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# Clio's Psyche

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

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Volume 8, Number 3

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## Terrorism, Tragedy, and Group Mourning

### September 11, 2001: A Psychogeography of Terror and Grief

Howard F. Stein

University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

"Seek simplicity and mistrust it."

- Alfred North Whitehead

Words are commitments. Description, narrative, interpretation, implications, conclusions -- none is without a prior commitment, usually unstated. About the September 11, 2001, attacks upon the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, so much has already been written. Policy has been made; action has been taken. Confusion and bewilderment quickly gave way to certainty and to action ("Either you're with us, or you're against us"). The pressure for knowing and acting was both confounded and made more urgent by the fact that the enemy could not be defined geographically. Part of the terror of terrorism is the free-floating anxiety, if not panic, it induces. To a degree the anxiety was contained by the American government and media's quick focus on Osama Bin Laden, the al-Qaeda network, and the Taliban government of Afghanistan as the enemy in "the new war."

What began as sheer horror has been thoroughly conventionalized, beliefs about it stylized, and its implications are the doctrines of opposing camps. One side of the conflict grieves, another side cheers. Accounts congeal within a matter of a few days. What is there left to say that does not

(Continued on page 155)

Turn to the next page for  
**IN THIS ISSUE**

## Psychobiography Special Issue

### Sex, Politics, and the Psychobiographer, With Remarks on the Case of Jefferson

Elizabeth Wirth Marvick

Unaffiliated Scholar and Lecturer

Inquiry into the lives of important leaders is bound to come across information and speculation about the sexuality of its subjects. This raises the question, When and how is a politician's private sexual conduct relevant to his public performance?

For the psychobiographer, there is little doubt on the matter: patterns in the sexual behavior of public figures often give clues to the motives and methods of political behavior. Revelations of

(Continued on page 112)

## Psychobiography and the Study of Lives: William McKinley Runyan

William Todd Schultz  
Pacific University

*William McKinley "Mac" Runyan is presently Professor, School of Social Welfare at the University of California, Berkeley; Affiliated Professor, Psychology Department, UC Berkeley; and Research Psychologist at the Institute of Personality and Social Research, UC Berkeley. He received a BA from Oberlin College in 1969, with majors in sociology and psychology, and a PhD in Clinical Psychology and Public Practice from Harvard University in 1975. In addition to the pathbreaking book Life Histories and Psychobiography: Explorations in Theory and*

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Psychobiography

- Sex, Politics, and the Psychobiographer,  
With Remarks on the Case of Jefferson ..... 105  
*Elizabeth Wirth Marvick*
- Psychobiography and the Study of Lives:  
William McKinley Runyan ..... 105  
*William Todd Schultz*
- Understanding Backwards:  
Erikson's *Young Man Luther* ..... 116  
*Cushing Strout*
- A Study in Historical Empathy: Ernst Jünger and  
Germany Undefeated..... 118  
*Robert Pois*
- Psychobiography Within Limits: Malcolm X..... 120  
*Victor Wolfenstein*
- Gorbachev and Yeltsin: Two Personalities That  
Transformed Russia..... 123  
*Caroline Scielzo*
- Alan Elms: Personality in Psychobiography ..... 125  
*Kate Isaacson*
- Prototypical Scenes as Keys to the Life Story..... 130  
*William Todd Schultz*
- The Problem of Opinions Without Evidence..... 132  
*Daniel M. Ogilvie*
- Is Fiction Autobiographical? ..... 134  
*James William Anderson*
- Frank Lloyd Wright's Personal Ideology  
Expressed in His Architecture ..... 136  
*Ed de St. Aubin*

- From Crisis to Comedy: Charles Chaplin's  
*The Adventurer*..... 138  
*Marilyn Fabe*
- Dean Keith Simonton: Scholar of  
Genius, Creativity, and Leadership ..... 141  
*Anna V. Song*
- What the Art of Alberto Giacometti Taught Me  
About Psychobiography ..... 145  
*Suzanne C. Ouellette*
- Feminist Psychobiography of Eminent Women  
In a Psychology of Women Course ..... 148  
*Christine H. Jazwinski*
- Nicknames and Psychobiography:  
The Case of Demosthenes ..... 150  
*Robert Rousselle*
- Formative Events in Presidential Psychobiography .. 152  
*Herbert Barry III*

- Psychotherapy in the Era of Managed Care ..... 154  
*Book Review by David Lotto*

### Terrorism, Tragedy, and Group Mourning

- September 11, 2001: A Psychogeography of  
Terror and Grief..... 105  
*Howard F. Stein*
- Where Were You on September 11? ..... 159  
*Paul H. Elovitz with responses by Vassiliki Flenga,  
Jennifer K. Clark, Charlotte Kahn, Brian Castner,  
and C. Nathan DeWall*
- Call for Papers: "The Psychology of Terrorism,  
Tragedy, Group Mourning, Bio-Terrorism, and  
The War on Terrorism" ..... 162

*Method* (1982), Professor Runyan also edited *Psychology and Historical Interpretation* (1988) and has a chapter, "Studying Lives: Psychobiography and the Conceptual Structure of Personality Psychology" in the *Handbook of Personality Psychology* (1997). He is a member of the Personology Society and is the 1986 recipient of the Henry A. Murray Award, given by the Society for Personality and Social Psychology of the American Psychological Association, for his contributions to personality psychology. Professor Runyan may be contacted by e-mail at <Runyan@uclink4.Berkeley.edu>. Todd Schultz interviewed this distinguished scholar at Berkeley on October 5.

**William Todd Schultz (WTS):** Please tell us about your early life and family background.

**William McKinley Runyan (WMR):** I was born in 1947 in New York City, where my

parents had been living on Perry Street in Greenwich Village. From 1950 we lived in Cuyahoga Falls, and from 1961 in Hudson, Ohio. My parents were American citizens, of French, English, Scotch, and Dutch descent, and were Christian Scientists. My father was a lawyer for Goodyear Aerospace, then for Goodyear, in Akron. My mother was a housewife. Then, when my brother and I were finishing high school, she went back to school to get a PhD in English at Kent State University, and subsequently was a lecturer in English at Kent State and Akron University. Additional information on my family background and how it may be related to my work is in a chapter, "On Coming to Understand My Father: A Personal and Professional Journey," in *Between Fathers and Sons*, edited by Robert Pellegrini and Theodore R. Sarbin.

**WTS:** How did you first get interested in psychobiography?

**WMR:** When I started graduate school in 1969, there was a program at Harvard called Clinical Psychology and Public Practice. At an opening retreat that summer, I formulated the idea that what I was most interested in was studying life histories. At that point, I didn't connect so much with psychobiography. Studying lives was a way to integrate interests I had in consciousness and subjective experience, and utopian communities, which I had written a BA thesis on. Studying individual lives seemed to be a way of looking at the kinds of experiences people have or could have in different societies or different social/cultural arrangements. So the program that I conceived then was to try to use social scientific methods to study individual lives -- I wrote my PhD dissertation on that. In 1975, when I finished the dissertation, there was not much included on psychobiography; I thought

it was too narrowly reductionistic in trying to explain lives by drawing on psychology alone, without attending enough to social/cultural/biological/economic factors. Then, when I started writing my first book, I found that good psychobiographies included much on social and cultural contexts, and were not reducing everything to psychological causes.

I ended up titling my book *Life Histories and Psychobiography*. That was partially because of a change of my own conceptions. Initially, I was doing just "Life Histories" and then, seeing that a lot of what I cared about was also being done by at least some people in psychobiography, I added that term. At first, I didn't have a sympathetic exposure to psychodynamic theory. In graduate school I got more exposure to humanistic psychology, through those influenced by Carl Rogers, and also to behavioral critiques of psychoanalytic theory. It wasn't really until after I got out of graduate school that I became more sympathetic to the value of psychodynamic theory, particularly for biographical interpretation.

**WTS:** What is the "School of Social Welfare" at UC Berkeley?

**WMR:** It is a professional school, giving MSW and PhD degrees in social work. I teach courses there on Human Behavior and the Social Environment, Personality Theory, and Life Histories and Case Studies. I'm also an Affiliate Professor in the UC Berkeley Psychology Department, which is a separate department in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

**WTS:** What are you are working on now?

**WMR:** I am currently interested in the psychobiographical side of the history of psychology -- examining relations between the life experience, work, and social-cultural contexts of major figures in the history of psychology. I've spent the last several years doing research on past persons in the Harvard Psychology Department, such as Henry Murray, Robert W. White, Erik Erikson, B. F. Skinner, Edwin G. Boring, and William James.

**WTS:** How would you describe your primary intellectual affiliation?

**WMR:** A primary interest is in the study of lives, as in biography, autobiography, and psychobiography. This overlaps with psychology, sociology, anthropology, and literature.

**WTS:** How do you define *psychobiography*?

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**WMR:** I define *psychobiography* as the explicit use of formal psychological theory or research in the interpretation of individual lives. According to this definition, there can be psychologically insightful biography, which is not technically "psychobiography" if it is not making explicit use of psychological theory or research. On the other side, not all psychobiography is psychologically insightful.

**WTS:** What is the relationship between psychobiography and personality psychology?

**WMR:** I see psychobiography as one particular way of pursuing the study of lives. I'm also interested in personality psychology in the ways that it overlaps with the study of lives. Personality psychology includes general theories of personality, efforts to measure dimensions of behavior, and studies of particular processes and of classes of behavior. I outlined my understanding of the relations between these four types of personality psychology in a chapter, "Studying Lives: Psychobiography and the Conceptual Structure of Personality," in the *Handbook of Personality Psychology* (1997).

**WTS:** How do you feel about the expression, "All good biography is psychobiography"?

**WMR:** I would agree to the extent that much good biography is psychologically insightful. However, not all good biography makes explicit use of formal psychological theory or research. Other good biography might be primarily literary, social, cultural, or historical.

**WTS:** Henry Murray is considered by some to be the father of psychobiography, in that he championed the study of the person -- what he called the "long unit." What is your sense of Murray's importance?

**WMR:** I think Henry Murray was important in advocating personality psychology and "personology" or the study of lives starting in the 1930s, with his publication of *Explorations in Personality* (1938). As director of the Harvard Psychological Clinic from 1928, he also inspired many workers in the field, including the distinguished co-authors of *Explorations in Personality*, such as Robert W. White, Erik Erikson, Jerome Frank, Donald MacKinnon, Nevitt Sanford, and others.

**WTS:** Who influenced your development?

**WMR:** Personally, Henry A. Murray was a major influence, with his enthusiasm, charisma, and encouragement, while I was in graduate school and after. Robert W. White was also more quietly

supportive, even though we differed in approaches to the study of lives, with White encouraging more life history interviewing in the study of lives, while I was drawn more to methodological and theoretical issues. When I was an undergraduate at Oberlin College, sociologist J. Milton Yinger was an important intellectual influence, with his book *Toward a Field Theory of Behavior* (1965), integrating social, cultural, and psychological levels of analysis. At UC Berkeley, people at the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research (now the Institute of Personality and Social Research) were intellectually and personally supportive, such as Ken Craik and Ravenna Helson. A brilliant former doctoral student and now professor at Rutgers, Jerome C. Wakefield, who received doctorates in both Social Welfare and Philosophy from UC Berkeley, was important with friendly debates over many years about the relative values of conceptual-philosophical analysis (Wakefield) or biographical-historical analysis (myself).

**WTS:** What is the Society for Personality?

**WMR:** This is a small group of personality psychologists, many of them influenced by Henry Murray, which started meeting once a year in 1983 or so. Among the organizers were Silvan Tomkins, Rae Carlson, Brewster Smith, Ravenna Helson, Alan Elms, and Irving Alexander. It's a group of psychologists with serious interests in the study of lives, with many interested in psychobiography.

**WTS:** What is your experience in teaching psychobiography?

**WMR:** I've taught a course at UC Berkeley, Life Histories and Case Studies, which includes much on psychobiography, ever since 1979. In recent years, I've used my book, *Life Histories and Psychobiography*; Alan Elms' book, *Uncovering Lives: The Uneasy Alliance of Biography and Psychology* (1994); and a psychobiography by Robert Waite, *The Psychopathic God: Adolf Hitler* (1977), as well as readings from Freud, Erikson, anthropologists, and others.

**WTS:** In the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, a lot of people are naturally looking very closely at the life of Osama bin Laden. Can a psychobiography of bin Laden even be done by a Westerner? Or is there a basic incommensurability between the Western and the Muslim mind?

**WMR:** I think a psychobiography of bin Laden could be done. A psychological analysis

would be just one strand of an interpretation of bin Laden's life and to do it well one would have to learn quite a bit about Islamic culture and social structure, his particular background in Saudi Arabia, historical events and processes, and so on. Some people are starting to do fragments of that. For instance, I noticed on the Internet recently that Jerrold M. Post, who formerly headed the U.S. government's Center for the Analysis of Personality and Political Behavior that did personality profiles of foreign leaders, wrote a brief psychobiographical statement about bin Laden. It wasn't done in a great deal of detail, but I think it could be elaborated as one strand of a biographical, cultural, social, political, and historical analysis.

I am going to get a better sense of this myself this spring in my course on life histories and case studies. In the past I have done a fair amount on Hitler and Nazi Germany, looking at psychological analysis of individuals, groups, and institutions. This year I may do Nazi examples briefly but I am hoping to spend a fair amount of the course thinking about psychologically and culturally informed studies of bin Laden, Saddam Hussein, and some of the individual terrorists, and about understanding at the group level what is going on with different sub-groups within Islamic, Arab, and other populations involved.

**WTS:** I am sure we shall see a lot of bin Laden-related articles appearing soon.

**WMR:** I think we will. Such articles would be useful, if done well. But the question arises: How well does such work need to be done? It can be impossibly difficult to be perfect, but it could still be useful to produce work that is incrementally better than current understandings.

**WTS:** Is "usefulness" one of the cardinal criteria of a good psychobiographical study?

**WMR:** Yes, but "useful" in a number of different ways. One way relates to political purposes or military purposes. Another way relates to our cultural understanding of the achievements of great writers, artists, and scientists. Then there are personal uses, benefits connected to understanding people in one's own life as well as oneself. Psychobiography can also contribute to clinical understanding.

**WTS:** The study of an individual could also lead to nomothetic hypotheses.

**WMR:** Yes, I think that can happen. But as I argued in *Life Histories and Psychobiography*, I feel it is important to include two other levels:

group differences (by culture, gender, ethnicity, class, and historical period) and individual lives. One of the goals of psychology -- along with understanding general theories and group differences -- should be to make sense of individual lives, whether clinical cases, cultural heroes, or figures such as Hitler or, now, bin Laden.

**WTS:** Why do you think the field of psychology has such antipathy, in general, for the case study?

**WMR:** That is something that often puzzles me. I think there can be intellectual, personal, and political factors. Part of it involves an effort to "be scientific," according to different conceptions of what that means. Part of it is personal, temperamental -- some people are not comfortable with, or want to get away from, experiential case studies. I am sure, also, that there are social, interpersonal dynamics at work -- imagining how one's peers are going to react to case study research.

**WTS:** What do you think is the primary value of psychobiography to psychology?

**WMR:** The advance in our understanding of individual people and individual lives is one of the major objectives in psychology and in the social sciences more broadly. I like the argument Alan Elms makes in *Uncovering Lives*. He talks about his own trajectory, from working as a "hard scientist," studying monkeys in the Panamanian jungle and working on Stanley Milgram's experiments on obedience to authority, to ending up studying psychobiography. Some of his peers thought he was going off the deep end by getting involved in more interpretive, historical psychology. But Elms saw it as coming back to the heart of psychology.

**WTS:** It is like the return of the repressed.

**WMR:** Or the return of some of the initial reasons undergraduates have for getting into psychology. Students may want to study individual lives, but sometimes that interest gets ground out of them as not sufficiently "scientific." It is as if psychology has now gotten more scientific by being more quantitative and more experimental, and can therefore bypass the individual life. I don't share that view. We can get more quantitative and more experimental, but can also increase our ability to understand individual lives.

**WTS:** How do you assess the work of psychologists who use quantitative methods to study history and lives, such as Dean Keith Simonton and Frank Sulloway?

**WMR:** I think they are making important contributions to the field. My own interests are more in qualitative and interpretive approaches to the study of individual lives. Ultimately, it would be valuable to develop a better understanding of the relations between these different forms of inquiry.

**WTS:** I always think of psychobiography as the antidote to psychology's excessive clinging to nomothetic or generalizing conceptions of science.

**WMR:** I agree. Studies of individuals can also be conceived as scientific in some sense. A phrase that Stephen J. Gould often uses is "historical science," meaning analyzing "unique unrepeatable sequences of events." He is talking about evolutionary biology or historical geology, but some of what he is saying applies also to unique sequences of events in individual lives.

**WTS:** How does one go about choosing a theory to use when looking at a life?

**WMR:** It can happen in a number of different ways. Sometimes one knows a lot about a life and then begins searching for a theory as a means of making sense of it. I think of Robert C. Tucker and the two-volume psychological biography he did on Stalin, *Stalin as Revolutionary, 1879-1929: A Study in History and Personality*, 1973, and *Stalin in Power: The Revolution from Above, 1928-1941*, 1990. He wrote a chapter about the process of doing the work in the book I edited, *Psychology and Historical Interpretation*. He had already known a lot about Stalin, having worked at the American embassy in Moscow and married a Russian woman. He wasn't allowed to leave Russia until Stalin died. After encountering Karen Horney's theory, he felt it explained a lot about the grandiose self-image that he saw Stalin actively creating. It was a case of happening upon a theory that seemed to fit. Another example is Robert G. Waite's biography of Hitler, *The Psychopathic God* (1977). Waite draws on fragments from a wide variety of theories, including classical psychoanalysis and Eriksonian theory. He also makes use of empirical findings concerning people who are born with one testicle -- which Waite believes was true of Hitler. So, rather than deciding in advance what theory one is going to use, another approach is to start with the life itself, and continually scan for theory and research which may be useful.

**WTS:** There are some psychobiographies in which the theory is more implicit than explicit.

**WMR:** One example is *Alice James: A Biography* (1980), Jean Strouse's book on the sister of William and Henry James. There was an explicit attempt to make the theory invisible. My guess is that she used the theory fairly self-consciously but then in writing things up decided to keep it in the background.

**WTS:** Can a psychobiography be right in some way -- revealing and persuasive -- even when the theory one employs is dubious in terms of an absence of experimental support?

**WMR:** It seems possible with parts of psychoanalytic theory, because there are so many different defense mechanisms, for instance, and one can just leave out those portions of the theory that seem wrong. Another example is James David Barber, *Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House* (1972, 1992), which uses two or three different dimensions. Even though the dimensions seemed too simple, the way he wrote the book made what he said seem fairly persuasive.

**WTS:** One quality of a successful psychobiography is purely literary.

**WMR:** Some of Freud's case studies relate to that. When I try to summarize his interpretation of a case like Little Hans, it sounds unpersuasive, but then Freud is such a good writer that when you read him, it seems much more compelling. It makes a big difference how skillful a writer one is in presenting interpretations.

**WTS:** It's also interesting how people latch onto a bad psychobiography and use it to advance the specious argument that psychobiography is somehow intrinsically flawed. Some plumbers do bad work but that does not call into question the basic principle of plumbing!

**WMR:** People always pick on Freud's mis-translation of the vulture figure in *Leonardo*, and argue that Freud's whole book -- the whole enterprise -- is bankrupt. It doesn't follow.

**WTS:** Have you ever found yourself idealizing or devaluing your subject, or so strongly identifying with a subject that it became a problem? When I was doing my dissertation on the writer James Agee, there was a period of time during which I thought I was Agee. I became aware of that, noticed it as a problem, and tried to get more distance from him, though I never succeeded entirely in doing so.

**WMR:** That particular phenomenon may have happened to me less because I seem to focus

more on methodological and conceptual issues. I use examples of Van Gogh or King George III or Hitler, but I've never spent years and years working on one person. Except, I may have to modify that because I've been working on the lives of psychologists quite a bit lately, going back and rethinking aspects of Henry Murray or Freud or Skinner in surprising ways.

I probably idealized Murray, particularly in graduate school. That relationship meant a lot to me. Then I read and wrote a review of the Murray biography by Forrest G. Robinson, *Love's Story Told: A Life of Henry A. Murray* (1992). That was very engaging and I spent a tremendous amount of time writing a review for *Contemporary Psychology*. I wanted to be fair to the book, to the different sides of Murray, and to my feelings about him. Yet, after writing the review, I was less satisfied with the book. It didn't do justice to Murray in some respects -- how charismatic and engaging he was to talk with. He was insightful about so many things.

The book argues how deluded he was, particularly in his relationship with Christiana Morgan. There may be something to that, but in the biography it may have been exaggerated. On the other hand, I learned a lot about their relationship that I hadn't known.

I also learned a lot about the meaning of Herman Melville for Murray -- how he got so engaged in Melville's life and work, and particularly Melville's novel *Pierre*. According to Robinson, Murray and Morgan saw a lot of their own relationship reflected in the central love relationship in *Pierre*. That may have been one source for Murray's interest in the book and in Melville. And also why he wrote a 90-page introduction to *Pierre* later on.

It always puzzled me why Murray never published his biography of Melville, which supposedly reached around a thousand pages back in the 1930s. Robinson offers an interpretation of that, centering on how Murray was too involved with it, or how Melville's life ended too tragically. Maybe Murray did not want to work through that period of Melville's life, or maybe it was too revealing of Murray. So, I'm sure I idealized Murray, but I do so less now, partly as a result of reading Robinson's book, and rethinking what Murray was doing and how he related to others. I also re-read a lot of Murray, and parts I admire, and parts I feel don't work that well. I wonder if I met him again, would I feel differently about him? I expect I

would, but he was still an important person in my life, and I'm grateful to have known him.

**WTS:** Sometimes my students will say: All these interpretations of a life are equal, and I can't decide which one is right, and if that is true, then there is nothing to psychobiography, because all interpretations of a life cancel one another out. How do you reply to this?

**WMR:** If two or three interpretations seem fairly plausible, that is one thing. But it is unlikely anyone thinks all interpretations are equally plausible. I think one of the tasks of psychobiography is to look critically at interpretations over time, and to collect more evidence, so that some grow more persuasive and others less so. In *Life Histories and Psychobiography*, I examined 13 different psychodynamic explanations of why Van Gogh cut off part of his left ear and gave it to a prostitute shortly before Christmas in 1888. Some explanations seem less persuasive than others, especially those with little relevant evidence. One explanation of Van Gogh's breakdown that seems to have considerable support is that Vincent, who was emotionally and financially dependent on his brother, Theo, may have been distressed at the prospect of losing the love and attention of his brother to his new fiancée.

**WTS:** That is the explanation my students tend to find the most persuasive. They also like the explanation that he did it because he was hearing voices and in his psychotic state he felt like if he cut off his ear the voices would disappear. It is always interesting to see which ones they find the most persuasive, because then you can start asking "Why?". By asking that question you can start identifying qualities of persuasive explanations generally.

**WMR:** I think that is a good way of doing it. Explanations can be evaluated in light of criteria such as: 1) how logically sound they are, 2) how much of the evidence they account for, 3) how much they stand up to attempted falsification, or 4) how consistent they are with other knowledge you have about the person.

**WTS:** What do you think is the future of the field?

**WMR:** Such a big question. Maybe recent events suggest a response. One thing that led to an advance in psychobiography or psychohistory was so many scholars trying to understand Hitler, Nazi Germany, German character, or the psychology of anti-Semitism. Trying to understand some of the tensions in the relationships between the Islamic

and Arab world and the Western world might produce a need for interpretations drawing on psychobiographical or psychohistorical factors, at the same time paying explicit attention to cultural history, religious history, and social and economic conditions. This might become a significant influence on the field.

**WTS:** Do you think psychobiography is becoming more acceptable within mainstream psychology?

**WMR:** I hope so, although there are signs on both sides. I think that the emergence of narrative interpretive approaches in psychology is encouraging. One of the challenges of psychology is to better understand how general theories and quantitative research interact with advances in our understanding of individual lives.

