

Arnold Richards's Interview with Charles Fisher Part III: From LA to Chicago to DC to NYC

. . . thing to do. There were cops, bulls, and they would shoot at you. I was pulled off the train twice, once in Cheyenne and another time in Grand Island, Nebraska. A big guy stuck a gun in my ribs. What they do is put you in a jail, which is filthy. They kept you overnight and gave you a bowl of mush and said leave town and don't come back again. By the time I got to Chicago I wired Betty and she wired me \$10 and with that I got to New York and we began to live together, and we have been living together ever since for 60 years.

AR: In 1925--you met in 1925?

CF: We met in 1926.

AR: Sixty years.

CF: So Betty really saved me, not just my life, my sanity. She was a very maternal woman, along with her other assets. So what we did then, I still hadn't decided what to do with my life. I knew the only thing to do was to go to school. So I looked up my relatives. They were still alive. The brother of my mother and her sister. I went to see her sister and husband, and they fell on my neck. They wanted me to come to stay with them. There was another uncle named Isadore. He was rich. He was a building contractor. I was living with Betty in the Village. We weren't married. We were very advanced for that time. We lived together for three years. It was in the early Depression years.

AR: There is one area from our discussion last time that I have a personal curiosity about. You told us that you spent these years in an orphanage which was essentially a Jewish institution, and I was wondering about that aspect of your development—your Jewish education, Jewish Identity.

CF: Yes, there were some difficulties about that. My Jewish identity was marred long before I got to this institution. My father was an anti-Semitic Jew. I told you that he was a sheet metal worker. He came here around the turn of the century, and most of the places where he worked he worked with Gentiles. The name he was given by Ellis Island was Herman Cohen, and Cohen got him into a lot of trouble.. He used to get in fights because of anti-Semitic taunts and once almost killed a man. He therefore decided to get his name changed, and he changed it to Fisher because half the Fishers were Jewish and half the Fishers were non-Jewish, and this assuaged his conscience, and he changed the Herman to Henry. On my birth certificate I was named Charles Cohen; the name was changed. My brother, unfortunately, was called Isadore and he had a lot of trouble because Izzy, Ikie, and Abie were names everyone knew were Jewish. It's very ironic that Isadore is a Sephardic-Spanish name, but I have not known any Jew in a long time who named his child Isadore. So, we never went to synagogue, we didn't celebrate the holidays, we never lit candles. And my father got so he could eat ham, but he couldn't get himself to eat pork. His conscience couldn't let him do that. So I had no religious upbringing until I was eight years old. Before my eighth year, although we always were aware that we were Jews and my father was a very Jew-conscious person. What my mother was I have no idea. I told you that my mother could write Yiddish, and I remember her writing to relatives in New York, and I was very impressed that she could write Yiddish, which I don't think my father could. So there was no religious upbringing until we got in the orphan home. The orphan home was Jewish. The superintendent of the orphan home was a rabbi in his sixties, named Sigmund Frey. He knew nothing about children. His wife was the superintendent. There was on these beautiful grounds a building that had a little synagogue in it, and so we had Friday services and we had Saturday services and we were taught to read Hebrew and I got so I could read Hebrew very well, but we were not taught what the hell it meant.

AR: You just learned it to pray.

CF: Yes. Later on, when I was about 15, when I was at the temporary institution between leaving the old one and going to a new institution, I used to be asked to conduct services, so I was something of a substitute rabbi. I think I told you that the orphan home decided to build a fancier place. I told you about that and why we moved to this more orphanlike tenement closer to the center of Los Angeles. We went to the B'nai Brith Synagogue, which was one of the principal Jewish synagogues in Los Angeles. There was a terrible rabbi there, named Rabbi Magnin, who became rather famous in Los Angeles because he built a beautiful synagogue on

Wilshire Boulevard, and I guess all the rich Jews in Los Angeles were in it. Anyway, when he was a young man and I was still an orphan attending this synagogue, when I was still at the orphan home, I was about 15, he approached me once and asked me if I wanted to be a rabbi. He would see to it that I was sent to Hebrew Union College.

AR: This was in Cincinnati?

CF: In Cincinnati. I hated this guy. I couldn't stand him. I knew he was a hypocrite. So instead of being flattered by his asking me that, I was angry and I told him very clearly that I didn't want to be a rabbi, which was stupid. I could have been sent to Hebrew Union College. They have a first-rate education, I understand, and I didn't have to be a rabbi if I didn't want to. But I had no one to guide me in these matters, so I refused him, in fact, was insulted, because being a rabbi to me--I was just a little kid--meant being like this son of a bitch, and I didn't want to be him. So I was confirmed--in those days reform Jews had a confirmation.

AR: At 13?

CF: At 15. Boys and girls together. There was no Bar Mitzvah. All those were post-World War II developments, when reform Jews went back to Bar Mitzvahs. There is no such thing as confirmation any more. So I remember it as--there was practically no preparation, very little Jewish education. I don't even remember that we had any classes. I think we went to services there, but neither in the orphan home or later on in the synagogue were we given any Jewish education of any kind. But I always recognized myself as a Jew and was rather proud of it and I never in my life experienced any personal anti-Semitism. Occasionally my brother did because of his name, but very little.

