

# CONTEMPORARY PSYCHOANALYTIC EDUCATION: ANALYZING THE CHALLENGES AND PROPOSING SOME CHANGES— A ROUNDTABLE AND “UMBRELLA PANEL”

by Norman A. (“Drew”) Clemens, Judith Logue, and Estelle Shane

## Introduction

Our psychoanalytic education, with all of the conflicts and controversies among our institutes and societies, reflects, among other things, the legacy of Sigmund Freud’s personal ambivalence about being a physician.

Freud wrote, “after forty-one years of medical activity, myself-knowledge tells me that I have never really been a doctor in the proper sense. I became a doctor through being compelled to deviate from my original purpose; and the triumph of my life lies in my having, after a long and roundabout journey, found my way back to my earliest path”(“*The Question of Lay Analysis*,” SE XX, p.253). Freud was more interested in the “riddles of the world” and in “contribut[ing] something to their solution.” He also believed patients were best helped if he carried out his task “coolly and keeping as closely as possible to the rules” (ibid p.254).

Taking the form of a dialogue with an impartial person, later identified by Freud as a public official with whom he had spoken on behalf of Theodor Reik, Freud articulated two basic propositions, still valid today, in favor of permitting non-medical people to practice analysis (*Freud: A Critical Re-Evaluation of His Theories*, p.231)

First, Freud argued, psychoanalysis is a branch of psychology, “not a specialized branch of medicine” (SE XX, p. 252); it “falls under the head of psychology; not of medical psychology in the old sense, or of the psychology of morbid processes, but simply of psychology” (ibid). Freud added: “The possibility of its application to medical purposes must not lead us astray” (ibid).

Many of Freud’s followers were opposed on this point, although Freud referred to their position as a resistance or as an attempt at repression. He called this opposition “the last mask of the resistance against psychoanalysis, and the most dangerous of all” (*The Life and Works of Sigmund Freud*, p.298.).

Second, Freud believed that no-one should practice analysis who has not acquired the right to do so by a particular training. “Whether such a person is a doctor or not seems to me immaterial” (Freud, SE XX, p.233).

While Freud granted that medical training is significant, especially for questions of differential diagnosis, he argued that the demand to add psychoanalytic training to the already long and burdensome medical training is neither economically justified nor scientifically required. Freud criticized his American medical colleagues for their resolution against lay analysts, which “based ... essentially...upon practical reasons, appears ... nevertheless to be unpractical” (SE XX, p. 258). Despite Freud’s position, until the 1988

lawsuit settlement between psychologists and social workers outside the American Psychoanalytic Association, the hegemony of medicine in American psychoanalysis persisted. Comparable (and contentious) controversies about the proper background and training of analysts continue to divide the field.

Freud's legacy of institute fractions and mergers, quarrels and rapprochements are legend. So it is a rare occurrence for our warring groups to meet in the same place at the same time to talk with one another.

With this in mind, Judith Logue, Chair of the Roundtable, proposed her "wild idea" for an ecumenical program of leaders of some of the major psychoanalytic groups in the United States today. This idea was expanded by Jane Hall, Arnold Richards, and the conference organizing committee into an "umbrella panel" with three additional members. The result was a diverse panel of twelve psychoanalysts that included four members with medical degrees, six with Ph.D. degrees, two with Masters of Social Work degrees, an attorney with an LLD, and an English educator with a Ph.D. Four members were trained in institutes of the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis (NAAP), and three are certified members of NAAP. All have taught, participated in organizational psychoanalysis, published, and practiced for many years.

#### The Roundtable

This historic event, The Future of Psychoanalytic Education, featured plenary speaker Jurgen Reeder, from Sweden, who opened the symposium. Dr. Reeder set the direction with his plea for "Ethos and Care." He called for a change toward love, care, and creativity, and contact with the real world, rather than hidden agendas, opaque centers of power, remoteness, and disrespect for candidates in our educational systems.

The "Roundtable" of representatives from major psychoanalytic organizations in the United States provided the conference finale, initiating an ecumenical dialogue among analysts of all stripes speaking from multiple experiences and points of view. By addressing contemporary challenges and proposing changes in psychoanalytic education, these leaders created a lively exchange among themselves and their audience. Judith Logue asserted that with their combined knowledge, backgrounds, and ongoing experience, the group encompassed a complete continuum of psychoanalytic perspectives. The group addressed three major challenges:• How do we inspire and influence or attract more candidates and support our members when we value inclusion?• How do we retain our independence while we emphasize collaboration?• How do we maintain our standards and remain all-inclusive?

Lynne Moritz, President of APsaA, observed that the hurt and hostility of the past 70 years – still present with us today – impede our progress. She affirmed our need to collaborate, especially in promoting educational research. Rather than maximizing singularity, Dr. Moritz urged us all to get past fractionizing and "fractious-izing" and to support APsaA as "a center that holds." With the invitation, "Join us. Come with us. Help us," she called on those present to "heal the wounds" and pool our strengths and talents to achieve a more hopeful future.

