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Introduction and Overview

The future of psychoanalytic education requires a greater clarity of its boundaries. Where is psychoanalysis in its evolution? What is psychoanalysis, and what is not psychoanalysis? How do new and old paradigms fit together, and how do they conflict? What should be kept, and what else is needed (i.e., preservation and innovation)? These were just some of the questions addressed at the third annual Future of Psychoanalytic Education Conference. This highly interactive event was a partnership of over 18 psychoanalytic institutes that focused on long-standing and contemporary challenges confronting psychoanalytic training. Needless to say, this diverse group came up with a variety of opinions and solutions. If one chooses to define the success of an event as an individual’s expressed wish for more, then the conference met the criterion, as many participants vocalized the desire, even urgency, to take the conference findings to the next level. Some steps have already been taken, both with the posting of the conference audio tapes on www.internationalpsychoanalysis.net and with this summary report of the meeting. Most important, however, is the content of the discussion that took place. This dialogue included concerns from the different points of view represented, as well as from the many stakeholders involved (e.g., the public, candidates, faculty); all focused on the need to enhance the profession.

The conference was structured with a morning session of three keynote speakers (Henry J. Friedman, MD, Theodore J. Jacobs, MD, and Paola Mieli, PhD) and a discussant (Kenneth Eisold, PhD). Jane S. Hall, LCSW, FIPA, welcomed the attendees, highlighting the mission of the Future of Psychoanalytic Education series, namely, to help rescue the “dysfunctional psychoanalytic family” from the “hubris” to which it frequently succumbs. Friedman and Jacobs critically assessed the training system, outlining dilemmas common to most institute training (e.g., required compliance, loss of ingenuity). Meanwhile, Mieli critiqued the broader political compromises in the U.S., which continue to impinge negatively on offering competent psychoanalytic training.

The two afternoon roundtables engaged the panelists and the audience in a discussion around the topics of changes in theory and the clinical practice of psychoanalysis. These discussions were moderated by Jonathan House, MD, and Arlene Kramer Richards, EdD, respectively. Each panel had candidate, practitioner and faculty representation. In addition to discussion of the morning’s themes, the panelists also added new and provocative questions: Is the difference between psychotherapy and psychoanalysis critical to our curricula? What is the role of research and hermeneutic traditions? How do candidates recognize their inherent power in shaping the curriculum?
The closing discussion by James L. Fosshage, PhD, PA, reflected on how extraordinarily different our perspectives are. Bringing back the morning speakers for a Q & A session with the audience, he underscored the participants’ hope and resolve for change.

The final remarks by Arnold D. Richards, MD, reminded the group that change is not only necessary but possible.

**Introduction: Jane Hall**

Jane Hall, an analyst from New York and the meeting’s principal organizer, opened the conference by reviewing its mission of ecumenicalism: to help mend the splits that provide the context for our current “dysfunctional psychoanalytic family.” These splits began with Freud and the early pioneer dissenters. Among these early dissenters was A.A. Brill, who, against Freud’s wishes, began a long practice of medical exclusionary practices in the U.S. After nearly 90 years of development, we see a diverse family tree that includes Horneyians, Kohutians, Lacanians, Bionians, Kleinians, and numerous Freudian branches.

She emphasized that respecting one another is the critical element in mending these splits. “Hubris,” Hall noted, “is this field’s biggest enemy.” Recognizing each individual’s complexity allows us to recognize the contributions of every theory and begin to appreciate other perspectives. She encouraged participants to attend meetings “outside his or her particular theoretical home” as a means of fostering this respect. This form of open-mindedness is what is needed to keep psychoanalysis alive and well.

Hall then introduced the keynote speakers: Henry J. Friedman from Boston, Theodore J. Jacobs from New York, and Paola Mieli from Après Coup. Kenneth Eisold from New York was the keynote panel’s discussant.

**Keynote Speaker: Henry J. Friedman**

In addressing the broad and loosely defined task of psychoanalytic education, Friedman was hopeful about the future of psychoanalysis as a clinical entity but only with important educational reforms. He noted that while clinical psychoanalysis may be vital in practice, it is misunderstood by the media, the public, academia and the broader community of therapists, all of whom rely on outdated versions for their understanding. Ensuring the future, however, would require addressing pitfalls in the training practices common to most institutes, irrespective of theoretical orientation. Cognizant of how threatening it can be to call basic assumptions into question, Friedman warned that not examining these beliefs posed a far greater danger.

He began his assessment of these beliefs by defining the changing needs of patients, which call for technical modification. For example, as patients seek responsive and forthcoming therapists, aspects of the technical foundation, such as abstinence of transference gratification and neutrality towards all characteristics of the patient’s conflicts, have proved alienating. The ideal of the warm and emotionally alive therapist, who is able to provide both effective advice and interpretations, seems less easily attainable to those who subscribe to usual training methodology. Holding onto the older practices, in the face of this conflict, has only weakened
Next, Friedman asked if all candidates should be required to be in analysis with a training analyst (“TA”). The TA system, he noted, has an inherently destructive dynamic. One characteristic of this dynamic promotes the myth that the TA is a superior analyst. This conjecture lacks evidence. Another aspect of this destructive dynamic is a selection bias that favors those analysts who “fit in” and opposes those who do not. This selection bias promotes compliance, misguided loyalty, and partisanship. It also severely limits creativity and intellectual freedom. The danger to all schools of psychoanalytic training is that a selection bias, from candidate through TA, leads to irrational certainty and dedication to theory, producing a clinical practice that has “little regard to the patient’s experience of his or her own reality.” Friedman noted, "The analytic stance ... has been failing with increasing numbers of patients who want something more than interpretations from an aloof-seeming interpreter of their reality."

