

Clio's Psyche

Understanding the "Why" of Culture,
Current Events, History, and Society

**Special Issue
on the Psychology of
Election 2012**

Robert Jay Lifton Festschrift

**Anderson Symposium on
Freud's Jewishness**

**Volume 19 Number 2
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The Psychology of Election 2012

Romney: Identifying with and Pursuing His Father's Dreams

Paul H. Elovitz—Clio's Psyche

Mitt Romney's parents, career, and life experience have prepared him to run for the presidency, as has been the case with so many presidents. He was his mother's "miracle child," delegated to fulfill his family's business and presidential ambitions, and has worked tirelessly to overcome resistance to his success based upon his Mormon religion, political flexibility, and a sense that he is inauthentic. He fears speaking openly about his religious beliefs, which are the source of his value system. Yet, telling your story in a way that enables people to relate to it and identify with you is an important element in getting elected to the presidency. In 2008 Obama did a fine job of telling his story and was elected in a period of disillusionment with the incumbent party. Mitt Romney has been handcuffed in his presidential bid by not wanting to bring up religion, which he believes can be effectively used against him, as it was by the Democrats in his 1994 senatorial campaign—his only loss in a general election. His being seen as inauthentic by so many Republican primary voters, who contributed to the "anyone-but-Romney movement," was based in part on his unwillingness to reveal much about certain things central to his life. Rather than focusing on the courage and pioneering spirit of his ancestors and his own deep religious faith and sense of community, he chooses to make the election about electing anyone-but-Obama. Like many politicians, he splits off negative feelings he has and projects them on the opposing party and its leader. After failing to win the Republican nomination in 2008, he wrote *No Apology: The Case for American Greatness* (2010) rather than a book unapologetically touting the remarkable history and achievements of his Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (or Mormon or LDS) family.

Willard Mitt Romney was born on March 12, 1947, in Detroit as the second son, and fourth and youngest child, of Lenore

LaFount (1908-1998) and George Wilcken Romney (1907-1995). Both of his parents were members of the Mormon Church, and the requirements of this religion had a major impact on the life of the family and ultimately on his bid for the presidency. The Romneys wanted a fourth child despite Lenore's having been told that becoming pregnant would endanger her life and that of the unborn child. While contemplating adoption, she became pregnant, and then spent a month in hospital bed rest to avoid a miscarriage. George performed "a Mormon blessing" for the success of the pregnancy (T. George Harris, *Romney's Way: A Man and an Idea*, 1967, 188). Mitt became the family's "miracle child," who was named, respectively, for both a highly successful family friend and a star football quarterback cousin—both Mormons.

The boy grew up in a three-story house in Detroit with a black housekeeper, various pets, and a father who sometimes worked 15 hours a day, but who left his briefcase at the door upon returning home from work, declaring his priorities to be "Family first, church second, work third" (Tom Mahoney, *The Story of George Romney; Builder, Salesman, Crusader*, 1960, 113, 167). Prayer and the LDS community were always essential elements in the lives of the Romneys. Weekends at a summer cottage were special family times. George spent more time with his younger son than he had with the older children. Family councils were sometimes called when he was about to make an important decision (Michael Kranish and Scott Helman, *The Real Romney*, 2012, 18). He involved Mitt in politics and encouraged him to speak his mind.

The former governor of Massachusetts idealized and still idealizes his father: "My dad was extraordinary," he says, "I am a small shadow of the real deal" (Philip Hines, ed., *Mitt Romney in His Own Words*, 2012, 189). He declared his father was making cars to make life better for people, not simply to make "a buck." Mitt "thought everything he said was interesting" (Kranish, 18). During the most recent Republican primary debates, he wrote "Dad" on the top of the notes he took in preparing to respond to his competitors, probably as a way of imaginatively calling on the strength of his father in this competitive situation. In psychoanalytic psychotherapy, idealization is usually a way of repressing and suppressing various feelings, typically ambivalence, anger, envy, or

frustration, toward the idealized individual.

Mitt's life is modeled on his father's, including his hopes and unfulfilled dreams. Mitt was a child of privilege who was awed by his father being a self-made, mostly self-taught man, who grew up poor after being born in Mexico. George was highly competitive, pushing himself and the children very hard, a source of Mitt's later anger cloaked by idealization; he sought to give their youngest son every advantage, starting by sending him for six years to the elite Cranbrook School in his hometown. Mitt was introduced to politics by campaigning for his father for Michigan governor as a 15 year old, serving as a governor's intern for his father the following year, and then driving his mother during her successful Republican primary campaign for the Senate two years later (she lost the general election).

Patterning his life on that of his father's—including unfulfilled ambitions—is reflected in numerous choices: his life's partner, missionary service, education, career, mentorship, location for political activity, and ultimate goal. Starting as a high school senior, Mitt would ardently pursue his future wife, Ann, over a period of years, just as his father had at the same age pursued his mother. The younger Romney served as a Mormon missionary in Europe and, as had his father, became the president of the LDS mission in the country he served. Mitt earned the college degree (majoring in English) his father had relinquished in favor of pursuing Lenore, and the Harvard business degree George had only dreamed of achieving. His father became head of American Motors, leading Mitt to enroll in a Harvard MBA program as a step toward heading a major U.S. automobile company. George convinced him to take a concurrent Harvard law degree—a degree with increasing value for both politics and business. The senior Romney had left his family and made his career in a state previously dominated by Democrats, far away from his family with few co-religionists, as did his youngest son who constantly sought to measure up to his father. Each found a mentor in business who gave his career an enormous boost, and they became governors of Michigan and Massachusetts, respectively. Both of these Republicans worked toward the presidency, with the son having come farther.

The two Romneys' personalities are very different. George

impressed people as a blunt, irrepressible force of nature, while his son makes a very different impression. According to his sister, Jane, the presumptive Republican nominee has the even temperament, personality, and diplomatic skills of his mother. Lenore was a beautiful and gutsy woman; she shocked her future husband by going to Hollywood to have a career in film. George left his Washington career as lobbyist and night student to go to California to woo her away from the film industry, where she was offered a three-year contract. His success was based upon his persistence, the way he kissed, and her belief that “you don’t feel like a woman unless you have children” (Harris, 187). He called this successful courtship his greatest salesmanship and tried to bring her a rose every day. Mitt has the personality of his mother and the perseverance of his father.

As much as Mitt Romney wants to be like his father, it is unlikely that he would be the presumptive Republican nominee if he was a carbon copy of his hero. Mitt is risk-averse while George felt compelled to speak out in favor of unpopular issues such as civil rights and, according to his son Scott, was mule-like in his stubborn determination (Kranish, 198). According to a friend of the father, “He is going to say what he pleases” since he “has a form of integrity that requires him to believe everything he said and, in addition, requires him to say everything he believes.” This trait offended some people who felt he went out of his “way to hit somebody on the nose” (Mahoney, 209). A major blow to the senior Romney’s presidential aspirations was his declaration and then defense of the statement that he had been “brainwashed” by governmental officials into supporting the war on a trip to Vietnam. Mitt, who had been a supporter of the war with his father, again sought his Dad’s approval by following his father in abruptly turning against it. Mitt’s sister Jane reports that “the brainwash thing” has had a great impact on their family. “Mitt is naturally a diplomat, but I think that made him more so. He’s not going to put himself out on a limb. He’s more cautious, scripted” (Kranish, 76).

During Mitt’s first presidential run, in 2007, he wrote about his struggle for control in his political career. Since dreams are important in psychoanalysis, noting a dream he describes is illustrative. “You’ve got to be really careful about what you say and do

anywhere you are,” he reports. “I actually had a dream about being in [a] parking garage and having somebody in front of me taking too long to get their change and honking the horn and then yelling back, and getting out and yelling at each other and then seeing it on YouTube the next day.” He decided, and it is unclear if it is actually within the dream or afterwards, “I’ve got to really be careful, you know, in my personal life” (Hines, 150). Declaring “I pattern myself like” my father, he carefully references his father’s “character, his sense of vision, his sense of purpose” (Hines, 189). These admirable patterns do not tie him to particular policies, making his reputation for political opportunism, or flip-flopping, earned but hardly unique among political leaders.

Although Mitt Romney clearly has a strong belief in Republican values, he is primarily a problem solver in a party currently dominated by ideology. His inclination is to listen carefully to those bringing problems to him and to help them resolve their issues while serving his own interests, as he did at Bain Capital where he became a multi-millionaire, his worth often reported at between \$190-250 million. As governor of Massachusetts, his willingness to compromise led to some major successes, as in passing a nearly universal health care law in an overwhelmingly Democratic state. To avoid criticism in campaigning, he focuses on a scalding critique of Obama, rather than on offering specific policy promises.

Mormonism has had a major impact on the Romneys and their political aspirations and abilities. George credited the “thousands of public appearances” he made for his church as part of his “fundamental training” (*The Concerns of a Citizen*, 1968, 12). Mitt reports “my church is very demanding in terms of requirements it places on people who join. It requires tithing ten percent of gross income; abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, coffee, and tea; and [chastity] before and [fidelity] after marriage” (Hines, 31). These demands strengthened his self-control. His 30 months proselytizing in France, a country with little toleration for the renunciation of alcohol and tobacco required by the Latter-day Saints, helped train him to face the rejection that politicians must endure. He became a planner, developing new strategies for success (as he would after losing the 2008 GOP nomination). Mitt had the security of a family supporting him in numerous ways, such as his fa-

ther maintaining a close relationship with his youngest son's girlfriend and future wife, helping to convert her to Mormonism during Mitt's long absence. His strong sense of mission was probably strengthened by surviving an auto accident in France, one in which he was initially pronounced dead and a passenger in the car he was driving was killed.

Mormons are expected to not only give a tenth of their income to the church and to serve as missionaries for their faith, but also to serve their community in many other respects. In deciding to serve his country and church by working to make the scandal-troubled 2002 Salt Lake City Olympics a success, Mitt declared "I was making more money than I should have"—reflecting a sense of guilt over simply making money (Hines, 183). He describes LDS President Gordon B. Hinckley with tears running down his cheeks as he watched the concluding ceremonies of the successful Olympics, relating this triumph to a 150-year-old Brigham Young prophecy of acceptance (Mitt Romney with Timothy Robinson, *Turn-around: Crisis, Leadership and the Olympic Games*, 2004, 284). This touching description of the surrogate father of his church crying has special meaning since it comes from a father-focused man who is working to match and surpass his own father's accomplishments.

Membership in the LDS church also links Romney with the polygamy of his great-grandfather, who went to Mexico in the 1880s to escape U.S. monogamy laws. It associates him with a hard-working, clean-living group known for being clannish and perhaps too set apart for many Americans. LDS religiosity is widely respected, although many secularists are suspicious of it. In voting on November 6, 2012, Christian fundamentalists may be torn between their dislike of Obama and distrust of a member of the LDS faith many do not consider to be a part of Christianity.

Willard Mitt Romney seeks to achieve his idealized father's presidential goal, but he consistently rejects the spontaneity that contributed to the senior Romney's appeal and ultimate defeat. He suppresses and represses, speaking no more than he is forced to about his religion, contributing to his appearing scripted and inauthentic to many voters. It remains to be seen if this strategy will ultimately result in success.

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A Mormon President?

Philip Langer—University of Colorado

Mitt Romney is the first Mormon to successfully seek and achieve a major political party's nomination for the presidency. Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter referred to as the Mormon Church or the Church), declared his candidacy in 1844, and Mormon missionaries were sent out to campaign for him. They encountered an active and hostile opposition, and Smith was never on the ballot. Mitt's father, George Romney, was briefly a candidate for the Republican nomination in 1968, until he announced he had been "brainwashed" by the generals during a Vietnam tour. Mitt Romney's 2008 candidacy never got off the ground, so his religious credentials did not then become a major issue. But it is my argument that Mitt Romney's Mormon religious affiliation could be a significant problem underlying his 2012 campaign efforts.

There were numerous explanations for Romney's relatively flat support in the polls during the primaries and caucuses, including his inability to identify with the electorate, his verbal gaffes ("I like to fire people"), and continuing questions about his conservatism and flip-flopping on issues. He had undoubtedly the best financial and administrative campaign resources of all the contenders but had to struggle with a succession of "anybody-but-Romney" candidates, creating a long and divisive campaign. Contributing to his problems, especially among conservative, evangelical Protestant denominations, prominent in the South, was a belief that the Mormon Church is basically a non-Christian cult. Various political commentators suggested that upwards of 20% of this Republican constituency are suspicious of Romney's Mormon heritage and, thus, his candidacy. Robert Jeffress, the Texas evangelical Baptist pastor who introduced Rick Perry at a GOP values conference, used a subsequent interview to make reference to Mormonism as a cult, a statement he never retracted. So, at least among the skeptics, the issue is whether Romney, as a practicing Mormon, is a true Chris-

tian or is masquerading as one. The persistence of the argument that Obama is secretly a Muslim should indicate that religion is an issue for some voters.

From its inception, the Mormon Church has been perceived by many as “different,” regardless of repeated, modern attempts by Mormon authorities to assert their legitimacy with more traditional Christian denominations. Indeed, the Church is currently conducting an active media program identifying Mormons as everyday folks. The Church has emphasized strong moral values embedded within a traditional family structure and is viewed as politically and economically conservative. Utah, where the Church is based, is a very “red” state. So the question remains as to why the Church, and thus Romney, has not resonated with conservative groups, especially with evangelicals.

Some of the Mormon Church's earlier doctrinal history is undoubtedly a contributing factor to the cult belief and wariness towards Mormons. Briefly, Mormons believe that Joseph Smith, a farmer's son in upper New York State, received a visit from an angel directing him to gold plates buried on a nearby hill. Smith translated the writings on these gold plates with the aid of seer stones, producing a canonized work called the *Book of Mormon*. He organized the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1830 as the “restored” true church of Jesus Christ and assumed the role of “prophet, seer, and revelator.” The Church began with Protestant characteristics, but Smith rapidly began to include the one element from Roman Catholicism that was missing: absolutism. Once he had claimed the “restoration” of the priesthood of God by visiting angels, he could speak as a prophet, and his words were as binding on his believers as *ex cathedra* statements to Catholics. This certainty brought enough comfort to his followers that they were willing to believe and do whatever he (and his successors) asked.

Doctrinal beliefs within Mormonism, unshared by many traditional Christian church members, have included precepts such as that God evolved from a man, Adam was God in the Garden of Eden, God and Jesus have physical bodies, and polygamy was necessary for eternal progression. Mormon theology has evolved, and the first two tenets I cited have been quietly set aside. But addi-

tional revelations have led to such beliefs and practices as multiple heavens; the *Book of Mormon* as companion scripture to the Bible; that Jesus after his resurrection visited and taught the descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel in the Western Hemisphere; the building of temples where secret ceremonies are held; baptism for the dead (though current policy restricts such baptisms to family members); eternal marriages; subordination of women and blacks; a lay priesthood of males (though now open to all races, most recently blacks); avoidance of such substances as coffee, tea, alcohol, and tobacco; temple underwear (or garments); and polygamy.

Also causing the anti-Mormon attitude has likely been the proselytizing success of the Mormon Church, which from its very beginning in 1830 established an aggressive missionary effort, resulting today in over five million members in the United States, and 13 million worldwide. Currently there are over 12,000 men and women full-time missionaries. With that kind of effort, the Church has become a threat to other denominations' membership rolls.

Still today, the Church believes in continuous revelation, not only for the Church president and other general authorities, but also for individual members. (It is true that the individual Mormon is free to accept or reject revelation, but open and strident rejection can have serious consequences, including excommunication.) Revelation leads to the question of Romney's separation from Church influence. What happens if the president of the Mormon Church states that he has received a revelation from God concerning some government policy? How would Romney deal with a declaration starting with: "Thus saith the Lord," or, for that matter, even a secular policy statement which carries with it some implication of inspiration? Any arguments to the effect that this would never happen would make Romney appear to either know the mind of God or ignore the fact the Church has already been involved in such significant political matters as the Equal Rights Amendment and Proposition 8 in California.

Although a practicing Catholic, in 1960 candidate John Kennedy defused possibilities of Vatican influence. Given the rather checkered history of Vatican interaction in recent world affairs, that was not a very hard thing to do. Romney may find the interface with God issue difficult to defuse in this current political

climate, as witness Donald Trump's success with the "birther" charge. It is worth noting that in Section 134 of *Doctrine and Covenants* (part of Church scripture), Mormons are enjoined to respect and uphold the laws of their respective governments. But to devout Church members, an instance of divine revelation supersedes existing civil law.

The Church's position on direct and continuous revelation from God is tied to another problem for Romney: polygamy, or plural wives, which the Church openly preached and practiced in Nauvoo, Illinois, in the early 1840s and then openly in Utah from 1852 until 1890. No mainstream Christian denomination ever countenanced polygamy. Indeed, the 1856 Republican Party platform declared slavery and polygamy to be twin evils of barbarianism. I doubt if anyone believes for a second that Romney espouses a pro-polygamy position or that the Mormon Church would advocate a return to the practice. But polygamy has historical antecedents, which the Church cannot put to rest. There are apparently still significant parts of the electorate who will not accept as Christian a church that once openly espoused the practice.

The question that has to be asked is why polygamy still remains a blemish on the Church in some quarters. First of all, beliefs and practices confined to chapel and temple existed but not as a daily observable occurrence. But in Utah, public display seemed to be a matter of Mormons' daily flaunting the unacceptable. This clearly was a non-negotiable moral divide.

The Mormon practice of polygamy resulted in a fierce and protracted struggle between the Federal government and the Church throughout the latter half of the 19th century and the very early part of the 20th century. In 1890 the Church renounced the practice in a manifesto, followed by a second manifesto in 1904 reaffirming the end of polygamy, with the threat of excommunication. It is worth noting that these documents condemned such marriages on legal and political grounds, not moral. Moreover, neither declaration has been subsequently canonized. Formal Church policy regarding the abandonment of polygamy led to Utah's acquiring statehood in 1896 (Richard Van Wagoner, *Mormon Polygamy: A History*, 1986, Chapter 12).

What then keeps the prejudice against Mormons alive, over a century after polygamy was ended, at least among a segment of the voting electorate? There are two sets of factors, one internal and the other external. Internally, even after the 1890 Manifesto, polygamous marriages were being sanctioned. These took place frequently outside the country, especially in Mexico. (Mitt Romney's great-grandfather, Miles Park Romney, married two wives in Utah and three more in Mexico, though polygamy has been absent in Romney's ancestry for two generations.) In Utah today, there are polygamists in every major city. Some more liberal Mormons believe that the polygamists should be left alone (pedophiliacs are an exception), for they are "only trying to follow the original Church teachings." Also, government authorities usually can identify polygamists but for various reasons steer clear of any crusade against them. A problem is that there is no certainty how a conservative Supreme Court would vote on basically a matter of religious beliefs.

Externally, while the main Mormon Church based in Salt Lake City has adopted an anti-polygamy position, there are fundamentalist Mormon communities, especially along the Arizona-Utah border, which openly and continuously practice their polygamous beliefs. These groups base their polygamous practices on a revelation received by Church president John Taylor in 1886, making polygamy the word of God and not for man to reject (Van Wagoner, 190). The 1890 and 1904 manifestos are thus viewed as political statements, and as such they cannot negate the word of God.

Attempts to crush polygamous communities have been political and media disasters. In 1953 the state of Arizona raided the Short Creek settlement, resulting in pictures of children being torn from their parents. The consequences of the raid resulted in an eventual political decision to drop the matter (Van Wagoner, 199-208). More recently, a similar raid on a fundamentalist community near the town of Eldorado, in west Texas, resulted again in a political mess, raising questions of constitutionality. In 2011 a fundamentalist prophet, Warren Jeffs, was sentenced to life in prison, but as a pedophile, not a polygamist.

Moreover, anti-Mormon evangelicals most certainly are aware of such problems as conflicts among fundamentalist sect

prophets, splintering of communities, and, in some instances, murder. Polygamy, whatever the circumstances, still reaches the attention of the public in a variety of ways, including the HBO series "Big Love" and the television reality show "Sister Wives." The Mormon Church has tried to remain above these problems, staunchly maintaining its anti-polygamy position. It is likely, though, that among members of conservative, evangelical groups, little or no distinction is still made between the Church and the fundamentalists.

It is my contention that polygamy in particular as well as proselytizing and possibly other non-mainstream beliefs and practices underlies the conservative, evangelical Christian wariness of Mormons in general and Mitt Romney in particular. These fears may subsequently make these voters hesitant to cast a ballot for Romney. For the GOP's "Southern Strategy," this could be a disaster.

Philip Langer, PhD, is currently Professor Emeritus of Educational Psychology at the University of Colorado. He has had a long psychohistorical interest in military history and has published in this area. In addition, he has previously published in Clio's Psyche on a number of other topics. Professor Langer may be contacted at philip.langer@colorado.edu. □

Obama's Lifetime of Consensus-Building Fell Short in the White House

Glen Jeansonne—University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

David Luhrssen—University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

As he grew into conscious awareness, Barack Obama could not escape a split identity, circumscribed by his bi-racial heritage, his father's absence, and the particular circumstances of a childhood divided between Hawaii and Indonesia. At every juncture in the most formative years of his life, Obama was the potential outsider at school and in social situations. The experience left no discernible trauma but solidified one of the salient characteristics of his personality. From an early age, encouraged by an intellectually curious mother and supportive grandparents, Obama became a

bridge-builder, the ready surveyor of common ground between himself and his associates, a quick study in conciliation.

Aware of his hybrid status at the cusp of America's racial divide in an era when the hard divide of segregation was only beginning to soften, Obama developed the ability to view people and situations from more than one perspective and to argue for commonalities between them. It was a matter not just of survival but a means to positive recognition and the achievement of goals. His talent for bridge-building, denounced by purists in his own party as an over-willingness to compromise, had served Obama well in school and in his early professional life (including his service as a community organizer), and brought him an unusual degree of national attention as a freshman senator. His failure to establish common ground during his presidency speaks more to the fractious, ideological drama of 21st-century American politics than to his character, albeit Obama may have entered the White House with more naiveté than was healthy. He was less experienced in the ways of Washington politics and the administration of government than most of his allies, rivals, and opponents. His talent as a quick study, which had also been necessary to transcend successfully his outsider status in childhood and adolescence, has probably served him better during his presidency than his bridge-building.

Called Barry in his youth, Barack Obama grew up conscious of significant absences. The gap in his family from the missing Kenyan father was only heightened by the disparity between his physical appearance and that of the mother and grandparents who raised him. He was fortunate to have been born in the recently admitted state of Hawaii, a truer melting pot than elsewhere in the U.S. in the early 1960s. A dark child at the side of a white mother turned fewer heads in Honolulu than in Houston. Obama seldom if ever felt the cruelest lashes of racism in childhood, and yet, an African American child was rare enough among the Filipinos, Japanese, Polynesians, and Anglos of the Islands.

When Obama was six, his mother married an Indonesian and he moved with them to his stepfather's homeland for a four-year sojourn. The society he encountered there was tolerant, but yet he stood out all the more as the African American child. However, no evidence survives that Obama endured any great difficul-

ties. He coupled a gathering sense of his own identity with a willingness, even an eagerness, to relate to anyone in his environment, whether peer or adult, regardless of their backgrounds and interests. Separated by his appearance from the possibility of being a chameleon, Obama continually mediated between his blackness and the world around him. He owed his successful adaptations to the particular environments of his formative years. A childhood in Los Angeles or New York, much more Jackson, Mississippi, might have precluded or at least stunted the development of his bridge-building skills.

As his mother's second marriage unraveled, Obama returned to the Hawaiian home of his grandparents. Their unconditional love soothed any pain he may have felt from the more or less prevalent absence of his biological father and the temporary absence of his mother. He was the treasured only son, precocious, comfortable with adults, and happy to be left alone with his imagination and his studies. The grandparents endowed him with a sense of his own potential. Although coming from modest circumstances, his grandfather was able to convince his employer to endorse the boy's admission to Punahou Academy, the prep school for Hawaii's elite.

At Punahou, Obama was doubly the outsider, blacker than his classmates and faculty, and from a lower social-economic order. Inspired by his mother's enthusiasm for Martin Luther King, Jr., Mahalia Jackson, and other figures of African American culture, Obama constructed a sense of his own black identity at Punahou, gathering images from Stevie Wonder and Miles Davis, though also finding time for the Rolling Stones and Elton John. He kept company with the writings of James Baldwin and W.E.B. DuBois as well as the great Russian authors. During his high school years he sought the company of other African Americans but was always fully engaged with the larger society around him. He never forgot that he had been raised in a supportive white family, even as the world categorized him as black and he embraced his blackness.

The conscious split in his identity became a source of strength in adulthood and his entry into politics, rather than a debilitating weakness. Although his associates and financial support came from the left on the political spectrum, by temperament

Obama treated ideology as a starting point for discussion, not a body of dogma. From his days as a community organizer through his inauguration as president, he was always concerned with the politics of unity. Ironically, he became one of his most polarizing presidents in living memory. Growing up in the varied environments of his formative years, he was always eager to find points in common with those around him and this conciliation nurtured his perspectives on political and social issues. As a legal scholar, Obama was committed to an understanding of the U.S. Constitution that valued the framers as geniuses of compromise.

By the time he decided to run for president, Obama was uniquely suited to rise above the racial divide persisting in American life. It is improbable that any other African American could have been nominated for president by a major party in 2008 or have won the White House. The conciliatory tone and consensus-building messages of his two books, *Dreams from My Father* (1995) and *The Audacity of Hope* (2006), and his inspirational keynote speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention (“There’s not a liberal America and a conservative America—there’s a United States of America”) were not simply matters of political expediency, although a degree of calculation can never be dismissed from any political discourse. The source of Obama’s politics is rooted in his personality, not in any particular ideology.

Confronted by the greatest economic crisis since the Great Depression and inheriting two overseas wars, President Obama pursued his accustomed strategy of seeking common ground with all parties. To his dismay, he found that a national political consensus over fiscal and social issues eluded him in an age when inflexible ideologues on both ends of the spectrum had the power to set agendas and stir incessant anxiety through the Internet, even if the zealots could not always achieve their own goals. The carefully measured bridge-building that had gained an outsider the acceptance of his peers in school and his entry to professional life and politics, fell short after Obama’s victory in the November 2008 election. Often criticized by members of his own party for failing to push policies with sufficient vigor or attack his opponents more stridently, Obama stepped slowly into the fray, which must have resembled the schoolyard battles he assiduously avoided in youth.

