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High up in the North in the land called Svithjod, there stands a rock. It is a hundred miles high and a hundred miles wide. Once every thousand years a little bird comes to this rock to sharpen its beak. When the rock has thus been worn away, then a single day of eternity will have gone by.

*Hendrik Van Loon - The Story of Mankind
Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., New York, 1938*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Dr. Shapiro:

It seems that John L. Lewis, the old Union Boss, was wrong when he said: "He who tooteth not his own horn, said horn will not be tooted." Why was he wrong? Because when I returned from vacation I was surprised to find that my horn had been tooted by some people in such a nice way that it made me forget my ingrained aversion against personal publicity.

I very much appreciate the great effort that went into your work as editor and also into Al Kandelin's friendly article.

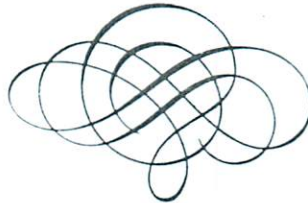
I also enjoyed much your case report which shows that such a clinical report can be pleasant to read and entertaining when written by someone with a talent for writing.

Sincerely,
 Ernest Lewy, M.D.

Dear Sumner,

I should like to call to the attention of the readers of our Bulletin that the last issue of The Reiss-Davis Clinic Bulletin was dedicated to Dr. Peter Blos, and follows this theme: The Ranges of Psychotherapeutic Work with Children and Parents. Our Society is represented in it through contributions by Dr. Motto and myself. The Bulletin also contains a delightful clinical note by Dora Hartman.

Sincerely,
 Rudolf Ekstein, Ph.D.
 Editor, Reiss-Davis Clinic Bulletin



HONORING LIFE MEMBERS*

On December 17, 1972, the members of the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society-Institute paid tribute to their Life Members. It was peculiarly appropriate, considering the meaning of Christmas, that a group of psychoanalysts would gather to honor the wise men and women who made psychoanalytic training a viable possibility in Los Angeles, without divine intervention. Hannah Fenichel, Ernst Lewy, David Brunswick, Richard Evans, Robert Jokl, Margrit Monk, Margarete Ruben, and Charles Sarlin breathed life into the new born babe as well as provided the leadership and wisdom necessary for a healthy child to grow. Beginning with a study group and the School for Nursery Years, the foundation for two psychoanalytic training institutes and societies was laid.

Since psychoanalysts are ordinarily skeptical of tribute and gifts, both Lawrence Friedman and Ralph Greenson aimed their remarks at providing an historical perspective from their respective experiences. Both avoided going overboard with unnecessary laudatory oration; but both speakers emphasized the work of the Life Members, work often against such serious obstacles as war, death of loved ones, lack of money, external criticism, and internal dissonance. The Life Members, like grandparents, can be proud of their work, of training such men as Friedman and Greenson, of the Center For Early Education, and of a thriving, growing society and institute. The psychoanalytic community of Los Angeles pays its respects to these fine people.

**Reported from a tape made by Mark Orfirer, M.D.*

HISTORY SECTION

MARGRIT MUNK

Margrit Munk died in Rome in September 1972, bringing to an end a long life devoted to analysis, analytic child study, and the education of teachers of an analytic orientation. Her name reaches back to the first days of analysis in California where she was intimately associated with the earliest pioneer groups. From 1927 on, she was among the few analysts in Los Angeles; when the Psychoanalytic Study Group was organized in 1935, she was its first Secretary, serving in that office for the next four years. The consistency and devotion of her efforts comprised major factors in the development and organization of the Center for Early Education whose precursors were the Parents' Coop-

erative Nursery School, and then the School for Nursery Years.. In each, her role was a leading one as teacher, counsellor, trustee, and member of administrative committees. When in 1969 the CEE marked its thirtieth anniversary, to honor her contributions, the Margrit Munk Lectureship was established.

At the 1969 Annual Meeting of the Psychoanalytic Society her seventieth birthday was noted and her long association with analysis reviewed: 1924-1927 marked her beginning analytic studies in Vienna comprising lectures by Bernfeld, Schilder, Anna Freud, and others, including especially significant and always recalled child study conferences with Aichhorn.

In 1927 she came to Los Angeles with her first husband, Thomas Libbin; her analytic work then definitely established the historical distinction of her being the first to do so in California. Other analytic professionals, all laymen at first, including David Brunswick, Estelle Levy, and Marjorie Leonard, joined her. This was the small group which invited Ernst Simmel who was in flight from the Nazi terrorism; he accepted. Under his guidance the Psychoanalytic Study Group was founded in 1935, Simmel as President and Margrit as Secretary.

Her role again was a leading one in the invitation of Fenichel whose flight from the Nazis ended with his migration to Los Angeles in 1938. To facilitate visa requirements a contract was issued guaranteeing him employment as a teacher in the Study Group program (with an income no less than \$3000 per annum). Simmel and Margrit signed the contract for the Study Group and stood as guarantors of the salary along with Arthur Timme (Honorary President), David Bruns-

wick, Estelle Levy, Paul Epstein, and Richard Tolman. The latter two were Professors of Physics at Cal Tech, devoted supporters of analysis, and members of the Study Group.

Mrs. Munk's qualities of sincerity, friendliness, and devotion to analysis are the ones most often recalled by those who knew her. She carried her role of analytic pioneer with modesty and consistent regard for the sensitivity of others. Her long identification with the analytic scene has contributed a significant page to its history.

CLINICAL ANECDOTES

From the couch this collector's item of "woman logic:"

"We had a terrible argument. I insisted I was right, but so did he. He said he'd get an impartial judge, so I told him I'd get one for my side too...!"

And its counterpart (presumably after the storm),

"I always say, 'The way to a man's heart is through his libido.'"

From the younger set, the sighing lament that it is "grossly unfair to saddle a mere teenager with puberty problems," and the convoluted paradox that followed, that "then again, the future just isn't what it used to be!"

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO LOMAS'S GRAFFITI

Superman, hot in pursuit, watched the elevator doors slam in his face. The crooks were getting away! Reacting quickly, he grabbed the indicator arrow as it arced downward, then, with a mighty tug, pulled back. By that maneuver the

car returned to his floor, sprang open, and yielded up his quarry.

Great comic strip copy! ... But hardly the kind of magic any grown up could believe, let alone a psychological sophisticate...you'd think... Yet, wasn't just such reasoning what inspired the James and Lange theory that we feel sorrow because we cry, instead of versa vice? Its logic implied that if you'd wag your doggie by his tail you'd make him joyous, and that sad Pagliacci's paint undid his grief.

Folks are willing victims of such childish notions—or anything that promises surcease from harsher truths—so *caveat*, if you're of a mind to tilt with windmills of such spurious philosophies, or still naively hold with structures needing years to form, or changes wanting eons to evolve ... like classical analysis.

Van Loon, quoted on our cover, might well have been admonishing in just that vein; it's hard to say.

Several years ago, midwife included, upon our local scene there burst a new-spawned monster. Its name: "NUDE PSYCHOTHERAPY." Theorizing, in its unthinking wishfulness, that removing the inhibiting stricture of man's clothing ought generally disinhibit Inhibition, it resurrected the spectre of mandrake, snake oils, kidney pies to cure nephritis, and beef hearts for angina. Yet,—mirabile dictu (!)—it attracted throngs of frenzied devotees, and even widespread publicity in a popular newsweekly.

Your Editor's indignant response was nationally immortalized in *Time Magazine's* columns when he predicted that therapeutically speaking, "disrobing neurotics" assuredly would produce "nude neurotics, though neither more nor less..." (why, were it otherwise, an

vercoat would heal a psychopath)
..but, my message went unheeded
should it have been written on the
walls of their latrine?). All that
veiled was a flurry of correspon-
ence from disgruntled heliothera-
ists who lamented my misguided
nugning of their art.

Bye and bye, with winter's ap-
roach and that of gusty weather,
id and faddist fell obscurely back
eneath the clinical horizon, but
ot, alas, for long. From another
quarter came the scent of the bad
enny returning. This time, wonder-
il to relate, the thaumaturgist went
o work upon Aggression. *In vivo*
ostility, he promised, cured *in*
tro! Squabbling couples in his
fice, provoked to bickering prattle,
ight enjoy the Master Magician's
alysis of their padded brickbat
ings to the accompaniment of
propriate scripture, incanted from
Allegro, or the Marquis of Queens-
rry Handbook, depending on the
agnosis.

So once more my blistering pen-
anship, responding to its feature,
is accorded space in print [*Time*
gazine]. Aggression, I argued,
eded more than the pass of a
nd to channel it sublimely—which
monition's ink was scarcely dry
fore a rival periodical devoted
lf its issue to miracle mental
alings through brief encounters,
isitivities, and assorted kindred
ickies. Its long report, incident-
ly, once again overkilled the
gthiest psychotherapy of them
analysis.

Rising to that challenge I fired off
baleful indictment [*Newsweek*]
ich derided man's belief in *instant*
racter. Verily, quoth I, good
fee and cement could spring
m out their essence plus hot
er, but surely not a human
che.

If, I hinted, one would properly
concoct a child, brew up a lasting
friendship, or anything of the sort,
both leavening and tireless steeping
had been proven indispensable, de-
spite the newest "pressure cookers,"
with their self-appointed chefs.

Nobody rebutted; mayhap no one
even winced...which might have
meant much progress...even Barnum
could be wrong ... I hoped ... until,
God help us, with a turn of the
wheel, there it was coming again in
the guise of guidebooks to LOVE:
Bedroom Baedeckers that pledged
safe passage betwixt the Scylla of
impotence and Charybdis of a prae-
cox! From everywhere, manuals for
attaining a Masters in manipulation
or a Ph.D. in prurience. Courses
with homework and lab exercises
(live models available) to instruct
men and women (animals appar-
ently require no assistance) in how
and where and what and when to
fricate, fret, or fricassee, all the way
to ecstasy and back beneath the
rubric of LOVE—and all with global
circulation!

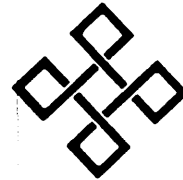
Wellsir, I wrote them again you
may be sure: Subtly, yet persua-
sively—coming in from the side as
it were, with a quote from our
Leader: Freud had said it—that the
size of the match has nothing really
much to do with the ultimate size
of the fire it ignited—implying to
Men, that truly meaningful rela-
tionships between mature people
depend upon more than bedrooms'
warm-up acrobatics or gymnastic
flourish....but they didn't print that,
nor the trenchant purple-veined ver-
sion of the self-same sentiment with
which below I close..wistful in the
recollection that hundreds of years
earlier even ancient Romans knew a
city couldn't be built within an eye
blink and that the proverbial stone
was hollowed by the droplet's often

falling, not its force—which supplies
us, if ever we should find new quar-
ters for our Institute, with much we
might inscribe upon its entrance
arches.

