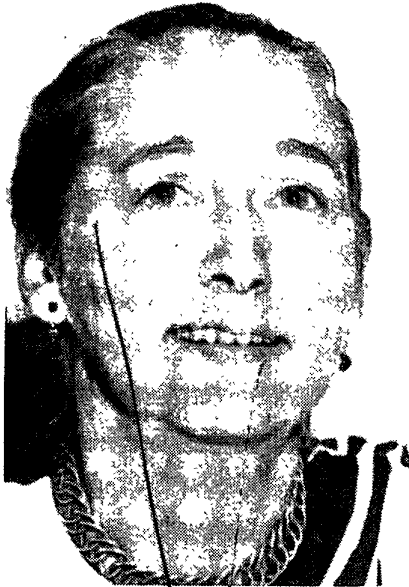


Clara Thompson

HISTORY OF THE WHITE INSTITUTE

—Thompson Reports



Ruth Moulton

your friend, maybe even your lover if we were in a position to know each other equally, but now you need me as a doctor more than as a friend. When you get well you will have many friends to choose from. This is our goal."

The spontaneous acceptance of social contact with patients has become tempered with time. We are used to Christmas parties and collations where barriers are lessened. We hope that there is an awareness of the sensitivity of the newer analysts, still caught up in transference problems that make genuine mutuality temporarily impossible. When the distortions and/or deep dependency needs are understood and worked through, the older student will then hopefully see his analyst as a "real person" and a mutually rewarding collegiality may develop.

Thus the friendliness which we all want and like can be abused as well as enjoyed. Clara Thompson lived to see how it could be used to ingratiate, to limit growth through failure to work through analytic problems and to promote sibling rivalry, even among graduates. Thus let us be more discriminating about our use of such words as friendliness, kindness and sympathy. May I end with a quote from Sullivan who, although he was inherently kind to any human being in pain, would say to supervisees who were being too kind in the wrong way to the wrong person, "this patient does not need your sympathy; that is disrespectful, what he really needs is your understanding."

—Ruth Moulton

March 15, 1955. "History of the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis and Psychology."

Clara Thompson, M.D.

Psychoanalysis is an unusually incestuous specialty. When Adler disagreed with Freud he said that Adler's difficulty was that he was a short man; therefore he had an inferiority feeling; therefore he had to have power. When Jung decided to desexualize the libido theory, he told Jung that the trouble was his Protestant Puritanism. When Ferenczi decided that it was a good idea to like your patients, Freud told him he was in his second childhood and that he wanted love himself. The trouble is that there is always some little grain of truth in psychoanalytically-oriented criticisms, so they act like guided missiles; that is, they always hit their mark.

There were three outstanding rebels in Europe in the 1920's: Rank, Ferenczi and Reich. All three were closely associated with Freud and were sternly criticized by him. Ferenczi at this time was advocating the idea that patients needed to be accepted and loved if they were to get well, and that patients needed to know the analyst was not perfect. The last paper which Ferenczi ever wrote was a paper which Freud tried to get him to promise he would never publish. The gist of this paper was that some of the difficulties in analysis are due to the problems of the analyst rather than the patient, just as some of the difficulties of children are due to the problems of their parents rather than their innate badness. This today seems such a self-evident statement that one wonders why it created such a furor in 1933.

Sullivan in the 1920's had a great advantage in that his beginnings were quite unnoticed. He started his work in an uncontested field, i.e., in the field of the psychoses, and even the most rabid Freudians were willing to concede that maybe it was all right to treat psychotics in a somewhat different way than Freud had taught. Sullivan was influenced by two people who were certainly not sold on Freudian theory. One was Adolph Meyer, whose attitude on the importance of the family situation on the production of neuroses and psychoses is one of the basic tenets of American

psychiatry and William Alanson White, who was always an eclectic. So, Sullivan started several years before the others in studying Ego Psychology. Sullivan was one of the first to point out that there was such a thing as an irrational attitude towards your physician which should technically be called transference, and that there was a rational attitude towards your physician which was not transference, and that one had to help the patient distinguish the two. He was one of the first to point out that psychotic patients had transferences, contrary to Freud's belief.

After Freud's lectures at Clark University in 1909 he went back with a very unfavorable opinion of American women and men. He decided that we were a henpecked country, that the men were all weaklings and that the women were all hens, the rulers of the family. The following year, 1910, the International Psychoanalytic Association was formed in Europe, in Salzburg. In February, 1911, the New York Psychoanalytic Society was founded, and in May of the same year, the American Psychoanalytic Association. After World War I, quite a few people began going to Europe to study psychoanalysis. Around 1922 there was quite a group who went from New York to be analyzed by Freud. A little later, they began to go to Berlin where Alexander was the head of the Berlin Institute. I think that I was the only American physician who was analyzed in Budapest. There are many analysts in the United States who were analyzed by Ferenczi, but they are all Hungarians who have come after their analyses. There were several non-medical people from the United States who were analyzed by Ferenczi and have become analysts. The best known to us is Izette deForest.