Obama's temperament and character would have been well suited to the presidency in the era occupied instead by Bill Clinton, a time of little genuine crisis when the old rules of the news media prevailed and conversations across the aisles in Congress could take place without hectoring from bloggers on the sidelines. To win re-election, Obama may have to sharpen his pugilistic skills and leave bridge-building for his second term.

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Why Obama Probably Will Be Re-Elected

Herbert Barry III—University of Pittsburgh

A prevalent group fantasy of American voters is the desirable choice between two rival political parties that alternate frequently in controlling the executive branch of the federal government. A president of the same party rarely occupies the White House for more than 12 consecutive years. The limited duration of continuous presidential power by one party is accompanied by a tendency for the president to be re-elected for a second term. Of the 14 presidents before Obama whose election changed the party of the White House occupant and who four years later were again nominated by their party for the presidency, 11 won re-election.

Thus, the history of presidential elections indicates a high probability that Obama will be re-elected in November 2012. This probability can be seen to increase or decrease by a comparison of Obama's situation with the defeat of one-term president Democrat Jimmy Carter in 1980 by Republican Ronald Reagan. Carter in 1976 had defeated his predecessor, Republican Gerald Ford.

The comparisons of Obama in 2012 with Carter in 1980 ap-

pear to be favorable for the re-election of Obama. Carter was opposed for the Democratic presidential nomination by Senator Ted Kennedy, who won the presidential primary in 10 states. Some of Kennedy's supporters did not thereafter support Carter enthusiastically, or they voted in the presidential election for Congressman John Anderson, an independent candidate. Obama is unopposed for the Democratic presidential nomination in September 2012.

A more important advantage of Obama in 2012 over Carter in 1980 is probably the gradual recovery of the national economy in 2009-2012 after the collapse in 2008, while Republican George W. Bush was still president. A potential advantage for Obama is the slowness of the economic recovery. Severe inflation, a euphemism for depreciation of the U.S. dollar, thereby will be postponed. During Carter's presidency, severe inflation was a hardship for many voters and probably the principal reason for Carter's defeat in 1980. In November 2012, the majority of the unemployed voters will probably vote for Obama because they realize that the Republican members of Congress have been blocking Obama's efforts to improve the economy.

Carter's great international achievement, negotiation of the 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, was overshadowed by the imprisonment of United States embassy staff members in Iran and by the failed attempt of special United States military forces to rescue them. By contrast, Obama successfully initiated the assassination of Osama bin Laden and other Al Qaeda leaders. The current relationship between the United States and Iran is tense, but neither nation appears to desire warfare against each other prior to the November election.

Other factors supporting Obama's re-election include his biracial parentage, an American mother descended from Europeans and an African father. With the help of his African American wife, Michelle, Obama will probably obtain the votes of most African Americans. He probably will also attract the votes of the majority of Latinos, Asian Americans, and other minority racial groups. The contrary sentiment of bigoted white voters, "He is not one of us," will be less effective against the incumbent president than it was four years ago against the Democratic nominee for president. The Mormon religion of Republican nominee Mitt Romney will detract from his support by some Christians.

Helpful to Obama is the U.S. Supreme Court decision on June 28, 2012, upholding the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*, passed by Congress in 2010. That decision affirmed one of Obama's principal achievements.

An advantage for Romney is the Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United* (2010), which upheld permitting corporations more freedom to donate money to political candidates. Obama will probably continue to obtain small amounts of money from multiple millions of supporters. He can then emphasize his advocacy for the 99% of the voters against the 1% richest that Romney's policies favor.

Incorrect predictions about future events can contribute to correct subsequent predictions. I predicted that Democrat John Kerry would win the presidential election in 2004 against incumbent Republican George W. Bush. I underestimated the tendency to re-elect that incumbent president. If my prediction that Obama probably will be re-elected is incorrect, it will indicate my underestimation of a different influence on the voters in November 2012.

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The Borderline Style in U.S. Politics

Dan Dervin—University of Mary Washington

Richard Hofstadter's classic analysis, "The Paranoid Style in American Politics" (*Harper's Magazine*, 1964), inspires this inquiry. One of the virtues of his essay is that he manages to identify psychopathologies in the political mainstream without pathologizing particular politicians. He deploys a general *style* that approximates *group-fantasy* in psychohistory. This article renames the political style as "borderline" and traces its current trends as they are driven by key figures and popular movements. The borderline traits selected here are so prevalent today that leading politicians

may embody and also manipulate them with alarming impunity.

Placed in the context of American history, Hofstadter's samplings stand out as both crackpot and foreboding minorities. He includes the Ku Klux Klan, millennialists, nativists, and anti-Masons, and culminates with McCarthyism and the John Birch Society. The paranoid style is based on "feelings of persecution" and "grandiose theories of conspiracy"; it is "overheated, over-suspicious, overaggressive, grandiose, and apocalyptic," but whereas a paranoid individual thinks of hostile conspiracies as being directed toward him personally, the paranoid-style speaker (we would say the group's delegate) thinks of conspiracies as targeting a "nation, a culture, a way of life whose fate affects not himself alone but millions of others" (Richard Hofstadter, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics and Other Essays*, 1965, 4-5). Thus, the *style* refers to how "ideas are believed and advocated" rather than to their truth or falsity. Paranoia becomes the overarching driving force of history, crusading against an all-encompassing "conspiracy, set in motion by demonic forces of almost transcendent power" that can only be defeated by an "all-out crusade" (Hofstadter, 29).

While the paranoid style persists today, a more broadly based *borderline* style has come to the fore, its key features being:

1) a splitting of self and world into either/or, all/or nothing defenses with tendencies toward projection (patriotic, God-fearing, hardworking Americans versus welfare queens, feminazis, and tree-huggers) (Otto Kernberg, *Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism*, 1975, 29-30, 35);

2) a disconnect between actions and consequences (stuff happens);

3) a facile superficiality in relationships supported by denial of awareness of any change (best buddies today, strangers tomorrow) (Kernberg, 31-2).

Related features appear in groups drawn to the borderline leader's style. These include underlying "chronic feelings of emptiness," being "easily bored," "persistently unstable self-images," sudden changes from "a role of needy supplicant for help to a right-

eous avenger of past treatment” (projected onto a delegated leader), and “transient, stress-related paranoid ideation or severe dissociative symptoms” (*DSM-IV*, 1994, 707, 710). These features need not be the primary or only dynamic within the makeup of any given individual or group. Thus, borderlines can swing in and out of paranoid and other styles.

Historically, the paranoid-style exponents were a marginal if clamorous minority: dormant for time-spans, then erupting at critical points, as in the aftermath of World War II, when the aggression deployed against well-defined external enemies sought other outlets, settling on Cold War enemies here and abroad. While similarly poised to respond to national crises, the borderline style has increasingly come to the forefront in politics. The mobile psychodynamics of the general population, especially during periods of acute stress and uncertainty, help explain why some people regress to borderline levels to reduce anxiety and preserve autonomy, and accordingly seek solutions embodied in borderline-style leaders-as-delegates.

While Hofstadter's thesis anticipated without naming Barry Goldwater or Richard Nixon, the profiles of other presidents and candidates offer a much more mixed bag of styles. Clinton and Reagan both grew up with abusive or absent alcoholic fathers and became to a degree wounded warriors. The former identified with hapless victims (feeling their pain), the latter with the threatening aggressor (talking tough to designated enemies). It was Ronald Reagan who, for all his *bonhomie*, seems to have re-infused borderline rhetoric into the body politic, designating the Soviet Union as the “Evil Empire,” without going the whole apocalyptic route (he had never been a church-goer before taking office). Ultimately, his substitution of hard-line rhetoric for executive action managed to avoid both major military enterprises and balanced budgets. He used good/bad binaries in his simplistic platform of government-as-problem-not-solution to such good effect that few noticed he left office with larger deficits (tripled by some accounts) than his predecessors. Although he made political hay out of “welfare cheats,” it was Clinton who reformed the system.

Reagan's feel-good messages (fix your gaze on the shining city on the hill; it's morning in America), bearing an overriding

borderline appeal, discouraged close scrutiny. His dramatic challenge to Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall, so widely applauded, ignored indigenous forces within Russia of real consequence. This episode would later be seized on by Neo-Cons to export democracy to Middle East countries with no infrastructure of human rights, independent judiciary, free press, or an educated middle-class. George W. Bush, who before 9/11 belittled Clinton's nation-building, soon led the exporting of democracy to Iraq and Afghanistan. It is not happenstance that the Iraq War was the brainchild of the Cheney-Rumsfeld borderline strategy: despite the thrilling shock-and-awe invasion, no plans to pick up the pieces and set up a peaceful transition were made.

Reagan's substitution of words for deeds suggests a precursor for the borderline profile. Introduced by Helene Deutsch as the *as if* personality, early identifications with the same-sex parent are not consolidated and imitating is substituted for it (Paul Roazen, *Helene Deutsch: A Psychoanalyst's Life*, 1985; Kernberg, 7, 13, 38-9). Reagan proved notoriously elusive for his biographer, Edmund Morris, who complained of no one *there*. Reagan's wife, Nancy, recently remarked that she could only get so close to Ronnie. Sports caster, GE huckster, actor, governor, president: his identity seems to come to the fore in public roles that complete his personality (Lloyd deMause, "The Making of a Fearful Leader: 'Where's the Rest of Me?'" *Journal of Psychohistory* 12:1 [1985]: 5-22). We can consider the *as if* political leader as seeking to validate his inner reality by conforming others to it, affirming it in attractive guises on the stump or at the ballot box, and thereby reducing anxiety and isolation for both self and group. Thus put, it feels pretty normal and comes off as politics as usual. They provide the mirrors, we bring the smoke—whatever it takes to turn *as if* into *as is*: Rid the world of evil! Drill, baby, drill! Colonize the moon!

Domestically, the stage had earlier been set in the second Clinton term when Newt Gingrich came center stage with the politics of personal destruction that revived borderline polarities with a vengeance. In fairness, Gingrich epitomized and drove to extremes a rough-and-tumble style already inherent in politics. Sally Quinn, Washington hostess, columnist, and wife to Ben Bradlee of the *Washington Post*, recalled a dinner she held in 1963, attended by

Kennedy and Goldwater, in which they amicably discussed sharing aircraft on their forthcoming campaign trips. Tip O'Neill could be pretty harsh on Reagan, but there were crucial extenuations. He and Reagan were observed at a public gathering schmoozing and exchanging pictures of their grandchildren. Following his death, Ted Kennedy was eulogized by nominal political enemies, Senators John McCain and Orrin Hatch. These are past exceptions that highlight the civility missing in today's political war zones. "I didn't come here to be a team player," announced a newly arrived Tea Party congressman.

With Gingrich, it was total war. His grandiosity and take-no-prisoners rhetoric has disposed many to view him as a classic narcissist, which overlaps borderline features (James F. Masterson, *The Narcissistic and Borderline Disorders*, 1981). Kernberg assigns to the "narcissistic personality" little empathy for others, exploitative and parasitic behavior toward others, and a coldness and ruthlessness beneath a charming and engaging veneer (Kernberg, 17). Barbara Oakley dubs Newt a "borderpath" (*Evil Genes*, 2007). By normalizing polarization, for example, once referring to the political parties as the American and the Democrat, he dramatically legitimized demonizing the other. In 1998 Gingrich led the charge for impeaching Clinton while conducting his own adulterous liaison. It may be serendipitous that in 1978 his first of 10 elections in Georgia to the U.S. House preceded by just a year the publication of Christopher Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism*.

In 1999, beset by overlapping personal and political scandals, Gingrich resigned from Congress. Off the political stage, he re-branded his image with books, speaking tours, and various policy institutes. Then, fortified with a new wife, Callista (his third), and a new religion, Catholicism, and with his hyperbole intact but his baggage not shed, he entered Republican presidential primaries for 2012. His new contract with America was even more ambitious and overheated with doomsday warnings of a nuclear holocaust looming over a planet desperately awaiting its savior. His apocalyptic portfolio included colonizing the moon. But in due course his black-balling of rival candidates and payback from other Republicans he had betrayed began turning off voters and tanked his campaign. Ultimately, his flamboyant style, which could accom-

moderate paranoid as well as borderline/narcissistic features, sank of its own weight. One surmises that an overriding grandiosity required the apocalyptic imagery of paranoid conspiracy along with the borderline's splitting and demonizing be put in service of a primarily narcissistic agenda. That Gingrich had some inkling of these internal processes surfaced in an interview with Gail Sheehy for *Vanity Fair* (September 1995), where he confided, "I found a way to immerse my insecurities in a cause large enough to justify whatever I wanted it to."

All of which brings us to Mitt Romney, who, after a moderate governorship in Massachusetts, has let himself be pulled into the comfort zone of the conservative right. The son and political heir of George Romney, who was briefly a candidate for the 1968 Republican nomination, Mitt Romney parades his Reagan *bona fides* of running against government by playing down his term as governor of Massachusetts and his unsuccessful challenge to Ted Kennedy by touting his experience in the private sector. There, he co-founded the investment firm Bain Capital, which took over and restructured troubled businesses, often with mixed results. Though frequently away on business or political trips, he takes fatherly pride in his five sons raised with his wife Ann, although by her count she had six sons, with Mitt acting as "mischievous and naughty as the other boys. He'd come home and everything would just explode again" (quoted by Ruth Marcus, "This Is Not a Wifely Duty," *Washington Post*, April 11, 2012, A19).

Despite Romney's primary wins, the public found him largely unknown and not very likeable; the press struggled to find signs of life beyond the tightly programmed campaign. One pundit remarked that Romney's like a handsome smiling face in a picture frame, and *New York Times* commentator David Brooks, stuck with supporting his party's choice, was constrained to term him the "other-directed man," flip-flopping on health-care, mass transit/fuel-efficiency, same-sex marriage, climate change, gun-control, and immigration ("self-deportation"), and generally tailoring his views to please right-wing voters.

Where's Romney's core? After an aide used the Etch-a-Sketch analogy to convey his boss's reconfiguring himself for moderate voters in the fall, Romney tried to allay doubts by claiming,

"I'm running as a conservative Republican." But as Dana Milbank astutely pointed out, "He didn't say he *is* a conservative Republican; he said he's *running* as one. As if this is a persona for this particular campaign" (Dana Milbank, "My Pet Mitt," *Washington Post*, March 30, 2012, A17). *As if*, indeed.

Then there are Romney's gaffes. In a period of high unemployment, he cheerily confesses, "I like being able to fire people." Bolstering his Buy-America image, he brags that both of his wife's cars are Cadillacs. Trying to be a regular NASCAR dad, he confides, "I have some great friends who are NASCAR team owners." It's neither fair nor realistic to affix a clinical label here, but he does come across as clueless about the import of his remarks. With two degrees from Harvard and several more by his sons, he accused Obama of spending too much time around Harvard.

If so far Romney has eschewed playing the Armageddon card, other Republicans did not hold back. The undergirding script for the new political right was Samuel Huntington's 1992 "The Clash of Civilizations" lecture; for evangelical conservatives, the Bible's either/or readings that divide the sheep from the goats. Hofstadter's "paranoid spokesman...is always manning the barricades of civilization. He constantly lives at a turning point; it is now or never in organizing resistance to conspiracy. Time is forever running out...he expresses the anxiety of those living through the last days" and may set a date for apocalypse (Hofstadter, 31). The day of reckoning is at hand, though its date is continually being moved up; don't in any case be *left behind*, the title of a best-selling series by evangelical authors that play to borderline fears of abandonment.

For Rick Santorum, history is always at a critical point of repeating the catastrophic rise of Hitler. America failed to act against Hitler early on because he was a "nice guy" and "not nearly as bad as what we think," but "it's going to be harder for this generation to figure this out. There's no cataclysmic event." As Dana Milbank comments, the "obvious implication—later denied by the candidate—was that Santorum is some modern-day Churchill and Obama is *der Fuhrer*" (Dana Milbank, "Santorum Cries Nazi," *Washington Post*, February 22, 2012, A15). In his 2006 bid for reelection to the Senate, Santorum warned, "We are in the equivalent

of the 1930s.” He brushed off the analogy by saying he’d used it a “hundred times,” which, as Milbank concludes, is the problem: Hitler lurks everywhere.

Today’s apocalyptic politicians stake their claim to omniscience from an accommodating deity who has summoned them to save the country. George W. Bush heard the call for 2000, as did Rick Perry, Michele Bachmann, Herman Cain, and Rick Santorum for 2012, raising questions about God’s ability to make up His mind. Whether or not this year’s Republican field all played the doomsday card, they exhibited the borderline’s totalized thinking to bolster their sense of certainty and resolve. “In office, you have to act as if [that phrase again!] you’re sure of what you’re doing,” Henry Kissinger recently remarked. “You don’t get rewarded for your doubts” (quoted at a Harvard address by David Ignatius, “Kissinger’s Lessons for a New Iran,” *Washington Post*, April 13, 2012, A15). Bush had already gotten the message with his signature line, “We don’t do nuance in Texas,” or in his White House, one might add.

The borderline style rests on hop-scotching over what Dostoevsky referred to as the crucible of doubt, an essential step for reaching reasoned convictions. For faith-based convictions, candidates leap onto a higher level derived from a supernatural sign, message, or encounter with a spiritual emissary. Suffering through her parents’ divorce when she was between 12 and 14, Michele Bachmann underwent the “emotional struggles of not having a strong father in my life.” At 16, her Lutheran prayer group began praying for her, and “all of a sudden the Holy Spirit began knocking on my heart’s door and I could hear the Lord tug me and call me to Himself... What it meant was that I had a father” (in Ryan Lizza, “Leap of Faith,” *New Yorker*, August 15-22, 2011, 57). Her Manichaeian version of Christianity puts her at odds with Renaissance humanism and generally with science while entitling her, along with her psychologist husband Marcus, to advocate corrective measures for “curing” homosexuality. By guaranteeing certainty, such faith forecloses issues of doubt without working them through.

Being divinely sponsored, moreover, can leave these candidates with a shaky grasp of facts. American history is not their strong suit. Sarah Palin insisted Paul Revere’s ride was to alert the

British. Michele Bachmann maintained the founding fathers vigorously opposed slavery. Rick Perry set the voting age at 21. Herman Cain had to be reminded by his interviewer of our engagement in Libya. Evolution and climate change are both off the charts, the one threatening the literal reading of Genesis, the other the unregulated economy. Faith—not reason, facts, or science—is the only reliable basis for public policy. The God of Bible knowledge is the “Lord of all of life,” Bachmann told a stump rally in 2011, about how her eyes were opened and she understood “life from a Biblical world view”: “Every bit of life, including sociology, theology, biology, politics. You name the area and walk of life” (in Lizza, 59). Here is a prime example of borderlines’ all-or-nothing style in which their grandiosity is displaced onto an omniscient, conveniently co-opted deity.

But before conveying a totally negative impression of the borderline style, one should note its positive features. When societies are threatened by clearly-defined external enemies who would endanger their legitimate system of values, borderline leaders are sought to take decisive action. Facing a realistic threat, they may be more prepared to respond quickly, and thus so perceived as better able to balance the consequences of delay against the immediate loss of lives. A “good” war can turn borderlines into heroes, but they are less able to deal with loss and guilt in victory as well as the humiliations of defeat. Their desperate strategy is usually to direct resentment toward selected domestic targets until new external foes are found. Following the Vietnam War debacle and the collapse of the Soviet bloc, borderlines struggled to locate external enemies to objectify their inner distortions of reality. The crumbling of Reagan’s Evil Empire was not unalloyed good news. Harold Myerson contends that so vital to the Republican Party was anti-communism that with its collapse, the “task of demonizing Democrats became vastly more difficult,” as evidenced by present attempts to label Obama a “European socialist” (Harold Myerson, “The GOP Misses Its Bogeyman,” *Washington Post*, February 10, 2012, A16).

Historians are lamenting the demise of moderate Republicanism and its 50-year transformation into a monolithic conservative organization (Geoffrey Kabaservice, *Rule and Ruin: The*

Downfall of Moderation and the Destruction of the Republican Party from Eisenhower to the Tea Party, 2012; Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, 2012). The trend, as Charles Lane points out, is made explicit in his op-ed title: “Return of a White Man’s Party?” (*Washington Post*, April 17, 2012, A15).

From the evidence of psychological studies, the trend may be both long-standing and deeply entrenched. Pulling together the work, notably of Robert McCrae and Arie Kruglanski, Chris Mooney found that those who opt for the left and those for the right “process information in divergent ways and differ on psychological traits.” Liberals are more “open to experience,” conservatives “less exploratory, less in need of change.” They have been called more “conscientious” because they “appreciate order and structure in their lives.” But, and here’s a key factor, as they have a “greater need for closure” and feel “discomfort with uncertainty and a desire to resolve it in a firm belief,” they evaluate new information accordingly: not in its own terms, but defensively (“Politics Is All in Our Heads,” *Washington Post*, April 15, 2012, B1, B4). For balance, one could say that liberals are too infatuated with the new, too prone to embrace change for change’s sake, too disposed to put down the wisdom of the past. Nonetheless, conservatives’ wariness and preemptively warding off new stimuli approaching their emotional radar screens is consistent with the polarizing, splitting borderline trends we’ve been tracing. The prospect that Obama represented an unfamiliar novelty on the political horizon was vehemently deflected by labeling him un-American and a Muslim (by the birthers), a dangerous anti-colonialist, a Nazi with death-panels, and a Marxist.

As the 2012 presidential race between Obama and Romney shows clear signs of getting uglier, it will be interesting to follow how the borderline option plays out for candidates and voters.

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Presidential Politics: When Is It Okay to Hate?

Frederick Stecker—Episcopal Church

In late October 2011, the Republican Party of Virginia sent out a cartoon-drawn Halloween card. Reminiscent of Michael Jackson's "Thriller," the card portrayed in one section mindless zombies in lockstep, shouting out "O-Bama"; other sections had ghoulish depictions of Nancy Pelosi and Barack Obama with a bullet hole in his head. On June 17, 2012, the Helena, Montana, *Independent Record* reported that the Republican Party of Idaho's convention hosted Rush Limbaugh as guest speaker. Outside the convention hall there was an outhouse. A sign declared it to be "Obama's Presidential Library"; it too was riddled with bullet holes, and inside the outhouse hung the president's "birth certificate" as well as scrawled messages regarding the sexual availability of Michelle Obama, Hillary Clinton, and Pelosi. In both cases, Republican Party spokespersons downplayed these incidents as minor infringements of good taste.

What is going on here? These are uncertain times, but it is worth asking: When, in presidential politics, is it okay to create hate?

Bill Moyers and Michael Winship caution that there is a breath of McCarthyism in rumors that Obama clings to neo-Communism in the air ("The Ghost of Joe McCarthy Slithers Again," *Reader Supported News* Web site, April 12, 2012). They cite the right-wing website, *Newsmax*, as suggesting "a military coup" "as a last resort to resolve 'the Obama problem.'" "Military intervention is what Obama's exponentially accelerating agenda for 'fundamental change' toward a Marxist state is inviting upon America."

In an examination of political discourse over the last 40 years, and focusing in depth on the last three presidential elections, I discovered evidence that the Republicans focus on creating fear through studied and repeated rhetoric. They assail the Democrats for weakening our country's standing in the world by attacking "the

myth of American supremacy”; they also employ metaphors which evoke apocalyptic notions of “end times” and God’s judgment.

In the opening statement of the first presidential debate of 2000, George W. Bush made reference to the threat of “another nation holding hostage or blackmailing an ally or a friend.” The source of this concern was unidentified; there was no contextual reason for his declaration. Additionally, both Bush and vice presidential candidate Cheney warned of the threat of Saddam Hussein to stability in the Middle East nine times in the 2000 debates. Cheney suggested “military action to stop that activity. I don’t think you can afford to have a man like Saddam Hussein with nuclear weapons in the Middle East.” Lamenting our leadership role in the world, Cheney said, “We have to put Iraq back in the box, so to speak...the French and the Russians are thumbing their noses at the international regime.” The perception: America’s role in the world is deteriorating.

The 2004 debates hinged directly on issues of national security in the wake of 9/11. Again in the first debate, President Bush urged the country to be resolute in the pursuit of “terrorism or the world will drift toward tragedy.” In the 2004 debates, the use of fear metaphors rose by 413%. While Kerry called for a new credibility by building stronger alliances, President Bush talked about Islam as an “ideology of hate” and spoke in religious terms about America’s “call” to intervene in the Middle East because that part of the world is “desperate for freedom [code: perfect freedom in Jesus].” Bush denigrated Kerry’s appeal to a “global test” before military action as dangerous and lavished additional stealth religious terms that signaled Biblical literalists, while inducing subconscious fears to undecided voters. For example, Bush’s educational program “No Child Left Behind” calls to mind evangelical Tim LaHaye’s popular *Left Behind* series of books, movies, and comic books about the bloody end of the world with the return of an avenging Jesus. Additionally, President Bush employed Homeland Security terror alerts to bolster his position. Terror Management Theory predicts that the recurrent exposure to fear-inducing stimuli creates a sense of impending catastrophe, hence conjuring up an unconscious fear of death in the post-9/11 debates. This may have been the turning point for the undecided voter. It made more sense

to re-elect an incumbent in an atmosphere of fear, over choosing a candidate with no experience as president.

Finally, in the 2008 campaign, laced with reminders of “fighting the terrorists over there so that we don’t have to fight them here,” Senator McCain achieved his party’s nomination in part by soliciting the endorsement of two evangelists: Rod Parsley of Ohio and James Hagee of Texas. Parsley, a “Christocrat,” announced that Christopher Columbus was seeking a route to the New World in order to eliminate Islam. Hagee had declared Hurricane Katrina the result of God’s judgment on homosexuals and proclaimed that Hitler was sent by God to have the Jewish people “come back to the land of Israel.”

