

HISTORY COMMITTEE

Review of the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society Minutes
1942-1953

but
R. J. S.
Rec 11-6-62

The complete file of the Minutes was read and is summarized below. A second file from 1954 to the present has also been reviewed but has not sufficient historical interest to warrant summarization. Whenever a significant statement has appeared in the Minutes, it has been quoted verbatim, and the Minutes of the critical meetings around the time of the split have been thermalized in entirety.

In general, one gets the impression from reading the Minutes that they are not a vital source of information concerning the events of the Study Group, Society and Institute. One has to have considerable background to understand often the implications of what is stated dryly and officially, and it is obvious that a great amount of detail is lost in innuendo, which innuendo would have significance to those who were present but not to a person who comes on the scene late.

The first note in the Society Minutes is dated 9/25/42 and is a form letter extending an invitation to non-psychoanalysts "whose training qualifications have been investigated by the Committee (Education) and found to be in accord with the standards established June 1938 by the American Psychoanalytic Association", to participate in scientific work of the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Society. Thus, the first note of all already foreshadows issues which are to involve the Society in increasing conflict. There is then a gap until 1946 when the more formal minutes begin. On 2/22/46 it is noted that "Dr. Simmel brought out that the San Francisco Society adopted a resolution that non-medical analysts, who were analysed before 1938, be given recognition as qualified analysts. Dr. Fenichel had expressed his

1938
null

view to Dr. Simmel that he would join the Society only if there was a gentleman's agreement that lay analysts had full rights in scientific meetings." On 4/4/46 there is a letter written to lay analysts confirming their status as qualified analysts.

On 4/11/46, the first meeting of the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society was held. Those listed as present were Briebl, Hacker, Levy, Levy, Fromm, Simmel, Tidd and 20 guests. At this time, Simmel is noted as looking forward to the eventual development of a "California Journal of Psychoanalysis". There were at this time 18 registered candidates, 7 or 8 of whom were considered to be advanced.

The American Psychoanalytic Association accepted Los Angeles as an affiliate Society on 5/26/46.

During the Summer and Fall of 1946, there were discussions about starting an official Institute. A predominant theme of these discussions regarded finances, for instance, the question of the Psychoanalytic Institute Foundation of Los Angeles (which seems to have had little existence other than on paper) becoming the official institute. This institute was defined as having four functions: training, a free clinic, research, and fund-raising.

The development of the Society and Institute toward their present form progressed, with increasing activity toward converting the study group into the Society. On 1/16/47, it is noted that Simmel felt that, to represent psychoanalysis in Los Angeles, the Study Group should be incorporated into the Society rather than these two groups being kept separate. He expressed this opinion, knowing that the members of the Study Group did not wish to become a part of the Institute at that time.

Another issue which was to concern members for several years to come showed up in an unresolved discussion on 11/20/47 in which the question

was raised whether members should psychoanalyse anyone who is doing psychotherapy without first getting the approval of the Society.

The earlier flutterings in the official minutes regarding problems that were to become major issues now begin to dominate the minutes. The Minutes of 12/4/47 note that at a meeting on 11/21/47, Hanna Fenichel's appointment as a training analyst was contested. On 12/4/47 the Minutes state, "...Drs. Eriehl and Levy questioned the procedure of the Education Committee as well as the motives for appointing a lay analyst as a training analyst. Dr. Levy asked to go on record that in his opinion the Education Committee had been negligent and derelict in its function as a Committee of the Society. Dr. Tidd objected, and the statement was withdrawn. Dr. Marmor moved, "that the Society recommend to the Education Committee that it rescind the appointment...."

(There were of course many other problems discussed during this time which, while obviously significant, are of less historical interest: how to send out announcements of programs, problems of office space, would Kubie take the position of Director of the Institute, the question of analysts listing themselves in the phone books, new members, low-cost psychoanalysis, shall there be Boards in Psychoanalysis. Between 1946 and 1950, there is a continuing thread running through the minutes of a desire on the part of analysts, to relate themselves in this community to organized psychiatry and its clinics, more than was expressed subsequent to 1950.)

The irritants were again concentrated; on 3/17/49 when there was a discussion about the seminar on controversial concepts related to psychoanalysis. This discussion apparently was not so much concerned just then with what material would be presented; rather, the battle was fought by

-4-

administrative skirmishing e.g. Marmor wanted the candidates to be invited to the seminar and Grotjahn wanted there to be more sessions assigned to the seminar.

