

January 25, 1949

Notes on interview with Doctor Esther Bogen Tietz  
on January 19, 1949.

The interview was arranged on my request because I had been directed by the Education Committee to talk to Dr. Tietz. The Education Committee wanted some information about the so-called psychotherapists who are working under her according to her clinic establishment announcement. This interview lasted over two hours.

After some initial conversation of a more social character, Dr. Tietz took up first the notice she just had received from the office of the Institute that she was not supposed to take some of the seminars that erroneously she had been assigned to. Those are seminars which are reserved for those candidates who are authorized to do control work. Dr. Tietz does not belong to this group yet. Although this was not the primary purpose of this interview, I shall include this matter in my report.

I briefly explained the reasons for this notice, but the whole topic came up in a broader way toward the end of the interview.

I told her that the reason for this request for information was that the impression had been created, at least by Miss Jordan, one of the psychotherapists on her staff, that she was doing psychoanalysis or that she had given the impression or perhaps even represented herself as a psychoanalyst.

The information Dr. Tietz gave me about the two people, that is, Miss Jordan and Mr. Skinner, was done in a rather confused and unclear way. Dr. Tietz very often veered off from giving information about these two persons and talked about all kinds of other things in connection with her clinic set-up which had no bearing on what these two therapists were doing.

She was concerned about the attitude of the Education Committee or some of its members seem to have toward her doing shock treatment. I explained, of course, that this was not the point to be taken up with me and was of no concern to the Education Committee - that the Education Committee was solely interested in activities in Dr. Tietz' clinic which could be linked up with psychoanalysis or with the status of Dr. Tietz as a candidate in training of psychoanalysis with the Los Angeles Institute. I explained that the Education Committee felt some responsibility for activities which could be interpreted as psychoanalysis being done by people who were not authorized or qualified.

Regarding Miss Jo Jordan, I learned the following things. She originally was a speech therapist and was hired by Dr. Tietz in that capacity and still officially seems to go under this designation.

She had had some psychoanalysis with Mrs. Olden. This allegedly lasted for four years and took place in Europe, probably in Prague. As far as the analysis of Miss Jordan is concerned, I could not get a definite answer whether Dr. Tietz thought this was supposed to be a therapeutic analysis or not. Dr. Tietz seemed to be in doubt herself whether this was ~~not~~ meant as some kind of a psychoanalytic training. In Europe she also worked under Steff Bornstein. This work was with children.

Later Miss Jordan attended courses with Dr. Kris, Dr. Brunswick and Mrs. Munk. From 1941 until 1943, she was a member of the staff of the School for Nursery Years, namely, a teacher. She also attended activities of the Los Angeles Psycho-analytic Study Group.

Miss Jordan furthermore had been connected with the Eisman Day Nursery in New York. There she was an Education Director for two years. This activity took place under the supervision of Dr. Judith Silberpfennig. Her main activity at Dr. Tietz' clinic is ~~analytic~~ play therapy and other therapy with children. She also does psychotherapy with adults. Dr. Tietz denied that she was doing psychoanalysis or was called an analyst.

As far as Mr. Skinner is concerned, he is a social worker and Dr. Tietz believes that he is a psychiatric social worker. I learned that he worked for some time at the Menninger Clinic, especially at the Southard School which is connected with the Menninger Clinic and in particular under the supervision of Dr. Ackerman. Supposedly Mr. Skinner was a supervisor of psychiatric social workers in the Army between 1942 and 1945. He had some psychoanalysis with Dr. Grotjahn and with Dr. Larry Friedman. He is ~~also~~ particularly good at play therapy and in his approach to children, but also very good in his handling of schizophrenics. Both he and Miss Jordan do a great deal of parent education in connection with their work with children.

As far as the whole set-up of Dr. Tietz' organization is concerned, it occupies an entire house. She has a staff of about seven or eight people, including a nurse; play therapist; a psychologist who does testing; occupational, arts and crafts specialists and other personnel. Most of the patients referred to Dr. Tietz' clinic are of modest means.

All patients are in principle her patients and are examined by her personally. The patients who are in therapy with the other therapists are seen by those people under her supervision. Once a week, a staff conference takes place in which the staff discusses all patients under treatment.

Dr. Tietz estimates that approximately twenty-five patients a day are being seen and treated. Some of them just attend the arts and crafts shop without being seen each time by a therapist or by her.

There are no couches in the clinic but only sofas which are meant for sitting up, more than lying down.

Dr. Tietz was quite definite in her statement that the therapists are not supposed to do anything but psychotherapy of some kind which varies with the individual patients and their conditions.

Both Miss Jordan and Mr. Skinner however, and particularly Miss Jordan, see patients at home. Dr. Tietz feels that she has no say over those patients which the two persons see at their homes. One of the reasons for this is that there are some psychiatrists and analysts who send patients directly to both Mr. Skinner and Miss Jordan. Dr. Tietz feels that if she interfered with this, it would cause

resentment and trouble with the referring doctors.

Although this does not strictly pertain to the main purpose of this interview, I feel that I ought to give my impressions about Dr. Tietz' attitude about psychoanalysis in general and about her own activities. She still seems to be somewhat confused and ambivalent toward analysis. However, it seems that she knows this and feels that she will have to go slowly and will make further progress in her understanding of psychoanalysis theoretically and practically. She seems to have a sincere and strong need to learn more and to understand more about the application of analysis. She feels there is no successful approach to psychiatric patients and conditions without having a psychoanalytic understanding of the dynamics.

She still feels somewhat as a stranger among analysts and among the candidates. This, according to her statement, has been even strengthened since she received the notice, which told her not to attend a certain type of seminar. She seems to have a hard time understanding that this is not meant personally against her, but is just an application of a rule which had been allowed to slip to some extent. It is obvious that she takes this notice and action as a personal rebuff. She also feels that her analyst should be the one to decide which seminar she could take.

In describing what she is doing with patients she was somewhat contradictory. This is partly due to the probably generally accepted fact that it is sometimes not very easy to draw a dividing line between psychotherapy which is psychoanalytically oriented and psychoanalysis.

She is particularly fascinated with dreams. She likes it especially when patients analyze their own dreams. She feels that some of the psychoanalytic technique is useful for everything in psychiatry. She has changed her approach to patients inasmuch as she has learned to listen while she used to talk most of the time herself before. She has learned to be more sensitive.

She has changed some of the customs in her clinic since she got acquainted with psychoanalysis. While before she had coffee available for everyone, and also food, she has now ~~made it dependent on the therapist's opinion~~ ~~whether the patient should be treated to coffee or food.~~ ~~She has found out that some of the patients just wouldn't work or not be interested in the psychotherapeutic work.~~ ~~made it dependent on the therapist's opinion whether the patient should be treated to coffee or food.~~ She has found out that some of the patients just wouldn't work or not be interested in the psychotherapeutic work.

She feels that people who are gifted for psychotherapy, regardless of being MD's or not, should be increasingly doing psychotherapy. If they are not MD's, they should do psychotherapy under supervision of MD's.

CC: All members of the Education Committee  
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