In the presidential debates, McCain went negative. As the economy steadily worsened, Obama used the “Siamese-twin strategy” to link McCain to Bush. In response, McCain became petulant, refusing to look at Obama or to call him by his first name. Negative references to Obama’s voting record and lack of experience soared to 40% by the third debate. Following the debates, McCain warned that the next president “won’t have time to get used to the office.” Arnold Schwarzenegger, stumping for McCain, spoke of Obama’s anorexic physique as well as his ideas, saying “I left Europe 40 years ago because socialism killed opportunity there.” John Boehner, in Oxford, Ohio, called into question Obama’s use of an abstention (“present”) in his voting in the Illinois Senate. “In Congress, we have a red button, a green button, and a yellow button, all right. Green means ‘yes,’ red means ‘no,’ and yellow means you’re a chicken shit. And the last thing we need in the White House...is some chicken who wants to press the yellow button.” According to FactCheck.org, Obama’s choice of the yellow button occurred for only 3% of his voting record.

Throughout the last three debate cycles, there has been an escalation in Republican presidential rhetoric pertaining to fear. Threat language encourages unexamined choices; it arouses anger. It speaks to primal instincts of “fight or flight.”

Regarding large gatherings like political conventions, Gustave Le Bon notes that crowds respond to the “hypnotic suggestion of the leader and become slaves of unconscious activities of the spi-

nal cord" (*The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, 1895, 17). Freud (1922) speaks of the fusion of the ego with the ego ideal (*Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*, James Strachey, ed. and trans., 1959, 96). Otto Kernberg asserts that in unstructured groups, there is resentment toward the independent thinker, especially in times of national disorganization ("Sanctioned Social Violence, a Psychoanalytic View," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, June 2003, 84: 683-698.) He writes: "Modern communications have created a mass psychology, a tendency to sharply differentiate what is good and bad; splitting the object world into idealized and persecutory figures; [and creating] a primitive morality ...with an intolerance for emotional depth...with a tendency to replace sentiment with sentimentality. Mass psychology...is a most powerful amplifier, both of paranoid ideologies and of leadership provided by narcissistic merchants of illusions" (694).

Candidate Romney's campaign to "restore our future" is telling. In the debates for 2012, it is important to listen to what is being said; it may, however, be more important to monitor both feeling states and facts.

Frederick Stecker, DMin, PsyD, is an Episcopal minister and is studying applied psychoanalysis and culture. His book, The Podium, the Pulpit and the Republicans: How Presidential Candidates Use Religious Language in American Political Debate was released August 2011. He may be contacted at fstecker@tds.net. □

Robert Jay Lifton Festschrift

Editor's Introduction

David Lotto—Psychohistory Forum Research Associate

Robert Jay Lifton is probably the most renowned living psychohistorian, inheriting the mantle from his mentor Erik Erikson. He has authored, or co-authored, 19 books along with numerous shorter pieces. The following collection of short articles touches on just a fraction of his work.

One aspect of Lifton's work, which is addressed by David

Beisel as well as by Ayla Humphrey in this *Festschrift*, is the unique research method that he has used throughout his career. It is probably the least well-known and least written about aspect of his work, but from a psychohistorical perspective, it is extremely important. The method involves talking with and recording the conversations between the investigator and a significant number of people who have experience or knowledge about the topic being studied. It uses an interviewing technique that is both open-ended and structured, allowing for all the complexity and methodological sophistication of listening with a psychoanalytic ear and gathering important information while simultaneously letting the investigator empathically hear the experiences of those being interviewed. These experiences have often involved bearing witness to some of the most violent and destructive events of the last 60 years.

It is important to mention the lengthy article, "Lifton's Method," written by Charles Strozier and Michael Flynn that was published in the *Psychohistory Review* in 1992, which gives an excellent account of these methods. That entire issue of the *Psychohistory Review* is devoted to Lifton's work, with articles written by colleagues and friends.

The articles in this issue of *Clio's Psyche* start and end with commentaries on Lifton's recent memoir *Witness to an Extreme Century*. This memoir provides a wonderful account of his life's work, and Carol Lachman's article gives us a concise account of its contents.

Nicholas Humphrey tells the story of how he and Lifton put together their book, *In a Dark Time: Images for Survival*, as their response to the frightening possibilities of a nuclear holocaust early in the administration of our new bellicose president Ronald Reagan. He tells us how the work had its origins in a book he read as a child about an earlier dark time: England in 1940.

Ken Fuchsman's article describes Lifton's involvement with the Vietnam War, the anti-war movement, and his attempts to help returning Vietnam veterans. In particular, he traces the important role that Lifton played in getting post traumatic stress disorder to be included as a psychiatric diagnosis in the *DSM III*.

The conversion of Nazi doctors from healers to killers has

drawn the most attention of our authors. Three of the nine papers in this collection, by David Beisel, Allan Mohl, and Eric Sterling, are largely devoted to this topic. With the exception of some professional historians who have, as Beisel tells us, ignored Lifton's work on this subject, many, including Lifton, find this transformation difficult to understand and continue to search for explanations.

Anna Geifman uses some of Lifton's ideas about the conditions that can lead some people to participate in totalistic systems. This behavior explains some aspects of the history of early 20th-century Russia and the Russian Revolution. Finally, Ayla Humphrey gives us personal insight into her connection with Robert and his wife Betty Jean as well as a first-hand account of what it was like to use Lifton's research method.

These accounts demonstrate that those who have come to know Robert and his work have tremendous respect for both his intellect and his humanity.

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Lifton's Life Journey

Carol Lachman—CUNY Law School

Robert Jay Lifton is a larger-than-life figure because of his scholarly accomplishments, activism against senseless war, and stance against nuclear weapons and mind manipulation. In his compelling memoir, *Witness to an Extreme Century: A Memoir* (New York: Free Press, 2011, 430 pages), he describes and analyzes his intellectual and emotional journey, the relationships that sustained him, and what he learned along the way. Early on in this autobiographical book, readers become acquainted with the familial influences on Lifton's decision to become a psychiatrist and the roots of his aversion to all-encompassing ideologies that claim to illuminate the whole truth, an idea he later embodied in the term "totalism."

The opening section of this book describes the difficult process whereby Lifton decided to pursue his interests in the impact of historical events on the individual psyche and collective behavior. It was a bold move not to follow the traditional path for a psychiatrist in the 1950s—that is, psychoanalytic training and a practice. He indicates somewhat “tongue-and-cheek” that “it was the military that liberated me.” Conscripted as a medical officer in Korea and Japan, Dr. Lifton had to make decisions regarding airmen psychologically impacted by combat.

Lifton was fortunate that his wife Betty Jean shared his passions and interests. It was through her that he learned of American soldiers and foreign missionaries who had been brainwashed while held captive by Chinese Communists in North Korea. He saw that for most of them the mind manipulation procedures they underwent left them confused, half believing the dogma of their captors that revolution against the “imperialists” was needed. His interviews with these victims makes for fascinating reading, as Lifton experiences firsthand the coercive power of thought reform. He speaks of a missionary who told him that the abusive thought reform techniques resulted in his not being able to differentiate his beliefs from reality. This missionary described to Lifton the convoluted process his mind went through to devise a believable false confession. Lifton later learned of the apocalyptic impact of thought reform going “berserk” during the Cultural Revolution, as millions of people died.

The second part of the memoir describes Lifton's process of becoming immersed in the study of Hiroshima survivors. He indicates an increased sensitivity in the years following the release of the atomic bomb to its destructive potential for human civilization. When visiting Hiroshima in 1962, he was horrified to come across encampments of individuals with keloid scars, effects of radiation, and to see from photographs the widespread destruction of Hiroshima. At those moments, Lifton felt compelled to study the full human impact of the bombs, and he says he is “still trying” to understand and comprehend its impact on the human psyche and our civilization. He intimates that it is difficult to put into words the death-dominated aura of what he saw; perhaps only art can approach representation of this kind of annihilation. Before conduct-

ing his interviews with survivors, Lifton became immersed in Japanese culture and researched the history of Hiroshima, an old castle city founded in 1589. He came to believe that, to some extent, survivor reactions are influenced by culture. As with the Japanese, he learned that most experienced the Emperor's surrender as more of a spiritual collapse than the bomb, as the Emperor, after all, was considered like a god. With respect to many individuals, though, who were close to the bomb's impact, Lifton learned that they lived with the lifelong guilt of not being able to save their loved ones. For most people who were in Hiroshima that day, there was also a profound worry of ill health from the radiation effects to oneself and one's offspring, and some amorphous feeling of having a stain on one's genes. Lifton's later books, *Death In Life: Survivors of Hiroshima* (1967) and *The Broken Connection: Death and the Continuity of Life* (1979), touch on these themes.

Lifton's subsequent foray into the destructive impact of war on individuals was his work with Vietnam War veterans. In a casual visit with his wife to Saigon in 1954, he saw the futility of getting caught up with Vietnam's struggles but also knew of America's fear of the spread of communism. After the My Lai Massacre, Lifton set about trying to understand what he termed "the atrocity producing situation." By this, he meant the circumstances in which an average person could be capable of committing atrocities. In Vietnam, he identifies fighting a war in a far-off place, the frequent impossibility of differentiating enemy fighters from civilians, and military policies such as search and destroy missions as contributing factors toward the creation of atrocity producing situations. He also learned that for the soldiers themselves, such psychological reactions as fear, helplessness, and angry grief in response to losses of comrades led to committing these atrocities. Lifton also interviewed a soldier who did not shoot at My Lai and was surprised to find that for this soldier, military ideals prevented him from killing innocents.

With Chaim Shatan, a practicing psychiatrist, Lifton organized groups for anti-war Vietnam veterans where they could vent and discuss their experiences of witnessing or participating in grotesque killing and dying, their changing sense of their masculinity, and their feelings about returning to a society that didn't care about

them. The Vietnam War galvanized Lifton's activism. He participated in sit-ins at the Capitol which resulted in getting arrested and widened his professional identity as a "being in the world psychiatrist."

One of the last systematic research studies that Lifton conducted resulted in an acclaimed book on Nazi doctors. In the *Memoir*, he entitles the first chapter in the section on this research as "Strong Enough Stomach?" This is a visceral metaphor for Lifton's fear, agony, and rage at having to face perpetrators who had taken the oath to do no harm, but in the death camps became cold-blooded killers involved in the selection for gas chambers and or injecting harmful bacteria for experimental purposes. Lifton provides chilling detail from these interviews and how, after 30 plus years, these men often still believed in their Nazi superego. In their lovely book-filled homes they stated that the killing of the Jews was necessary to rid the German race of the stain of the Jews for the recovery of the world. In this section, Lifton coins the term "doubling" to describe a form of dissociation in which the self splits into two separate functioning wholes, an Auschwitz self and a more benign self, enabling the second to behave as an ordinary husband and father. To illustrate doubling, Lifton uses a query from the daughter of a Nazi doctor who asked him whether her father, whom she remembered as a good man, could do such bad things. Dr. Lifton responded, "The first time he did this he became evil."

In the last section of the memoir, Lifton ties up some loose ends and follows up on Hiroshima, the death-life continuity, and the resilience of the self. Readers learn that Lifton was called upon, because of his work on thought reform, to testify at the Patty Hearst trial. Lifton speaks of his continual enthusiasm for his yearly Wellfleet Conference, where individuals from various fields discuss timely topics. He also shares his ongoing appreciation of long-standing friendships with individuals like Norman Mailer, David Riesman, and Erik Erikson. In the epilogue, Lifton talks about his grief at the loss of his wife in November of 2010.

This book not only alerts us to think about the dangers of all-encompassing ideologies and into witnessing an extreme century, but also allows us to be witnesses to an extraordinary life.

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In A Dark Time

Nicholas Humphrey—Darwin College, Cambridge

When I was 12 years old and boarding at an English prep school in 1955, my mother gave me a book to read at night called *The Seven Stars of Peace*. It was “an anthology for the times,” first published in 1940, “selected and arranged” by Arthur Stanley, otherwise known as author of *The Book of the Garden*. “It is my hope,” Stanley wrote in the introduction, “that in the difficult days that lie ahead some help may be found in this little book. It has seemed worthwhile to suggest an atmosphere in which peace may be born and flourish...Walkers in darkness, we have need of light; and these *Seven Stars* can guide us in the right way.”

I first met Robert Lifton in 1981 at a theatre in New York City. His friend, the actor Harris Yulin, was performing opposite Susannah York in an off-Broadway production of “Hedda Gabler.” We went for a drink after the show. Robert knew that I was active in the campaign for nuclear disarmament in the UK, and, as we parted, gave me, somewhat shyly, a brown paper bag, which contained his book *The Broken Connection*. I read it on the plane ride home and was bowled over.

I was invited to give the Bronowski Memorial Lecture on BBC TV later that year and decided to use the opportunity to speak about the psychology of the nuclear arms race. Now, with Robert’s book, I had an entirely new line of argument. I centred my lecture on the phenomenon of “nuclearism,” borrowing freely from Robert’s ideas. The lecture created a political furor. The government demanded an explanation of the BBC’s “biased” broadcasting, and the Bronowski Lecture series was summarily cancelled. James Cameron, commenting in the *Guardian*, wrote that the lecture alone had “justified the invention of the television.” Robert must have had every reason to feel proud of the fall-out.

From then on, I had a friend in Robert, but I wouldn’t say I

had a new “soul mate.” As we got to know each other better, we realized we would never be easy intellectual companions. I am too much of a scientific sceptic, or—as Robert would see it—a rationalist spoilsport. At bottom, he and I continue to have deep disagreements regarding what the world is made of. Through the years, I have been less than willing to give the benefit of the doubt to prophets of mysterian ideas, such as John Mack, the scientist of alien abduction, or Norman Mailer, the cabbalist. But this has never (well, hardly ever) mattered to our friendship, because what Robert and I recognized from the beginning as the bond between us is our common belief in the transformative power of human imagination—scientific, religious, poetical, and, yes, even nonsensical.

Back in 1982, we decided we wanted to put together our own “anthology for the times.” We assembled the material for *In a Dark Time: Images for Survival* through a flurry of mailed exchanges, each of us reaching into our rattlebags of memorable quotes for ever darker, funnier, nobler, more revealing commentaries on the human condition. Then I went to spend a week with Robert and his wife BJ (Betty Jean) at Wellfleet. We spread out all the bits of paper on Robert’s huge study table, and, as Stanley the gardener had done, we selected and arranged them, so as create a narrative of answering voices. The novelist John Fowles said of the result: “This is the most important book to be published for many a long year.”

What were Stanley’s seven stars? They were the virtues of knowledge, faith, brotherhood, joy, gentleness, liberty, and courage. I am glad to have come to know and love a man who embodies all of them.

Nicholas Keynes Humphrey, PhD, born into a family of scientists, took his doctoral degree at Cambridge University and has had a varied career researching in neuropsychology, ethology, evolutionary psychology, and philosophy of the mind at Cambridge, the London School of Economics, Oxford, and other universities. Harvard, Princeton, and Oxford university presses have published some of his nine books; one was co-edited with Lifton. He has given numerous distinguished lectures and invited talks around the world and may be contacted at humphrey@me.com.

Robert Lifton, Vietnam Veterans, and PTSD

Ken Fuchsman—University of Connecticut

It was a time when the personal was political, and the political could become personally torturous. Another generation of young men had traveled to the farther reaches of the planet to earn their stripes in combat. Yet Vietnam was a war where allies were often enemies, where free fire zones permitted Americans to slay civilians at will, and where progress was measured by the number of the opposition killed. In order to save Vietnam villages, according to the military, it was often necessary to destroy them.

Many U.S. soldiers returned home from Southeast Asia dazed and confused, depressed and outraged, traumatized and guilt ridden. In September 1969, two months before the story of My Lai hit the papers, social worker Sarah Haley did an intake at the Boston VA Hospital with a soldier who had been at the massacre. He witnessed his fellow soldiers slaughter hundreds of innocent Vietnamese, and because he did not fire his weapon, others in his unit who did were threatening to kill him. Haley was concerned for this soldier's well-being and later she would put this man in contact with Robert Lifton (Wilbur Scott, *Vietnam Veterans since the War*, 2003, 4-6).

This is just one way Lifton became involved with suffering Vietnam veterans. In June 1967, Jan Crumb, who later adopted the pen name Jan Barry, held a meeting of six other Vietnam vets in his Manhattan apartment. This evolved into Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW). Over time, as the organization grew, the veterans talked to each other, and it became evident that many of them were haunted by their war experiences. In November 1970, under his pen name Jan Barry, Crumb wrote to Lifton, seeking any assistance he could give in helping veterans deal with their pain. Lifton asked New York psychiatrist, Chaim Shatan, to join him. Both men had been active in the anti-war movement, Lifton was co-editing a book about crimes of war, and had testified before Congress in 1969 and early 1970, both about atrocities and a phenomenon among veterans Lifton called post-Vietnam syndrome. The two doctors first met with these veterans in New York in December

1970, in what became known as rap groups. It was here that the veterans vented and exchanged thoughts and feelings about their disturbing memories with Lifton, Shatan, and other health professionals (Gerald Nicosia, *Home to War*, 2001, 158-166). These groups continued for years, and in a way, started a path that led to PTSD being included as an anxiety disorder in 1980 in *DSM III*.

Lifton and Shatan thought they were developing a new form of group therapy. The veterans in the rap groups were anti-hierarchical and wanted to have equal status with the therapists. One of the vets objected to Lifton taking notes during the sessions as he was concerned he would become “so immersed in note-taking that ...[Lifton] was not fully ‘present’ in the group” (Lifton, *Witness to an Extreme Century*, 2011, 190). During the meetings, Lifton then refrained from writing. He did see the groups as proceeding from “affinity,” being fully engaged with each other, and assisting the veterans “to initiate their own process...on their own terms...even when calling in others with expert knowledge” (quoted in Nicosia, 163). Here Lifton combined his professional knowledge of trauma with respecting the need for the veterans to develop a sense of autonomy and initiative.

In 1973, Lifton published *Home From The War: Vietnam Veterans: Neither Victims nor Executioners*. Lifton later said that this is “the angriest of my books” and is “an act of protest” (Lifton, 2011, 231). In this book, he repeated what he had been saying for years, namely that the Vietnam War “is best understood as an *atrocious-producing situation*” (Lifton, 1973, 41). Though Lifton clearly placed the blame for the resultant consequences on the U.S. policy makers, he was not insensitive to what being in such an environment did to the combatants. The My Lai survivor whom Haley encountered in her first day on the job was interviewed by Lifton for this book. This witness to a Vietnam atrocity, according to Lifton, felt guilty that he had not done something to stop the slaughter. Beyond guilt was disillusionment. Lifton said this conscience ridden veteran “had difficulty extricating himself from an abyss of infinite evil” (1973, 116). His focus in describing these veterans highlights the remorse of the perpetrator and/or survivor. Many veterans have “guilt...associated with transgression—with having crossed boundaries that should not be crossed.” As either

murderers themselves or witnesses to the death of their buddies, these soldiers cannot justify to themselves “what they have seen and done”; they are “caught in a vicious circle of death and guilt” (1973, 100-101).

Lifton’s remedy for processing through these horrors is reminiscent of the therapy of William Rivers, the World War I era British psychiatrist. Animating guilt, Lifton argues, involves “bringing oneself to life around one’s guilt.” This entails a dialectic between experiencing the guilt and going beyond it; a kind of catharsis that results in “connection, integrity...life-affirming patterns” (1973, 127-128). Lifton’s ethically centered analysis and solution is seen as a way beyond the abyss of infinite evil. A therapeutic process could assist troubled veterans deal with the psychological legacy of their combat experience.

There was a problem, though; when mental health providers sought official assistance for Vietnam veterans with severe stress and extreme anxiety, they ran into a roadblock. In order to make a proper diagnosis and get insurance coverage, psychiatrists relied on the diagnostic and statistical manuals published by the American Psychiatric Association. The first such manual, published in 1952, recognized gross stress reaction as a diagnosis. The second such document, issued in 1968, did not. There was thus no appropriate *DSM* assessment of the syndromes the Vietnam veterans were experiencing. When word got out that *DSM II* was being revised, Lifton, Shatan and Haley, among others, began to advocate for inclusion of a disorder related to post traumatic stress in *DSM III*.

Administrators of the forthcoming updated *DSM* wanted to upgrade the existing document to make it more scientifically reliable. Robert Spitzer chaired the task force revising *DSM II*. Initially Spitzer said there were no plans to add a disorder on stress reactions from combat. The advocates of adding such a diagnosis began to organize to arouse public interest in making such a change. Along with others in 1974, Lifton helped arrange for New York Pacifica radio station, WBAI, to devote a full day of their programming to the plight of Vietnam veterans. The next year he and Shatan participated in a panel on the readjustment of Vietnam Veterans at the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association. Afterward, Lifton, Shatan and others talked with Spitzer, and

then soon after Shatan formed the Vietnam Veterans Working Group to find research supporting a combat stress related diagnosis for the new *DSM*. This group compiled records on over 700 Vietnam veterans and kept Spitzer updated on their research. Spitzer began to reconsider his former position and formed a Committee on Reactive Disorders for the new manual. Of the six members, three were from Shatan's working group, including himself, Lifton and a Vietnam veteran, Jack Smith. The chair of the group, psychiatrist Nancy Andreasen, studied burn victims but had a previous career as an English professor. When Andreasen discovered that the burn victims experienced post-traumatic stress, she became sympathetic to including a trauma related stress disorder in the new *DSM*. In a January 1978 meeting with Spitzer, Lifton, Shatan and veteran Jack Smith discussed their research with Spitzer. Later that month, Spitzer and colleagues announced there would be a diagnosis of post-traumatic disorder in the forthcoming *DSM III* (Scott, 59-66). Lifton later wrote that he "managed to have some of the language I used, such as the concept of psychic numbing" included. He did wish that "the concept of an atrocity-producing situation" could have been added, but recognized that "does not qualify as a psychiatric disorder" (Lifton, 2011, 396).

When post-traumatic stress disorder was adopted, it applied to such experiences as rape, combat, earthquakes, death camps, large fires and airplane crashes, among others. *DSM III* says that PTSD includes "characteristic symptoms following a psychologically traumatic event that is generally outside the range of usual human experience." The symptoms can include extreme startle response, nightmares, sleep disturbances, intrusive memories, and guilt feelings (American Psychiatric Association, 1980, *DSM - III*, 236-238). With the adoption of PTSD in *DSM III* there was the unusual marriage of anti-war activities and academic research that dealt with a serious disorder. An estimated 7.8% of Americans will have some form of PTSD in their lifetime (<http://www.ptsd.ne.gov/what-is-ptsd.html>). Lifton's prominent role in getting PTSD adopted is one of his most lasting legacies and one that has given opportunities for help to millions of suffering Americans.

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Genocidal Agenda: Witnessing the Role of the Nazi Doctors

David R. Beisel—SUNY RCC

The new preface to the 2000 paperback edition of Robert Jay Lifton's acclaimed study, *The Nazi Doctors* (1986), begins with a few thoughts on the trauma of witnessing and bears witness to his baring witness, the inevitable and potentially excruciating emotional consequences of witnessing historical events steeped in trauma. (He returns to the theme in the book's four-page afterword, "Bearing Witness.") It is clear that one has to pay a steep emotional price for entering the horrific terrain of Nazi evil, a consequence recognized by many Holocaust scholars in the past and even by some historians.

Indeed, the subject of witnessing can be found in Lifton's other historical and psychological work and is reflected again in the title of his recent autobiography, *Witness to An Extreme Century* (2011). In *The Nazi Doctors*, Lifton reminds us that, "One cannot expect to emerge from a study of this kind spiritually unscathed," revealing that his preoccupation, perhaps even his own traumatic obsession with Nazi evil and the Nazi practice of medicalized killing, has not dimmed with the passage of time. "Fourteen years after the publication of this book," he confesses, "the Nazi doctors continue to inhabit my mind" (*The Nazi Doctors*, 2000 edition, vii).

How could they not? After one enters the darker regions of Nazi thinking and practice, it becomes clear that no final emotional escape is possible since Nazi evil is and will remain one of the essential eternal issues for future generations—the elusive questions of how and why such horrific acts could be carried out by "normal," otherwise "decent" men—and it remains a universal consequence because of the possible traumatic impact on any researcher empathically entering into such a harrowing and horrific subject. Such work requires persistence buttressed with considerable emotional and mental toughness.

Psychological historians who have not read Lifton's important study or those who might re-read it are likely to find them-

selves particularly interested in the masterful ways Lifton interweaves his subjective experiences into his narrative, showing how his emotional reactions became part of his research model. His many personalized references are a singularly successful application of the ideas developed by Erickson's notion of disciplined subjectivity, though one suspects many historians will find Lifton's descriptions far too personal. His explorations of his own motivations and the unfolding and often conflicted emotions he found operating within himself during his one-on-one interviews with the Nazi doctors makes for fascinating reading. They intersect and compliment his explanation of the rigorous and lengthy scholarly methods he employed doing his research.

Lifton's strong emphasis on these rigorous research models is an important dimension of the study, since this emphasis (it seems to me) was meant as a strategy for convincing skeptical historians of the soundness of his study, a study made even more suspect for them by the disciplined subjectivity Lifton emphasizes throughout. His emphasis on the rigor of his method is made doubly necessary because it was precisely at the time he was gathering research and doing interviews—the late-1970s—that psychological history was coming under increasing attack in books and in a series of scholarly publications, from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* to *The American Historical Review*.

To his credit, Lifton has never shied away from referring to himself as a psychohistorian, though he has sought to distance himself somewhat from the field by warning against its tendency toward “reductionism” and by his insistence in many of his writings (as an early example see “On Contemporary Man and Woman” from *History and Human Survival*, 1971, 210), as well as in *The Nazi Doctors*, that while he is indebted to some of Freud's insights, he is definitely not a dogmatic follower of psychoanalysis, a point well made in Tom Artin's recent web-review of *Witness to an Extreme Century* (truthdig.com/arts-culture/item/the_examination_of_evil_20110804).

It is important to recognize that 25 years had elapsed between Raul Hilberg's groundbreaking three-volume study of *The Destruction of the European Jews* and the publication of *The Nazi Doctors*. Hilberg's 1961 study first brought the Holocaust to the

attention of historians and the public as a specific event of the *Nazizeit* and as a central part of the history of World War II in Europe. Of course, even before that, many observers were well aware of the role of doctors in the Nazi genocidal agenda, yet that role—Mengele’s experiments with twins at Auschwitz, for example—was understood as a small part of the overall phenomenon. Lifton’s work changed all that. By bringing the doctors to center stage, he made a singular contribution to Holocaust study as well as helping to make psychological sense of genocides in general, also one of this study’s wider goals.