**William Todd Schultz, PhD**, is Associate Professor and Chair of Psychology at Pacific University in Oregon. He received his PhD in personality theory in 1992 from the University of California, Davis, where his main advisor was psychobiographer Alan Elms. Previous psychobiographical essays on James Agee, Jack Kerouac, Roald Dahl, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Oscar Wilde have appeared in *Biography*, *Psychoanalytic Review*, *American Imago*, and *Turns in the Road: Narrative Studies of Lives in Transition* (2001). Schultz is a contributing editor for the journal *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* as well as its psychobiography bibliographer, contributing each fall an annotated bibliography of psychobiographical research. In summer 1998 he chaired a symposium at the APA convention in San Francisco on the subject of psychobiography and creativity, with panelists including Runyan, Alan Elms, and Rae Carlson. He may be contacted at <schultzt@pacificu.edu>.

Schultz relates: "Around 1986, when I first became aware of psychobiography through a seminar taught by Alan Elms at UC Davis, there was one book the aspiring psychobiographer could turn to for guidance, support, and reassurance: William McKinley Runyan's *Life Histories and Psychobiography: Explorations in Theory and Method*. It seems to me now that that one book -- partly because of when it emerged on the intellectual landscape and partly because of its evident scholarship -- did more for the field of psychobiography than any other book before or since (with the possible exception of Elms' own *Uncovering Lives*). At some point "Mac" paid a visit to the seminar. He was a sincere, genuine, slightly quiet, totally un-

*prepossessing scholar of warmth and generosity -- an absence of ego combined with an abundance of hard-earned learning. Now that I have come to know Mac fairly well, my opinion has not changed in the slightest."* □

## Sex, Politics, and the Psychobiographer, With Remarks on the Case of Jefferson

(Continued from first page)

Eisenhower's sexual inhibitions, Kennedy's promiscuity, and Clinton's indiscretions all help to explain formerly ill-understood features of their political style and values. Eisenhower's romance with his wartime driver is related by her in elliptical terms: the Supreme Commander of the Allied forces found himself unable to consummate their sexual relationship. (Kay Summersby Morgan, *Past Forgetting: My Love Affair with Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 1975, pp. 132-140) John Kennedy's insatiable, risk-defying sexual predation (Garry Wills, *The Kennedy Imprisonment*, 1981, pp. 5-35) was part of a frantic response to his father's sexual competitiveness and continual challenges to his sons to be hyperactive. At the same time, reports of the nature of his actual sexual encounters suggest a longing to play the passive role that had won him signs of tenderness from father and mother when he was a sick child. (Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*, 1987, pp. 310-314) Clinton's dangerous self-exposures in yielding to sexual temptations had an air of challenges to Fate: his repeated successes in extricating himself from their consequences may have reaffirmed his belief that Providence smiled on the needs of the child who had early been deprived of a father's protection.

Each of these patterns of sexuality helps illuminate political strategies: Eisenhower's fear of his destructive power -- particularly strong where subordinates were concerned -- was channeled effectively toward wartime targets. (On childhood experiences that seem to have shaped these fears, see, by Eisenhower, *At Ease: Stories I Tell my Friends*, 1967, pp. 57-88.) The Presidential style that he crafted, by avoiding direct confrontation (Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader*, 1982), served at once to restrain his own rage and to confound and divert partisan attacks on his policy directives. One of

John Kennedy's recent biographers considers his sexual behavior "reckless in the extreme" with a "potential for disaster," especially because of criminal connections of some of his lovers. Yet Reeves observes that these "did not apparently interfere directly with the broader issues of peace and prosperity." (Thomas C. Reeves, *A Question of Character: A Life of John F. Kennedy*, 1991, p. 327) Certainly it is true that in the short time that Kennedy held the Presidential office he was able to resist making highly aggressive responses to what he felt as personal challenges from Khrushchev and others to "test" his "backbone." As for Clinton, it may be that his many narrow escapes from sexual adventures gave him the reassurance he needed to seek approval from the public through the conciliatory strategies that his critics described as "waffling" and that he considered generous and statesmanlike. Intimate details may be important sources of clues to how personal needs play a part in the politician's performance.

For the past few years I have been working on the Virginia "founders" -- that small group of exceptionally closely linked leaders who were instrumental both in achieving American independence and in shaping the new republic. Information on the sexual behavior of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Marshall holds special interest because of the light it throws on their common early experience in a very distinctive Southern milieu. Knowing about their sexuality is one way to gain understanding of all their social relations. How good a way it is, compared with others, depends on the kind of data available. This varies greatly amongst them, and of course has been most investigated and discussed for Thomas Jefferson.

A quarter of a century ago interest in a certain aspect of Jefferson's private life was revived by Fawn Brodie. Her *Thomas Jefferson: An Intimate History* (1974) resuscitated rumors of the third American President's extramarital affairs that were originally circulated publicly in 1802, just after Jefferson's first inauguration, by a disaffected journalist, James Callender. These included a report of a long-term sexual relationship with Sally Hemings, one of his slaves.

Informed by psychoanalytic study and experience, Brodie was able to discover and interpret aspects of Jefferson's childhood development that helped explain his "affection for power" and his "hunger for affection and esteem," assuaged partly, as she saw it, by his "fantasies of what constituted his duty to the state." (p. 470) The popular success

of the book was owed to the central place she gave in it to Jefferson's sexual relationships.

It was not prurience that inspired Brodie's investigation of the alleged Hemings affair. She was interested in it exactly because of the political significance she thought it held. An ardent champion of civil rights, Brodie saw Jefferson's connection with Hemings as evidence of the weakness of racial barriers in Jefferson's affective perspective. She reconstructed a sexual liaison between the all-powerful planter and his slave as a romantic relationship that implied an intense unconscious conflict on Jefferson's part. Brodie was able to cite utterances from Jefferson that professed a horror of slavery and a wish to see it ended, but the Great Man's actions, throughout his life, were utterly inconsistent with his equalitarian professions. He himself owned several hundred slaves and freed almost none of them. He rejoiced in the increased capital that their multiplication brought to the plantation owner and he approved the extension of slavery westward in 1820. Moreover, he was notorious for talking out of both sides of his mouth: the same book that denounced slavery, his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1787), condemned miscegenation as unnatural and as corrupting to the dominant race on the grounds that African-Americans are congenitally inferior on almost every score.

From the point of view of other psychobiographers the weakness of Brodie's evidence connecting Jefferson's sexuality with his politics lay in her failure to substantiate any feelings of guilt on his part that would support her proposition of an inner conflict between his ideals and intimate connections and his public policies and pronouncements. More plausible is the unconflicted, less than romantic, interpretation put on Jefferson's sexual practices by Conor Cruise O'Brien: they were merely the typically exploitative ones of the privileged Virginia planter of his time; though repelled by intercourse between black men and white Virginia women, Jefferson "had nothing against his miscegenation" and there was "no valid reason to suppose that he disdained the sexual perquisites available to his caste." (*The Long Affair: Thomas Jefferson and the French Revolution, 1785-1800*, 1996, p. 23)

Indeed, as in most psychobiographical problems, sexuality is one of several aspects of the subject's orientation: understanding its motives and forms adds to understanding the whole personality, just as following the development of personality from its earliest stages helps to understand the

psychological function performed by sexual practices.

In studying Jefferson's case it becomes clear that certain early deprivations produced a narcissistic pattern in which he gratified an intense demand for love and protection by imagining the world around him as objects that supplied his needs. (See Erik Erikson, *Dimensions of a New Identity: The 1973 Jefferson Lectures in the Humanities*, 1974, and E. W. Marvick, "Thomas Jefferson's Personality and His Politics," *The Psychohistory Review*, 25, 1997, pp. 125-164.) In this light he was perfectly capable of enjoying Sally Hemings as a non-person, without guilt or conflict, just as he was able to construct the French Revolution -- or any other political events -- to suit demands of his imagination.

In any case, the absence of new evidence confirming the Hemings-Jefferson liaison, and the sentimental theme that Brodie injected into her interpretation gave more conventional historians -- mostly Jefferson admirers -- the basis to express outrage and skepticism at her work.

In 1998 the results of a DNA analysis were published that were consistent with Thomas Jefferson having fathered, at the age of 64, a child born to Sally Hemings. Joseph Ellis, whose very successful biography of Jefferson had come out the year before, appeared alongside the scientific report to recant his earlier judgment that "the likelihood" of Jefferson's "liaison with Sally Hemings is remote." (*American Sphinx*, 1997, p. 305)

Ellis' reasons for his original disbelief were of a kind that the psychobiographer is used to meeting from "orthodox" historians. They rest on ad hoc constructions of character -- the subtitle of *American Sphinx* is *The Character of Thomas Jefferson* -- that owe little to systematic understanding of personality development or dynamics.

The first reason Ellis cited for his disbelief was the fact that Sally Hemings' last two children were conceived years after James T. Callender publicized the rumor of Jefferson's long-term affair with her. "It is difficult to believe that Jefferson would have persisted in producing progeny with Sally once the secret had been exposed and the Federalist press was poised to report it." (*Sphinx*, 1997, p. 305) This "circumstantial evidence," as Ellis called it, against the liaison, seems based on a conception of Jefferson as prototypical "Political Man" in whom rational political calculations easily trumped the impulse to sexual

gratification.

Ellis' second "reason" must be dismissed out of hand: it does nothing to explain Jefferson's behavior and it is not based on fact. He claimed that Jefferson's political enemies, John Adams and Alexander Hamilton, did not find "it possible to believe that Callender's accusations were true." (*Ibid*) Contrary to this, however, there is evidence that Adams *did* believe the Hemings story (see David McCullough, *John Adams*, 2000, p. 581) and, so far as I am aware, none whatever that Hamilton did not. Hamilton's father-in-law and other correspondents certainly did and Hamilton did not demur at their assumptions. (See H. Syrett, ed., *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, Vol. 26, pp. 36 & 141.) Nevertheless, in Ellis' rewritten discussion of the affair he repeats this misstatement, though more circumspectly: "His enemies doubted the charges." (*American Sphinx*, 1998, p. 366)

The third reason Ellis gave for his disbelief in the Jefferson-Hemings story was that Jefferson wasn't sexy enough to have lusted after Sally, much less to have consummated his desire. In Jefferson, Ellis claimed, "the palpable realities of physical intimacy were routinely sublimed [sic] to safer and more sentimental regions." (*Sphinx*, 1997, p. 306) This is squarely in the scholarly tradition that Fawn Brodie called an "essentially passionless, monastic, and ascetic" view of Jefferson. ("The Great Jefferson Taboo," *American Heritage*, 23, 1972, p. 51) Nor has it disappeared, despite the recent embrace extended to the idea of a Sally-Tom miscegenational relationship. For example, a new "character study" of Jefferson by E. M. Halliday concludes that Jefferson did not succumb to the attractions of prostitutes because he would have considered such contact "reprehensible." (*Understanding Thomas Jefferson*, 2001, pp. 16-20)

Not only is there equally persuasive evidence that Jefferson took a quite personal interest in the availability of prostitutes, but also, so far as I can tell, most Jefferson biographers have ignored other evidence on Jefferson's sexual predilections. During his lifetime he deftly warded off obloquy by confessing to having attempted, as a bachelor, to seduce his best friend's wife in her home, but offered nothing to refute her claim that he had renewed his efforts during a later visit with his wife to the same place. Lucia C. Stanton, a leading authority on Jefferson, discovered Jefferson's contemporary reputation for promiscuity among his

slaves, including a report that he was in the habit of accosting a certain slave washerwoman for sexual favors on his own plantation. (See "The Other End of the Telescope: Jefferson Through the Eyes of His Slaves," *William & Mary Quarterly*, 57, 2000, pp. 139-152)

Nevertheless, Ellis thought to support his original "weak libido" conception by citing Hamilton's observation of Jefferson's "feminine" temperament -- a point quite different from the notion that Jefferson's "urge to remain oblivious [to the 'meaning of both sex and slavery'] was considerably stronger than his sexual drive." (*Sphinx*, 1997, p. 306) The haphazardness of such attributions of motives and psychodynamics is pointed up by their inconsistency: On the one hand, according to Ellis, Jefferson could have been regularly copulating with Sally before Callender's exposure, but conscious calculations of political risk would certainly have caused him to desist after 1802. On the other hand, any sexual impulses Jefferson might have felt would have been suppressed by unconscious aversions. Ellis reports arriving at these rather random examples of what he calls "plausible conjecture ... in the spirit of responsible speculation" after five years of "mulling over the ... evidence." (p. 305) If the original speculation had really been responsibly anchored in a clear conception of the Jeffersonian personality, however, Ellis would not so readily have veered to an opposite, extreme conclusion in 1998: "A long-standing sexual relationship between Jefferson and Hemings ... is now proven beyond a reasonable doubt." (*Sphinx*, 1998, p. 398; repeated in *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation*, 2000, p. 98) Even the geneticists who made the findings go no farther than to make "modest probabilistic interpretations" (E.A. Foster, et al, *Nature*, 396, 1999, p. 397), and the limits of the new evidence have been acidly pointed out by Philip Ranlett of Hunter College in the *William & Mary Quarterly* (57, 2000, p. 728).

Ellis' revised view of Jefferson's sexuality is not based on new insight into the processes that shaped the adult politician. In the new edition he remarks, "I have changed my mind on the Sally Question, but not on Jefferson. He emerges ... as more of an American Sphinx than ever before, more complicated and inscrutable." (*Sphinx*, 1998, p. xx) To him, the lustful post-DNA Jefferson is just as mysterious as the chaste one of 1997. As in the case of many biographers without a clue to the springs of psychodynamic structures, there is no

problem in simply re-imagining a Jefferson doing what he was formerly thought incapable of doing.

Little has changed since Fawn Brodie's 1972 indictment of the near-unanimous denial of the Hemings-Jefferson affair by white Jeffersonian biographers of her day "whose sense of identification with their subject is almost total." ("The Great Jefferson Taboo," p. 50) What is different is that the lineaments of subjects considered worthy of identifying with have changed. Historians now put positive valuations on interracial and multicultural contacts, including sexual contacts.

I have recently been asked what I make of the revival of interest in the founders and my answer has been that one would have to see actual numbers to be convinced that "revival" is what it is. Writing on "those who made the revolution and the new republic" has been a growth industry from the very start, beginning with Parson Weems' hagiographic treatments of George Washington in many editions tailored to suit the changing times. I suspect no decade has been without several best-sellers on the subject and the most recent are not necessarily the best. Navel-gazing and self-congratulation -- or muck-raking and finger-pointing -- about the "Fathers" has always been an American delight. Depending on their own personal histories and needs, today's biographers, like yesterday's, cast their subjects -- Jefferson, Washington, Hamilton, or John Adams -- in a favorable or unfavorable light.

Either way, the Jefferson that today's historians relate to is a different Jefferson than Dumas Malone's, or even Merrill Peterson's, but his treatment by biographers is likely to tell more about them than about how Jefferson got to be the man he became and what kind of a man that was. That is the vocation of the psychobiographer.

*Elizabeth Wirth Marvick, PhD, is in the process of a book on the Virginia Founders and has recently published "Beyond the Narcissistic Leader: Toward Comparing Psychopolitical Roles" in Mind and Human Interaction, 8, 1997, and "Family Imagery and Revolutionary Spirit: Washington's Creative Leadership" in Mark J. Rozell, et al, eds., George Washington and the Origins of the American Presidency (2000). She has taught political science at CUNY, the University of Bordeaux, Cal Tech, the American University in Paris, and UCLA, and has served on the councils of the Western Society for French History and the International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP) and on the editorial boards of*

*The Psychohistory Review and Political Psychology.* Dr. Marvick is one of the founders and past chair of the Research Committee on Psychopolitics of the International Political Science Association and the author of the psychobiographies, *The Young Richelieu: A Psychoanalytic Approach to Leadership* (1983) and *Louis XIII: The Making of a King* (1986). She may be contacted at <Dmarv@ucla.edu>. □

## Understanding Backwards: Erikson's *Young Man Luther*

Cushing Strout  
Cornell University

"We live life forwards and understand backwards,' said a Danish writer." So wrote William James, quoting Soren Kierkegaard. They had much in common as radical individualists, voluntarists, and introspective psychologists with a deep interest in freedom of the will in the making of crucial decisions and in the power of conversion experiences to unify the divided self. But James was much more secular and much more oriented to a historical sense of life: "I am finite once and for all, and all the categories of my sympathy are knit up with the finite world as such and with things that have a history."

In the 1940s I read as much of Kierkegaard as I could. Probably his titles -- *The Concept of Dread* or *Fear and Trembling* -- did not seem inappropriate to an infantry soldier trained to go into battle in 1944. At the end of the war, back in America, recuperating from pneumonia in a military hospital, I had a welcome opportunity to read Ralph Barton Perry's two volumes, *The Thought and Character of William James*. Moving towards sympathy with James rather than Kierkegaard, as I did, meant moving to a thinker who, in spite of his depression and despair as a young man, was at home in the secular world and emphasized our being rooted in a temporal point of view.

When I returned to Williams College, I thought at first I might write an honors thesis on Kierkegaard, but my philosophy teacher, John William Miller, was not at all friendly to the idea. Soon I became more and more drawn to his courses and in particular to his philosophy of history, which led me eventually also to the congenial writings on history of Benedetto Croce, Ortega y Gasset, and R.G. Collingwood. Looking back, it now seems to me inevitable that when I read Erik

Erikson's *Young Man Luther* in the 1960s, I would find it compelling. Luther, Kierkegaard, and James, for all their important differences, had some affinities in religious ideas and in biographical crises. They were certainly evident to Erikson in his book.

I encountered *Young Man Luther* at a time when I was developing a friendship with a local psychiatrist, Dr. Howard Feinstein, and I had told him about James' youthful crisis, which Perry had been able to explain only as "morbid traits" in counterpoint with "benign traits." Howard suggested that we work together on this problem by taking our cue from *Young Man Luther*, as we did in many discussions over a long time. I began being very skeptical about psychoanalysis but gradually became persuaded of the pertinence of Erikson's version of it.

I found his book about Luther very dense and strange. It oscillated back and forth between telling a story and expounding a psychological theory. It focused on only a seven-year period of Luther's life and made forays into the lives of others, such as George Bernard Shaw and Adolf Hitler, and ruminated as well about contemporary young people and their problems. It began with a dramatic but historically dubious fit in a choir. Luther himself never mentioned it, and Erikson admitted that it was "half-legend." He dealt with a 16th-century German society and culture about which I knew very little, and, surprising for a man with ties to the Freudian tradition, he took serious account of complex theological issues in Luther's preaching. I was more at home when he invoked my old familiars -- Kierkegaard and James -- and even cited my favorite philosopher of history, R.G. Collingwood.

What impressed me the most, however, was the book's different exposition of psychoanalysis, because I had never been sympathetic to Freud's determinism, motivational reductionism, and absence of a historical sense. Erikson still adhered to Freud's theory of sexual stages of development in childhood, but the idea of an identity crisis introduced a new element about late adolescence and early manhood, where for a historian documentation would more likely be available and where the person's conscious aims and ideas would be taken more seriously. Whenever he spoke as a clinician, Erikson seemed impressively undogmatic, patient, and remarkably nuanced.

Freud had spoken about the importance of love and work, but his detective work had been directed at the former. Erikson suggested that

choice of work might itself be an important locus of conflict, for Luther's decision to join a monastery had aroused the opposition of his father, and in the monastery Luther had found a mentor who had been able to become something of a surrogate father and therapist to the troubled young man.

Historians have found fault with Erikson's portrait of Martin's childhood, his father, and their society, as well as with the use of episodes (like the fit in the choir) that are more legendary than historical. The portrait of the father's authoritarianism has been called much overdrawn. The historian Lewis W. Spitz has acutely pointed out, however, that "a father who is a sweet persuader can induce pressures more persistent than one who is overtly gross or hateful."

Certainly James had just such a father, Henry James, Sr., theologically rebellious and socially liberal. Erikson's definition of the identity crisis in *Young Man Luther* seemed especially pertinent: "overidentification" with a disturbed parent, who seeks his own justification in his child and who by an "all-pervasive presence and brutal decisiveness of judgment" precipitates the child into a struggle for a distinctive identity. That was the story that Howard and I were piecing together as we read and reread the letters written by members of the James family.

I had earlier written an article on James' unfinished philosophy, suggesting that his idea of finding the meaning of causality in "the individual's personal 'activity-situations' where he strives to sustain a purpose against obstacles" had a basis in the procedure of the historian. I suggested that James might have completed his "unfinished arch" by developing a concept of narrative history. He surely would have been fascinated by Erikson's story of Luther and probably would have seen in it something of himself: a father and son who had "a mutual and deep investment in each other, which neither of them would or could abandon," and a regressive struggle "not only over his obedience toward, but also over his identification with, his father." Luther experienced his crisis during his role as a monk, as James did when he was in medical school, and both men illustrated Erikson's point that "the crisis in such a young man's life may be reached when he half-realizes that he is fatally overcommitted to what he is not."

More than most psychoanalysts, Erikson always tried to take into account not only internal conflicts but also the social and cultural contexts of his subjects. There was a "there" there for the his-

torian to try and reconstruct. Yet in retrospect, it became clear, when the family facts emerged, that Erikson's theory was more autobiographical than readers of *Young Man Luther* ever realized. He was an illegitimate child who imagined his natural father (whom he never knew) to be Danish, Protestant, and artistically gifted, like himself. His mother was Danish and Jewish and his stepfather, German and Jewish. Erikson chose a name that suited his myth about his natural father, and he recognized his Jewish and German lineage only by the middle initial of "H" for "Homburger." No wonder his theory made identity central!

Moreover, Erikson was an Americanized immigrant who found personal success and political hopefulness in New Deal America; and finding a new identity is a vast collective story for immigrants in general, who have to adapt their Old World traditions to their New World actualities. That process helps explain why so many American readers took up the language of identity psychology and why he would become in this country the best known and most honored of psychoanalysts.

For a historian, concepts from other fields are pragmatic instruments to be used only if they work with respect to the historian's particular data and problems; they do not have to be certified as universal truths. Erikson's partial revision of Freud has had the advantage for historians of paying attention to capabilities and not merely to deficiencies in dealing with the psychological problems of subjects such as Luther and James. Many historians in time came to be stimulated by *Young Man Luther*, and by 1970 there was evidence to prove it in a Daedalus volume, *Philosophers and Kings: Studies in Leadership* with essays on Gandhi, de Gaulle, Bismarck, Newton, James Mill, and William James.

Historiography is always a part of history and must change with it in terms of problems, questions, and modes of understanding and explanation. Carl Becker, one of the subjects of my book, *The Pragmatic Revolt in American History* (1958), was especially aware of that relationship, and he was also much interested in his essays on individuals to penetrate to those "more subtle and impalpable influences" which underlie motive and conduct. In his *Eve of the Revolution*, Becker hoped to communicate "the thought and feelings of those days" by enabling the reader "to enter into such states of mind and feeling," a method which did not depend upon "a mere verification of references." What it did depend on, he never quite ex-

plained, but he surely would have sympathized with Erikson's attempt to make Luther comprehensible to us without forgetting that he was *homo religiosus*, "who can permit himself to face as permanent the trust problem which drives others in whom it remains or becomes dominant into denial, despair, and psychosis."

Historians are often inclined, when they turn to psychoanalysis for explanations, to look for textbook versions of mental diseases, as did the Danish psychiatrist criticized in *Young Man Luther* for failing to compare him "with other examples of sincere religious preoccupations and corresponding genuine giftedness." Erikson's story was thornily difficult and sometimes obscurely elusive, but in telling it he never made that mistake; and so he became a model in this respect for other biographers who were also interested in the complex personalities of historically influential leaders.

*Cushing Strout, PhD, is Ernest I. White Professor of American Studies and Humane Letters, emeritus, Cornell University. He may be contacted at <scs15@cornell.edu>. □*

## A Study in Historical Empathy: Ernst Jünger and Germany Undefeated

Robert Pois  
University of Colorado

When the Great War (World War I) ended in November, 1918, many Germans refused to accept the fact that Germany had been defeated. Too much emotional energy had been invested in the war, and too much suffering endured on both battle and home fronts. Adolf Hitler, as he expressed himself in *Mein Kampf*, is seen as representative of those who could not accept defeat. To address the issue of German unwillingness or perhaps inability to accept defeat in the Great War it is necessary to consider Ernst Jünger, one of Germany's most decorated war heroes, and an individual whose writings attained considerable attention and influence in the 1920s. In gaining an empathic understanding of his motives with regard to attitudes toward wartime experiences, we can gain at least partial understanding of why he could become representative of the opinions of many Germans.