These underlying destructive characteristics have also introduced a restrictive flaw in the broader profession’s ability to change. Friedman suggested that this finding is supported by the observation that Kleinian TAs produce Kleinian analysts, contemporary conflict TAs produce conflict analysts and self psychological TAs produce self psychologists. The nature of these loyalties leaves the profession besieged by turf wars that further diminish psychoanalysis in public opinion. Some of Friedman’s assertions find support from Rangell (1982, 2004, 2005), Mosher (2006) and Mosher & Richards (2005). The challenge for psychoanalytic education is to develop a curriculum that is clinically relevant and technically free of antiquated rules that constrict the role of the analyst.

In spite of these didactic problems, Friedman stated his belief that psychoanalysis will be part of the future simply because it places such a strong emphasis on the individual patient’s suffering. Friedman asked if there is something in psychoanalysis that transcends its various schools. He closed with a quote that captured his message: “If … we educate candidates who are dedicated to helping patients using a range of tools, technical, theoretical as well as non-theoretical, we will be able to continue to be, as they say on CNN, the ‘best therapeutic team’ in the world.”

**Keynote Speaker: Theodore J. Jacobs**

Jacobs began his paper with a brief review of the new model for psychoanalytic education being used in Atlanta, based on the university model. This model includes a comprehensive curriculum with participation from the neurosciences, sociology, anthropology, and other related fields. The impetus for the model was the declining status of psychoanalysis, as well as the need to share with and stay connected to allied disciplines. Jacobs credited Steven T. Levy with the development of this version of the psychoanalytic university. Many other versions of this model have been presented over the years, beginning with Freud’s (1926 [1959]) calling for a "college of psychoanalysis” (p. 246).

In an evaluation of the state of analytic education, Jacobs noted that most graduates are well-informed about the field of psychoanalysis and fortified with a reliable methodology. He
agreed with those who call for broadening the scope to include different modalities (e.g., applying analytic principles to couples, group, and family therapy) and a wider variety of difficulties (e.g., severe pathologies, addictions, and those whose character was formed in the grips of poverty). The problem, he noted, is that psychoanalysis has lost something vital, even essential – “We have lost a spirit of inquiry … of the human mind.” This loss brings with it damage to “intellectual rigor, wide ranging curiosity, the desire to explore, to study, to learn and to debate one another's ideas and beliefs.” Jacobs noticed a very real difference between his teachers (e.g., Ernst and Marianne Kris, Loewenstein, Hartmann, Lewin, Jacobson, A. Reich and Stone) and too many students today. He offered, as an example, the current approach to seeking out the transference as if all therapeutic gains were totally dependent on these interpretations. Dependence on this narrow point of view not only warps the listening process, it also restricts communication to the patient and, hence, the patient’s experience. This tendency for repetitive and thoughtless application of a method presents a serious problem in analytic education, limiting the creativity necessary to keep the field alive and vital.

Echoing Joyce McDougal, Jacobs noted that it takes years to grow out of our experiences as students and establish independent judgment. The personal challenge confronting every practitioner is in resolving the ongoing transferences to his or her “analysts, teachers, supervisors, and institute belief systems.” But even with this challenge met, the field remains at risk when the joy of learning or discovery is absent.

To address this deficiency, Jacobs advised a reconsideration of not only the teaching but also the attitudes, values and spirit being conveyed. He suggested that everyone who teaches should undergo one or more year’s preparation in pedagogy and supervision. Likewise, students should read more broadly and write about their patients in a way that locates them and their treatment within the wide framework of psychoanalytic history. We need to return to an educational approach that is committed to conveying knowledge, i.e., toward a genuine university model.

**Keynote Speaker: Paola Mieli**

Using The Psychoanalytic Consortium's \(^1\) "standards of psychoanalytic education" as well as its Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic Education (ACPE) as the backdrop for her discussion, Mieli critiqued their approach as insufficient. She acknowledged the rightful concern and ethical duty that psychoanalysts share with regard to the best possible transmission of psychoanalysis to prepare candidates, treat patients and promote analytic discourse. Psychoanalysts must vouch for professional quality. This task, however, has always been provided by psychoanalytic institutions, and Mieli wondered why we would now benefit from a consortium’s single set of standards, which has left its participants mostly dissatisfied. She noted: “… it appears crucial for us to join in this debate.” Her main critique was that the Consortium’s standards appear not to be analytical. She wondered how a monopoly on the regulation of analytic standards of training could be beneficial when it puts at risk the principles

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\(^1\) The Psychoanalytic Consortium consists of four organizations: the American Psychoanalytic Association, the American Academy of Psychoanalysis, the National Membership Committee on Psychoanalysis in Clinical Social Work, and Division 39 of the American Psychological Association.
of both psychoanalysis and democracy.