Lifton pointed out once again what all researchers come to know: “The unfortunate truth is that people can all too readily be socialized to killing...enabling all kinds of men and women to adapt to existing genocidal institutions and prevailing genocidal mentalities” (*The Nazi Doctors*, 2000 edition, x). What psychological factors make this possible is the crucial question historians have been trying to solve for decades. In Lifton’s able hands, his examination of “medicalized killing” proves to be a key to unraveling the enigma of Nazi evil in general.

“At its heart,” he writes, “is the transformation of the physician—of the medical enterprise itself—from healer to killer.” In my mind, this is not just an issue for the Nazi doctors but is crucial for Nazi Germany as a whole. How did it happen that killing became a moral imperative for Germans, a compulsory “have to” obligation of the German people?

Lifton proves it was the selling of the notion by means of the biological model, a fantasy of the German people as an organic “reality,” whose “health”—indeed whose very existence—was threatened by the Jewish “virus.” Earlier historians clearly understood the importance of this aspect of Nazi thinking; Lifton’s study made the complicity of the medical professionals who joined in the fantasy crystal clear as they helped “corroborate” it as a “reality” for both themselves and the larger German community.

How professionals who took the Hippocratic Oath could engage in the most heinous crimes, including sadistic “scientific” experiments on children, is met head on by Lifton by showing how a conjunction of psychological factors came into play. The now

familiar notion of crossing the threshold of collective killing through the so-called "euthanasia program" was one of them, the blending of ideas and rationalizations from eugenics, racist fantasies, and the Nazis' medical-ideological theory another.

Two additional themes are crucial to Lifton's explanation: the idea of "doubling" and the notion of "numbing."

Lifton defines "doubling" as the ability of the Nazi doctors (and others by implication) to split off part of themselves in the "the formation of a second, relatively autonomous self, which enables one to participate in evil." Some have wondered if creating a new category was necessary, since the psychoanalytic concepts of splitting and dissociation were readily available for elaboration. Lifton attempts to deal with this objection by asserting that splitting is only one aspect of a five-part mental strategy in the overall process of doubling.

Another criticism of doubling has been offered by political psychologist C. Fred Alford, who has studied hundreds of testimonies of Holocaust survivors and presents compelling evidence that suggests "doubling" may be more appropriately applied to what happened to the psyches of death camp survivors than to the minds of their persecutors ("Why Holocaust Testimony is Important, and How Psychoanalytic Interpretation Can Help...But Only to a Point," *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*, September 2008, Vol. 13, No. 3, 221-239).

As for the idea of "numbing," it is familiar enough, is widely used by social scientists, and is commonly found in public discourse. Given Lifton's ambivalence toward psychoanalysis, some critics have wondered if his developing this theme was not a disguised way of introducing other psychoanalytic principles, such as repression, through the back door.

The Nazi Doctors was reviewed in the popular press and in scholarly journals and was widely praised as having made a major contribution to our understanding of the Holocaust and the Nazi era. This initial reaction makes the book's later fate somewhat surprising.

Historians learn in graduate school to be scrupulous about

their sources and always to give full credit where credit is due. My impressionistic survey of major Holocaust and Nazi-era studies published over the past two decades has revealed that not all historians have actually lived up to their professional obligation.

One can of course find *The Nazi Doctors* listed in the bibliographies of many standard works on the Holocaust and on the history of the Nazis. Yet, there are far too many other studies, including those with indexed references to “medicalized killing,” that fail to list *The Nazi Doctors* at all. Even in those instances where Lifton’s book is listed in the historical study’s bibliography, his findings have too often been missing from the narrative. If only half of the historians who should know better continue to ignore Lifton’s important work, it constitutes a gross injustice to psychohistory, genocide studies, and to the histories of the Holocaust and of Nazi Germany.

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Lifton on Healers Turned to Killers

Allan Mohl—Psychohistory Forum Research Associate

A unique contribution to Holocaust literature is Robert Jay Lifton’s *The Nazi Doctors* (1986). In it he describes in detail the Auschwitz death camp, including the selection process and the disposal of bodies after gassing. But what is most intriguing is his exploration of the question, “How could physicians, trained as healers, become killers?” It is this question that engaged Lifton for nearly 10 years in interviews with former Nazi doctors and Auschwitz survivors, as well as in extensive historical research. Lifton illuminates the Nazi “biomedical vision,” whereby mass murder was committed to “heal” the racially “diseased” body of the German nation. He shows that from the Nazis’ little understood early program of sterilization and “euthanasia” to the death camps, doc-

tors were indispensable to Hitler's Final Solution. These physicians went far beyond performing grotesque experiments to directly involving themselves in the entire killing program.

Robert Jay Lifton's description of the doctors' behavior in psychological detail was striking, especially in the specific environment of Auschwitz, where they routinely engaged in killing. The doctors became murderers through "doubling," forming a second, relatively autonomous self—a process enhanced by the Nazi vision of a revitalized German people. Using portraits of SS physicians, including Josef Mengele and the chief doctor of Auschwitz, Lifton described the polarity of the Auschwitz self that wavered between the sense of omnipotent control over the lives and deaths of prisoners and the seemingly opposite sense, of being a powerless cog in a vast machine controlled by unseen others (Lifton, *The Nazi Doctors*, 1986, 447). These polarized feelings were undoubtedly widespread among death-camp personnel, but they had special meaning for doctors, who ordinarily experience both extremes of feeling in everyday confrontations with disease and death—accompanying struggle with their own death anxiety. The polarity took on outrageous dimensions in Auschwitz, as Nazi doctors called forth feelings of omnipotence and related sadism on the one hand, and masochism on the other, in order to reduce this death anxiety.

Lifton saw doubling as the psychological vehicle for the Nazi doctors' Faustian bargain with the evil and diabolical environment: in exchange for his contribution to the killing, he was offered various psychological and material benefits on behalf of privileged adaptation. Beyond Auschwitz was the larger Faustian temptation offered to German doctors in general, that of becoming the theorists and implementers of a cosmic scheme of racial cure by means of victimization and mass murder. Humans are always ethically responsible for the bargains they make—a responsibility in no way abrogated by the fact that much doubling takes place outside of awareness. In exploring doubling, Lifton engaged in psychological probing on behalf of illuminating evil. For the Nazi doctor in Auschwitz, doubling was likely to mean a choice of evil. He provides considerable analysis of the five characteristics involved in this process (Lifton, 419).

Toward the end of the book, Lifton describes two images,

among many, that continue to reverberate with him. The first is from Auschwitz itself, when he visited the camp many years after the Holocaust. He was shown the many exhibits that emphasize the evil that human beings can do to others. The room that left the most profound impression on him was the simplest of all; a room full of shoes, mostly baby shoes.

The second image is from a talk with a Jewish doctor who survived Auschwitz incarceration and described doing what he and a few other prison MDs did under these extreme circumstances. While dispensing what few aspirins were available, they also “made a point in the process of offering a few words of reassurance and hope.” It helped. “He concluded that by maintaining one’s determination to try to heal, even under the most extreme conditions, [he] was impressed with how much one could do” (Lifton, 504). Hope in Auschwitz was life preserving.

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Using Lifton’s Work in Teaching the Holocaust

Eric Sterling—Auburn University

Ever since I started teaching my Jewish Literature of the Holocaust class and publishing on the Shoah 19 years ago, I have been influenced by the insightful and poignant writings of Robert Jay Lifton. But of all his publications, the one that has influenced my students and me the most is *The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide* (1986). In this short essay, I will discuss how I have used this seminal book in my teaching of Elie Wiesel’s *Night*.

The focal point of my course is *Night*. Wiesel discusses selections several times in his narrative, particularly how the selections frightened him and his father Shlomo, making them fear that they would be sent to the gas chamber and that their strong, interde-

pendent father-son bond would end in death. Because Wiesel does not provide many in-depth details about the selection process and students want to know more about this prominent aspect of Auschwitz, I turn to Dr. Lifton's insightful book.

Wiesel discusses the fear that inmates in his block experienced regarding selections. For instance, he mentions that his father, upon having his number written down during an inspection, gave—as in bequeathed—Elie his knife and spoon: “My inheritance” (75). Students read about the infamous Josef Mengele and wonder whether his behavior was typical for SS doctors. Wiesel barely mentions Mengele, so they are pleased to learn more about the doctor in Lifton's book. They are also intrigued by the kind inmate doctor who operates on Wiesel's foot: was this compassion typical or were camp doctors more like the deceitful dentist who wanted to extract Elie's gold crown? *The Nazi Doctors* addresses these issues, providing students with valuable information from the psychiatrist's own research and the eyewitness accounts that Lifton includes, such as those by Dr. Jacob R., Hermann Langbein, Marianne F., Dr. Franz Lucas, and Dr. B.

Students who read Wiesel's memoir might believe initially that the selections were an organized and orderly process conducted on regular intervals, but Lifton's research shows them that the selections were rather arbitrary and disorganized, both in regard to when they were performed and how the inmates were selected. Wiesel indicates, for instance, that when his father was chosen, it was inevitable that his number would not be forgotten, so he remained in the barracks (74). Lifton, however, provides instances of arbitrary processes and chaos, quoting prison doctor Otto Wolken who said that a doctor sometimes chose prisoners who “for some reason or another, didn't please him.... There was no medical examination” (182). Lifton cites Marianne F., who survived a selection even though she was very ill with typhus while healthy people were chosen to die (182). Furthermore, Lifton mentions that Wolken saved lives by altering records, providing prisoners with the numbers of deceased inmates, removing names of selected prisoners from the lists, and once stealing “before the eyes of the camp doctor...a pile of...reports from which the numbers for the gassing list were supposed to be taken” (183-184).

By reading Wiesel's account, students learn how he, Shlomo, and other inmates felt about the selections, but they have no way of discerning the feelings of the Nazi doctors toward this elimination process. Lifton's book comes in handy in this regard as well. He quotes an anonymous Auschwitz prison doctor who says that the SS doctors primarily were unaffected by the selections and "did their work just as someone who goes to an office goes about his work," even though they were responsible for deciding which Jews and gypsies were put to death (193). However, Lifton sagaciously complicates the issue, placing physicians into different categories and emphasizing the excessive use of alcohol and the impact of selections upon new doctors. Lifton's focus on the camp doctors' dependence on alcohol suggests to my students that the doctors were not as unaffected as some historians, scholars, and eyewitnesses have asserted because alcohol allowed a temporary escape from the pangs of conscience.

Lifton characterizes SS extermination camp doctors in varying degrees, from those enthusiastic about selections and killing inmates, to those who were ambivalent, to those who were reluctant, to those who were initially resistant and occasionally refused to blindly serve the Nazi genocidal ideology. Lifton's classifications correlate well with Hermann Langbein's three categories of Nazi camp physicians: the zealots who took pleasure in genocide, the indifferent who simply went about their business by conducting the selections because it was their job, and the reluctant doctors who thought they had no choice but to obey. Lifton also juxtaposes Mengele with Dr. Franz Lucas to demonstrate that, although both were camp physicians, a significant difference existed amongst the doctors who conducted the selections and made life and death decisions on a daily basis (195). Mengele's cruelty is well documented, but Lucas was a compassionate and gentle man who was reluctant to kill. Lifton points out that kind doctors who had a good bedside manner benefited the camp inmates who desperately needed help and benevolence and who were at the mercy of the physician they encountered.

Yet, to be fair, Dr. Lifton quotes former SS Doctor Ernst B., a gentle camp doctor (the only doctor at Auschwitz who neglected to conduct selections) who suggested that the results from the selec-

tions conducted by sadistic and kind doctors were not as different as one might assume. Dr. B. claimed that the difference between the cruel and the humane doctors during selections was simply a distinction in bedside manner and that the results of selections by the two extremes of physicians were similar. He asserted that the prisoners' different attitudes toward the cruel and the kind doctors "had to do with their 'typical SS' authoritarian demeanor...that it was little more than a question of bedside manner" (195). Dr. B. admitted that the prisoners feared some SS physicians and felt comfortable with others but claimed that the reason was not because the inmates were treated differently—"the source of the difference in their reputations being only 'their personal relationships with patients'" (195). Although Lifton respects Dr. B., he disagrees with his perspective. Although Dr. B., a humane SS doctor in Auschwitz, had no reason to lie by minimizing the demarcation between sadistic doctors such as Mengele and humane physicians like himself, Lifton politely disputes his assertion, claiming that "Dr. B., for psychological reasons of his own, minimized actual differences between himself and fellow SS doctors" (195).

My students learn a great deal from this section in Lifton's book, not only from the information he provides, but also from the way in which he interacts with Dr. B.'s observations. Many students find quotations that support their thesis and accept them as truth, without challenging the statements, particularly when they are eyewitness accounts; some students see claims made in a book and assume that they must be veracious because they are in print. In this example, however, Lifton's approach shows students that they must be circumspect and skeptical as he carefully challenges Dr. B.'s statement. It is unsettling to them when a humane former SS doctor claims that there was little difference in the results of the actions taken by the gentle and the sadistic doctors in Auschwitz. Students can readily comprehend why an evil doctor would make such a claim—to mitigate the extent of his crimes and a subsequent punishment—but they have trouble understanding why one of the nicest physicians would make this statement. Lifton posits that Dr. B. does so for psychological reasons, which indicates that not all Holocaust testimony, particularly that given decades after the Shoah by former SS men, is completely, 100% reliable.

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Lifton's "Historical Dislocation" Applied to Russia

Anna Geifman—Boston University

"Historical dislocation" is a pivotal paradigm of Robert Lifton. It emphasizes an abrupt breakdown in the traditional value system, including ethical and aesthetic conventions—a breach "of connection men have long felt with vital and nourishing symbols of their cultural practices." In *Boundaries: Psychological Man in Revolution* (1970), he wrote that these symbols revolve "around family, idea systems, religions, and the life cycle in general"—every value, meaning, and link that sustains our psychological existence (43). Lifton accentuates a danger entailed in a situation, where the old is no longer valid and the new is not yet integrated. A case study of the Russian Revolution, for which "historical dislocation" was a cardinal precondition, is a perfect illustration of the validity of his paradigm.

"Things fall apart; the center cannot hold." While referring to Europe generally, W. B. Yeats' line depicts perfectly the early-20th-century Russia. The country's swift industrialization undercut centuries-old mores based on cooperative land cultivation. Vigorous urbanization lured thousands into the rapidly growing cities, impeding customary interactions and routines. The intelligentsia felt the urgency for Russia to catch up with the rest of Europe and to become a "modern society" by espousing individualism and by

recognizing the individual's special powers and responsibilities.

Prior to the 1900s, with the strong cultural emphasis on the shared, at the expense of the individualistic lifestyle, an ordinary Russian had comparatively low-level experience as a distinct, separate being. His self-perception was closer to what Alan Roland identified the "we-self" of India and Japan, as opposed to the "I-self" of Western societies. Noting the "inadequate development of the personal factor" in his country's life, philosopher Nikolai Berdiaev emphasized that the Russian "has always loved to live in the warmth of the collective." It spared him from angst-provoking conflicts, such as aspiration to control one's life through independent decision-making and simultaneous desire to avoid risk and relegate responsibility. Around the turn of the 20th century, for the first time in history, the average Russian, no longer confined within the commune, began to perceive himself as "I," not "we."

As with other pivotal points in Russia's history, its "historical dislocation" occurred too abruptly to allow a smooth transformation from collectivism to individualism. The displaced and unsettled people found themselves as loners in the urban environment. They experienced the new situation as arduous and disheartening. Thousands had severed physical and spiritual ties with their indigenous communities, but only relatively few found sufficient inner resources to face the demands that modernity made on their maladjusted selves. Perhaps more consequential than wretched economic conditions—and in the early stages of the industrialization they were miserable indeed—psychological adaptation to the new lifestyle was remarkably slow.

Outside the commune, existence was disconcerting and devoid of basic security. The breakdown of social values led to widespread disappointment marked by depressive states of senselessness, and unreality—which Lifton calls "death-in-life." Concomitant with alienation, victims of "historical dislocation" suffered from an array of life-undermining symptoms, such as emptiness, apathy, hopelessness, and disengagement (Andrei Belyi, *Na rubezhe dvukh stoletii*, 1966, 5). Lifton described the obscure presentiment of non-being that permeated the dislocated and rootless souls in which vitality had thus been subverted. Modern individualistic society provides few cultural means of relief for mental

strain through self-abrogation and release from Nietzsche's *principium individuationis*, says psychologist Karen Horney. Yet, one may reduce devastating effects of individuation-related angst by abandoning himself "in something greater, by getting rid of the self with its doubts, conflicts, pains, limitations and isolation" (Horney, *Neurotic Personality of Our Time*, 1937, 270, 278-279). To escape the anguish associated with "historical dislocation," its many victims rejected the ailing "I" and sought to dissolve it in a new commune—the subversive political movement.

By immersing themselves into a radical camp, ostensibly for the sake of a great common goal, the proselytes give themselves a chance to behave "selflessly" in the strictly morphological sense of the word. Trapped between the requirement to activate their befuddled selves and the torturous difficulty of making choices, building relationships, and utilizing opportunities, they became easy prey in the hands of recruiters on the lookout for the "dislocated." Dejected, they readily succumbed to incitement to turn against the environment that rendered them failures.

In various parts of Europe in the second half of the 19th century, the new mobility and urbanization created "an extraordinary number of persons uprooted from ancestral soil and local allegiances," who experienced "grave economic insecurity and psychological maladjustment," according to Carlton J. H. Hayes in *A Generation of Materialism* (1941, 254). The Russians were even less prepared for the advent of modernization; vulnerable to an even greater degree, they were increasingly prone to take an opportunity to release the bottled-up rage. The difficult transformation process in Europe turned into a crisis in Russia, where it surfaced suddenly around 1900 and spiraled swiftly into a political calamity.

The protest was intrinsically nihilistic. While seeking to "desymbolize" age-old culture and to attack its meanings, the rebels did not share one set of beliefs or program. The "the banner that united us was the denial of life that had formed us," recaptured writer Andrei Bely wrote in *Na rubezhe dvukh stoletii* (4). "In a certain sense," recalled a memoirist, "we were the revolution before the revolution"—so "profoundly, mercilessly, and fatally" they destroyed the old tradition" (Aleksandr Blok cited in W. Bruce Lincoln, *Sunlight at Midnight: St. Petersburg and the Rise of Modern*

Russia, 2000, 210). What Lifton recognized as “ideological hunger,” they sought to satiate with a feverish quest for a new system of values. The communist paradise was to overcome the trauma of “historical dislocation.”

Anna Geifman, PhD, has written and edited numerous works, including her most recent work Death Orders: The Vanguard of Modern Terrorism in Revolutionary Russia (Praeger, 2010). For over 20 years, Geifman has been Professor of History at Boston University, teaching undergraduate and graduate classes on Russian and Soviet history, modern terrorism, and psychohistory. She also holds a senior research position in the Political Science Department at Bar-Ilan University in Israel. Dr. Geifman may be contacted at annageifman@hotmail.com.

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A “Yes Man” In All the Right Ways

Ayla Humphrey—University of Cambridge

“Yes.” That is the word that comes to mind of when I think of Robert Jay Lifton. His sentences so regularly start with the word “yes,” spoken in his deep resonant but gentle voice: “yes” with an affirmative shake of the head, “yes” with a lift in intonation and a doubtful nod to one shoulder, and “yes” with the vocal rhythm of a mother rocking a baby as he pats his conversant in a reassuring way on the back. This word is meaningful because it speaks of Robert’s great interpersonal and intellectual gift. Robert is a “yes man” open to experience, and most importantly, open to the experience of other people. He is also a man of vital principle, but principle which is laid over a foundation of knowledge accessed through his openness.

I first knew Robert as a mentor. I was a psychology graduate student at Columbia University and working under his tutelage on a McArthur funded project, “Nuclear Imagery and the American Self.” The project-group met every week in City University, where Robert led the Center for Violence and Human Survival that he had created. Robert is a big man with big ideas. Big ideas, but we were guided to believe that these big ideas could be found in the “little”

man. Robert had us interviewing the homeless on the streets of New York, and I was sent to a Christian fundamentalist church in East Harlem to speak with men and women who lived every day in the hope that it would be their last, if they were so lucky as to be raptured to heaven in the final burning moments of a glorious nuclear apocalypse. Robert thought that the lived experience of the people was critical in understanding the mass psychological gestalt that gave (gives) rise to the elite political policy. By listening quietly to the people we interviewed, we were told remarkable things about individual inner life.

Looking back almost 30 years later, I understand that it was Robert's ability to listen and to nod "yes" that gave him access to the stories of Nazi doctors, Vietnam veterans, and survivors of Hiroshima. He has the extraordinary ability to maintain his own clear and strong moral values while allowing others to speak of theirs.

Robert has titled his recent memoirs, *Witness to an Extreme Century*. A witness—"one who can give a first-hand account of something seen, heard, or experienced." As I began this book, I was hit by Robert's capacity to see, hear and experience the world around him. This was also true of his late wife, B.J. Lifton, who at the start of their marriage left with Robert for Asia and moved in with a Japanese family while writing for Japanese newspapers.

Robert had a special "yes" for B.J.—"yes, dear." The two of them were a duo. My memories of them are underscored by the gratitude I have to both of them: for Robert first introducing me to my husband and for B.J. finagling so that the whole thing would work out. To me, Robert is an extraordinary and dear person, as was Betty Jean.

Ayla Humprhey, PhD, is a child and adolescent clinical psychologist working in the University of Cambridge's Department of Psychiatry and the Cambridge and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust. She trained as a clinical psychologist at Columbia University and the Schneider Children's Hospital—affiliated with the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She has a special interest in developmental disorders of childhood, the development of mental health screening and early intervention for young children. Dr. Humprhey may be contacted at ayla.humphrey@cpft.nhs.uk.

Reflections on a Memoir: The Mind of a Moralist

David Lotto—Psychohistory Forum Research Associate

It's not possible to do justice to the 400-plus pages of Robert Lifton's memoir *Witness to an Extreme Century: A Memoir* (New York: Free Press, 2011, 430 pages) in a short article like this. It is a richly packed account of more than 50 years of scholarship and activism written in his characteristic lucid and fluid prose, providing an excellent overview and summary of the vast body of work he has created. He gives us glimpses of the many mentors, colleagues, and students with whom he has been involved as well as descriptions of the events he has experienced.

One of the things I find most remarkable about the Robert Lifton who emerges in this memoir is how clear and consistent his moral and political stance has remained throughout his work. In the preface of the book, Lifton expresses simply and elegantly the basis of his moral and political positions.

“I've been moved by the victimized people I encountered and have spoken out publicly against the forces responsible for their suffering. That identification with survivors of cruel events has in fact been a major source of my social activism. After what I had heard and seen, it became quite natural—indeed urgent—for me to take stands against mind control, nuclear weapons, American war making, and Nazi-like cruelty and genocide” (xii).

Lifton has remained true to this sensibility throughout. He is affirming the principle that if one witnesses cruelty, violence, and injustice, or evil, as being displayed by an individual or group toward others, there should be a moral imperative to speak out, make public, and bear witness to its existence. As he puts it, “I felt that I had gained special knowledge of the impact of these abuses, which could inform my witness, and I was able to make use of my unusual vantage point to become an advocate for peaceful paths to justice and political decency” (xii).

One problem with doing this is that it can bring opposition and criticism. Lifton has been the recipient of a good deal of both. For example, being subjected to investigation and harassment, including having his phone tapped by the FBI because of hosting a fundraiser in support of a group of Catholic anti-war activists who had been arrested. Lifton responded to this intrusion with an active effort, which included writing letters of complaint to various senators along with publishing an op-ed piece in the *New York Times*.

Similarly, when pressured by Turkish inspired criticisms of his published remarks about the Armenian genocide, Lifton, along with Eric Markusen and Roger Smith, published a scholarly article in the *Journal of Holocaust and Genocide Studies* documenting details of the Armenian genocide as well as the complicity of the United States government and some parts of American academia in supporting the Turkish denials of responsibility.

This incident concerning the Armenian genocide is a good example of the blending of scholarship and activism that has characterized Lifton's work. In the article, he wrote that when scholars deny genocide in the face of decisive evidence, they foster a "false historical consciousness" and can contribute to future atrocities because "unopposed genocide begets new genocide" (400). He writes; "The impact of the paper astonished us. It was widely reported on in a way that few articles in serious journals are, especially by publications concerned with issues involving academia." Furthermore, "the article had an electrifying effect on the Armenian community in America, which had felt itself beleaguered by bullying Turkish falsifications that were more or less encouraged by the U.S. State Department policy (to avoid alienating a NATO ally)" (400). The political impact of the article followed from its scholarship.

Another aspect of Lifton's moral integrity is the manner in which he has remained faithful to his principles and the politics that follow from them despite pressures and temptations to do otherwise. He has had offers to collaborate with those in power. In 1962, he was approached either by the CIA or military intelligence with an offer to aid them by using his knowledge about thought reform and brainwashing techniques: much as, more recently during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, military intelligence and the CIA

have employed psychologists to assist them in maximizing the effects of certain “enhanced interrogation” techniques.

Lifton was able to make use of his knowledge of thought reform when he had the opportunity to testify against the CIA in a case involving Dr. Ewen Cameron, a prominent psychiatrist who worked with the CIA in developing methods of mind manipulation. These methods included using sensory deprivation and hallucinogenic drugs to induce psychological breakdown. He was also able to make public the CIA’s role in the death of Frank Olson, which he learned about from his colleague and friend Eric Olsen, Frank’s son. Lifton has also twice belatedly discovered that both his first research project on Chinese Communist thought reform and a later conference he participated in were partially supported by CIA funds.

This steadfast principled moral consistency stands in contrast to so many of the positions taken by other Jewish intellectuals with leftist sensibilities who underwent left to right, or at least rightward, political transformations over the course of their careers, such as Irving Kristol, Daniel Bell, Arthur Koestler, and even Irving Howe and David Riesman.

