



Authority, Charisma and Analytic Education  
an essay in honor of Paul Roazen  
by Daniel Burston

Twenty years or so ago, when I was half my present age, I read a book that -- quite literally -- changed my life. It was Paul Roazen's Brother Animal (Roazen, 1968). By a fortunate coincidence, I had read Erich Fromm's book, Sigmund Freud's Mission: An Analysis of His Personality and Influence (Fromm, 1959), some weeks previously, and even now, I remember being struck by the strong convergence between Fromm and Roazen's perspectives. In conjunction with Henri Ellenberger's The Discovery of the Unconscious, which I read four years later, it was the conjoint influence of Fromm and Roazen that put me on my present path.

As the years passed, and I read Paul's other books, I continued to ponder the similarities between him and Fromm, and while researching Fromm's life in Mexico, was quite gratified to discover that unlike the vast majority of his contemporaries, Fromm had accorded Brother Animal a warm and enthusiastic reception, and had recommended it widely to friends and colleagues. Somewhat later, I was also gratified to learn that Roazen had read Sigmund Freud's Mission, and that even now, after all these years, he sees himself working in a heterodox historiographical tradition that Fromm started in this brief but illuminating rejoinder to Ernest Jones' highly selective "court biography".

I know I speak for many contemporary scholars when I say that Paul Roazen's work has repeatedly transformed our



understanding of Sigmund Freud and his disciples. In addition to reviving Tausk's memory and contributions, Roazen was the first one to draw attention to Freud's analysis of his daughter Anna, and to his curious and distasteful flirtation with Mussolini (via Eduardo Weismann). He was among the first to give Adler, Jung and Rank their due, and the first to disclose the truth about Jung and Toni Wolff. Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, he is the only psychoanalytic historian of note who really takes Erich Fromm's work seriously. And like Fromm, Paul has never wavered from his goal of celebrating Freud's genius without succumbing to pitfalls of Freud piety, as the hostile and dismissive rejoinders from the dwindling ranks of the orthodox attest. And though it strikes some people as odd, it is actually quite fitting that nowadays, when many Freud historians really *are* trying to discredit Freud, both humanly and scientifically, as Roazen was once accused of doing, it is frequently Paul who comes to Freud's defense.

In addition to being a prolific historian, Paul Roazen is a political theorist, and has written at length on the politics of psychoanalysis and the psychoanalysis of politics. The nature of authority, and the sources and meaning of obedience to and defiance of authority, are topics of timeless relevance to political discourse. Accordingly, I dedicate this essay to him, in acknowledgement of a debt I can never fully repay.

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Like most people, psychoanalysts tend to think of obedience to authority, or of defiance of authority, in one-dimensional and



psychologically impoverished ways. Though fraught with multiple meanings, which shift according to our personal and cultural scale of values, the concepts of authority, obedience and so on, are generally just taken for granted. To his credit, Erich Fromm distinguished between three different types of authority, which may co-exist in one and the same culture, or indeed, in one and the same person, and whose consequences for human development are exceedingly diverse. If Fromm was right, then respect for authority (or its opposite) means utterly different things depending on whether we are referring to *rational*, *irrational* or *anonymous* authority (Fromm, 1941, chapter 4, section 1; Fromm, 1947; Fromm, 1955).

Rational authority is a relationship between two or more people of *unequal* age, experience or status. For the sake of discussion, however, let us assume a dyadic situation, following Fromm's prototype of the teacher-student relationship. In this relationship, the teacher is authorized to set goals and standards that the student must strive to achieve. But rational authority aims at eventually abolishing differences in status, so that the two parties can relate as colleagues in the fullness of time. The achievement of equality presupposes effort, respect and discipline on the student's part. In order to master a skill or a body of learning, the pupil must follow the master's instructions, and practice diligently. Discipline entails a commitment, not to the teacher qua teacher, but to the craft or discipline, and the goal of becoming a gifted practitioner in one's own right. Ideally, the teacher derives satisfaction from the student's progress, because it confirms his knowledge and ability,



and because he does not feel threatened by the prospect of equality or by the student's originality. The friction of competing egos as a student reaches or exceeds the teacher's level is contained and diffused by a disinterested love of the craft that they both share.

