On a basic level, Mrs Klein presents a simple story of a mother and daughter relationship and all the entanglements that come with it. On another level it questions the very nature of motherhood and the relationships that bind us to the people we love.

Based on real people and drawing on their documented history, Mrs Klein is a biographical drama rooted in reality. Yet it offers more than documentary theatre, playing back a night in three people’s lives. Mrs Klein is a discourse on the role of ‘parent’: what makes a mother, above and beyond biological relation? Is the role of a parent something that comes with giving birth or is it developed through association and relationship? It is a reflection of and a treatise on the personal effect of Melanie Klein’s most renowned theory: that children’s personalities are determined not by genetics but by object relations, by the very early relationships the child forms with the objects in their infant life. Nothing is by chance. And so too Melanie Klein. The relationship she formed with her children was led in many ways a negation of the ‘mother’ and a supposition of the ‘analyst’. Her now dead son Hans had many, many hours of psychoanalysis at a very formative age. Melitta too was analysed in depth. These children saw their mother as something other than maternal. Is it any wonder that Melitta blames her mother, the great Melanie Klein, for her brother’s death?

All three characters are highly respected minds, intelligent and articulate much of the time; it might be easy for it to appear a solely intellectual debate. But emotions are running high, and everyone has a point to make, or a demon to confront.

A detailed plot synopsis follows.
MRS KLEIN
Clare Higgins
52. Melanie Klein is one of the most admired, yet controversial, psychoanalysts of the time. She is at present comparable in fame to Sigmund Freud. She gained renown through her analysis of young children, attempting to understand the basic human instincts. After marrying and becoming a mother, she studied theory and trained herself in psychoanalysis from home; she analysed her own children at great length. She is now struggling to accept how her son might have died.

PAULA
Nicola Walker
Early 30s. Paula has recently arrived from Germany, which she fled due to the rise of Hitler’s Nazi party, leaving her, a Jewish psychoanalyst, unable to practise. She lives in Bethnal Green in East London, which is all she can afford; however it is hard to find patients in this area, which she describes as a slum. She seeks out Melanie Klein, whose work she admires, and befriends her, hoping to be her assistant and learn from her first hand. She is acquainted with Melitta from their time together at the Berlin Psychoanalytical Society, where they were good friends.

MELITTA
Zoë Waites
Early 30s. Melanie Klein’s daughter. Melitta is also a psychoanalyst, moving in many of the same circles as her mother. They often engage in fierce battles in academic discussion. Melitta opposes many of her mother’s psychological theories. She blames Hans’ death on her mother, whom she sees with a lot of resentment. She feels she is being forced out of the British Psychoanalytical Society by her mother’s supporters.
Act One

Mrs Klein is sorting through some old papers in her house. Paula is with her, but it is clear that the two women don't know each other very well. As the scene begins, Mrs Klein finds an old photograph and tears it up; she then finds a piece of paper with a poem written on it, and on reading it, she starts to cry. The photograph and poem remind her of someone she has lost. The two women decide to have coffee and Paula has brought Mrs Klein a poppy-seed cake, which Mrs Klein tells us was her mother's speciality.

Mrs Klein talks to Paula about her grief, though who she is grieving for is yet unsaid. She specifically mentions that she has stopped dreaming, something which she thinks is very significant. We find out that the person who wrote the poem was her son, and the source of her grief. Suddenly, Mrs Klein changes the subject to the work that she would like Paula to do while she is away. Paula tries to determine what exactly Mrs Klein wants her to do but Mrs Klein continues to reel off instructions about the running of the house; eventually she refers to the task at hand, proof-reading work on the second German-language edition of a book she has written. She gives Paula a tight deadline, trusting her to make no mistakes; Mrs Klein will be away in Budapest when Paula finishes the job. Paula is surprised to be trusted with such responsibility when Mrs Klein has hardly met her. Mrs Klein also mentions a letter that has arrived from Dr Schmideberg, but which is marked 'open on return'. Mrs Klein is reluctant to open it at all.

We begin to learn more about Paula: she too is a psychoanalyst and has lived in London for six months. She was married to a medical doctor, and they had to leave Berlin because they were Jewish; her husband in particular was more involved in politics and therefore at higher risk of persecution by the Nazi government. Paula is now divorced. She finds it lonely. She has a nine-year-old daughter in Berlin, who she hopes will join her in London in due course. Paula says that she hates where she lives in Bethnal Green, and hates being poor in London; she is having trouble keeping patients because she doesn't have the right kind of visa to practise anywhere other than Bethnal Green, where the demand is low. Mrs Klein gives Paula the poem written by her son, Hans, as a gift. Paula is confused about why Mrs Klein has chosen her to help with her work. As if in answer, Mrs Klein falls into a reverie and speaks about the memory of the moment she was told of her son's death. She admits that she doesn't trust English people, and that she likes having Paula around to speak the German language.
Mrs Klein prepares to depart for the station, leaving a phone number to be reached on, and checking her belongings. The taxi arrives and Paula takes the bags out to the street. Alone, Mrs Klein locks the drinks cabinet, puts Dr Schmideberg’s letter in the filing cabinet, and then hides her bunch of keys behind a book on the bookshelf. She leaves. Paula sits down to start work.