Jünger was at the very least socially anti-Semitic, as were many of his fellow Germans. At the same time, he was hardly an ideological anti-

Semite, rejecting, at times, almost laughing at, Nazi ideological principles. In this regard, Jünger was perhaps somewhat more representative of pre- and post-Great War attitudes of many Germans than was Adolf Hitler. It is necessary to see, though, that beliefs embodied in Jünger's writings were crucial in helping to prepare Germans for the more stridently consistent anti-Semitism of the National Socialists.

In comparison to other Germans, Ernst Jünger, a 19-year old volunteer in 1914, was, at the very least, a singular individual. Seriously wounded seven times, he was the recipient both of the Iron Cross and Germany's highest award, *Pour le Mérite* (the French name of this award was preserved during the Great War despite obvious spiritual stringencies). Also, he was far more literate and intellectually rigorous (though largely self-schooled) than the majority of his countrymen. He not only participated in some of the worst battles of one of the most hideous wars in history but also was able to view such experiences as somehow spiritually uplifting. An examination of his background reveals his reasons for welcoming the war and for not being able to accept the loss, at least on a spiritual level. Thus he can be seen as representative of a large portion of German public opinion.

Ernst Jünger was born in 1895 into an upper-middle-class family in Heidelberg, Germany. His father was a well-established pharmacist. His mother, although devoted to her children, was easily dominated by her seemingly more intellectually acute husband who was apparently quite sarcastic with both her and the children. In Jünger's observations, she comes across as a stereotyped German housewife/mother, hemmed in by patriarchal limits, which she largely accepted. Her soon-to-be-famous son seems to have viewed her with a certain measure of contempt, something that might well have contributed to the misogyny revealed in his post-Great War writings.

From his own accounts, the young Ernst Jünger lived a great deal in a world of imagination and fantasy, which adversely affected his school performance. This may have resulted from abuse inflicted, at least verbally, by his father. He sought a way out of a not particularly happy middle-class existence by joining the *Wandervögel* movement when he was 16 years old. This movement, almost entirely comprised of middle-class youth in rebellion against what they perceived to be the stultifying middle-class society of their parents, sought spiritual revivification in emphasizing ties to na-

ture, and to a more natural, rooted, and heroic German past. Its members took to the road and visited myth-hallowed forests, battlefields and castles. These groups were typically extremely nationalistic and often anti-Semitic. It is uncertain whether Jünger was influenced by the anti-Semitism often espoused by the *Wandervögel* groups. However, he clearly shared in a substantial youthful protest against contemporary values, a protest that conditioned many for the spiritually-redemptive adventure of war.

In 1913, barely 18, Jünger secretly joined the French Foreign Legion, eventually winding up in Algeria. This was another effort to escape a family situation that he found stifling. Additionally, this one would allow him to translate aggressive fantasies into reality. Matters, however, did not go well. After apparent sexual threats posed by fellow mercenaries, Jünger had to be rescued from the Legion by his father, who used diplomatic contacts to effect his son's return to boring, middle-class society. The young man's humiliation must have been considerable. The Great War represented an escape both from recent humiliation and from a society in which he had been able to survive only by retreating into a world of dreams. He had attempted the latter once before, only to be frustrated. He would do better this time.

Some recent studies have suggested that the war enthusiasm in August, 1914, has been exaggerated. However, for very large numbers of middle-class young men, the war did indeed represent liberation from bourgeois society and its spiritually-suffocating rules. Certainly, Ernst Jünger would be far more successful at fighting than most of his cohort. Post facto reflections upon his experiences indicate that he had managed to be *so* successful in the war that he had become an extension or embodiment of it. Such a success would lead to his joining the paramilitary *Freikorps* after the war. This organization, comprised of returning veterans too alienated by that sense of loss engendered by defeat to be at home in a new, unwanted republic, and university students who regretted missing out on sanctified carnage, has correctly been seen as a palpable link between the Great War, its sad ending for Germany, and the war to come.

Jünger certainly recognized the hideousness of this new variety of war. His descriptions of the horrible results -- corpses turning phosphorescent through moldering uniforms, gelatinous flesh peeling away from shattered bone, all on a mass

scale, must stand, even by today's strained standards, as an intensely disturbing description of the end point of mass death. Yet, it is plain that he was eager, and able, to transcend such horrors and move on to an almost joyful participation in those efforts that produced them. Furthermore, in his writings, Jünger views women as an unwelcome intrusion in a virtually sanctified male experience. J. Vollmert has stated that people like Jünger already had battles raging within them and that such folk brought respective "fronts" to more formal, military ones. In a word, personal concerns, grounded in childhood difficulties, allowed an individual at war with parents, parent figures, and himself, to conflate his stresses, rages, and demands for a better future, with national issues.

Well after it had become plain that respective plans for rapid victory had wilted in the face of horrible attritional realities, the leading literary representative of German liberalism posed a rhetorical question, "Is not war a purification, a liberation, an enormous hope?" Later on, Thomas Mann would regret having made this statement. At the time (1915), however, there was no question but that many in Germany shared this attitude. Pride in the power of a so recently unified fatherland, senses of national and racial superiority engendered by *Volkish* and Social Darwinian certainties, counterbalanced by challenges posed by women's issues, homosexual scandals in government circles and the military, and fears of decline resulting from the perceived degeneracy of industrial civilization, combined to produce a sense of arrogance and uncertainty. For those awash in this spiritual ambivalence, war *could* be an "enormous hope." Many outside Germany surely felt the same way. But other armies could return home at least putatively victorious, however shallow the victory might prove to have been. For Germans who had invested so much in a war that cost them two million dead on the battlefield, and possibly close to 700,000 dead on the home front defeat and the shame attaching to it were almost impossible to assimilate.

Once newspaper censorship had been lifted in late September, 1918, any literate German could see that his country's armies were being pushed back all along the line. Yet, in late November, 1918, after the armistice, Berliners cheered wildly when the Prussian guard returned to its home city. The Social Democrat head of the new provisional government, Friedrich Ebert, greeted them with the ill-chosen words, "I salute you, you who have re-

turned unbeaten from the field of battle."

Ernst Jünger, in a very personal sense, no doubt had at least as much, maybe more, at stake in his country's victory. As mentioned earlier, in his *Storm of Steel* he recognized that Germany had been defeated on the field of battle. Yet, in fighting for so long virtually all of the armed Western world, and not breaking even in defeat, the German army had won a spiritual victory, one that would provide the foundation for a "new man of Central Europe." Of course, Jünger himself had to have been this individual. This young man had emerged victorious over his past.

In November, 1925, the return of the remains of Germany's best known war ace, Manfred von Richtofen, were returned to Germany, resulting in a veritable explosion of national enthusiasm, alternately weepy and defiant. Many Germans still had a great deal invested in a terrible past in which, both on battle and home fronts, extraordinary sacrifices had been made. Even at a relatively "good" time in Weimar Germany's unhappy history, Paul von Hindenburg, a very anti-republican Great War icon, had been elected president of the Republic, in the same year that Manfred von Richtofen came home. Hindenburg's election, and the enthusiasm with which many Germans welcomed their most admired ace's return to the fatherland, pointed to a desire to touch base with a better past, possibly something which could serve as the foundation of a better national future. Certainly the republic despite economic improvements struck many Germans as a colorless nonentity, utterly shorn of military glory.

Manfred von Richtofen embodied German historical, indeed, as some must have seen it, transcendent, truths. As such, he could be, and was, a point of departure for German rebirth. Being dead, however, he could not really embody it in an existential sense. Ernst Jünger, aggressively very much alive, could. A crucial reason why Jünger could present this viewpoint so convincingly was because the war was the occasion of *his* rebirth. In extolling the emergence of the "new man," Jünger declared that there was "a new race self-educated through the hard nurturing of war." A lack, as he saw it, of meaningful family nurturing was responsible for an undoubtedly sensitive young man welcoming war with enthusiasm. No matter how hideous the situation, no matter how afraid he might be on one or the other occasion, horrors had to become points of departure for a man who, as a child, had been compelled to live almost entirely within

his own head. In the end, his "hard nurturing" could be conflated with that of Germany, and many of his countrymen, no small number of whom were brought up in circumstances similar to his own, could see in Ernst Jünger an embodiment of a natural force which seemed to defy defeat, and, finally, to defy history.

*Robert Pois, PhD, is Professor of History at the University of Colorado in Boulder. His special interests are in Weimar Germany, Nazism, the Great War, German Expressionism, and psychohistory. □*

## Psychobiography Within Limits: Malcolm X

Victor Wolfenstein  
UCLA

If one has a historian's scruples, it is difficult to do psychobiographical work with a clear conscience: there is almost always too much of a gap between evidence and inference to meet the usual standards of reliability and validity. In parallel fashion, clinical psychoanalysis cannot pass muster if the standards are those of the natural sciences. But these limitations do not excuse us from being scrupulous in our own way. As a small contribution to the task of self-clarification, I offer a post-facto reflection on my *The Victims of Democracy: Malcolm X and the Black Revolution* (1981).

By way of preface, we might say that psychoanalytic inquiry combines two hermeneutic modalities -- what Paul Ricoeur (Denis Savage, trans., *Freud and Philosophy*, 1970, pp. 20-36) terms interpretation as the recollection of meaning and interpretation as an exercise of suspicion. The recollection of meaning is akin to empathic listening, in which the auditor or reader opens her/himself to the inner world of the speaker or text to learn what it can teach. Taken to an extreme, this is the stance of a reader of sacred texts, who hopes that the divinity will be revealed through the hermeneutic process. Short of this extreme, it is a necessary condition for mutual respect and recognition.

The exercise of suspicion approximates to the interpretation of resistance in the psychoanalytic process. The object or other is subordinated to the interpreter, who is in the position of teacher. Again taken to the extreme, this becomes a kind of cross examination or inquisition, in which truth-claims are demolished and the apparent value of

things is destroyed. Used with restraint, it functions as the negative moment in the psychoanalytic dialectic. The restraint is precisely the hermeneutics of recollected -- also reconstructed -- meaning, which set the boundaries within which the modalities of critique are deployed.

Turning now to *Victims*, I began in this fashion:

When Malcolm X was in prison and after he had been converted to Islam through Elijah Muhammad's ministry, he dedicated himself to documenting Muhammad's teachings in books. The present inquiry is an attempt to document in books the truths contained in *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* and in Malcolm's collected speeches. It is, however, an interpretive and critical documentary.

Stated in Ricoeur's terms, my intent was to adopt a fundamentally empathic stance toward my subject matter and then to mediate it with interpretive suspicion. More simply, I believed that Malcolm had something important to teach me -- not only about American racism but also about the project of racial liberation. Liberal interpretations (black or white) of the "American dilemma" seemed inadequate, founded as they were upon a belief in the American dream. Malcolm enacted and articulated a different conception of the problem. The task was to understand his experience and his perspective.

The attempt to see things from Malcolm's perspective involved two important limitations. First, other perspectives -- for example, Martin Luther King's -- would be obscured. Second, I could not really hope to align my own vision with Malcolm's. My own subjectivity, including my racial identity, was unavoidably a part of the inquiry. (I should also acknowledge that I was predisposed to believe in the essential honesty of *The Autobiography*.) Hence, the truth-claims I put forward for my work were decidedly modest.

Beyond that, my orientation departed from the usual approach to psychobiography. Conventionally, psychobiography privileges the individual unconscious. Cultural context is placed in the background and the individual's consciousness is taken as an effect of unconscious causes. Thus, there is a double shift away from the existential nexus of action, away from the situation of choices of action. Even when, as in the work of Erik Erikson, culture and consciousness are treated seriously, the *theoretical* ground is occupied by psy-

choanalysis, hence by the unconscious determinants of action. Because psychoanalysis is usually construed as an individual psychology in the first instance, the individual rather than the collective unconscious remains the locus of explanation.

The consequence of applying this approach to Malcolm is that he is placed outside history from the outset. Yet we are interested in him because he played a historical role, because he contributed significantly to the struggle for black liberation. Accordingly, it would seem that we should begin with the context and work our way inward toward the individual. Moreover, Malcolm's significance was twofold. On the one hand, he was the most important spokesman for Elijah Muhammad's version of black nationalism; on the other, he was a radical Pan-Africanist. These forms of his consciousness are therefore the starting point for an exploration of his character, including its unconscious determinants. Or, stating the point more generally, psychobiographical interpretation involves three terms -- culture, consciousness, and unconscious motivation -- none of which can be reduced to the other.

One result of utilizing this contextualizing approach to Malcolm's life and work is that it becomes quite impossible to ignore the structure of collective interests that framed his choices of action. White racism in the United States was and is a system of domination, a deployment of power that disadvantages black people in all aspects of their lives. So long as that system is intact, white people are, collectively, the enemies of black people. The recognition or denial of this reality marks the parting of the ways in American racial discourse.

If we accept this premise and Malcolm's construal of it, then the following two questions arise: Why would black people continue to believe in the American dream when, as Malcolm contended, it has been largely a nightmare for them? What are the social and psychological processes that lead to transformations in this self-limiting form of collective consciousness, and to expansions in the possibilities for collective action? *Victims* was an attempt to answer these questions.

Among the answers that the inquiry generated, one in particular stands in marked contrast to the interpretive line developed by Bruce Perry, *Malcolm: The Life of a Man Who Changed Black America* (1991). Perry contends that Malcolm's black nationalism, his insistence on his blackness and rejection of whiteness, masked an underlying

uncertainty concerning his racial identity and a repressed yearning to be white. I would argue that Malcolm's embracing of blackness reflects a profound affirmation of racial identity and that his rejection of whiteness was a necessary condition for this self-affirmation. Malcolm was born into a world that was racially binary -- white *or* black -- and in which blackness was devalued. As *The Autobiography* and, indeed, Perry's own data suggest, he lived his early life on the basis of identification with the white racist oppressor. Conscience and consciousness were whitened out, while the hostility that white racism nonetheless generates was enacted self-destructively. It was an enormous step forward when he converted to Islam. Elijah Muhammad's doctrine enabled him to identify affirmatively with his own race and to cognize central features of social reality. It also permitted him to direct hostility away from himself and his own people and toward his racial enemies. This solution to the problem of white racist oppression did not overcome its Manichaeism. But it did involve a transvaluation of racial values and it provided Malcolm with a secure foundation for personal growth and social action.

Such an interpretation would plainly not be persuasive *if* Malcolm had lived in a non-racist society. In such a society the affirmation of blackness would not require the negation of whiteness, racial identities would not be reified, and a single self could comfortably contain interpenetrating cultural values. If in such a context an individual insisted on the criminality of white people and on blackness as the standard of human value, we would surely wonder what private wars were being fought on public fields. But this hypothetical is counterfactual.

One piece of Perry's data might seem unaccounted for in the preceding interpretation -- the occasional slip of the tongue in which Malcolm stated that he hated every drop of black blood in his body, when he consciously meant to say every white drop. More closely considered, however, precisely the preceding interpretation helps to account for these lapses: if racial self-identification is an achievement in a context of contestation, one would expect there to be traces and residues of the old Adam -- of the self-negating identity that had been negated. Only in idealist dialectics is the negation of the negation an unqualified affirmation. In real processes of development, new forms of existence are haunted by the ghosts of their predecessors.

As noted above, in *Victims* I argued that black racial essentialism can play a progressive role in the struggle for liberation. But this judgment cannot be made in the abstract. For example, Malcolm's conversion to Islam when he was in prison was an enormous step forward. For years thereafter, within the protective world of the Nation of Islam's doctrines and social practices, he continued to grow. Yet at a certain point, and in true dialectical fashion, the protective shell became a limitation upon his further development. By 1963, Malcolm had simply outgrown both the role of disciple and Elijah Muhammad's doctrine. Thus, quite apart from the internecine struggles and moral contradictions that pushed him out of the Nation, there was a pull toward autonomous leadership and the development of his own theory and practice.

In other words, at one juncture racial essentialism was progressive for Malcolm, at another it was regressive. These judgments do not result from the evaluative perspective of the interpreter, except in the sense that s/he accepts some notion of self-development as a criterion. This criterion, perhaps uniquely, locates interpretation within the historical manifold. It is the corollary of Ricoeur's hermeneutics of recollected meaning. Accepting it does not preclude critique -- for example, of the psychology of racial essentialism. And it plainly does not guarantee the revelation of a truth about biographical or political matters. But it does encourage both an awareness of how our own subjectivity plays into the interpretive process and a shift in perspective, a shift away from modes of interpretation that make the interpreted object a mere vehicle for the expression of one's own will to power.

*E. Victor Wolfenstein, PhD, is Professor of Political Science, UCLA, and a member of the faculty, Southern California Psychoanalytic Institute. He is a long-time if also skeptical practitioner of psychobiography. His books include The Revolutionary Personality (1967), The Victims of Democracy: Malcolm X and the Black Revolution (1981); and Inside/Outside Nietzsche: Psychoanalytic Explorations (2000). Professor Wolfenstein may be contacted at <evw@ucla.edu>. □*

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## Gorbachev and Yeltsin: Two Personalities That Transformed Russia

Caroline Scielzo  
Montclair State University and  
Private Practice

A decade has passed since the red Soviet flag was lowered from the Kremlin and the Soviet Union began the process of transition to a democratic Russian Federation. That, as they say, is history with its facts and figures. The interpretations and analyses of these events and the personalities involved are what make the essays in *The Russian Transformation: Political, Sociological, and Psychological Aspects* (1999) edited by Betty Glad and Eric Shiraev such compelling reading. Their attention to psychobiography and their insights into the personalities of the two men intimately connected with these events were particularly thought-provoking for me. I explore my own thoughts about the two main political personalities of this period in the following article that is inspired by my reading of *The Russian Transformation*.

Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin both came to maturity in the twilight of a political era rooted in hypocrisy, cynicism, and the opportunism of Soviet bureaucracy. The emotional marker of this period was the divide between the authoritarian programming of incapacitated geriatric leadership and increasing demand for social and personal freedoms ushered in during a time of relative peace and prosperity. Mikhail Gorbachev's appointment to General Secretary in 1985 launched Russia into the process of transformation that forms the core of the Glad and Shiraev study. The Soviet Union had chosen a healthy, well-educated adherent of the Communist system to govern during the last years of the 20th century. Gorbachev had advanced politically under the old rules, but he was clearly a representative of the modern post-war generation.

Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev was a complex personality on the political scene. His intentions were to reconcile the wide gulf between Soviet political fantasy and reality, to remedy increasing social disillusionment. He was, however, one of those historical figures in whom opposites were always present, and working relentlessly towards the realization of his socialist society, he brought about its demise. For those who were high-flying in their evaluations, he was a Moses, a saint, a tsar, and finally a tragic hero. Calmer mid-

dle-ground political analyses proclaimed him a hero from Western perspectives, a failure at home. At the bottom of the scale lay detractors who reflected Russian fears that they had been offered only flashy slogans and poorly thought-out and failed economic programs. There is, of course, some truth in each of these perceptions, but it was Gorbachev's fate, or perhaps a political inevitability, to have instituted changes that resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Empire and to be himself brought down in its rubble. Some of his greatest triumphs can be expressed in endings: he effectively ended the Cold War, the Soviet military build-up, and dictatorial control over the Soviet people. He had totalitarian force at his command but did not call upon it to secure his political control, a tolerance that was perceived as a sign of indecision and weakness. Ultimately, his political nemesis Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin and the popular vote of the Soviet people hounded him out of office.

The more I thought about it, the more I began to consider these two political adversaries a necessary package deal in the process of Russian political and social transformation. They seemed to me two warring aspects of the national personality acting out those eternal Russian conundrums of identity and direction. Both men were needed to see Russia through a bloodless transition from Communist dictatorial control to a democratic society and both men were influenced and flawed by their personal backgrounds.

I have always had trouble accepting that Gorbachev and Yeltsin were not only of the same generation, but they were the same age, both men born in 1931. They were both products of the same environment, generational twins in a "boy loves tractor" socialist realist culture. They were both rural boys and both knew the hungry years of collectivization, Stalinist purges, world war and its aftermath. Men in both their families had experienced arrest and imprisonment during the boys' formative years. As adult politicians Gorbachev and Yeltsin would argue with all the tenacity of sibling rivalry over who had had the harder childhood and, thus by implication, more innate understanding of the country's suffering.

In many ways Mikhail Gorbachev had the more supportive family life, certainly one that seemed more nurturing to his emotional development. In spite of the hardships and persecutions of his youth Gorbachev had the opportunity to work side-by-side with each of his parents in the Russian

countryside. Both parents seemed to have been attentive to their child and valued his abilities. We know young Mikhail respected and talked at length with his father. We know his mother was a strong woman who dealt effectively with harsh realities. In short, Mikhail Gorbachev grew up in a family that offered emotional security and encouraged self-confidence. He then clearly married his equal, a strong-willed and cultured partner on whom he relied emotionally and intellectually. The young man who had arrived at Moscow University was a mature and well-adjusted young Soviet citizen. As a politician, Gorbachev progressed along the fast track in part as a result of his steadfast character. He was more hard work than drama and related well to many levels of Russian society from the peasant to the intellectual. He offered his fellow countrymen the unprecedented openness he himself had experienced, a program of *glasnost* that challenged the false rhetoric of the past and promised authenticity of spirit.

Boris Yeltsin, on the other hand, had grown up in grim and crowded Soviet communal housing in a less emotionally attentive family. His father was authoritative and brutal, no stranger to physical punishment of his son, while his mother was relatively helpless against the strong will of her husband. Yeltsin was quick to point out that his childhood had been joyless but it nonetheless provided colorful stories that shed light on his personality. One of the common Yeltsin childhood stories is of his baptismal near-drowning by a drunken priest who is said to have consequently named him Boris, meaning "a fighter" in Old Russian. By personality he was wild and impetuous, and throughout his life his judgment would frequently be called into question. As a young boy during the war years he lost two fingers playing with a live grenade he had stolen. He was always a risk-taker, always needing to see himself as tough and invincible, although in later life a heart attack and frequent hospitalizations cast doubts on this persona. Behind all this bravado was the personal insecurity of a man who could not tolerate being alone. He suffered from insomnia and a pathological need for constant attention and reassurance. Construction management had been a suitable first career for him and satisfied his need to be the center of attention of a large group of Russia's workers. He gravitated towards a compliant and passive opposite in the choice of a wife and prided himself on not having had time to involve himself in family life and the raising of his two daughters.

Together in the political arena Gorbachev, the General Secretary of the Central Committee, and Yeltsin, the mayor of Moscow, were aggressive opponents, the reformer and the rebel. There were constant power shifts between them with rivalry, mutual humiliations, and victories and defeats. The hostility between them was palpable, and they probably did sincerely dislike each other. Gorbachev was part of the establishment while Yeltsin was a populist leader, a macho kind of guy always ready for a good fight. Gorbachev worried about destructive social forces and tried to deal with the nation's rampant alcoholism by curtailing the sale of vodka. Yeltsin readily admitted his weakness for the bottle. Yet in a Russian context, Yeltsin's increasingly incapacitating alcoholism was less a deterrent than what was perceived as Gorbachev's cultural and emotional isolation. While the Gorbachevs had become bona fide citizens of the world, the Yeltsins remained socially and emotionally provincial and ascetic, preferring to stand in Moscow's long consumer lines and use public transportation. Yeltsin appealed to the grass roots contingency and was trusted by the common man. He was seen as the authentic Russian with all his moody flaws and personal weaknesses. People seemed to love him most when they were called upon to forgive him for his "common" transgressions. Yeltsin's impetuosity was more readily understood than Gorbachev's mastering the bourgeois life of the West. Gorbachev's personal indulgences were incomprehensible to Yeltsin -- and to much of the Russian population. The fashionable and expensive European clothing Raisa Gorbachev wore seemed a reproach to Russian designers, her taste in fine jewelry inappropriate for a Soviet wife. The national consensus seemed to be that if Gorbachev could not keep his wife in line, how ever could he be expected to manage a whole nation. What irony it was that ultimately, Gorbachev would have to appeal for a retirement package, a pension plan, from a begrudging Yeltsin who sincerely did not understand or covet "the good life."