A major thread throughout Lifton’s work has been his engagement with what he names totalism: an all-encompassing system of beliefs involving a passionate attachment to an ideology along with the desire to battle against ideas or people that are seen as not sharing in the belief system. His first focus was on the rigidly dogmatic ideology of Mao’s China and the accompanying fanaticism that led to the uses of brainwashing and thought reform. As he says concerning the centrality of this engagement, “My thought reform study became a leitmotif for all of my work. Everything I’ve done since connects somehow with totalism and mind manipulation, and all too frequently with expressions of apocalypticism” (85).

The four major events that he has studied—Chinese thought reform, the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, the Vietnam War, and the behavior of Nazi doctors—follow this leitmotif. For Maoist China and Nazi Germany, the connection with totalism is clear. With Hiroshima and atomic weapons, Lifton sees the totalistic ideology of

what he calls “nuclearism,” the worshipful attitude toward the bomb paired with the magical belief that the bomb’s power will save us, as crucial to understanding our relationship to nuclear weapons. In Vietnam the totalistic fanaticism of our cold warrior leadership led us into the “atrocities producing situations” of that war.

Other aspects of totalism that Lifton has examined include religious fundamentalism, in particular Aum Shinrikyo and other religious groups that believe in and wish for the coming of the apocalypse; the role played by Nazi ideology in creating the Holocaust and the perverting of physicians from healing to killing; the totalistic aspects of American policy including the excesses of the McCarthy era; the involvement of the CIA in mind control; the anti-communist fanaticism that fueled our nuclear weapons buildup and pushed us into the disastrous war in Vietnam; and the apocalyptic aspects of America’s “superpower syndrome.” He even remarks on the totalistic aspects that formerly characterized training programs in psychoanalytic institutes with their rigid adherence to dogmatic theoretical constructs.

Opposition to the oppressiveness of totalistic ideology and the harm that can follow from a commitment to it has always informed his thinking about totalism. His concept of proteanism is a description of a way of relating to the world that is in opposition to totalistic fundamentalism.

One of the most commendable aspects of Lifton’s work is that he is not reluctant to criticize reprehensible actions even when the perpetrators are American. So much psychohistorical writing has an unfortunate tendency to focus on the bad behavior and unsavory motivation of others—Nazis, terrorists, fundamentalists, jihadis, etc.—while not addressing our own sins and shortcomings, even when there are clear similarities between the actions and motivations of others who are the focus of one’s inquiry and the actions and motives of one’s own group.

This aspect of Lifton’s work, both the scholarship and the activism, brings to mind the Old Testament prophets who spoke out about the erroneous beliefs and harmful actions of their people in the service of holding them to a higher moral standard.

Lifton's explorations of and conclusions about his subjects of study have consistently been informed by his moral principles. In my opinion, this model for doing psychohistory serves us better than pseudo-objective accounts that assiduously avoid making moral judgments. The critical accounts that often emerge are both courageous and potentially constructive.

David Lotto's bio may be found on page 159. □

Anderson Symposium

The Influence of Sigmund Freud's Jewishness on His Creation of Psychoanalysis

James William Anderson—Northwestern University

Sigmund Freud savored Jewish humor so much that he collected, wrote about, and frequently told Jewish jokes. I'll give an example of one of the Jewish jokes Freud liked and later explain why I quote this one. The teacher asked a Jewish boy, "Who was Moses' mother?" The boy, Itzig, answered, "An Egyptian princess." "No, that's wrong," said the teacher. "He was the son of a Jewish mother. The Egyptian princess found him in a basket at the edge of the river." "Says she!" replied Itzig (paraphrased from Theodor Reik, *The Search Within: The Inner Experience of a Psychoanalyst*, 1956, 38).

My topic is the influence of Jewishness on Freud's creation of psychoanalysis. There were other influences, of course, such as classical thought, German culture (Freud was especially taken by Goethe, and Shakespeare was another favorite of his), and especially positivist science of the late 19th century. But in this short essay, I focus on Jewishness, a factor that Freud himself highlighted. He asked a Protestant pastor once, "Why did none of the devout create psychoanalysis? Why did one have to wait for a completely godless Jew?" (Peter Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time*, 1988, 602). It wasn't "a matter of chance," he said another time,

“that the first advocate of psychoanalysis was a Jew” (*The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, [hereafter referred to as *S.E.*], 1925, 19: 222). Freud realized that being Jewish was intrinsic to his inventing psychoanalysis.

Freud felt he was “in his essential nature a Jew” (*S.E.* 1913, 13: xv). Several times he spoke about what being Jewish meant to him. He made it clear that he was an “unbeliever” (*S.E.* 1926, 20: 273), a person who was “completely estranged from the religion of his fathers—as well as from every other religion” (*S.E.* 1913, 13: xv). While he was a child, his family had no doubt of being Jewish but practiced almost none of the observances of Judaism and did not keep kosher. Thus, Freud would not have undergone the Bar Mitzvah ceremony. He learned the stories of the Old Testament and remained fond of them. In the public schools he attended, religious study was required, with Jews and Catholics having separate instructors. Freud was very fond of his teacher, Samuel Hammerschlag. What he liked, though, was Hammerschlag’s emphasis on humanistic values. Whatever Hebrew he may have learned he forgot in later years. In adolescence and thereafter, he was a confirmed atheist. After his marriage, he adamantly opposed any religious observance in his family; his wife was surprised that he forbade her even to light the Sabbath candles. Hence he had a minimum of what can be described as Jewish learning (Dennis B. Klein, *Jewish Origins of the Psychoanalytic Movement*, 1981).

Yet, Freud was immersed in Jewish culture and always surrounded by Jews. His friends at every stage of his life, as well as the followers with whom he was close, were Jewish, with only two exceptions that I can think of: Carl Jung, with whom he had a nasty split, and Ernest Jones, the leader of psychoanalysis in Great Britain. Not surprisingly, Freud felt at home among Jews. He found the “attraction of Jewry and Jews irresistible,” because of “many obscure emotional forces,” he noted, “as well as a clear consciousness of inner identity, the safe privacy of a common mental construction” (*S.E.* 1926, 20: 274).

He used a similar phrase in a letter in which he wrote to Karl Abraham, a Jewish follower, about Jung before their breakup: “Please be tolerant and do not forget that it is really easier for you than it is for Jung to follow my ideas.” One of the reasons Freud

gave was that “you are closer to my intellectual constitution because of racial kinship, while he as a Christian and a pastor’s son finds his way to me only against great inner resistances” (Hilda Abraham and Ernst Freud, eds., *A Psycho-analytic Dialogue: The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Karl Abraham*, 1965, 34).

Abraham picked up on Freud’s term and replied, “I freely admit that I find it easier to go along with you than with Jung. I, too, have always felt this intellectual kinship. After all, our Talmudic way of thinking cannot disappear just like that. The other day a small paragraph in Jokes (Freud’s book, *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*) strangely attracted me. When I looked at it more closely, I found that, in the technique of apposition and in its whole structure, it was completely Talmudic” (*A Psycho-analytic Dialogue*, 36).

Abraham no doubt noticed that the method of analysis used in the Talmud and by those who studied the Talmud had signal similarities to Freud’s method. Various works (David Bakan, *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition*, 1958; Mortimer Ostow, ed., *Judaism and Psychoanalysis*, 1982; Lewis Aron and Libby Henik, eds., *Answering a Question with a Question: Contemporary Psychoanalysis and Jewish Thought*, 2010) have looked at resemblances between psychoanalysis and the Talmud. A page of the Talmud contains a passage of the Torah along with discussion of the passage and also discussions of the discussion. In Central Europe during Freud’s lifetime, believing Jewish boys and men would study, discuss, and debate the Talmud. Freud’s father, but never Freud, was one who read the Talmud. The commentaries were ingenious, free-wheeling, and sometimes playful, but also relied on careful attention to the specific words of the Torah. One assumption of the Talmud is that the Torah has hidden meanings that can be discovered. Freud’s analysis of dreams, as well as of some jokes—the point Abraham made—is like Talmudic analysis. Freud would look carefully at words and their connotations; he believed that a verbal creation, such as a dream or a joke, might have a concealed meaning that he could find; and he had a free-wheeling, ingenious style of interpretation that included but went beyond strictly rational analysis.

Freud, though, meant something far more extensive than just the Talmudic way of thinking. He believed that he shared with other Jews the rich body of assumptions, beliefs about human nature, and values that made up Jewish culture in Central Europe at the time. It is this Jewish "mental construction" that, I am arguing, undergirded Freud's creation of psychoanalysis.

Let's return to the joke about Moses and consider some of the characteristics of that joke that are in keeping with basic elements of psychoanalysis.

First, the joke says that circumstances are not always what they seem to be. The Egyptian princess claims that she found the baby at the edge of the river. As the joke recognized, there may have been something going on within her that caused her to invent that story. Psychoanalysis rests on the assumption that, surface appearances aside, the complicated inner worlds of individuals determine their behavior.

Second, that which is being hidden, according to the joke, has to do with illicit sexuality. The Jewish boy, Itzig, is suggesting that the princess had sex while unmarried and bore a child out of wedlock. While the established view in the field of psychology at the time was that sexuality was of little importance in a person's mental makeup, Jewish culture, as reflected in its humor, recognized the powerful and central force of sexuality, and so did Freud's creation, psychoanalysis.

Third, there is the little boy's irreverence. Jews were allowed a wide berth in questioning just about anything, even the religion. Moses was arguably the most sacred person in all of Jewish history, yet Itzig calls him a bastard. I submit that, in virtually all Christian confessions, there would be far less tolerance for making a joke like this about Jesus. To create psychoanalysis, Freud had to be willing to come to the conclusion that the contemporary view was dead wrong.

Freud's Jewishness readied him to question the settled assumptions. "Because I was a Jew," he once observed, "I found myself free from many prejudices which restricted others in the use of their intellect; and as a Jew I was prepared to join the Opposition

and to do without agreement with the 'compact majority'" (*S.E.* 1926, 20: 274).

The majority at the time simply failed to recognize that psychiatric symptoms could have a psychological cause. Symptoms such as phobias, compulsions, and what we now call conversion reactions were seen as meaningless, as possibly the result of weak nerves or inheritance. Freud created the first systematic psychological theory of psychopathology, and it lies at the heart of his conception of psychoanalysis. I'll describe the theory succinctly here with a case example.

Freud (*S.E.* 1917, 16: 248-254) discusses in one of his "Introductory Lectures" a woman in her 50s who had an obsessive and pathological jealousy of her husband. She believed against the strongest evidence that he was having an affair with a younger woman. I will not consider whether Freud's analysis of this symptom is correct; I will limit myself to presenting what he said as an example of his theory. He argues that the woman was sexually attracted to her son-in-law. But, to be aware of that attraction would have seemed "monstrous" to her, and therefore she created her neurotic symptom as a way of hiding her illicit attraction from herself. This whole process took place unconsciously. She said, in a sense, "It is not I who wants to sleep with a younger person of the opposite sex, it is my husband who wants that and does it." To Freud's way of thinking, not only did her symptom serve to keep her illicit desire unconscious, it also gave her some outlet for her desire: she could fantasize about sex between a younger and an older person. In Freud's theory, there is a conflict between a threatening wish, usually an illicit sexual desire, and a person's superego; the result is the symptom, or in this case, the woman's irrational jealousy.

It is clear sexuality plays a pivotal role in Freud's theory. He was influenced by the Jewish view of sexuality, a view that differs sharply from the Christian attitude. In Judaism, there is a general appreciation of sexuality and sexual pleasure within marriage. The "Song of Songs" in the Old Testament celebrates sex, as is apparent from the first line: "Beloved, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for your love is better than wine." Against all common sense, the traditional Christian interpretation is that it is an allegory about Christ's relationship with His church.

A central law of Judaism is “to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.” Love making between husband and wife is a recommended way of following that law. In contrast, Christianity, if I may be allowed a generalization that has some exceptions, takes a begrudging attitude toward sex. A long-standing principle of Christianity is that celibacy is preferable. Hence Paul’s famous comment in the New Testament, “If they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with lust.” A similar position was stated as dogma of the Roman Catholic Church in the 16th century. “If any one saith, that the marriage state is to be placed above the state of virginity, or of celibacy, and that it is not better and more blessed to remain in virginity, or in celibacy, than to be united in matrimony; let him be anathema” (Council of Trent, Session 24, Canon 10, retrieved from http://www.edwardtbabinski.us/sheldon/clerical_celibacy.html). The general attitude toward sexuality in Christianity is that it is unclean and preferably avoided, except for purposes of procreation.

My argument is that Freud was readied to see the importance of sexuality because he was influenced by the greater Jewish acceptance of sexuality.

When he was engaged to his future wife, he met an older Jew who had known her grandfather, a celebrated rabbi. According to the older Jew, the rabbi had been no ascetic. The man had learned from the rabbi that the Jewish person “is the finest flower of mankind, and is made for enjoyment...The Jew is made for joy and joy for the Jew,” Freud wrote his fiancée. “Something of the core, of the essence of this meaningful and life-affirming Judaism,” Freud asserted, “will not be absent from our home” (Ernst Freud, ed., *Letters of Sigmund Freud*, 1960, 21-22). In speaking here of joy, Freud was especially referring, I would argue, to sexual pleasure.

Please note, though, that I specifically referred to a Jewish acceptance of sex “within marriage.” Freud was aware of this aspect of the Jewish view. He noted once that “the Old Jewish religion” restricted “perverted sexuality” and guided “all libidinal currents into the [marital] bed” (Herman Nunberg and Ernst Federn, eds., *Minutes of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society*, 1974, 3: 273).

In Freud's day, "perverted sexuality" referred to all sex besides intercourse between husband and wife, including extramarital sex.

Jewish law takes a strong stand toward sex outside marriage; one of the Ten Commandments forbids adultery. This approach, of celebrating sex, but only within marriage, is in keeping with Freud's explanation of psychopathology. In Freud's theory, the desire for sex outside of marriage, when a person is in conflict about the desire, causes neurotic symptoms.

There is one other Jewish-Christian difference that I think is especially important to the origins of psychoanalysis. In Judaism, the emphasis is on following the rules and being observant. There is no particular sanction against sinful thoughts. A Jew might want to steal or even kill; it is accepted that people will have such thoughts at times. But a person who behaves properly is seen as an observant Jew. In Christianity, there has often been a great emphasis on having pure thoughts. In the *New Testament*, Jesus is quoted as saying, "But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Taking the desire for adultery and the commitment of adultery, and seeing them as virtually the same, would appear absurd in the Jewish tradition.

The result of this difference is that Jews are relatively free to look inside themselves and to examine their thoughts. Freud found it threatening to discover his own Oedipus complex: to realize that he desired to sleep with his mother and kill his rival, his father. But he was able to search into his inner world and admit to himself that he had these wishes. Christians, especially Calvinists, have found it to be aversive to look within themselves. Being aware of their sinful thoughts tends to be frightening for believing Christians; it can mean that a person is destined for hell.

I am going to end with one other Jewish joke that Freud examined (paraphrased from *S.E.* 1905, 8: 49-50). A beggar talks to a wealthy man. After explaining how much he is struggling, the beggar borrows the equivalent of \$50. Later that same day, the wealthy man runs across the beggar in a restaurant, and the beggar is eating a gourmet dish of salmon with mayonnaise sauce. The wealthy man reproaches him, "What? You borrow money from me

and then order yourself salmon with mayonnaise sauce? Is that what you've used my money for?" The beggar replies, "I don't understand you. If I haven't any money I can't eat salmon with mayonnaise sauce, and if I have some money I mustn't eat it. Well, then, when am I to eat salmon with mayonnaise sauce?"

You may be surprised to hear what Freud makes of this joke and others like it. He notes, "What these jokes whisper may be said aloud: that the wishes and desires of men have a right to make themselves acceptable alongside of exacting and ruthless morality." In other words, the joke recognizes that people have underlying desires for pleasure and satisfaction, and those desires are powerful. The beggar wants to eat salmon with mayonnaise, and he does not care that he has to break society's rules in order to do so. Freud declares, "Every honest [person] will end by making this admission, at least to [one]self," that, if our life is not sufficiently "enjoyable," we will not be able "to stifle the voice within us that rebels against the demands of morality" (S.E. 1905, 8: 110). In other words, Jewish jokes such as this one expressed the view that people have a personal and powerful desire for pleasure—including sexual pleasure, I would add—and those desires remain forceful despite the moral restrictions that are meant to hold them in.

In conclusion, Freud's Jewishness had the fundamental effect of putting him outside of the majority culture and freeing him to disagree with the conventional ways of explaining the workings of the mind. It also provided him with certain assumptions that came to underlie psychoanalysis. Jewish culture formed key components of what he called his "intellectual constitution." The factors that I have emphasized are: the willingness to question the conventional givens; the belief that circumstances are not as they appear to be on the surface, because there is a complicated inner world that produces a person's behavior; a recognition of the great importance of sexuality, and an appreciation for the powerful conflict between a person's desire for pleasure and the forces of morality that are arrayed against such desires.

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Historical Reflections on Sigmund Freud's "Talmudic Way of Thinking"

Patricia Cotti—Université Paris Diderot

James William Anderson has many thought-provoking points and quotations in his essay on Sigmund Freud's Jewishness. The starting point of my commentary is a quotation Anderson provides from a letter that Karl Abraham wrote to Freud: "Our [meaning Freud and Abraham's] Talmudic way of thinking," he observed, "cannot disappear just like that." Abraham then noted he felt at home with a passage in *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*, in which "the technique of apposition" and the "whole structure" were, according to him, "completely Talmudic" (letter 5 May 1908 in Hilda Abraham and Ernst Freud, eds., *A Psycho-Analytic Dialogue: The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Karl Abraham*, 1965, 36). Abraham, in making this remark, clearly believed he was paying Freud a compliment by stressing a positive side of Freud's writing—a style of thought that he felt they shared.

At the time, Freud and Abraham were both concerned with the Swiss resistance to Freud's theory of neuroses and especially to his idea of children's sexuality. In this context, Freud put forward the idea that Carl Jung, as a Christian, was less amenable than were Abraham and other Jews to understanding psychoanalysis.

A striking juxtaposition comes from placing Abraham's favorable remark about Freud's Talmudic reasoning next to a comment, just a few years later, in 1911, from Auguste Forel. The well-known Swiss psychiatrist also compared Freud's reasoning to Talmudic exegesis but with the ill-concealed intention to discredit the Freudians.

Forel had been director of the Burghölzli, the psychiatric

clinic of the University of Zurich, for nearly 20 years until he was succeeded by Eugen Bleuler in 1898. In the new edition of his book, *Hypnotism*, Forel (1911, 205, original in German) wrote about "Freudian writings":

On the other side, we find everywhere [in the "Freudian writings"] a tendency to install hypotheses flimsily supported by an elaborate fantasy, to dogmatize these hypotheses, and then an intention to protect them by a manufactured exegesis, almost Talmudic, by a construction reduced to mere quibbling (and sometimes to absurdity), in such a way that we leave the domain of science to enter instead that of sectarian theology....

Forel added that he considered sexuality a "psychological icon" for Freudians. Let us consider the environment in which Forel wrote these words. For centuries, the Catholic Church and anti-Semites had pronounced the Talmud to be a dark and devilish text that contained instructions encouraging crimes against Christians. In 1911, the same year Forel compared Freud's writings to Talmudic exegesis, a court in Kiev levied a blood libel accusation against a Jew; the charge was supported by a book, *The Talmud Unmasked*. The author of the book, Justin Pranaitis, was called by the court to testify in the case. (It was shown in 1913 that this supposed expert on the Talmud had never even read the text.)

Thus Forel's words reflected the anti-Semitic prejudices of his time. Forel referred to the Talmud to emphasize that Freud's ideas about the role of sexuality, Freud's method, and Freud's way of explaining his ideas were not based on scientific reasoning but in an attempt to establish a dangerous cult.

How did Freud respond in 1908 to Abraham's allusion to a "Talmudic way of thinking"? He did not make a direct reply. However, two months later, as he again considered the Swiss resistance to psychoanalysis, he wrote to Abraham: "On the whole it is easier for us Jews, as we lack the mystical element" (letter, 20 July 1908, in *A Psycho-analytic Dialogue*, 46). What does Freud mean exactly by "the mystical element"? The word mystical, like mystery, comes from the Greek and relates to what is hidden. Mysticism refers to the experience of people who believe some of their

feelings, acts and thoughts put them in a direct relation with God or with supernatural forces that cannot be explained scientifically or by natural reasons.

To Freud, the understanding of Jung and the other Swiss psychiatrists was greatly impaired by their Christian culture and “civilized morality,” and thus they 1) could not consider sexuality as a cause for psychological troubles, and 2) they tended to refer when treating patients to metaphysical causations and aims.

Forel's critique of psychoanalysis in 1911 angered Freud. Perhaps this anger helped feed Freud's interest in his scientific inquiry into the “tragic guilt” and the origin of religion (letter to Sandor Ferenczi, 21 May 1911, in Eva Brabant, Ernst Falzede and Patrizia Giampieri-Deutsh, *Sigmund Freud–Sandor Ferenczi Briefwechsel*, 384-5, original in German). Subsequently, Freud in fact developed a theory of monotheism that included an explanation of anti-Semitism (Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*, 1939).

Freud was a secular Jew who thought psychological questions could be explained by natural factors. With words and notions such as “racial kinship,” “intellectual constitution,” “Aryan” and “Jew” (*A Psycho-analytic Dialogue*, 3 May and 11 October 1908, in Abraham and Freud, 34 and 54), Freud shows he employs the anthropological vocabulary and distinctions of his contemporaries. Yet he transcended the prevailing usage of racial categories in his psychoanalytic writings. Freud thought there was only one science, which could explain the deepest motivations and ideas of every human soul, whatever one's kinship and “race.” As Anderson has pointed out to me himself, Freud expected that when the pioneering anthropologist, Géza Róheim, studied native peoples in Australia and the South Pacific, he would find that psychoanalytic ideas applied to them (Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, III, 1957, 139).

Whatever Freud and Abraham may have intended to share about their mutual Jewishness—and certainly, as Anderson puts it, Jewish “culture” influenced Freud's thinking—they did not consider the religion to be exempt from scientific investigation and from the rigorous application of the ideas they were developing regarding human behavior. Freud examined the human tendency to

“create” gods, and the first subjects of his inquiry were the Judaic and Christian ideas of God. Abraham, in *Traum und Mythos: Eine Studie zur Völkerpsychologie* (1909, 70), used the same methods of analysis and even contemplated whether Judaism's notion that Jews are the people of God could be considered a child's fantasy.

Because of the efforts and daring ideas of these analytic pioneers, psychoanalysis is neither a religious belief nor a “national Jewish affair,” though its founders identified themselves as Jewish and were greatly influenced by Jewish culture.

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Freud as Atheist Jew

John Jacob Hartman—University of South Florida

Dr. James William Anderson has given us an essay on the influence of Jewishness on Freud's creation of psychoanalysis that is modest in its scope yet provocative in its implications. I say “modest” because Dr. Anderson recognizes that there were numerous other influences on Freud that contributed to the uniqueness of Freud's thinking and of psychoanalysis itself. I say “provocative” because the very topic touches on the controversy of the relation between science and religion as well as the role of ethnic and cultural values in science.

In its stated modest form, Dr. Anderson's essay makes a solid, credible case for the importance of Freud's Jewishness for certain aspects of psychoanalysis. Anderson argues that Freud was imbued with “assumptions, beliefs about human nature, and values” that made up Jewish culture in Central and Eastern Europe in the 19th century. Part of this cultural heritage included marginality

from Gentile culture and thinking which Freud, himself, felt enabled his creativity. A similar thesis was advanced by the Norwegian-American Thorstein Veblen in his short paper, "The Intellectual Pre-Eminence of the Jews in Modern Europe," which he published in 1919 in the *Political Science Quarterly*. Veblen's point was the same as Freud's, namely that because Jews are marginalized in European society, they are in a position to exercise the kind of skepticism and intellectual freedom that leads to new ideas in scholarship, particularly in the sciences.

In his book, *A Godless Jew*, Peter Gay argues that only an atheist could have created psychoanalysis. He argues that marginality is not a sufficient explanation for the ability to make innovations in science. He cites the example of Darwin, who was not socially marginalized yet made iconoclastic innovations in scientific thinking. He was also an atheist. This is a point that Anderson's assertion ignores.

Freud was both an atheist and a Jew, a condition brought about by the fact that Jewishness is both an ethnicity and a religious category. Freud consciously abandoned the beliefs and behaviors of the religion but retained the ethnic and cultural aspects of Jewishness in his identity.

However, Anderson goes on to assert two additional factors in religious Judaism that favorably disposed Freud toward the discovery of psychoanalytic principles: "the greater Jewish acceptance of sexuality" and "no particular sanction against sinful thoughts."

The first assertion remains for me unconvincing and ambiguous. Generalizing on attitudes about sexuality between two major religions is a hazardous undertaking. Anderson provides scriptural examples of a supposed Jewish celebration of sex within marriage and examples of a seemingly Christian antipathy toward sexual pleasure. I feel the evidence in this part of his essay is thin.

There were other innovators in the field of sexology, like Havelock Ellis, who was raised in the Christian tradition, and there were many Jews who found Freud's emphasis on sexuality anathema. If expanded, this part of the argument may prove convincing.

While Anderson argues that Judaism celebrates sexuality

within marriage, it is also true that Orthodox Judaism advocates and enforces strict gender roles and stereotypes. Women are separated from men in the synagogue, have not been allowed to study Torah or become rabbis, and other limitations. While Freud's thoughts about sexuality were a major contribution, the part of his theory having to do with female sexual and gender development are by far the weakest part of his life's work. Is Freud's Jewishness also responsible for his erroneous ideas about women? He did have four younger sisters and was his mother's favorite.

The second assertion about the different treatment of sinful thoughts in Christianity and Judaism, however, has great merit and cannot be emphasized enough. Here, Anderson's citation of Jesus' words on the matter seems convincing. We know that this concept has had wide influence on Christianity, if only from the example of Jimmy Carter and his sins of the heart. Psychoanalysis makes a sharp distinction between thought and behavior and does, as Anderson argues, make a moral distinction between the two. Freud felt that one was not morally responsible for the content of one's dreams, for example. This kind of distinction has been the basis of the understanding of moral development and moral responsibility in general in psychoanalysis to the present day. It has had a great effect on clinical practice as well. Psychoanalytic therapists are constantly reminding patients that "just because you think it doesn't mean you are going to do it." Or, "it is okay for you to think it and talk about it rather than to do it." Essentially, the thought is not equal to the deed. This is indeed a difference with Christian thought and does seem to be Judaic in origin. Freud seems to have absorbed this kind of moral and ethical value system despite his atheism.