Elsewhere in that building...in its
bowels or on their walls...perhaps
some scamp will carve my still un-
printed graffito, whose message
reads:

"If e'er we do succeed in teaching
Neurotics how to F_ _ _ , most
assuredly we shall wind up, nor
more nor less, with just a bunch of
F_ _ _ ING neurotics — and
Heaven help us all!"

SLS



Winner of the JACQUES BRIEN
MEMORIAL AWARD is Harvey D.
Lomas, M. D. His prize essay,
GRAFFITI: Some Observations and
Speculations, is reproduced below.

Five entrants competed. Their
efforts were judged by Mrs. Ruben
and Dr. Jokl (the latter kindly sub-
stituting for Dr. Lewy who was
temporarily indisposed).

A similar honorarium will be
offered next year.

GRAFFITI: SOME OBSERVATIONS AND SPECULATIONS

Harvey D. Lomas, M.D.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In 1962, while interning at a large
public hospital, I observed, for the
first time so it seemed, prolific writ-
ing on walls in quarters restricted to
the medical staff. Lengthy and in-

zed messages were especially abundant on bathroom walls. I was surprised that physicians would try on such an unlikely practice, in a quickly passing moment matter was forgotten. In 1965, I was provoked to bring this and similar observations to the attention of a friend, Dr. Gershon Weltman, whose enthusiastic response and encouragement provided the impetus for an unexpected, mutual research effort which culminated in the preparation of a paper at the 1966 meeting of the American Psychiatric Association.¹ (16) Briefly, Dr. Weltman suggested we go see for ourselves, first to the literature, then to the field to collect and categorize the data. Much to our surprise we found little or no literature on the subject of graffiti in contrast to the overabundant supply of pictures and writings on walls of every depiction in every conceivable location. Of course, archaeologists (2, 3), historians (4,15), folklorists, and epigraphers (19) were represented, but the literature on psychology, as far as we could tell, contained virtually no mention of this illicit behavior. Feeling confident that we had made a significant discovery, Dr. Weltman and I eagerly awaited the judgment of the scientific community only to be refused publication. In contrast, the response of the popular press and interested individuals was overwhelming. Our disappointment was short-lived for we now had to explain this paradox, i.e., the apparent apathy and disinterest of the official psychiatric journals, and in one instance refusal to publish because the paper contained obscene words, while laymen and professionals, unofficially at least, seemed overjoyed. Could it be that our bringing the presence of such behavior into consciousness was

meeting with resistance, in particular, the kind of resistance Freud so often encountered on the part of the scientific community whenever he attempted to present his ideas on psychoanalysis? Making allowances for deficiencies in our presentation, nevertheless, it was as though our report itself was disgusting.² Could it be that we had touched lightly on another aspect of the repressed, in particular, on a part of that dearly guarded but forgotten epoch in early childhood? I am speaking, of course, of an aspect of infantile sexuality. We are forced to conclude at the outset that writing on walls is but another manifestation of a prehistoric, instinctual life long ago forgotten.³

But this was not new to Dundes (5), who has compiled a most complete bibliography on bathroom wall writing. He writes, "Despite the widespread distribution of these inscriptions and despite the fact that many of them are demonstrably traditional, one looks in vain for extended collections of published texts and for any rational discussion of them and/or the practice of writing them." Continuing, "It is curious that it is perfectly permissible to investigate the graffiti of the past, say the graffiti of classical cultures, but it is not equally acceptable, academically speaking, to study the graffiti of our culture." This "academic resistance" is familiar to students of psychoanalysis who are prepared to encounter it whenever we come to investigate derivatives of the repressed. Curiously enough, however, and in contrast to the psychoanalyst, these academicians, in the case of graffiti at least, choose the past over the present for their full attention. This does not surprise us, for these same academicians rely almost exclusively

on relics of the past for their study (13). Indeed, one such scholar, Della Corte, in describing the abundance of graffiti in ancient Pompeii writes, "I leave in the shade the enormous mass that wallows in lubricity and in the most crude obscenity, which scholars know where and how to find."⁴ Lindsay, on the other hand, who in his book *The Writing on the Wall*, reconstructs the climate of Pompeii from wall writing remnants, felt no such compunction to eliminate so-called obscene messages and for this we are eternally grateful (15). It is worth noting that Freud was aware of Strauss's collection of erotic stories, jokes and graffiti, and wrote a letter in defense of the periodical *Anthropophyteia* in which they appeared (7). Ferenczi (6) and Jones (12) also commented on the presence of wall writing. Finally, Grotjahn (11), in his book *Beyond Laughter*, touches on graffiti in his discussion of Kilroy, and Kinsey and his co-workers include a section on bathroom wall writing in their encyclopedic study of sexual behavior (13).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Our review of the literature revealed that while culture historians have reconstructed ancient societies from artifacts such as wall writing remnants, psychologists have not been as successful in explaining the meaning of wall writing itself. Of course, if there was nothing else to write on, we need not look further for an explanation. The heroes of the French underground who scratched their names on cave walls, often obscuring 20,000 year old pictographs of bison and mammoth, are to be forgiven, for it was unlikely that they carried scratch paper in their flight from the Nazis

(18). It would appear as though writing on walls before there were alternative modes of written communication has no connection with our subject, although a brief review of the historical record may lend a perspective so often lacking when we consider contemporary wall writing.

Most experts agree that our prehistoric cave-dwelling ancestors traced the outlines of game, such as the mammoth, under the auspices of magic, specifically expressing the wish to possess and insure an abundant food supply (2). In Totem and Taboo, Freud speaks of it as representing the "omnipotence of thought," a form of mind over matter so to speak (10). Later human figures appear on the cave wall, in particular, so-called fertility figures or females with prominent sexual features, again expressing the wish for plenty (2).

The next significant reference to wall writing appears in the Old Testament, Book of Daniel (5.2), where we learn that Belshazzar, the new king of Babylon and son of the wicked Nebuchadnezzar, while celebrating his accession to the throne (his father banished "to eat grass as oxen" for worshipping false idols), summoned his lords, his consorts and concubines, to partake of wine served from the sacred vessels taken from the temple in Jerusalem while they praised the gods of gold, silver, iron and wood. "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace..." It was written that Belshazzar, repeating his father's mistakes, would likewise lose his kingdom and be put to death. Thus, "the handwriting on the wall" has come to mean that the end was clearly in sight. When one sees the

handwriting on the wall, he is warned of what is to come. This biblical story confirms our initial impression of the infantile origin of wall writing. Indeed it combines the magical technique of representation on the wall with the additional element of wish-fulfillment, for there can be no doubt that it was the wish of the Jews that Belshazzar be castrated, separated from his kingdom, and killed for his brutal treatment of their people and their treasured beliefs. And it was their wish or belief that someone else would carry out the punishment, someone like God the Father. What is so clearly portrayed in this story is the projection of Jewish aggression (revenge) onto the wall. As we shall see later, this ancient legend sheds much light on our subject and we are again impressed with the parallels between man's early development, both individually and collectively.

Finally, in 67 A.D., a hungry people waited for food to arrive by sea only to learn that all of the wealth of Rome went to feed Nero and his pleasures. Thus, in Pompeii, according to Della Corte, "The statues of Nero...became covered with phrases such as ... :

'We have seen you, you rogue, engaging in so many sporting contests [now]...we shall test your ability....of drawing us out from our present misery.'"

Continuing, "The greater parts of these inscriptions, and the most interesting, are traced by means of the stylus or *graphium*: these are the so-called *graffiti*." (4) There has been virtually no change in this activity over the past 1900 years.

At this point, I would like to stop and review with you some of the data collected from our study of wall writing in Los Angeles (16).

REVIEW OF THE DATA

We classified messages according to their location and content. We were then able to compare messages in 1965 with those from 67-79 A.D., and we noted that the content varied only slightly over 1900 years. Such variations could be accounted for by errors in translation or changes in the function of language through time. For example, the word *suck* was used liberally by the Romans in messages whose impact today would depend on the word *fuck*.⁵ We discovered that wall writing was not restricted to the bathroom, but was most commonly found along school routes, amidst recreation areas, e.g., beaches and playgrounds, as well as in alleyways, parking lots, and tunnels. Bridges and freeway overpasses were a favorite site for outdoor wall writers. It was our impression that adolescents were responsible for the majority of outdoor wall writing. Thus, large white walls on the way to school would be particularly vulnerable as were walls in close proximity to the home range of a particular group or gang. For example, at a local beach, various adolescent groups marked off homing sites, i.e., areas which remained theirs for the entire summer.⁶

There was abundant outdoor wall writing in Los Angeles, but nowhere more than in Mexican-American neighborhoods. Indeed, there was a disproportionate amount of outdoor graffiti in both acculturated and unacculturated Mexican-American communities.⁷ Virtually every building and wall contained some writing. Outdoor walls contained virtually no political or social commentary. This included economically deprived and highly volatile black communities like Watts. Of

course, outdoor walls contained their share of provocative comments and insults, for example, laudatory and derogatory messages concerning themselves and their individual members.

The content of indoor walls was more varied. Messages here dealt mainly with sexual themes, but political and social commentary was not uncommon. Marks of identification were rare except for direct solicitation and insult. Indoor messages were more complete and often involved meticulous graphic representation of sexual objects and acts, as well as self-contained essays, poems, sayings, and jokes. At the other end of the spectrum were the fragmented associations, fantasies, and confessions reflecting more clearly the writers' inner world. Finally, responses to previous messages were more common indoors. Often these protested the previous writer's morality or general intelligence.

We are immediately impressed by how difficult it would be to explain the meaning of wall writing by relying too heavily on the messages themselves. Weltman and I discovered that we could compile an exhaustive classification of graffiti which could be favorably compared with a similar effort to categorize dreams or dream symbols, jokes, or parapraxes. We are all familiar with the difficulties inherent in such approaches, for example, with how we can be misled by deriving a dream's meaning solely from its manifest content. It is far more complicated in the case of graffiti, for we rarely have access to the writer's associations. In the case of dreams, slips, and jokes, the psychoanalyst has a distinct advantage for he can analyze their meaning in the context of a relationship and place them alongside other associations of the pa-

tient. Unfortunately, the student of psychoanalysis is in no better position than the folklorist or archaeologist in his attempt to reconstruct the meaning of messages on the wall. On the other hand, graffiti, unlike dreams, are ordinarily anonymously produced in private. Thus, in our original presentation, Weltman and I were led to perform a contextual analysis of the messages, i.e., we inferred the writers' intent from the content of the message while considering the context in which they appeared. For our own purposes then, the pictorial representation of sexual intercourse on a bathroom wall, for example, was considered to be a more or less direct and undisguised expression of a sexual wish.⁸ But how were we to explain other messages such as social or political commentary on a bathroom wall or messages on outdoor walls which were rarely sexual in nature? As we would expect, all sorts of wishes were expressed on the wall. But what is the unifying thread? We must look elsewhere for the answer.