Miiele argued that psychoanalysis in the U.S. has positioned itself as a branch of medicine, adopting a traditional U.S. psychotherapy training model, which prioritizes educational eligibility (level and type of education) and personal suitability over the candidate’s personal analysis. This approach is contradictory to the process of the formation of the psychoanalyst and puts the candidate in training at risk for the calamitous outcomes of the institutional re-enforcement of symptoms and personal conformity.

Further, she noted, the Consortium’s definition of psychoanalysis, in stark contrast with Freud’s own notion of science, relies on a mental health ideology for understanding. Freud built upon theoretical models as temporary working models subject to refutation. Differing from Freud’s view (i.e., that a symptom is a compromise formation conveying a subjective truth), the Consortium is driven by the ideas of adaptation, symptom relief, and assimilation. The Consortium considers a symptom to be the sign of a mental “disorder.” Psychoanalysis distinguishes itself from other therapies in that its principal aim is not symptom relief. Through understanding and handling of the transference, psychoanalysis aims at overcoming the subject’s resistances, which are grounded on a specific libidinal economy and not at “suppressing the symptoms” (Freud 1926, p. 225). She stated that analysis is a process of discovery and novelty. Every case is unique, an “exception,” that cannot be reduced to the generality of a diagnostic category. The process of analysis is specifically characterized by the unfolding of events within the transference, generating subjective transformations independently from the subject’s awareness. If “understanding” takes place at all, Mieli notes, it is as a result of this experience. Psychoanalysis as a process is characterized more by emotions, affects and surprises than by intellectual awareness. She noted, “The transformation of the subjective position brought about by the end of an analysis leads more to a savoir faire, a know-how to handle life, than to any intellectual understanding.”

Mieli emphasized her point that psychoanalysis is a practice of de-identification that enhances the relationship to difference, not conformity. It is a “practice of exile,” a passage from the security of the known towards the insecurity of the unknown. There is no way to cut short the process of analysis. The proposed process outlined by the Consortium not only lacks rigor, but worse, fosters group identification and excludes differences.

Mieli ended her presentation with a review of Freud’s college of psychoanalysis model, which invites participants to take an active role and engage in forms of intellectual production, rather than being merely passive recipients of knowledge. She said, “The coming into being of an analyst as the result of an analysis can then be seen as only a first major step into a universe of learning that will accompany him or her throughout life.”

Discussant: Kenneth Eisold

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2 “Psychoanalysis is a specific form of individual psychotherapy that aims to bring unconscious mental elements and processes into awareness in order to expand an individual’s self-understanding, enhance adaptation in multiple spheres of functioning, alleviate symptoms of mental disorders, and facilitate character change and emotional growth” (Accreditation Council for Psychoanalytic Education at: http://www.acpeinc.org/standards.htm).
Eisold offered a clear and concise review of the panelists’ presentations, categorizing Friedman and Jacobs as providing liberal critiques of dilemmas faced by institutes (e.g., conformity, inhibition of creativity), while Mieli represented a more radical critique that indicated that psychoanalysis has gone “way off track.” Eisold found the propositions offered by Friedman and Jacobs both relevant and useful yet difficult to implement and possibly insufficient to resolve the problems. Mieli, Eisold noted, had Freud on her side when she called for a return of the profession as a “calling.” Freud, through the 1920s and 1930s, warned against psychoanalysis becoming part of medicine, especially psychiatry. In the U.S., Brill led the battle against Freud’s view of lay analysis, and medicine won the day but only to face a long decline. Eisold viewed Mieli’s suggestion as admirable yet unsustainable, most likely alienating the public even further. Eisold ended with a series of reflections: “Might we want to reconsider our role within medicine? Would it make sense to establish parallel or separate professional organizations and training institutes: medical and non-medical?”

Following audience participation, Eisold closed the morning session by observing: “If you really invite the whole diversity of the psychoanalytic world to come, maybe they will. And there will be a lot of conflict, there will be a lot of self-promotion, there will be a lot of competition. But it will be a lot of what is really there. That is a welcomed development, I think.”

**Roundtable Discussion #1: Changes in Theory and Clinical Practice of Psychoanalysis**

**Moderator:** Jonathan House

**Discussants:** Muriel Dimen, PhD, faculty, NYU Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis; Anne Erreich, PhD, faculty, The Psychoanalytic Institute affiliated with NYU School of Medicine; Craig Solomon, MSW, candidate, Institute for the Psychoanalytic Study of Subjectivity; Matthew von Unwerth, candidate, Institute for Psychoanalytic Training and Research, Nancy Wolf, MSW, faculty, New York Freudian Society, and Arnold Zinman, PhD, faculty Westchester Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy.

**Reference Quote:** “Psycho-Analysis is the name of a procedure for the investigation of mental processes which are almost inaccessible in any other way, of a method (based upon that investigation) for the treatment of neurotic disorders and of a collection of psychological information obtained along those lines, which is gradually being accumulated into a new scientific discipline” (Freud 1923).

