, he initially rationalised his offence by suggesting that it was not so much him as alcohol and drugs that did it. By removing self from the disunifying act, Harry has overcome the disunity. It is easy to regard alcohol as an evil which commits sex offences!

Other authors have also discussed rationalisations as a way of alleviating guilt. For instance, in Shaver's model rationalisation is a "justification." Bandura (1986) postulated the existence of a number of rationalisations which he described as mechanisms of disengagement of control, (a list of these is found on page 35 of this thesis).

4.2 Responsibility: The Emergence of the I'

The other possible way of overcoming the disunity of guilt is through the acceptance of responsibility.

The current psychological literature on guilt aligns guilt and responsibility to the extent that guilt is conceptualised as an attribution of responsibility for transgression. (McGraw, 1987). It is argued here that guilt involves a disunity of self which is often reflected in impaired control (ie. unintentional) behaviour. In contrast, responsibility reflects the admission of intent and thereby overcomes the disunity of action and intent.

Research results indicate that the experience of guilt is typically associated with unintentional but controllable acts (McGraw, 1987 and Weiner, 1986) respectively. Such acts reflect a disunity, (ie. between intent and action). The unification of being is possible by overcoming this conflict. In simple terms this occurs when the person acknowledges intent for his/her action.

The operation of psychotherapy provides a useful illustration of the distinction between guilt and responsibility. Guilt is commonly perceived as a fundamental psychological problem (Stein, 1968) and yet psychotherapy has long been depicted as movement towards the
assertion of responsibility for self. Freud (1895) located the therapeutic efficacy of psychoanalysis in the conscious acceptance of the unconscious (ie. insight). Perls (1969) emphasised the need for clients to "own their statements" by developing the technique whereby every client statement was concluded with "... and I take responsibility for it." Existential psychotherapy aims at the client accepting responsibility for the nothingness of his/her freedom, (see Yalom, 1980). Reality therapy also sees responsibility for self as a fundamental goal of psychotherapy (Glasser, 1965).

Given this focus on responsibility in the psychotherapy of guilt it is surprising that guilt theorists equate the two constructs. It has been proposed here that despite their similarity, guilt and responsibility represent a disunity and unity of being, respectively. Thus, they can be seen as the antithesis of each other. Responsibility is the overcoming of guilt by the unification of being.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