What has been neglected in the study of the writing on walls is the walls themselves, for it is an undisputed fact that throughout history, wherever and whenever men have contact with walls, graffiti appear. Indeed, if there are no walls, then trees or rocks suffice. Wall writing continues despite man's access to canvas or paper, despite billboards, posters, road signs, books, newspapers, or other more modern means of communication. It is my feeling that we can no more understand graffiti by separating them from the walls on which they appear than we can understand dreams by neglecting their obvious connection to sleep or comprehend jokes by ignoring the laughter they produce

in the listener. It is about this relation of man to the walls that surround him that I wish now to speculate.

SOME SPECULATIONS

What can we say here of the psychic meaning of walls? If one were allowed to speculate, several rather poetic ideas emerge: A wall is to keep things in or out, something to peek through, climb over, or hide behind. A wall is to support, enclose, fence off for privacy, seclusion, restraint, or protection. Walls are obstacles, barriers, or as Frost reminds us, "Good fences make good neighbors." A wall represents individual property rights, national boundaries, in short, a reminder of ownership, of differences. A wall can mean isolation, loneliness, separateness, aloneness, alienation, mine, yours, theirs. A wall holds up, shelves, divides. Walls in another sense are testimonials, public bulletin boards, cultural grave-stones. Walls are adorned, lavished, worshipped, painted, or they are torn down, hit, or kicked in disgust. Finally, walls are scrawled on. What is the common thread?

There can be little doubt that walls have something to do with separation. We have all observed an infant's reaction to his mother who disappears around the corner of a wall or through the door in the wall. The mobile infant crawls around the corner in hot pursuit and cries if unable to circumvent the wall. Such a chase may even bring an infant in painful contact with the wall requiring mother's loving attention. Older children often prefer at night to have the doors to their rooms open and are much less concerned with privacy than are their parents. To such children, closing the door is often associated with punishment,

e.g., "Go to your room!" Is it no wonder that walls and doors are the victims of the child's displaced assaults? What appears as an innocent scrawl on the wall could be a vicious attack. Walls not only serve to separate the child from his mother, from his parents and siblings, but also to separate societies and nations. The Great Wall of China secures the Motherland from foreign intruders. The Berlin Wall keeps some people in, while keeping others out. Walls then not serve to separate but also serve the purpose of defense.

Clinically speaking, walls serving the purpose of separation and defense are referred to frequently by many of our patients. We are all familiar with our patients' description of their feelings as being "walled off." Patients often report that they are enclosed in a shell, or feel at times as though they are banging their heads against a wall, or more commonly that there is a wall between themselves and the therapist. Often, we and our patients agree that the patients' feelings are "walled off." To be sure, we are all familiar with the schizophrenic's wall—the wall which separates him from himself as well as from others. Harold Searles writes, "...He is likely to be so unable to communicate his thoughts and feelings in general, in a sufficiently understandable fashion so as to make his needs known to the other person." Continuing, "Probably there is no greater threat to the schizophrenic than the repressed knowledge of his aloneness, the realization that he, who yearns so strongly for oneness with another person, not only has the same inevitable aloneness as every human being, but in addition is even more completely cut off from his fellow beings by reason of his isolation within his schizophrenic illness."⁹ (19)

There is a wall separating all men. We are all alone, separate individuals, yet we seek contact, communication, symbiosis, dependence, satisfaction, and pleasure from each other. Is it a wonder that walls in our society become the object of scrawls and messages, drawings and paintings? Walls seem to fascinate us. Men spend thousands of dollars building walls, and some men contribute millions and have their names engraved on a wall. Walls testify to the strength of their construction, and yet they are impersonal and unpleasant reminders of our separation from each other. The use of a wall for drawing pictures or making jokes is to point out that the wall itself is no joke, and no art gallery, and no artistic creation, but rather a necessity to keep the inside in and the outside out.

If we can go back for a moment to the infant lying in his crib at the moment he discovers the fecal content of his diaper and begins to smear playfully these contents on the wall, I wonder if we are not observing the first important contacts between the child, the contents of his body, and the outside world. If there is an aim in this behavior, it is seeking pleasure. But the response from the outside world is as a wall to his pleasure-seeking, for most certainly his mother will not be pleased. And perhaps for the first time he will hear the word "no," long before he has entered into toilet training and long before he has developed the ability to move about the house under his mother's watchful eye. He may not be aware of it, but the infant has learned his first lesson about what will occur in his development, that is, what will eventually be erected within him to wall his instincts off from their natural tendency to seek pleasure

able discharge unimpeded. This reminds me of a footnote in the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* where Freud refers his reader to a paper by Lou Andreas-Salome, a paper which demonstrates how the first prohibition, namely, the prohibition against getting pleasure from anal activity and its contents, has a profound effect on the developing child. "This must be the first occasion on which the infant has a glimpse of an environment hostile to his instinctual impulses, on which he learns to separate his own entity from the alien one and on which he carries out the first 'repression' of his possibilities for pleasure. From that time on, what is 'anal' remains a symbol of everything that is to be repudiated and excluded from life."¹⁰ (1) It would be tempting to carry this line of speculation even further back into the history of an individual's life to the point where as a fetus, surrounded by the uterine walls, he periodically taps out his message reminding his mother of his presence and alerting her of his ultimate desire to be let out. And what would prevent us from speculating further about the wall as a stimulus barrier, a dream screen (14), or a breast for that matter?¹¹ In this sense, the fetus and later the developing infant are warmly protected from a comparatively cold and hostile environment in the womb or in his mother's arms, although periodically abandoned and left to his own devices. Yet, he struggles to get out, to grow and develop, and the male child, in any event, is propelled out of his mother's arms in search of manhood, never to return even for a moment to the comfort he once knew.¹² Unfortunately, we must at this point restrain the desire to speculate further and come to some conclusions.

CONCLUSIONS

In this presentation I have purposely overlooked the obvious connection between the act of defecation and wall writing. That anal erotic and aggressive impulses are directly involved can hardly be disputed. Furthermore, that abundant messages appear on outdoor walls should not trouble us any longer, for we must remember that bathrooms are a convenience of relatively recent origin. An additional connection of graffiti to art and writing in general has also been neglected here in favor of focusing on the wall and its relation to the wall writer and his audience. For if we take the wall as the starting point in our investigation of graffiti, we can trace its significance back to earliest infancy, back to a time when hallucinatory wish-fulfillment takes precedence over motor discharge in the search for pleasure. The wall, like the intrapsychic dream screen, is a public screen onto which are projected one's most pressing unsatisfied desires. So it was for our prehistoric ancestors whose need for food took precedence over virtually every other need. We must not forget that there is an earlier oral need, a need to possess the breast and its contents, that arises before feces are discovered by the infant.

This brings us to the final point in my presentation, namely, that in virtually every case, indoors or out, writing on the walls is at bottom the expression of aggressive and destructive wishes, in particular, the wish to destroy or possess the wall and all that it represents.¹³ And, like a joke, the destructive wish wraps itself in a disguise, the message, a disguise which temporarily robs us of our critical powers of observation

and forces us to join the writer in his act of destruction. Since we have come for another reason, we are nevertheless his captive audience, and we are helpless to resist. Indeed, some of us are compelled to join in, in much the same way a group action takes place.

Returning for a moment to my initial observations on fellow physicians-in-training, we can plainly see the displaced aggression. The great majority of these messages consisted of hostile and sadistic comments about certain patients and their care. These same physicians provided excellent care to a never ending tide of hopelessly ill, senile patients, many simply abandoned by their families to die, as well as to an equally difficult and numerous group of acute and chronic alcoholics. Temporary destruction of some of these hospital walls was a small price to pay for the frustrations inherent in this system of medical care.

Although I have tried to show that wall writing was inevitable before toilet training, before the anal-locomotor epoch of child development, it is nevertheless true that it is during the anal phase that we can observe it more clearly for the first time. The dilemma for the child in the anal phase is the same at any other phase of development, namely, the conflict between obtaining maximum pleasure on the one hand, and environmental restraints on the other. Jones describes the influence of the anal phase on character formation as coming from two directions. "The one is the endeavor of the infant to get as much pleasure as possible out of the performance, the other is his effort to retain his individual control of it in opposition to the educative aims forced on him by the environment." Ulti-

mately, there is an inordinate, and often extreme sensitivity about outside interference. "When, now, these hated intrusions and interferences nevertheless take place, the subjects' reaction to them is one of resentment, increasing on occasion to anger, or even outbursts of extreme rage."¹⁴ (12) Again, we can see how the wall as an obstacle to the natural desire to possess, becomes the displaced object of assaults and attacks.

We can see from our discussion so far that the wish to have or possess is intimately related to the wish to destroy, for each time a message appears on the wall it temporarily robs the owner of his exclusive possession of it. And like the bible story, the owner is warned. This point is even more clearly seen in recent incidents involving student uprisings at the Sorbonne and the University of California at Los Angeles. Once portions of the University were in the hands of the rebellious students, the walls were literally destroyed by graffiti.

Thus, wall writing, like an obscene joke, allows the writer and his audience to gain at the owner's expense in much the same way a fantasied woman becomes the object of a sexual assault while the teller and listener laugh on. Obviously, it is not the wall that suffers but the wall's owner.¹⁵ If we rely on Freud's discussion of jokes we see that graffiti, like jokes, make possible the satisfaction of an instinct despite the presence of an obstacle, namely, that intrapsychic wall, the wall against the instincts (18). That the instinct in question is always aggressive does not exclude the possibility of there being a fusion of sexual and aggressive impulses. Obscene pictures, words,

and jokes force us to picture the act portrayed automatically and in that sense are aggressive (12). Ultimately, it is derived from the experience of something seizing consciousness, something which breaks through all obstacles and forces itself on our mind that is the prototype for writing on a wall. It would appear that this occurs before refined motor discharge, say, fecal smearing becomes possible.

SUMMARY

This presentation concerns hand-written messages on walls in public places (graffiti). Throughout history men have recorded their experiences on the walls that surround them, yet despite the universality of this behavior, it has received very little attention in the scientific literature. More often than not wall writing forms a part of life's background occasionally mentioned in novels, cartoons, or the popular press. This most primitive form of communication and expression certainly deserves our careful attention.

In 1965, Lomas and Weltman studied contemporary graffiti with the aim of classifying a representative sampling of wall writing in the Los Angeles area. Perhaps it would be useful to refresh our memories by reviewing some of those data before attempting to explain their meaning. Ultimately, it shall be our purpose to trace the course of this behavior to its origin in early childhood; for just as wall writing served our prehistoric ancestors, so it served the instincts during a prehistoric epoch in the development of all of us, — that oft forgotten early period of infantile sexual life.