**Questions for Discussants:**

**1st Topic: Concepts Central to Psychoanalysis**

Which, if any, of the following concepts should be taught as central to psychoanalysis: 1. Repression, 2. Sexuality? Additionally, what other concepts should be central to teaching psychoanalytic metapsychology?
2nd Topic: Psychoanalysis & Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy
Is there a difference? If there is an important difference, is there a "natural" tendency toward "slippage, that is, toward doing psychoanalytic psychotherapy while believing oneself to be doing psychoanalysis?

3rd Topic: Free Association and Dream Interpretation
Are they central? What emphasis should be given to each in our teaching of theory of technique and clinical work?

Arnold Zinman began the discussion on the concepts thought to be central to psychoanalysis. He considered the following three concepts as central to psychoanalytic change: psychic determinism, the therapeutic relationship, and resistance. These analytic functions promote and increase integration and flexibility through making the unconscious conscious. Zinman focused his remaining discussion on the concepts of the relationship and resistance.

Each psychoanalytic school offers a rich history of ideas, valuing the relationship and its place in therapeutic change. Zinman provided brief examples from a diversity of schools to illustrate what the relationship involves. Some of these ideas are compatible, while others are contradictory. Zinman wondered how to introduce and teach these ideas such that the candidate could choose and experiment.

This same complexity arose with the other central concept of resistance. Some analysts, Zinman pointed out, used violations of the fundamental rule as the quintessential example of resistance. Zinman saw the concept of resistance as fundamental to all psychoanalysis, even if not explicitly defined. To specify a particular act as resistance is to lose an appreciation for the total human being and to minimize the more encompassing meaning of this concept—its ubiquity in every action, thought and feeling. Consequently, this concept needs to be taught as a fundamental feature of psychoanalytic education and must be explored from the vantage point of each theory.

Consistent with Friedman (1988), Zinman argued that all basic concepts should be explored, compared and contrasted across theories. Thus, he suggested that a series of courses could be designed to introduce each one of the major schools of thought, while another series might consider key concepts across the disparate schools. Friedman, he noted, captured this idea: “To get the real value of the comparison, all models must be drawn into one, continuous critical discussion” (1988, p. 548).

Nancy Wolf distinguished between types of pathology and one’s model of pathology as yet another dimension of this question (i.e., which concepts are central to psychoanalysis). If the

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3 Examples given included: rapport; the transference itself; attachment; sympathetic understanding; the curative role played by the affective relationship; giving care or friendly hugs; management of regression; management of the earliest stages of infantile development grounded within the dyadic mother-child matrix; based on mature, secondary-process, logical, and consciously directed ego functioning; the non-transference relationship; the absence of condemnation or judgment; a new, "corrective" relationship; experiences of mirroring and idealizing; reaching higher levels of ego organization via new integrative experiences; the medium (the relationship) is the message (the interpreted content).
clinician is working with a patient who functions concretely, by “evacuating” rather than “repressing and symbolizing,” he or she is working in a different clinical terrain. Psychoanalysis has broadened its scope to include treatment of patients with more primitive disorders. To have repression and sexuality as central constructs would mean that there is a whole realm of people who would not be treated or would be misunderstood by clinicians. If someone is in the process of evacuating something and it is mistaken for a form of free association, then the clinician would not be affectively connected to what the patient is talking about. In this case, free association and the concept of repression do not fit. To these concepts, Wolf added splitting and attacks on linking (Bion 1959).

Matthew von Unwerth noted that the first dilemma a candidate faces is the variety of viewpoints within curricula. Typically, candidates begin with a limited concept of psychoanalysis. Their initial task is to make sense of this complex theoretical and clinical discourse, while simultaneously trying to be helpful to their patients. Von Unwerth noted that it takes a long time for candidates to make decisions for themselves about what makes clinical sense. For von Unwerth, the basis of psychoanalytic education is aimed at getting candidates to think of concepts central to psychoanalysis, such as transference, and to explore why these issues are important, how they are clinically useful, and how they assist in creating an analytic process.

Craig Solomon recounted the case of a patient who characteristically reacted angrily whenever Solomon remembered something incorrectly. However, during one of these angry outbursts, Solomon understood something different about how “this man organized his experience, how he put his world together.” He was able to communicate this new understanding to the patient, which seemed to provide relief. After presenting the case in his supervisory group he was asked, “But where did the anger go?” It occurred to Solomon that there were an inordinate number of assumptions imbedded in the question. He concluded that when concepts are taught without grounding in clinical experience, they are devoid of any meaningful content.

Jonathan House asked Solomon what theory of mind he would use to discuss the clinical phenomena. Solomon responded: “I am thinking of getting at the patient's theory of mind, or our theory of the patient's mind. This is what we are trying to pursue. This is what grounds my thinking. Two people trying to understand a single mind.”

House next turned to the audience for their responses.

Irwin Z. Hoffman, PhD, noted that to teach the concepts as they had been discussed in the panel would be misleading. Repression and resistance, he felt, did not seem at all central to theory. Many approaches that emphasize the impact of defective self objects and developmental experiences, he thought, trumped the drives. Hoffman also warned that there is a danger in too narrowly defining psychoanalysis in a way that excludes important experiences coming in from clinical work.

