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## STUDY OF THE PHENOMENON OF MOTHERHOOD WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF PSYCHOANALYTICAL RESEARCH

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### Abstract

This article provides an analysis of psychoanalytic studies of the problem of motherhood in the family. In addition, scientific information is provided on the social and biological consequences that negatively affect motherhood.

**Keywords:** Woman, mother, motherhood, child, personality

### Аннотация

В этой статье представлен анализ психоаналитических исследований проблемы материнства в семье. Кроме того, представлена научная информация о социальных и биологических последствиях, негативно влияющих на материнство.

**Ключевые слова:** женщина, мать, материнство, ребенок, личность.

### Introduction

Family relations are the subject of various empirical and research in psychology. In particular, in foreign psychology, psychoanalytic, barrierist and etioped studies were carried out within the framework of psychoanalytic and etiological surgery.



## *Modern American Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*

ISSN (E): 3067-8153

Volume 01, Issue 06, September, 2025

Website: [usajournals.org](http://usajournals.org)

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In these approaches, many theoretical and practical studies are widely covered in the motherhood.

We would like to focus on the first psychoanalytic approach to studying the problem of motherhood in psychology. Mother and child relations are one of the main goals of our research. Therefore, it is impossible not to appeal to the works of psychoanalysis Z. fripe when starting the research work. Although the scientist was not specific to the study of the mother's event, he made a great contribution to studying the problem of parents.

Z. Freud focused on the mother and the baby, and described them as a psychological model of their relationship with adults, especially in the opposite sex. According to him, any form of human activity is determined by instincts focused on the mood or elimination of the state of domestic need. If this need is met, a person of satisfaction and happiness appears in man. The satisfaction or non-satisfaction of needs in childhood is usually formed through the child's relationship with his mother, and this situation plays an important, and sometimes decisive, role in the development of the child's personality.

Within the framework of the psychoanalytic approach, the theory of attachment was developed, which is directly aimed at studying the problem of motherhood, in which the issue of the relationship between the child and the mother is considered as one of the main theoretical centers.

The main principles and ideas of this theory were theoretically substantiated by the English psychologist J. Bowlby.

According to J. Bowlby, the child's mental and personal development is directly dependent, first of all, on the characteristics of his relationship with his mother, in particular, on the formation of affection in the first year of his life. The scientist noted that affection is expressed in the child's needs for protection and security. If these needs are satisfied by the mother through care, affection and constant attention, the child feels emotionally stable and secure. Such emotional closeness serves as an important factor for healthy psychological development. On the contrary, prolonged separation of a baby from his mother can have a negative impact on mental health and lead to psychopathic states or limitations in intellectual development. According to Bowlby, a child needs constant care from a mother or a person who replaces her, because it is in this process of interaction



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and Humanities*

ISSN (E): 3067-8153

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that a stable emotional connection is established and a sense of attachment is formed. The scientist writes in this regard: “Love is an instinctive behavior of a child, the main purpose of which is to establish or maintain closeness with the object of affection.”

If the primary attachment object can form a sense of security and protection in a child, he will later be able to develop stable emotional relationships with other people. On the basis of such a connection, the child’s ideas about the environment, the level of trust in him, and the general understanding of humanity are formed. On the contrary, the absence of attachment or its distorted forms can lead to negative consequences, such as psychosis, psychopathic behavior, or limitations in intellectual development. This limits the child's ability to fully perceive not only the outside world, but also himself. Individuals deprived of maternal love, care, and emotional support during childhood often tend to deny their own needs and interests and devote their lives entirely to others. The main difference between the views of J. Bowlby and Z. Freud is manifested in the interpretation of the functions of the attachment object. According to Z. Freud's theory, the mother is considered primarily as a subject who satisfies the child's physiological needs - for example, feeding. J. Bowlby, on the other hand, associates the function of the attachment object mainly with the formation of a sense of protection and reducing anxiety. In all these studies, special attention is paid, first of all, to the child's need for affection. However, aspects reflecting the psychological state of the mother are not sufficiently covered either in these theories or in the approaches created later. In the context of such an approach, the mother is interpreted primarily as a means of satisfying all the child's basic needs. Another important direction in the development of psychoanalysis aimed at studying this problem is the theory of object relations, which substantiates the importance of emotional connections with external persons in the child's psychological development. The most prominent representatives of this theory are M. Mahler, V. R. D. Fairburn, and D. W. Winnicott. Within the framework of this direction, M. Mahler emphasizes the stages of development of the relationship between mother and child in his research. He interprets the early childhood period as a unity of two main processes - separation and individuation. Separation is the process of the child's ability to physically and emotionally separate from the