It is my view that the meaning of wall writing cannot be gleaned solely from the messages themselves,

for like dreams, jokes, and slips of the tongue, graffiti do not easily betray their meaning. Indeed, we would be lost in our attempt to understand them if we relied too heavily on their content. We can no more understand graffiti by separating them from the walls on which they appear than we can fully understand dreams by neglecting their obvious connection with sleep, or comprehend jokes by ignoring the laughter they produce in the listener. It is this relation of the writer to the wall that holds the key to our investigation.

I think we have been successful in our comparison of graffiti to jokes where a hostile or sexual instinct succeeds in finding disguised expression and relief. I have tried to show that aggressive-destructive and incorporative wishes are similarly satisfied by the wall writer at the expense of the wall's owner. I have also tried to give an historical perspective to the subject, one which forces us to trace the origin of this behavior in the case of mankind to the cave-dweller and, in the case of an individual, to earliest infancy.

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FOOTNOTES

- ¹ I must also acknowledge the equally enthusiastic support of Charles Wahl, Edward Kollar, and Jack Lomas.
- ² In discussing the scientific investigation of smut, Freud writes, "It is true that these (*jokes*) have been far more rarely deemed worthy of investigation, as though aversion to the thing itself had been transferred to the discussion of it." (8)
- ³ This would explain the relative absence of meaningful literature. Indeed, the classic monograph by Allan Walker Read (19) and a more recent discussion by McLean (17) are published in French and have never to my knowledge appeared in English.
- ⁴ Academic resistance is, after all is said and done, merely the collective resistance of intellectuals who individually and together shun all that reminds them of the repressed infantile sexual life. It is ironic, even perhaps intellectually dishonest, that Della Corte in his book entitled *Loves and Lovers in Ancient Pompeii* chooses to leave out sexual messages because they are obscene as if they were not essential to the academic study of love and lovers.

- ⁵ This observation lends historical weight to Leo Stone's (21) discussion of the unconscious connection between these two words.
- ⁶ The connection between wall writing and possession became even clearer when a young man stopped to ask if we were photographing "their wall."
- ⁷ This perhaps is a testimony of the degree to which Mexican-Americans remain on the fringe of American society maintaining a prior cultural heritage despite demands to conform.
- ⁸ Representations of sexual acts on the bathroom wall provide excellent examples of the component sexual instincts described by Freud in the *Three Essays* (9).
- ⁹ When I came to UCLA I took on the treatment of a 16-year-old chronic schizophrenic girl whose reaction to separation was so severe that she inevitably kicked a hole in the wall while flying into a fit of rage. She was also in the habit of writing on the wall, on the sheets of her bed, and on her body, the word "alone." She never acknowledged my interest in wall writing and on the occasion of my presentation in Atlantic City in 1966, while I was away from her, she flew into a rage and wrote on the wall, "Fuck you, Lomas."
- ¹⁰ This is not altogether true as I shall try to show for the periodic loss of the breast accompanies the initial differentiation between self and object despite the fact that this is more like a thin line than a wall.
- ¹¹ From the standpoint of the structural theory (a fitting name), I would have to conclude that the wall refers to the ego and those functions concerned with instincts, especially the defensive functions of the ego. Of course, such a model presupposes conflict in the same way that ownership and the struggle for possession have plagued mankind since the beginning of time.
- ¹² It is different for a female child, and this difference makes all the difference, for the little girl is encouraged to cling to her mother as a model for later identification; and one wonders to what extent this difference is reflected in the comparison of wall writing in male and female bathrooms.

- ¹³ I would consider these to be oral, incorporative, and destructive to begin with, only to become linked later with anal erotic and aggressive impulses. We must not leave out phallic-exhibitionistic impulses as well. The only point I'm trying to make is that we must not exclude orality.
- ¹⁴ The natural tendency in the anal phase, the one providing maximal pleasure, is the desire of the child to eat, play with, or smear his feces, i.e., to have absolute possession of them, and to create with them at will. Unfortunately, Freud, as well as Jones, and Ferenczi, preferred to believe that such tendencies in the adult were a sign of being lowly educated or poor. To the extent that wall writing is related to fecal smearing and smut, Weltman and I have shown that this is not necessarily so. I remind you again of my observations on fellow physicians.
- ¹⁵ When "End the War" messages appeared on a local federal building, the authorities were far more concerned with the nuisance and the cost of cleaning it up than with the content of the messages themselves.

REPORTS OF SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS

THERAPEUTIC SYSTEMS & MORAL ASSUMPTIONS

by MORTON LEVITT, Ph.D.
and BEN RUBINSTEIN, Ph.D.

Speaker: Morton Levitt, Ph.D.
Date: January 18, 1973
Reporter: Peter D. Landres, M.D.

In the preamble to their paper, the authors state: "The field of psychoanalysis provides an observation platform from which to view the relationship between changes in ethical standards and human sexuality in the past two decades. They offer the following theses:

- (1) The loss of traditional value systems and the deterioration of family structure, combined with the powerful, seductive impact of the commercial message, produce a societal "why not" reaction.
- (2) This movement is supported by therapeutic schools whose stated morality is consonant with the "why not" theme.
- (3) The therapist's use of the transference process provides significant information about his attitude toward such important issues as patient independence, liberation, and reality mastery.

They indicate that in the past there were individuals who could view their actions through value systems which justified them. Today there are individuals who encourage themselves to action without viewing the value of the action unless there are "overwhelming negative consequences." This, combined with the seductiveness of commercial advertising which appeals to the fulfillment of infantile fantasy, threatens the already shaky status of modern day family life by producing an attitude defending infantile gratification. The authors term this attitude "why not."

The "why not" attitude is reflected in current psychotherapeutic schools which seek a change in the patient's pattern of behavior and a discharge of wishes rather than a reorganization of defenses. In the consequences of the "why not" approach, the living out of impulses, wishes, and feelings is needed to bring about mental health. By helping their patients to bring wishes to the surface, the new therapists aid the patients in handling these (which are in psychoanalysis sexual aggressive material) as if they were equivalent to "data" or information to be

handled as in a "computer" by direct expression without "overloading" the "machinery." In our analytic understanding these wishes emerge under the pressure of transference and regression as a search for infantile gratification and infantile object relations which promote acting out rather than remembering. rather than remembering.

The newer therapies encourage the expression of these in *real life* and at times the therapists of the "why not" school aid their expression. Such may lead to sexual relations between therapist and patient under the rationalization of freeing the patient, but actually, bears a resemblance to the familiar male fantasies about "liberating" with "gifts of masculine virility."

The authors discuss the reasons for this transition from a defensive to an expressive mode and present the view that it is due to the encouragement by our predominant culture which promotes "immediate solutions" to internal conflicts and gratification of fantasies. In the forefront the advertising media "invade the individual psyche in a pseudo-rational way, and sink into the unconscious through its regressive imagery which promises the fulfillment of every infantile fantasy." There is a relationship between the "uncritical public's response to the regressive message of the mass media and the compliant therapist's wish to be seduced by female patients." Both encourage regression of the ego towards pregenitality under the "sway" of "repetition-compulsion.... A given cultural surrounding produces similar character structures by encouraging certain impulses, desires, modes of defense, and conflict resolutions.... As Freud's culture produced classical neuroses, present day society breeds

character disorders." The authors discuss how health ethics, cultural radicalism and the new left, technocratic morality, and the commercialization of the sexual revolution have through their cultural effects encouraged the regression.

Dr. Lawrence J. Friedman in discussion continued the theme of character disorder and psychopathy. He considered the psychopathy of some of the new therapeutic schools as manifestations of the regressive phenomena that we are seeing in society generally. He did not dismiss all of the new therapeutic approaches as psychopathic, but rather discussed their disarray, confusion, and endless variety. He pointed out that we are seeing presentations and defenses of the new therapies in our media reflecting the attractiveness of the personalities of the therapists rather than the merits of the therapies. He agreed with the authors that we are "experiencing a universal regressive picture in our society." He attributed the process to the increase in "man's destructive potential, leading to greater and greater wars, with their inevitable regressive features like greatly increased need for immediate satisfaction, the breakdown or destruction of the family structure, morality, etc." He referred to Freud's article on "thoughts for the times on war and *death*," "regression is always possible and higher stages of development once abandoned cannot be reached again."

Dr. Friedman reminded us that it is the third generation of Americans which did not have any pause in war, even to re-establish higher levels of development. He stated: "The concept of world destruction, ever present in fantasy and religious concepts, became reality, greatly increasing anxiety, forcing further

regression, and reënföring the infantile here and now, and "why not" attitude.

Malcolm J. Hoffs, M.D., stated that those who hold the "why not" attitude are actually composed of two groups: those who challenge with the declaration, "If I want to, I should," and those who challenge with the question. He said that the first group, the declarers, was the pernicious one, then gave the clinical example of an individual who decided to satisfy a wish rather than be responsible to his work, rationalizing that "if it had occurred to him and 'it felt right,' it was right." As a result a situation was created in which there was neither dialogue nor dialectical synthetic process but rather a declaration. Dr. Hoffs indicated that "the advantages of the reality principle over the pleasure principle must be clearly and even vividly demonstrated or the reality principle will remain rejected." The second group questions everything. While part of this group might be negativistic and its questions intentionally provocative or baiting, there may be individuals asking serious questions which reflect their serious concerns about attitudes and behavior.

* * *

The Fall issue of the Bulletin inadvertently omitted from its summary of Dr. Weiss's paper, *The Emergence of New Themes: A Contribution to the Psychoanalytic Theory of Therapy*, Discussion by Milton Bronstein, M.D. His commentary:

On reading Dr. Weiss's paper I was impressed with how carefully it was wrought and how deceptive its initial apparent simplicity. Each time thought a point was over-

looked, on reëxamination I found it clarified or subsequently considered. To achieve a new, fresh point of view is a most difficult task. To express it clearly, without oversimplification, presents hazards with risk of immediate criticism. Knowing Dr. Weiss to be a careful worker, and that the examples and models contained in his essay, though seemingly cryptic and brief, represent considerable labor with patients and scrupulous study of material gathered over long periods, even several years, I value his concept of integration and utilization of defenses as well as his clear presentation of how new themes emerge as it is safe for them to do so; however, even in consideration of the preceding, there remain some questions, representing a desire for further understanding on my part, rather than a criticism of the desirability or validity of the results. I would query only the emphasis in how the ego achieves its results.

In the analytic situation is the id at times no longer an ally in bringing forth previously warded off contents?..... Or is it a static ever-threatening force and powerful enemy which is evacuated, so to speak, or acted upon by a controlling, regulating ego? Does the ego bring forth warded off contents only when it is safe to do so?