He suggested that a better organizing principle for governing any discussion among colleagues with significant differences of opinion would highlight that “what psychoanalysis has to teach is that experience is ambiguous and open to multiple interpretations and multiple ways
of organizing it.” This experience is open to interpretation, and the meanings have to be constructed. Positivism, he noted, failed in psychoanalytic theories and has been replaced with a hermeneutic attitude that allows people to “consider how something means something other than the thing that they are fixed on.” Here the task is substituting a constructivist point of view for a positivistic one.

For Mark R. Stafford, MA, psychoanalysis has become quite narrow and complacent in the use of the word “concept,” such that everyone seems to agree upon what it means. It might be valuable, he suggested, to introduce how other disciplines, such as physics, philosophy, art and anthropology, differ in their understanding of the term “concept” and to see whether a discourse could develop that shows specifically what a concept is in the practice of psychoanalysis. We might find that some of the terms of our working vocabulary do not quite have the status of “concept” as it would be understood by many other thinkers of human experience. In Après Coup, the notion of the philosophical concept is delineated very differently than the notion of a psychoanalytic concept. Here, a psychoanalytic concept is a continuation of Freud’s elaboration that it is a work in progress, used to understand more fully new clinical material and to refine technique.

At this point, the moderator asked the panel participants to address the other topics they had been asked to consider. The second topic was “Psychoanalysis & Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy: Is there a difference?”

Anne Erreich began with the proposition that the answers to all of the questions presented to this panel depended entirely upon the panelists’ choice of metapsychology. Based on one’s theory of mind comes a theory of technique that determines what concepts are important to teach candidates.

She then outlined a series of her own assumptions: that “needs” from the beginning of life are sometimes met and sometimes frustrated; that from the beginning, “wishes” come up against the limitations, prohibitions and frustrations of the environment; that solutions are developed to some of the conflicts encountered in life; that the course of development has to do with finding relationships that make one feel whole, safe and secure early on; that these feelings get overlaid with more frankly sexual feelings later on; and that the mind is such that these narratives get overlaid, one on top of the other, with none lost. These narratives then help determine what is essential in a theory of technique, e.g., it defines the method of helping people discover their own relational narratives to needed, loved, and feared others in their world. Technique, then, would strive to create an awareness of how the patient uses these narratives to organize and behave in the world. Erreich noted that, within this theoretical framework, the important constructs to teach include unconscious fantasy, wish-defense configurations, and transference and countertransference enactments. She also noted that, if one sees the mind and development as operating differently, then a different set of constructs may become operable, leading to a whole set of different treatment conditions.

Von Unwerth noted that the difference between psychodynamic psychotherapy and psychoanalysis seems much less important to candidates. Candidates are much more concerned with what can be done to help the patient. The whole idea of technique, he thought, was to
transmit knowledge to the next generation. If there are meaningful differences between the technical aspects of psychotherapy versus psychoanalysis, he thought candidates could be trained in both. He believed that “no one has made a coherent case in the literature for a distinction between the two.” More important, he did not think candidates cared that much about this distinction. Solomon echoed these sentiments.

Zinman responded from a different vantage point. He asked how we know what is psychoanalysis and what is psychotherapy. Recent research on long-term psychoanalytically-oriented psychotherapy had two relevant findings: 1) the more times per week someone went to the therapist, the better the outcome; and 2) the better outcome was not tied to how long the person was in treatment. It is fundamental to our understanding of psychoanalysis that we do research and build evidence-based knowledge. Every institute, he proposed, should have a research component.

**Roundtable Discussion #2:**

**Changes in Theory and Clinical Practice of Psychoanalysis**

**Moderator:** Arlene Kramer Richards

**Discussants:** Pam Donleavy, JD, faculty, C.G. Jung Institute – Boston; Giselle Galdi, PhD, faculty, American Institute for Psychoanalysis; Samuel Herschkowitz, MD, faculty, The Psychoanalytic Institute affiliated with NYU School of Medicine; Michael P. O'Loughlin, MA, LP, candidate, National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis; Lisa Samstag, PhD, candidate, William Alanson White Institute; Caryn Sherman-Myer, MSW, faculty, National Institute for the Psychotherapies; and Jane Snyder, PhD, faculty, Boston Graduate School of Psychoanalysis.

**Questions Posed to the Discussants:**

- How is the emergence of multiple psychoanalytic theories and developments in related fields (for example, cognitive science, neuroscience, and infant and attachment research) influencing the training and formation of a psychoanalyst?

- What are your recommendations for changing psychoanalytic education (for example, curricula, supervisory and control case requirements, and personal analysis)?

Arlene Kramer Richards opened the second panel with the following brief vignette:

*Early in our careers, I and a group of psychologists who were not allowed to attend the medical American Psychoanalytic Association institutes at the time arranged for our own psychoanalytic education. We each chose our own analysts and our own supervisors, and, as a group, we hired teachers for our seminars. The most eminent analysts, supervisors, and teachers were happy to work with us. Because we had our analyses, supervision, and course work with analysts who were responsible only to us and not to any institution, we felt entitled to ask...*
any questions, no matter how elementary, challenge any shibboleths, no matter how sure others were of their unassailability, and disagree with any experts. I think we learned a great deal from the experience of taking responsibility for our own education. In the end, we took longer than any institution would dare to ask of its candidates, only about a third of us became IPA members and only a few of those training analysts, but we all enjoyed a collegial and empowering education. I enjoyed a sense of power over my education that I believe other people could have within the institutes now.