Some hours pass. Melitta enters the house. She is surprised to see Paula. Melitta seems shocked that Mrs Klein was in the house this afternoon, and decides to pour herself a drink, but she cannot get into the locked drinks cabinet. Paula tries to continue her work, but Melitta keeps interfering. Paula asks her why she’s there, and she says she was just driving past; they talk, and it turns out that Paula was invited to the house by Melitta’s husband Walter. This riles Melitta further, but they continue to talk, and Melitta asks if her mother mentioned her. Paula says she doesn’t want to discuss it.

Paula leaves the room and Melitta searches through papers and the desk while she’s away. Paula returns, ready to leave for the night, and Melitta says she’ll drive Paula home, persuading her to stay a little longer. Melitta wanted to collect some papers, but the filing cabinet is locked and neither woman knows where the keys are. They agree that it’s symbolic that Mrs Klein has locked up most of the house: ‘the house is her’, and she has shut herself up. Melitta tries to call the cleaning lady, who will know where the keys are, and during this phone call Melitta reveals herself to be the aforementioned Dr Schmideberg. Eventually Paula manages to interrupt her long enough to explain that the cleaner has gone away for the weekend. Paula wants to leave, but Melitta asks her directly about the letter – Paula admits that Mrs Klein did receive the letter but didn’t read it in her sight, because she felt attacked by it. Melitta reacts badly to this. Paula re-examines the drinks cabinet and manages to get in via the top drawer. She pours a whisky for them both.
...she was hostile to the letter and to you, but not to you, her daughter. No. To Dr Schmideberg. She only referred to you as Dr Schmideberg. The daughter’s good, she loves her, but the doctor’s bad, it’s casebook stuff.

Paula
Act One

It isn’t funny being her daughter. Try it. Perhaps you have.

Melitta
Act One

The women talk about their ‘anxiety dreams’, and their experiences with psychoanalysis - both as psychoanalysts and patients themselves. Paula hints that she’d like Mrs Klein to be her analyst, and Melitta accuses her of stealthy manoeuvring, almost implying that Paula is trying to ‘steal’ her mother. Paula insists that she has a mother of her own, and makes to leave. Melitta wills her to stay and announces that she believes her brother Hans killed himself. Paula enquires further, and Melitta reveals that the letter she wrote her mother told her about this. Paula is horrified. Melitta tries to find out the exact whereabouts of the letter now, but the women can’t find it among the papers. Melitta had come to the house to get her letter back. They become a little hysterical, giggling, imagining the fabled ‘Mrs Klein’ on her journey.

Melitta has noticed that a book on the shelf has moved. It is Freud’s The Interpretation of Dreams and they agree that this is significant, given Mrs Klein’s lack of dreaming. Paula finds the keys behind the displaced book, and Melitta opens the filing cabinet. As she does so, it falls forward, and Paula helps her right it. At this moment, Mrs Klein returns, with no money to pay for the taxi – so she sends Paula out to get the bags and pay. She is pleased to see Melitta and begs her to stay the night.

There follows a short interlude in which Mrs Klein searches her memory, making notes. Paula comes in with her luggage, but Mrs Klein brusquely dismisses her, so she goes to sit in the hall. Melitta brings in tea and tells her mother to be nicer to Paula. Mrs Klein invites Paula to have tea with them, and speaks about the recurrence of her dreams, on a bench at Dover station. She dreamt of a mother and son, and this caused her to decide to return to London, and not go to the funeral she was supposed to attend in Budapest; she had realised that if she went to the funeral she might have met Melitta’s father, who, she believes, might have propositioned her. Melitta laughs at this as a poor psychological excuse, and reminds her mother that her father has married someone else.

Mrs Klein seems put out that Paula is still there, and bosses her around as if she were a servant, but because Melitta is staying, Paula must stay the night too, having missed the last train home. Mrs Klein and Melitta continue to discuss the dream; it is unclear who is analysing whom. Whenever Paula tries to speak, Mrs Klein finishes her sentences for her to make it sound as if she wanted to go upstairs to have a bath. Paula has no choice, and goes out.
Alone together, Mrs Klein talks about the joy of motherhood, saying she wants grandsons. Melitta changes tack, to ask if she has read her letter, and Mrs Klein directs her to the bottom drawer of the filing cabinet, where Melitta finds the unopened envelope. Mrs Klein asks what is in it, but Melitta avoids the question. They relax into conversation about their work at the Psychoanalytical Society, but suddenly Mrs Klein expresses anger that Melitta always attacks her writing; they argue, and Mrs Klein accuses Melitta of being a poor clinician. The boundary between the mother/daughter and the two analysts blurs. In reply, Melitta coolly hands her letter to her mother. Again, Mrs Klein asks what is in it, and Melitta says: 'It's the truth about Hans.'