In the process of reasonably free association do the ego control and regulation operate strictly as constant, ever-vigilant and almost perfect monitors in bringing forth warded off contents only when it is safe to do so?

Is there an intermediate between expulsion of warded off contents with damage, as opposed to carefully regulated defense after defense integration or theme after theme

emergence?

Can we consider even in the most highly developed and desirable psychoanalytic ego some squeaking through its interstices only with damage and without analytic assimilation and growth? How healthy need an ego be to serve as a perfect safety regulator for turning off and on again at just the right time?

What kind of ego does everything right—when it is "safe to do so" in our patients?

If that which is warded off does come through under less than optimal circumstances, can it become clarified, interpreted, integrated, and utilized even so? If the emergence of themes or warded off contents is analogous to trial as with signal anxiety and emergence when it is safe to do so, what about an analogy to toxic anxiety, or an accumulation of anxiety, or signal anxiety more intense than seems to be implied in this paper with emergence? Is this necessarily resultant in severe symptoms or disruptive acting out in the analytic situation and its utilization?

Does the emphasis of ego-regulatory activity overlook these strong forces, where theme after theme is not meaningfully uncovered or integrated in nice succession, but rather certain kinds or configurations of behavior recur with awesome regularity and insistence in the face of reasonable ego judgments?

But even if the ego is not the prime regulator shouldn't it be dignified by the capacity to adjust and integrate without reeling, even though it is not always in charge or control of practically everything that happens yet ultimately possibly approaching achievement of this ideal goal?

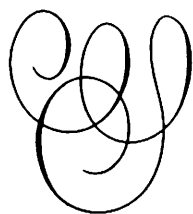
In other words, shall we give it a quality of homeostasis or more

humaneness thus allowing for error and correctibility of error and utilization of error?

Are there not structure and function that are not all ego (with capacity to criticize or judge or regulate)?

Is it just instinct versus ego, and in this an all governing ego? Does the work represent a model or paradigm of extremes, i.e., the danger of the return of the repressed versus the sovereignty of the ego?

Finally, could any of the endeavor for integration, utilization of defenses, and the emergence of new themes occur with analytic development without another element which occurs between analyst and patient, whatever the condition of the transference, i.e., without a mutual commitment and interest which includes not only the ego and superego of the patient, but that of the analyst as well?



19 BERGASSE

Speaker: Richard F. Sterba, M.D.
Date: October 19, 1972
Reporter: William R. Flynn, M.D.

As a young Viennese analyst, Dr. Sterba attended about ten of the twenty or so evening meetings held in Freud's apartment between 1928 and 1937. Since a junior member of the group, he was able to be present only when selected by Paul Federn, then president of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. It had started in 1902, and held, traditionally on Wednesdays, once-monthly meetings.

Because Freud was very ill after his first mouth cancer operation in 1923, there were none in his apartment however until 1928. During the subsequent 10 year period, largely owing to repeated operations and illnesses, only about twenty more meetings took place.

These, held in his waiting room, necessitated attendance limitation to about 12 to 14 people. The society's board of directors had a standing invitation, while other places were filled by Federn, at his discretion.

Formalities began precisely at nine, Freud being extremely punctual himself, and quite intolerant of anyone else's tardiness. Sterba, pleased to be invited, and eager to retain as much as possible of what the Master said, understood Freud's disapproval of recorded notes, but managed a few. Aided by these, Dr. Sterba presented what he could recall of the setting, colored with his personal reminiscences.

The sessions were structured: first, one of the participants would review the latest of Freud's papers or present an original one followed by a brief open discussion during which Freud said very little. A break for refreshments was followed then by lengthier discussion in which Freud participated much more. Sterba commented on the great difference between his discussions at these later rather informal meetings during the '30's and those 20 or 30 years earlier wherein Otto Rank took careful minutes. In the first set, as official spokesman of the psychoanalytic movement, Freud was careful and precise in what he said. At the second, i.e., those of the late '20's and early '30's, he felt relaxed and informal in that he was speaking, not for publication, but rather to his closest colleagues, ex-

plaining why he wanted no notes taken.

On one occasion (1928), Theodor Reik reviewed *The Future of an Illusion*. Freud's discussion of what he meant by "weltanschauung" proved a preliminary statement of that which he elaborated two years later in the last chapter of the new series of introductory lectures. He expanded upon the various "weltanschauungen" and among them, the precarious position of the scientific, enumerating besides, the animistic, the religious, the materialistic, and the mystic. His remarks pointed out the position of psychology and psychoanalysis in the world, highlighting how the struggle of psychoanalysis paralleled that of the scientific weltanschauung: to bring reason and understanding to the lives and affairs of men in the face of the occult and the irrational.

At another meeting Wilhelm Reich made the presentation. Reich had by then become zealously opinionated over his formulations of the role of genital sexuality in neurosis. Much impressed by a Russian experiment in child rearing, he hoped to eliminate the Oedipus complex. Forcefully and provocatively he presented such ideas to Freud who, in response, said, "It is not possible to discuss the subject seriously; it is much too difficult. But Reich's presentation has one weak point. It is too much dictated by therapeutic ambition. Therapeutic ambition is only halfway useful for science, for it is too tendentious. Free investigation is tremendously limited by it. Therapeutic ambition leads to a kind of pragmatism, like in America where everything is judged by its dollar value. As a scientific investigator one should not take therapy into consideration."

He disputed Reich's position which, as in the Russian experiment, held that children raised in a group rather than a family, would experience no Oedipus complex, hence no neurosis. Freud suggested that the matter be tabled, but reconsidered in 30 years. Then those Russian children should be grown.

In March 1930 the topic was *Civilization and its Discontents*. Freud was critical of his own work; he called the book "dilettantish," comparing it with the *Tropaeum* of Adamklissi, one of his more esoteric archeological allusions. The analogy was meant to convey that he considered the book out of balance, insofar as it did not exhaustively deal with the purported subject, i.e., our cultural discomfort. Rather, it presented a convoluted discussion of the psychoanalytic theory of guilt.

He chided those present for not having noticed in the work the significant omission which bore upon the possibility of happiness. Said condition for a happiness which is psychologically unassailable is that of the absolute narcissist, or person who relies completely on himself.

To illustrate his point, Freud misinterpreted, Sterba believed, a fragment from an ode by Horace. Placing the fragment in context, Sterba showed Horace's imputation that brave men derive fearlessness from moral conviction, not narcissism.

He recalled that at that same gathering, Freud defended himself against a recurring accusation that he damaged people by his psychoanalytic uncovering method. He insisted that telling people the truth about themselves could not hurt, in proof of which he cited his own reaction when told 7 years earlier that he had a maximum of 5 years to

live!

Also, in that meeting, *Civilization and its Discontents*, resulted, he said, from his recognizing deficiencies in the psychoanalytic theory of instincts, noting too, that he had been accused of trying to force the death instinct on analysts.

Discussing Otto Rank, he acknowledged that colleague's superior ability, but believed him driven by a need to contradict. He decried Rank's criticism of psychoanalysis via inapplicable concepts from other sciences.

In January 1931, Sterba presented a paper of his own. It dealt with the problem of the psychoanalytic theory of sublimation, specifically with inconsistencies in Freud's statements on said subject. Repeatedly Freud had said that repression precluded the sublimation of instinctual strivings; but he had also claimed that reaction-formation was one of the pathways to it, despite reaction-formation's requiring repression. Sterba proposed to solve the dilemma by distinguishing two forms of reaction-formation: one identical with the counter-cathexis against drive impulses, the other in which drive energy is absorbed in the establishment of the defense. He exemplified by the compulsive rituals established to contain a strong unconscious drive toward anal messiness, in contrast to normal cleanliness. This thinking was predictive of Hartmann's later theoretical notions on neutralized energy. (It seemed to the reporter that Sterba was essentially refuting Freud's contention that repression precludes sublimation, as a general rule. However, his paper did not really support the refutation because what he called the "second form" of reaction-formation we refer to usually as sublimation, rather than a

pathway to it.)

During the discussion, Robert Waelder concurred with Sterba, and asked Freud whether he really considered sublimation one of the vicissitudes of the instincts. Rather reluctantly Freud agreed that sublimation differed from reversal, turning round, and repression. Later that evening he talked about how he had developed the sublimation concept, having read a story by Heine about a sadistic young man who used to cut off dogs' tails but grew to become a renowned surgeon. The concept, immediately accepted, even by enemies of psychoanalysis, many of his critics considered as its sole redeeming virtue.

Sterba recalled that Freud was a bit testy on that occasion; it seemed he felt his colleagues unduly picky in dissecting ideas he considered still in preliminary stages.

Dr. Robert H. Jokl as first discussant announced that he had two years of notes about these meetings at one time but that they were lost when confiscated by the Nazis. He said Freud never objected to his recording them, probably because he had served as Secretary of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society for so many years.

He commented that he had not at the time recognized the extent of Freud's suffering from his cancer, nor did he fully until reading Max Schur's recent book.

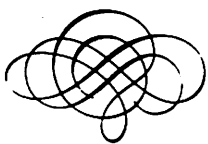
He felt Freud always expressed himself defensively in meetings, not only because of outside hostility, but because of great sensitivity to resistance and opposition within the group itself.

Dr. Jokl discussed the psychological atmosphere of the Vienna psychoanalytic group from his own recollections, reflecting that the question remains.

...why in these early times of the movement, and in spite of the strong feelings of belonging, and the almost undivided adoration and reverence for the Master, intense resistances and complex conditions evolved which almost shook the foundation of our institution... The psychoanalytic group at that time had very much the character of a closed society. The members were a bunch of regressed grownups representing a large family, parents and children, with all the ambivalences, resentments, love and hatred, enthusiasm and aggressiveness, rivalries and jealousies, their egos under the high pressure of an organization asking in vain for subordination and self control...

Dr. Martin Grotjahn then spoke very briefly, since the hour was late. He complimented Dr. Sterba for the paper, particularly for using his own translation from Freud. He believed official translations often underplay his "colorful, often unique, and occasionally neologistic, but always masterful use of the German language."

He mentioned that Dr. Sterba had once quoted Freud to him as having said: "After my death there will be many analysts and very little analysis."



THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Speaker: Wm. G. Niederland, M.D.
Date: September 14, 1972
Reporter: William Flynn, M.D.

The author introduced his remarks by pointing out that human creativity has always eluded exploration by psychoanalysis and other investigative methods.

Instead of a single process, however intricate and complex, one should perhaps speak of processes and consider the multiple roots or components of these processes, since the creative work of a scientist or a mathematical genius, for instance, seems to be of a different nature—not only with respect to content and goal—from that of a poet, painter, composer, or sculptor, and no single formulation covers them all.