AR: Maybe we can get into this theme later on. Maybe we should return to where we left off last time, which I think was some time in college.

CF: We left off when I got to New York.

AR: You had returned from Wyoming.

CF: I bummed across the country, and Betty and I began to live together. So we were only in New York no more than about six weeks. I got in contact with my relatives, my Aunt Fanny and her husband, Max, and Rubin and Moe, my cousins, and they got on my neck and wanted to take care of me and come and live with them and they'd send me to school. And again I turned them down. I hated what they were. In those days--this was in the mid-twenties--I wasn't a political radical. There were no radical movements at that time, the Communist Party wasn't around yet.

AR: What about the anarchists?

CF: There was the IWW, International Workers of the World, they were beginning; there was the Socialist Party of Eugene Debs, that was around, that didn't have very much power. The intellectuals were against the system--people like H.L. Mencken, Upton Sinclair, Sinclair Lewis, Sherwood Anderson, Ben Hecht, Lincoln Steffens, all those early writers. So that was the kind of intellectual atmosphere. You were against the capitalist system, which at that time was presumably at the height of its prosperity, although there were weaknesses, for sure. I was in New York in 1927 and I couldn't get a job, so I had contempt for these relatives of mine. It was also based on other things. They told me some things about my parents and they hated my father.

AR: Were they your mother's relatives?

CF: They were my mother's relatives. My father had a brother who died many years before. My mother had two brothers and a sister. There was my Uncle Isadore, but I think he was dead by that time. He had become very wealthy, according to some standards. He lived in Flatbush. So my poor relatives didn't know what to do with me and they knew I was living with this little whore in Greenwich Village and were very shocked, and I didn't know what to do with myself. I couldn't get a job. Betty had a job but she'd lost it and we were practically out of money. Anyway, my aunt and uncle decided to send me back to California where I came from. So they said they'd get me a ticket, so they got me a ticket and Betty and I decided we would stop in Chicago, where she was born and where she had one brother and one sister who still lived there, and also I got the idea from I don't know where that I'd like to go to the University of Chicago, but I don't

know how I knew anything about it. So you must understand that in those days one could afford to be daring because you didn't

have any alternatives.

AR: This was around 1925, 1926?

CF: This was already 1927. I was 19 and Betty was a couple of years older, and we were just on our own. We had broken off with our families.

AR: Did they give you two tickets or just one?

CF: I think they just gave us one because they weren't interested in her. I think she must have had a little **money** left and she had some friends. All I know is we got the train and got off in Chicago and turned the ticket in. We had \$75, and we started off life with \$75. So since I had decided I wanted to go to the University of Chicago, I got a job. First we found a room near the university on East 61st Street, it's across the Midway.

AR: Yes. 61st and where?

CF: Woodlawn.

AR: Where Burton Judson is now--the dormitory of the University of Chicago, it's right there. Yes, 61st, because the el is on 63rd. Was the el on 63rd then?

CF: Yes. So I forget how but I got a job as a stenographer for a little company called the Stahmer Coal Company. I was Mr. Stahmer's secretary.

AR: Ah, your stenographic background.

CF: That's right. I got \$30 a week or something, which was a lot of money. So I worked there for a month and I was going mad because I thought if I have to do this for the rest of my life, I'd die. I was certain I was made for better things. Betty got a job and I decided I'd go to the university and I would get a part-time job. So I quit Mr. Stahmer and I sent away for my transcript and there was no trouble getting into the University of Chicago in those days. Besides, I had a very good record from the University of California. No one seemed to have any trouble getting in, but the University of Chicago was a very select place and the undergraduate school was always very small. It must have been even smaller then. Anyway, my story is that I was admitted to the University of Chicago and graduated without ever having seen the Dean or an advisor or anybody. I don't know if that was so unusual, maybe it still happens these days. So whatever I did, I did it on my own, I never had any advice, but unfortunately I sort of knew what I wanted to do. But first I had to get a job, so I went to the employment office and I was about to reach--I was standing in line and there was this fat man in front of me and I heard him tell the girl that he was looking for a male stenographer, so I thought this was a gift from heaven, so I tugged at his coat and I said, "I'm a male stenographer," so he looked me over and he said, "Come to my home tomorrow at 2:00." So I went. He didn't ask me any questions, and he turned out to be Samuel Harper. Do you know who Samuel Harper was?

AR: I know who William Rainey Harper was.

CF: Samuel Harper was his son. He lived in a big mansion right off Woodlawn. He was an old bachelor who lived with his mother. William Rainey had two sons. One was psychotic and was in an institution. Samuel was a big, fat, unattractive man without much grace or charm, who was professor of Russian language and history. He became that because--the story used to go around campus--old William didn't know what the hell to do with him so he placed him a field where there was no competition and besides it wouldn't be a bad idea to have a Russian department. So he hired me for 50 cents an hour and I worked for him for about four years. Besides what Betty made, I brought in a little money myself.

AR: So those were the four years you had in Chicago . in college?

CF: No, I entered there as a junior. I had two and a half years at the University of California but I lost a half year when I transferred; I don't know why. I had a liberal arts course, political science, economics, etc. I took Spanish, which was a terrible mistake and which made trouble for me later on. Everyone took Spanish there.

AR: Where, in California?