Act Two

Later that evening, Mrs Klein and Paula are drinking wine together. Mrs Klein opens Melitta's letter, and asks Paula if she should read it; Paula suggests that now is not the right time. In response, Mrs Klein tears up the letter and throws the bits of paper in the wastepaper basket. Mrs Klein describes her dream to Paula, and they try to analyse it. Mrs Klein fears she is sinking into a great depression. Melitta comes in to say goodnight, and asks if her mother has opened the letter - Mrs Klein says she has, so Melitta assumes that she has read the truth about Hans.

Melitta gives blankets to Paula to set up a bed on the sofa, and hints at Paula's hope to be Mrs Klein's patient, but this doesn't surprise Mrs Klein. They goodnight and Melitta leaves, but returns a moment later, pressing questions about her letter. Her mother doesn't want to talk about it, since it is now the middle of the night, so Melitta insists that they'll discuss it over breakfast. Paula lets slip that Mrs Klein hasn't read the letter, and Melitta is furious. She starts to try to tell Mrs Klein about Hans' death, but Mrs Klein constantly interrupts her with tangential comments and self-analysis of her own deepening depression. Finally Mrs Klein realises what Melitta is trying to tell her, but initially refuses to believe that Hans killed himself, and asks for all the details. Melitta gives as much, accusing her mother of restricting Hans as a child, and even stopping him from loving another boy at school; Mrs Klein denies this. Eventually we discover that Mrs Klein had extensively psychoanalysed Melitta and Hans as children, for her research. Hans received over 370 hours of analysis between the ages of 13 and 16 and a half.
They go over the story of the day that Hans died, and Mrs Klein begins to analyse Hans' life in detail; Melitta starts to cry. Mrs Klein also analyses Melitta, and her relationship with her husband, Walter. The women bicker, and Melitta suddenly insists upon buying her mother's car and impulsively writes her a cheque.

Melitta announces that she has changed her analyst, and Mrs Klein disapproves; the tension mounts. When Melitta reveals that her new analyst is Mrs Klein's most influential critic Edward Glover, Mrs Klein throws her glass of wine at her, and grabs the bits of the letter out of the bin, rubbing them in Melitta's face violently. Melitta doesn't react, but Paula pulls Mrs Klein away. All three women continue to talk, and the conversation descends into intense psychoanalysis of their mutual situation.

Melitta asserts that Hans killed their mother by killing the part of her in himself, and insists that she herself is still alive because she can actually bring herself to hate her mother. Mrs Klein is intrigued rather than offended by this. Melitta symbolically hands back her key to the house. Mrs Klein goes upstairs to bed; Melitta also leaves the room.

Alone, Paula picks up the telephone and dials the number of Mrs Vago, Mrs Klein's sister in Budapest, left for her before earlier that day. She waits, then rings off. Melitta returns to the room, somewhat calmed, and then leaves the house; yet leaving her key behind her as a matter of pride. The telephone rings, and Paula speaks to the sister. She tells her that Mrs Klein won't be visiting after all. She then asks Mrs Vago about Hans - she believes there's something that Mrs Vago has kept secret. The alarm clock goes off during the conversation. We hear Paula respond that 'Mrs Klein will be relieved', but we do
not hear the other side of the conversation. The phone call ends, Paula settles down on the sofa and goes to sleep.

Some hours later, Mrs Klein comes back in, waking Paula. Mrs Klein offers Paula coffee, and Paula lights a cigarette. Mrs Klein looks for her recent paper, On Criminality, in the filing cabinet, fearing an imminent attack on it from Melitta at the British Society. She asks Paula to stay until supper, when they can honour the moment of Hans' funeral service in Hungary. Paula reveals that she called Mrs Vago last night, and begins to retell Hans' story as she sees it – he had a lover, an older woman, and Hans' death was in fact a tragic accident, not suicide. Mrs Klein reacts badly, resenting the fact that Hans had a lover that she didn't know about, rather than being relieved that he didn't commit suicide, an accidental death without meaning seemingly worse than a suicide, at least less able to be comprehended.

Mrs Klein crumples into tears, coming to the full realisation that she has lost her son. She thanks Paula for helping her, and looks for her appointment book, to begin scheduling appointments as Paula’s analyst. They decide to start consulting right away, then and there, but it transpires that Paula is, in some ways, analysing Mrs Klein rather than the other way around. In the final moments of the play, it is as if Paula has finally replaced Melitta as Mrs Klein’s daughter. Symbolically, the doorbell rings to interrupt their exchange; maybe it is Melitta, coming back to collect her key, but neither woman answers the door.
What is Psychoanalysis?

Psychoanalysis is the most intensive form of the talking therapy, devised by Sigmund Freud one hundred years ago. Freud’s theories are seen as fundamental but they have been developed continuously and often radically since then.