Freud had suggested 30 years ago that the analyst limit himself to studying "the factors which awaken genius and the subject matter it is fated to choose." Since then psychoanalysis has been able to discover something of the sources and content of artistic creativity. Niederland referred to the writings of Ernst Kris, and to his own previous writings, his remarks about the creative process being taken from the literature as well as the analysis of twelve creative persons from which small samples, he reminded us, no sweeping conclusions could be drawn.

The central purpose of his paper was to tie together common features which to him seemed of significance in understanding some creative process dynamic forces. Of these he enumerated:

1. A considerable degree of psychopathology in all. While it is true that the analyst is not likely to see the creative artist without it, evidence of psychopathology is also present in such nonpsychiatric literature as the biographies of famous writers, composers, and artists where one sees a preoccupation with ill health and the body.

2. The exhibition of an unusual capacity for loneliness and isolation.

3. The tendency to withdraw from complex emotional involve-

ments and to occupy the mind with personal ideas and projects, along with insulation from other people.

It should be noticed that also the novelist at his typewriter, the artist at his easel, often become recluses and thereby convert their rooms into sanctuaries for the free play of their fantasies and imagination, a sort of analytic setting where the transference is lived out in relation both to the product being created (born) and to the unseen audience which is to admire the product in days to come. In my analyses of several artists, it became apparent that the unseen audience—unconsciously present during the creative work—was the elusive *mater eterna*, a fantasy based on an unconscious identification with the preoedipal mother and the wish to show her that he, the artist, is not insignificant or small, that in fact he can give birth like her.

4. A special, peculiar relationship to reality which distinguishes the artist from the non-creative person. This, referred to by Kris as "regression in the service of the ego," Niederland prefers to call "regression in the service of ego restitution."

5. An apparently heightened perceptual sensitivity to stimuli, both from within and without. Greenacre considers that sensitivity inborn in the artist; Niederland has found it, in his patients, to be related to object loss.

On analysis, the creative efforts of the artist turn out to be, on the deepest level, on-going restitutive and restorative efforts in the sense of a search constantly reactivated and reconstituted to regain, on a different plane, the state prior to the factual or fantasied onset of the object loss.

6. A "restitutive function" of the ego which is a pivotal factor. In his opinion in it lies one of the major differences between genuine versus psychotic art.

The restitutive function of the ego serves to reinstate the actual or fancied condition prior to the object loss, irrespective of its occurrence in the external world or the subject's own body. It further seems to undo the narcissistic injury and to regain in this magic-restorative way the lost omnipotence of infancy. If the restitutive strivings find their pathway along the lines of creativity, new groupings of mental events are formed with rediscovery of one's familiar experiences, and this reconstruction and reconstitution are achieved in a completely novel fashion, usually unrecognizable to himself.

He then illustrated with historical vignettes and slides of paintings, his thesis concerning the role of object loss and restitution in the creative process. Specifically, he showed how losses and their actual or attempted restitutions were reflected in the paintings of several renowned artists, produced after the losses had occurred.

Dr. Gerald Aronson, the first discussant, commended the scholarship and clinical acumen with which the author had scrutinized the creative process as a psychoanalyst. The problem, he said, was, "how to investigate by means of words and ideas, creative processes whose paths are hidden to us and whose embodiments are visual and textured." He questioned whether we as analysts, though knowing neurosis within ourselves and psychosis within our dreams, can discover more than what is in us: object loss, restitution, and envy of the creativity of our parents or our mother.

He noted that Dr. Niederland focused on elements common among very creative people, namely, preoccupation with the body and hypochondriasis. He suggested that the creative person has an unusual ability to make metaphors, while relating such to the "continued vigor of the purified pleasure ego—that ancient function of the mind which beneficent evolution has constructed to enable the vulnerable infant to deal with discomforts and pain a mother cannot reach... The artist attempts to bring all of his experience and all of his functioning within the realm of the metaphor under the sway of this purified pleasure ego."

He noted that Dr. Niederland emphasized the tendency of the artist's restitutive activity to re-establish the status prior to object loss, pointing out however, the inapplicability to Goya, who, in Aronson's opinion, appears to have tried not to reconstitute the status quo ante. Rather, he seemed to be attempting to preserve the painful consequences of his losses. Aronson asked if the black paintings were a flinging out upon the walls of his house what was too indelibly printed on the more narrow and suffocating confines of his skull.

He referred to the artist's distinctive way of functioning as "traumatophilic." While the non-artist deals with reactions to traumas, grief, etc., by denial, projection, or reaction-formation, the artist retains these reactions as "precious part-objects." He has available an ego function which fastens on, and elaborates these reactions, while other ego functions, in the service of the purified pleasure ego, act to dissipate them.

Dr. Martin Grotjahn believed the need to create has two sources: first,

man's envy of women's procreative ability. Such applies not only to males, but includes as well a woman's envy of her mother. Second, a fear of death and nothingness; the need for immortality.

The creative person is lonely, as if in the face of death; the beauty of the creative product serves to disguise and make tolerable the awareness of death's inevitability.

Dr. Lawrence J. Friedman stated that we have to differentiate between creative activity, the creative process, and creative talent. As psychoanalysts, we know a good deal about the first, can form some postulates about the second, but don't know anything about the third.

Dr. Freidman has written extensively on the subject of creativity; he very briefly summarized his ideas, that the creative process is determined by man's envy of the woman's ability to create life, the existence of an aggressive drive in human beings, and the process of sublimation in dealing with violence and aggression. These elements are ubiquitous, but it is only where creative talent is present that works of art result.

In previous writings he has used the Pietà to illustrate his theses, particularly in terms of Michelangelo's dynamics. He pointed out that the assault on that statue less than a year ago tended to confirm them insofar as the deranged man, while screaming "I am Jesus Christ," attacked only the Madonna who created Christ.



IMPACT OF NEW ADVANCES IN
SEX RESEARCH ON
PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY

Speaker: Robert J. Stoller, M.D.
Date: November 16, 1972
Reporter: Paul H. Ackerman, M.D.

The presentation examines the impact of recent research upon five concepts which run through Freud's writings: bisexuality, infantile sexuality and the oedipus complex, libido theory, the primacy of the penis, and conflict.

Constitutional Bisexuality. — Freud felt there was a biological substrate, or "bedrock" of bisexuality, upon which all later psychological development is anchored. It is an anlage of the psychological bisexuality present in all humans. He found bisexuality, and the fear of it, at the etiological root of all symptoms and behavior, normal and psychopathological.

Current evidence is that in mammalian species the "resting state" is on the female side, and that to make tissues, organs, or organisms male, requires an androgen pulse (apparently initiated by the Y chromosome) for the development of each of those anatomical and physiological criteria, the algebraic sum of which we call "maleness." Our expectation of finding humans to share in the general rule of the femaleness of mammalian tissue seems borne out by the "natural experiments" of endocrine disorders.

As yet, Dr. Stoller does not believe these physiological studies, animal or human, explicate human sexual behavior; rather they tell us only about underlying biological potentialities, as do so many other studies in regard to an aspect of human behavior. What is made of

these potentialities usually lies in the area of environmental influences.

Infantile Sexuality and the Oedipus Complex — Freud told us that parents have the greatest possible influence on their children's development, that children create psychic structure in response, that adult sexual life can be traced back to effects in infancy, and that sexual desire and gratification find origins in infancy long before the obvious upsurge at puberty. Exactly how parents transmit these influences has been the subject of increasing study for years. Freud's ideas spurred the researches of physiologists, behaviorists, ethologists, general systems theorists, — innumerable workers, who now believe infancy and childhood crucial developmental phases.

Studies which reveal what distortions of behavior can be permanently built into animals by experiments (such as conditioning, imprinting, or electrode implants in discreet brain structures) tell us about potentialities, not answers about free-ranging behavior in man; the data show us only more questions, confirming nothing in humans, rather only suggesting. Analysts ought to recognize when theory building, that they ignore such suggestions at their peril.

A new factor in the theory of development of masculinity and femininity comes from studies on earliest stages of gender development. Findings contradict Freud in several places. Repeatedly demonstrated is that attitudes passing between parent and infant are powerfully instrumental in creating masculinity and femininity in both sexes. Such reduces the conflict (castration anxiety) aspect of gender development, and differing with Freud's formulation, shows conflict-free development to play a promi-

nent part.

New data are appearing in regard to the differential handling of male and female infants by their mothers. Usually (and more likely to produce femininity in girls and masculinity in boys), girls have more physical and visual contact, over the months, than boys. Mothers generally feel easier being intimate with their infant girls. Boys do not have the straightforward heterosexual development Freud alleged. Instead, they have a major impediment on the way to heterosexuality; they must rid themselves of what femininity may develop in the mother-infant symbiosis. Only then, at a later stage, can they see Mother as the separate and classically desirable Oedipal object.

Thus, rather than being little boys, girls are shaped in the direction of femininity from the start. Indeed, simple observation reveals girls generally just not masculine in early childhood, clearcut femininity routinely being seen by about one year of age, with no evidence that such is a façade or imitation femininity.

The Primacy of the Penis — Freud felt male superiority was a fact established throughout mammalia by virtue of superior physical strength: life-death struggles select out males because they are stronger. The penis as the most compelling symbolic representation thereof, finds reflection in mythology, folk tales, institutions of society, artistic productions, religious worship, and dreams.

However, except for the chromosomes, in mammals, the function of cells is female in both sexes until androgens are added in fetal life. This female cast to tissue extends into the central nervous system, where (as has now been demon-

strated in mammals other than man) future masculine behavior in the male requires the organizing which only androgens produce; in the female nothing need be added for femininity.

Further apparent refutation of Freud is implied by Masters and Johnson, who have found all female orgasms originating in the clitoris; they have not observed vaginal. Yet, innumerable women have no trouble distinguishing between the two. Simply because gross vaginal changes at the moment of orgasm are not visible to these observers does not prove the absence of vaginal orgasms.

Libido Theory — As a description of human childhood development, Freud's observations on zonal phases can at any time be confirmed with biologically normal children. However, no confirmatory studies have been published. No class of neurosis, perversion, or psychosis has yet been shown to be caused by a disruption of sensual experiences of the mouth, defecatory or urinary systems, or phallus (there is, however, much evidence that disturbed object relations during these phases cause psychopathology).

Conflict — Sexual deviance, defined as the habitual, preferred, compelling need to satisfy oneself in an erotic act other than heterosexual genital intercourse, simply is not seen in animals (unless they have been manipulated by unnatural forces like experimentation or captivity). On the other hand, such a need is ubiquitous in man; sexual deviance is as exclusively human as are murder, humor, fantasy, competitive sports, art, or cooking. This observation is so grossly manifest that one wonders why it has no force in the speculation of modern

sex researchers. Almost every notable study on human sexual behavior since Freud has tried to prove that one does not create his own deviance but rather has it thrust upon him, by genes, hormones, electrical circuiting in the brain, imprinting, conditioning, or statistics.