Rational authority is based on competence, experience and the promise of equality. By contrast, *irrational* authority is designed to perpetuate or intensify conditions of inequality through the use of force, or the threat of force, and/or the use of deception and/or the manipulation of interpersonal relationships. The prototype for this, as Fromm observed, is the master-slave relationship, where the "discipline" demanded by irrational authority is really a form of bondage that benefits the authority himself. Though it is often disguised as benevolent paternalism, such authority is really motivated by greed, fear and/or the desire to dominate and humiliate others. Irrational authorities habitually distort the truth, and feel threatened by the prospect of equality, though they often enjoy a kind of sordid intimacy others, called sado-masochism or symbiosis, to alleviate loneliness or to achieve other ends. In this context, a subordinate's respect for authority entails a *lack* of respect for oneself, although this trait of character need not be conscious, particularly if it is accompanied by neurotic pride and/or compensatory tendencies to idealize the master. Conversely, defiance of irrational authority may be a healthy attempt to sunder the bonds of oppression that masquerade as paternalistic or disinterested care and guidance.

As Fromm noted in The Sane Society (1955) and again in The Art of Loving (1956), rational authority is similar to conditional or



fatherly love, and is as vital to the development of an alive and intact adult human being as is unconditional (or motherly) love. But just as motherly love can degenerate into overprotectiveness, infantilization, engulfment, and so on, so fatherly love can deteriorate into mere authoritarianism. In short, rational and irrational authority are the positive and negative, or life affirming and life diminishing aspects of the father principle -- or of the father archetype, if you prefer.

By virtue of their resemblance to paternal attitudes, and their cultural and psychological equivalents, rational and irrational authority engage those under them in a more or less personal manner. But unlike these modes of authority, where differences in power, knowledge and status are freely acknowledged, and sometimes rigidly insisted upon, *anonymous* authority occurs in groups of nominal equals, and is mediated by rumor, common sense, "public opinion" and the impersonal structures of bureaucratic roles and procedures.

Unlike irrational authority, however, anonymous authority is not backed up by overt demands, or by threats and coercion. Anonymous authority is sustained by rumor, suggestion and the participants' internal (and generally repressed) fears of the loss of status, and of ostracism or isolation from the group. As Fromm noted in Escape From Freedom:

"In external authority is clear that there is an order and who gives it; one can fight against the authority, and in this fight personal independence and moral courage develop. But whereas in internalized authority the command, though an internal one,



remains visible, in anonymous authority both command and commander have become invisible. It is like being fired at by an invisible enemy. There is nobody and nothing to fight back against (Fromm, 1941, p.190)".

According to Fromm, anonymous authority takes root as a widespread phenomenon in societies where, regardless of their actual ability, people must market themselves aggressively to avert failure and unemployment, and where the tendencies to abstraction, quantification and alienation accompanying the headlong advance of technology promote a consumeristic culture that palliates the inner emptiness occasioned by the progressive attenuation of core to core relationships with the promise of affluence, safety and various kinds of pseudo-identities.

Though no one is personally in charge here, (and though the real opinion-makers disclaim any special influence on others), the group functions as an anonymous censor, even though people are free to think or act independently -- in theory, anyway. To sustain the illusions of freedom, individualism, and equality that remain necessary to the functioning of the group, the gap between ideology and practice must be bridged by self-deception and rationalization, with a concomitant decline in the capacity for realism, honesty and self-awareness.

Respect for anonymous authority can take many forms. Among the traditional middle class, it makes a virtue of complacency and conformity, and an idol of respectability for respectability's sake. But like the middle class itself, this sensibility, though far from dead, is waning. Still common, however, is diffuse reliance on "the



experts", even in the absence of any real familiarity with them, their methods or findings, or indeed, of any real consensus among them, and a sort of mindless deference to prevailing opinion, and an insatiable appetite for gossip, and the kinds of voyeuristic entertainments that purport to inform their viewers.