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mother and act independently. Individualization is a stage of development aimed at the formation of the child's identity, understanding personal boundaries, and the development of signs that distinguish him from others. M. Mahler noted that the processes of separation and individuation should occur simultaneously, in parallel. However, in some cases, these processes may diverge from each other as a result of a delay in development or, conversely, its accelerated pace. According to the scientist, a child goes through four stages in his psychological and personal development. According to M. Mahler's theory, the stages of separation and individuation in the development of a child are manifested in the following four main stages: The stage of primary symbiosis (from about 2 months): during this period, the child cannot separate himself and his mother; he perceives them as a single whole system, that is, a "powerful system - hypocrisy within a common boundary." The stage of differentiation (4–5 months): at this stage, the child begins to physically distance himself from his mother. Crawling, exploring the environment, getting out of the hands and independent movements begin the physical separation between the child and the mother. The child also begins to make independent decisions in situations such as eating or going to bed. The stage of conflict: during this period, the child experiences two opposing needs at the same time: on the one hand, he wants to be close to his mother, to maintain emotional contact; on the other hand, he shows attempts to separate from the mother, striving for independence. The stage of maintaining the image of the mother in consciousness: at this stage, the child is able to maintain the presence of the mother in his consciousness, remembering her even when the mother is not with him, maintaining mental stability. Although the work of M. Mahler is highly appreciated by the scientific community, his theory of separation-individuation remains one-sided. Because this process is analyzed mainly from the child's point of view, and the psychological state and active participation of the mother in these stages of development are not sufficiently covered. In addition to M. Mahler, the theory of object relations was also developed by W. R. D. Fairburn. Unlike Z. Freud, he explains all human desires not by their satisfaction, but by the desire for their source - the object of satisfaction. Therefore, a person's psychic development occurs mainly depending on the system of objective relations that he forms.



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The ideas of W. R. D. Fairburn attracted the attention of D. Winnicott, who made a significant contribution to the further development of the theory of object relations. For Winnicott, the concept of "object" refers primarily to the image of the mother. He could not imagine the development of a child without a mother, since the mother is the main factor that satisfies all the basic needs of the child and creates the necessary environment for his healthy psychic development.

D. Winnicott noted that motherhood is a natural biological process that "cannot be learned from books", which occurs spontaneously in every woman. This state is formed by the mother's intuition, love and devotion to the needs of the child. In his opinion, the mother can understand her child not only on the basis of previously acquired knowledge, but also at the level of intuition. The mother's attitude towards her child is expressed by Winnicott through the concept of "holding" - that is, maintaining a stable physical and emotional connection with the child, showing him love and care.

Good attention and care form a child's sense of psychological stability and social confidence, contribute to the emergence of a positive attitude towards the world around him. On the contrary, incorrect or bad attention and emotional care disrupt the child's development and form negative views towards him.

Based on this approach, Winnicott distinguished three main types of motherhood: "Good enough mother" - a mother who naturally supports the child's development, protects him and, sensing all his needs, creates an environment suitable for them. Such mothers create an atmosphere of trust that ensures that the child is not afraid of unknown people.

"Normal loyal mother" is a mother who is devoted to her child, adapts to all his needs, and strives to maintain psychological stability without limiting his needs. This type of mother is one of the various manifestations of the "good enough mother".

"Bad enough mother" (in some sources, "negligent mother") is a mother who does not create the environment necessary for the healthy development of the child, who is not ready for this process for emotional or psychological reasons. This may be due to unpreparedness for maternal responsibility, emotional disorders, or external negative factors.



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One of the new views on the problem of motherhood from a psychoanalytic approach was put forward by D. Pines, who expressed his ideas in his work "The Unconscious Use of a Woman's Body". The researcher states that the mother is formed in the child's mind as an ideal embodiment of motherhood. Her physical presence and emotional relationship to the child's body and personality are combined with experiences perceived by the child at a conscious and unconscious level.

A girl's identification with her mother (the desire to see herself in the image of her mother) occurs as a multi-stage process. This process includes the following stages:

The first stage is when the girl's initial ideas about her gender are formed during childhood;

The second stage is when sexual identity (identity) is fully formed by the end of adolescence;

The third stage is when the full realization of the role of parenthood and its implementation in life occurs through pregnancy.

It is during pregnancy that a woman's personal identification is completed, and she becomes a psychologically mature woman. In some cases, this stage is an important period of internal development, allowing the individual to understand himself and become more mature. However, for some, this stage is accompanied by negative conditions such as a lack of sufficient emotional readiness, fear, anxiety, depressive states. D. Pines notes that during this period, "an internal conflict arises between the intensification of emotional regressive tendencies and the desire for maturity, which requires compromise." Women who are able to achieve internal compromise successfully pass this stage of development, while women who are unable to achieve compromise sometimes decide to terminate the pregnancy. It is worth noting that the success of the process of a woman's individuation depends on a number of factors: this is the woman's attitude to her life, the quality of the relationship with the child's father, and, above all, the level of satisfaction of the individual with his own "I". Thus, D. Pines analyzes a woman's life as a gradual process of development. In her opinion, pregnancy is one of the most important and complex stages in a woman's life. It is during this period that the role of motherhood is formed in a woman: she identifies with her



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mother and, at the same time, creates an image of motherhood in her mind in relation to her future child. This process is emotionally and psychologically deep and determines the transition of a woman's personality to the stage of maturity. In conclusion, an analysis of the most popular concepts and theories in the psychoanalytic direction shows that the problem of motherhood is not sufficiently covered in psychoanalytic literature. The main attention is usually paid to the process of the child's development, formation as a person within the framework of the relationship between the child and the parents. However, the role of the mother in this process, her emotional state, feelings and emotional experiences are not sufficiently studied and are presented in psychoanalytic research in a secondary position.

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