CF: Yes. So I signed up in the psychology department. The University of Chicago at that time was a great, free instituion. William Rainey had hijacked many of the better Eastern universities for famous professors because of a heavy endowment from the first John D. Rockefeller. There were splendid professors in every department.

AR: This was before Hutchins arrived?

CF: I graduated in the summer of 1929. Hutchins was there then. I was in his second

graduation class. You could take pretty much what you wanted, there were often no special prerequisites. I was only taking things I liked, a course in the French Revolution, a course in paleontology and geography.

I entered as an undergraduate in the summer of 1927. By the spring of 1928 I was taking premedical courses and in two years I finished all the four years of chemistry--general chemistry, qualitative and quantitative analysis, organic-which were very hard for me. At the University of Chicago you were up against students who were superior to the ones at the University of California. I didn't do too well. I got B's and C's. By the time I got through and graduated I had completed a minimum of premedical courses. Three months after I graduated, the crash came. I think I may have started to apply to medical school then. But it was already difficult to get in. In the first place, my grades weren't good enough and I had a lot of courses in social sciences and psychology, which tended to be held against you. So I couldn't get in. I don't know how many medical schools I applied to. What happened was that very shortly after the Depression kids couldn't get work. Medical tuition was \$200-\$300 a year. If one could live at home and pay the relatively modest tuition, it was possible to go to medical school. As a consequence, the medical and all the professional schools were flooded with applicants, making it difficult to gain admission. All the schools had Jewish quotas, just like Czarist Russia. But I just happened to be in the one medical school on the planet Earth where they didn't have a Jewish quota.

AR: You were a psychology major as an undergraduate?

CF: Yes, I was a psychology major. At the time the University of Chicago, that had once had a magnificent psychology department--John Dewey and John Watson taught there and for some period Lashley. I was there when the department had deteriorated, in a period when there was Harvey Carr and Bills--they were second-raters. I took a lot of courses but I was not excited about them, except for several courses in abnormal psychology. I read a lot of Janet. There were no inspiring psychology teachers. But I read things by Morton Prince. I was always interested in dissociative states and hypnosis. I don't remember that I particularly read Freud at that time. I remember there was a guy in the psychology department, a student, who sat in the library all day long and everybody said, "He's reading Freud from beginning to end," and everyone made fun of him, and I had a sort of contempt for him, too. And my developing ambition was that I wanted to be a psychiatrist and that included being an analyst, but I don't know if the passion for analysis started then--how early that started.

AR: When you say analyst--a Freudian analyst?

CF: Yes, a Freudian analyst. There weren't any other kind around.

AR: But you weren't reading Freud?

CF: I don't know how much Freud I read. I don't think very much--excerpts.

AR: What made you interested in dissociative states? Do you know where that came from?

CF: Yes. It came from dreams, from my father's statement that my mother committed suicide because she had a bad dream and she must have done something in a dissociated state.

AR: Ah, I see. So the dissociative state was the waking part of....

CF: The waking part of something unconscious. I struggled with the idea of an unconscious mechanism, some compulsion, propulsion....

AR: Some action that is out of control.

CF: That's the way I explained it. It hadn't been proved. So I very early read Morton Prince on multiple personality. Those things were what interested me.

I was taking all the science courses and it was very difficult. But I persisted with this crazy notion to be an analyst, that some miracle would happen and I would be able to get into medical school.

By the end of my first graduate year I was at my rope's end. However, after I left Los Angeles periodically I wrote to the superintendent of the orphanage where I was raised, whose name was Joseph Bonaparte, like Napoleon's brother. He was a cut above the average superintendent. He had a Master's degree in social work. That was unusual. Things were picking up in the Jewish charities. So he was more educated--a rather cold man but nice, and he took a kind of interest in me. I left the orphanage without any financial support. I got a job as a secretary to the registrar of the university in Los Angeles and I was able to support myself. I would write to

Bonaparte periodically, and I wrote to him that I really wanted to go to medical school and he wrote me a letter that suggested he thought I was kind of presuming above my position, but he said he would try to help me. He got some money for me that would support me through a year of graduate school in psychology. I don't know how much money I was making or Betty was making, but I took a year of graduate work in psychology. I started a dissertation. The dissertation was interesting. There was a friend of mine named Daniel Flanagan, a charming Irishman, who did a rather clever experiment that was far ahead of his time. It had to do with perceptual defenses. He may have been the first one to really do this. He would take paired nonsense syllables, one of which was neutral and the other like "FUK" or "COK," taboo words. Flanagan was able to demonstrate an inhibition in perception of the taboo words.

That's the sort of thing the leading psychologists were doing in the 50s. Erikson, Lazarus, Bruner. They got hung up on the idea that in order to be able to not see something, you had to see it first. This led to the idea of a humunculus that scanned the unconscious and recognized the dirty words. I was very impressed with Flanagan; I understood the significance of the unconscious aspects of his experiment toward -which I had no resistance. Poor Daniel Flanagan. He was thrown out of school because he had to take a French examination to get his degree and they caught him cheating. I took a French examination, which I'll tell you about in a little while.

I tried to devise something equivalent to Flanagan's experiment using pictures, but I never got a decent thing going. All I remember is a dermatology-textbook with a lot of pictures of disgusting diseases, syphilis of the skin, of the nose, leprosy, but I never really got the thing set up. My advisor was a man named Bills. At any rate, that quarter ended and I was disgusted. I was sick of the field. I didn't want to go on.