Gorbachev was at his best when concentrating on reforming counterproductive social issues. He wished the country the open emotional environment he himself had experienced but soon learned he could not control the forces he had unleashed. Economic uncertainties plagued his programs and he lost the confidence that had marked the earlier period of his five-year tenure. Boris Yeltsin was at his best rallying the masses, a populist espousing the "will of the people." He was hostile to *perestroika* as an empty phrase that pro-

duced no real results, while he himself promised more subway lines and more sausage in the stores. He flung himself into characteristic action, introduced economic "shock therapy," and tolerated gangland-style corruption and crime in Moscow public life. At worst he appeared to be a power-hungry clown or opportunist, but he did, in fact, bring improvements to daily life in Moscow. The public loved him for that, and coined the term "a yelt" as a unit of measurement for progress. But inflation stymied Yeltsin's political progress as it had wrecked havoc on the hopes of *perestroika*. Both men had fallen prey to the sausage lines, as economic uncertainties and currency devaluations soured the tolerance of the population for any program that caused a decrease in the standard of daily living. The message that haunted both men seemed to be, "It's the economy, stupid."

Neither Mikhail Gorbachev nor Boris Yeltsin could have interpreted their country's needs any differently than they did, and they each were necessary for the peaceful transformation that occurred in the Russian Federation. They brought out different perspectives and different strengths within the country, and history should give both men credit as the return of repressive Communism and virulent nationalism lurked in the background as threats to them both. For this, much can be forgiven.

*Caroline Scielzo, PhD, is Professor and Coordinator of Russian Area Studies at Montclair State University. She is a graduate of the Center for Modern Psychoanalytic Studies in New York. Her research and publications are directed towards a psychoanalytic exploration of Russian culture and society. She may be contacted at <scielzoc@mail.montclair.edu>. □*

## Alan Elms: Personality in Psychobiography

**Kate Isaacson**  
University of California, Davis

*Alan Elms was born in 1938 in Gorman, Texas, and grew up in Arkansas, California, and Kentucky. He received a BA in psychology from Pennsylvania State University in 1960 and earned his PhD in personality and social psychology at Yale University in 1965. Dr. Elms has been a professor of psychology at the University of Califor-*

*nia, Davis, since 1967 and has taught courses in psychobiography to undergraduate and graduate students for many years. He has conducted extensive research on influences on social opinion and behavior, including being the research assistant in Stanley Milgram's obedience to authority studies, as well as far-reaching research in political psychology, personality psychology, and psychobiography. Dr. Elms is a founder of the Personology Society and a member of the Bay Area Psychobiography Working Group. He has received numerous honors for his work, including the prestigious Henry A. Murray award in 1988, given by the Society for Personality and Social Psychology of the American Psychological Association (APA), for career contributions to personality psychology. His books include: *Role Playing, Reward, and Attitude Change* (1969), *Social Psychology and Social Relevance* (1972), *Attitudes* (1976), *Personality in Politics* (1976), and *Uncovering Lives: The Uneasy Alliance of Biography and Psychology* (1994), which earned a *CHOICE Magazine* award for "Best Academic Book of 1995." He is currently the recipient of a UC Davis faculty research fellowship that has taken him to Washington, D.C., to complete psychobiographical studies of Cordwainer Smith (Paul Linebarger) and Carl Jung and to begin a book on "the Freud Wars." Professor Elms can be reached at <acelms@ucdavis.edu>. Kate Isaacson interviewed this distinguished scholar at UC Davis and by phone and e-mail in the fall.*

**Kate Isaacson (KI):** What influence did your early environment have on your interest in psychology?

**Alan Elms (AE):** When I was 10 or 11 and living in Arkansas, I began reading newspapers every day. I found two kinds of articles especially intriguing: those on UFOs and those on the behavior and various bizarre or just deliberately funny statements of Arkansas politicians. Then we moved to San Diego, where around 1950 my father took me to an anti-Nixon rally, when Nixon was running for the U.S. Senate against Helen Gahagan Douglas. Nixon at that point was an entertaining person to be against. When we moved back to the South several years later, this time to Kentucky, Happy Chandler was the governor. He had been baseball commissioner and was a very amusing character, though as governor he was close to being a total idiot. I had fun writing satirical pieces about him for the local newspapers.

**KI:** What did your parents think about

your going into psychology?

**AE:** My father would have preferred that I go into some other more scientific area such as nuclear physics. I had declared at 12 or 13 that I wanted to pursue a career as a writer. He and my mother had both reacted very strongly against that idea, mainly in terms of "This is an uncertain profession" and "You're not going to have a steady salary." My mother asked, "What if you run out of ideas?" So I went into psychology, in part, to earn a regular salary while still pursuing a career as a writer.

**KI:** Frank Sulloway (*Born to Rebel*, 1996) describes first-borns as typically less rebellious than later-borns. As a first-born, how do you identify with his characterization?

**AE:** On his questionnaires I come out as an "honorary later-born," partly because of a considerable degree of adolescent rebellion against my father. In comparison to my five siblings, I have both shown the most initiative and been the most rebellious. Sulloway's research does not sufficiently take into account sheer individual variability.

My father was the last boy among nine children and was, in his own way, a somewhat rebellious individual. One of the points of issue between me and my father was that I usually preferred staying inside, reading books, when he wanted me to be outside hunting, fishing, or farming. But one of his older brothers told me that when my father as a young teenager was supposed to be out working on the family farm, he'd sometimes instead climb up on the roof of the house, out of sight, and read books. I saw this earlier rebelliousness as something I could emulate. I was academically an excellent student, but at times I resisted when teachers tried to make me do something that I saw as unreasonable or unfair. My father would be outraged at the teachers and he'd write letters to the newspapers, denouncing the teachers and criticizing school policies. He was not someone who obeyed orders without question. As with psychobiographers Mac Runyan and Jim Anderson, I've written a non-fiction piece on my very early life in the form of an essay about my father, due to be published shortly in *Between Fathers and Sons*, edited by Robert Pellegrini and Theodore R. Sarbin.

**KI:** Did you have early literary publications?

**AE:** I published several poems in campus

literary magazines and elsewhere. But my main publishing venue was the campus humor magazine, the Penn State *Froth*. I wrote large parts of each issue -- satire, parody, crude campus humor, cartoons. I also wrote two novels -- both unpublished -- at about that time. The first was a combination tribute to and parody of the Beat Movement -- I had been much impressed by Kerouac's *On the Road* and *The Dharma Bums*. I was intrigued by Kerouac but didn't believe in totally spontaneous writing -- and it turns out that Kerouac didn't either, though he pretended that was what he was doing. My second novel was a comedy of campus political intrigues, featuring the rebellious editor of a campus humor magazine.

**KI:** So with these literary and political interests, how did you get involved with psychology research?

**AE:** I started with rats. The Penn State Psychology Department was heavily behaviorist, really Skinnerian, so my first research assignment as an undergraduate was running a couple of rats in a Skinner box. I found that pretty boring and I thought monkeys would be at least a step up. The first social psychology class I took was taught by C.R. Carpenter, who was the only person who had done any systematic field research on monkey and ape behavior at that time. I joined his expedition to Barro Colorado Island in Panama, which primarily did a census of howler monkeys to find out the social composition in each group. I also observed the incidence of intra-group aggression among these monkeys for a senior honors thesis.

**KI:** How did this lead to your joining the Milgram studies on obedience to authority?

**AE:** After about two weeks of studying howler monkeys, I knew that I didn't want to make that my life work. By the time I got to Yale Graduate School I wanted to do research on human beings. I started there with Irving Janis, who was doing research on persuasion and the effects of role-playing on attitude change. I knew something about that because I had been a competitive debater in high school and college for seven years. In debate you don't necessarily just advocate a position you believe in. It's a very good background for research, for identifying the important issues and outlining the main points and supportive evidence.

But Irving Janis was to be away on sabbatical my second year, so I began looking for someone else to work with. Stanley Milgram was a new,

young assistant professor at Yale then, very organized, very self-confident. He hired me for the summer when the obedience experiments began. Milgram kept detailed notebooks of everything he was thinking and doing. He was very good at outlining things and developing procedures.

I was very interested in using social psychological research to address major social issues. Obedience to authority certainly was one. It was important at the time in terms of understanding the psychological processes that led to the Holocaust but it was relevant to other social issues as well. This was 1961, when obedience to destructive authority was evident among more than a few U.S. citizens. I had recently written a couple of articles for the *Nation* magazine about right-wing political activism and I saw connections.

**KI:** What was your role during the experiments?

**AE:** I helped run a few trials and develop the procedures. I prepared the lists of words the subjects were supposed to memorize, recruited subjects on the phone, came to the lab every day, made sure the electrode paste was ready for application -- I was the man Friday. Stanley and I both played various roles in the pilot, including each of us being the person giving the orders. But we decided neither of us worked out very well as the Experimenter: I looked too young and Stanley was too short (he was around 5'6" or 5'7"). He wanted somebody who would immediately be perceived as an authority. Usually we both remained behind the mirror, observing and discussing the subject's behavior.

**KI:** Did the obedience research change the tide of research in social psychology?

**AE:** It did briefly encourage some other researchers to find situations that realistically involved human subjects, rather than the very artificial experiments that most social psychological laboratories were doing then, and are now. But then the controversy developed about ethical issues, and the Feds and the APA established ethical guidelines that made it very difficult to do research even remotely like that.

**KI:** In retrospect, how do you view your involvement with the studies?

**AE:** I participated for about a year. It was certainly the most striking study I had been involved with, just in terms of research subjects engaging in what they felt to be a really intense and emotionally involving experience. My main criti-

cism is that Stanley was really not interested in personality variables that might affect people's behavior; his concern was strictly situational factors. Irving Janis was clearly both a social and a personality psychologist. Stanley Milgram was purely a social psychologist and I thought he was missing something.

**KI:** Please tell us more about your advisor, Irving Janis.

**AE:** He was an unusual psychologist in that he not only did laboratory studies of attitude change but was very interested in major political issues -- this was when he wrote the book on groupthink (published as *Victims of Groupthink*, 1972). He also was trained as a psychoanalyst. He really started me on psychobiography by assigning our first-year graduate seminar to read Freud's chapter on the Irma dream and asking us to come up with additional interpretations besides Freud's. He responded very positively to the ones I came up with, based on material in Freud's letters. That eventually resulted in my first psychobiographical paper, on Freud and the Irma dream and Martha Freud's sixth pregnancy.

Irving was a good role model -- quite eclectic in his methodology as well as theoretically -- he was strongly Freudian but considerably utilized ego psychoanalysis, Erikson and David Rapaport. One of his major books was *Psychological Stress* (1958), which discussed the effects of stress in social psychological terms but used as an extended example a woman he had treated in full-scale psychoanalysis while she was developing cancer. This was a combination of nomothetic and very idiographic research, so I was determined to do the same thing.

**KI:** After completing your doctorate, you taught at Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas before coming to UC Davis in 1967?

**AE:** Yes, starting in fall 1964 -- John Kennedy had been assassinated in Dallas less than a year earlier. I figured it would give me the opportunity to do sustained research on the personalities of extreme right-wingers. This was the time that the John Birch Society was very active. It was also then that Richard Hofstadter published his book, *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (1965), which impressed me. I assembled a sample of extreme right-wingers, people who had written really extremist letters to Dallas newspapers, and a sample of moderates. I made certain statistical comparisons among those samples but I became most

interested in how the right-wingers' individual autobiographical experiences motivated them to take these extreme positions.

I was moving toward psychobiography with this interest in right-wingers as individuals rather than as an average. In my first real book, *Social Psychology and Social Relevance*, I included a good deal of material about personality variables interacting with social psychological variables. But when I was hired at UC Davis, it was principally as a laboratory researcher and as a questionnaire researcher. I was still working both on studies of attitude change and on political beliefs and thought Davis would be a good place to do research on left-wingers. The students at Berkeley had started the Free Speech Movement by that time and the anti-Vietnam War movement was getting strong there, and Davis is only 60 miles from Berkeley. But I found it nearly as hard to find real left-wingers in Davis as in Dallas. So I gave up that line of research and at about the same time I stopped doing lab research on attitude change. I decided there were plenty of other psychologists who were more eager to do lab research than I was and they were probably better at it, whereas I was one of a very few psychologists who seemed genuinely enthusiastic about psychobiography.

**KI:** What is your primary intellectual affiliation now?

**AE:** I'm primarily a personality psychologist but I still think I have some things to say about social psychology.

**KI:** Please describe your theoretical biases and methodologies in doing psychobiography.

**AE:** I try to find the theoretical orientation most appropriate to the subject I am studying, since I don't feel that any single theoretical perspective fits everyone. If I'm looking at what appears to be midlife crisis issues, I'll go to Erikson or Levinson. If I see a lot of sexual symbolism in a subject's dreams or writings, I'll see if Freud's ideas about such things still work (as they do in looking at Freud himself!). I've written about my preferred methods at some length in *Uncovering Lives*. As with theoretical approaches, I try whatever works in amassing useful data about a subject.

**KI:** How do you respond to critics who claim that psychobiography is hopelessly subjective and therefore extremely prone to bias?

**AE:** By doing as good a job as I can of avoiding bias in my own work and using care to collect the sorts of biographical data that will per-

sue even the critics that there is something useful in a psychobiographical approach.

**KI:** What are your thoughts on Freudian psychobiography?

**AE:** With regard to Freud's own psychobiographical work, I regard him as the field's great pioneer who broke the trail for the rest of us but who failed to overcome his own biases. See my "Freud as Leonardo," Chapter 3 in *Uncovering Lives*, for a detailed discussion of what he did wrong in his longest psychobiography -- especially in terms of his projective identification with Leonardo. With regard to others' work in Freudian psychobiography, sometimes it works and sometimes they should have chosen another approach.

**KI:** How do you assess the work of psychologists who use quantitative methods to study lives, such as Dean Keith Simonton and Frank Sullo-way?

**AE:** Dean and Frank have both come up with interesting findings, which psychobiographers may find useful in providing a broader context for individual case studies. Frank provides a number of mini-psychobiographies in *Born to Rebel* that sometimes support and sometimes contradict his overall quantitative findings. He doesn't seem to realize that his conclusions about children finding individual psychological "niches" in the family are more Freudian than Darwinian.

**KI:** What has been your experience in working with the dreams or daydreams of your subjects?

**AE:** I don't usually have dreams or daydreams to work with, but I do look for imaginative constructions when I can find them. In examining the psychobiographical foundations of B. F. Skinner's theories, for instance, I found it very useful to have his novel *Walden Two* available to analyze, rather than having to work only with his intentionally non-self-revealing technical books and articles.

**KI:** Is psychobiography of women subjects, or "feminist psychobiography," the same as or different than that of male subjects?

**AE:** "Feminist psychobiography" and "psychobiography of women subjects" are not the same thing. Blanche Wiesen Cook's psychobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt (1992) is explicitly feminist, pushing Roosevelt herself into a particular feminist pattern that the data doesn't fully support. Doris Kearns Goodwin's "stealth psychobiogra-

phy" (my term) of Eleanor Roosevelt in *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt* (1994) is not feminist in any dogmatic sense, but is attentive to issues in her life that a female biographer would probably be more sensitive to than a male biographer would be, or might overlook or misinterpret.

**KI:** Can autobiography or memoirs be psychobiography?

**AE:** An autobiography or memoir can certainly be sufficiently attentive to psychological questions and answers to qualify it as psychobiography. Erikson's essay, "Autobiographical Notes on the Identity Crises," on his own personal history in relation to identity issues is as psychobiographical as one can get. Likewise Henry Murray's essay in *A History of Psychology in Autobiography* (Vol. 5, 1967). Jung's *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1963) is psychobiographical in part, though I think Jung would have done better in his self-analysis if he'd used something besides Jungian theory.

**KI:** How are we to evaluate the quality of psychobiographies?

**AE:** By closely tracking the research methods used, by careful assessment of the quality of the biographical evidence, by evaluating the psychobiographer's evident biases and relating them to his/her interpretations of the data, and by considering whether another theoretical approach to the subject would explain more or be more coherent.

**KI:** Please list the five people who you think have made the greatest contribution, in rank order, to psychobiography, with a brief "why" for each one.

**AE:** Freud, of course, as the granddaddy of us all -- arguing in favor of a comprehensive approach to the subject's psychology, rather than just doing pathography; offering at least a hint of appropriate methodological models; and providing an imperfect model, but a model nonetheless, of how to apply a broad theoretical approach to a specific subject (for example, Leonardo).

Erikson, of course -- refining Freud's approach; giving us very detailed examples of applying theory and method in two major cases and a number of shorter ones; giving much attention to issues of countertransference; and providing us with a developmental schema which among other things reminds us of certain key questions that we need to ask about our subjects at different parts of their life cycles.

Beyond Freud and Erikson come a number of people who have made significant contributions but whom I couldn't rank in any sensible way: Henry Murray, William McKinley "Mac" Runyan, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Jim Anderson, Irv Alexander, and Peter Loewenberg.

**KI:** Please name five exemplary psychobiographies, with a brief reason for each one.

**AE:** Erikson's *Young Man Luther* and *Gandhi's Truth* are exemplary for their biographical detail, theoretical perspectives, and displays of methodological thoughtfulness. I know that several of the specialists on Luther have complained about one or another detail in *Young Man Luther*, but I haven't seen them producing a more psychologically sophisticated or persuasive account of his basic motives and his development in young adulthood. Likewise for specialists on Gandhi -- Erikson did as good a job as anyone could expect in approaching Gandhi from a non-Indian's perspective and at the same time offered us a fascinating comparison of Gandhi's "truths" with Freud's "truths." Both books are full of explicit and implicit methodological lessons for would-be psychobiographers.

Freud's Leonardo book, for providing later psychobiographers with an array of prescriptive and proscriptive guidelines as detailed in my *Uncovering Lives*. Doris Kearns Goodwin's book on Lyndon Johnson, *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream* (1976), still one of the best political psychobiographies, for her use of inside information about LBJ and for her attention to the ways in which personality interacts with specific political roles. Goodwin's *No Ordinary Time*, for insightful analyses of the great husband-and-wife team, even though Goodwin avoids citing the sources of her theoretical approach. John Bowlby's book on Darwin, *Charles Darwin: A Biography* (1990), for the restraint he shows in suggesting connections between Darwin's psychosomatic problems and Darwin's theories, while advancing a persuasive explanation of how those psychosomatic problems developed and were eventually resolved.

**KI:** Which are a couple of purported psychobiographies that are examples of how *not* to do psychobiography?

**AE:** Gail Sheehy's multiple analyses of Presidential candidates in the magazine *Vanity Fair*, partly collected in her book *Character: America's Search for Leadership* (1988), and various Freud-bashing books trying to invalidate

Freud's theories by offering wild analyses of his personality.

**KI:** What training and experience has been most helpful in your doing psychobiographical work?

**AE:** Getting a fair amount of clinical training during graduate school was helpful, but I think it would have been less helpful if I hadn't also been getting trained in the more "scientific" approaches to research in personality and social psychology. Training in classical and contemporary psychoanalytic theory, in grad school and later, has been quite useful. In addition, I have undergone psychoanalytic psychotherapy from two wise analysts. I wouldn't say that it changed my outlook on society, but I think it gave me greater self-insight (a useful thing for a psychobiographer to develop as much as possible) and more self-confidence that my perceptions of others' behaviors and personalities were more often than not reasonably veridical.

**KI:** What are you working on now?

**AE:** I'm working to finish a couple of book-length projects: a psychobiographical novel on C.G. Jung and a full-scale biography of Paul Linebarger, aka Cordwainer Smith. The Jung novel, focusing on his six-month journey across East Africa and down the Nile in 1925-1926, grew out of my research on Jung's autobiography and is an effort to get at some psychological insights about him that might be more elusive via straightforward psychobiography.

The book on Linebarger is my first and maybe last effort at doing a life history essentially from scratch. Previous biographical work on him was quite limited in length and scope, so I've had to work from the ground up to establish the broad outlines as well as the details and subtleties of his life. (I do want to give credit to John J. Pierce, who did the first biographical work on Linebarger in a fanzine article and a book introduction.) Linebarger is a fascinating subject for several reasons. His book, *Psychological Warfare* (1948), was a pioneering effort and is still well worth reading. His scholarly studies of China only partly conceal a strongly ambivalent personal relationship with the Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek regimes. His work for U.S. Army Intelligence and the CIA, mostly unpublished and unavailable for public view, was given alternative expression in several pre-James Bond spy novels that are a good deal more psychologically complex than anything Ian Fleming ever wrote. Perhaps most significantly, his

science fiction under the pseudonym "Cordwainer Smith" remains strongly influential on many contemporary science fiction writers (for example, Ursula Le Guin, Harlan Ellison, Norman Spinrad) for its psychological strangeness as well as its literary style.

*Kate Isaacson is a doctoral student in personality and social psychology at the University of California, Davis. Her research interests are in psychobiographical theory and methodology, literary psychobiography, life course theories of personality, and the personality and social correlates of addiction. She is currently the research coordinator for the Northern California Methamphetamine Study (National Institute of Health/UC Davis Medical Center), and is working on a psychobiographical study of Tennessee Williams, a study of recipients of the Nobel Prize for Literature, and a longitudinal study of creative productivity in Pulitzer Prize winners and nominees. She can be reached at <kalisaacson@ucdavis.edu>. □*

## Prototypical Scenes as Keys to the Life Story

William Todd Schultz  
Pacific University

In trying to approach a life psychobiographically, often the very first step in the process pertains to relevancy, but relevancy of a specific sort. That is, what in the sprawling and endlessly iterating data of a life -- the life's biographical record -- must be singled out for especially careful consideration? After all, much of what we do is relatively trivial. Today I drank three cups of coffee. Does that reveal me? Probably not as much as a set of other things I said or did. So, the first puzzle a psychobiographer must solve is how to identify what Irving Alexander has called "primary indicators of psychological saliency," those life-episodes that stand out from surrounding data.

Then, even within a set of salient episodes, one can isolate two or three perhaps, which become, so to speak, super-salient. In fact, the question sometimes arises: Can a single scene encapsulate the core parameters of an entire life-story? My feeling is that it can. In my most recent writing, I have come to regard such scenes as *prototypical*: they effectively condense the myth of a life.

Thus far I have identified what I think of as

prototypical scenes in the lives of Franz Kafka, Jack Kerouac, Sylvia Plath, and Kathryn Harrison, all writers. As expressed in these literary lives, such scenes possess certain telltale features. They 1) interpenetrate, or recur in a variety of contexts; 2) are recalled with a great deal of specificity, often imbued with color, details related to setting, and snatches of verbatim dialogue; 3) possess developmental gravity in that they highlight crises specific to stages in the life-course; 4) are affectively intense -- one does not construct a lukewarm prototypical scene, in other words; and, furthermore, 5) allow their author to creatively rehearse "throwtness." They are, that is to say, artful responses to something done to their creator under the assumption that situations we get "thrown" into relatively passively require heightened efforts towards narrativity or story-making; we are drawn to adduce reasons for things that happen to us not of our own doing but through external agency.

The Southern writer Truman Capote represents an excellent reference-case for the prototypical scene concept. Repeatedly he described an incident -- replete with detail -- of being locked in a hotel room at age two by his mother, who went out on the town looking for men and social cache. This abandonment, he said, became a theme of his psychological life -- he lived in a state of anticipatory anxiety lest friends or lovers might leave him. The image also embodies the kind of "throwtness" referred to above: something was done to the young Capote, something puzzling and initially inassimilable. He was moved, therefore, to narrate the event, both by talking about it to others -- which he did on numerous occasions -- and by incorporating it into his fictions. In Capote's unfinished final work *Answered Prayers*, the main character, P.B. Jones, a Truman alter-ego in a number of different respects, suffers early abandonment, then speaks of his later tendency to abandon others pre-emptively whenever they begin to stop loving him. In Capote's most famous short story "Miriam," the focus is on a mysteriously motherless little girl -- also resembling Capote -- who enters, then promptly destroys, the life of a widow, Mrs. H.T. Miller. In no time at all the widow is under Miriam's thumb, powerless to refuse her wishes; the crazy-making little girl reduces the widow to virtual psychosis. Is this Capote's fantasized, table-turning revenge against a mother who failed adequately to love him? It seems likely. Via displacement, the widow gets the just desserts Capote may have wished -- unconsciously -- for his mom.