Though he embellished on this theme in later works, Fromm first discussed anonymous authority in 1941, and noted that this, and not the fascist mentality, was the socially patterned defect characteristic of industrial democracies. While preferable to fascism, of course, it is a phenomenon that still compromises human integrity. One salient consideration is the way anonymous authority erodes our capacity to think critically. By critical thinking, Fromm did not mean intelligence as measured by I.Q. tests. On the contrary, according to Fromm, a person can be highly intelligent, I.Q.-wise, and still lack the ability to question or consider matters deeply, freed from conventional prejudices and beliefs. In fact, Fromm noted, highly intelligent people generally come up with cleverer reasons for distorting reality than less intelligent people do. Take a highly intelligent rocket scientist who worked for the Nazi regime, and did not question their ridiculous racial ideologies. Or the many intelligent and successful whites in South Africa who still support apartheid. Intelligence as such has nothing to do with the ability to reason critically. It may be a help or a hindrance. The first and primary prerequisite of critical reasoning is a willingness to question prevailing beliefs and practices, which requires emotional and intellectual independence, the courage of conviction and a willingness to court disapproval or punishment.



Fromm was not alone in his concerns. As Solomon Asch demonstrated immediately *after* World War II, anonymous authority among unrelated individuals really does erode the person's judgement. Asch wanted to determine what percentage of people in the general population were really capable of exercising independent judgement in 1948. Accordingly, he set up a situation where an experimental subject was invited to a room with ten others who were colluding with the experimenter, and asked to declare which of two lines on a graph was closer in length to a third line on the same graph. This was not a difficult call to make. One line was visibly closer to another in length, even for someone whose vision was slightly impaired. Nevertheless, Asch's confederates had been instructed beforehand to falsify their replies, and say that the other line was longer, and were called on to answer before the test subject was.

To the astonishment of Prof. Asch, 80%, or 4 out of 5, falsified their responses in keeping with the majority's perception of events. Only 20% -- or slightly less, as he later confided to me -- proved capable of defying the group consensus and stating the lengths of the lines accurately, and many of those who did disagree openly with the majority did so only with great difficulty. Since Asch's subjects were a representative sample of the American middle class, Asch reasoned that, consciously or unconsciously, the vast majority of middle Americans allowed their judgement to be biased by prevailing attitudes and perceptions, and were therefore incapable of exercising truly independent judgement. According to





his assessment, independent judgement, far from being normal or universal, is actually quite rare (Asch, 1950).

If Asch's experiments are any indication, the majority of "normal" people conform to the prevailing perceptions of their group, even when they are manifestly at variance with the immediate evidence of their senses. In effect, to avoid anxiety, they literally *take leave of their senses* rather than risk difference and isolation, even though many of them espouse an attitude of robust individualism. This is exactly what Fromm meant by anonymous authority.

Now, as Fromm freely acknowledged, rational, irrational and anonymous authority are typological fictions, and seldom encountered in pure form (Fromm, 1941, p. 188). So applying these schemata to history, society or clinical data in a naive or dogmatic way can do more harm than good.

Nevertheless, the effective predominance of certain modes of authority, said Fromm, is a clinically and empirically ascertainable trend, whether we are addressing (or being addressed by) individuals or institutions. The relative preponderance of rational, irrational and/or anonymous authority in our lives has an enormous influence over individual and social character, and the whole cultural dynamic of our time. If Fromm's intuitions are basically sound, despite the preceding caveats, it follows that the culture of psychoanalysis, its objectives and training methods, will be shaped by prevailing modes of authority, and will therefore benefit or suffer accordingly.



Before we look at contemporary psychoanalysis, however, let us review the history of the movement, its founder, and of some noteworthy historical trends that Fromm (and others) have already remarked on. To begin with, let us remember that Freud himself did not distinguish between rational and irrational authority per se, but that like many Enlightenment figures, he associated irrational authority with religion, and rational authority with the natural scientific *Weltanschauung*. Fromm, who trained for the rabbinate before becoming an analyst, did not welcome or endorse this invidious comparison, and was apt to distinguish between rational and irrational authority in both the spiritual and scientific domains -- and rightly so, I think. Still, as his study of Leonardo attests, Freud was acutely aware that the demands and threats of punitive authority -- usually embodied in the father, or in supernatural prohibitions and sanctions -- could stunt the emotional and intellectual development of his patients.