Today, Kramer Richards noted, candidates can consider themselves to be the future of psychoanalysis and should try to mold their teachers and supervisors to respond to their needs and their experiences in a similar way. They can ask for the freedom to choose ways of learning that fit them, such as tutorials on working with certain kinds of patients, taking courses at other institutes, organizing courses in how to involve patients in analytic work, or when to recommend other forms of treatment.

Caryn Sherman-Myer stressed the importance not only of theoretical diversity, but of creating a dialogue among those advocating the disparate theories. Students, she thought, should be encouraged to be interested in a multi-theoretical framework. They should be given the opportunity to study and debate the various beliefs about psychoanalysis. By breaking away from traditional models of psychoanalytic training (which rely on specific faculty, supervisors and training analysts), one can model an ecumenical approach to psychoanalysis consistent with different models suited to different patient populations with different needs.

Lisa Samstag, in a dissenting opinion, found real value in the more traditional training model, the Eitingon tripartite model. One of the strengths this model offered, she remarked, was the milieu in which one’s thinking evolved as ideas come together in the clinical experience from classes, supervision and personal analysis. This strength, she thought, could be enhanced by taking courses at other psychoanalytic institutes and creating a dialogue on the candidate level. Another enhancement, she suggested, would be adding to the curriculum research courses that are critical at this time. Research should be aimed not necessarily at validating constructs but at enhancing the process of inquiry, looking at what patients and analysts actually do in analysis, i.e., approximating a self-study.

Jane Snyder agreed with the critical need for research. In addition, she emphasized the process of the “emotional education” of the analyst as critical. The candidate should be encouraged to experience, in treatment, the diversity of individuals with moderate to severe psychopathology who seek help. “Emotional education” goes beyond one's personal analysis and supervision. It is further explored in the classroom and goes beyond what is offered in the traditional model of training.

Pam Donleavy noted that, from a Jungian perspective, one’s technique depended on who is walking into the consultation room. Some patients need the sensitivities of a different model because of their difficulties. She and her colleagues have become more interested in neuroscience and how these additional different models facilitate understanding changes in the
brain. Here she noted that methodology, which changes with the models, offers a broad and essential resource of interventions, often critical for patients with specific needs (e.g., eye contact; drawings and other activities external to the clinical hour; interaction on an emotional level).

Samuel Herschkowitz highlighted a fundamental issue that had not been addressed, namely, the endpoint of a candidate’s training. He asked whether we are offering an apprenticeship-like model, or do we have a model of scholarship? Clearly, some institutes privilege or lean more heavily in one direction or the other. He wondered how institutes display all the material that is being taught. Does one take a horizontal or a vertical approach? For instance, he offered, material can be taught across the board, from early Freud through relational and intersubjective theory, which is organized around a clinical vignette. This would be an attempt at a horizontal approach. Or, the material can be taught more vertically. Here one provides a foundation, teaching historically and theoretically, building on that foundation more as the changes in psychoanalysis branch out. The emphasis has to be on the thought of how one teaches and what outcomes one is trying to achieve. Once this has been decided, the next issue is to determine who is doing the teaching. Some teachers are charismatic and possess a riveting style. Others teach exciting material in a dull and boring manner (this also applies to supervision). It is important for psychoanalytic institutes to recognize the important impact these dimensions have on their candidates and curriculum design.

Giselle Galdi emphasized how important it is to understand our particular history in order to appreciate what institutes offer. Karen Horney, for example, was an essential figure in the operations of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute until the Nazi takeover of power in Germany. She left there in 1939 to join Franz Alexander at the Chicago Institute, where she became the institute’s Secretary. She brought these influences to the American Institute for Psychoanalysis, which, like so many other programs, is operating on the Eitington model. Like many institutes, the AIP has changed with time, progress and cultural shifts. For example, initially Horney vetoed non-medical professionals from training, which led to the loss of prominent analysts like Erik Fromm, Clara Thompson and Harry Stack Sullivan.

Galdi also spoke of the educational process as bidirectional in terms of both teaching and learning. In terms of how learning occurs, there is the notion of unconscious communication, which has bidirectionality and differs from the Eitington hierarchal model, where knowledge trickles down from the top. She wondered what the optimal conditions are for learning, and whether they change with candidates.

Michael O’Loughlin followed up on Galdi’s point, noting that he was concerned about the infantilization of candidates that often leads to alienation and isolation and disrupts the sense of dyadic involvement. Coming from “academic history,” there were times he felt that what he had to offer was negated. This experience led to a course of action that eventuated in his institute’s developing efforts to reach out to students who appeared alienated and to bring them back into the educational progression. This process, he noted, made a radical difference in the way students experienced their training, and how, in the end, they perceived themselves as a psychoanalyst, supervisor, faculty and training analyst.
Sherman-Myer noted that this point has a greater urgency in New York State with the legislative passage of licensure requirements for a practicing psychoanalyst. Now, many individuals are involved in training with no mental health background, yet come from a wide diversity of educational and life experience. Much can be learned from these candidates. Often fueled by their own analyses, these individuals bring a certain zeal and vitality that enrich and excite the educational process. This excitement, she believed, has been dormant in our educational system.