This takes me to the summer of 1931. I had one year in which I just took courses. During that time I had a lot of jobs. I was a night watchman in a garage. I worked as a night x-ray technician. It was in Pullman, Illinois. Do you remember the famous Pullman porter strike? Betty and I had a little room above a veterinarian whose place was full of barking dogs who kept us awake all night. It was filthy. I worked as a waiter in a fraternity house and did all kinds of shit. So that was the summer of 1931. I was desperately depressed. I didn't know what I was going to do. I didn't want to go on in psychology, so I thought I would make one more attempt to go to medical school. The University of Chicago was an extraordinary place. They had extraordinary rules, some of which were probably illegal. They would let you take your first year of medicine, and if you did well, they'd accept you. I don't know of anyone else but me who really accomplished this.

AR: They would take anyone?

CF: I don't know if they would take anyone but they took me. However, they would predate your admission but they'd only predate it to the time you took your language exam. Most medical schools required French or German, and of course I took Spanish. I didn't know any French or any German. So one day--this was the most important decision in my life--I found out that the next French exam was ten days off so I said to myself, maybe I can learn enough French in ten days to pass the exam. I reasoned thusly. I had had a Romance language, Spanish. The exam was a translating exam. They gave you a page and you could bring a dictionary, so I got myself a French grammar, and I went through it, and I got myself a French dictionary, and the dictionary also had the principal parts of the verb forms. I tried to read some scientific French. It didn't go too badly. Most of the technical words were the same as English. All I had to do was learn the little words in between. So I reasoned, if I had to learn the little words in between, why read scientific French, why not read literary French? So I got out a couple of volumes of de Maupassant, short stories. I was always quite well-read. So I sat down and I began to read, De Maupassant's stories were short and interesting, sexy, and easy to read, with a nice pure French, so I tried it and I could see that I could read it and make sense. So what I did for the test is I sat and read de Maupassant for ten days. At the end of the ten days I could read de Maupassant. And this was my preparation for taking the exam. So when the day came, I appeared, with 15 others, and we were handed a sheet with five paragraphs on it. You had to translate four of them. And I said to myself, if you don't quite understand, at least write a clear English sentence, but I did understand, I did very well. I translated all five paragraphs. I had to wait for about three weeks and after three weeks they posted the results on the bulletin board and there were three names of those who passed and I was one of them.

AR: Three out of 15?

CF: Three out of 15. You must understand, all these other people had at least two or three years of French, and they couldn't translate, evidently.

AR: You were good at decoding.

CF: I have no gift for languages, no ear, I can't talk, but I'm very good at decoding.

So now I said, all you have to do is go to medical school. I signed up for gross anatomy. For the first time since Betty and I were together, I was able to devote full time to my studies. She was working for a man she didn't know was a bootlegger, connected with Al Capone. He had a mineral water sign in the window as a cover. But he was smuggling scotch. Betty worked as a secretary. She was making about \$50 a week, which was a big salary in 1931.

AR: On the South Side was the Al Capone headquarters. 63rd Street was the center of his gang.

CF: I was taking laboratory-courses, especially anatomy. I didn't have time to work; for the first time I was a full time student. The Dean of the medical school was a man named Butch Harvey, an Englishman. He taught the anatomy course. In the summer of 1931 it was ghastly hot. I was given the cadaver of an 80-year-old woman. The student next to me had a huge, muscular Negro with burn marks on his wrists and ankles. He had been electrocuted. Electrocuted convicts ended up in a medical school anatomy lab, often men with great physiques, prized in anatomy classes. My 80-year-old woman was not so prized. I had some terrible corpses. However, I was very good at things like anatomy, and so I worked hard, and once a week we had a recitation, a lecture, and Butch Harvey, the Dean, was there, so I plunked myself down right in front of him. This was a terribly hot summer; nobody else was very much interested in anatomy at the time, so I sat in front of him and he would ask questions and I would raise my hand. I wanted to call his attention to me so he would remember me, and so I did that, I made myself very much in evidence. At the end of the year--I liked neuro-anatomy--and I got an A in it, H, Honors, and an H in gross anatomy.

AR: Do you remember the neuro-anatomy textbook?

CF: It was Ranson.

AR: Right, that's the same one.

CF: That book was very important to me because it was Ranson for whom I went to work (I later got a fellowship at Ranson's Institute of Neurology at Northwestern).

AR: I knew there was a reason I asked the question.

CF: I was impressed with the textbook and I was impressed with certain experiments that Ranson had done on peripheral nerves, cranial nerves, and I found that I was full of admiration for certain things on esthetic grounds because they were done beautifully, which was the beginning of my interest in research.

AR: That textbook became Ranson and Clark.

CF: That's right. Clark was a graduate student when I was there.