A basic structure of treatment involves patients attending sessions weekly, at 50 or 55 minutes each, usually for a period of several years. During this time they will work with their psychoanalyst to examine and to explore unconscious conflicts of feeling, emotion and phantasy that are at the root of their symptoms and the problems that are troubling them. Unlike psychiatric treatment, psychoanalysis is not always used to ‘treat’ an illness or psychological disturbance, but can be used to enhance a person’s understanding of their mind and individual psychology.

Basic psychoanalytic theory suggests that genetic and constitutional factors are by no means the only building blocks of the personality. Other central influences may be experiential in origin, including one’s birth, the early relationships with parents, sexuality, love and hate, loss and death. These essential experiences establish patterns in the mind of feeling and interaction - patterns which are seen to originate in the core relationships of the family and thereafter provide unconscious templates for further relationships. Psychoanalysis seeks to uncover such unconscious versions of relationships, which are often found to be at the root of the problems which lead people to seek help.

The regular and frequent sessions of psychoanalysis provide a setting within which these unconscious patterns can be brought into awareness and worked on with a view to change. The analyst/patient relationship itself becomes a central area of study, throwing light on the patient’s patterns of relationship within the safe immediacy of the sessions: the patient’s unconscious ways of behaving are often powerfully exemplified by the influence this has on the therapeutic relationship.

Psychoanalysis is long and arduous work, for both patient and analyst. When successful, however, psychoanalysis can be seen to be a unique and profound experience that often leads to long-term development in close relationships, work and creativity. Success depends on both analyst and patient, on rapport and understanding, and on the quality and effort applied to their joint work.

It was always part of my technique not to use educative or moral influence, but to keep to the psychoanalytic procedure only, which, to put it in a nutshell, consists in understanding the patient’s mind and in conveying to him what goes on in it...

Melanie Klein
from Psychoanalytic Play Technique: Its History and Significance (1955)
The London Psychoanalytical Society was founded by Ernest Jones in 1913. It was renamed the British Psychoanalytical Society in 1919 after the expansion of psychoanalysis throughout the United Kingdom.

Soon after, the Institute of Psychoanalysis was established as an umbrella body to administer the Society’s activities, including training of psychoanalysts, development of theory and research practice, publications and lectures, and a resource library. It is the Institute to which the characters in Mrs Klein refer. Today, the Society has a Code of Ethics and an Ethical Committee. Members of the Society today are required to undertake continual professional development.

The British Psychoanalytic Society exists today with the aim of being the leading centre of excellence in psychoanalytic theory and practice in the UK. It lists its aims as follows:

1. To support the development of psychoanalytical knowledge as a general theory of mind.
2. To maintain and further the clinical and scientific standards of psychoanalysis.
3. To promote an internal culture where a diversity of psychoanalytic theories and techniques are valued and can be debated with intellectual openness.
4. To train high quality psychoanalytic professionals in sufficient numbers to maintain and develop the profession of psychoanalysis.
5. To provide and/or support high quality psychoanalytic treatment.
6. To disseminate knowledge about psychoanalysis, to health and allied professionals.
7. To promote the contribution of the discipline of psychoanalysis to public and intellectual life.
8. To form mutually collaborative clinical and academic links with other organisations (public sector, academic and charitable) which support the furtherance of the above aims.
9. To work as appropriate with and/or within national and international organisations in the interests of psychoanalysis and the psychoanalytic profession.
10. To maintain the physical and administrative facilities necessary for the above activities to take place in an appropriate and professional environment.

For further information, please visit the British Psychoanalytical Society website:
www.psychoanalysis.org.uk

The following pages give some information about the real people behind the key characters in Mrs Klein, to give rounded context to the play. An overview of the key principles of Klein’s work is included.
Melanie Klein 1882-1960

Melanie Klein was born in Vienna of Jewish parentage. Her early life was full of tragedy. She was purportedly the product of an unwanted birth and there was little affection shown to her by either parent. Her older sister died when Melanie was four and she was made to feel responsible for the death of her doting younger brother who sank into decadence after Melanie’s marriage to Arthur Klein, a chemical engineer and friend of her brother.

During their two year engagement, Melanie studied art and history at Vienna University. She passed up medical school to follow her husband who often moved often to accommodate his career. Consequently, she never received an academic degree. Throughout her career, many did not respect her views due to this lack of proof of medical knowledge. She gave birth to Melitta in 1904 and Hans in 1907. Her life was altered when the family moved to Budapest, where she first encountered Freud.

She became captivated by psychoanalysis after reading Freud’s short book On Dreams in 1914, when she was in her early thirties. She longed to practice but was restricted by her family life and motherhood; she first sought psychoanalysis for herself from Sandor Ferenczi when he was living in Budapest during the First World War. It was Ferenczi who encouraged Klein to begin work with children and can be seen as the first major influence of her work. She began to analyse children under his guidance in 1919.

Melanie Klein’s marriage was never happy and her husband had been frequently unfaithful from the first year after they wed; eventually they separated in 1919, when Arthur moved to Sweden to work and Melanie relocated from Budapest to Rosenberg ("Ruzomberok" in the play) with the children. They finally divorced in 1922.