Kramer Richards interjected that this hierarchal difficulty, which leaves students in some way less respected than the teachers, is a turning around of the original model of education. The earliest universities were groups of students who hired a professor to teach. As mentioned, she and her colleagues adopted this model for their training. It becomes imperative that students respect themselves as students and see educators as people hired to help them develop. If they can make this shift in their self-perception, they may feel more empowered about their education.

Herschkowitz advocated for an integrative approach to learning, rather than teaching reified concepts that may or may not be connected. He offered as an example that, when teaching something about character organization, one wants a technical course linked with the course on character organization, linked again to a third course on case conference. This is a much more interesting way of teaching and learning.

Samstag referred to an earlier point made by Kenneth Eisold, describing the process of change in our institutes as “calcified.” She was uncertain about the effort it would take to implement some of these very important ideas about change. Sherman-Myer, following Samstag, wondered how we could operationalize what had been outlined at the conference. She felt it was important to try to actualize the findings and generate change so we would not be faced with the same kinds of concerns and experiences in ten years. From the audience, Jane Hall noted that one inherent problem was the competition among institutes, which exists at many levels. She questioned if we could overcome this competition by sharing not only our curricula but also our ideas.

From the audience, Arnold Richards noted that the conference was recorded and would be posted on the internationalpsychoanalysis.net website. All attendees and others would be able to access the recordings. He observed, “This can lead to a dialogue between what has happened here today and what is happening at your institutes and the psychoanalytic world at large. We have to start the dialogue, define some of the issues, and get people to participate.”

During the audience question and answer period, Irwin Z. Hoffman said he had been thinking about another theme and hoped for a conversation on a broader level with respect to the nature of psychoanalysis and what kind of discipline it is. He posed the following question: Do we locate psychoanalysis as science or as a hermeneutics? He wondered how many of the attendees were familiar with the works of thinkers like Habermas, Taylor or Foucault. He believed that this line of thought would help generate discussions that interrogate the premises of the things we take for granted, such as whether it is good to do research on the psychoanalytic process or to add research courses to our curricula. It is almost politically incorrect to object to these notions but, he noted, there are a lot of substantive and important arguments against the
premise of research. He stated, “I think a lot better time would be spent studying the philosophy of science and various other aspects of the overall context of that kind of work.”

Closing Discussion: James L. Fosshage

During the closing remarks, James Fosshage summed up the day with the following reflections. He noted how remarkably different we are and wondered what, if anything, was common ground in psychoanalysis. Yet, he noted, most of the panelists agreed that we are in what Balint called an "interpenetrating mix-up" from which something new emerges. This is true for psychoanalysis today and is echoed in the current conference participants’ expressed hope for change as well as sense of urgency for action.

Today’s conversation, he noted, can be contextualized by its recognition that the psychoanalytic world reflects a shift from a monolithic, authoritarian, objectivist outlook to a pluralistic, egalitarian, and constructivist one. What seemed essential to therapeutic action has swung from the “blank screen, neutrality, anonymity and objective interpretations to what many now speak of as constructivism, co-creation of transference and the analytic relationship, emotional engagement, collaborative exploration, and implicit as well as explicit learning.”

Fosshage noted that each of the morning’s speakers commented from their own particular context. Friedman and Jacobs addressed the ossification in theory and technique that profoundly affected the psychoanalytic education of candidates. Friedman described how we need to change our education of psychoanalysts to keep pace with patients’ needs and changing contexts. Jacobs asserted the importance of reintroducing the excitement of exploration in the spirit of inquiry in place of codified prescriptions of technique. Mieli argued that the prescribed standards of the Consortium and ACPE are fundamentally antithetical to psychoanalysis itself. She disputed the Consortium’s conclusions that the frequency of sessions be a prescribed standard for all and noted that all aspects of treatment must be tailored to the analysand’s needs. Frequency affects process but it does not define it as psychoanalytic. Fosshage, who urged the group to follow Mieli and discard the whole issue of frequency as a way to define psychoanalysis, noted: “Once we work psychoanalytically, we work analytically.”

These ecumenical conferences, Fosshage suggested, served as a forum where, through dialogue, we can support and challenge one another. While today’s conference focused on preservation and innovation, it highlighted that, in order to remain adaptively relevant, we need to promote innovation over preservation. Organized structures change slowly and affect institutes in different ways. While some institutes belong to the American Psychoanalytic Association and others are independent, both contain a blend of those parochially fixed on a particular school of thought and those who attempt to teach comparative models. The latter institutes are less encumbered by tradition and are freer to create and implement the new, cutting-edge developments in contemporary psychoanalysis.

4 Quoting Gill (1984), Fosshage reminded us: “It would seem obvious one can accomplish more with greater frequency simply because there is more time to work. But if greater frequency is frightening to a particular patient, frequent sessions may impede the work despite interpretation. One cannot simply assume that more is better. Yet the frequency of sessions remains as the most tradition bound immutable criterion used to differentiate psychoanalysis in psychoanalytic psychotherapy.”
Fosshage mentioned that the group had heard some very important challenges during the day’s event and posed these questions: How can we continue the dialogue beyond the current conference? How do we bring about change?