Dr. Anderson has given us a thoughtful essay that attempts to illustrate the role of ethnic, cultural, and religious background in the creation of ideas in science. He stresses the role of marginality in promoting the kind of skepticism and intellectual freedom to make new advances. He cites particular teachings in Judaism that he believes contributed to some of Freud's major concepts. The essay, at the same time, evokes the volatile issue of the relation between science and religion. Anderson argues, largely convincingly, that cultural and religious values do affect scholarly innovations in

science. Psychology, in particular, cannot be value-free. It is no secret, however, where Freud stood. He was an atheist and a scientist, yet Anderson has shown that Freud was influenced by certain cultural-religious values and conditions whether he liked it or not.

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Freud as a Jew First, Psychoanalyst Second

Allan Mohl—Psychohistory Forum Research Associate

Dr. James Anderson's paper on the connection between Freud's Jewishness and the creation of psychoanalysis is quite interesting. The paper points out that although Freud was not a religious Jew, he was immersed in Jewish culture and always surrounded by Jews.

Freud's inner circle of psychoanalysts consisted of Jews with two exceptions: Carl Jung and Ernest Jones. Freud was a cultural Jew who was influenced by the Talmudic interpretation of the Torah. It was Karl Abraham, a Jewish disciple, who pointed out that the method of analysis used in the Talmud and by those who studied the Talmud had signal similarities to Freud's method (David Bakan, *Sigmund Freud and the Jewish Mystical Tradition*, 1958). Like the Talmud, psychoanalysis searches for hidden, discoverable meanings in dreams, jokes, and elsewhere.

Freud developed a theory of the unconscious by which behavior is essentially affected. It is the conscious mind that struggles to prevent the unconscious wishes and desires from coming to

the surface. This theory of behavior is invariably related to sexuality, which plays a pivotal role in Freud's theory. Anderson, I believe, correctly points out that Freud was influenced by the Jewish view of sexuality that differs sharply from the Christian attitude. In Judaism there is a general appreciation of sexuality and the sexual pleasure within marriage. The Christian attitude is somewhat negative, the general attitude toward sexuality in Christianity is that it is unclean and preferable avoided, except for purpose of procreation.

Anderson, in his paper, points out that Freud was able to see the importance of sexuality because he was influenced by the greater acceptance of sexuality within Jewish culture.

I can recall that as a second-year social work student at Rockland State Hospital, a psychiatrist with whom I consulted informed me that "one of the major sources of guilt among the Christian patients was sexual behavior that the Church frowned upon." According to the psychiatrist, the Church frowns upon recreational sex, which is considered sinful.

In addition to what Anderson writes, it would appear that aside from Talmudic influence, I believe that Freud was affected by Hassidic teachings. Hassidism was a reaction to the extensive persecution of the Jews in Eastern Europe. Feelings of guilt around sexuality were minimized in that despite adversity, one could derive pleasure from the daily and mundane, including sexuality. Interestingly enough, the founder of the Hasidim, Israel Baal Shem Tov, was viewed as a "physician of the soul" and he formed a circle of devoted disciples (Max L. Margoles and Alexander Wock, *History of the Jewish People*, 582). Then we see an analogy, or perhaps a connection, between the birth of Hassidim and psychoanalysis.

Besides the Jewish variable in psychoanalysis, it should be noted that Freud was of the first generation of his family born outside Galicia, a territory that had been deeply stirred by the Cabala, Messianism, Hassidism, and ultimately the Enlightenment (Judd Teller, *The Jews: Biography of A People*, 1976, 270). I believe that Freud was influenced by Cabala mysticism and Hassidism, as well as his parents. His father, Jacob, was a self-taught free thinker with a sense of humor who was always pointing to a moral with a Yid-

dish anecdote. His mother was a descendant of a famous Talmudic scholar (Henry Kagan, *Six Who Changed the World*, 1963, 205-206).

In 1930, in a foreword to a Hebrew translation of *Totem and Taboo*, Freud made a significant remark that while he was himself not able to unravel the specifically Jewish in his personality, it is “probably its very essence...someday no doubt it will become accessible to the scientific minds” (Sigmund Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, 1913). Ernst Simon, a Jewish scholar, notes of Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams* that it brings to mind the Talmud’s “combination of freedom of expression and a strictly anti-libertine attitude on sex which is precisely what characterized Freud’s standpoint toward sexuality.”

Freud concerned himself with the fact that he was a Jew not only in his analysis of himself but also in his struggle to free the psychoanalytical movement from being labeled a “Jewish affair.” However, it was not until the last 10 years of his life, which coincided with the growth of Nazism and the beginning of the horrifying program to commit genocide against the Jews, that Freud undertook a thorough analysis of the causes of anti-Semitism, and even of his ambivalence about being a Jew himself. The product of this combined effort was his last book, *Moses and Monotheism*.

Allan Mohl’s biography may be found on page 175.

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Freudian Dream Interpretation as a Shibboleth

Juhani Ihanus—University of Helsinki

Psychoanalysis began with Sigmund Freud and his conceptions of the new science of the unconscious. Scholars, who as human beings have their own projections, have fluctuated between maximizing and minimizing the Jewish roots of psychoanalysis. For some researchers, Freud has played the role of a gate opener to the hidden realm of childhood and to the invisible mental treasury, acting even as a guardian of Jewish memory, vitality, and tradition.

On the other hand, there are good grounds to contradict the importance of the Jewish religion to the atheistically- and scientifically-oriented Freud.

Plausibly, James Anderson does not insist on any connections between Jewish mystical (Kabbalistic) tradition and Freud's psychoanalytic contribution. Instead, he favors the view that Freud has a Jewish "mental construction" that "undergirded" the creation of psychoanalysis. Undoubtedly, such directly or ambiguously expressed constructions can be found and quoted in Freud's works and letters. One of the most direct expressions of Freud's Jewish self-understanding has been found in the preface to the Hebrew edition of *Totem and Taboo* (1930): "If the question were put to [me]: 'Since you have abandoned all these common characteristics of your countrymen, what is there left in you that is Jewish?' [I] would reply: 'A very great deal, and probably its very essence.'" This statement, though, begs for a further question that Freud did not pose: "Is there such a thing as Jewish 'essence?'" Except perhaps as something to be renegotiated, intellectually, morally and passionately?

Even when non-Jews started to become interested in psychoanalysis, supported by Freud partly so that psychoanalysis would not be labeled as a "Jewish science" but as a science with universal claims, there remained traces of sectarianism and tension between the Jewish specialty and universalism. As Anderson reminds us, in his letter to Freud (May 11, 1908), Karl Abraham wrote that "our Talmudic way of thinking cannot disappear just like that." Anderson also aptly refers to Freud's analysis of dreams and jokes being "like Talmudic analysis." This claim, however, deserves closer scrutiny.

In his works, Freud himself did not consciously illustrate such links to Talmudic (rabbinic) tradition. It is instructive that *The Interpretation of Dreams*, the crucial founding text of psychoanalysis, does not include any clear, explicit links to the Talmudic tradition of dream interpretation. Still, it can be maintained that the Talmud (the "way of thinking" from ancient times concerning Jewish religion, its holy texts, and their interpretation) is an unconscious subtext even in Freud's dream interpretation. It conceives of a "manifest dream" as a text molded by dream work and of "latent

dream thoughts” with hidden meanings to be revealed by free association and psychoanalytic interpretation. Freud (in *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis*, 1933) called his dream theory a “shibboleth” that marked those who understood psychoanalysis and the opposition who did not.

Just as the manifest content of the dream can't represent the entire dream's meaning, Freud's manifest commitment to scientific psychoanalysis cannot be taken literally to represent all of psychoanalysis. The shibboleth of manifest scientism has its “other”: the shibboleth of latent Talmudic heritage. Freudian dream interpretation is akin to rabbinic tradition in that holy texts are related to dreams and have literal, hinted, implicit, and esoteric meanings and their interpretation takes into account all kinds of details, omissions, distortions, repetitions, and contradictions—virtually all imaginable possibilities. The task of Freudian dream interpretation is to grasp meaning in every detail, to make sense of every absurdity. Likewise, the rabbinic tradition, including the Midrash (the investigative and interpretative process of the commentaries), is tuned to distill the deeper truth and wisdom from every detail and hint, and from the interdependence of holy texts.

In the early Semitic and Jewish traditions, dreaming was linked to health, vigor, and sexual pollution (masturbation). Dream interpretation had meanings connected with liberation from the evil inclination (“Yezer”) and solving and untying knots by translating the language of dreams. In his dream interpretation, Freud also spoke about unwinding knots and tangles and translations of symbols into a more understandable language.

Freud presented himself as a naturalizer and secularizer of holy dream texts. His magnum opus was meant to carry on the new mission of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis was not built to support any religion, since all religions were discarded as illusions.

The psychoanalytic house that Freud built was neither a synagogue nor a church. With his theories and metaphors, Freud tried to see and hear into the symptoms of psychic disorders and to reveal the compulsive rituals and obsessive doctrines of all religions. The Torah and the Talmud left out feminine qualities from the concept of God, and even Freud operated with his penetrating

theories as a “conquistador” for whom the dark continent of femininity was still vaporous, but to which he was a sensitive listener.

When his house in Vienna was to be emptied, Freud had his association about an ancient hero. On March 13, 1938, a day after the German annexation of Austria, Freud told the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society that after the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, Rabbi Jochanan ben Zakkai wanted to open a new school at Jabneh for the study of the Torah and that “we are going to do the same” (Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, 1957, vol. 3, p. 236). The treasure of psychoanalysis could no longer be located in Berggasse, the Freudian Home Temple. The Jewish ancient Temple had been destroyed twice (by the Babylonians and the Romans), but Jews had survived with their sacred texts and their tenacious mind. Freud wrote in *Moses and Monotheism* (1939; *S. E.*, 23, p. 115), “From that time on, the Holy Writ and intellectual concern with it were what held the scattered people together.” Psychoanalytic writing and research on the human mind could also go on living in exile, in future talking cures.

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Freud and His Jewishness

Norman Simms—Waikato University

It is well known that Sigmund Freud was not a practicing Jew, yet he helped to found the Vienna B'nai B'rith, was glad to welcome Carl Jung into his inner circle so that his new science would not be categorized as Jewish, and yet published at a most inopportune moment his *Moses and Monotheism*, thus providing anti-Semites with much fat to chew on. It is also no secret that

Freud called himself a Zionist but made no effort to move to the Land of Israel, let alone to escape until it was almost too late after the *Anschluss*. Martin Freud recalls that his daughter Anna pleaded with him to escape or commit suicide. Nor should it come as a surprise that Martha Bernays' family had connections with leading rabbis and would have been brought up not just as a practicing Jew but also to have been aware of Talmudic and Kabbalistic traditions—but it is surprising, as James William Anderson points out, that she gave in so easily to her new husband's demands that she stop keeping the customs of the Sabbath.

Thus Anderson indicates many of the important points of contact between Freud and his Jewish heritage, but he does so in a way that can only provoke objections in those who have studied both Freud in the specific context of his Austrian background in the late 19th and early 20th century and those who have grounded themselves more thoroughly in the rabbinical traditions of the same period, both in regard to the complexities of Central European *Yiddishkeit* and of the conflicts in Vienna among various factions of religious, Zionist, socialist, and assimilationist and/or integrationalist groups. I don't think he understands what rabbinical Judaism entails, although he tries to extrapolate from American-Jewish (almost completely East European) attitudes and beliefs, many of which are more American than Jewish, and then even more Protestant than Catholic—the context of Freud's childhood and professional career was Central European and German-speaking, and also particularly Roman Catholic Austria, much in Imperial Hapsburg Vienna, very unlike what New York Jewish Liberals know and understand. His family, friends, and patients tended to be *yekkas* not *yiddles*. The German-speaking Jews seemed to their co-religionists to the east as more than just heretics and *epikorim* (followers of Greek knowledge; that is, often materialists and tending to be converts), but in their short jackets (*yekkas*) instead of long gabardines worn by Yiddish-speaking Jews, both *mitnagim* (strict guardians of the Law) and *hassidim* (pious devotees to some charismatic *rebbe* or other) traitors to the faith—and much too clean, orderly, and polite.

Remember the story about Benny Cohen, who was shipwrecked on an island for 27 years, and when he was found showed

his rescuers his various shops, houses, warehouses, and synagogues? They asked him: "Why, since you are only one man, you need two *shuls*?" "Nu," he answered, "there is one I go to and one I wouldn't be caught dead in." Viennese Jewry at the turn of the century was riddled with acrimonious internal divisions, vociferous arguments, and physical strife, and every choice that Freud made put him on the outs with all the other fellow Jews. Without specifics of dates, names of persons, and indications of political events—not just two world wars, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the rise of Austrian Nazism—or cultural contexts, how can one assess Freud's unique qualities and his shared ideas with various Jewish factions? He lived in Vienna, alongside Elias Canetti, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Karl Kraus, Stefan Zweig, Arthur Schnitzler, and hundreds of other great Jewish or once-Jewish philosophers, novelists, musicians, painters, architects, sculptors, poets, mathematicians, scientists, not to mention the future leaders of Israel and its struggle for independence.

Psychohistory is a new science of its own, insofar as it is more than a deepening of the scope of normative history through the application of psychoanalytical principles and the enhancement of psychoanalysis to embed its findings in the particular circumstances of specific times and places. Like developmental psychiatry, which studies the mutual evolution of consciousness and the growth of the organs of the mind in order to refine and expand the qualities of that self-awareness, with all its inherent dark spaces and silent leakages, psychohistory discovers aspects of human motivation, social interaction, and intellectual reflection beyond the reach of any prior means of approach. Hence, Anderson's essay misses the essentials of Freud's Jewishness, glosses over the invisible mechanisms of Freud's ambiguous and often contradictory statements about his family upbringing and early schooling, skirts the sticky issues of pervasive Viennese anti-Semitism and widespread Jewish self-loathing among intellectuals, and decontextualizes the insights of psychoanalytical paradigms by papering them over with platitudes and clichés more appropriate to a Catskill vaudeville show than a serious conversation on Talmudic logic, midrashic wit, and Kabbalistic exegesis. Hopefully, in the event of the presentation of his paper and the debates it stimulates, real *lernin* takes

place and all is revealed as calculating Socratic irony.

What is all this like? An example: A certain priest asks revered sage Avraham Shapiro for permission to follow him around for a week so as to understand what Jewish tradition is all about. After seven days have passed, the rabbi asks, "So what do you think?" Father Clancy says: "Interesting, but one thing puzzles me. Whenever you are praying with the congregation everyone zips through the service and mumbles the words, but when you have your discussion groups you belabor every sentence and argue about every jot and tittle of the text." "Very easy," says Shapiro, "when we pray we know God understands everything we say and sees into our intentions, but when we try to figure out what He is saying—*Givalt!* nobody can agree on anything, but we know each syllable and even the shape of letters is filled with important meanings—so we argue, for the sake of heaven. On the other hand..."

Norman Simms, PhD, retired from a long career in academia to continue to write articles and books, to edit journals, and to attend scholarly seminars and conferences. His latest book is Alfred Dreyfus: Man, Milieu, Mentality and Midrash and his e-mail is NSIMMS@waikato.ac.nz.

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Anderson's Inaccurate View of Freud's Jewishness

Jerome A. Chanes—CUNY

Eva Fogelman—Psychoanalytic Private Practice

An early personal experience for us with Freud's Jewishness was at the 1977 meeting of the International Psychoanalytic Association in Israel—the first time the IPA met in Israel—with the establishment of the Freud Chair at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Anna Freud was scheduled to be there for the ceremony; it was a huge disappointment to everyone that she in fact did not show up. Were we unhappy? Yes. Were we surprised? No. Anna Freud had no interest in coming to Israel. The buzz around the room was that, in this, she was replaying her dad's ambivalent attitude by not wanting to be overly identified with Judaism or Jewish-

ness. A Freud Chair in Jerusalem would assert to the world a connection between Freud and Jewishness.

What is it about Freud and Jewishness, a topic on which much ink has been spilled of late? James William Anderson wrote a recent commentary on the subject with a canny take on Freud and his Jewishness and the early days of psychoanalysis. Anderson identifies Jewish openness toward sexuality as central dynamics in the relationship between Jewishness and the creation of psychoanalysis, which “readied Freud to see the importance of sexuality” and the relative freedom that Jews have to “look inside themselves.”

While Anderson's suggestion about self-examination is accurate, he bases his view on a distinction—a distinction between “rules” and “thoughts”—that is spurious. Judaism is not a faith community based on “rules.” It is rather a normative system that is defined by the term *halakha*, often translated inadequately as “law” but meaning much more. *Halakha* is a mode and pattern of behavior that governs and informs every aspect of a Jew's life, and of that of the Jewish community and Jewish polity. The halakhic norm therefore includes all behavior, including thought—and a person who harbors sinful or anti-social thoughts is not one who is appropriately observant. The relationship between attitude and behavior in Judaism is therefore a highly nuanced one, and indeed does lead to an unusually high premium placed in Judaism on introspection.

But there's more. At the core of Freud's Jewishness was a historical and sociological reality, one that is missing in Anderson's discussion: the Freud of *fin de siècle* Vienna indeed had deep, perhaps unconscious, ambivalence about his own Jewish identity. Sigmund Freud was of a generation of Central-European Jews—especially those in Vienna—who, coming out of the Enlightenment and Emancipation, did not view themselves as marginalized or as “second class.” But as Harold P. Blum accurately notes (“Anti-Semitism in the Freud Case Histories,” in Arnold D. Richards, ed., *The Jewish World of Sigmund Freud*), Freud's pride in his Jewish heritage was early on tempered with his internalizing the pervasive anti-Semitism of his time, an anti-Semitism that radically parted company with Christian religious anti-Judaism, and instead viewed Jews as an inferior, and therefore despised, race. Internalizing anti-

Semitism meant that Freud believed that the Jewish character itself contributed to anti-Semitism, and that Jews themselves were at least partly to blame for their own problems with non-Jews. The creation of psychoanalysis was therefore not merely informed by internal psychological dynamics having to do with being Jewish; it was a function of sociological and historical dynamics of Jewishness that informed the way in which Freud looked both at the external world and at his own internal world.

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On Freud and Judaism

Anna Geifman—Boston and Bar-Ilan Universities

George Khasin—Shaloh House

In his memoirs, Carl Jung recalls a 1910 conversation with his then-friend and colleague Sigmund Freud. Contemplating the future of psychoanalysis, Freud suddenly turned to him and said: "My dear Jung, promise me never to abandon the sexual theory. That is the most essential thing of all. You see, we must make a dogma of it, an unshakable bulwark." "A bulwark against what?" Jung asked, surprised. Freud replied: "*Against the black tide of mud of occultism.*" Jung remembers being astonished by Freud's dogmatism, "for a dogma, that is to say, an undisputable confession

of faith is set up only when the aim is to suppress doubts once and for all. But that no longer has anything to do with scientific judgment, only with a personal power drive" (C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 1965, 150).

This conversation not only punctuates the famous split between two prominent thinkers, but also offers a rare glimpse into Freud's critical shift in attitude towards his theory. By the turn of the 20th century, he had adopted a dictatorial and doctrinaire position with regards to psychoanalysis. He was intolerant of any attempt to modify it and fought anyone who deviated from its basic tenets. To protect it from the slightest criticism or doubt, he sought to isolate it. There is strong evidence to suggest that for Freud, psychoanalysis took a form of religion or cult, of which he was the leader.

Freud's "secret committee," established in 1912, is a glaring example of his rigid attitude. This small circle of colleagues loyal to Freud was committed to his ideas *verbatim* and prepared to lead a "united front" against anyone who doubted psychoanalysis. The chief adversaries of this society were renegades Adler and Jung, labeled the "apostate." Freud assumed the role of a sect spiritual leader, ritualistically granting each committee member an ancient ring, which symbolized loyalty (Phyllis Grosskurth, *The Secret Ring: Freud's Inner Circle and the Politics of Psychoanalysis*, 1991, 1-5). As on multiple other occupations, Freud's behavior was suggestive less of a scholar advancing a scientific theory than of a prophet proclaiming the ultimate truth. For an explorer of the unconscious, he was astonishingly insensible to the fact that his attitude carried the imprint of Judaism, the rejected culture of his childhood.

The first paragraph of *Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers)*—a principal Jewish source of the Talmudic era—ends with "*vasu siyag latorah*," which translates as "and make a safety fence around the Torah." There is a striking resemblance between this well-known dictate and Freud's demand "to make a bulwark" around psychoanalysis. It is highly probable that Freud unconsciously borrowed his phrase from the classic text he had to learn as a Jewish boy.

James Anderson presumes that Freud “had a minimum of what can be described as Jewish learning,” but this underestimation hardly agrees with his frequent and free usage of scriptural references and quotations in scholarship and letters. Some researchers say that Freud’s exposure to Jewish thought was average for his time; others claim that he was fully tutored in Jewish studies (Earl A. Grollman, *Judaism in Sigmund Freud’s World*, 1965, 52). When he was a gymnasium student, Jews were required to study religion with instructors certified by their own community. Sigmund learned Hebrew tradition and literature between 1865 and 1873. He certainly had to read in an essential source, *Pirkei Avot*, however permeated with “humanistic values” his Jewish education might have been, according to Anderson. He does admit that Freud’s analysis of dreams and of some jokes is “like Talmudic analysis.”

Freud’s commandment to turn psychoanalysis into “a dogma...an unshakable” could have been a “Freudian slip.” Behaving as if he were a cult guru, Freud would not have enjoyed the irony of being the object of analysis, in which his own discovery was a means to reach unconsciousness. Still, the “Freudian slip” reveals that, beyond his awareness, psychoanalysis for him was a creed.

Freud’s admiration for Moses is also well-documented. As a young boy, Sigmund listened to his father’s recounting of the Biblical stories about the Exodus, which left a profound impression on him. His life-long fascination with the most celebrated Jewish leader and prophet is reflected in two controversial works, “The Moses of Michelangelo” essay (1914), and *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud’s last book (1937) (B. Goodnick, “Sigmund Freud and the Countenance of Moses,” *The Israel Journal of Psychiatry and Related Sciences*, 32.2 [1995] 3).

On a deeper level, Freud strongly identified with Moses’ character. In private correspondence, he assigned to himself the role of the prophet, once musing that his efforts to conquer the territory of the unconscious are equal to Moses’ journey to the holy land and that he, like the Jewish leader, would only be able to reach his goal with the help of his “Joshua ben Nun”—Carl Jung (Boris Kherson, “Resistance to Psychoanalysis” *Moriah* 3 [2005]).

Having denounced all religions, and specifically Judaism, Freud might have come to perceive psychoanalysis as a credo-substitute. He did maintain that, like a creed, his theory could explain all phenomena. Freud compared his own effort to the work of Moses—the gigantic endeavor of a spiritual leader, who, through his psychoanalytic “Torah,” reveals the law of universal deliverance.

Moses and Monotheism negates the two pillars that support the edifice of the Judeo-Christian culture—the divinely ordained Exodus and receiving the Law of Torah at Mount Sinai. While building the immutable “safety fence” around his sexual theory, Freud’s simultaneous unconscious intent might have been to undermine the old tradition so as to “make space” for his new religion of salvation. If psychoanalysis were the panacea of the modern world, then Freud would be Moses incarnate.

Anna Geifman’s biography may be found on page 182. George Khasin, elementary school teacher at Shaloh House, Brighton, MA, and a blogger with interest in social psychology and history. He may be reached at math@shaloh.org.

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What Freud Missed

Vivian Rosenberg—Drexel University

Although I knew that Freud was an assimilated Jew, I never thought much about his “Jewishness.” Now, however, I am fascinated by James Anderson’s overview of the ways Freud’s family background, his Jewish friends, and even his minimal involvement in Jewish studies influenced his invention of psychoanalysis.

Freud’s family fled from to Vienna from Leipzig because of religious persecution and for economic opportunity. Still, even in more liberal Vienna, their household could not have been free of the fears and anxieties experienced even by Jews who chose assimilation when they were able to do so. Nor could they have been unaffected by the Jewish texts, so central to Jewish learning, or the Jewish attitudes and assumptions that were part of everyday life in the communities they left behind. Certainly, those of us who are first

generation Americans know how much emotional and intellectual baggage our own families took with them from the Old World.

It was interesting to read that the secular public schools where Freud studied provided separate instructors for the religion courses every student was required to take. Surely this was a daily reminder for Jews that they could not escape their status as a minority and had to be separated from the mainstream. Anderson notes that Freud didn't study Talmud in these classes or at home. However, he must have been aware of the texts his father studied; in fact, it's difficult for me to believe that such an original thinker didn't, as a youngster, occasionally peek into his father's books—if only to reject their contents. More importantly, Freud must have heard references to the Talmud or experience Talmudic types of discourse among family and Jewish friends who visited the Freud household. He may have been exposed to Jewish ways of thinking by the criticisms assimilated family members might have directed against the less cosmopolitan world they had left. Anderson quotes Karl Abraham's comment, in a letter to Freud, noting, "After all, our Talmudic way of thinking cannot disappear just like that."

Thus, it should not be surprising that Freud's psychoanalytic theories and practices were deeply affected by Talmudic analytic strategies. However, what particularly interests me is that Talmudic disputations were left open-ended, with no conclusion and no clear "right" answer chosen to end the conversation. This style of discussion dramatically influenced late 20th century postmodern thinkers (e.g. Jacques Derrida who, like Freud, came from a Jewish family). But Freud was born into an earlier and very intellectually different world: he was not only a Jewish son but also a son of the Enlightenment.

Despite his remarkable understanding of the irrational and subjective components of mental life, Freud was deeply committed to the Enlightenment faith in science and reason. Although he drew many of his ideas from Jewish tradition, he was often able to slip out of his Jewish envelope. However Freud was embedded in another cultural envelope he could not escape: he had inherited the Enlightenment's faith in science. Thus, he did not appreciate the fact that human nature could not be studied like physical matter, where at least some things can be pinned down. Freud was con-

vinced that his way of interpreting human nature (and treating mental problems) was the “scientific”—and therefore the “right”—way.