David Ramirez, Director of Swarthmore College Psychological Services, spoke in favor of increasing experiential aspects of a psychoanalytic education. To demonstrate the educational practices he had found valuable in his training at a modern psychoanalytic institute, he asked panel members to log on index cards all their questions, passing feelings, criticisms, and thoughts stimulated by what he was saying. In this exercise, he demonstrated the value of here-and-now reactions to psychoanalytic education, in addition to the formal, didactic aspect of institute courses.

Carola Mann, Deputy Secretary General of IFPS, focused on factors other than obvious considerations, such as cost and length, that discourage potential candidates from intensive psychoanalytic training. She critiqued fundamental deficiencies in our curricula and contended that if psychoanalysis is to regain its relevance, it must take greater account of changes in the culture, going beyond “Western” attitudes in approaching development, gender issues, and mind/body interactions. She argued that institutes should foster an attitude of inquiry, of “not knowing,” and of thinking “outside a theoretical box,” in order to apply psychoanalytic knowledge in a variety of areas beyond the consulting room.

David Downing, President of IFPE, stated that if psychoanalysis is to survive, psychoanalysts must reposition themselves within an inclusive community of scholars and ecumenical debate. Urging psychoanalytic institutes to consider affiliating with universities, he strongly argued for preserving the integrity of the profession and the free development of its students, in the contemporary context of those who would denigrate it or constrain it within the paradigm of the health care-industrial complex.

Sherry Katz-Bearnot, President of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis and Dynamic Psychiatry (AAPDP), works with physicians and trainees, teaching the importance of psychoanalytic principles. She emphasized the critical need to educate physicians at the earliest stages of their training, when they are learning to become sensitized to the doctor-patient relationship. Her love for applied psychoanalysis inaction, and her recognition that at one time or another “we are all patients,” were combined with a clarion call to stop marginalizing ourselves by teaching only the most advanced students. Instead, we must demonstrate the elegance and relevance of our point of view to the unconverted and to the public.

Norman A. (“Drew”) Clemens, reviewed current challenges to the by-laws of APsaA and its Board on Professional Standards. Responding to Jurgen Reeder, he recommended paying more attention to love than to hate. He then addressed the current crisis in psychoanalytic education, with particular reference to APsaA institute accreditation and certification of individual members. These issues are part of a controversy within APsaA framed as national standards *versus* “local option,” whereby each institute determines the qualifications of its training and supervising analysts. The fact that an accrediting and certifying body is housed within a membership organization means that academic freedom is sometimes in conflict with inclusiveness and egalitarianism. Dr. Clemens noted that the “psychoanalytic experience” described by Reeder and the need to set standards for candidates are concerns of both APsaA and this conference. Arguing in favor of externalizing the certification of individuals and against externalizing the accreditation of institutes, he suggested that the nature of both psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic training is most relevant to the conference themes.

Judy Ann Kaplan discussed psychoanalysis as an independent profession and as a specialty of a mental health discipline. She believes there is room for both, but notes that we must educate and train non-mental health professionals in the necessary psychoanalytic mental health education and clinical skills. She expressed hope that we might soon endorse the standards of the Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic Education (ACPE) as formulated by the Psychoanalytic Consortium.

Kaplan urged that we arrive at a “core definition” for psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, preferably using the continuum, not the qualitative difference, model. She believes we should clarify treatment frequency, reasonable standards for the training and control analysis, and eligibility requirements for graduation, and give candidates freedom of choice in selecting a personal analyst rather than requiring them to see an “in-house” professional. She called this proposal “moderate, but currently radical,” arguing that it would ensure the highest quality treatment and the best collaboration among analysts.

Fredric Perlman, President of CIPS, an association of Independent International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA) societies in the United States, noted his basic support for the Psychoanalytic Consortium standards and reviewed the requirements and obligations of the professions as social institutions.

Dr. Perlman argued in favor of psychoanalysis as an independent profession, with training programs open to aspirants from the mental health professions as well as the arts and sciences. He advocated frequency and intensity requirements consistent with those of the ACPE, and discussed the importance of balancing the nurture of creativity with promoting rigor in psychoanalytic education. He noted the specific obligations of professional education, which are different from education for the arts or academia, and which must be democratically established within a collective. He recognized that, ultimately, society will decide which social contract it endorses; we do not yet know whose version of appropriate standards for the profession shall prevail.

Estelle Shane began by noting that despite Dr. Moritz’s kind invitation, neither APsaA nor the Consortium would be willing to accept her institute, the Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis, because of its independent status and flexible philosophy of education. She described her commitment to appreciating Freudian concepts while embracing the wide, pluralistic world of contemporary psychoanalysis. ICP’s curriculum includes required courses on classical theory, attachment theory, object-relations theory, self psychology, intersubjective systems theory, and relational theory, and a wide range of electives, including courses in neurobiology, infant research, and dynamic systems theory.