He then turned for a response from the speakers. Friedman pointed out that clinicians all work out of a specific theory and often forget that suggestion plays an enormous role in treatment. He recalled a point from Jerome Frank’s research on psychotherapy effectiveness and quoted that point: “It may be that the patients are accepting the interpretations from these various points of view because of something else that they get from the treatment relationship.” Many analysts believe that success is due to their theory. Friedman noted that success is often because patients will comply with a great deal in order to get something else out of the treatment relationship. In his work, he attempts to focus on the “something else.” What is important to Friedman is the effect of helping someone to feel whole and cohesive and to function better in his or her life and in his or her emotional experience. Friedman had no doubt that people obtain that from a variety of approaches and noted that “it may well be time that we stop the turf wars.”

David Lichtenstein, PhD, (sitting in for Paola Mieli) noted that, at these kinds of conferences, we should allow ourselves the imagination of big ideas. When contrasting theories, what appears interesting is the kind of conversation that happens around the questions. What kinds of questions can we participate in, and do these questions and the ensuing conversation hold a real interest for us? What kinds of ideas get brought into play when this discussion occurs? This appears more important than whether one comes down on one side of a theory or another. Thinking about it in this way allows us to formulate positions about both points of view, which can genuinely be innovative. It is not trying to convince another that his/her ideas are wrong.

Finally, in looking at Mieli’s idea slightly differently, he thought we could affirm that there is a distinct clinical field of psychoanalysis that has its own philosophical, ethical and theoretical framework. It is not unrelated to the other mental health disciplines or to philosophy, linguistics or anthropology, but it is distinct. In devising and interrogating the best pedagogical approaches to psychoanalytic formation, one ought to remain true to that distinct ethical and theoretical base and allow it to exist as its own independent voice in relation to these other disciplines.

Eisold returned to the theme of change and how to bring change about in psychoanalytic institutes. The whole landscape of psychoanalytic training has become much more competitive but candidates often do not experience their actual power. He suggested that, if candidates could give voice to what they want to learn, then change might begin. Beyond that, competitive institutes might ask their students: “What do you really want to learn? What are the really interesting questions to you?” If we could develop a training program that was responsive to those interesting questions, Eisold thought, maybe students would be more inclined to apply to those programs. Even though it may seem like a transparent attempt to exploit the market and even though it may interfere with all sorts of standards and traditions, it might be a way to facilitate change. In that sense, Eisold concluded, our candidates are our real hope.
Fosshage offered three final comments. The first was a belief that we will find the answers in research and neuroscience. He noted that, whereas psychotherapy research is extremely complex due to the uniqueness of the individuals in that intersubjective field, we need research to broaden the way we think about things. Second, we need to think about both the big ideas as well as the nuts and bolts of our training. It seemed that there was a real change in the way people participated around the discussion of the big ideas and the discussion of the nuts and bolts of training. With the latter, there seemed to be unification. Participants came together because they are all involved in the education and training of psychoanalysts. Finally, taking a suggestion from the audience, we might form one committee to work on the issue of what psychoanalysis is and another to focus on research. Perhaps, the committees could come back next year to report on their findings.

Final Remarks: Arnold D. Richards

Richards closed the conference with some playful remarks. Because of their concision, they are presented in full:

Since Ted Jacobs is not here, I can correct his Yiddish. He referred to Henry Friedman as a “kuch ladel.” That’s wrong. It’s a “kuch leffel,” and a kuch leffel is a cooking spoon. And what a kuch leffel does literally is “stir the pot.” And with all due respect to Henry Friedman, I think that I am more of a pot stirrer then he is. In fact, I think I have spent the last 10 years stirring this psychoanalytic pot. This hasn’t been easy. I think the reason it is so difficult relates to what is going on in the field. The way I understand our field is using Fleck’s concept of “thought collective” and “thought style.” The field is a large thought collective with a certain commonality of approach beginning with Freud but bifurcating rather quickly in terms of Brill and Freud: Freud’s building and Brill’s commitment to medical training. But then, within each institute, there is a theoretical thought collective/thought style and organizational thought style. Some institutes have a single theoretical thought style but many organizational thought styles and the other way around. For example, NPAP has many theoretical approaches but a single organizational thought style, which is democratic and inclusive. APsaA, unfortunately, is the other way around. We have a conflict between more participation and less participation. Fleck noted that any person belonging to a thought collective feels the people of all the other collectives are incompetent. I think this reflects the way it is because a thought collective develops within an organization because of shared history and affiliation and connection and dinner parties and all the other activities that bring people together. This makes it very hard to bridge the divide between organizations or thought collectives. I think this is the challenge. How do we get organizations with different thought collectives to connect with each other, to talk to each other, to disagree with each other, and most importantly to work together with each other in regard to the common challenges that face our broader thought
collective – psychoanalysis? That is the spirit of this conference and hopefully we can continue in that vein. I think it is very necessary. This is the change we need. And I would say, “Yes we can.”

References


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