Another element in Freud's work that expressed a leaning toward rational authority, as Fromm conceived it, was his "basic rule". As Fromm noted in Sigmund Freud's Mission, published in 1959, and again in Beyond the Chains of Illusion, published in 1961, in asking, inviting and if need be *insisting* that the patient put aside all sham and pretence, and be absolutely honest with himself and his analyst about his feelings, experiences and desires, Freud was essentially predicating his "technique" on the capacity to relinquish deception and self-deception. Furthermore, his claim that the analyst must be a model for his patients in this respect conveys the attitude of rational authority quite succinctly.



From the outset, and to his credit, Freud attracted many disciples who responded to the anti-authoritarian elements in his thought. By the same token, however, those who were most radical and uncompromising in their opposition to irrational authority often clashed with Freud, and were eventually thrown out of the IPA, and were dismissed, vilified or ignored by the Freudian faithful, e.g. Otto Gross in 1909, Wilhelm Reich in 1933 and Erich Fromm in 1946.

Though recognized by Freud and Jung as a theorist of considerable promise in 1907, Otto Gross was an anarchist with strong irrationalist leanings, and after bolting from his analysis with Jung in 1908, rejected authority of any kind (Michaels, 1983).

Wilhelm Reich, by contrast, clearly distinguished between rational and irrational authority, albeit in the Enlightenment spirit, which equates religion with irrationality and natural science with rationality per se. Before embarking on his own pseudo-scientific religion, called orgonomy, Reich's revisions to analytic theory and therapy were devoted to promoting Freud's psychosexual ideal of the "genital character", which valorized the traits of critical and independent judgement, of industry, initiative and freedom from the fear of one's own sexuality (Reich, 197?). And following Gross, perhaps, in the late 20's and 30's, Reich also thematized the idea of the sado-masochistic or patriarchal-authoritarian character that informed Fromm's later studies of authority as well.

Like Reich, Fromm felt that the ruthless repression of childhood sexuality is one of means by means of which the authoritarian personality reproduces itself (Fromm, 1947). Unlike Gross and Reich, however, Fromm did not believe that sexual liberation would



automatically dissolve structures of irrational authority in the individual, the family or society at large. He was not that naive. But like them, Fromm also charged Freud with a patriarchal-authoritarian attitude and agenda that colored his dealings with disciples, and fostered a tradition of idolatry, of sibling rivalry, and of tendentious, distorted and self-serving historical and biographical writing on the part of the Freudian faithful.

Fromm drew attention to these issues in 1958 in an article entitled "Psychoanalysis -- Science or Party Line?", and again, the following year, in Sigmund Freud's Mission, and once more, a decade later, in a powerful but often neglected essay entitled "The Crisis of Psychoanalysis" (Fromm, 1970). Meanwhile, however, the work of independent Freud scholars, who were not in awe of the Freudian establishment, began to corroborate many of Fromm's intuitions. One only need think of Freud's relationships with Victor Tausk, Horace Frink, Sandor Ferenczi and Anna Freud to recognize how often and how profoundly Freud embodied and embraced irrational authority.

Freud's problem with Viktor Tausk was in many ways the reverse of his problem with Jung. Though splendidly original, Tausk was fiercely loyal to Freud. Instead of taking his work in a fundamentally different direction, as Jung did, Tausk was moving quickly and deeply into Freud's own territory, before Freud himself had arrived there! Instead of rejoicing in Tausk's originality and accomplishments, Freud was frightened at the prospect of being eclipsed by Tausk, whose formulations on narcissism and aggression regularly anticipated his own, robbing him of his customary priority



and pre-eminence. Freud was quite relieved when Tausk committed suicide, and did not hesitate to say so to Lou Andreas-Salome. As Fromm remarked to Ronald Laing, the callousness of Freud's remarks about this tragic turn of events is quite chilling (Fromm, 1967).