Did the scene in the hotel really happen as Capote described it? We can't be certain. Research reveals that complex narrative memories from before age three-and-a-half are exceedingly rare. Did Capote simply make the memory up? Possibly, but from the standpoint of how the recollection functions in Capote's psychological life, it may not even matter. Regardless of the scene's veridicality, Capote still employed it as a means of self-understanding. It became the dominant picture of his childhood. He cast himself in the role of unloved child and then projected that image forward into his adult life. The hotel abandonment, fact or fiction -- or part fact and part later embellishment -- captures the core parameters of Capote's life-myth. He played it out in life with friends and lovers, and he wrote it out in fiction.

Staying on the lookout for such scenes in the lives of psychobiographical subjects should serve several useful functions. Prototypical scenes reduce the signal-to-noise ratio; they encourage a discrete focus and allow for a kind of winnowing. They also help in the generation of psychobiographical hypotheses that can be tested out on subsequently emerging life data. The scene and the life stand in a reciprocal relationship: the scene anchors the life, and the life refers back to the scene. In some respects the strategy of isolating single scenes and regarding them as especially explanatory may be seen as excessively reductionistic. This is not the case. The scene is a top down construction, narrated from the vantage point of adulthood. It is continuously caressed, so to speak, retaining all the while a certain degree of flexibility. One keeps making it up -- adding and/or subtracting -- as needs be. It is a dynamic entity, responsive to current concerns and life conflicts.

*See profile of author on page 112. A longer article on the prototypical scene concept will appear in 2002 in Volume 2 of Narrative Studies of Lives (APA Press). □*

**Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting  
Saturday, January 26, 2002**

**Eli Sagan**

**"The Great Promise and  
Anxiety of Modernity"**

## The Problem of Opinions Without Evidence

Daniel M. Ogilvie  
Rutgers University

One of the more sophisticated criticisms of psychobiographic research is that of identifying a specific, usually early, episode in a subject's life and treating it as a (often *the*) prominent factor in understanding the course of a person's subsequent development. These episodes are commonly referred to as "prototype scenes," and are thought by some to contain the blueprints of scripts around which lives are patterned. Since so many eggs are placed in a prototypic scene basket, great caution must be taken in the selection of the basket, partly because the selection of an unworthy scene is likely to result in a psychobiography that lacks coherence. Still more damaging, investigators may select scenes partly on the basis of prototypic fits with their own unconscious needs, fears, and resistances, and thereby proceed to "read" their lives into the lives of others. These problems can be elaborated upon by reviewing one of Sigmund Freud's least admirable works, *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory from His Childhood* (1910).

Freud used his analysis of Leonardo to underscore his ideas about the omnipresence of the sexual instinct. As most readers know, a primary feature of Freud's tension-reduction model of the psyche is the belief that instincts press for alternative avenues of expression when direct expression is blocked. For reasons outlined by Freud, Leonardo was an exemplar case of the phenomenon of sexual impulses being sublimated into creative acts and artistic achievements. The only exception to Leonardo's "pure and perfect" diversion of libido into matters of the intellect was his interest in the prospects of human flight. Because Freud's hypothesis regarding the wish to fly was that it represented a longing to be capable of sexual performance, his task became one of locating evidence that Leonardo's interests in flight were sponsored by a portion of his libido that slipped through the shield of repression.

Freud located support for his thesis in a fragment of an early memory that Leonardo had written, recording a time in his cradle when he imagined a vulture coming down to him, opening his mouth, and striking its tail against his lips. Freud lifted that single notation extracted from voluminous works by and about Leonardo to the level

of a prototype scene that could provide insight into the psychodynamic forces that not only inspired and shaped the life of one of world's great artists but also led him to wish to fly.

Space limitations prevent any detailed recapitulation of Freud's speculations about the significance of Leonardo's memory. However, it should be noted that Freud did not write in the language of speculations but rather billed his inferences as facts. Based on mere fragments of clues, Freud made the case that the vulture that struck Leonardo on his lips with its tail symbolized his mother who, in her unwed, lonely status, applied innumerable passionate kisses on her son's lips. This led to an early onset of Leonardo's researches into sex and his desire to explain how babies were conceived. An important link in Freud's argument was the significance of vultures. He observed that Leonardo must have known that early Egyptians had represented Mother-Goddesses as vultures partly based on the belief that vultures impregnated themselves. Therefore, Leonardo must have concluded that his mother, Caterina, was a sexually self-contained unit who, nonetheless, had become an object of desires so overwhelming that he was forced to divert their aim by concentrating on matters of the intellect.

However, it was later discovered that Freud had used a document that mistranslated a critical word in Leonardo's notation. The bird was not a "vulture," but a "kite." Several scholars have independently arrived at a consensus that Freud used his analysis as an opportunity to attribute to Leonardo various matters that were more pertinent to his covert concerns than they were to the inner life of his subject. For example, Ernest Jones, Freud's most supportive biographer, wrote that Freud's mother's tenderness was fateful to him, that the violence of her caresses established his sexual inactivity for the whole of his later life.

Freud set a bad precedent. He granted himself (and others who would follow his lead) license to sift through documents, letters, closets, and artifacts pertaining to an individual for the purpose of locating information to confirm his theory. Put it this way: Psychobiographers surrounded by large amounts of information about another person can always find what they are looking for. Materials deemed irrelevant to the researcher's hypothesis may be ignored and non-supporting evidence shoved aside with thesis-preserving vengeance. Suppositions can be inserted in places where critical information is missing. Insidious circularity is

often the regrettable result.

The question of validity is at the core of the problem outlined above. Critics of psychobiography, who raise that matter, do so justifiably. Although it is often the case that various stringent standards for assessing the validity of a construct, an idea, or, in this instance, the selection of a prototype scene, cannot be met, sometimes steps can be taken to appease what can be called "opinions without evidence" complaints. More than a token to soften the voices of critics, a validated prototype scene assists in shoring up the premises for building one's case. The remainder of this article describes a validation strategy I used in a study of the life and works of J. M. Barrie, author of *Peter Pan*.

Like Freud, I initiated my study with a theory regarding the meaning of flying fantasies; however, it was a different theory. My position was that levitation desires express unconscious longings to recover feelings that once accompanied a sense of weightless union with a maternal figure. From this perspective, Leonardo's interest in the mechanics of flight was not sponsored by repressed sexual desires directed toward his mother, but by lingering needs to be cuddled, held, and carried about in the protective arms of a nurturing figure. My theory further posited that this pattern is likely to be especially pronounced in individuals who experienced an early disruption in their relationships with their mothers; a time, perhaps, when they underwent the subjective experience of their mothers turning against them.

Armed with this theory (less a theory than a few hunches at the time), I initiated a study of Barrie in an effort to discover the psychodynamic forces involved in his creation of Peter. I might not have undertaken the study had I known that Barrie was one of the most prolific authors in Great Britain at the turn of the last century. The volumes that had been written by and about him presented me with a daunting task. At last, in the process of reading most of his books and memoirs, I ran across the first time Peter Pan was mentioned in print. It was a story within another story titled *The Little White Bird*. Largely confined to an island in Kensington Park, Peter, part bird, part human, flew back and forth to his mother's open bedroom window in an effort to decide which life, that of a bird or a boy, he preferred. Finally, he determined that boyhood suited him best. He flew to his mother's window but, this time, the window was barred and he was forever shut out of her life.

Then, in *Margaret Ogilvy*, I located an in-

cident in Barrie's early life that paralleled the adventures of the first version of Peter Pan. Margaret was Barrie's mother and the book was written as a tribute to her shortly after her death. Barrie was six years old when one of his older brothers, Margaret's favorite child, was killed in a skating accident. Margaret was devastated and confined herself to her bedroom. Mary, J. M.'s oldest sister, begged him to console his mother. He entered her room and, in a listless voice, she asked, "Is that you?" Assuming that she was asking the question of her dead son, Jamie replied, "No, it's not him. It's just me." The gate was locked, the bars were in place, and my hunches were confirmed! The incident was a resounding example of the kind of disruption of maternal care that I had been seeking. All other hypotheses could now be set aside because the "prototypic scene" had been unveiled. Why? Because I said so. It felt right to me.

Such assertions are not sufficient grounds for isolating one episode from hundreds of episodes and using it as the foundation for reconstructing a life. Unchallenged, it can serve as a premise to "read" whatever one wishes, including one's own dilemmas, into the life of another person and, as a consequence, provide additional fuel for the already raging fire built by critics. Psychobiographers need to reach beyond the range of their personal perspectives and seek ways to verify their seminal impressions.

In Barrie's case, I was able to take advantage of the fact that he had been the topic of concern of many other writers. Notable among them was Robert Sapolski, a neuroscientist, who specializes in endocrinology; Denis Mackail, Barrie's "official" biographer; and Jackie Wullschlager, a literary scholar who has written extensively about 19th- and 20th-century British authors. Although each of these individuals had different views about the consequences of Margaret's rejection of Jamie, the incident itself was deemed by all to be a major, life-determining event. Sapolski argues that Margaret's turning away from her son caused him to suffer from "stress dwarfism." Mackail, albeit no fan of psychoanalysis, returned to Margaret's shift in her relationship with Barrie on numerous occasions, presenting it as the source of Barrie's complete and utter devotion to caring for his mother for the remaining 29 years of her bedridden life. Wullschlager attributes Barrie's repeated pronouncements that he had never desired to grow up to Margaret's reaction to her favorite son David's death.

In the language of scientific psychology, *convergent validity* is said to be good when different measures of the same construct are shown to be related to each other. Psychobiographers seldom think in such terms. But in the case of Barrie, the fact that outside opinions converged on the critical importance of an episode (read "construct") that I planned to use as a key feature in my psychological story about another person's story provided a welcome degree of credibility to my premise.

*Dan Ogilvie, PhD, is Professor of Psychology at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. He has conducted research on mental representations of the self in interpersonal relationships, changes in motivation over the lifespan, and introduced the concept of the undesired self as a variable in self-discrepancy research. This article is based on his return to his early "case study" roots in psychology and is derived from his in-progress book manuscript titled Glory in the Highest: Beneath the Surface of Dreams and Fantasies of Flight. He may be contacted at <ogilvie@rci.rutgers.edu>. □*

## Is Fiction Autobiographical?

**James William Anderson**  
Northwestern University Medical School

Many critics claim it is mistaken to think of fiction as being autobiographical. They say, "A novel is made up. It's the product of imagination. You are going down the wrong road if you try to see one character as representing the novelist or another as the author's mother." The problem with this argument is that it is based on a simple-minded notion of what it means for a novel to be autobiographical. The bridge to a deeper understanding is a word these very same critics use, *imagination*.

What is imagination? It is what people think when they let themselves go, when they "take a leap." It is the generator of fiction. Imagination is fed by what is unworked-out, what presses upon one from within, that with which one is most vitally concerned. Why would someone indulge in and expand on anything else? What could provide the energy for constructing a fictional reality other than someone's inner preoccupations?

Fiction is autobiographical not in a trivial external way, not as a recitation of events and behaviors. Fiction is autobiographical in the much deeper sense that it is a playing with, a musing on, an expression of what matters most to the individ-

ual. In this essay, I will use examples from the work of a college student named "Terry" and the Russian novelist Tolstoy.

Terry was shown Card 3 BM from the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), a picture of a person huddled on the floor, and was asked to make up a dramatic story based on this image. What follows is the student's story.

John couldn't believe what he'd just done. He collapsed to the floor and slumped weakly over the couch. The gun slid from his hand and clattered noisily on the floor. The house was silent, dead silent. John began to sob as the last several minutes played through his head like a video.

He had crept into the house quietly, knowing what he would find. They were making so much noise upstairs they wouldn't have heard even if he had pulled into the garage and walked in like normal. That made him angry. So much better for his story: he had simply come home early to an intruder in his house. He couldn't be blamed for shooting the man out of self-defense, could he? John began climbing the stairs slowly. He was no longer worried about making noise, but something was still holding him back. He knew what he was about to see, but still he didn't want to see it, didn't want to finalize it in his mind. He made it to his bedroom door. It was open a crack. Voices were coming through, his wife's voice and -- a stranger's? No, it was oddly familiar. John pushed open the door and stood in shock. The scene was as he had expected, but the other face was not. He was enraged. They didn't even notice him. In a moment of hatred, John fired his pistol, twice.

Is this story autobiographical? The author never was cheated on by a spouse, never shot anyone, and she has never been a husband, let alone a man. But when she talked to me she said she was startled that the story expressed so much about herself that she had not intended.

She explained that several months ago her father left her mother and their family and began living with a woman. To make matters worse, this woman once had been Terry's boss. Terry is further torn because everyone else in the family has refused to talk to her father, while her role is to be the accepting, mediating child who remains friendly with her father.

The story reflects the heated thoughts and feelings that are on fire within her and contending with one another. It offers expression especially for that which she has tried to suppress. She told me she avoids thinking of the strife within her family but she knew she was disappointed with her father and found it hard to be on friendly terms with him. According to the testimony of the story, she also feels murderous rage toward him and his lover, and a sense of having been betrayed by both of them. She said that, until considering the story that her imagination had produced, she had been unaware of these two factors, the murderous rage and the sense of personal betrayal.

Some might argue that, yes, Terry's story is fed by and expresses her inner conflicts, but a student's TAT story has nothing to do with literature. I chose her story because it provides such a clear illustration of my point but also because, in my view, the creative process that underlies fiction is the same with an ordinary person as with a major literary figure. Next I will discuss how that same process takes place in the fiction of Leo Tolstoy, who is the epitome of the great novelist.

The critics who protest that fiction is not autobiographical see Tolstoy's works as an exception. Countless incidents in his writings seem to be drawn, without distortion, from his life. For example, Levin in *Anna Karenina* proposes to his future wife in just the same manner as Tolstoy did to his future wife. But these critics do not appreciate that his writings are autobiographical in the more significant way that is the subject of this paper, that is, they stem from the struggles going on in his inner world.

Tolstoy wrote a series of three stories about men who were overwhelmed by and felt guilty about their sexuality. One of these, "The Devil," is about a wealthy landowner who had an affair with a peasant woman while he was single. After his marriage, sexual obsession continues to plague him, and he one time asks someone to stay with him to prevent him from committing adultery. There is unimpeachable testimony, from Tolstoy's diaries and from the accounts of people in whom he confided, that Tolstoy had these same experiences.

But Tolstoy in this work was not giving an account of his history. Instead, his imagination fastened on these events because they offered an expression of his inner struggle with desire and guilt. During his marriage fierce battles raged in his mind. He often felt overcome by lust, but also be-

lieved, not only that adultery was wrong, but also that sex itself, as an aggressive exploitation of another person, was selfish and sinful.

In the second story, "Father Sergius," a similar mixture of illicit desire and guilt is expressed, but the external events are far distant from Tolstoy's personal experience. Father Sergius is a holy man who fights against sexual desire, cuts off his finger to resist a woman who is trying to seduce him, and eventually falls victim to temptation with another woman. Even in "The Devil," the ending, or, I should say, the endings, because there are alternate endings, reflect Tolstoy's inner feelings, not his actual behavior. In one, the main character kills the temptress; in another, he kills himself.

In the third story, "The Kreutzer Sonata," the main character, Pozdnyshv, is married but disgusted with his sexuality. As a bachelor, he consorted with prostitutes. After marriage, he concludes, his desire for his wife dominated and undermined his relationship with her. He was especially sickened over his inability to refrain from sexual relations with his wife while she was pregnant. Pozdnyshv explains how his overmastering sexuality results in uncontrollable jealousy. "I considered myself to have a complete right to her body as if it were my own," he notes, "and yet at the same time I felt I could not control that body ... and she could dispose of it as she pleased."

The climax of the story is a scene remarkably similar to Terry's TAT story. Sneaking into his house when he is supposed to be out of town, Pozdnyshv hopes to catch his wife with the man he is sure is her lover. He does find the two of them together -- eating dinner. Although they certainly have not been having an affair, Pozdnyshv kills his wife with a dagger and would have murdered the man, too, had he not escaped.

Because the two scenes -- Terry's and Tolstoy's in "The Kreutzer Sonata" -- are so much alike, they provide a striking illustration of what I mean by a profounder form of autobiography. Neither scene depicts the actual life situation of the author. Neither Terry nor Tolstoy ever tried to kill a spouse for unfaithfulness. Each scene is the product of inner forces that troubled the author, but these forces are dramatically different for the two authors.

Terry's scene reflects her anger and resentment toward people she felt had hurt and wronged her and her family. It expresses a desire, which she would never enact in real life, to lash out at her

father for breaking up the family. It also expresses her yearning for revenge on her father's lover, not only for being complicit in her father's affair, but also for a special betrayal of her; the lover had once been Terry's kindly, and respected, boss.

Tolstoy's scene reflects something very different. He believed that his powerful libido threatened to dominate his life. It led to his forcing sex on his wife with no regard for her needs, and it produced his obsessive jealousy, since he wanted to be the only one to possess her. The scene shows the danger of sexuality and jealousy; they can be so irrational and malignant as even to result in murder.

Tolstoy's three stories, taken together, are misleading and contradictory if viewed as an autobiographical account of his external life. But they depict in detail the landscape of his inner struggle over sexuality. They illustrate, for example, how and why he was plagued by his powerful urges; his unconscious strategies of sometimes blaming others, especially the women who attracted him, and sometimes blaming the unruly forces within himself; and his inability ever to find peace in the face of these inner conflicts. These stories help explain why he settled on the seemingly absurd conclusion that the only answer -- proposed in "The Kreutzer Sonata" as well as in non-fiction -- is for everyone to be celibate.

Fiction stems from a natural tendency people have, also seen in the production of dreams and daydreams, to create stories that express and explore their deepest, most pressing, often unresolved concerns. Writers try to come to grips with, to reconcile, and to find solutions to that which lacerates their souls.

*James W. Anderson, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Clinical Psychology at Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago, a faculty member at the Institute for Psychoanalysis in Chicago, and Associate Editor of the Annual of Psychoanalysis. He has published papers on the writing of psychobiography as well as on such psychobiographical subjects as William and Henry James, Henry A. Murray, Woodrow Wilson, and Sigmund Freud. He may be contacted at <j-anderson3@northwestern.edu>. □*

## Frank Lloyd Wright's Personal Ideology Expressed In His Architecture

Ed de St. Aubin  
Marquette University

Frank Lloyd Wright's (1867-1959) personal ideology was manifested in his architectural creations. Over 40 years after his death, Wright is still considered one of the greatest American architects. He created a powerful legacy through his over 600 architectural projects (430 completed buildings) and his voluminous writings concerning his unique beliefs about architectural theory and practice.

A psychobiographical focus on the relation between Wright's personal ideology and his architecture provides the reader with a deeper understanding of Wright's life and also reveals significant dynamics regarding the nature of his personal beliefs. As with all individuals, Wright's personal ideology is a unique blend of idiosyncratic proclivities and of the values defining the larger socio-historical context in which his life was embedded. His personal ideology was contoured by intrapsychic tensions (egalitarianism vs. elitism); the inner integration of paradox (valuing both nature and machine); the rejection of larger systems of belief (repudiating traditional schools of architecture); and incorporation of values (beliefs of relatives; public discourse). While the contents of Wright's personal ideology (parenthetically noted above) may be unique, the parameters, underlined above are common to all humans.

Wright once said that architects do not speak through words, phrases, and sentences but instead express themselves with brick, concrete, color, and shape. This then becomes part of our biographical data as we interpret the values and beliefs that inform Wright's architecture. Three domains of Wright's personal ideology will be explored: his view of nature; his beliefs concerning technology; and his assumptions regarding human nature.

A major component of Wright's personal ideology is a glorification of the natural world. His early childhood was spent in nomadic wanderings throughout the fertile New England countryside as his minister father moved between congregations. He then relocated with his mother (who was his sole parent after his father left) to his place of birth

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in the rolling hills of central southern Wisconsin. It was here that he would later build Taliesin -- a compound of buildings spread along the Wisconsin River that was to serve as his residence, workshop, and the school that he founded. There are several ways in which his love of nature results in the "organic" architecture that he created. First, his buildings often mimic the configurations he observed in natural formations. Nature inspired him to build the dendriform ("branched tree") columns of the Johnson Wax building (1936). His home in the southwest was called Ocotillo (1929 with major additions in 1937) as it was modeled after the plant of that region. Other projects are inspired by bamboo and by the interior fibers of the staghorn cactus. Even his geometric designs were often abstractions of natural forms, as was true of his famous stained glass windows where clusters of rectangles represent the basic structure of a tree.

A second manner in which Wright manifests his deep appreciation for nature is in his use of indigenous materials. Buildings were to be constructed, to the extent possible, of materials that one would find locally: sand-based concrete is the basic substance of his desert buildings; local lava is woven into his Japanese projects; limestone and wood constitute the Wisconsin home and school. Never at a loss for ways to use readily available ingredients, Wright had the student-builders donate their urine to a mix used in oxidizing the copper detailing on the ten buildings designed for Florida Southern University (constructed between 1939 and 1959). Finally, Wright's organic architecture is attuned to nature in that buildings are not to conquer the natural environment but to embrace it symbiotically. This is captured in his remark that a house should be "of" a hill and not "on" a hill.

This nature-inspired work is very much in line with the ideology of the Arts and Craft Movement influencing other artists and creators of Wright's time. The leaders of this group invited Wright to address the Chicago Arts and Craft Society at Jane Adams' Hull House, the very center of this school of artists. His 1901 presentation, *The Art and Craft of the Machine*, was not well received. The title alone was enough to infuriate many in the audience who pitted the cold and sterile "machine" (metaphorical or literal) as directly opposed to the warmth and earthiness that carried the spirit of their movement. The machine was equated with technology that was seen as the clear enemy of true artistic endeavors. In his talk that night, Wright suggested that such romantic notions

were misguided and childish. He offered technology as a force that would allow artists to surpass the efforts of previous generations. He unabashedly embraced technology for its ability to serve the artist in realizing his or her visions. Wright referred to steel as a "miracle of strength for its weight and cost." Reinforced concrete was to appear in several different guises in his architecture -- as textile blocks; as his beloved cantilevers; and as strong but narrow dendriform columns.

There was no tension in his personal ideology, as there was for those of the Arts and Craft movement, between nature and technology. It is the mark of a complex system of values that Wright so effortlessly combined these in his architecture. Fallingwater (1935) is a prime example of this integration. One of the best known designs of a private home in the entire world, observers of Fallingwater have noted how the balconies and terraces seem to be suspended in midair in such a way that one feels a part of the river below. These structures would not have been possible to build had Wright not depended on new technologies of reinforced concrete cantilevers. Further, we discover that the value-based vision Wright held for good architecture was not to be easily swayed by the larger trends of his day. His was a personal ideology defined more by inner integrity than by conformity to social conventions.

Technology and nature are yoked together within Wright's personal ideology in his drive to create beautiful and functional dwellings. While there were no tensions between these aspects of his belief system, we find plenty of intrapsychic conflict within Wright's personal ideology when we begin to examine the manner in which his beliefs about human nature played out in his architectural endeavors. The tension in values might best be described as one that opposed egalitarianism to elitism.

Wright's strong leanings toward egalitarianism can be traced to several of the forces at play during his childhood years: his mother's belief in the noble spirit within all humans that craved beautiful sounds and sights; the preachings of his minister uncle Jenkins which emphasized tolerance; and the philosophy of individual freedom underlying the Unitarian school founded by his two aunts. Wright's advocacy for "the common man" (a popular concept in the 1930s and 1940s) is clearly articulated in two of his several books, *Architecture and Modern Life* (1937) and *When Democracy Builds* (1945). It is also expressed in his models

and writings concerning Broadacre, an utopia community of planned living that embodied what he felt were the most noble American ideals -- individual freedom grounded in a strong work ethic and the love of beauty in nature and the arts. Finally, the inexpensive and partially pre-fabricated Usonian homes were an attempt to provide affordable yet charming homes to those not able to purchase one of his more elegant dwellings.