Dr. Shane emphasized that candidates need to know that differences among patients demand different ways of thinking and practicing. She advocated an attitude of openness and flexibility, pluralistic course offerings, and a comparative instructional approach that recognizes no single theory or concept as “true.” She argued that promoting a systems sensibility helps candidates consider a variety of conceptualizations, increasing their vitality, openness to change, and originality.

Douglas F. Maxwell, NAAP’s President, spontaneously responded to the previous speakers. He invited

Estelle Shane's ICP into the NAAP community, and sympathized with Lynne Moritz's feeling of marginalization, a familiar feeling to those in NAAP who have felt "fractionalized" for over 30 years. Observing that Theodor Reik would not have founded the National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis (NPAP) in 1948 if he had been accepted by American medical psychoanalysts, he thanked APsA for a decision that ultimately allowed him, as a lawyer and art historian, to become a psychoanalyst.

Mr. Maxwell rejected Dr. Perlman's suggestion that NAAP discard its own standards in favor of those of the Consortium and CIPS, and he likened our current controversies to "having a boxing match on the Titanic." He challenged the assumptions behind the call for more diversity from Warren Procci, noting that NAAP has always trained candidates who are ethnically, racially, and sexually diverse, as well as candidates with backgrounds in the arts, social sciences, business, the humanities, and other disciplines. He "What is psychoanalysis?" That question was asked several times on Saturday, the first day of a two-day December conference on the future of psychoanalytic education. It was asked in two panel discussions following a keynote address by Jürgen Reeder, Ph.D., a member of the Swedish Psychoanalytical Association and Associate Professor at the University of Stockholm, Sweden. In his address, Dr. Reeder stated that the spirit of psychoanalysis is ethos, which contains all the theories, ideas, and practices that characterize psychoanalysis. "It is what psychoanalysis is all about," he said. Thus, he opened the door to explore the true meaning of psychoanalysis with all its changes in our modern world.

The question was asked at the first panel discussion that followed the keynote address on Saturday morning. The discussion was titled *Educating Psychoanalysts in Today's Regulated World: Licensing and Other Matters*. The question was asked again during the second panel discussion under the title *What Do We Educate For? The Role of Psychoanalysis in the Age of Psychotherapy*. The speakers of both panels agreed that psychoanalysis is a valuable gift to our culture that should definitely be accepted as a science and is more than ever necessary in our uncertain times. However, it was not until the third panel discussion *Constructing Our Psychoanalytic Ethos: How and What We Teach* that an answer to the question "What is psychoanalysis?" became clear. The answer was right in plain sight from the moment everyone in the audience was welcomed to the conference by Jane Hall of the New York Freudian Society, who cochaired the conference with Arnold Richards of the New York Psychoanalytic Society. Before introducing the keynote speaker, Hall had everyone in the audience reach out to someone they didn't know. "Think how the world might be if everyone truly listened to each other," she said. Then she added, "Take one idea away with you."

This reporter took away a definition of psychoanalysis that is a summation of what this conference was about. Psychoanalysis is a kind of education in which a person chooses to find out who they are so they can master emotional conflicts that prevent them from realizing their full potential in life. How a person in psychoanalysis chooses to do this, with whom, and for how long, is up to the individual because, in the end, we are all responsible for our own education.

He noted that most NAAP institutes train candidates in several different theoretical orientations and

eschewed a training analyst system that consolidates power in elite. Finally, Mr. Maxwell emphasized that NAAP has no agenda to achieve licensing laws except when its members' right to practice psychoanalysis and psychotherapy is under threat.

Nancy McWilliams, President of Division 39 of APA, concluded this conference by commenting on love and on her own falling-in-love with psychoanalysis as a passionate, radical movement.

When movements become institutionalized, however, they devolve into rigidity, inflexibility, and hierarchy, and tend to quash enthusiasm. She pointed to the insider/outsider theme running through the conference and spoke about her own experience in that context. She advised against pathologizing outsiders and argued that an emphasis on "standards" can mask differences in educational philosophy that are not necessarily differences in value. Finally, Dr. McWilliams urged attendees to respect candidates' accounts of what they need, and to be openly fallible so that candidates can identify with our real professional selves rather than with idealizations. She ended by saying: "Without the next generation, we will all starve for what we fell in love with so long ago."

The panel was greeted with a standing ovation, with many excellent comments and searching questions from the audience.

*Norman A. ("Drew") Clemens, M.D., is a candidate for President-Elect of APsaA; a Fellow and former candidate for Chair, Board on Professional Standards (BOPS) of APsaA; and Past-President of the Cleveland Psychoanalytic Center.*

*Judith Logue, Ph.D., is a Training Analyst at the Center for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy of NJ (CPPNJ); a Board Member of Division 39 (Psychoanalysis) of the American Psychological Association (APA); and a Member of Task Forces and Committees of the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA)*

*Estelle Shane, Ph.D., is Past President of the Association of Autonomous Psychoanalytic Institutes (AAPI); on the Clinical Faculty at UCLA Department of Psychiatry; a Training Analyst, Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis (ICP); and President, International Association of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology.*

© Norman A. Clemens, Judith Logue, Estelle Shane