Another disturbed disciple who came to a bad end was Horace Frink, whose experience is summarized in Paul Roazen's book Freud and His Followers. Freud had chosen Frink to lead his American followers over the objections of A.A.Brill, Frink's first analyst, and despite the fact that Frink had experienced florid psychotic interludes during his first analysis with Freud in Vienna. During his second analysis there, Freud advised Frink to dissolve his current marriage to marry a former patient, but the concurrent death of the former patient's husband, and of Frink's own wife, left Frink and his patient/fiance smitten with guilt. Frink's marriage ended in a bitter and heart wrenching divorce, and a nervous breakdown from which he never entirely recovered. If Freud felt any remorse over his ill considered interventions, it is not recorded anywhere, to my knowledge.

Another disciple who suffered from less-than-neutral interventions into his love life was Sandor Ferenczi (Stanton, 1991). Leaving Ferenczi's love life aside, however, it is instructive to note he tried to foster genuine openness and collegiality between Freud, Jung and himself by engaging them in a three way mutual analysis during their voyage to America. Freud went along, up to a point, but at a critical juncture, bluntly refused to associate to some dream material on the grounds that it would compromise his "authority".



For reasons too complex to enumerate or explore at present, Jung found Freud's refusal profoundly disappointing (Jung , 1963). At the very least, it was clear that though Freud demanded complete honesty from his patients and disciples in sexual matters, he would not reciprocate in kind, placing himself in a more elevated category, beyond the rules that he himself legislated for the conduct of others.

Jung's immediate response, as he later admitted, was to falsify and conceal his own dream associations from Freud, i.e. to counter Freud's defensiveness with a deliberate deception. Ferenczi, by contrast, did nothing of the kind, and in the ensuing years, doggedly pursued a more open and collegial relationship with Freud, though Freud was forever pulling rank on him.

Another flagrant example of irrational authority was Freud's relationship with his daughter Anna. In analysing her, Freud once again placed himself in a category where the rules that governed the conduct of others somehow did not apply to him. Freud's secretiveness, his dynastic ambitions, and so on, probably had more to do with his decision to analyse Anna than her ostensible needs or problems.

Though one could multiply examples, the preceding instances indicate that discipleship in the analytic movement during Freud's lifetime was often fraught with problems of irrational authority. This was partly a function of Freud's own charisma. Freud himself was never entirely enveloped in or answerable to any of the organizations he created, and despite interludes of friendliness, and of varying levels of intimacy with his followers, he never treated a



single one of them as a complete equal. Like all charismatic leaders, he stood apart from his followers, played by different rules than they, and insisted that they devote themselves to a cause that he identified, very largely, with himself. He treated many loyal followers as expendable, was often jealous of their originality and suspicious of their independence.

In fairness to Freud, however, it important to recognize that Freud's vivid mix of rational and irrational authority made him splendidly immune to the blandishments of anonymous authority. Though he was intensely ambitious for his intellectual offspring, Freud had absolutely no patience for people who wanted to "sell" psychoanalysis, and to make it more marketable by adapting it to prevailing prejudices. And though he was received here with eagerness and enthusiasm, Freud had no patience for the commercialism, the technologism and the levelling camaraderie and informality of Americans. Freud's authority was always personal, and never vague or equivocal. Whether you liked it or not, agreed with him or not, you always knew exactly where you stood with him, and he always had the upper hand -- unless you decided to leave psychoanalysis.

Until recently, many training analysts were overidentified with Freud personally, and mimicked Freud's peculiar combination of rational and irrational authority in their dealings with patients and trainees. As a result, the culture of analytic training institutes was often quite authoritarian, hierarchical, and secretive. In flagrant violation of the ethics of confidentiality, many training analysts -- who confided nothing of their private or emotional lives to their



trainees -- could demand complete honesty of them, and use their personal confessions, and their honest doubts and misgivings about the theory or therapy they were learning to discredit or even ruin them professionally. The narrowness, dogmatism and elitism fostered by this kind of identification with Freud was -- and is -- stupid and repulsive, both humanly and scientifically.