Yet his egalitarian principles were in constant conflict with his elitist belief that there is a definite hierarchy of human worthiness and the arrogant vision that he sits on the very top of this pyramid. He would readily belittle students in his Fellowship (the school he created) and suggest that it is impossible to become an architect unless one was born with certain precocity in this area. He also constantly berated clients and referred to them as brutes too ignorant to appreciate the beauty of his designs. The intrapsychic conflict between values of egalitarianism and elitism is captured in a quote related by a visitor to Wright's school: "You know, a perfect democracy flourishes here at the Fellowship. When I get hungry, we all eat." Meant for its comic effect, the quip hints at the very real tension between Wright's desire to maintain an egalitarian mode within his Fellowship and his self-serving and elitist tendencies. Wright's elitism stems both from his innate genius in the skills necessary for architecture and from a childhood wherein his mother constantly praised him as an extraordinary boy destined for greatness. This intrapsychic tension between egalitarianism and elitism partially shaped Wright's personal ideology.

We might begin our attempts to understand one's personal ideology by investigating the intrapsychic tensions as well as the inner integration that occurs regarding personal beliefs. We must also examine the selective incorporation and rejection of values one is exposed to during one's life course. As is demonstrated here with Frank Lloyd Wright, this constellation of dynamics reveals meaningful insights regarding the psychology of personal ideology.

*Ed de St. Aubin, PhD, is Assistant Professor of Psychology at Marquette University. His scholarship in personality and developmental psychology has focused on personal ideology (one's philosophy of life), generativity, psychobiography, narrative psychology, and the integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches to understanding the person. Professor de St. Aubin is the author of several empirical*

*journal articles and two co-edited books, including Generativity and Adult Development (1998) (with Dan McAdams), which includes a more extensive psychobiography of Frank Lloyd Wright. He thanks Todd Schultz for helpful comments regarding a draft of this article and may be contacted at <ed.destaubin@marquette.edu>. □*

## From Crisis to Comedy: Charles Chaplin's *The Adventurer*

Marilyn Fabe

University of California, Berkeley

Shortly after Charles Chaplin traveled to Vienna in 1920, Freud wrote a letter to a friend linking Chaplin's comic persona to his early childhood. "He always plays himself as he was in his dismal youth. He cannot get away from those impressions and humiliations of that past period of his life." (Stephen M. Weissman, MD, "Charlie Chaplin's Film Heroines," *Film History*, Vol. 8, No. 4, 1996, p. 1) My essay elaborates on Freud's observation through an analysis of one of Chaplin's funniest and most popular early films, *The Adventurer* (1917). Through the constantly beleaguered persona of the film, Chaplin symbolically relives and comically triumphs over the physical and emotional ordeals of his childhood.

Chaplin was born in London in 1889, the child of music hall performers. His father drank and his mother suffered from ill health, both physical and mental. His parents separated by the time he was two. When Chaplin was five, his mother lost her singing voice; soon after, she had a mental breakdown resulting in a series of painful separations from her. Packed off to Lambreth Workhouse and then to the Hanwell School for Orphans and Destitute Children, Chaplin experienced life as one humiliating incident after another. He suffered the daily indignity of being scrubbed down by 14-year-old orphan girls who were put in charge of the younger boys. When he was infected with ringworm, his head was shaved and he was quarantined. The children were publicly flogged for minor infractions. Chaplin's worst humiliation was being shamed for soiling his bed.

After a stay of 18 months at Hanwell, Chaplin was reunited briefly with his mother, only to be separated once more when she again went insane. This time, the courts placed Charlie and his

brother Sydney with their father and his mistress. Chaplin remembers himself as a male Cinderella, having to do all the chores and receiving no love. Some nights he was locked out of the house and had to wander the streets on his own.

Chaplin had fond memories of his mother when she was well. She taught him to read and he attributes his success in mimicry and pantomime to her. He dreamt of making his mother happy, buying her beautiful things and taking her to a place in the country where she could rest and do nothing but play with him. (Joyce Milton, *Tramp: The Life of Charlie Chaplin*, 1996, p. 15) Her illness and poverty left Chaplin to support himself and his mother from the age of 10.

At age 11, Chaplin successfully auditioned to become one of the Eight Lancashire Lads, a troupe of child dancers. When this stint ended, he tried a number of occupations -- clerk in a sundries shop, barber's assistant, newsboy, printer's assistant, glassblower's assistant -- but his bad work habits and tendency to steal from his employers resulted in his soon losing his jobs. (*Tramp*, pp. 27&28) Chaplin was saved from a life of permanent poverty by his talent as a performer. At age 14, his mother once again institutionalized, he played the part of Billy in a touring company production of Sherlock Holmes. He then developed his talents as a music hall comic mime and artist of improvisation, eventually becoming a featured act in England's leading music hall company.

In 1914, during a U.S. tour, he received an offer to work for Mack Sennett, the director of the popular Keystone Cops comedy films, at the princely salary of \$150 per week. Almost instantly he became a star. In 1916 he signed a contract with the Mutual Film Corporation at a weekly salary of \$10,000. Chaplin wrote, "Like an avalanche, money and success came with increasing momentum; it was all bewildering, frightening -- but wonderful." (Charles Chaplin, *My Autobiography*, 1964, p. 174) By drawing on and transforming a childhood that he describes in his autobiography as "a life of continual crisis" (p. 12), Chaplin became one of the most famous and well-paid men in the world.

In *The Adventurer*, a Mutual film, Chaplin plays an escaped convict hunted by the police, whose life is a continual crisis from his first appearance in the film. After emerging from a hole in the sand only to encounter a gun aimed at his head, he frantically covers his head back up with sand. Evidence that Chaplin drew on his traumatic child-

hood is suggested by the way his film persona combines and condenses adult and childhood traits. His prison cap resembles a baby bonnet and his face has the innocent look of a baby. Yet he also sports a dapper mustache, making him the image of a small child who had to grow up too fast. Though he is capable of miraculous athletic agility that helps him escape his pursuers, his movements are strangely awkward and clumsy. Thus he climbs a hill with marvelous speed but his movements are those of a crawling baby. When he runs, his gait is that of a toddler. The comedy derives from the incongruity of Chaplin's infant-like awkwardness with his surprisingly successful evasive agility. Chaplin's baby, moreover, is no helpless traumatized victim as Chaplin must have been in his childhood. In numerous wish-fulfilling comic reversals, his persecutors become *his* victims. The cops who pursue him are all bigger than he is, they outnumber him and carry guns. Even when he is shot at point blank, not only does he survive, he retaliates: he kicks the man who shot him over a cliff.

Chaplin's convict survives continual threats to his person by employing the most primitive defense mechanisms of childhood. Burying his head in the sand is both a regressive retreat, as if back into the womb, and the essence of denial: "If I can't see it, it can't hurt me." Similarly, when a guard sneaks up behind the convict and pins him to the spot by stepping on his hand, the convict looks down at the foot and begins covering it with dirt. Once again the logic seems to be: when in danger, deny it. In the real world, the primitive defense of denial results in disaster. In Chaplin's world, it works. The policeman's surprise gives the convict the split second he needs to escape. (Andre Bazin, *What is Cinema?*, essays selected and translated by Hugh Gray, 1968, p. 149)

Chaplin's convict also successfully employs the defense mechanism of projection to ward off a crisis. While his rival for the affections of Edna Purviance, played by Eric Campbell, is fuming over Charlie's success with her, he discovers a "Wanted" picture of the convict. While Campbell is imparting this information to Edna's father (a judge no less, and probably the man who has sent the convict to jail), Charlie happens across the incriminating photo. He takes out a pen and alters the picture, adding a beard and bushy eyebrows so that the picture looks nothing like him and everything like Eric Campbell's character. By transferring or projecting his guilt onto his rival (I'm not the one

wanted by the police, he is) he momentarily escapes from the danger of exposure.

In *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*, Freud theorized that laughter results from a sudden lifting of repression. We all struggle daily with transgressive impulses against authority figures and rivals, impulses that our socialization teaches us to suppress. When the repression is lifted in a sudden and surprising way through the mechanism of jokes, we can own these impulses without guilt. The end result is relief expressed in laughter. Chaplin, so often victimized by authority figures in his childhood, has an uncanny knack in his films for making victimization a pretext for marvelously liberating and funny expressions of unbridled aggression.

I've always been bemused when film critics talk about Chaplin's deep sympathy and identification with the underprivileged and about the tramp as the sad little clown, totally at odds with the world around him -- "a universal symbol for our common humanity." (David A. Cook, *A History of Narrative Film*, 1996, p. 200) Gerald Mast in *The Comic Mind* (1979) discusses the tramp character as "a plucky, human, sensitive, warm, alternately generous and tough, down-and-out in society's eyes ... and in sharp contrast to the mean, ornery, often dishonest, usually ungrateful, smug and insensitive bullies who persecuted him" and "representative of antagonistic social and moral forces." (p. 72) These sentimentalizing descriptions leave me unsatisfied because in trying to inject a humanist or social dimension into Chaplin's art they distort the reality of the tramp -- much more a walking *id*, at least as he appears in the early Keystone, Essanay, and Mutual shorts, the films which made him an international superstar. (Charles J. Maland in *Chaplin and American Culture*, 1989, argues that Chaplin deliberately softened and humanized his persona because reviewers often criticized his Keystone and Essanay films for their excessive brutality and vulgarity. (p. 21ff)

Even in *The Adventurer* Chaplin is not the warm and fuzzy character that the above critics describe. Nearly everyone in *The Adventurer* is a fair target for the convict's aggressive, anti-social instincts. In one scene, for example, when he escapes one of his jailers by scurrying up a hill, he doesn't immediately flee. Instead he takes advantage of his elevated position to rain down rocks at the frustrated cop below. He gives each rock a little kiss before happily plunking it down upon the head of his target. Since he is nearly recaptured because

of this distraction, it appears that his pleasure in zapping his enemies supersedes his instinct for self-preservation. Chaplin no doubt had a lot of scores to settle with authority figures from his life in the workhouse and the orphanage, which he does vicariously through the gleeful sadism of his convict persona. We can participate in the convict's aggression without guilt because even as he acts aggressively, he is simultaneously the outnumbered underdog, the one in danger, and the little fellow, all of which permit him to strike back at the world with impunity.

Another motif in *The Adventurer*, strongly related to Chaplin's childhood experience, is the rescue fantasy. Throughout his career, Chaplin's characters find safe harbor by saving lives or otherwise rescuing people who can then rescue him. The almost obsessive recurrence of this theme in Chaplin's films, I suggest, derives from his childhood wish to rescue his mother from her poverty and depression so that she can be emotionally available to him. The link between the rescue motif and Chaplin's life is especially evident at the end of *The Great Dictator* (1940), when Chaplin's Jewish barber makes a speech which he hopes will rescue the world from fascism and his girlfriend from Nazi oppression. The girlfriend's name is Hannah, Chaplin's mother's name.

Chaplin's greatest moment of comic savagery in *The Adventurer* comes in the context of a rescue. Charlie's convict saves the lives of three people who are drowning: a lovely young girl (Edna Purviance); her mother; and the girl's suitor, the villainous, over-sized bully (Eric Campbell). About to rescue the mother, he notices her lovely young daughter also struggling in the water. He pushes the old woman under water and swims off to rescue the girl, an action that usually gets the loudest laugh of the entire film. Here Chaplin vents some of the rage he must have felt at having to save his mother when he himself was so needy. Interestingly, the girl he rescues is drowning because she attempted but failed to rescue *her* mother.

Individuals like Chaplin who had insufficient mothering and care often compensate for their lost childhood by clinging fiercely to childhood capacities lost to most adults. The brilliance of Chaplin's sight gags derive from Chaplin's never having relinquished his childlike capacity to perceive the objects of the world in an imaginatively transformative way, allowing viewers to regress with him to a more playful and creative time.

*The Adventurer* contains numerous examples. The convict uses his rival's beard as a towrope and later as a napkin. When the butler approaches him with a tray containing a glass, a bottle of liquor, and a seltzer bottle, the convict ingeniously creates a new use for each object on the tray. He squirts seltzer water directly into the wine bottle, uses his wine glass as an ashtray, and drinks (like a baby) directly from the bottle, all the while maintaining an aura of suave dignity. In the extended chase sequence at the film's end he suddenly stops running and dons a lampshade. He evades capture because his pursuers either don't notice him or think he is a lamp. In this absurd variation on a children's game, hide-and-seek, Chaplin once more reveals the childhood roots of his comic triumphs, successfully transforming an early crisis-filled life into pure comic gold.

**Marilyn Fabe, PhD**, is Lecturer in Film Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. She teaches Film History, Film Theory, Representations of Gender in Film, and auteur courses on Charlie Chaplin, Woody Allen, and Alfred Hitchcock. In addition she is faculty organizer for the University of California, Berkeley Townsend Center working group on Psychobiography in which faculty, graduate students, and clinicians meet monthly to discuss their work-in-progress. She may be contacted at <marfabe@uclink4.Berkeley.edu>. □

## Dean Keith Simonton: Scholar of Genius, Creativity, and Leadership

Anna V. Song  
University of California, Davis

Dean Keith Simonton was born in 1948 in Los Angeles, California. He received his BA at Occidental College in 1970 and his PhD in social psychology from Harvard in 1975. Simonton is currently Professor of Psychology at UC Davis, where he has taught since 1976. He is the author of more than 240 publications, including the books *Genius, Creativity, and Leadership: Historiometric Inquiries* (1984), *Why Presidents Succeed: A Political Psychology of Leadership* (1987), *Scientific Genius: A Psychology of Science* (1988), *Psychology, Science, and History: An Introduction to Historiometry* (1990), *Greatness: Who Makes History and Why* (1994); *Genius and Creativity:*

*Selected Papers* (1997), and *Origins of Genius: Darwinian Perspectives on Creativity* (1999) for which he recently was awarded the William James Book Award by the American Psychological Association. In addition to his numerous research awards, Professor Simonton has also been recognized for his achievements in education, receiving the University of California, Davis, Teaching and Scholarly Achievement Award. Simonton's next book, *Great Psychologists and Their Times: Scientific Insights Into Psychology's History* will be published in 2002 by the American Psychological Association. He may be contacted at <dksimonton@ucdavis.edu>. Anna Song interviewed this distinguished scholar at UC Davis in September.

**Anna V. Song (AVS):** What brought you to a life in academia?

**Dean Keith Simonton (DKS):** Well, I decided, coming from a working class background, that I didn't like the kinds of jobs that everybody had. It looked like they were very boring and uninteresting. I had to have a lot of minimum wage jobs myself: working in a car wash, working in restaurants as a bus boy, as a dishwasher. I didn't want to do that for the rest of my life. My dad hated his jobs. He started as a mechanic, and then was a truck driver -- umpteen different things. He never graduated from high school so he didn't have the kind of career options most people had. He always told me, if you can, try to get a job that you can spend the rest of your life doing.

**AVS:** Did he motivate you in academics?

**DKS:** He really didn't push me. He had mixed feelings about me -- I think he felt awkward as a high school drop out who can't really spell well to have a son who ended up getting a PhD at Harvard. The more successful I was, the more strained our relationship became. But then my mother realized that she wanted to do better so she went back to school and got her RN certification. When she married my stepfather who had a college degree from Occidental College, a liberal arts college in LA, and had gone to the same high school I did, he brought academia up close because I hadn't known anyone who went to college, none of the parents of my friends went to college, none of my close friends were even thinking about college. That made it a more realistic goal and helped me overcome sort of the flack I got from people when I said I wanted to go to college. Starting from junior high, I wanted to become a high school science teacher and did really well in school, particularly in

my science classes. More generally, I loved reading, I read voraciously. I took my hard earned money as a car washer and bought *The Great Books of the Western World* and started this program of reading the classics. Then I would always do mathematics, problem sets.

At Occidental College there was a required two-year history of civilization program where you were exposed to all of human knowledge, across all time, across all human civilizations -- not just Western civilization but also Chinese, Japanese, African -- literature, philosophy, science, music. The entire faculty taught it, so a person in the physics department would come in and talk about the scientific revolution and then someone from archeology would come in and talk about a civilization. The program was based upon reading primary sources not just some generic history of civilization textbook that does these superficial scans of everything. For example, when we covered a section on Japanese civilization, we read the *Tale of Genji* that is considered to be the first great novel in the world and the greatest single piece of literature in Japanese history.

**AVS:** What is your primary field and sub-field affiliation?

**DKS:** My primary or generic field is personality social developmental cognitive historical quantitative psychology [laughter]. My work in personality, developmental, whatever, has always focused on genius, creativity, or leadership.

**AVS:** There's really no subfield in psychology that can accurately describe what you do.

**DKS:** Well, look at how many divisions I belong to in the American Psychological Association (APA). I'm a fellow of seven divisions and belong to three more. I'm spread out all over the map. When you're dealing with a complex phenomenon like genius, creativity, or leadership, you cannot scientifically study them from only one perspective -- you'll miss something important. They develop over time. There's obviously individual variation, influence, personality characteristics, certain social factors that influence them, cognitive and decision-making processes, integrative complexity -- all these things are relevant and if you miss one thing, you're missing a big piece of the picture.

**AVS:** How did you come to the field of genius, creativity, and greatness?

**DKS:** That goes back to when I was in kindergarten. My teacher was selling the *World Book*

*Encyclopedia*. She convinced my parents, even though we didn't have very much money, that we should own a set. The interesting thing about *World Book* for a kid is that it has lots of pictures of people, sometimes looking very strange and sometimes looking contemporary. I started wondering, how did these people end up in this book, because I noticed that my picture wasn't in there, my mom and dad's pictures weren't in there. So, I wondered, "What do you do to get your picture in there?" This question kept coming back. When I took History of Civilization over six terms at Oxy, we had these small discussion groups and I was always trying to take things from the idiographic to the nomothetic. I still have this journal where I would write and wonder, "How do you measure influence?" I was interested in figuring out how to scientifically answer the question, "How do you get into that book? Why does this person get this much space and that person only gets that much space?"

**AVS:** What are you currently researching?

**DKS:** Over the course of my career, I've always studied genius, creativity, and leadership in some form, though the specific types have often changed. I've obviously taken more of an interest in psychology as a form of achievement but this comes as a continuation of my work on scientific genius. I've moved away from Presidents -- doing work on Presidents is frustrating because I exhaust the data set and get new cases so infrequently. Clinton wasted eight years of my career -- he could have just resigned and I could have had another President earlier [laughter]. So now, I'm working on two leadership studies -- one is on leadership style -- charismatic, transformational leadership -- and another is a study on military leadership.

**AVS:** You're very identified with "historiometry." What is historiometry?

**DKS:** It's quantitative psychological history. In essence, historiometry applies the methods and theories of modern psychological science to historical data, including biographies and creative products. It's all very complicated but I have described the approach in great detail in my book *Psychology, Science, and History: An Introduction to Historiometry*, which was published by Yale University Press in 1990.

**AVS:** What is your definition of *psychobiography*?

**DKS:** It's the study of a single individual life or an event of a person's life from a psycho-

logical perspective. It had been, until recently, co-opted as psychoanalytic. I argue, as in my King George III study ("Mad King George: The Impact of Personal and Political Stress on Mental and Physical Health," *Journal of Personality*, 66, 1998, pp. 443-466) that it doesn't have to be. Mac Runyan has said that this is an archetypical example of what psychobiographers deal with.

**AVS:** He has also written that psychobiography can encompass the breadth of personality psychology, including contemporary theories.

**DKS:** And, in my case, more contemporary methodology. I do whatever gets me inside the person. There are some topics you can't deal with in a quantitative fashion. Another issue that Mac wrote on was theories why Van Gogh cut off part of his ear. I can't even imagine studying that historiometrically, getting a random sample of artists, looking at correlations between various things and which ones cut off their ear.

So the applicability of historiometry depends on whether the question has an inherently nomothetic context to it. Take King George III. When someone says, "Well, it could be that these episodes are associated with major points of stress in his life, but it's clear that's not the case," what do you mean, "it's clear that's not the case?" You're obviously acknowledging a general nomothetic principle that people are more likely to have mental breakdowns when they are under extreme stress. Now, how do we know that's not the case that there's a relationship here? That's a nomothetic question. Now, if you start saying it has to do with a very unique relationship between him and his mother that resurfaced again, then that's something that's inherently idiographic.

**AVS:** If you were Freud back in 1910 writing the first psychobiography, *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood*, what would you do differently?

**DKS:** I would do what he said we should do: not draw big inferences from small pieces of information, like "vulture," which was a faulty translation anyway. What is the connection, for example, between Leonardo's being gay and his art? Is his incessant curiosity and his gayness truly the result of his relationship with his mother? If someone does have an unusual sexual orientation or a handicap that stigmatizes them or sets them apart from the rest of society, that may actually make them more marginal, even revolutionary. They're less likely to conform to their times,

they're more likely see things in different way, they're less likely to accept authority for authority's sake.

**AVS:** Which are factors that help foster creativity.

**DKS:** One of the reasons why he had that insatiable curiosity -- this is the thing that's very impressive about Leonardo -- is that he categorically -- in several places in his notebooks -- totally rejects the notion that he needs to learn Latin and read all these tomes written by ancient Greeks and ancient Romans and medieval scholars. All he has to do, he says, is "just go straight to nature." He could see how the body was actually designed, he could see how clouds were actually formed, he could study mechanics directly by fooling around in the workshop. He went to the primary source instead of the secondary source. Having an unusual background, being an illegitimate child -- that's obviously where his mother could come into the story because that was a difficult situation -- having what I call "diversifying experiences" would put him on a different developmental track, that plus his sexual orientation. So he became iconoclastic, feeling that he didn't need to learn things the way that everybody says he needs to learn them. That allowed him, all of a sudden, to span to anything he could see.

**AVS:** Perhaps a little too wide, though, because he could never finish projects.

**DKS:** Right -- he would do a massive piece on anatomy, a massive piece on mechanics, a treatise on war machines. I mean he had everything covered that could be covered in spatial-visual intelligence.

**AVS:** Is there contemporary psychobiography that mirrors modern, non-psychoanalytic paradigms in the field of psychology?

**DKS:** There are many examples. One that comes to mind is the research that cognitive psychologists have conducted on problem solving. They have come up with theories of the creative process that have then provided the basis for interpreting the laboratory notebooks of great scientists, such as Faraday and Darwin.

**AVS:** Could you describe your theoretical basis in doing research on genius, creativity, and leadership?

**DKS:** Well, my original theoretical basis was pretty eclectic. But as time went on, I became more Darwinian, at least in genius and creativity

research. I'm trying to merge it with evolutionary psychology and a lot of it will tie into behavioral genetics. Leadership is much harder -- there are more situational factors. I could write any book on any philosophical position I want or any poem I want and I'm creative. But leadership... I can't go around saying "I command the foreign policy of the United States to go in this direction." I've made some attempts to tie some of the research I've done on Presidents with evolutionary psychology, particularly since some of the characteristics of charismatic leaders and particularly great Presidents tie right in with being the Alpha male, with social dominance. They have primary importance in defending the troop against invasions by other troops or predators. There are the issues about being wartime commander-in-chief, the number of years at war, and charisma's being associated with rumors or speculation about sexual behavior and infidelity, which is amply documented like with FDR and Clinton. In the 20th century, one of the most charismatic Presidents was Ronald Reagan. His whole image was that of an Alpha male -- as an actor he played Alpha parts, he dated starlets, as President his foreign policy was Alpha male. It's hard to make the ties, though, without -- and that's a problem with evolutionary psychology in general -- sounding trivial. It's like, Where do you go next?

**AVS:** In "History, Chemistry, Psychology, & Genius: An Intellectual Autobiography of Historiometry" in M. Runco and R. Albert, eds., *Theories of Creativity*, 1990, pp. 92-115), you wrote that one of your professors at Oxy commented, "If you think of the historical process as rigidly as universal laws are conceived of, then you will probably have great difficulty understanding history." How would you respond to that professor today?