The new research seems aimed unanimously at tearing down the conflict theory; no other aspect of Freud's system has created such resistance, perhaps because Freud believed perversion to be motivated, by the person, in his depths, in part responsible for it. The deviant act, Freud felt, is the product of the great human capacity for choice, and so ultimately with a moral quality (even if one's responsibility is mitigated insofar as the choice is unconscious and was arrived at via unsought threatening childhood circumstances). The modern researchers, however, deny that intrapsychic conflict plays a part or that fantasy propels and perpetuates deviant activity.

The attack on conflict theory has taken four forms: (1) that human aberrations are due simply to physiological mechanisms, either organic dysfunctions or inherited normal physiology which is producing behavioral variance the same as seen in lower animals and the result of the same brain and hormonal mechanisms as in them; (2) (learning theory) that deviation is inflicted by an outside force, e.g. conditioning, hence not a matter of choice and without fantasy origins; (3) (statistical) that there is a bell curve for sexual behavior and that variations are not abnormal, just not normative; (4) that while cultures may pronounce a variant pathological, the society, not the individual is sick.

In sum, the measurable impact on psychoanalytic theory has been mild. First, the theory was drawn up in such a way that most of it cannot be put as propositions to be tested by any scientific procedures yet devised. Second, psychoanalysis concerns man, but the new research does not have techniques yet to answer its own main, though usually unstated goal: to show how the findings of any experiment on animals or on an isolated part of a human subject's physiology or psychic function bear upon the sexual behavior of a human in his life as a person, not a laboratory subject. Still, while the measurable impact on the theory has been mild, that on analysis may be considerable. Many are listening closely to the researchers; and into the writings and conversations of analysts is moving an impatience with being confined to theoretical positions glued together more by tradition than data. Dr. Martha Kirkpatrick said the task of integrating the old with the new requires an adventuresome mind willing to move away from intellectual and social isolations and inertia, but deeply respectful and understanding of psychoanalytic theory. She joins Dr. Stoller in an attempt to separate the wheat from the chaff in Freud's theories of sexuality and current investigation.

Consider biological bisexuality and the psychological consequences of fundamental femaleness upon which maleness is superimposed. How might this support the greater fear of femininity in men as compared with fear of masculinization in women, and men's greater reaction-formation to feminine interests and activities? Perhaps there is in addition to castration anxiety, a powerful need to ward off the press of feminine longings by men.

Psychological bi-potentiality may have its physiological roots in the bisexual hormone production after the third fetal month, and its psychological roots in the two parents.

Dr. Kirkpatrick inventively roamed through many issues surrounding object choice and gender, emphasizing what we have learned about the determining importance of preoedipal sensuality, fantasy, and early identifications. She and Dr. Stoller understand gender development as occurring quite early in the main, but certainly influenced by Oedipal conflicts. Intrapsychic conflict is present prior to the Oedipal phase. Her observations and hypotheses about transsexuals were discussed.

With regard to the primacy of the penis, as an organizer of early psychic life it follows in the psychosexual footsteps of mother and her body. Penis envy and castration anxiety are important in the phallic phase. Johnson and Masters have helped women admit what they always knew; that they are different from men, that their orgasms are not limited in time and space, and that enjoying that difference without the nagging fear of second class sexuality is fitting.

Focusing on Women's Lib and Freud, Dr. Kirkpatrick said, "I am offended when he is not given respect for his recognition of the importance of sexuality in women's lives and their right to gratification at a time in history when many considered it offensive to woman-kind to suggest that they should ever enjoy any type of sexual activity. Postulating penis envy and placing a value-judgement on vaginal orgasm were neither necessary nor sufficient to oppress women or their sexuality. On the other hand, putting serious, respectful, scientific

credentials on that sexuality was both necessary and essential to begin the struggle out of that oppression. This seems to me a landmark on the path toward the liberation of women."

Dr. Ralph R. Greenson underlined a cautionary note, i.e., for analysts to continue to work within the often ambiguous framework of analysis and not to be seduced by recent sex research. He felt that Dr. Stoller has in the best sense continued to analyze, introspect, compare findings, modify hypotheses, learn, and teach.

Scientific psychology explains mental phenomena as the result of the interplay of primitive needs rooted in man's biological structure and the influences of the environment. What is characteristic for psychoanalysis is *what* it regards as biological structure, *which* environmental influences it recognizes as formative, and *how* structure and environmental influence are related to each other (Fenichel, 1945). There is no room for moral judgments, good or evil, moral or immoral, or what ought to be. The danger lies in overestimating either the biological or the environmental. Dr. Stoller has demonstrated this in much of the recent neurophysiological research. There are those who overestimate the environmental factors, "the culturalists," who would deny the importance of constitution and the instinctual impulses, e.g., the learning theorists.

Freud constantly worked on refining and amplifying his own theories and technique. He was not one completely to renounce the old until he was convinced the new could fully supplant it. Part of the difficulty in reading Freud is the failure to recognize how often he revised and then returned to his old

thinking only to move onward in a paper 20 years later. Until 1905 he felt bisexuality was the motivating force leading to repression, but by 1914 he repudiated this view as too narrow. Yet even in his last works he considered the bisexual constitution a predisposition to certain neuroses. The recent findings Stoller quoted on the "femaleness of mammalian tissue," and the influence of androgen production upon this tissue, can be looked upon as a confirmation, from an unexpected source, of man's bisexual potentialities.

Dr. Greenson, too, felt that Freud seemed to have missed the pre-penis envy phase of little girls, who are distinctly feminine already in the first year of life. Being raised by a good-enough mother is sufficient to produce such, probably conflict-free, because it is pre-structural at this time; neurotic conflict is possible only when there are relatively stable structures.

Boys who become feminine early (the trans-sexual boys), Stoller and others have described as subvertex not by a too loving mother, but by a too possessive or symbiotic one. Their early femininity from early identification-symbiosis with Mother may be a factor in the males later urge to creativity. Girls start out far surer of their femininity then go through a stage of peni envy, and once through puberty are far more secure in their femininity than men ever are in their masculinity.

Freud's overestimation of the penis was a prejudice he shared with much of his and today's society. A factor often overlooked in the equation of penis with physical strength. Women have put up with men's mistreatment of them for many reasons—not the least impor-

tant, that men are stronger physically. Isn't there a difference in the relationship between physically weak men and powerful muscular women, no matter who owns the penis anatomically?

The difference in the super-ego is an interesting one: It does not depend on who has the penis, but rather on who has achieved independence. Women who have attained true independence behave in the ways Freud attributed to men in general. On the other hand, fearful and dependent men feeling already castrated, behave in ways Freud attributed to women.

One has to distinguish, in regard to orgasms, where one takes place physiologically vs. where it is subjectively felt. Any man or woman with either sufficient clinical or personal sexual experience will relate that women feel they have clitoral and/or vaginal orgasms. The physiology for these is the same.

The breadth of the paper evoked a correspondingly multifaceted discussion, and Dr. Greenson shared his thoughts about a variety of issues. These included confirmatory experiments of nature, e.g., a boy raised as a girl, who knew differently; the disruptive influences of sensual experiences in early childhood, e.g., babies born with severe eczema, colic, etc. whose body is experienced as a source of pain, not pleasure; and considerations and reconsiderations of historical and current notions about libido theory, neurotic conflicts, and perversions.



MY DEATH HAD BEEN THE HEALTHIEST ONE IN HER LIFE*

I was surprised to hear Nancy's voice. It was deeper and more sophisticated. Why not? After all, she was a very young lady when I had treated her, and that had been some time ago.

The call was about her Uncle Lester's death.

From her analysis I knew of his brilliant career, and well could picture how the family might react to his loss. Little surprise that "Grandma," who had already buried her husband and first-born in "the Old Country" was especially hard hit.

Nancy feared that the elderly lady wouldn't survive this shock, and asked if there was nothing I could recommend, but beyond a few embarrassingly trite platitudes and my sincere commiseration, it seemed not.

A week later, Nancy's mother phoned. "Forgive *my* annoying you, Doctor. Nan's back at school. It's Mother. She's having a very hard time over my brother's death. I know that it isn't your usual practice, but she's heard so much of you from Nan we thought under the circumstances that you could just talk a little with her. She often said that she wanted to meet you."

To refuse such a consultation on the basis of "Psychoanalytic Purity" seemed utterly pointless, and cruel, yet it was equally so to encourage it, since Grandma's grief appeared beyond therapy's bounds.

In agreeing to see her I had gross misgivings as to what could be done for an octogenarian with such a legitimate claim to depression, and when the appointed hour rolled around, annoyed with myself for compliance, I tried to control a gloomy futility. That was one feel-

ing Grandma least should need.

Three o'clock! One minute past. Then two . . . then five. The red sweep second hand of the silver transistorized clock said "ten after." No one yet.

Certain that the family understood the usual punctuality problem, I wondered (and hoped). Could something have happened to change the plan? An alternative?

Not so! There were sounds of approaching feet, and a slow but steady opening of the door—and then—there she was, "Grandma."

It is always fascinating, even fulfilling, on those occasions when a true flesh and blood personification appears—someone whose image you have constructed through another's perceptions. Nancy had described her frequently, and not inaccurately. Now there she stood like a mythologic character, magically inspired with life—a wax museum figure made to move, breathe, and speak.

"So . . . You are the Doctor?"

"I am, and how do you do?" I managed, as it flashed through my mind that just as she for me, so I too for her was metamorphosing from myth and wax to blood, flesh and bone.

"Shake hands! I'm pleased to make your acquaintance," she said.

I beheld Grandma. Mrs. "Five by five"—or better perhaps, Mrs. "Five by five by five," perfect cube of a woman, compressed into a solid, much-aged, somewhat distorted yet still unmistakable Nancy.

Seeing and liking her were instantaneous; I bade her be seated.

"Sit I will, Doctor, but stay, I don't know . . . , it wasn't my idea, this visit. What's the use? Can you bring back my son?"

Behind thick cataract lenses, lubricating the fleshy wrinkles of her face there sprung up two ample

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streams of tears, and as she sat, she sobbed and shook, a portrayal of grief.

And isn't it curious how we hunger for comic relief when an atmosphere is so pervaded with sorrow? No doubt some cosmic good sense accounts for it . . . but enough that a fantastic contrast was presented in the tragic charade of the bereaved mother and the ludicrous spectacle of the way she had guessed, steered, guided, then dropped herself into the deep Danish Modern seat.

Grandma's stubby, short legs hardly reached the floor; the rest of her filled the space as if a liquid. There she sat, patently mourning, covertly pleading, defying me.

"So, can you bring him back? . . . No, it wasn't my idea to come here, dear Doctor, I know your time is valuable; and I know you should spend it on younger people . . . with more hope . . . For me there is nothing."