On 2/16/50 there is the first notice in the official notes of the Society of the disagreements leading to the split.

When the dust had begun to settle, and as a first official sign of relief, the following amendment to the constitution was recommended by Greenson and passed: "A member of another affiliate society of the American Psychoanalytic Association is ineligible for membership in the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society, and if a member of the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society becomes a member of another affiliate society of the A.P.A. he thereby forfeits membership in the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society".

The next troubling problem to come up before the Society was that of fund raising. The Minutes, other than hinting at this, cast no light on the problems that arose, the personality differences involved, or the historical facts.

Questions regarding the definition of a psychoanalyst which had previously disturbed the workings of the Society continued to be worked on. On 12/21/50, changes were made in the constitution to define accredited member, active member, and affiliate member. In later years, the related problem of how to evaluate and when to accept for membership a person on transfer from other societies in the United States or Europe was also hammered out. It is interesting to note how this question would repeat itself a few years later and be rehandled as if it had never come up before.

On 6/28/51, an amendment to the constitution was made as follows: "Honorary members who practice psychoanalysis in the State of California have the right to vote".

On 3/15/51, the problem of the loyalty oath and the involvement of members of the San Francisco Society in this controversy came to a head with a motion being passed by our Society condemning the actions of the University of

Society officially sympathizing with those San Francisco members who had taken a stand against the Oath, but also in these discussions, questions were raised whether our Society should not forbid its membership from taking employment with the University of California so long as this restrictive Oath was demanded of future employees.

Later in 1951 the same issues which had produced the split in Los Angeles were now shaking the A.P.A. (which is not to imply that these disturbances were not felt before this time). Of especial note from our Minutes is the problem of increasing argument in the A.P.A. over the number of hours per week for candidates. At this time, the arguments seemed to be led by the Chicago and Southern California Institutes.

On 4/24/52, when these issues seemed to be at a peak of tenseness in the A.P.A., it was noted in our Minutes: "Dr. Greenson read a letter from Dr. Levy outlining his views on the Knight letter. Dr. Levy emphasized that the central issue is how to maintain high standards and to enforce them in the institutes, and that to accomplish this it is necessary to preserve the powers of the Board on Professional Standards which are being questioned, and that it is a misuse of the democratic principle to apply the majority vote to scientific issues. Due to the fact that new members will shift the balance of power, it is necessary to make positive proposals. Dr. Levy in his letter noted that the Knight letter had in three places referred to candidates being 'penalized'. It should not be regarded as penalizing candidates to see to it that they are well trained."

And on 5/22/52: "Dr. Windholz was elected 18 - 5 Chairman of the Committee on Problems of Training. This Committee showed a sharp split, with Doctors Alexander, Rade and Romm and their groups opposing minimal requirements and demanding autonomy for local institutes, but the majority were against them....."

"When our representatives arrived in Atlantic City, they found that a new scientific committee had been formed -- on the Theory and Practice of Psychoanalytic Training -- with Leon J. Saul as Chairman. George J. Mohr reported this committee recommended that the 5-4 hour rule, the 200 hours of supervision should temporarily be held in abeyance. This recommendation should have gone to the Committee on Minimal Standards of the Board of Professional Standards, and was referred there....."

"The Committee on Institutes, Dr. Benedek, Chairman, reported a change in the procedure to establish a new Institute: There will be no sponsors required, but a subcommittee will go to the place and investigate, and the new institute will be under investigation for three years. Dr. Levy reported that he had received a letter from Dr. Benedek -- our Institute is considered a new one since the split, and we will be investigated as a new Institute."

From then on the intensity decreases. Between 1951-1952 the main issues taken up in the Minutes concern accreditation of psychologists by a State Board, graduation procedures and problems of papers to be read by candidates, increased teaching activities in local hospitals and residencies, concern over the slowness in establishing the UCLA Psychiatric Unit.

On 12/17/53 occurs a last note on the A.P.A.'s struggle with minimal standards: "The Committee for Training Standards has lowered the minimal requirements for supervisory hours from 200 to 150 hours. If any deviations from the 4-5 rule or the once-a-week supervisory rule should

occur, letters of explanation for such must be sent in advance to the Board on Professional Standards."

The file ends at this date.