I got through the first trimester; the second trimester I signed up for head and neck, for histology, and something else. The head and neck course is the important thing. I was a whiz at the cranium and the cranial nerves. However, at the time the professor of anatomy and the one who was actually dissecting was a man who was named Professor Swift, a tall man, about 6' 8". So I ingratiated myself with him, and he saw that I was very good and one day it came up--I probably insidiously brought it up--that I wasn't in medical school, and he said, "How come you're not in medical school?" So I said very resentfully, "They won't let me in." He was indignant. He said, "How come?" I said, "I don't know," and he said, "I'll see about that. I'll go to see the Dean." So I guess he did go to see the Dean. It was nearly the end of the trimester and I got another H, some more H's, and he had gone to see the Dean and I was admitted into the medical school and I was predated back to that French exam. So that's how I got into medical school. It was a chance in a million, the combination of being in the right place at the right time, being lucky and daring and scared.

AR: This was Billings?

CR: No, the way it was then, you could take your first two years on the campus and then you could take your second two years at Billings or at Rush, downtown, so the end of that year when I was firmly in medical school and I could see that if things went well I could come back....

AR: So you went to medical school then with some background and interest in psychology and neuro-anatomy.

CF: That's right, and in psychiatry, psychopathology. I was interested in that.

AR: Were you the only Jew in your medical school?

CF: No, there were lots of Jews. I didn't really have a class. I don't remember any Jews in that particular class. I don't remember knowing anybody, I can't remember a soul. I had other friends who were Jews and other non-Jews. In fact, when I first got to the university I met some nice people. There was a daily paper that was called *The Maroon*.

AR: *The Chicago Maroon*?

CF: *The Chicago Maroon*.

AR: It still exists.

CF: The first year I was there I wrote a book review and there was a famous book called *Companionate Marriage* by Judge Lindsey, who was recommending doing what Betty and I were doing.

AR: So you were still not married at that point?

CF: No, not yet. We didn't get married until 1930. So I wrote a review, a favorable review, for *The Maroon*. Through that review I met a number of campus radicals, interesting people, and so I began to make some friends that way. That was 1927-1928. This was the summer of 1932. I had run out of money. I had heard that Ranson had a fellowship so I went up to see him and he said, "Oh, you're just the person I was looking for," with a year of medicine, some training in psychology. I never liked Ranson. He was a sort of cold fish, a Yankee, he had a peptic ulcer, he was cold and ambitious. Anyway, Ranson is the man who had been working on peripheral nerves, and he was the one who discovered the nerves that carry pain. So he got the idea that he wanted to try to correlate the portions of unmyelinated nerve fibers with the sensory spots of the skin; there were different sorts of spots (pain, touch, temperature, etc.), so he wondered if there was a correlation; so what he wanted me for was to map out these spots on the skin. I died at the idea of doing that because it was tedious, an uncertain thing to do.

AR: Was it the staining of the myelin?

CF: No, first you had to examine people and map out these spots, and he would make-- say you found certain areas were innervated by the radial nerve--you would get the branch of that radial nerve and you could count the number of unmyelinated and myelinated fibers to see if the proportions correlated with the number of spots. It was crazy, impossible, so I dreaded doing it, but I looked up the literature and I saw that the crazy Germans, systematic, obsessional Germans, had already done this. They had gone all over the body for touch, warmth, cold, pain, and everything, but the literature was all in German and I didn't know any German. So I thought, "German ain't French," but maybe I could pull the trick again. I'd seen Ranson early in the summer and since he had hired me I was supposed to go to work in the fall and start his crazy experiment, so instead I spent the summer with a German dictionary. I didn't know any German at all. I was reading these articles by men named Strughold and Frey, crazy guys who had done all this, and so I painfully translated these half-dozen articles and they were not bad translations. I had to learn to teach myself some German so I had my own ways of doing that. I read literary works. I got so I could read Thomas Mann's short stories. His early stories were sentimental. I read other writings by Schnitzler, Reigen, for instance

AR: Schnitzler? Schnitzler always shows up in psychoanalysis, doesn't he?

CF: Yeah. I read the *Christian Science Herald* because it was English on one side and German on the other, and that was what I was doing, learning to translate. So when fall came I brought all these translations and he, Ranson, was so delighted he said I wouldn't have to do the work myself. But that first year I didn't do much of anything.

Now there was a very fine group of researchers, the principal one being Magoun. And then there was a guy named Ingram. They were all full-time researchers. This was in the days when a research person--I was earning \$600 a year. There was some research money around for principal investigators. Ranson by this time had a research institute of his own and quite a reputation, so I had done a little research in Chicago in anatomy. One semester when I had a little free time I went to Dr. Bartelmez and said, "Do you have some work I can do?" So he put me to work and I did a little experiment and wrote it up. Anyway, Ranson put me to doing something which I was not interested in.

AR: That was your first paper, then?