**DKS:** He's one hundred percent correct. I'm not interested in understanding history as usually conceived -- the story of the past replete with names, dates, and places. I'm interested in what's behind history. What are the underlying psychological processes and principles that help explain what historians observe? It's the same thing psychohistorians and psychobiographers are doing, I'm just doing it a different way, using contemporary psychological methods and theory. It's the fundamental notion that if you want to understand history, and history primarily consists of people doing things -- such as Alexander the Great being victorious on the battlefield of Issus or why Hitler came to power -- then you're talking about psychology.

**AVS:** That speaks to the person-situation debate in psychology. How much of a behavior can be attributed to the person and how much is a result of the forces of society?

**DKS:** If Hitler had been killed on the battlefield in World War I instead of being decorated as a hero, we probably would still have had something like Nazism arise because the Versailles Treaty made it inevitable that Germany would say, "I'm fed up and I'm not going to take it anymore." But so many of the *specifics* of how it happened including the Holocaust are engrained in Hitler's character that I think what happened in Germany is only understandable from understanding Hitler's psyche.

**AVS:** How do you explain the growth and psychology of fundamentalism?

**DKS:** I think that's pretty easy, which means I'm probably wrong. There's always going to be a subset of people in any population who are towards the authoritarianism end. It's heightened under threatening conditions. Our society has changed very quickly -- it's become very heterogeneous -- and many Christian fundamentalists have been left behind. The civil rights movement started giving rights to people who were below them socio-economically. New immigrants don't represent the original core puritanical founding fathers. It's not just Muslims or Buddhists, but even Roman Catholics, with the increased presence of the Hispanic population. The early settlers came to escape Catholicism or Anglicanism. It's funny, they came here for religious freedom, but they actually didn't -- they came here for *their* religious freedom. They're actually quite intolerant.

Islamic fundamentalism is different because it's a national syndrome of a whole culture. Christian fundamentalism is a sub-cultural syndrome. Islamic fundamentalism made a mistake that Christians didn't make until much later -- they made the revelation of Muhammad, the *Koran*, have such a supreme place in society. Then around the late Middle Ages, Islam went from being one of the most creative civilizations on the planet to the one of the most uncreative because everything ultimately had to be rooted in the *Koran*.

**AVS:** You've written, "The most influential psychologists tend to take extreme positions on the controversies that have characterized the history of psychology." Who have been the three to five most influential psychologists?

**DKS:** Sigmund Freud, obviously. Jean Pia-

get, obviously. For the third, I would say Francis Galton. But for me, Francis Galton is number one. His 1869 *Hereditary Genius*, for all its faults, remains one of the classics in historiometric inquiry. Galton's pioneering efforts informs every thing I do, right down to my most recent book on *Great Psychologists and Their Times*.

**AVS:** Do you think your research on eminent people, especially eminent psychologists, has influenced the trajectory of your own career?

**DKS:** It's made me realize there were certain things that I should have done if I wanted to have my career go in a better direction. For example, write more grants. I probably would have gotten more graduate students because I would have been able to give them financial support. It hasn't affected my research, but it has affected my having intellectual posterity.

**AVS:** You've expressed concern about the solitary aspect of historiometric research. In "History, Chemistry," you write, "Maybe I would not launch a revolution, as I every so often fantasized, yet I anticipated that I would have acquired more comrades in arms."

**DKS:** I believe historiometry requires a unique combination of interests and abilities that few psychologists possess. How many people combine an interest in history and biography with a love of psychological theory and quantitative techniques? Many who like the history part tend to dislike the numbers and abstractions of science, whereas those who like the scientific part tend to dislike the messy names, dates, and places of history. Perhaps it's a reflection of the natural antagonism between natural and human sciences. Besides all that, it takes a great deal of hard work to condense the complexities of the historical record to a matrix of numbers suitable for statistical analysis. My study of 10,160 Chinese creators and leaders required a decade of intensive labor, at least one hour per day, filling up dozens of boxes of index cards, before I ended up with a database that can easily fit on a single diskette.

**AVS:** But you stir interest in graduate school applicants -- many people want to work with you.

**DKS:** It's increasing but some people want to work with me because I've established a reputation in the field but they don't want to do what I'm doing.

**AVS:** A hundred years from now, what aspect of your career would you want to be most

known for?

**DKS:** I devoted my whole career to try to understand genius, creativity, and leadership by studying them directly and as scientifically as possible, putting little constraints on the type of genius or where or the civilization or period in which that genius was located. I tried to approach the phenomenon from as many angles as I possibly could -- laboratory experiments, mathematical models, computer simulations -- but they all converge on a general understanding of genius -- exceptional achievement -- greatness.

*Anna Song is a personality-social psychology doctoral student at the University of California, Davis. Her general research interests include political personalities, leadership, and Presidential decision-making. She is currently working on research on U.S. Presidents and personality factors that influence their decision-making process during times of crises. Anna may be reached at <avsong@ucdavis.edu>. □*

## What the Art of Alberto Giacometti Taught Me About Psychobiography

Suzanne C. Ouellette  
The Graduate Center, CUNY

Why this compulsion to record what one sees? When one loses oneself in the task of recording as exactly as possible what one sees, it's a matter of the same need whether one is a scientist or an artist.... Both science and art mean: wanting to understand.

- Alberto Giacometti in A. Parinaud, "Entretien avec Giacometti: 'Pourquoi je suis sculpteur'," *Arts-Lettres-Spectacles*, No. 873, June 13, 1962, pp. 1, 5

As a psychologist, I work in many spaces. The artist's studio has become for me a site for special inspiration about the study of lives, a home to unconditional encouragement for the viability and value of case studies and psychobiographies. When painting a portrait or a human figure with a live model, all of the following happen in remarkably enlivening ways: I work hard and long at seeing another and the whole setting of which she or he is part. I struggle to decide: What is most *distinctive* about the people I am to paint and what

*general human quality* do they represent? I search the feelings and ideas the model provokes. Self-examination sharpens my perceptions and checks that what I record is about the other person and not myself. I enjoy a powerful experience of connection with the many artists who have stood at similar easels in far distant times and places. Finally, I put down on the canvas a story about a human life, a story that might move viewers to greater appreciation of the joy and power of understanding another person.

These studio experiences have a positive influence in those other places where I work: the research sites, my university office, the library, and the classroom. The connections with social science practice (looking really hard, moving from the individual case to the general human condition and back again, checking on subjective bias, and feeling community with fellow workers and audiences) make art a powerful source of new teaching techniques. These strategies are especially important with students doing narrative and other forms of qualitative research in the study of lives. (See Suzanne C. Ouellette, "Painting Lessons" in R. Josselson, A. Lieblich, and D. McAdams, eds., *Teaching and Learning Narrative Research*, forthcoming 2001.) Doing art inspires new research. With another researcher-artist, I am writing the lives of 19th-century practitioners of garden art, using analysis strategies made possible through the creativity opened up by the studio. (See H. Schenker & S.C. Ouellette, "The Garden as Women's Place: Celia Thaxter and Mariana van Rensselaer" in B. Szczygiel, J. Carubia, & L. Dowler, eds., *Gendered Landscapes: An Interdisciplinary Exploration of Past Place and Space*, 2000.)

From this vantage point of psychologist-artist, it is painful to hear the phrase "it's only art" as the sharp criticism of psychobiography that many intend it to be. N.B. Barenbaum and D.G. Winter record the ambivalence many key players in psychology have felt towards the study of lives, showing that too many psychologists, for too many years, have stayed away from life histories for fear that their work would be perceived as too little like science and too much like art. ("Case Studies and Life Histories in Personality Psychology" in I.B. Weiner, ser. ed., and D.K. Freedheim, vol. ed., *Comprehensive Handbook of Psychology: Vol. 1. History of Psychology*, 2001) But what is wrong with art? Would it be so terrible for the psychobiographer to work like the portraitist? Supporting the critique of psychobiography is the notion that

art is not sufficiently disciplined, objective, and rigorous to meet the goals of science.

To free psychology from this misguided view of art, the present paper tells how an artist rescued a young graduate student in psychology from despair about the viability and usefulness of her discipline. It was the mid-1970s and I was a graduate student with doubts about whether I had made the right career choice: Was personality psychology, the discipline devoted to understanding peoples' acts, thoughts, and feelings, even possible? Could I know another person? Could I convincingly convey that knowledge?

The art of Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966) showed me that another's life could be depicted and that such depictions could have powerful effects on others. Giacometti, an internationally recognized Swiss sculptor, painter, and draftsman, is best known for his hauntingly elongated sculptures of the human form. His figures, sometimes in small groups and sometimes alone, are depicted as if seen in an instant and from a distance, with no sharp boundaries between them and the space they inhabit. His female figures typically stand still with a solemnity of Egyptian statues; while male figures, possible stand-ins for the artist, walk cautiously. Giacometti also made portraits with an amazing multiplicity of intersecting lines that seemed to have been drawn and redrawn, put down and erased and put down again. (See images of Giacometti's work at <[www.moma.org/exhibitions/Giacometti](http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/Giacometti)> and <[www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/giacometti\\_alberto.html](http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/giacometti_alberto.html)>.)

I met his work through museum presentations and reproductions. We were also introduced by what others wrote about his work. The existential philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre provided an essay in a museum catalogue. (See "La recherche de l'absolu" in *Les Temps Modernes*, vol. 3, 1948, pp. 1153-1163.) The writer James Lord wrote a small book about his experience of being drawn and painted by Giacometti. (See *A Giacometti Portrait*, 1965.)

There was plenty about Giacometti's life to catch the attention of a young personality psychologist, including lifelong attachments to a very strong mother, a teenage illness that left him sterile, critical life events such as deaths in which he was unusually involved, ambivalent sexual relationships with women, meager living conditions when his work was well rewarded financially, and hallucinatory experiences. His involvement with the Surrealists (1929-1934) speaks of his deliberate

linking of his inner life and his art. Inspired by Freudian ideas, their art was a product of the unconscious, dreams, memories, and the imagination. Like them, he turned away from life models and toward inward examination. Although he was never fully committed to the Surrealist creed and eventually broke with its practitioners, Giacometti throughout his life remained committed to intensive self-examination. He sought to "render his vision" in ways that would reflect how *retinally perceived effects* intersect with inner psychological states.

These facts about Giacometti's life, however, were irrelevant in my student fascination with him, which was centered on the physical reality of his work. All I wanted was to look at it, be moved by it, and be taken to another place. In that place, the most important thing to do was ask: What was happening between the art and me? What was the artist trying to communicate about the model, himself, and me? How did he achieve all that in plaster, bronze, wood, pencil, and oil? Could I do it in psychology through good research designs and words on a page?

Most compelling was the work Giacometti had done after World War II, and throughout the rest of his career. The Giacometti who rescued me was the post-Surrealist artist who had returned to working from life, with live models, and who sought to capture the essential presence of another human being. His sculptures, drawings, and paintings drew me to the people he sought to depict, who seemed to call for recognition and understanding. As I focused on the work to grasp its meaning, however, the one portrayed appeared to retreat, to escape understanding. Giacometti captured the inevitable continuity and discontinuity between one's own and another's existence. His portraits awakened a desire to experience another person, but also awareness of all that must be overcome before an encounter is possible and of the distance that will inevitably remain.

Along with the dualism of beckoning and inaccessibility, Giacometti's work presented the tension between the stationary and the moving. Along with the work's remarkably ethereal and transcendent quality, his portraits had a compelling materiality and specificity. Giacometti returned people to their very concrete worlds. For him, persons have physical bodies and material environments, and reside in particular times and places. Gone is the abstraction of the 18th-century portrait in which individuals are portrayed without tangible

grounding. His figures walk across a public square; his models are sitting in what could only be a very cluttered and active artist's studio. While they are there before you, Giacometti's figures and portraits are also refusing to stand still with you. When I looked at Giacometti's work, I saw people who had been captured in the endless process of creating and transforming themselves. Giacometti's portraits caused me to wonder not only who the portrayed *is*, but also who he or she *will be*. His work communicated a fascination with the entire scene of life, where people "unceasingly form and reform living compositions of unbelievable complexity." (Giacometti in R.J. Moulin, "Giacometti: Je travaille pour mieux voir" in *Les lettres francaises*, No. 1115, January 20, 1966, p. 17)

What did the young graduate student learn about personality psychology from all of this? I was reassured of the usefulness of thinking and rethinking about what it means to be a person, encouraged to look for new methods in keeping with my conceptual commitments, and inspired that beautiful things could be produced through hard work. Giacometti's figures and portraits reassured me that my oh-so-abstract existential and phenomenological notions could be applied in active engagement in the world. Sartre's museum essay had been only one of many existential and phenomenological pieces that I had searched for its relevance to a psychological alternative to behaviorism or strictly Freudian psychoanalysis. Giacometti's work and way of working brought to life, not some rendition of a simplistic "Existentialist worldview" of alienation and nihilism (T. Bezzola, "Phenomenon and Imagination" in C. Klemm, ed., *Alberto Giacometti*, 2001), but the possibility of inquiring about concerns like the simultaneous connection and distance between people and the centrality of subjective experience. In Giacometti's work, I saw and felt what I wanted from my reading. Simone de Beauvoir writes about how women do not move with the same freedom as men in the world. In his female figures and representations of encounters between men and women, Giacometti shows the restrictions and ambivalence that women experience and provokes our reaction to their situation.

I had long been drawn to Kierkegaard's definition of personality as "a synthesis of facticity and possibility." Giacometti let me see both at work in the personality of his models. For example, in his 1946 drawing of Sartre, the viewer sees an older man of a "certain age" with very thick

glasses. Sartre's "facticity" includes lost youth and poor eyesight. The viewer also experiences the spontaneous physical act of creation, both that of the vitally present Giacometti devoted to reproducing what he saw and of Sartre who is depicted in the act of writing. Kierkegaard's "possibility" is here and one can only wonder where Sartre will go next, what change his new words will bring for him and the rest of us. Giacometti's Sartre is the existential person with a distinct given history and a nature that is ever changing and challenges any fixed definitions from others or self.

Giacometti showed me that one could go beyond static trait depictions of personality to the recording of stories and narratives of the changes and processes in others' lives. He also represented the value of asking questions about and describing the many contexts of lives -- the physical spaces, the encounters or absences of others, the time in history, and the political and cultural realities that shape life. Looked at from his vantage point, psychology is essentially the study of lives in their wholeness and fullness.

Giacometti's disciplined stance towards those he portrayed gave me at least two "tips" on how to finish a psychobiography. First, the artist and psychologist can do no more than present what we see in another and be honest that our vision is limited. The artist and psychologist are inevitably frustrated in their goal to create the final portrait. James Lord's tiny book on how Giacometti painted him presents the artist's continuous struggle to draw what he saw. Giacometti destroyed countless versions of the portrait that he thought were too easy to grasp and versions he thought too indeterminate. He was willing to begin again and again to capture his perceptions of the other who was changing before him. Just as one puts away the paint or sends the manuscript off to the publisher, the one portrayed (or another's response to that one) offers something else to say and understand. To call something finished is only to decide that the portrait is now able to communicate at least one meaningful idea about a person to another. Second, the artist and the psychologist need to evaluate how our product fares on ethical dimensions. Along with all the questions we raise for viewers and readers about the good, bad, just, and unjust, we have a special responsibility as workers in the study of lives. What we produce needs to represent our accountability to the individuality and connectedness of anyone willing to be sketched, painted, analyzed, or diagnosed, and our accountability to

our own individuality and connectedness.

*Suzanne C. Ouellette, PhD, is Professor of Social/Personality and Developmental Psychology and Chair of the Interdisciplinary Concentration in Health and Society at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York. She holds graduate degrees in theology from the Yale University Divinity School (MA) and psychology from the University of Chicago. She studies painting and drawing at the National Academy of Design in New York. She may be contacted at <souellette@gc.cuny.edu>. □*

## **Feminist Psychobiography of Eminent Women in a Psychology of Women Course**

**Christine H. Jazwinski  
St. Cloud State University**

I have taught a university course entitled Psychology of Women for over 15 years. Mostly women enroll in the course and the focus is primarily on women (as contrasted with a gender differences course). Students complete a feminist psychobiographical analysis of an eminent woman from any historical period. Psychology of women typically includes such topics as: the social construction of gender, gender roles, stereotypes and myths, biology, development, cognitive abilities, achievement and careers, personality, mental health, communication, and friendships. Students practice critical thinking by learning about several biases (for example, male-as-normative, overuse of biological explanations for women relative to men) and evaluating mass media presentations of women. The psychobiography assignment provides students with vivid detail about an individual person with an appreciation of constants and changes in women's lives throughout history. The lives of remarkable women, from various cultures and times, are often inspiring as examples of achievement under adversity.

Unfortunately, women who are important participants in the culture are still not sufficiently visible. Eminent female artists, writers, scientists, rulers, politicians, or social activists are relatively unknown. Sometimes eminent women's successful performance is attributed to others' efforts. For instance, Marie Curie Sklodowska's two Nobel prizes, one in physics (1903, joint award with Pierre Curie) and one in chemistry (1911, awarded to

Marie Curie only), are sometimes both attributed to her husband Pierre.

Being unaware of exceptional female role models can lead one to believe that few such women existed. As Gerda Lerner has eloquently put it: "Women who did not know that others like them had made intellectual contributions to knowledge and to creative thought were overwhelmed by the sense of their own inferiority or, conversely, the sense of the dangers of their daring to be different." (*The Creation of Feminist Consciousness: From the Middle Ages to Eighteen-seventy*, 1993, p. 12) Students who learn about eminent women in my course tend to express the sentiment that they *should have* learned about these women earlier.

A feminist approach to psychobiography is relatively recent, having been spurred by feminist scholarship in the disciplines of history and psychology. (See *The Creation* and Reinharz, "Feminist Biography: The Pains, the Joys, the Dilemmas" in Amia Lieblich and Ruthellen Josselson, eds., *Exploring Identity and Gender: The Narrative Study of Lives*, 1994.) Traditionally, biographical analyses have focused on men. Biographies of women have typically been of persons with fame thrust upon them, who posed no threatening questions, or whose fame stemmed from their association with men as wives, mothers, sisters, mistresses, and muses.

In contrast to traditional biographical scholarship, feminist psychobiography has the following special properties: focuses on women who are valued in and of themselves rather than because of their relationships to men; views eminent women as representative of other women, rather than as rarities; considers the study of "anomalous" women -- who challenged female stereotypes, belonged to the sphere of action, and existed outside typically "female spaces" such as the home -- to be valuable; considers women who were feminist or proto-feminist to be particularly interesting; and considers relations among women as central to women's stories. Gender-neutral theories, such as social learning theory (Bandura) or Maslow's theory of self-actualization are preferred.

Feminist psychobiography acknowledges the importance of contextualizing the lives of women. The roles and opportunities afforded women within a particular historical period and culture are taken into account. For example, the profound effects of denial of education are often underestimated in examining women's past

achievements in the mainstream culture. Women were not admitted to universities between their founding in the 11th century up until the late 19th century. (*The Creation*) Although many a persistent woman overcame the obstacles of inadequate education, one can only speculate as to what might have been had women's talents been nurtured. For example, brilliant mathematician Sophie Germain (1776-1831) taught herself mathematics and foreign languages through the solitary reading of books, against the wishes of her parents. Germain learned differential calculus, among other topics, in this manner and made significant contributions in number theory and the theory of elasticity. Unfortunately, her work on elasticity was hampered for many years by her lack of formal training in physics. Germain's death certificate lists her merely as a property holder rather than a scientist or mathematician.

Women's socio-economic status has been an extremely powerful determinant of their achievement. It is difficult for successful creative accomplishments to occur without appropriate tools (such as an education) and support (both physical and social). The women who have achieved, seemingly against many odds, usually have had *some* resources. Perhaps the most necessary (though not sufficient) requirements for creative, intellectual achievement are economic security and free time, which allow women access to creative space. For example, Germain, though discouraged from reading, did have access to a fine library and enjoyed economic security. Florence Nightingale was discouraged by her family from pursuing nursing but had been given a classical education and economic support by her upper-class parents. Emily Dickinson was not encouraged or even acknowledged by her parents as a poet but she was supported economically and was not coerced into marriage. What is common in the lives of these brilliant women is that though they were not celebrated by their families for their creative, intellectual achievements, at least they were allowed some space to develop their talents.

To aid the students in their selection of a subject, I provide a list of eminent women. (See [condor.stcloudstate.edu/~jaz/psy275/eminent.women.list.html](http://condor.stcloudstate.edu/~jaz/psy275/eminent.women.list.html).) Popular choices have included: Joan of Arc, Margaret Sanger, Mother Theresa, Harriet Tubman, Catherine the Great, Beatrix Potter, and Emily Dickinson. (It is interesting that students in other courses rarely choose women for assignments unless instructed to do so.

In my Theories of Personality course, only four out of thirty-one of the students spontaneously chose women for a psychobiography assignment.)

The content of student presentations is prescribed in an outline. (See [condor.stcloudstate.edu/~jaz/psy275/psybioguide.html](http://condor.stcloudstate.edu/~jaz/psy275/psybioguide.html).) Students are required to address the following topics: historical and socio-cultural context, women's roles (legal, economic, family, etc.), individual developmental history and mentors, adult roles and achievements, creative space, obstacles and sacrifices, and societal acknowledgement of the woman's achievements.

Maslow's theory of self-actualization is the common analytical framework. Its advantage is that it stresses the self-actualized person's relative detachment from social and cultural imperatives. Maslow's theory is well suited to the study of eminent women because Maslow himself defined optimal psychological adjustment by looking at the qualities of people such as Albert Einstein and Eleanor Roosevelt. An emphasis on positive personality characteristics and the individual's uniqueness within their social milieu helps avoid a focus on "pathology," for example, achievement as a form of compensation for one's inferiority. Eminent women's detachment from proscribed sex roles, such as motherhood, within a particular culture and historical period often can be seen as a necessary choice for gifted women who wished to fulfill their creative potential.

There are several problems in assigning a psychobiography of an eminent woman. One problem is the sheer paucity of information on eminent women. Many creative women from the past have contributed to art, science, and literature but are not well known and some may never be known. Another difficulty in feminist psychobiography is the lack of high quality scholarship on women. Research on people from past centuries requires years of work with documents. Scholars have devoted their lives to the study of such figures as Abraham Lincoln. The same, high-quality volume of work has not been done on the lives of eminent women. Further, some of the work that has been done on women is biased. One problem can be an excessive focus on women's sexuality. In a recent presentation on Georgia O'Keefe, one of my students did a good job of covering O'Keefe's life and work but, to my dismay, she saved all of the "gossip" on O'Keefe for the end of her talk.

A valuable consequence of the psychobiography assignment is the development of students'

critical stance towards institutionalized knowledge. The lack of awareness of eminent women is perceived as a flaw in the educational system. Biases in describing and interpreting women's lives can be understood as resulting from particular sex role stereotypes. By working on their own presentation and listening to the presentations of others, many students hear about some brilliant women for the first time. This knowledge creates a sense of pride and identification in many of my students.

*Christine Jazwinski, PhD, is a social psychologist and Professor of Psychology in the Psychology Department of St. Cloud State University in Minnesota. She is interested in the intersection of psychology and history, the psychology of altruism and Holocaust rescue, and the impact of computer technology on social interaction. She may be contacted at <jaz@stcloudstate.edu>. □*

## Nicknames and Psychobiography: The Case of Demosthenes

**Robert Rousselle**  
Independent Scholar

Psychobiographies of individuals from antiquity are notoriously difficult to write. In contrast to the immense volume of evidence available for people from more recent periods, such as letters, journals, autobiographies, or biographies by contemporaries, anyone wishing to write a psychobiography of a person from antiquity is confronted by a profound paucity of data. The most important evidence, source material dating to a particular subject's childhood, is also the most rare. Most of the surviving childhood material is anecdotal, written during the subject's adulthood and often reflecting partisan polemic. The anecdote's purpose is to illustrate the subject's nobility, depravity, or some other quality, which was allegedly evident during his youth and presaged his adult character.