The Washington-Baltimore Psychoanalytic Society was formed in 1930, and I was the first president. Very soon after, the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute was formed. The Chicago Institute was also a fairly liberal group. In 1932, the American Psychoanalytic Association was reorganized as a Federation of Psychoanalytic Societies. The Societies had their own Institutes, they determined their own rules,



A Letter—and a

they elected their own members, and these members automatically became members of the American Psychoanalytic Association. The American refused to accept lay members from Europe. For a time lay members were carried by the International Psychoanalytic as members-at-large. But sometime in the early 1940's, their membership was abolished. *Dr. Fromm* found out by accident one day that he was no longer a member. The American Psychoanalytic was changed in 1946 to an organization with individual membership. Each member of a local society who wished to become a member of the American had to go through a personal examination by a Committee of the American. There had been a rule in the American that there should be only one psychoanalytic society in a city. But in 1946 this rule was abolished, partly because New York City had so many analysts in it. As soon as this rule was passed, the Columbia group was formed. This same year we had our own provisional charter from the Board of Regents of the State of New York, but continued to function under the Washington-Baltimore Institute.

Horney came to New York City in 1934. She became a training analyst at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute. In 1936 she persuaded me to leave the Washington-Baltimore Society and join the New York Society, where I soon became a training analyst. When Horney's *THE NEUROTIC PERSONALITY OF OUR TIME* came out, it produced a landslide of anger. The first thing that happened was that her students never graduated. The next step was to take away Horney's status as a training analyst and demote her to a "lecturer." Kardiner's students began having troubles. Then mine began to be afraid, too. When they took away Horney's training analyst status, five of us resigned from the New York Psychoanalytic. Those five were: Robbins, Horney, Ephron, Sarah Kelman and I. With us went fourteen students: my students, Horney's and Kardiner's. Silverberg and *Fromm* joined the five, beginning the Society for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis and the American Institute for Psychoanalysis. The people connected with me were: *Janet Rioch, Leopold Rosanes, Ed Tauber, Meyer Maskin, Gene Eisner, Lewis Wolberg, Ruth Moulton, Leon Goldensohn and Ed Weinstein.* We were starting out with high hopes.

Horney was the first Dean of this new group. Presently it became apparent that

"Dear Colleague:

When five individuals, all members of a professional society, feel impelled, for reasons not of a personal nature, to resign their membership in that society, an explanation to their professional colleagues is an obligation upon them and a matter of fundamental importance to those interested in the profession.

The resignations are a response to a situation which constitutes a crisis in psychoanalytic education. Psychoanalysis is a young science, still in an experimental stage of its development, full of uncertainties, full of problems to which anything approaching final and conclusive answers is still to be sought. As in all sciences, the solutions of these problems are directly dependent upon more voluminous and keener observations, as well as upon further weighing and consideration of observations already made.

Education in any field consists in a passing on from an older to a younger generation of the truth that the older generation believes it has learned, as well as a bequeathing to the younger generation of the problems left unsolved by their elders. In psychoanalysis as it is today, we cannot afford to subject the younger generation to any dogmatism; we should not mislead it with the illusion of certainty, where none actually exists.

There are two antithetical attitudes towards psychoanalysis today. One of these is based upon the awareness that psychoanalysis is still in an experimental stage of its development. The other attitude regards psychoanalysis as having in many respects passed beyond this stage and holds that training in psychoanalysis should begin with the learning of certain concepts and technics which are, as they sometimes term it, "classical," and which represent psychoanalysis as they conceive it to have been handed down by Freud. No two of these "classicists" have precisely the same notions of what "classical" psychoanalysis is. But they seem to be agreed that something which passes under the name of "classical" psychoanalysis should be first inculcated in the student; and that after this certain "deviating" notions of psychoanalysis may be taught to the student, if he so elects.

The educational program which is based upon the conviction that psychoanalytic therapy and therefore theory—is still in an experimental stage, and which, for want of a better term, might be called "non—classical" is considerably less crystallized than the "classical" one. Its advocates hold that the student at the beginning of his training in psychoanalysis may choose whether he will first be exposed to "classical" or to "deviating" or "non—classicist" should be taught "classical" concepts in the course of his training and that the student who chooses a "classical" type of personal analysis should learn "deviating" notions as part of his later training.

no new students were being sent to either *Fromm* or me. *Fromm*, Horney and I were the first training analysts; then she made Ephron and Robbins training analysts. The next thing we knew, *Fromm* was deprived of his status as a training analyst. This time *Fromm* and I and our students left. Sullivan joined us and we formed the Washington School of Psychiatry. Several of Kardiner's students went back to the New York Psychoanalytic Institute, got them-

selves reanalyzed for their rebellion and became good N. Y. Psychoanalytic members.