Klein moved to Berlin in 1921, where she went into analysis with Karl Abraham. Her work continued but her ideas did not receive much support from the Berlin Society but Ernest Jones, president of the British Society was very impressed with her work and invited her to lecture in London.

Klein gave lectures to the British Society in 1925, and moved to London the following year, at the invitation of Ernest Jones, who secured her entry to Britain. She was the first continental European to be made a member of the British Society. Klein soon became a controversial but powerful presence in the Society and her impact on thinking at the time was dramatic, with her arrival marking a burgeoning of creativity.

Melanie Klein sought to elaborate on and extend Freud’s original theory through her observations and clinical work with very young children. Her working with children involved using
play therapy and interpretative techniques similar to those used with adults, in stark contrast to the previously held notion of the child analyst's role as purely educative. She believed she had observed processes in pre-Oedipal children very similar to those Oedipal conflicts seen in older children, and the bulk of her work throughout her career sought to theoretically justify these observations. She drew similarities between children's coping strategies in play and psychotic symptoms observed in adults, formulating a deeper understanding of the elements affecting psychological development at an earlier stage than had ever been witnessed by her predecessors.

Through her own unique perspectives, her work emerged as not only an extension but also a transformation of Freud's insights, though she would never have called his work 'incorrect'. Although laying claim to work entirely within the outlines laid down by Freud, she differed on key points. She believed that the internal world was less clearly structured than Freud of his daughter Anna posited, and that envy and destructiveness loom larger in the unconscious than traditional Freudian thinking. Far more controversially, she believed that the superego was present at birth, rather than being attained at 5 or 6 years, in line with the resolution of the Oedipus complex. Most important of all, she argued that the course of an infant's psychological development was not set in biological fact from birth, but was determined through relations to objects (people, relationships, environment) in that infant's mental world.

Her ideas are among the most debated and most controversial in psychoanalysis. Klein's most influential ideas concern the mental life in infancy. She focused on the content of primitive, psychotic anxieties in very young childhood, and her work centres on a belief that our unconscious phantasies (not to be confused with the conscious daydreaming of fantasies) are never entirely mastered, and our psychological maturity as a result can never be fully under our control. Hers is a chaotic and troubled view of the human psyche, arguing that our mental life is alive with extreme emotions and violent impulses. Our inner mental life, even in adulthood, seemed to her a perpetual struggle.

She offended traditionalists with her conduct: as a character, she was very intense and prone to flashes of 'insight' which she would rarely follow up with a closely reasoned theoretical analysis. The language of Kleinian theory is one which avoids detached analogies drawn from science, opting instead for a more individualised psychological approach. One reason why Klein is perhaps not as well known as Freud now is that she was not a very systematic or organised theorist, and her writings are not as persuasive as she clearly was in person to many who interacted with her personally. Nevertheless, it is certain that Klein's discoveries from her infant analyses opened up new possibilities for psychoanalysis which were quite different to anything posited by Freud's classical theory and practice.
Kleinian Theory: the Key Areas

The following two pages detail the key principles of Melanie Klein's work.

PLAY TECHNIQUE
Following World War I, Klein developed the technique of play therapy, which is now used worldwide. As a substitute for Freud's free association, of which very young children are deemed incapable, Klein developed the technique of play therapy to reveal children's unconscious motivations and phantasies, which she believed were revealed in the way children played with toys. She believed that children projected their feelings in therapeutic sessions through the use of play and in drawings and that analysts could understand children's unconscious lives through observing their non-verbal behaviour. In her seminal work, The Psychoanalysis of Children, she showed how these anxieties affected a child's developing ego, superego, and sexuality to bring about emotional disorders. Through her methods she attempted to relieve children of disabling guilt by having them direct toward the therapist the aggressive and Oedipal feelings they could not express to their parents.

PARANOID-SCHIZOID POSITION
Klein also wrote about the use of projective identification. Therein it was not the impulse only, but parts of the self and bodily products that were in fantasy projected into the object. When pain came, she said, one would put the pain on someone else. Thus the other became the persecutor. The aims of projective identification could be manifold: getting rid of an unwanted part of oneself, a greedy possession and scooping out of the object, control of the object, and so on. One of the results was identification of the object with the projected part of the self.

DEPRESSIVE POSITION
Klein's Depressive Position was a more evolved state than the Paranoid-Schizo Position. The Depressive Position occurred when the child realises the mother is a whole object, therefore they would realise that the mother that they hated was also the mother that they loved. This would inhibit the need to attack, and so the child's feelings of antipathy would be contained, leading to taking in and tolerating more pain. This theory of Klein's was linked to ambivalence, where love and hate can coexist in a relationship without threatening the existence of that relationship.

My psychoanalytic work has convinced me that when in the baby's mind the conflicts between love and hate arise, and the fears of losing the loved one become active, a very important step is made in development. These feelings of guilt and distress now enter as a new element in the emotion of love.

