

A Book Review

*Published by
Bond Wheelwright Co
Freeport Maine.*

HISTORY COMMITTEE
June 18, 1962
Albert Kandelin, M.D.

"The Birth of an Institute"

The above is the title of a book published in 1961, printing papers presented at the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Boston Psychoanalytic Institute. In my opinion a reading of this book is valuable for the members of our Committee, and will give assistance in the form of suggestions on approaches and methods valuable to our efforts.

The principal paper in the book is the one by Ives Hendrick on the Boston Society and Institute. Immediately striking are the differences between Boston and Los Angeles, Boston with its much longer cultural history as a background of literary, scientific, and artistic institutions and activities. This varies sharply from the brevity of these elements in California. I consider this to have some significance; e.g., this longer cultural background surely contributes somewhat to institutional stability, and probably helps explain the uninterrupted unity of the Boston group, and the avoidance of a split, in spite of dissention and controversy. Hendrick makes reference to the avoidance of splits on Page 64, and a reading of this is useful to us in trying to make an analysis and complete record of the Split in Los Angeles.

Although there are of course certain similarities, again I am impressed by the differences. The prehistory of psychoanalysis in Boston goes back much further than in Los Angeles, and this prehistory includes many eminent scientific names.

Another significant difference is the eclectic character of the early Boston members, which included followers of Rank, Jung, and Schilder. The Los Angeles founding group, it seems to me, was more unified in a Freudian identity.

In Boston there existed an established scientific community, with a number of large and famous institutions, educational and scientific. The scientific institutions included the refinements of child psychiatry, child guidance, and social work. However, a history of psychoanalysis in Los Angeles should mention our own institutions, such as Compton Sanitarium, the Veterans Administration Mental Hygiene Clinic, the Brentwood Hospital, Los Angeles Psychiatric Service, etc.

A very interesting element in the Boston history was the establishment of the Faculty Principle, which was a new development, which came somewhat into conflict with the old hierarchical practice which was traditional

(continued)

History Committee--Page 2--June 18, 1962

to early psychoanalysis. Under this latter principle, teaching tended to be done by the apprentice method, in contrast to the present faculty and institute method. Because our history in Los Angeles is much more recent, this principle was already well established, and certain controversies were avoided. In Boston the controversy was very active.

The other significant and interesting part of the book is a paper by Bertram D. Lewin, wherein he reviews the history of psychoanalytic education. He begins by reviewing this first on the European scene. This is a background for making an analysis of the factors in the development of psychoanalysis in America, which derived from continental influences. However, he does proceed by describing certain aspects which were unique to the American scene, such as the Flexner Report of 1910, which made a comprehensive study of medical education. This in turn helps produce a high standard in the establishment of psychoanalytic institutes.

These notes are not very complete, but probably illustrate the usefulness of this volume for our purposes.

AK/jh