We formed the Washington School of Psychiatry in 1943. *Sullivan, Fromm-Reichmann and David Rioch* came up to New York every three weeks. *Ralph Crowley* got connected with us through the Navy, because he got stationed here in New York, and he liked it so well that he has never left. A little later *Hilde Bruch*



Bridge Was Crossed

REVOLT

Thus while the "classicists" are very positive about what the beginning of psychoanalytic training should be and are willing to enforce this view where they have the power to do so—as in the case of the disqualification of Dr. Karen Horney as a training analyst of the New York Psychoanalytic Institute—the "non-classicists," realizing that any crystallization of this nature is in the present circumstances premature, are of the opinion that the decision should in each case be left to the individual student.

There can be no doubt that there is here drawn a real issue in psychoanalytic education: Shall policy in psychoanalytic training be decided upon the basis of the number of votes that can be mustered in favor of this or that theory; or shall we frankly admit that it is much too early to attempt a definite decision of policy? There is no question in the minds of the undersigned that to choose the first of their alternatives will delay rather than accelerate progress, not only in psychoanalytic education but in psychoanalysis itself. Scientific issues cannot be decided by votes or by political power in any form; one would have thought that the experience of Galileo with the Church had determined this truth once and for all.

We have tried for many years now to combat this dogmatism in psychoanalytic education. Our efforts have increasingly met with frustration; the "classicists" within the New York Psychoanalytic Society and its Educational Committee have become more and more strongly entrenched in their dogmatism, and recent developments have convinced us of the impossibility of persuading them to take a more liberal attitude towards this issue.

We have therefore felt it essential for the future of psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic education to disassociate ourselves from a professional organization a majority of whose members are under the impression that scientific issues may legitimately be decided through the possession of political power, and to create a new center for psychoanalytic work, devoted to truly liberal and scientific principles, in psychoanalytic training, investigation and discussion. We invite freely all those of our colleagues who are likewise devoted to such principles to join with us in this endeavor.

(signed)
Harmon S. Ephron
Karen Horney
Sarah R. Kelman
Bernard S. Robbins
Clara Thompson''

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The revolt within the New York Psychoanalytic Institute that took place in 1940 must be seen in the perspective of the ferment that was taking place in American psychoanalysis in the late thirties, particularly around the contributions of *Harry Stack Sullivan*, Sandor Rado, Abraham Kardiner, Karen Horney, and *Erich Fromm*. The emerging emphasis on ego psychology began to shake the foundations of classical instinct theory and as always in such ideological struggles much heat and hostility were generated.

The appearance in 1939 of Horney's openly polemic book, *NEW WAYS IN PSYCHOANALYSIS*, aroused particular irritation in conservative psychoanalytic circles. What Horney said does not seem as revolutionary today as it did then. In retrospect, I strongly suspect that it was not just the content of her book but the tone in which it was written that caused so much resentment. Horney wrote as though there were only two significant protagonists in the psychoanalytic movement, Freud and herself, and made no effort to place her views in a historical context that would have given due credit to some of the prior works that had prepared the soil for her ideas; e.g., Freud's *PROBLEM OF ANXIETY*, Anna Freud's *EGO AND THE MECHANISMS OF DEFENSE*, William Reich's *CHARACTER ANALYSIS*, to say nothing of the contributions of *Sullivan*, Rado, Kardiner, *Fromm*, and others. Moreover, her book seemed to be addressed more to the lay public than to her colleagues, and thus it seemed to threaten the professional security systems of those who still adhered to classical Freudian doctrine.

The response from the ruling hierarchy of the New York Psychoanalytic Institute was to remove Horney's popular seminar from the required list and to make it an elective available only to third and fourth year candidates. This appeared to be a clear infringement of academic freedom and a punitive reaction to her ideas. There was considerable protest, particularly among the students of Horney, Kardiner, Rado, and *Clara Thompson*. When the Institute's hierarchy stood firm, a movement for secession began to be discussed among these training analysts. Their initial hope was that a new, progressive psychoanalytic organization of national scope could be formed with help from the progressive Washington and Chicago Psychoanalytic Institutes, then under the

became a member, and Meyer Maskin as soon as he came back from the Army. (All these people were members of the Washington-Baltimore Society and were therefore automatically members of the American.)

When the War ended, we became a large and flourishing institution. The Washington group began to be criticized; they told us that we were now large enough and that with the new rule that there could

be more than one institute in city, we should apply for recognition as a separate institute.

If you have to start your own institute, the tendency is to overemphasize your own point of view and you lose the constructive criticism which goes with talking with people who disagree with you. If it's humanly possible, we should remain in contact in some way with the main psychoanalytic stream. —C. Thompson