By the late 20th century, the nature of science itself was being reexamined and was subject to different interpretations, and a Jewish intellectual like Derrida, influenced by Emanuel Levinas, could see the Talmud in a different light and value the open dialogue of Talmudic disputations. Moving away from the idea of a “right” or “scientific” way of interpreting texts (and life), postmodern thinkers now highlight the multiple possibilities of interpreting texts and human beings. This is a lesson from the Talmud that, unfortunately, Freud never recognized.

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What's in a Name: Who is Sigismund Schlomo Freud?

Merle Molofsky—Psychoanalytic Private Practice

Given the history of the Jews in the post-diaspora world and the particular history of the Jews in Western and Central Europe, it would seem inevitable that the Jewishness of any creative person would be an important, or even major, influence in the development of that individual's work. Sigmund Freud was born Sigismund Shlomo Freud in 1856 in Freiberg, Moravia, a town that was 3% Jewish, 3% Protestant, and 96% Catholic (rounded off). His family moved to Vienna in 1860, a sophisticated Central European city that was also predominantly Catholic, but they lived in a Jewish neighborhood, referred to at the time as the slum. The Jews in Austria had been granted equal rights by Emperor Francis Joseph, and Freud went to public schools and excelled academically.

What's in a name? A Sigmund Freud by any name would be a seminal thinker and a genius. Yet—let us look at his name.

Sigmund is a variant of the name Sigismund. Sigmund is well known as the protagonist of Richard Wagner's "Die Valkyrie"; in Norse mythology he is the hero of the Volsunga Saga. Sigmund also is the name of a Roman Catholic saint and many kings. The Norse name means protection through victory (*Sieg* means victory in German, as in *Sieg Heil*). There are parallels between the legend of Sigmund and the Anglo-Saxon legend of King Arthur. Odin, dressed like a beggar, thrust a magic sword into a tree, and only a hero—in this case, Sigmund—could pull the sword free. King Arthur also pulled a sword free—Excalibur, which he pulled from a stone. King Arthur's father was Uther, but at one point Arthur thought his father was Ector, his companion Kay's father. Arthur at one point, therefore, like Oedipus, did not know who his father was in actuality.

Shlomo is the Hebrew for Solomon. Shlomo, or Solomon, means peace. King Solomon was revered as a wise king, who also took sword in hand, in order to settle a dispute between two women who claimed one baby. He offered to cut the baby in half, and the real mother gave up her claim to preserve the baby's life—and he awarded her the baby. This story is one of conflict and paradox: a sword in the hand of a peaceful man creates justice.

Thus Sigmund Freud grew up with a dual national identity, beginning with his name that was emblematic of a hero in each culture. What sword would young Sigismund Shlomo need to cut the Gordian knot of his identity, and his search for meaning, truth, and the unknown? First and foremost, he had his intellect.

A number of authors have discussed Freud's Jewishness in terms of his identification with Moses, and his disavowal of Moses' Jewishness, including Eliza Slavet, *Racial Fever: Freud and the Jewish Question* (Fordham University Press, 2009), and Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Freud's Moses: Judaism Terminable and Interminable* (Yale University Press, 1991). Freud's connection with Moses was overt. However, his connection with Joseph perhaps was even more compelling, though not acknowledged.

Freud's second seminal writing, following "Studies in Hys-

teria" (1895), was "The Interpretation of Dreams" (1899). Western civilization is rife with stories of dream interpretation, and one of the oldest and best known stories of dream interpretation is that of Joseph in the Pharaoh's court. A Jewish boy, the second youngest of 12 brothers, is sold into slavery and becomes a court favorite in Egypt, where he interprets Pharaoh's dreams. The Hebrew root of the name Joseph is twofold: it means "added to" and "taken away." Is Moses/Freud Jewish and not Jewish? Freud, with his half-brothers from his father's first marriage who were old enough to be his father, was a Jewish interpreter of dreams in Christian Europe. Dream interpreters search for hidden meaning. What hidden meanings was Freud searching for?

Anderson wonderfully sketches those hidden meanings. I would add to his discussion a few more "mysteries" asking to be interpreted. First, Freud was humiliated to learn that when his own father's hat was knocked to the ground because his father was Jewish, his father did nothing. Second, in a story Freud's son Martin told of his father responding to being harassed on the road while traveling together, Sigmund fought back using his walking stick. Third, Freud maintained a membership in the B'nai B'rith, which literally means Sons of the Covenant, an organization devoted to fighting anti-Semitism. He refused to accept royalties from any of his works translated into Yiddish or Hebrew.

Freud was hyper-aware of his status as a Jew, and therefore as an alien, a reversal of the non-Jewish Ruth being a "stranger in a strange land." But, unlike Ruth, Freud not only was an alien, but a despised alien, an object of fear, contempt, and discrimination. Although most of his associates and patients were Jewish, he must have been acutely aware that he was pulling a sword from a stone or a tree in interpreting the mysteries of the mind, the mind with the alarming content of sexuality and aggression. Did he see himself as a hero, liberating others? Was he afraid that the mind he understood would be seen by non-Jews as a filthy, vile, dirty mind? Could he teach Western Europe to speak Yiddish?

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Freud: More Hellenistic Than Hebraic

Don Carveth—York University

James Anderson emphasizes the influence of Jewishness on Freud's theory, but in many respects Freud's thinking is more Hellenistic than Hebraic. To a considerable extent, Freud is a follower of Plato: while id (horse) is Plato's "appetites," Freud's ego is Plato's "reason" and his superego resembles Plato's "spirit." The mind/body dualism in which a human ego-superego conflicts with an animalistic id is Platonic. Freud found the roots of human destructiveness in the id drives of sex and aggression that he claimed are rooted in *somatic* sources (by which he did not mean the brain but bodily erogenic zones, despite his admission that he could never specify the somatic source of the aggressive drive).

Here lies one of Freud's greatest errors: to think (with unfortunate common sense) that human destructiveness is "beastly"—that it derives from the animal in us. This is sheer projection onto animals of a uniquely human destructiveness of which animals are incapable. Similarly, human sexuality is so pervaded by uniquely human symbolic meanings and dramas (as Freud the clinician understood without allowing the fact to effect his more general theorizing) that to conceive it in animalistic terms is grossly reductionistic.

As Anderson understands, the Bible, especially the so-called "old" testament, is not hostile to the body and sexuality for it holds that God created the material world, including our bodies, and said it is good. It is the gradual corruption of this vision by the incursions of Greek thought, especially in St. Augustine, that infected Christianity with Greek, gnostic devaluation of the material world

in general and of sexuality in particular. Whatever other attitudes of Freud's may have contradicted this strain in his thinking, his view of the sexual and aggressive drives of the id as in their raw forms essentially asocial if not antisocial and as deriving from somatic sources reflects a Greek rather than a Jewish pattern of thought.

Though proud of his ethnic Jewishness, Freud hated Judaism (and its offshoot, Christianity) and was intensely ambivalent toward the father who practiced it. He preferred dualism to any monism that smacked of monotheism. When his first drive theory (sexual vs. self-preservative drives) broke down on the shoals of narcissism (the recognition that the self-preservative drive was not an independent drive at all but a mere manifestation of the sexual drive invested in the self), he was forced for six years (1914-1920) to put up with an instinctual monism. Though he could still speak of conflict between the socialized part of the self and the sexual drive, he wanted to conceptualize conflict between the drives themselves. So in 1920, with palpable relief, he ditched this "Jewish" monism for a new Greek dualism, even giving capitalized Greek names to his two new "deities": Eros and Thanatos, which he acknowledged were new editions of the dual metaphysical forces that his pre-Socratic predecessor Empedocles called *philia* (love) and *neikos* (strife).

Freud was an elitist. With Nietzsche he believed one earns the right to rule others by first learning to rule oneself; like Plato he believed philosophers (read: successfully psychoanalyzed people) should rule. Just as an enlightened elite should dominate in society, so there should be a "dictatorship of the ego" and the intellect should prevail over the other components of the self. When Freud referred to America as "a great mistake," whatever else he may have meant, I believe he had its experiment with democracy in mind for, as Franz Alexander has pointed out, Freud had a dim view of the viability of democracies. In *The Future of An Illusion* he argues that because of the instinctual renunciations it demands, civilization requires the coercion of the masses by a minority: "For the masses are lazy and unintelligent; they have no love for instinctual renunciation, and they are not to be convinced by argument of its inevitability."

In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud writes of “the psychological poverty of groups” and says this is “most threatening when the bonds of society are chiefly constituted by the identification of its members with one another, while individuals of the leader type do not acquire the importance that should fall to them in the formation of a group.” Alexander points out that Freud has little to say about the role of abstract principles and ideals, such as freedom, individual responsibility, and self-government in holding groups and societies together, emphasizing instead the role of the leader whom he likens to a hypnotist, whereas for Alexander, “the guiding principles of free societies, the stress on the individual’s critical faculty and self-responsibility, are contradictory to that blind obedience to authority which is the essence of hypnosis.” Freud has little to say about independent self-governing individuals who display a very different attitude toward leaders, critically watching them, ready to throw them out. Bion, too, is critical of Freud’s view of the group’s dependence, pointing out that when the leader isn’t taking the group where it wants to go it simply replaces him.

Freud mostly wrote about unstructured groups that, following LeBon, Tarde, McDougall and others, he sees as highly emotional, irrational, regressive, etc. Here we have the 19th and early 20th century bourgeois fear of unruly mobs, such as those that made a revolution at the Bastille and again in October 1917. When Freud does speak of structured rather than unstructured groups, his models are the Church and the Army, highly authoritarian organizations. As a product of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, we may understand where he came by all this, though perhaps not entirely forgive his early admiration of Mussolini (until he turned on the Jews).

In all these ways Freud’s thinking displays an affinity with Platonic and anti-democratic thought. People who like to view Freud as a political liberal tend to ignore his typically conservative outlook in which civilization is viewed as a “thin veneer” perpetually threatened by barely contained barbarous forces, in constant need, like the ego, of defenses against the chaos and madness threatening from the id. This is a long way from the prophetic tradition of Judaism calling the established order to account for its immorality, and from the outlook of a morally outraged peasant rabbi

tortured and crucified by the Romans at the behest of the establishment.

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It's Déjà Vu All Over Again

Frederick Stecker—Clio's Psyche's Online Forum

Rabbi Lawrence Kushner suggests that scripture is a refractive lens through which we discover who we are, and additionally, since each person hears and interprets scripture differently, even a return to the same scripture evokes new learning for the individual (*Eyes Remade for Wonder*, 2002, 331). The Biblical word is a repository for the infinite and each word or letter can be an entrance to new meaning. Anderson believes that the technique of apposition found in the Talmudic study of scripture was a foundational platform for Freud's creation of psychoanalysis.

Having been a minister for over 40 years and a student of applied psychoanalysis for 15, it is my conviction that theology and autobiography (and, therefore, psychoanalysis) are connected or linked. In this brief response, I wish to support Anderson's thesis and also to add my own personal critique: that, aside from early hermeneutics, in Freud's time the only tools available to understand scripture were argument (the Talmudic approach) and allegory, a form of literalism. The former provided the opportunity for real-world discussion of scripture's intent; the latter, a "why-because" solution, unacceptable to scientific application. Despite light-year advances in scriptural studies, literalism reflects a form of scriptural interpretation that is dominant today.

I distinguish between two types of religion: what I call for lack of better terms "critical" and "uncritical" religious thought. In

Talmudic study, in Kushner's words, "scripture is expounded, interpreted, plumbed...manipulated, massaged, psychoanalyzed, inverted, sliced and diced." Much like this appositional argument, in critical religion one employs diverse disciplines such as archaeology, history, and linguistic analysis in an attempt to capture a shared story of a people and their god(s). For critical religion, such examination is conducted in an attempt to get scripture's truth. Understanding scripture is, therefore, an ongoing and often an argumentative process.

Uncritical religion holds that scripture is the literal word of God or "fact"; scripture is often cherry-picked for explanation and when that doesn't work, it is to be accepted despite its many eccentricities and contradictions. In the Abrahamic religion there are two creation stories, talking turtles, verses concerning smashing children's heads against stones, and, in expanded Christian, Hebrew, and Islamic scripture, references to "end times," and they are, by and large, accepted as truth beyond our understanding; as one bumper sticker reads, "God said it; I believe it; that settles it."

Returning to Anderson, Freud's Jewishness was a matter of ethnic and cultural affinity at a time when obsessive prejudice was rampant in Vienna. Literalism and notions of "election" inspired fascism. Freud's Protestant colleague, Carl Jung, was a member of the Anti-Semitic Union; theologically uncritical religion reigned. It was natural that Freud would find intellectual and emotional support amongst his fellow Jews; it is no stretch of the imagination to say that the Talmudic method would influence his approach to psychological theories of individual and mass psychopathologies.

Today, only the names and places have changed. A like sense of "election" reigns over Christian America. We are, in Reagan and Winthrop's words, a "shining city upon a hill"; in George W. Bush's a "light to the nations"; and in our current race for the presidency, former Senator Rick Santorum leads a charge to get our "guns and Bibles back." In my home state, two bills face the legislature: one to allow the teaching of intelligent design beside the "theory" of evolution, and the other to allow parents to circumvent any aspect of public education that they deem inappropriate to their personal belief system. As Vamik Volkan has demonstrated, the projected enemy is "out there and not one of us," rather

than within. In the ministerial and psychoanalytic circles in which I live, we struggle against our own and other people's projections, following in the path Sigmund Freud.

Frederick Stecker's biography may be found on page 157.

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Religious Culture as a Powerful Influence

Nancy C. Unger—Santa Clara University

I was not surprised that a lively discussion followed the posting of James Anderson's paper on Freud's Jewishness to the Online Psychohistory Forum. Certainly it provided a lot of food for thought on the influences of Judaism on Freud's creation of psychoanalysis, but it also inspired me to think deeply on how religion affects people culturally as well as spiritually.

The concept of a "secular Jew" is hardly new. Many Jews reject their faith but embrace their culture and its heritage. Even those who renounce both their faith and its culture are not immune to the anti-Semitism of those who define Jewishness in racial terms. But, as Anderson illustrates, it was the cultural (rather than religious or racial) components of Jewishness that attracted and inspired Freud. This emphasis on religion as culture rather than faith got me thinking about the ongoing impact of religious culture on those who have rejected the religious tenants of their Christian upbringing. Churches are easy to quit; the culture they create, not so much.

I know many people who were Cradle Catholics (raised Catholic from birth rather than converting to the faith) but who no longer consider themselves devout. There are Supermarket Catholics (who pick and choose only the features of Catholicism that they like—these include Catholics for Choice) and C&E Catholics (who attend Mass only on Christmas and Easter). Others have disavowed the church entirely and self-identify using a variety of terms: Former Catholic, Recovering Catholic, Lapsed Catholic, Non-practicing Catholic, Ex-Catholic, etc. Whatever they call themselves, most people who have left the Church find that their Catholic upbringing leaves an indelible imprint.

Some are grateful for aspects of the Catholicism that lingers in their psyche. My daughter recently told me that while she has rejected the religious component of her Catholic school education, she remains grateful for the emphasis—in elementary school, high school, and at a Jesuit university—on social justice issues. She appreciates that moral and ethical issues and questions, subjects considered inappropriate in her friends' public schools, could be discussed and debated openly. Others who have left the Church are grateful for the Catholic rites of reconciliation. The act of confessing wrongdoing, making penance, and being absolved of sin ingrained in them a lifelong habit of examining their conscience and impressed upon them the value of asking for and receiving forgiveness when warranted. At the Catholic university where I work, even students who are lifelong atheists are eager to embrace the Jesuitical approach to learning that will shape their thinking for the rest of their lives.

Perhaps more former Catholics deeply resent rather than appreciate the lasting effects of the Church's teachings and culture in their lives. They are frustrated that they were made to feel guilty for actions such as pre-marital sex, artificial birth control, masturbation, abortion, assisted reproduction, homosexuality, and divorce. Worse still, the belief system is so deeply ingrained that some can't shake still feeling guilty for violating these tenets—in which they no longer believe.

The Catholic faith is hardly unique in this regard. Jack Mormons (an inactive Mormon), Lapsed Mormons, Ex-Mormons, etc., populate a large spectrum of attitudes toward their former faith based in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Like lapsed members of other churches, including Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh Day Adventists, the culture of their former faith communities remains a part of them.

People who have left their churches often form strong bonds with each other. Former Catholics share stories, sometimes tragic, often hilarious, of their years of plaid school uniforms, May crownings of statues of Mary, confessions, genuflections, Stations of the Cross, novenas, rosaries, saints, prayers learned by rote, Holy Water, big families, Midnight Masses, experiences as altar servers, and early dreams of becoming a priest or nun. Shared memories and

repercussions of collective experiences remain even after the faith that inspired them is gone. Whether people who have rejected their religious institutions welcome or resent the lingering effects of their former faith, the cultural influences of their former religious institutions often live on in their new secular lives.

There are not just secular Jews, but secular Catholics, secular Mormons, secular Baptists. Too often, we are persuaded that someone who has left the religious faith of their childhood has made a complete break, underestimating the cultural experiences, patterns, and ways of thinking that remain internalized. The Jewishness that influenced the non-religious Freud is rightfully understood as a key component in his creation of psychoanalysis. James Anderson's article makes me think that the culture of a religion can have a far more lasting impact than even its articles of faith, and may be the source of powerful but frequently overlooked psychological insight.

Nancy C. Unger, PhD, is Associate Professor of History at Santa Clara University, a Jesuit institution. She is the author of Fighting Bob La Follett: The Righteous Reformer (University of North Carolina Press, 2000; Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2008), and American Women in Environmental History: Nature's Housekeepers and Beyond (Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2012). She may be contacted at NUnger@scu.edu.

The Psychohistory Forum will have a fall
2012 meeting on the psychobiography and
psychology of the 2012 election

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The March 2, 2013 meeting will feature the
distinguished psychobiographer Lawrence
Friedman on Erich Fromm based on the
years of research devoted to his forthcoming
book, *The Lives of Erich Fromm:
Love's Prophet*

Further Reflections on Sigmund Freud and Judaism: With a Focus on Anti-Semitism

James William Anderson—Northwestern University

Anna Freud

Anna Freud was scheduled to speak at a meeting in Jerusalem. The purpose of the gathering was the establishment of the Sigmund Freud Chair at the Hebrew University, but she failed to appear. Jerome A. Chanes and Eva Fogelman, in their response to my essay, recall that they were in the audience. “The buzz around the room,” they recalled, “was that, in this, she was replaying her dad’s ambivalent attitude by not wanting to be overly identified with Judaism or Jewishness.”

Their anecdote about a near encounter with Anna Freud brings to mind my actual encounter with Anna Freud. I interviewed her on October 13, 1981, in her office in the home where her father had lived during the final year of his life. Near the end of our discussion, I mentioned that there was more interest in psychoanalysis in the United States than in England. The English, because of their style and their attitude toward the inner world, I commented, do not seem to be open to psychoanalysis. “Also,” I went on, “there aren’t many Jews in England, and Jews seem comfortable with introspection and revealing themselves, and that is important to being receptive to psychoanalysis.”

She surprised me with her response: “Yes, the Jewish science.” This statement meant, I thought, that she considered me to be in agreement with those who dismissed psychoanalysis as being a Jewish creation that is not applicable to people in general.

I replied quickly, “That term was used in a derogatory way. I certainly didn’t mean that.” I told her I was Jewish. I explained that my mother is Jewish and that I was brought up as Jewish, although my father is from a Gentile background.

“A little Jewish blood is all you need,” she noted, apparently including me among the Jews. She added that she agreed Jews are more open to psychoanalysis.

Both of these anecdotes draw our attention to the subject of anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism in Freud's Vienna

Norman Simms, in his response, observes that my essay "skirts the sticky issues of pervasive Viennese anti-Semitism." Alan Mohl notes that Freud "struggle[d] to free the psychoanalytical movement from being labeled a 'Jewish affair.'" Merle Molofsky points out that, as a Jew in Vienna during his era, "Freud not only was an alien, but a despised alien, an object of fear, contempt, and discrimination." According to Frederick Stecker, "Freud's Jewishness was a matter of ethnic and cultural affinity at a time when obsessive prejudice was rampant in Vienna." Many of the commentators see anti-Semitism as a topic that should be included in a discussion of Freud's Jewishness, so I am focusing on that topic in my reply.

Freud's era in Vienna is remembered for the great accomplishments of people of Jewish background, such as Gustav Mahler, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Alfred Adler, and Arthur Schnitzler. Jews also had more success than ever before in medicine, law, academia, and business. Yet it was also a time of almost unbelievably virulent, destructive, and consequential anti-Semitism (my following comments are based on Dennis B. Klein, *Jewish Origins of the Psychoanalytic Movement*, 1981; Bruce F. Pauley, *From Prejudice to Persecution: A History of Austrian Anti-Semitism*, 1992; Brigitte Hamann, *Hitler's Vienna: A Dictator's Apprenticeship*, 1999).

Freud's middle childhood occurred during a period in which Jews in Vienna had the rare privilege of enjoying full legal rights, and anti-Semitism, though widespread, was not intense. Yet in his later years at the *Gymnasium*, Freud notes that he became aware of the anti-Semitism surrounding him: "I began to understand for the first time what it meant to belong to an alien race" (*Standard Edition* 1900, 4: 229). A few years later in 1873, when he began at the University of Vienna, "I found," Freud recalls, "that I was expected to feel myself inferior and an alien because I was a Jew. I refused absolutely to do the first of these things. I have never been able to see why I should feel ashamed of my descent or, as people were beginning to say, of 'my race'" (*S.E* 1925, 20: 9).

The atmosphere at the University became increasingly hostile toward Jews after Freud's graduation. The German fraternities expelled their Jewish members. Respected professors and political leaders called for limiting the number of Jews in *Gymnasias* and universities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire; despite substantial support, official quotas were not established. Often Jews were denied professorships because of their religion. Freud was bitter about being turned down for that reason multiple times beginning in 1897, but he finally received an appointment in 1902 after asking a grateful patient, who had connections at the highest level of government, to help him. Jews were openly discriminated against, and in the period after World War I, they would be beaten up from time to time by roving bands of malicious students.

In the 1890s, Vienna was one of the most anti-Semitic cities in Europe and the only major city whose mayor was an avowed anti-Semite. The tolerant Emperor, Franz Joseph, refused to allow Karl Lueger to assume office the first four times he was elected. (Freud lit a cigar "for joy at Lueger's non-confirmation in office" the second time it happened.) The Emperor finally gave in and Lueger became mayor. Franz Joseph commented privately that he tried to protect the Jews, "but who really is not an anti-Semite?"

As the Emperor realized, anti-Semitism was widespread, but there was more than just a mild dislike of Jews. Large numbers of Austrians—possibly a majority of non-Jews—accepted the despicable narrative of the anti-Jewish leaders, who included politicians and newspaper writers. They promulgated two seemingly contradictory points: first, that the Jewish immigrants from the east were overwhelming and poisoning the country and would soon destroy it, and second, that the powerful Jews, such as bankers and newspaper owners, were carrying on a conspiracy to dominate the country and to join with other Jews to suppress freedom throughout the world. Adolf Hitler, an Austrian who lived in Vienna from 1908 to 1913, swallowed this propaganda and used it to form the basis of his rabid hatred of the Jews. Jews were largely excluded from higher positions in the military and from government jobs. The anti-Semites passed a law in 1910 to ban peddlers, who were predominantly Jewish, and they carried on boycotts against Jewish businesses. In Vienna during the early 20th century, it was consid-

ered legitimate to hate Jews and to seek ways to discriminate against them.

Influence on Freud

Freud was rightly afraid that psychoanalysis would be dismissed as a “Jewish science” that did not apply to Gentiles. That is just what happened at times, as Patricia Cotti shows in her response. Auguste Forel, who rejected Freud’s work for its Jewishness, was at the very top of the profession of psychiatry; for nearly 20 years he headed the Burghölzli, which was the most prestigious psychiatric hospital in the world.

Freud stated explicitly that he believed his Jewishness contributed to the resistance to psychoanalysis: “Finally...the question may be raised whether the personality of the present writer as a Jew who has never sought to disguise the fact that he is a Jew may not have had a share in provoking the antipathy of his environment to psycho-analysis... But we have unfortunately grown so suspicious that we cannot avoid thinking that this factor may not have been quite without its effect” (*S.E.* 1925, 19: 222). Anna Geifman and George Khasin argue that Freud took a “doctrinaire position” about his ideas; according to Vivian Rosenberg, “Freud was convinced that his way of interpreting human nature (and treating mental problems) was the ‘scientific’—and therefore the ‘right’—way.” I agree that, although Freud made significant changes in his theory during his lengthy career, he did have a deep conviction about the fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis. I think Rosenberg has identified the main reason: Freud believed his ideas applied universally to human beings, as did the ideas of the physical scientists he most respected, such as Hermann von Helmholtz and his teacher, Ernst von Brücke. Moreover, with his deep interest in a wide variety of literature, such as Greek and Roman writing (Don Carveth emphasizes Freud’s interest in classical learning) and the Old Testament, as well as English, French, and Spanish fiction, Freud found that his ideas seemed to fit, and help explain, much that he found there. I would argue that anti-Semitism also played a role in his claim to universality. As Alan Mohl notes in his response, Freud wanted to “free the psychoanalytical movement from being labeled a ‘Jewish affair.’”

At the international psychoanalytic congress in 1910, Freud wanted to install Jung as the Association's president because he was a Gentile. Freud's Viennese followers held a meeting to decide how to protest that a Swiss was to be given this position instead of one of them. Though not invited, Freud "crashed" the meeting. He said, "Most of you are Jews, and therefore are incompetent to win friends for new teaching. Jews must be content with the modest role of preparing the ground. It is absolutely essential that I should form ties in the world of general science. I am getting on in years, and am weary of being perpetually attacked." Freud was so upset that tears were running down his cheeks as he spoke. Grabbing his coat by the lapels, he declared, "They won't even leave me a coat on my back" (Peter Gay, 1988, 218 & 681).

As Don Craveth observes in his response, "Freud had a dim view of the viability of democracies." Craveth notes that Freud did not believe the masses were capable of "instinctual renunciation." I submit that Freud's experience with anti-Semitism was the underlying reason for his suspicion of democracy. He saw firsthand that masses of people were capable of believing in the most heinous and outrageous lies about the Jews—and that was in Vienna in the early years of the 20th century, long before Hitler came to power in Germany.