Meanwhile, however, the culture of many training institutes was becoming manifestly out of step with prevailing cultural sensibilities, in which irrational authority, with its characteristic abuses, was becoming distinctly unfashionable. Beginning, I suspect, in the late 1960's, successive cohorts of analytic trainees were expecting -- and demanding -- more intellectual openness, more personal accountability and more real confidentiality from their training analysts. Training analysts, in turn, had to adapt to cultural changes to avoid alienating their trainees, and to keep enrollments up. And as younger analysts came up through the ranks, replacing the training analysts who retired, these changes became more commonplace.

The results, on the whole, are quite positive. Arbitrary or irrational authority is still a factor to be reckoned with, here and there, and there is no scarcity of new charismatic leaders either. But the dominant tone in most institutes is now a mixture of rational and *anonymous* authority -- one that is congruent with current cultural norms. In the interim, however, the problems posed by the ascendance of anonymous authority as the "shadow-side" of analytic training institutes have not been properly thematized or addressed.





On close inspection, there are certain trends in analytic education that promote anonymous authority, and which therefore should be viewed with caution and skepticism. The first of these, now mercifully on the wane, was the near-hegemony of ego psychology in this country. Unlike Lacan and many of his followers, I am not dismissing ego psychology as a whole. White, Erikson and Rapaport et. al. made some very illuminating and worthwhile contributions. But as Erich Fromm pointed out, in "The Crisis of Psychoanalysis", any school of psychology that makes adjustment or adaptation to society the pre-eminent criteria of mental health (a la Heinz Hartmann) is bound to promote complacency, conformism and intellectual mediocrity in the long run (Fromm, 1970).

In more recent years, other approaches have risen to prominence, and currently compete for their "market share": interpersonalists, object relations theorists, self psychologists, Lacanians, and so on. To accommodate prevailing trends, many institutes allow candidates to become conversant in one or more of the newer approaches, so that the old narrowness and intolerance has been replaced by a more "ecumenical" attitude.

Unfortunately, the tolerance fostered by the new ecumenicism is rooted in an underlying sensibility that is more pragmatic and market oriented than the attitude of days gone by. So while it permits -- indeed, encourages -- theoretical diversity, it is also profoundly presentist or *a-historical* in character. The result is the newly minted psychoanalyst who prides himself on being at "the cutting edge" of recent developments in analytic theory and practice, but is basically ignorant of Freud's work and ideas, or



familiar with them in a fragmentary, second hand way through the writing of authoritative interpreters, who invariably have their own axe to grind.

That just won't do. Freud's authority should never be invoked as a barrier against new and original work. Nor should one anyone prescribe a "correct" attitude to take towards him and his ideas. Those who do grapple seriously with Freud are bound to have divergent views about the structure and evolution of his thought, a diversity that is both welcome and necessary. But a sound knowledge of Freud's work *in its entirety* should be integral to every analyst's training and professional identity -- unless, of course, you are a Jungian, in which case a more limited knowledge of Freud is permissible.

Another symptom of the presentism of contemporary analytic culture is the relative ignorance most analysts still have of the broader history of their own discipline. In days gone by, analysts received informal training in the history of their discipline by a kind of oral transmission from their training analysts, and by reading a handful of authoritative texts. As a result, their sense of history was often very partisan and selective. But what it lacked in breadth and perspective it sometimes made up for in depth of a certain kind, based on a narrow but nonetheless strong sense of intergenerational identification that traces its origins back to Freud. That sense of identity and historicity is decidedly on the wane among analytic trainees, for both good and ill. The question is -- what have we got to replace it? The answer, generally speaking, is -- nothing!



Though there are several explanations for this state of affairs, there really is no excuse for it. There is now a vast literature on the history of psychoanalysis which can and should be studied by analysts in training, and not in a haphazard fashion, but as an integral part of their whole training. Since clinicians are seldom great historians, if recent experience is any indication, this part of the curriculum should be entrusted, for the most part, to trained historians who are active and accomplished in the field, or to clinicians with genuine historical credentials.