Melanie Klein
from Love, Guilt and Reparation (1937)
OBJECT RELATIONS
Klein, along with Sigmund Freud and W.R.D. Fairbairn, contributed ideas to make up what we now know as 'object relations theory'. Freud first introduced the idea of object choice, which referred to a child's earliest relationships with his caretakers. Such people were objects of his needs and desires. The relationship with them became internalized mental representations. Subsequently Melanie Klein coined the term 'part objects', for example the mother's breast, which played an important role in early development and later in psychic disturbances, such as excessive preoccupation with certain body parts or aspects of a person as opposed to the whole person. Finally, Fairbairn and others developed the so-called object relations theory. According to it, the child who did not receive good enough mothering increasingly retreated into an inner world of fantasy objects with whom he tried to satisfy his need for real objects, that was for relationships.

ENVY
Breast envy is Klein's infant counter to the 'penis envy' observed by Freud at the onset of the later-occurring Oedipus complex. Klein's understanding of envy was best understood as in comparison to greed. The infant at the breast provided the prototype. Infants, as Klein portrayed them, were intensely needy creatures, feeling dependent on the breast for nourishment, safety and pleasure. Klein imagined the infant's experience of the breast as extraordinarily plentiful and powerful. In more suspicious moments, the infant thought of the breast as hoarding its wonderful substance, good milk, for itself, enjoying its power over the infant, rather than allowing the infant continual and total access to its resources.

SEXUALITY
According to Klein, both artistic creativity and bodily pleasures were arenas in which the central human struggle between love, hate, and compensation was played out. Men and women were seen as deeply concerned about the balance between their own ability to love and hate, about their capacity to keep their objects alive, both their relationships to others as real objects and their internal objects, their inner sense of goodness and vitality. Klein viewed sexual intercourse as a highly dramatic arena in which both one's impact on the other and the quality of one's own essence were exposed and on the line. The ability to arouse and satisfy the other represented one's own compensation capacities; to give enjoyment and pleasure suggested that one's love was stronger than one's hate. The ability to be aroused and satisfied by the other suggested that one was alive, that one's internal objects were flourishing.
Melitta Schmideberg-Klein 1904–1983

Melitta was born in Rosenberg, older sister to Hans. She grew up and was educated in Budapest. After the war Melitta moved with her mother back to Rosenberg, and on finishing school in 1921, she joined her mother in Berlin. Melitta worked for and obtained her MD in 1927 from Wilhelms-Universität in Berlin.

Whilst a medical student, in 1924 she met and married Walter Schmideberg, who was an Austrian psychoanalyst and a close friend of Sigmund Freud. In 1929 she began her analytic training with the renowned Karen Horney at the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute, qualifying as an associate member of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Society in 1931.

In 1927, in view of the growing anti-Semitism in Germany, the Schmidebergs moved to London and joined the British Society, following Melanie Klein who had done the same earlier that year. Melitta Schmideberg-Klein was elected an associate member in 1932 and a full member the next year.

She wrote many papers, which initially bore a great deal of influence from, and made use of, her mother’s ideas. However as her career developed, more and more she began to question her mother’s theories. Simultaneously their relationship, personal and professional, became increasingly fraught and the pair often argued openly, and ferociously, in Society meetings. Through the 1930s, violent antipathies were building between Klein and her followers on one hand, and Melitta and Edward Glover on the other.

After the death of her brother Hans in 1934, and her mother’s reaction to it, she became increasingly critical of both her mother’s contributions and her behaviour in the Society. The turning point came after Melitta went into analysis with Edward Glover, in order to better understand her relationship with her mother and to deal with her dependence on Klein the parent. Edward Glover too became increasingly vocal in his criticisms of Melanie Klein, and his influence on the British Society stirred up a great deal of anti-Kleinian debate and really provoked the major disagreements with Klein’s theories.

In many ways this initiated the critical furore which led to Controversial Discussions (between Melanie Klein and Anna Freud), which in turn led to a profound schism in the psychoanalytic community, which still remains to this day. Yet Melitta’s primary contributions to the Controversial Discussions were rather less concerned with theoretical issues than with Melanie Klein’s proselytising influence on the conduct of the affairs of the Society.

As Melitta’s criticisms of her mother increased in vitriol, the atmosphere in scientific meetings worsened. With the
arrival of numerous colleagues from Vienna in 1938, the theoretical differences became more obvious, together with the fear that the essentials of psychoanalysis were in danger. She wrote a number of key articles dissecting the process of psychoanalysis and the effect on the patient, drawing primarily on her own experience in extensive analysis by her mother/Melanie Klein. Following Edward Glover’s resignation from the British Society in 1944, Melitta eventually withdrew from active participation in the Society. Thereafter the focus of her work concentrated on a psychological understanding of criminality and the treatment of delinquents in particular.

In 1945 Melitta moved to America, where helped found the Association for the Psychiatric Treatment of Offenders in New York. She continued to publish many scientific papers and reviews, and in 1948 she published her book Children in Need. In 1957 she started The International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology of which she was editor.

