

Minutes

Of the Scientific Meeting of the Psychoanalytic Study Group
Of Los Angeles on September 4, 1942, at 8 p.m., at 145 So.
Beachwood

Dr. Erikson of Berkeley reports on: "Psychiatric Observations on a Submarine". On several trips on submarines, Dr. E. had the opportunity to make very interesting psychological observations. Working on a submarine presupposes not only the precise teamwork^{on} on similar machines of modern warfare, but has its specific conditions. The adaptation to the unusual surroundings is best accomplished by a kind of regression of the individual crew members, a regression which, of course, has to remain a partial one since the crew has to remain active and adaptable. The principal condition of the necessary "regression" is given by the fact that the members of the crew have no contact whatsoever with the outside world. Comparable to persons under hypnosis, they have shifted their perceptual functions to their commander, who is the only one who can see and hear. -- A detail characteristic for the "regression" is the importance which is placed on food. The icebox is always open, and everybody can eat whatever and whenever he wants to. There are also no special hours for sleep. If anybody wishes to sleep, he lies down and his work is taken over by others.

The situation of the commanding officer, however, is very different from that of the crew members; it seems that the officers tend more to neurotic after effects than the crew members.

The discussion concerned especially relations to claustrophobia, anxiety, and "pleasures" of mother's womb fantasies.