And nothing was my reply.

"It isn't the first time. . . Oh, no; believe me! You're a young man . . . and I don't know have you tasted tragedy. God help you if so . . . Don't mind if I talk personal. I take the privilege of old people . . . but God should help you if you know from experience what it is. . . . My husband, now it's thirty years, and still I'm not over that, also in his prime, and so good . . . and then my son . . . but still it's not enough!—so now my angel! . . . That's more than an old woman can bear. . . . Are you married, dear Doctor? . . . Do you have children? . . . I know you don't answer; that's what I see on T.V. . . . No answers. . . . Yeh, can you bring him back? . . . no, aaaagh!"

Grandma turned to the window and sponged away at a fresh flow of tears.

Had I something to offer, she didn't give me chance: "So, what can you do for me? Do you know what? All can be done now is to die. And I'll tell you a secret; that I pray every night I shouldn't wake in the morning. . . . That's what. I pray to die. . . . My golden son!

"Let me tell you—no, probably Nancy already did, . . . his talents; so patient, so thoughtful. I hate to say it, but that one was the best of all my children — oh, not to talk against my daughter; only since her divorce and all, . . . You know, I trust you, so I'll say: I never could 'modernize' like with the divorces—and she is a fine woman, you understand, . . . but my angel—that was a *one!*

"He had a kind word for everybody. They wanted him to run for mayor, and believe me, for a Jewish boy that wouldn't be easy in Tower City. Everyone loved him—and patience! Nothing was too much.

"You could wake that one at three in the morning and ask a favor, and he smiles and asks are you sure that's all . . . not to say something against his wife . . . but, that's another story. . . .

"Oh, oi, oi!"

It seemed impertinent to interrupt. Grandma was telling the story she had undoubtedly recounted one thousand silent times since the death.

"'Patience' was his middle name; I don't want to knock the others, mind you, but even from Tower City, which ain't around the corner, every Friday noon he drove himself thirty miles to get me. Always Friday. And always the wife (whom I am very fond) and his beautiful children for the ride, but it's *me* he took to Temple. So busy he was, he was never too busy for that."

Grandma stopped. She rocked

back and forth in a manner perhaps identical with her praying at those services. She wept. "So, why do I take your time, Doctor? What can you do for me? Hum? Yeh, you are a good listener; Nancy told me . . . now I'm quiet; you say."

"What is there to say?" I ventured, annoyed at the futility of my question.

"Yeah, what? Such a boy! With thieves and gangsters and crooks running around and my angel not. Does it make sense? Does it? Every night I look at his picture, my beautiful son, and kiss it, and cry myself to sleep . . . I am dry; no more tears; just noises. And can you believe it? I pray to God to take me! So,—tell me. Something.

"Nancy said you were quiet. She really respected you. I see why. . . How old are you, Doctor? . . . Just his age, I bet; ha, even a little you resemble. . . . Oi, how foolish an old fool can be."

She daubed at her tears, then started up again.

"Look, something I want to tell you, then see how foolish a Grandma you have...I am ashamed, but who loses so much already—what can I lose more?"

She looked away, then slowly turned back to me.

The old woman hesitated, drew a deep breath, and reassured herself that what she was about to say was safe. "The wife—my daughter-in-law—how did it happen?—I am ashamed to say . . . and not that I didn't try to love her, for his sake,— . . . she is a hard type, and always I thought not the one he could be happiest with . . . not that I am narrow-minded about her religion, because I read books in my day, and am a modern type. Even *he* used to say so, but *she* was not for *him*. It didn't matter she converted. Who

wouldn't for such a jewel?

"Listen, she couldn't have children—I mean, not her own. They adopted. Yeh, that's for me a disappointment too, but you bear in life. Even him I never told, or anyone. But that hurt. Her tubes, I don't know what . . . and sometimes they were, well, like children will be, cranky, fussy. She didn't have the patience to manage them.

"Oh, my son, like I told you, an angel, he would reason; she would hit! I saw it with my own eyes!

"So now you'll see what a big fool I am — Friday he called. 'Ma, I'll get you at one o'clock and we'll go to Temple. O.K.?' 'No,' I said. 'What's the matter, Ma?' he asks me. And I told him a lie.

"The truth? I tell *you*; you will see what a fool can do.

Him I didn't tell; who wants him to worry—but over a silly nothing that keeps me up all Thursday night, because an old *schmorrer* doesn't invite me to play cards at his table; and me, like I'm sixteen, I'm hurt; I don't shut my eyes a wink that night, and God help me, I am too irritable to put up with the *wife*, the kids, the noises, the fights, so I tell him, 'Next week, Darling' . . . and next week he is buried and dead!"

Grandma wept afresh; she moaned. In the tight compartment of her seat she found space to quiver. I watched, and waited, goose-pimplily. But something troubled me in what I had heard, then began to give way to encouragement. It was that last little confession about her having put off her son. That might prove a hopeful twist to an otherwise grim story.

The office clock showed we were obliged to stop, but it was now clear that Grandma was feeling guilty. Her pride, her self-indulgent pride had had a hand in preventing

a last living encounter with her son. Of course it was impossible to bring him back, but with luck, I just might be able to help her with this awful recrimination. Accordingly, waiving whatever protocol applied, I really urged her to return . . .

So, there were a second visit and a third. Then there were more. Grandma was grieving, appropriately, aloud, regularly, and with welcome acceptance rather than the tolerant impatience that others were affording her. An extra dividend of the therapy was the expiation over having rejected her son at their last telephone encounter.

Together we went over and over the story. Usually she apologized for having told me it before. Invariably I reassured her that to repeat herself was good and how each repetition offered some fresh little consideration, an added confession, an embellishment, with added insight and relief.

Each time she seemed a trifle better for the retelling, . . . but better, only in a sense, inasmuch as her improvement was not altogether a welcome commodity. It proved an interesting aside, and commentary on Human Nature, because in the Nursing Home where she had been resident, during the depths of depression, she had been so very withdrawn, that whatever was served at mealtime sufficed. She didn't complain about the broken television set, nor the malfunction of the air conditioner, but, as her mood lifted, personnel found her "troublesome and demanding."

Psychological triumph, but sociologic defeat!

And then it happened:

Everything seemed as usual, except that Grandma arrived with a bundle under her arm. It gave me

the cue to comment, "You have a package, I see," as she eased herself into her chair.

"Yeh, I'll catch my breath, then show you."

"What is it?"

"What it is you'll see, dear Doctor."

"O.K. When you're ready."

"Ready! Here . . . look, an angel! Ain't he beautiful?"—with which, in a single motion, she unwrapped and handed me a gold-framed portrait of the hero of our story. "That's him!" She watched me study it, then her, then it again. I remarked aloud on the resemblance, and she reminded me that this was the photograph she spoke to and kissed "good night" each night.

"But I don't do that anymore, Doctor."

"No?"

"No, no more."

"You have stopped, hm?"

"Yeh, but something. . . ."

"Something? . . . What something?"

"Something like only an old fool could do, and only a bigger fool would say."

"What are you getting at?" I asked.

"I am saying what is for a silly old woman to say, that now I don't kiss him anymore at night . . ."

"And is *that* silly?" I remarked.

"Not that . . . that even *I* think is healthy; silly is that now, dear Doctor, at night when I go to sleep I see another face. A sweet face, and I talk to it!"

"Another sweet face?"

"Yours!"

"Mine?"

"Yours; I talk to you for hours; I tell you of my Mother's boarding house when we arrived in this country. . . . about the winters in Galicia . . . about the Russian pogroms and

the Cossack horsemen. How we moved so many times to keep one step ahead of tragedy, and how it was already there waiting when we arrived. Who knows what else? I talk; and I do not blush to say that I love you . . . like a son . . . so . . . am I not a big fool? . . . Don't answer; hear first what, because I don't come back here after today. Soon my daughter picks me up, and I tell you 'auf wiedersehen,' that's German 'goodbye.' "

Grandma smiled. "Now," she said, "say!"

I too smiled, "What shall I say?"

"Nu, like you always tell me—'say what you're thinking.' "

I laughed aloud, then replied, "O.K. I'll tell you what I'm thinking—and I want you to listen very carefully. If you don't understand, stop me and I'll explain it another way, all right?"

"Why not?"

"O.K., perhaps it is a good idea to stop now, or soon, perhaps not. I'm uncertain, but one thing I am sure is necessary is for you to understand why *you* have arranged to call it quits so suddenly. Do you know?"

"Why to stop? You're the doctor. You tell me."

"I'll try; but first I want your promise that you'll hear me out even if we have to get you back another time."

"So tell me," said the old woman.

"Well, it isn't really so complicated. I think that you've come to be very much attached to me, and that you gradually have turned on to me all the affection that you used to lavish on your son . . . at night you have allowed me to take his place at your bedside, when you have those long talks with me."

"So far I understand and agree," she added.

"Yes, but that's not all. You know, at least three times in your

life you have grown to love someone, and without a warning, he has been taken away from you . . . am I right?"

"So far, clear."

"Right! and do you know what more I think?"

"Yeh?"

"I think that you are afraid that if you don't quickly pull out while you're ahead, that just the same as happened to you with the others, will happen to you with me. You're afraid that you'll get maybe too attached to me, and I'll die just as your husband and two sons. Then you'll be hurt again . . . the old pattern! Do you see?"

"God love you, Doctor. You read my mind!"

"No, not really. Anyway what matters is that you understand it and realize that you don't have to be as superstitious as all that, or as guilty. Your thoughts and fears won't kill me at all. It's for that reason I want you to continue for just a little more, so I can convince you of what I've just said . . ."

"Our time is up so soon?"

"Today, yes; but come next week and we'll go over it again." Grandma agreed, and with what I construed as a mawkish and seductive grin, and a little lilt in her voice said "Good bye."

In the sessions which followed I worked over the same idea with her many ways and with several clinical and practical examples. I tried to show her how it was natural for her to need to repeat actively what passively she had been made victim of those previous occasions. I taught her how man always tries to do just that to gain mastery after overwhelming shock.

And she grasped the entire concept, with insight as to how it applied to her in this instance as well as others, seeing how it was necessary to make me her son as a device

of mourning, all of which was accompanied by a really gratifying clinical improvement.

Indeed, her depression lifted so much, that the Nursing Home literally wanted no more of her, and asked her family to take her out—which done, ended the meetings and the relationship between us . . .

Or did it?

I shall probably never wholly know, for when we stood in the doorway for the last time, together, something in her glance made me just a bit uneasy—even though I didn't feel it out of place that so old and sentimental a patient take "the privilege of age"—and kiss my cheek! But for all the effort, the theory, the exceptions, the variations, the unfinished—I did feel that when the door shut behind her, my old friend went back to her world a little better than when we met, and that my death had been the healthiest one in her life.

S.L.S.