Melitta returned to Europe permanently after her mother’s death in 1960. Bitter and unreconciled to the end, Melitta did not attend her mother’s funeral. Instead, she gave a lecture that day in London, wearing a flamboyant pair of red boots. She rebuffed all further attempts at reconciliation by her remaining family.

Melitta finally resigned her membership of the British Society two years later, having developed her own form of psychotherapy at odds with the Society’s accepted practice. She died in 1983, without ever having been able - or rather, willing - to make a rapprochement with her family or with other psychoanalysts in the British Society. Her legacy arguably remains the prolific work she undertook on criminal psychology and for the rehabilitation and psychological treatment of offenders.

**Paula Heimann** 1899-1982

Paula Heimann was born in Danzig, Germany (now part of modern day Poland). She trained as a medical doctor, and studied medicine in Koenigsberg, Berlin, Frankfurt am Mein and Breslau. After receiving her MD, Paula studied at the Psychiatric Clinic in Heidelberg and then at the Charité in Berlin, training in psychoanalysis at the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute.

Paula married Franz-Anton Heimann, a medical doctor, in 1924; they had one daughter. The pair divorced in 1933 and that year Paula emigrated to London leaving behind her daughter. Her departure
was also propelled by the restrictions placed on her position as a Jewish psychoanalyst by the Third Reich. Once in London, she joined British Society, where she met Melanie Klein and became fascinated by her theories on psychoanalysis. She received a British medical qualification from Edinburgh in 1938, her training being paid for by Bryher, a notable patient of Walter Schmideberg, and a year later, Heimann became a full member of the Society.

After the death of Klein’s son, Hans, Paula wrote, sending her condolences, to Melanie Klein, having been briefly acquainted with her at the British Society, and having been friendly with Melitta and Walter Schmideberg at the Berlin Society. Klein expressed a wish to meet Heimann, and Walter helped to facilitate this. Upon meeting, it is reported that Klein immediately began to pour her feelings out to her, a near stranger. During their early discussions, Klein was very depressed and Heimann was arguably a sort of analyst for her mentor in return.

Paula Heimann soon became a very close collaborator of Melanie Klein and one of her most staunch supporters in the British Society. In 1935 she went into analysis with Klein, who in turn became reliant on Heimann’s support and input into her papers. Heimann was a strong voice for Klein in the Controversial Discussions, for which she delivered two papers.

Over her career, Paula wrote a total of thirty papers. The first were distinctly Kleinian in their theoretical orientation, whilst the later papers develop into deeper discussion on the position of the clinician and psychoanalytical technique. From the 1940s onwards, the idea of the psychoanalyst as non-neutral was growing in recognition and Heimann’s influential 1950 paper on counter-transference developed a theoretical stance on the aspects inherent in formulating interpretations in analysis. She was key in positing the counter-transference phenomenon as a useful tool for understanding patients’ communications.

Heimann eventually broke from Klein in 1953; the reasons for this divergence are unknown, but it is thought that a combination of Heimann’s disillusionment with her one-time mentor’s cool detachment and selfishness, after Paula’s daughter suffered a traumatic childbirth which put great stress on the family; and possibly growing resentment from Klein towards her protégée, as Heimann’s success and reputation within the Society grew, whilst Klein became increasingly criticised. Either way, the analysis ended and after 1955, Heimann’s papers are often implicitly critical of Kleinian technique and theory, though she never wrote a comprehensive, direct critique of Melanie Klein’s work.

Before she died in 1983, Heimann stated that Melanie Klein had ‘seduced’ her into analysis.
Walter Schmideberg 1890 - 1954

Melitta’s husband, Walter Schmideberg, was 14 years her senior, and when they met was already a renowned psychoanalyst and personal friend of Sigmund Freud. He was at the forefront of the pioneering phase of psychoanalysis which came to an end only a few years after the First World War.

Walter was born in Vienna into a wealthy family and educated at Karlsburg, an exclusive Jesuit school. He was uninterested in a career in the Austro-Hungarian Army as was expected of him. However his deep fascination with psychology troubled his Jesuit teachers who seized his books on hypnosis as sacrilegious and burned them in front of the whole school.

Walter became drawn to psychoanalysis after meeting Max Eitingon, then an army psychiatrist in Hungary, during the First World War. It was Eitingon who introduced Schmideberg to Freud and Ferenczi. He became a regular visitor to the Freud household and also began to attend meetings at the Viennese Psychoanalytic Society.

In 1921 he moved to Berlin where he stayed with the Eitingons. He joined the Berlin Society and acted as its secretary for a time. He met Melitta for the first time at the International Psychoanalytic Conference held in Berlin in 1922. They married in Vienna in April 1924.

Through Sigmund Freud, Schmideberg was introduced to Ernest Jones, head of the British Society, who secured their entry to England at a time of increasing anti-semitism in Germany. Walter had some difficulty gaining entry so eventually followed Melitta in 1932.