Fostering a sense of history among analytic candidates should not be viewed merely as professional identity-building -- or more cynically, as indoctrination -- but as a potent corrective to the dogmatism of the past, and the incipient rootlessness of tomorrow. Despite Freud's commitment to the anti-authoritarian sensibility of 19th century science, his interpersonal conduct was fraught with less desirable qualities, and in many analytic institutes, until recently, his loyal followers (and their trainees) perpetuated an attitude of Freud piety which is detrimental to genuine scientific inquiry. The history of the discipline should always be taught in such a way that it highlights these problems and processes, or at least acknowledges them frankly.

Meanwhile, psychoanalysis in the United States is now effectively under siege. To adapt to prevailing conditions and ideologies, analysts must market themselves and their services in ways which erode much that is valuable and worth preserving from the past, and is apt to be forgotten in the struggle for survival. Without a vivid sense of history to remind them of where they



came from, and what they are losing due to the exigencies of the modern mental health scene, many recent and future graduates of analytic training institutes will lack the inner ballast to weather the storm, and to resist market pressures that could change the nature of analytic work decisively, so that it is no longer really analytic. According to some, we've travelled quite some distance down that road already. In the absence of a clear cut "party line", and of vigorous guardians of doctrinal purity who obstruct or disqualify candidates for ideological deviance, many analytic candidates nowadays embrace particular schools or approaches because they are fashionable and/or profitable, and not out of deep conviction rooted in personal experience, or a deep familiarity with the whole analytic tradition, including theorists previously excluded from the canon. One symptom of this development is that some of the newer analytic icons discover "new" ideas that were actually well articulated in the works of others some decades previously, and then market them as if they were their own creations. If it were not so tediously commonplace, this kind social amnesia in analytic circles would be nothing short of astonishing.

Leaving the vicissitudes of the next few decades aside, what we really need to insure the integrity of psychoanalysis in the 21st century is a balanced combination of historical awareness and critical thinking. The two tend to go hand in hand. A presentism focused on the exigencies of survival and the immediate future is perforce pragmatic, and often willfully, sometimes proudly ignorant of the past. Accordingly, it does not know (and can scarcely imagine) what it does not know, and cannot make a discriminating



judgement about what to keep, preserve, enhance, and if need be, to defend, even at some cost to its own economic fortunes.

Finally, in the interests of fostering critical thinking and historical awareness, Erich Fromm's models of rational, irrational and anonymous authority be introduced into the analytic curriculum, and applied simultaneously in historical studies and clinical work. This is not to say that Fromm should have the final say on this matter. I rather hope he does not. But in the absence of a better theory of authority, his ideas do furnish a useful point of departure, and warrant sustained scrutiny and reflection. Leaving the political economy and cultural climate of training institutes aside, analytic patients are invariably the products of familial and cultural environments where authority, in one form or another, plays a growth enhancing and/or disabling role. Yet only seldom do analysts ask themselves anymore what kinds of experience with authority have shaped their analysands attitudes to the analytic encounter, and/or the kind of relationship they seek to establish with the analyst and/or significant others who may be of greater, lesser or equal status in work and family life. This sort of thinking was more common in days gone by, and I think it is high time we resume intensive exploration of the nature of authority, for ourselves, our patients and posterity.

#### Appendix (incomplete)

Fromm's concepts of rational and irrational authority are linked (through his theory of character) to the phenomena of rational and



irrational doubt, and rational and irrational faith. We cannot do them justice here, but we should note that Fromm applied them to the study of religious belief and experience. Unlike Freud and Reich, as noted previously, Fromm did not regard religious belief as being necessarily symptomatic of a deeper, irrational striving. But like them, he denied the existence of a transcendent or supernatural authority of any kind, so he was bound to approach ideas about supernatural authority as the embodiments of various kinds of rational and irrational authority.

A important case in point is Fromm's analysis of the myth of the Fall. According to Fromm, the Bible situates the beginning of human history in an act of disobedience against irrational authority. Though Fromm neglected to point this out, Jehovah's utterances regarding the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life in the Genesis narrative are completely consistent with his model of irrational authority. Jehovah is intent on maintaining conditions of inequality by depriving Adam and Eve of the opportunity to acquire "knowledge of good and evil" -- maturity. or