Anti-Semitism, in my view, did not have an influence on the content of Freud's psychological ideas, but it had an impact on his stewardship of the psychoanalytic movement, reinforced his conviction that his ideas were universal, and contributed to his distrust of democracy. Plus, it had the larger effect of contributing to his generally pessimistic, even cynical view of human nature.

James William Anderson's biography may be found on page 195. □

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Book Reviews

Obama and Family

Ken Fuchsman—University of Connecticut

Review of David Maraniss, Barack Obama: The Story (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2012), ISBN 978-1-4391-6040-4, 641 pages, hardbound, \$32.50.

The book's title could have been *The Obama Family Saga*, as it is as much about his grandparents and parents as it is about the President. Only eight of the 18 chapters are about him. He is not born until almost a third into the book, and he is 27 when the biography ends. Maraniss has managed to find and talk to more people who knew Obama and his relatives than anyone else. His themes are that Obama seeks to avoid life's traps, is very cautious, and has forged a distinct identity.

The book's strongest parts address Obama's time in Manhattan in the 1980s while studying at Columbia. Maraniss quotes extensively from letters Obama wrote to one girl friend and journal excerpts by another. The author's impressive achievement is persuading them to let him use these materials. Obama writes of himself as a man "without a class, a structure, or tradition to support me" and who sought "to assuage my feelings of isolation" by absorbing "all the traditions" (452). Despite Obama's soul-searching, one of his romantic partners, Genevieve Cook, found he kept "a veil" separating himself from others (481). Still, his psychology comes through. There is also a third romantic partner, this time in Chicago. This woman and Cook were anthropology students, as was Obama's mother. He had told Cook that for the past two years he was pushing his mother away, yet he was dating women who resembled her (491). While Obama then was struggling with his racial identity, all three of these lovers were white. Cook tells Maraniss, there "was hardly a black bone in his body." Another friend recalls that Obama "never had many black friends" (497). Maraniss concludes that Obama "remade himself" (417). Obama is African American in a different sense than most American blacks. He is equally black African and white American, and has no rela-

tives who were American slaves, sharecroppers, or were raised in our urban ghettos. Obama has made a greater self-transformation than any other American president.

Maraniss has impressive skills as a narrator; this is a richly textured book. His thesis about Obama as a cautious man seeking to avoid life's traps has merit. Yet Maraniss shies away from some rougher edges, except concerning the President's biological father. Barack Obama Sr. was a womanizer, an alcoholic, and an abusive husband. Maraniss portrays the full scope of Obama Sr.'s destructiveness and self-destructiveness, but less the flaws of the future President's maternal grandfather, Stan Dunham. While Maraniss does document the elder Dunham's frequent geographical moves, that his wife made more than he did, and the distanced relationship between him and his only child (Ann Dunham, the President's mother), he omits much that others have discussed. For example, Dunham's volatile temper made for stormy family relationships. When his daughter was a teenager, he would let her friends drive his car if they sat on his lap. Ann sought to escape from her father's control and unusual behavior, but he insisted she go to the University of Hawaii and live at home (Janny Scott, *A Singular Woman*, 2011, 46-47). Six weeks after this 17-year-old started college, she was pregnant.

Maraniss' portrait of Ann Dunham is also milder than others have presented. He does say that she resembled her father in being a restless soul who moved from place to place. To Maraniss, Ann became a hard-working, knowledgeable, professional anthropologist, who was even employed by the Ford Foundation in Indonesia. Maraniss does not mention that once Ann's contract was up, she was let go, nor does he show that she had trouble completing things, including taking 11 years to finish her master's degree and another nine to complete her doctorate (Scott, 25; Stuart Lau, to reviewer, May 27, 2009). Her son said that she "was not a well-organized person" and was "always at the margins." Both of Ann's children said that she remained financially dependent on her parents for much of her life (Scott, 252-254, 267). Maraniss does not report these deficiencies, nor that Ann hit Barry, discouraged him from showing emotion when Indonesian children would pelt him with rocks in her presence, nor the rebukes she would direct at him

when he expressed his feelings. Obama's caution and often hiding his emotions are connected to his need to accommodate his mother. He never knew when she was going to lavishly praise him, be sharp tongued, uproot him, or send him away.

Maraniss does shed some light on what happened between the President's parents. After marrying Ann, Obama Sr. kept a separate residence. Maraniss correctly concludes that Obama was a "man who was married in name only" (175). Yet Maraniss does not report Obama's April 1961 statement to the University that he did not live with Ann. While Ann told her son that his father remained with them for two years, Maraniss effectively debunks this. She and her child moved from Hawaii to Seattle when her infant was a month old. The father left Hawaii before his wife and son returned. When Maraniss considers what led to Ann's leaving Hawaii with a newborn, he does not ask why she would separate from her parents. Nor does he report that Obama Sr.'s African stepmother said that Stanley was furious with his daughter's marriage. Her father's rage could be a reason Ann left Honolulu. In some ways, Ann never recovered from these tumultuous events of her adolescence. Her son was deeply marked by his mother's unsettledness and seeks stability and reliability. He is no-drama Obama.

Barack Obama, the future prophet of self development through a united American community, is better suited for a time of reconciliation and prosperity than of political slash and burn and deep economic divides. In seeking to remake himself and transcend divisions, he wants the American center to hold and does not fully recognize, as Yeats did, that the "blood-dimmed tide" has been unleashed and that "the worst" are "full of passionate intensity" (Yeats, *Collected Poems*, 1950, 184-185). The roots of Obama's underestimating the irrational stem from his response to his childhood travails. Maraniss supplies much of the necessary evidence and omits other information. As admirable as his book is, the definitive psychohistorical biography of this president has yet to be written.

Ken Fuchsman's biography may be found on page 168. □

The Drive for Recognition and Power

Carol Lachman—Private Practice

Review of Robert A. Caro, The Passage of Power: The Years of Lyndon Johnson (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 2012), ISBN 978-0-679-40507-8, 712 pages, hardbound, \$35.

Considering that this is an election year, the timing of publication of the fourth volume of Robert Caro's work on Lyndon Baines Johnson, this one on his rise to the presidency from 1958 to early 1964, is fortuitous.

The Passage of Power is a detailed study of a man who longed to be president, and who could have been a viable candidate in the 1960 presidential election due to his huge sphere of power as Senate Majority Leader, dogged determination to influence, and political acumen. However, as Caro adroitly weaves throughout this book, Johnson's fear of failure and the imagined humiliation coming from defeat kept him hanging back from announcing his candidacy until it was too late. Caro is rife with detail about how Johnson avoided telling political groups in various parts of the country that he was a candidate for president, canceled talks in states where he needed the backing, and only made public his intention days before the Democratic convention, which nominated John Kennedy. Then, to the astonishment of most of his political backers, Johnson accepted the second position on the ticket. Most likely, his presence and whistle-stop tours throughout the country helped Kennedy get elected.

As vice president, Johnson had hopes of being an important member of Kennedy's inner circle, but that was not to be, much of it attributable to Johnson's intense need to be important and bend Kennedy to his will. It is painful to read how this sociable, energetic, and bursting-at-the-seams ideas man was relegated to the sidelines by Kennedy, who would have nothing of being pushed around by Johnson.

It was only when the office of president was thrust upon him due to Kennedy's assassination that Johnson rose psychologically and publicly, overcoming his inner demons. Caro illustrates

several times how important Johnson's presence and communication to the country was during this frightening time. He reassured the American people that the Kennedy legacy would be maintained and proceeded in the transition time from November 22, 1963, to his "State of the Union Address" on January 8, 1964, to lay the groundwork for the most significant social legislation passed by Congress since FDR's New Deal.

Though it would probably be useful and enjoyable to read Caro's three previous books on Johnson to obtain information on this man's family history and the process of his ascent to power, one does not have to, as the author provides contexts in this volume for his insights. For example, in the beginning chapter entitled "The Prediction," we learn that as a teenager Lyndon was telling fellow road-gang laborers that he was going to be president one day. What was Johnson doing, engaged in back-breaking labor? We learn that from when he was 14, Johnson's family was steeped in poverty. They could not pay their bills, had to take money from extended family to pay the mortgage, and accepted food from town folks. This situation resulted from the failure of a cotton crop, an enterprise Johnson's father, Sam, undertook to expand his wealth.

It is also interesting to find out that Lyndon did not come by his political ambitions and style on his own. He had a model in his father, who had been elected to the Texas House of Representatives several times. As a small boy, Lyndon would go around town with his father, who cozied up to the town folks and would demonstrate his influence by providing them with help. So, Sam Johnson's financial failure was a major trauma for Johnson, for not only did the family have to accept charity, but they also had to suffer the sneers of the people in town, who seemed to relish his father's comedown. According to Caro, Sam Johnson's failure and humiliation was seared into "every fiber of Lyndon Johnson's being."

Approximately a third of this book covers the Kennedys, the steady rise of John Kennedy, his presidency, and the fateful trip to Texas to ensure Democratic backing for the 1964 election. Caro is a master with respect to describing the details and complexities of character, interactions, and politics that impacted major events of that time, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis. The reader learns things that are not well known, some of which are riveting. The

Kennedy era includes the intense animosity between Robert Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, which is one of the threads in the book and extends to Johnson's ambivalence in 1968 as to where Robert Kennedy should be buried.

Throughout this volume of the series, the reader can feel Caro's compassion as well as admiration for Johnson. He brings us into the many details of how swiftly and smoothly Johnson took the reins of power after John Kennedy's assassination. Johnson almost immediately assuaged the country's fears about a conspiracy that was going to destabilize the government, by appointing the Warren Commission. It is staggering to read how much work Johnson carried out in just 10 weeks to ensure that the most momentous civil rights legislation since 1865-1869 (the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments) and 1919 (the 19th Amendment) would be passed, as well as a tax cut bill and money directed toward such social programs as Head Start. Johnson wanted people, in his words, "caught in the tentacles of circumstance," to be helped. He knew only too well what poverty felt like. Caro many times describes Johnson's empathy for the underprivileged and demonstrates that his vision of the Great Society was motivated by authentic compassion.

There are also amusing anecdotes about how Johnson wanted to put his Texas stamp on the presidency. In December 1963, Johnson welcomed Chancellor Ludwig Erhard of the Federal Republic of Germany to his ranch as part of a state visit. Caro describes a barbecue with the chefs in Stetson hats and cowboy boots. At some point, the song "Deep in the Heart of Texas" was sung in German. The Chancellor indicated he felt very much home, but this barbecue was naturally a far cry from the elegant state dinners of the Kennedys.

In the final pages of the book, Caro lays the seeds of some of the things that were going to mar Johnson's presidency in the future, after he had been elected in 1964 by the largest share of the popular vote in Democratic/Republican competition. One hopes that the next volume of *The Years of Lyndon Johnson* won't be too long in coming. In the meantime, *The Passage of Power* is a brilliant exposition on a president and the American political process.

Carol Lachman's biography may be found on page 163. □

Remembering Mary Lambert (1920-2012)

Paul H. Elovitz—Psychohistory Forum

On April 22, 2012, after many years of ill health, Mary Lambert died in her home. She was known to most members of the Psychohistory Forum as the gracious hostess of many of our meetings in her elegant apartment on the 32nd floor at 190 East 72nd Street in Manhattan. Colleagues appreciated her warm reception and were dazzled by the magnificent view of Central Park, the East River, and the city skyline. Their eyes would turn to the signed etchings by Miro, Signac, Marini, Sonja Delaunay, Renoir, Rouault (etching and aquatint); oils by Arthur Segal, Delle Site; and engravings by Jacques Villon of paintings by Vlaminck and Othon Friesz (a few were copies). Some paintings were by her daughter, the artist Elizabeth “Liz” Lambert. Personally, I treasured Mary’s friendship, clear judgment, and wise counsel. She was also an active member of the Forum’s Autobiography and Biography Research Group.

Mary Grosslight was born on August 16, 1920 in Vienna to Jewish parents who moved to New York City in 1925. In 1940 she married George Lambert, a businessman and fine cellist who had escaped from Nazi-occupied Austria in 1939. They raised their two sons and daughter in Larchmont, New York, before moving back to Manhattan in 1964 where she eventually pursued her own education. She graduated with honors from New York University, took a MSW at Hunter University, trained in psychoanalysis at the Westchester Institute, and maintained a private psychoanalytic practice. The death of her husband George in 1994 was a terrible blow. For her own pleasure she wrote poetry and on one occasion, an article for *Clio’s Psyche*.

Mary Lambert is survived by her children, one grandchild, three great-grandchildren, and many friends and colleagues.

Paul H. Elovitz’s biography may be found on page 133. □

Back Issues of volumes 1-17 of
Clio’s Psyche are now available
at cliospsyche.org

Betty Glad: In Memoriam

Nicole Alliegro & Paul H. Elovitz—Ramapo College

Betty Glad (1928-2010), a distinguished political science professor at the University of South Carolina and longtime political psychologist, died at age 82 on August 2, 2010. Her primary areas of research were American politics, foreign policy, and presidential psychology; her 1998 presentation to the Psychohistory Forum on Clinton's impeachment was well received.

Professor Glad received numerous honors for scholarship, service, and teaching at such institutions as Mt. Holyoke College, Brooklyn College, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, New York University, and, finally, the University of South Carolina, where she joined the faculty in 1989 and eventually became the Olin D. Johnston Professor of Political Science and Distinguished Professor Emerita.

Professionally, Glad was awarded the Frank J. Goodnow Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Field of Political Science in 2000 and the Harold Lasswell Award of the International Society for Political Psychology (for which she served as president) in 1997 for a lifetime of outstanding contribution to political psychology. Additionally, Glad was vice president of the American Political Science Association (APSA) and the president of APSA's Presidency Research Group. In addition to her service, Glad authored dozens of highly praised books, chapters, and articles. Her most recent work, *An Outsider in the White House: Jimmy Carter, His Advisors, and the Making of American Foreign Policy*, was published by Cornell University Press in 2009, and Glad's first book, *Charles Evans Hughes*, was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize.

Her accomplishments as a female scholar include being one of the first women to earn a doctoral degree in political science and spending most of her career at PhD-granting institutions. Glad also served as the first woman chair of the University of Illinois' Department of Political Science.

A native of Utah, liberal Mormon, and a democrat with a large and small "D," Betty Glad earned her bachelor of science de-

gree magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Utah, where she also received a distinguished alumna award in 2009. She received her doctorate from the University of Chicago in 1962. Glad loved music, dancing, and reading, and she was admired for her courage, strength, and tenacity.

To read more about Betty Glad's life and achievements, read "Political Psychologist and Presidential Scholar: Betty Glad," *Clio's Psyche* (June 1999, Vol. 6, No. 1, 18-24).

Nicole Alliegro is a junior journalism student at Ramapo College and may be contacted at nalliegr@ramapo.edu. □

Letters to the Editor

Peter Loewenberg: Inspiring Mentor and Ego Ideal

Dear Editor,

It was 38 years ago as an entering graduate student at UCLA that I first met Peter, and in the years since, there is no individual who has influenced me more in my work, and for whom I have more admiration, both as a scholar-clinician, and as a human being.

The UCLA history department in the 1970s was a hotbed of methodological innovation, and as a radical leftist, I was interested in understanding history and the "failure of socialism" in a new way. Not psychoanalytically-minded yet, it took me a couple of years, after taking several of Peter's classes, to appreciate the promise of psychohistory and of a psychoanalytic perspective, and to be drawn to select this reserved but passionate teacher as my mentor and "Doctor-Vater." I couldn't have made a better choice.

What Peter offered was a way of understanding history that incorporated, but went beyond, traditional causes and explanations for historical events and developments; that illuminated the existential and human reality of the historical process. The fate of socialism was not a matter of simply having the wrong ideology or of determinate objective conditions. Instead, as he brilliantly portrayed in his case studies of Austro-Marxism, it centered more on the particular psychodynamics of its leadership. In a masterful array of historical detail and narra-

tive, social historical analysis, and contextual illumination, "Austro Marxism and Revolution" (in *Decoding the Past*, 1983) connects the psychodynamics of Otto Bauer (shaped by the family of Freud's patient "Dora") to the strategy of ambivalence and passivity that doomed Social Democracy in its confrontation with National Socialism. He wrote, "Movements, like individuals, are not always conscious of what they are really doing, and what they really want."

Especially important to me (given deficits in my own developmental history) was having a mentor who was aware of the emotional pitfalls of the graduate school experience and committed to "compassion, concern and pedagogical intent toward the student...The student must always be respected as an individual" (58). What Heinz Kohut described as a self object experience was available to me for the taking, given Peter's gentle humanity and friendly inclusiveness (I have fond memories of being invited to outstanding social dinners at his home). Peter is a multi-dimensional man who combines a rich personal and family life with intense dedication to his craft, who integrates scholarly seriousness with an acute concern for social justice and progressive values, and an authoritative manner with empathy.

Although I ultimately did not succeed in landing the tenure track position I sought in teaching German history (having a psycho-historical dissertation at that time did not make it easier in the face of the resistance the profession has shown to this approach), this was not in any way related to Peter's efforts on my behalf. He was not only unflaggingly energetic in his support for me (as well as his other students), but served as an "ego ideal" that allowed me to persevere in my intellectual (and later clinical) pursuits over the decades to follow. In my own way, after a long career as a civil servant, now as an adjunct professor of history, independent scholar, and recently licensed psychologist practicing psychoanalytic psychotherapy, I feel that I have finally fulfilled the ambition and vision of being a psychohistorian that was planted in me almost four decades ago by this inspiring professor and now colleague-friend.

What I especially appreciate about Peter was and is his powerful commitment to the tradition and discipline of critical reason and scholarship (and his important advocacy that psychohistory be truly interdisciplinary). While flexible, Peter always insisted on rigor and empirical precision from his students, as well as mastery of the histori-

cal literature. In my recent reading in early 20th century German existential and hermeneutic thought, I am impressed at how much Peter embodies Karl Jaspers' ideal of "the University as a way of life" and of the scholar who will "dedicate himself to truth as a human being, not as a specialist" with a "serious commitment of the whole man" (*The Ideal of the University*, 1959, 3, 12). Peter's openness to new ideas and intellectual aliveness, together with his carrying forward of the tradition and humanism of Freud and of the spirit of critical inquiry, continue to inspire me today, as I know it does all who are in contact with him.

Sincerely yours,

Kenneth Rasmussen

Kenneth Rasmussen, PsyD, PhD, is a historian and psychotherapist, who teaches at Santa Monica College and has a private practice in Santa Monica. His research interests include the psychohistory of political ideologies and the psychological dimension of German philosophy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He may be contacted at erasmus472001@yahoo.com. □

Four More Important Points on Loewenberg

Dear Editor,

Regrettably, four important points were inadvertently deleted from my essay in *Clio's Psyche* (June, 2012, 108-112), on Peter Loewenberg's important 1971 *American Historical Review* (AHR) study, "The Psychohistorical Origins of the Nazi Youth Cohort" as a result of my need to very quickly shorten the article.

What didn't make the cut was Loewenberg's reminder to historians of the cohort notion's original conceptualization, that it was broader than what it became later as it took on a more narrowly demographic age-related definition of a group linked together by birth decade. Originally as Loewenberg writes, "a cohort is the aggregate of individuals within a population who have shared a significant common experience of a personal or historical event at the same time." This includes all those experiencing a collective emotional crisis, or series of crises, thus sharing, as Loewenberg puts it, "intensive experiences in later life, [which] if they are of a massive traumatic nature, can supersede both earlier influences and individual predispositions." This

connects importantly to his pioneering emphasis on the inclination of groups to repeat collective trauma, which is mentioned in my essay but needs constant stressing.

A second point is Loewenberg's call for attention to the dehumanizing consequences of statistical data, which he considers "itself a subject requiring psychohistorical analysis." It is worth noting he was one of the first to observe in the *AHR* what many have subsequently noted, how: "The high degree of isolation of feelings permitted by the use of statistics gives them an attractiveness to social scientists who wish to avoid their own painful emotions."

Another point that was deleted relates to the many significant psychological consequences of father-loss, which Loewenberg elaborates for historians in several incisive pages, including the tendency to idealize father-figures so important to understanding why Hitler came to power.

One last point needs to be noted, how deftly and courageously Loewenberg includes as part of his evidence examples from the German fiction of the 1920s that deal specifically with the psychological themes presented analytically in his essay that show how much and how intensively the traumas suffered by the youth cohort of the First World War still pressed on their minds.

Sincerely yours,

David Beisel

David R. Beisel's biography may be found on page 173. □

**The Online Forum
Invites You to Participate**

Join the lively psychohistory conversation of the online leg of the Psychohistory Forum.

To do so contact Molly Castelloe
at msc214@nyu.edu.

BULLETIN BOARD

CONFERENCES: Invitations to Psychohistory Forum Work-In-Progress Seminars will be sent by e-mail to members as plans are finalized. Our next meeting is on **September 12, 2012** in Toronto, organized by **Don Carveth** in conjunction with the Toronto Psychoanalytic Society. The topic is “Modernity Psychosis: The Evolutionary Psychoanalytic Social Theory of Eli Sagan” with presentations by Carveth and **Eli Sagan**. Later in the fall, we also will have a meeting on the presidential election and perhaps one on Robert Caro’s most recent book on LBJ. On **March 2, 2013**, **Lawrence Friedman** will present on the life and work of Erich Fromm. At the **International Psychohistorical Association’s (IPA) June 8-10, 2012** conference at New York University the Forum sponsored a meeting on the presidential election with papers by **Herbert Barry, Paul Elovitz, Ken Fuchsman, and Robert Gilbert**. Other Forum members presenting were **David Beisel, Molly Castelloe, Joel Markowitz, Jamshid Marvasti, Denis O’Keefe, Howard Stein, and Jacques Szaluta**. **Anna Geifman** presented at the **International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP)** July 6-9, 2012 conference in Chicago. The Forum is sponsoring a meeting at the Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society’s (APCS) at Rutgers on **October 19-20, 2012** with presentations by **Patricia Lazar, David Hodderson, Paul Elovitz, and David Beisel**. The theme of the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis” (NAAP) on October 27, 2012 in Manhattan is “Normal and Pathological Generosity: Clinical and Cultural Perspectives.” **NOTES ON MEMBERS:** Congratulations to **Glen Jeansonne** on his March 15th publication of his eighth book, *The Life of Herbert Hoover, Fighting Quaker, 1928-1933* (Palgrave MacMillan). Best wishes to Lawrence Friedman on the forthcoming publication of *The Lives of Erich Fromm: Love’s Prophet* (Columbia University Press, 2013). In July **Tom Ferraro** traveled to Seoul, Korea to promote his psychoanalytically informed book, *The Yin & Yang Tales of Neurotic Golfers*, and to write several articles on sports psychology. **OUR THANKS:** To our members and subscribers for the support that makes Clio’s Psyche possible. To Benefactors Herbert Barry, David Beisel, David Lotto, and Peter Petschauer; Patrons Fred Alford, Peter Loewenberg, Alice Maher, and Jacques Szaluta; Sustaining Members Dick Booth, Eva Fogel-

man, Ken Fuchsman, Joyce Rosenberg, and Nancy Unger; Supporting Members Judith Gardiner, John Hartman, and Bob Lentz; and Members Sue Adrion, Marvin Leibowitz, Ruth Neubauer, Christine Silverstein, and Richard Wolf. Our special thanks for thought-provoking materials to Nicole Alliegro, James Anderson, Herbert Barry, David Beisel, Donald Carveth, Jerome Chanes, Patricia Cotti, Dan Dervin, Paul H. Elovitz, Eva Fogelman, Ken Fuchsman, Anna Geifman, John Hartman, Juhani Ihanus, Glenn Jeansonne, George Khasin, Carol Lachman, Philip Langer, David Lührssen, Allan Mohl, Merle Molofsky, Ayla Humphrey, Nicholas Humphrey, Ken Rasmussen, Vivian Rosenberg, Norman Simms, Frederick Stecker, Eric Sterling, and Nancy C. Unger. Thanks to Bob Lentz for Guest Editing the Election 2012 materials and to David Lotto for editing the Lifton Festschrift. To Nicole Alliegro for editing, proofing, and Publisher 2007 software application, Caitlin Adams for editing and proofing, and Professor Paul Salstrom for proofing. Our special thanks to our editors and to our numerous, overworked referees, who must remain anonymous. □

*We Wish to Thank
Our Prompt, Hard-
working, Anonymous
Referees and Diligent
Editors*

Call for Papers
The Psychology of Violence and the Uses of Enemies
The December 2012 Special Issue

We seek psychoanalytic/psychological insights of 500-1,500 words on:

- Aggressive and violent language in the media
- Violent and aggressive language in political discourse
- Killing in war and peace and its consequences
- Violence in Mexico and other parts of the world
- Violence in the Ancient, Medieval, and the pre-modern world
- Foreign versus domestic violence and enemy formation
- Fear and violence as political motivators
- The militarization of campus security, the police, and language
- Anti-bullying and gay-baiting movements and legislation
- The historical process of the renunciation of violence
- Ending cycles of violence
- Implications of having professional soldiers versus citizen soldiers
- The uses and threats of violence by drug cartels, gangs, kidnappers, paramilitary groups, and terrorists
- Apocalyptic violence such as by Aum Shinrikyo and Jim Jones
- Case studies on the use of violence to end violence in Bosnia, Kosovo, Libya, Syria, and elsewhere
- Clinical case studies on fascination with violence
- Case studies on the uses of enemies to maintain group cohesion
- The desire to arm every American by the National Rifle Association (NRA) and whether this desire is for war?
- Violence in the name of religion: Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim
- Enemy formation and violence as unresolved mourning
- The impact of the bomb and the Holocaust on modern consciousness
- Psychobiographical case studies of individuals who have devoted their lives to lessening or ending violence
- The psychic characteristics of violent individuals
- Review essays on relevant books, games, major movies, & TV shows

Due October 1, 2012

Articles of 500-1,500 words are welcome. A symposium paper of up to 3,000 words will be accepted by August 20th. Please send submissions to Peter Petschauer at petschauerpw@appstate.edu.

Clio's Psyche
627 Dakota Trail
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