Walter became a respected voice in the British Society. His colourful personality and close alliance with Freud worked in his favour although he was often at pains to impress his audience that he could speak with authority because of his close contact with the master; and of course Walter defended the Freudians at the Controversial Discussions in the 1940s. Within the British Society, Schmideberg was alert for any signs of anti-Freudian deviance, and thus scrutinised Klein’s work in close detail.

As an analyst, took many well-known patients into psychoanalysis. One of his patients was imagist poet Hilda Doolittle (H.D.). In the 1930s he became involved in a relationship with H.D.’s lover, the bisexual novelist Winifred Ellerman, known as Bryher. Indeed it was Bryher who gave Paula Heimann a loan to get a British medical degree in Edinburgh. After Melitta had moved to America, Walter and Bryher moved permanently to Switzerland; Melitta visited them amicably from time to time.

I'd lie there trying to think up what to say to her. Trying to think of something so banal, so ordinary that she couldn't interpret it.

Melitta
Act Two
Walter Schmideberg suffered from long-term alcohol addiction which became worse over the passing years, and more so after the move to Switzerland. He died there in 1954, from an ulcerous condition caused by his alcoholism.

Edward Glover 1888 – 1972

Edward Glover was born in a small Scottish village, the son of a staunchly religious mother and Darwinian father. He trained as a medical doctor, in a decision greatly influenced by his older brother James. Through his time working with a number of well-known specialists in cardiology and pulmonary medicine, he learned a deep appreciation of how to apply scientific method to clinical practice.

However, his growing dissatisfaction with a strictly ‘natural scientific’ approach to medicine led him to follow his brother again, this time towards an interest in Freud’s psychology. James had recently moved to London to set up a psychiatric practice, and in 1920 both brothers went to Berlin to undergo training analyses with the renowned Karl Abraham. Glover gained an honorary appointment in Berlin and gleaned as much knowledge as he could from the hospital facilities there before returning to London. He joined the British Society in 1920 and became a full member in 1921.

After the death of his brother James, Edward became very close to head of the Society, Ernest Jones, taking over many of his secretarial commitments. He was renowned as a fine public speaker and a very gifted writer; with a few forgivable lapses into polemics. Soon, his influence in the British Society was second only to Jones, while his reputation among doctors outside the Society was unsurpassed. Under Jones, his standing within the Society steadily increased with a number of important positions, being appointed first Scientific Secretary, then Director of Research. He later became Assistant Director of the London Clinic of Psychoanalysis, and finally became Secretary of the training committee of the International Psychoanalytic Society.

After qualification, Glover was cautious not to allow his enthusiasm for psychoanalysis to undermine the critical and scientific discipline that had become so important to him during his strictly medical work. He became an enemy of what he called ‘unchecked speculation’ and published a number of influential critiques of fellow analysts and theoreticians over the years. In many ways a conservative in the field, he held firmly to the common ground of basic psychoanalytic concepts. Yet during his lifetime he would see that ground becoming increasingly less common.

Critiques aside, the bulk of Glover’s work consists of original contributions covering the breadth of psychoanalysis. Key areas included drug addiction, prostitution, the classification of mental disorders
Mrs Klein: What I write, I’ve learned and proved in twenty years of clinical practice. And you’ve seen the results.

Melitta: I have. You’re a great clinician. But Mother, you can’t write rubbish and expect me not to say it’s rubbish.

Act One

and the early development of mind and the nuclear theory of ego formation. He also published a number of works on education and psychoanalytic research methods. But, like Melitta Schmideberg, he had a keen interest in psychopathy and criminology and his groundbreaking and numerous contributions to the area reflected this fascination. The bulk of his papers on the subject were published together in 1960, in his book The Roots of Crime.

Glover played a leading critical role in the Controversial Discussions, and his critique of Klein, published thereafter, remains perhaps the most thorough and exhaustive.

Glover was initially undecided in the arguments between Klein and Anna Freud; yet the turning point in his disillusion with Klein’s work seems to have come in line with his analysis of her daughter, Melitta Schmideberg, and their growing professional alliance.

In the play, Mrs Klein is furious with Melitta for choosing Glover as her analyst. In the early 1930s, Glover was becoming increasingly opposed to Klein’s views, and similarly opposed to her somewhat more idiosyncratic dominance of the British Society. Upon Melitta’s entering into analysis with him, Glover’s shift in opinion away from Klein was already underway and he encouraged Melitta to do the same (although she was starting to do so already, spurred on by her increasing hatred for her mother after Hans’s death). As he was the second-in-command at the Society, his opinion was crucial in swaying the general trends. As analysis would encourage Melitta to talk about her childhood and her relationship with her mother, Klein would have been appalled that her daughter, who knows so much about her, will be revealing all the family secrets to her professional enemy (including the fact that Melanie analysed her own children). In that respect Melanie sees it as betrayal.

Professional dissent led Glover to leave the British Society in 1944, but he continued to be a member of the International Psychoanalytic Association through his honorary membership of the Swiss and American Societies. Glover was married twice: his first wife, died from septicaemia 18 months after they married in 1918. He married for a second time in 1924, and their only child, a mentally handicapped girl, was born in 1926.