CF: No, my first paper was written in 1933. I came to Ranson in 1932. In 1933 I wrote

this paper on the sympathetic cells in the spinal ganglia. Around that time, the end of 1931, beginning of 1932, what had happened was that Ranson had picked up a so-called Horsley-Clark machine. It's an instrument you put over a head--a monkey's head, not a human one. You can put electrodes into any part of the brain so you can explore the interior of the brain. The Horsley-Clark machine was invented by Sir Victor Horsley, an Englishman, in 1908, and Clark, who was an engineer. It looked like a cap. It has a metal frame which has movable electrodes that you can move in any direction and you had to do the preliminary work to work out a series of coordinates to guide you in placing the lesion. The thing wasn't used because it was too hard to do the preliminary work, but two important pieces of work were done in English, one by Wilson on the basal ganglia. But the thing wasn't used. Three of these apparatuses landed in the United States. One was at Yale, one was at St. Louis, and someplace else, but it wasn't used at all. Ranson picked the one up that was at Washington University in St. Louis, brought it to Northwestern, and he and a young man I worked with named Ingram spent a couple of years perfecting the instrument, and just when I got there, it could be used, and it was a gold mine. Imagine. You could stimulate and make a lesion any place in the interior of the brain you wanted. So I had never been lucky much at anything. I was always lucky in my career, by accident. So one day Ingram came to me and he handed me a big black box of slides and said, "Go through these and see what you can make of them." They happened to be a series of slides, stained lesions in the hypothalamus; they peppered it with lesions, both laterally and in the midline. The only behavioral or other observations they made were they collected the urine of these animals and they found that a certain number of them were pissing their heads off and they found they had diabetes insipidus, so I went through the slides. I was never very good looking through a microscope, I could never see anything, but if I was looking for something I could see it. Anyway, I put together the lesions that cause diabetes insipidus. It is a rare disease, and the whole thing was important because I worked out the pathophysiology of the disease and the connections between the posterior Pituitary gland and the hypothalamus.

AR: The neurohormonal relationships?

CF: That's right. The relationship between the pituitary and the supraoptical-hypophyseal tract, and I did a lot of work from 1932 to 1939.

AR: You had finished medical school at this point?

CF: No, I just had one year. My struggle to become a doctor never ceased.

AR: You couldn't continue medical school? You went to work....

CF: I couldn't, but I did. For two years I stayed out of medical school and during the second I got involved in the hypothalamic work. By 1933, I was making \$1500 a year. You could live on that. Anyway, in 1934 I got my Ph.D. Magoun and I got our Ph.D.s together.

AR: Magoun? He hadn't got a Ph.D. before?

CF: He was a young man. Ranson had an eye for talent.

AR: So in a way you were the first of the M.D.- Ph.D. people.

CF: I was one of the few. Then my troubles began with Ranson. We really had a gold mine. He never let anybody work for their M.D., so when I got my Ph.D. in 1934, I told him I wanted to go back to medical school and could I work part-time? He said absolutely not. However, I always had something hot going, so he let me work there part-time and I could go to medical school. I was taking part-time medical courses and doing research, so from then on I worked for him a year part-time and I went to medical school part-time, from 1934 to 1939.

AR: That was another five years.

CF: Altogether it took me eight years to get my M.D. and my Ph.D. It was well worth the time.

AR: So during this time your interest in dissociative states and psychopathology was on the back burner, so to speak.

CF: It was on the back burner. With all that I was doing, I did a lot of work that became very well known, but by 1937 Ranson got some money and asked me to publish a monograph on diabetes insipidus. One of the important areas that the work on diabetes insipidus led to was the demonstration of the hypothalamic-hypophyseal control of pregnancy, labor, and sexual behavior. The latter processes were controlled by the same areas of the hypothalamus as was water metabolism. We observed that our cats and guinea pigs with anterior lesions in the hypothalamus did not mate or become pregnant, while those that were already pregnant had very prolonged

and difficult labors and some of them died in convulsions. We had found that the hypothalamic lesions producing diabetes insipidus resulted in atrophy of the posterior lobe of the pituitary gland and demonstrated that the latter had a total deficiency of pitocin. Pitocin was known to be a powerful uterine contracting substance and its deficiency probably had something to do with the difficulty our lesioned animals had in delivering their young.

The same anterior hypothalamic lesions destroyed neural pathways having to do with mating behavior and neurohormonal pathways to the anterior pituitary having to do with ovulation. We had serendipitously localized the areas in the hypothalamus that controlled sexual behavior, and it was not until a decade later that the accuracy of our localization was confirmed. Without knowing it, the effects that we produced undoubtedly involved the destruction of the hypothalamic-pituitary areas having to do with the so-called releasing hormones.

By that time I was earning \$2000 a year and all I had to do was write this monograph, but I continued to do other work. Ranson protested every year when I wanted to go back to medical school, but every year he let me go back. Not that he had any special fondness for me--I never became really friendly with him.

AR: Can you think of anyone else, just offhand, who was well known?

CF: I finally wrote this monograph--they were all working on different things.

I had about 20 papers and this monograph, which became something of a classic. So I left an extremely promising career in neurophysiology. Sometimes I regret it.

AR: Yes, as Freud did, as Charlie Brenner did.

CF: But it was a very exciting period. Those were the Depression years. During the worst part of the Depression, from 1931 to 1939, I was able to get my degree, Ph.D., stayed married, and some other things. Betty worked. She stopped working in 1936. We had a little boy who lived to five and a half, who had an accident and was killed. It was a terrible, terrible business, but it is dubious whether I would have been able to accomplish all this if it wasn't for Betty. From 1936 on I was self-supporting. Betty didn't work then. We got married in 1930. I graduated from medical school in 1939. In 1936 we had our little boy and I had to get an internship, so I applied for an internship with the United States government, in St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

AR: The Public Health Service?

