

January 20, 1955

Ives Hendrick, M.D., President
The American Psychoanalytic Association
84 Mount Vernon Street
Boston 8, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Hendrick:

I am glad you sent me the copies of your correspondence with Dr. Noyes anent the Los Angeles Institute for Psychoanalysis and wrote me the letter you sent with them, since this brings into the open the matter of 'accusations' against the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society and the Los Angeles Institute for Psychoanalysis regarding our handling of the lay analysis problem, and it gives us an opportunity to show the facts about our handling of this matter. These facts indicate that we have always operated in accordance with the regulations and usages of the American Psychoanalytic Association, so that any criticism of us along this line, certainly by members or officers of the American Psychoanalytic, is entirely unwarranted.

Since the matters discussed in your correspondence pertain to the Los Angeles Institute for Psychoanalysis rather than directly to the Los Angeles Society, I am writing this letter in consultation with Dr. Ernst Lewy, Director of the Institute, and Dr. Carel Van der Heide, Dean of its Training School.

Let us first look at Dr. Noyes's letter to you. He, or the complaining member, refers to our 'use of non-medical personnel as instructors in psychotherapy'. This is erroneous. Our instructors (training analysts) and lecturers do not offer instruction in 'psychotherapy' but in psycheanalysis. Our candidates have already had their instruction in psychotherapy in their psychiatric residencies; and our instruction in psychoanalysis is under the regulations of the American Psychoanalytic Association, not of the American Psychiatric. Our non-medical personnel has been appointed in conformity with the 1938 Resolution with the approval of the American Psychoanalytic and has functioned with its continued approval

(with the single exception of Milton Wexler, Ph.D., as lecturer). Certainly the A.P.A. Committee on New Training Facilities, which investigated our Institute in consequence of our split and in May 1954 recommended full approval of our training operations, never questioned our use of non-medical training analysts or lecturers.

A few words about the appointment of Milton Wexler as lecturer in a single course on the psychoanalytic theory of the psychoses. This appointment was made in June 1952, i.e. before the official ruling concerning such an appointment, which was passed by the Board on Professional Standards in December 1953 (paragraph J, section III, Report of the Committee on Training Standards, Minutes of the Board on Professional Standards, N.Y., Dec. 1953, page 19.) After the ruling was made, we applied to the Board on Professional Standards for an exceptional permission in this case, since the ruling contained provision for such exceptions. The permission was denied in St. Louis in May 1954. Accordingly Milton Wexler ceased to be a lecturer for our candidates. His name appears as Lecturer in our 1952-53 Annual Report, but not in the Annual Report for 1953-54, now in press.

I should point out that among our nine training analysts, six are medical psychoanalysts and three non-medical, and among the lecturers for 1952-53 (including Wexler) eight are M.D.'s and two not. For 1953-54 this numeration for the lecturers is twelve and one, the single non-medical lecturer being Mrs. Margarete Ruben, lecturer and supervisor in Child Analysis (who completed her training in 1936 in Berlin).

I turn now specifically to your letter in reply to Dr. Noyes. In the middle of your third paragraph you discuss the publication in 1938 of the 'Minimal Standards for Training', etc. of the A.P.A., and refer (though not specifically) to the 'Resolution Against the Future Training of Laymen for the Therapeutic Use of Psychoanalysis'. You are referring to the so-called 'grandfather clause' in paragraph (3) of the Resolution (Page 27 of the A.P.A. booklet of Jan. 1, 1945), but you note only the first half of this paragraph, the whole of which reads as follows:

“(3) That this does not in any way alter the status of those laymen who already are members of any one of the constituent societies of the American Psychoanalytic Association, nor jeopardize the future status of those laymen who at the date of adoption of this resolution are already trained or in training for the practice of psychoanalysis.” (Underlining is mine.) (This principle was reaffirmed by the Board on Professional Standards in December 1953, paragraphs E and I, pp. 18 and 19, loc. cit.)

It is in conformity with the second half of this paragraph (3) that the appointments of non-medical instructors (training analysts) in our Institute have been made.

In the first sentence of the second full paragraph on page 2 of your letter to Dr. Noyes you write: '... we have from time to time had difficulties within our Association, some but not all of them involving this problem of training by laymen in a few of the Institutes accredited by us.' Now I believe that the difficulties have come not from training by laymen but from the training (suspected or actual) of laymen. The training of laymen in the therapeutic use of psychoanalysis is something which all of us here in our Institute and Society have scrupulously avoided, whether we are medical or non-medical psychoanalysts. And when we have felt that seminars for social workers in the Extension Division of our Institute were being used by them as instruction in therapy, or could be construed as such, we have discontinued such seminars; and seminars requested by psychologists we have simply not given, because it was clear that instruction in therapy was the thing wanted. It is clear that we have wished to conform broadly as well as specifically with the policies of the American Psychoanalytic Association; and not one of us has a conviction, as you put it, 'that unrestricted lay analysis and lay psychotherapy is desirable'.

By the way, in the next paragraph of your letter to Dr. Noyes you refer to our appointment of Milton Wexler as the appointment of 'an instructor in supervised psychoanalysis'. This it most definitely was not. He was only to be a lecturer, to give one single course, a reading and seminar course on psychoanalytic theory of psychoses (page 7 in the latest, 1954, edition of our Curriculum). So it seems that the strength of your feelings about all these questions caused you to exaggerate our 'wickedness'!

I pass now to a few specific points in your letter to me. In the third paragraph you mention 'the paradox of the long established policy of the American in regard to lay instructors and the situation in your Society' (you really mean 'Institute'). As I have indicated earlier in this letter, our non-medical training analysts have received their appointments in conformity with the second half of paragraph (3) of the 1938 Resolution, and have served for many years with the full knowledge of, and without any disapproval being expressed by, the American Psychoanalytic Association and its Board on Professional Standards. And recently the Board's Committee on New Training Facilities recommended approval of our organization and our training and took no exception to our use of non-medical instructors. The Board accepted this recommendation and granted us full approval.

On your last page you express the opinion that 'this problem in Los Angeles will inevitably create major difficulties,

not only for the A.P.A., but for your own Society, in its relationship to the medical profession¹. I want to point out, Dr. Hendrick, that so far we have not had any such difficulties, and by virtue of our sincere adherence to the principle that we have nothing to do with the training of laymen for therapy and our contributions to the training of physicians (psychiatrists) in psychoanalysis, we do not expect to have any such difficulties, unless they should be stirred up from the outside. We hope that you, knowing the facts, will help to prevent any such unwarranted stirring up.

From all of the preceding it can be concluded that, to use your own figure of speech, we have in these matters kept our skirts clean, and also our undergarments are as clean as it is humanly possible to keep them. And therefore any attack upon us in this regard is definitely barking up the wrong tree.

With best personal regards,

Yours sincerely,

David Brunswick, Ph.D.