CF: Yes. So we moved to Washington. It was a terrible internship, no teaching, no supervision, psychotic patients. My whole education was somewhat sporadic, in and out of medical schools. The State Boards which I took at Hopkins, I had a 90% average, which wasn't bad. Anyway, it was a miserable internship. In 1940 I became a student in the Washington-Baltimore Psychoanalytic Institute and I was in analysis with Edith Weigert. At the time, Leslie Farber, who was also at St. Elizabeth's, and I became very good friends. Now at that time the Washington-Baltimore Society was still ostensibly Freudian.

AR: Sullivanian?

CF: This was before Sullivan. Sullivan was not on the scene. There was Frieda Fromm-Reichmann. She was rebellious in some way against classical Freud, although she was not enough of a theoretician to know what to do and always attached herself to some man who influenced her, for example, Groddeck, Fromm, and finally to Sullivan.

AR: What about a psychiatric residency?

CF: It was a two-year internship, it counted as a residency.

AR: In psychiatry?

CF: I didn't have a real residency. In 1942 the war came and I got into the Public Health Service and was stationed on Ellis Island for three and a half years, where they had a neuropsychiatric service, and that took the place of a good residency.,

AR: So you were just starting the Washington-Baltimore Psychoanalytic Institute, you and Leslie Farber? Did you both start?

CF: Yes. He started his analysis a little before me. He started in January, 1940. Edith was a classical analyst. She was very nice to me. Leslie and I were both going to her. There was some rivalry.

AR: Sibling rivalry.

CF: I did my first piece of research with Leslie. He had begun to do some hypnosis, and he taught me how to hypnotize, and we decided to do an experiment together in giving people suggestions to dream, and then we added another thing. We would give dreams to some subjects

that had been dreamed by other subjects and ask them to interpret them, which some of them were successful in doing. We published a paper on this work in *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* in 1943.

AR: Was that your first analytic publication?

CF: Yes, it was my first analytic publication. It was entitled "Suggested Dreams under Hypnosis." It was superior compared with other things in the literature, such as a paper by Schroetter in 1912. Schroetter was awfully crude. For instance, he gave a suggestion to a female subject to dream about a homosexual relationship. She dreamed of carrying a bag on which was written, "For women only." We didn't do anything that crude. Leslie was a very good hypnotist and I became a very good hypnotist, too. For example, we would say to a subject, "I am going to remind you of something that once happened to you. You were walking along the street and saw a woman sitting on a stoop nursing a baby." She was then told, "You're going to have a dream. When you wake up you will tell me about it." The subject reported, "I was taking a streetcar up to Mt. Pleasant and I went into a store and bought a lot of apples, fruit, and candy." We asked the girl to draw the mountain. She drew a breast, but she was not aware that she was doing it. The experiment was very successful. We published it and it's part of the classical literature on the subject.

AR: So it's interesting in a way that your career recapitulates Freud's professional development, neuro-anatomy, hypnosis, and dreams. Do you remember much about your training at the Washington-Baltimore Institute? Who were your teachers and supervisors?

CF: I'll tell you about my non-training at Washington-Baltimore Institute. About this time my son was killed in an accident. He fell off a cliff in Rock Creek Park in Washington and fractured his skull. That day my analyst got ill and was away for eight months. About a year later, after the war started, I was drafted into the Public Health Service.

AR: On Ellis Island?

CF: Yes. They gave me a choice of location. I chose the Marine Hospital on Ellis Island so I could be in New York. It was a marvelous service. In Washington there was very poor training, poor supervision. In 1939 the psychoanalytic field was quite well developed, but it wasn't too difficult to be admitted to an institute. I talked to Fromm-Reichmann and she said I had to go into treatment right away. My first supervision was with Frieda. I also had supervision with William Silverberg, the homosexual, at Flower Fifth. I shared an office at that time with Leslie Farber. We were in private practice and both got jobs at Chestnut Lodge as psychotherapists. It was an ideal time to start our careers and was very exciting. You know Chestnut Lodge, it's a famous place (*I Never Promised You a Rose Garden*). Frieda Fromm-Reichmann was a national figure. Did you ever see her? She was a little Germanic woman and overly sweet in manner and voice. She got famous at a 1940 meeting at the Richmond annual meeting of the American when she gave a paper called "Transference in Schizophrenia," in which she demonstrated that some kind of transference goes on. It was a very touching, moving paper which everyone applauded when she told how she would go and sit on a cold, damp cement floor with a mute schizophrenic for eight hours until the patient talked. At Chestnut Lodge they had real acutely ill schizophrenics. It was a very noble enterprise to attempt to treat them with some kind of modified psychoanalysis.

AR: Who was it, Rosen? What was that fellow's name?

CF: That's a different story.

AR: Not Victor, the other Rosen.

CF: I knew him very well. I've known a lot of the people of historical significance since 1939.

AR: Good, that's good for the purposes of this project.

CF: The other Rosen is, I'll think of his name. It was John. Well, Farber and I were sort of Frieda's favorites at Chestnut Lodge. When you came there, they assigned you a couple of patients. I had two patients, a paranoid doctor and an extremely disoriented and hallucinating schizophrenic woman of about 36, named Cunningham. You were told to go and take care of her but they didn't tell you how to take care of her. Frieda would just give you one instruction--just go in and listen--so I don't think, anyone there, including Frieda, knew very much about schizophrenia, and no one had any theoretical framework.

AR: Burnham?

CF: No, there was me, Leslie Farber, the Cohens, and there was Stanton.

AR: Of Stanton and Schwartz?

CF: Yes, of Stanton and Schwartz. He was the most original.

AR: Was Bob Morris there?

CF: Yes, Bob Morris was there. He was a very minor talent.

AR: Bob Morris came from Topeka. He trained at Topeka. He trained with Leo Stone at Topeka. I wasn't there then but I knew of him. But I applied to the Washington Institute and I was interviewed by a committee, and the committee included Edith Weigert, Bob Morris, Dan Jaffe, and Howard Searles. Searles gave me a terrible time, but Edith sort of stood up for me. She was very nice, and Searles was horrid. Jaffe and Morris didn't say much of anything.

CF: Edith was nice. She did me some good. She favored me over Farber.

AR: Which helped.

CF: And she recognized that he was a son of a bitch.

AR: You were telling me about Frieda.

CF: I liked Frieda to begin with. I liked anyone who seemed to like me. I had two patients at Chestnut Lodge. I had a schizophrenic woman who was not in contact at all, and I would take her for a walk every day. They did a lot of things like that. They were experimental. Their whole effort was admirable. They had the sickest schizophrenics you could imagine. Periodically I'd be able to establish contact with the woman.

AR: Did Frieda learn this from Simmel? Was she part of that--Simmel's hospital?

CF: Yes, she had been at Simmel's hospital. I forget the name of it.

AR: In Berlin?

CF: Yes. She had been influenced by Simmel. I was having a hard time with this schizophrenic woman, but she seemed to be getting somewhat better. In the end I thought I'd - helped her a lot, but I forget what I did. Frieda said to me one day, "Your patient has a real Oedipus complex," and I said, "Doesn't everyone?" And she said, "No. Not everyone, just some people!" By this time I was sufficiently psychoanalytic that it wasn't pleasant to hear her judgments. Also, Farber and I had gone into private practice. We were seeing patients for \$5.00 an hour. That (Frieda's comment about the Oedipus complex) made me raise my eyebrows. What really turned me off of her was that we'd have conferences and Frieda would say things that supposedly I had reported to her during supervision that didn't go on, things that I didn't say. She would say things she wanted to hear. So I became suspicious of her. I always said what I thought was the truth, tell the truth no matter what. That supervision was a disappointment. Chestnut Lodge was the most disturbed place. Patients who couldn't commit suicide in any other way would take a needle and stick it in their chest. They did have an arrangement to try to split the transference which was introduced by Stanton.

AR: Having a treating doctor and an administrative doctor?

CF: Yes. There was this paranoid doctor, he was a killer. I was in the library with him one day and there was no guard around. He accused me of not letting him see his wife. He threatened me with a cigarette, poked at my eyes with it, blew smoke in my face, yelling at me. Then he said to lie down, so I lay down on the floor. He talked all this mumbo-jumbo. I was shaking so much and he was scattering ashes on me. He put a vase of flowers on my chest, going through some burial ritual. That's all I remember. I don't remember how it ended. It scared me to death. There were only two patients I tried to treat. All in all, I was there for a year, from September, 1941, to September, 1942. Then the war came and we were all drafted. I saw patients during that year, trying out my skills, such as they were.

AR: So you had good clinical exposure but not much in the way of good clinical teaching or training.

CF: No clinical teaching. There were courses. Very poor training program. In Baltimore there was Lewis Hill. He was smart and quite orthodox. I just remember going to Baltimore once in all that time. Harry Stack Sullivan came the last year I was there. He had been at St. Elizabeth's before. He had a curious history. There is a marvelous article by Farber that appeared in the *London Times Literary Supplement*.

AR: I read his biography. You know that was published not too long ago?

CF: He was crazy. He had a weird charisma. He didn't have it for me. I was never taken in by him. He had a crazy way of talking--convoluted sentences, more heat than light. But he had a tremendous influence on psychiatry.

AR: Even our friend Merton Gill has recently become enamored of Sullivan. He sees himself as an interpersonalist. Sullivan cornered the market on that.

AR: When we left off last, we left you at Ellis Island in 1942.

CF: I came there in December, 1942, and I was very happy that I got there. First I didn't want to be in the army, and then I was turned down by the navy. I was accepted by the army but then I heard the Public Health Service was looking for people. So I rushed there, and they grabbed me because they were very impressed with my background and my research, and they gave me my choice where I wanted to go, so I said I'd like to go to New York, so they sent me to Ellis Island--that's how I got there. Anyway, it was a very interesting place. I was there for three and a half years. I spent the whole war years there, from 1942 to March or April of 1946.

AR: Do you remember your rank?

CF: Yes, I went in as a P.A. Surgeon and I left a P.A. Surgeon, with two stripes. They never promoted anyone. We were Reserve. We weren't Regular. Anyway, the thing that was interesting about it was they had a wide variety of cases, but mostly they had some genuine combat neuroses, war neuroses, in the merchant seamen and later on amongst the Coast Guard. The merchant seaman were--did you ever treat a merchant seaman?

AR: Certainly. Do you know the Greek merchant seaman's disease? It was abdominal pain masquerading as appendicitis . . .