With the possible exception of a subject's mother, few adults in antiquity paid much attention to the events of a child's life. If a child grew up to be a powerful or famous man, what little that was recalled from his formative years was often the subject of tendentious elaboration. Only when a child was considered destined for greatness from childhood, a member of royalty or the imperial family, would observers, courtiers, royal biogra-

phers, and seers pay any attention. Thus, for only a few men, such as Alexander the Great or some of the Julio-Claudian emperors, is there some accurate awareness of their childhood history and, just as importantly, the family dynamics.

For the rest, only rarely do we find childhood material useful for psychobiography. One exception is the two uncomplimentary childhood nicknames, *Batalos* and *Argas*, given to the Athenian orator Demosthenes (384-322 BCE). Born into a wealthy family, Demosthenes lost his father when he was only seven. When his father, also named Demosthenes, lay dying from his fatal illness, he made three kinsmen guardians of his estate for his son but they later embezzled the funds.

Demosthenes' childhood was not an easy one and the two nicknames show the contempt in which his childhood peers held him. Later in life his great opponent Aischines reminds his auditors of these nicknames while attacking Demosthenes in an oration in court. He claims that Demosthenes was called *Batalos* as a child because he would act obscenely as a *kinaidos*, an effeminate-dressing passive homosexual (Aischines 2. 99). Elsewhere he refers to him as the unmanly *Batalos*, and describes the soft pretty clothes he wears as fit for a female (1. 131). In his attack on Timarchos, accusing him of being a male prostitute, Aischines again refers to Demosthenes, who was defending Timarchos, as *Batalos*, suggesting to his audience that both men were passive homosexuals. Aischines also notes without explanation the nickname *Argas*, which he claims Demosthenes earned in early manhood when he prosecuted his guardians for embezzlement (2. 99).

Demosthenes himself does not deny the nickname of *Batalos*. In one speech he reminds the audience of a more heroic *Battalos* of Paeania, while elsewhere he claims it was an endearing baby name given him by his nurse (Demosthenes 18. 180; Aischines 1. 126). The latter explanation is ridiculed by Aischines (1. 126). The purpose of Athenian speeches in court were rarely to ascertain the truth, but more likely to obscure it. It was an *agon*, a contest, between two men to convince the jury that they were right, and to use any means necessary, including slander, embellishment, and outright falsehood. Neither Aischines nor Demosthenes should be credited with giving an accurate explanation of the origin or meanings of the nicknames, without other corroborating evidence.

Plutarch, writing nearly five centuries later

but having access to good source material, comments on these two nicknames. *Batalos*, according to some, meant an effeminate flute player, according to others a composer of delicate verses and drinking songs. It was also the name given to a part of the body (the anus) that Plutarch thought indecent to mention. Demosthenes' other nickname *Argas*, which according to Plutarch meant snake, referred to his manners, which were beast-like and angry (Plutarch *Demosthenes* 4. 6-8). To some extent Plutarch supports the interpretation of the nicknames given by Aischines, though it is likely he is partly dependent upon Demosthenes' old enemy.

*Batalos* and *Argas* had other associations, contemporaneous with Demosthenes, which give a clearer picture of their significance as nicknames. *Batalos* was an actual distinguished flutist, well known for his effeminacy and debauchery (scholia Aischines 1. 126. 2), whose name became synonymous with the anus (Harpokration 44. 9). This connotation became the source for later Greek words such as *Batalidzomai*, to live like a *Batalos*; *Batalidzesthai*, to wiggle the hindquarters; and *Batein*, in the sense of *to mount*. Flute players were able to make various sounds on their instruments, including those that mimicked crepitation (breaking wind, farting) (Aristophanes *Acharnenses* 860-71, *Nubes* 386-91). There was an association for the Greeks between crepitation and stammering, the latter an affliction from which Demosthenes suffered (Plutarch *Demosthenes* 11. 1, *Moralia* 844 E). There are a constellation of effeminate associations here: *Batalos* = anal penetration = crepitation = Demosthenes = stammerer, with the implication of passive homosexual activity on Demosthenes' part. At the same time flute-girls, who were usually slaves and often forced into prostitution, were notorious fellators (Aristophanes *Vespae* 1346; Eupolis Fr. 427; Alexis Fr. 49. 3; Nikophon Fr. 170). It should not surprise that in later Greek the *auliskos*, the small flute, came to have a phallic connotation (Ptolemaeus *Tetrabiblos* 187). There is nothing to suggest that either *Batalos* or Demosthenes was reputed to be a fellator but the association with passive homosexuality would include that possibility.

At first sight the origin of the nickname *Argas* seems less obvious. Plutarch writes that the name comes from the composer of worthless, malicious songs, although *Argas* is also a poetic usage for the snake (Plutarch *Demosthenes* 4. 8). *Argas* is a Doric contraction for *argeeis*, which means

*white*. It is this second meaning that fits the evidence from Demosthenes' childhood. In the lexicon of Greek vilification calling a man "white" likened him to a woman. Contrary to the dark, tanned complexion of Greek men, earned by toiling out of doors, women's skin was depicted as soft and white. Similarly, the effeminate passive homosexual was characterized by white or pale skin.

Losing his father at age seven was a very traumatic experience for Demosthenes, since that was the usual age a boy left the world of the women's quarters and mother's supervision and, under his father's guidance, began his education. Ignored, abandoned, and swindled by his male kinsmen, his appointed guardians, Demosthenes was raised by his mother Kleoboule. Emaciated and sickly from early childhood, his body was feeble and soft and his mother did not allow him to participate in the physical exertion and bodily exercise of the gymnasia and the wrestling schools. Nor would his *paidagogos*, or slave attendant, compel him to participate, even though these were part of the traditional education of the affluent Athenian boy (Plutarch *Demosthenes* 4. 3-5).

Raised solely by his mother, without male help, and forbidden by her to participate in the outdoor physical and athletic contests typical of his social class, Demosthenes was maligned by his peers as a passive homosexual. The two nicknames given him, *Argas*, arguably meaning white, and *Batalos*, a name synonymous with the anus, were the two elements by which Greek abuse characterized passive homosexuals.

Yet it was the gymnasia and wrestling schools that were the cruising spots for young men to seek out and begin courting adolescents as sexual partners. This was an institutionalized seduction, which included obtaining the permission of the boy's family, wooing him with gifts, and to some extent teaching him how to be a proper Athenian citizen. According to the Athenian "politics of reputation" this was an acceptable form of homosexual seduction that did not ruin the boy but rather enabled him to become the seducer of boys and women when he became a young man. Demosthenes was removed from that normative social practice and was perceived to be reared in the hidden world of the women's quarters after the age of seven. This, his peers intimated, would cause Demosthenes to grow up to be like a woman, with soft white skin, wearing fine, effeminate clothes, a passive homosexual long after his peers had grown up to be the active seducers of young boys and

women. As an adult, Aischines capitalizes on this when he imaginatively describes the mature Demosthenes at home, composing speeches attacking his friends, wearing a fine wool wrap and a soft frock indistinguishable from women's clothing (1. 131). According to Aischines, once a *pathic*, always a *pathic*, not to be trusted like a real Athenian man.

Friendless and mocked by his peers, Demosthenes overcame his childhood infirmities and speech impediments through self-discipline, determination, and considerable effort, which included exercising his voice while running or climbing steep hills, speaking with pebbles in his mouth, and practicing oratory in front of a mirror (Plutarch *Demosthenes* 11. 1, *Moralia* 844 E). The disparaging nicknames of his childhood would occasionally be used to discredit him as an adult and though they might have embarrassed him, there is little evidence that they hurt his ability to win a case. One of his first acts as an orator, at about age 20, was to successfully sue his guardians for the money they embezzled from his mother, sister, and himself. It was the beginning of a long, prominent career as Athens' greatest orator, where he fought rarely on the field of battle but frequently in the court of law.

*Robert Rousselle, PhD, an ancient historian and independent scholar, is a regular contributor to this publication. □*

## Formative Events in Presidential Psychobiography

Herbert Barry III  
University of Pittsburgh

Early childhood is a critically important stage because it shapes development of the principal desires and patterns of life. A dominant desire, such as for achievement, for wealth, or for protecting endangered people, can usually be traced to experiences and responses in the first few years of life. My psychobiographical research has emphasized situations or events in the early childhood of males that are unusual and that can be interpreted as having major influences on personality development.

One type of unusual childhood situation occurs when the son's father is 20 or more years older than the mother. Typically, the much older father is a benign rather than threatening parent.

The son becomes more closely attached to his young mother and grows to be self-confident and assertive. His strong identification with his mother, combined with his minimal fear of his father, may result in a compensatory reaction of exaggerated masculine assertiveness. Extraordinary ambition and dominance characterize the following four men whose fathers were much older than their mothers.

When future President Franklin D. Roosevelt was born in 1882, his father was 53 years old and his mother was 27. In the case of Adolf Hitler, his father was 52 and his mother was 27. Sigmund Freud's father was 40 and his mother was 20 at the time of his birth. For all three of these pairs of parents, it was the father's second marriage and the mother's only marriage. At the birth of George Peter Murdock, an anthropologist who was the principal developer and leader of cross-cultural research using ethnographic reports, his father was 50 and his mother 23. In this case, it was the only marriage of both parents.

Another unusual experience is the death of the father prior to the birth of the child. This tragic event has a major effect on the social environment of the family. The son who grows up without a father may be expected to develop strong identification with his widowed mother. He may also develop a strong desire to emulate the idealized descriptions of his dead father while being free from the punitive and threatening attributes of a living father. Three Presidents of the United States -- Andrew Jackson, Rutherford Hayes, and Bill Clinton -- were born posthumously. Each of these Presidents tried with substantial success to be an exemplary father figure for the people of the United States. Jackson was a fervent, aggressive populist; Hayes provided an honest administration, helping to reconcile post Civil War Northern and Southern whites; and a prominent part of Clinton's Presidential program was "putting people first."

I have identified several other famous men who were born after the death of their father. An especially powerful leader was Muhammad, founder of the Islamic religion. Legends state that his father died either just before or shortly after Muhammad's birth. Islam demands complete obedience to Allah, who constitutes an exalted father figure. Two kings of England, Henry VII and William III, who were born after their fathers died, were diligent and shrewd monarchs. Other eminent Englishmen born after their fathers died were the great scientist Isaac Newton and the great journal-

ist Jonathan Swift, author of *Gulliver's Travels*.

A more frequent occurrence is that of a boy whose middle name is the same as his mother's premarital surname. The special name connection may increase the attachment of the mother and son, perhaps diminishing the boy's subordination to his father. I applied this research to the Presidents of the United States because their political achievement is distinctive and their prominence increased the availability of substantial biographical information. The middle name of eight Presidents was the mother's premarital surname: James Knox Polk, Thomas Woodrow Wilson, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Lyndon Baines Johnson, Richard Milhous Nixon, Ronald Wilson Reagan, and George Herbert Walker Bush. A brother of each of these Presidents had the same first name as the father. Biographical information indicates that during childhood, in comparison with the brother named after the father, the future President whose middle name associated him with the mother was generally more similar to and more closely affiliated with her. The Presidential policy of these eight Presidents was assertive and militant, with most of them directing major warfare while commander in chief.

The death of a parent during early childhood is a traumatic event with the child tending to react with feelings of anxiety and depression. Several studies have shown elevated incidence of childhood bereavement among psychiatric patients. The child also may react to this dreadful loss by increased self-reliance, initiative, and ambition. Thus, in rare cases, early bereavement sometimes leads to future residence in the White House rather than in a mental hospital. For example, Presidents John Tyler and Abraham Lincoln lost their mothers at ages seven and nine. George Washington's father died when he was 11, Andrew Johnson's when he was three, and James Garfield's when he was one. Herbert Hoover suffered a double loss, losing his father at six and his mother at nine. Both symptoms of a stressful childhood and unusual achievement were exhibited by each of these six Presidents, as well by Jackson, Hayes, and Clinton, who were born after their fathers' deaths.

When an infant dies, the grief of the parents might have a severe effect on the young children in the family. An infant sister died when Washington was eight years old; John Quincy Adams, two; and James Buchanan, ten. An infant brother died when James Madison was seven; Chester A. Arthur, seven; and Dwight Eisenhower,

four. Jefferson was six and seven years old when two brothers died successively in infancy. Benjamin Harrison was five when his infant sister died and six when his infant brother died. Most of these nine Presidents were introspective or intellectual rather than gregarious.

The death of a sibling who is old enough to walk and talk may have a more severe effect on the young child. Lincoln was four years old when his brother died at the age of two. Hayes was two when his brother died at the age of nine. Both Presidents suffered from severe episodes of depression during adulthood.

George W. Bush, a first-born child, was given his father's first name. Contrary to the typical pattern for boys with these characteristics, he was a mediocre student but very socially sensitive and a popular leader. A crucial experience may have been the death of his three-year-old sister when he was seven. The unusual characteristics that led him to the White House may have originated from his response to that traumatic event. He spent much time with his mother, sharing her grief and comforting her. His strong maternal affiliation and assertive adult personality resemble the pattern found among Presidents whose middle name was the same as their mother's premarital surname. His subsequent identification with and similarity to his father may be enhanced by the fact that his father's two middle names were derived from the maternal grandfather, George Herbert Walker, rather than from the father, Prescott Bush.

I believe that psychobiographic studies will acquire stronger explanatory and predictive power if they demonstrate that a single influential experience has a similar effect on a sufficient number of people. Other types of influential experiences from more diverse samples of people, including women, as well as alternative interpretations should be selected in future research. Greater diversity of people will increase the generality of the conclusions and the validity of the explanations.

*Herbert Barry III, PhD, is Professor Emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh. He has published on Presidents of the United States since 1979 and is Co-Director of the Psychohistory Forum's Research Group on the Childhood, Personality, and Psychology of Presidents and Presidential Candidates. He may be contacted at*

## Book Review

<barryh@pitt.edu>. □

### Psychotherapy in the Era of Managed Care

David Lotto  
Private Practice and the University of  
Massachusetts

*Review of Alex Sabo and Leston Havens, eds., The Real World Guide to Psychotherapy Practice. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2000. ISBN 0674003241, 352 pages, \$39.95.*

The dust jacket of this book announces that "Managed care has radically reshaped health care in the United States, and private long-term psychotherapy is increasingly a thing of the past." It continues, "*The Real World Guide to Psychotherapy Practice* gives voice to therapists' frustrations with the administrative constraints under which they work. But it accepts the reality and offers guidance and inspiration to committed therapists everywhere."

Dr. Alex Sabo's introduction, "Psychotherapy at the Start of a New Century," is the only chapter that directly addresses the impingements of managed care. He clearly sees at least some of the destructive handiwork of managed care, saying "The long-term therapeutic relationship is a casualty of today's health care." He goes on to criticize managed care for its support of brief cognitive-behavioral treatments, saying, "These treatments will be guided by manuals. One pill or one formula for 'cognitive restructuring' can be delivered by 'any willing provider' to the 'covered life'." Dr. Sabo continues, "A medical director of one of the largest behavioral-health managed care companies recently remarked that any therapist who needs more than eight sessions to solve a mental health problem has a 'seriously flawed method' of treating patients. He teaches his case reviewers to make this assumption when they scrutinize a case." Sabo also acknowledges that managed care promotes these policies for its own financial gain.

The reader looks forward to what might be suggested as a way of dealing with these depredations. Alas, this section on the negative attributes of managed care ends with the plea, "We hope that managed care companies learn to support the value

**There are no negatives in the unconscious.**

of a therapeutic relationship, whether brief, intermittent, or long-term." But it is difficult to see how managed care can ever come to support long-term therapy when Dr. Sabo has just told us that managed care has made long-term therapy a "casualty" in pursuing its goal of cutting the costs of mental health care.

Sabo then goes on to introduce the unifying theme of the book: the importance of the therapeutic relationship in any and all types of psychotherapy. The chapter following the Introduction, which is co-authored by Dr. Sabo, is titled "The Relational Aspect of Psychopharmacology." In it, he argues for the importance of establishing and maintaining a good relationship with the patient, even when the focus of the treatment is mainly on medication management.

The rest of the book, as advertised, is about how to make the best of bad situations, including working with patients with impoverished circumstances, severe trauma history, borderline personality disorder, and psychosis; men with histories of violent behavior; and crisis situations. For the most part, these chapters provide excellent practical advice with many valuable suggestions and insights. The therapists who have written them are respectful toward their clients and recognize the value of the relationship between the therapist and the patient as a major vehicle for promoting therapeutic change. The constraints, restraints, and prohibitions of managed care are taken as givens that need to be adapted to rather than fought against.

This book typifies what I see as the unfortunate attitude that still pervades the community of mental health professionals. It illustrates the technician's mentality that characterizes so much of the profession. Therapists don't consider it to be part of their job to question or resist the negative intrusions imposed on them and their patients, whether they come from managed care or any other negative environmental influence. They see their job as simply trying to help people to adapt and cope with whatever situation they find themselves in.

Therapists may not be able to do much about reducing poverty, violence, or any of the myriad afflictions that impinge upon their patients from many different sources, but they certainly can have an effect with regard to the constraints imposed by managed care. Managed care can't function, or even exist, without the active participation and cooperation of the therapists who are treating the patients. Without the clinicians, managed care companies have no services to deliver and no prod-

uct to market.

*David Lotto, PhD, is a psychologist/psychoanalyst in private practice in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, a Psychohistory Forum Research Associate, and an adjunct professor at the University of Massachusetts. He is a frequent contributor to psychohistorical and psychoanalytic publications who may be reached at <dlotto@vgernet.net>. □*

## September 11, 2001: A Psychogeography of Terror and Grief

*(Continued from first page)*

trivialize or sentimentalize? Should it not be difficult -- rather than easy, facile -- to say something that can encompass the scale of the assault and of the catastrophe? Even trauma-language can be a flight from what occurred and continues to occur. Our words bear the responsibility of the emotional work they might haltingly do -- for ourselves and for others. This is the only ground that overcomes my own hesitation to speak.

On the morning of September 11, hardly had two hijacked jets been flown into the World Trade Center Twin Towers and one hijacked jet into the Pentagon, than a torrent of words rushed in to fill the void, to contain the terror, and to offer meaning to what had just happened. Language immediately dominated and attempted to wrest some control out of the incinerating inferno. In the United States, and among its allies, old and new, the weeks that followed elaborated the stories and, from them, prepared for action: "Pearl Harbor all over again," "Freedom has been violated," "Ground Zero" (the site of the attacks, initially desecrated, now a sacred place), "It happened here," "A different world after September 11," "America is brought to its knees -- in prayer," "American crusade," and "Democracy and freedom versus fanaticism and terrorism."

If people make meaning *of* disasters, they also bring meaning *to* disasters -- a point I have made in numerous contexts for a quarter-century. We not only create meaning *afterwards*, but, at least to some extent, we "know" the meaning *beforehand*. It is as if we are unconsciously poised to give form to events before they occur. Events follow story lines and become woven into them. If the attack is itself a thrust by terrorists *into* the United

States, so too are the American accounts impositions upon the event. Many antecedents were held to explain the calamity, ranging from the Battle of Tours in 732 and the Battle of Vienna in 1683 (both, decisive battles at the boundary of Islam and Christianity) to American abandonment of Afghanistan in 1989 and American policy toward Israel. Narratives of American audacity and exploitation vie with narratives of Third World envy and resentment. Secular modernism was pitted against religious fundamentalism.

It is as if there are latent, inchoate narratives that precede events, poised to claim and to fill them with projective meaning. Behind these narratives lie group fantasies of unconscious motive, desire, and defense. Psychoanalytic anthropologist George Devereux wrote that much of cultural folklore is held in emotional "cold storage" until needed. When the attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., happened, we -- whomever constituted the "we" worldwide -- already "knew" much of what they signified. In the United States, from a summer filled with news stories of shark attacks upon innocent swimmers, to the popularity of computer flight simulator games featuring attacks upon skyscrapers and movies about terrorist attacks upon America, imminent danger and suggestibility were in the air. The popular movie *Pearl Harbor* was still in active memory. But, then, sharks were just sharks, and computer games and movies were only entertainment. What at one level was already known, at another level constituted a devastating surprise attack upon unsuspecting innocence. Surely the course of response and recovery from trauma becomes complicated when there is unconscious collusion with its occurrence.

Put differently, trauma is often partly the result of the tempting of reality. Culture always anticipates and rehearses for later reality, even for reality for which its members feel unprepared. When the heroic firefighters planted the American flag in the rubble of the World Trade Center, one immediately "knew" -- recognized via projection -- that a re-enactment of the Asian Theatre in World War II was taking place. These firefighters were immediately likened to the marines who raised the American flag on Mt. Suribachi, Iwo Jima, on February 23, 1945. Past was (conflated with) present. Idealization of "the Greatest Generation" was followed by merger with it -- and with the sacrifice it required.

Further, the decade after the end of the Cold War had been filled with a search for a sus-

tainable, good-enough enemy: Japan, Iraq, and China. The "War Against Terrorism," with its promise to be long-waged, was as much a *solution* to the problem of chronic, diffuse anxiety as it was a *problem* to those who also -- and consciously -- sought solid, safe borders. A decade of unfulfilled search gives way to the realization of an external enemy -- one who has for the first time in American history since the War of 1812 managed to penetrate American boundaries. At last, Americans could hope again to discriminate between "us" and "them," the good and the evil. So could those who visited the terror upon the United States. Americans and their elusive enemy were both, I feared, equally regressing to their respective Dreamtimes. "The infidel" would be made to leave "the land of Muhammad," and "democracy" would be freed of the scourge of "terrorists." Each became "the Evil One" to the other. Both, in fact, became "infidels" to the other. The evil at home in America went largely unnoticed. What we have done to our own -- in waves of ruthless downsizings, restructurings, re-engineerings, and workplace shootings -- was eclipsed by what the new enemy did to us.

We prepare but there is no way of completely preparing -- of being prepared -- for "trauma." That is the essence of "massive psychosocial trauma" (trauma expert Henry Krystal's felicitous term). No shore, no sea wall, can hold back the onslaught of the waves. As if the waves are not battering enough, they awaken the memory of earlier waves. Everything is present at once. Yet, unconsciously, is the unimaginable trauma anticipated, expected -- even wished for? What, in short, is the role of "letting our guard down" in the causation and experience of trauma? In saying this, I hope that I will be understood as not blaming the victims, but attempting to further unearth the *process* of victimization.

Homogenizing narratives of the September 11 calamity are supposed to be experienced as the whole story. They contain and enforce the cultural fiction about what and who are significant and what and who are not. For instance, the heroes of September 11 are the firefighters, the police, and the emergency medical personnel. The stories of some are newsworthy (group fantasy-worthy) and the stories of others are mostly omitted -- for instance, the merchants of New York's Chinatown who were virtually blocked into isolation during the rescue and the ironworkers in the long aftermath of the disaster, many of whom not only

painstakingly dismantle the rubble now, but who were the builders of the Twin Towers 30 years earlier.

The monumental architecture of midtown and downtown Manhattan could scarcely be fathomed by the miniaturization that television silently inflicts. On the morning of September 11, as I stood watching the television screen in my department's atrium, I experienced "narratives" different from those being articulated by the popular media and the government. As I watched the countless replays of the second jet approaching and penetrating, then exploding, the south tower, the attacks upon the Twin Towers felt to me like an immense rape scene: the two jets as vicious phallic thrusts piercing vulnerable tissue. Yet, the Twin Towers were themselves proud, audacious, generative American phallic thrusts into the technological New York City and American skylines. Symbolically, it felt as if the attacks were intended to turn symbolic American "maleness" into "femaleness," and in turn to transform the feminized adversaries of America into triumphant males. The collapse of both towers into a mass grave shows how far the symbolism of (national) castration or emasculation can go.

If the attacks upon the Twin Towers and the Pentagon were attempts to symbolically castrate the "bad" American father in order to idealize the "good" Islamic father and deity, the attacks could also be construed as the terrorists' own self-castration of their own disavowed youthful oedipal strivings against their own fathers. Those who attacked the U.S. thus transformed themselves into obedient, "good" sons of their purified father and of Allah. In this image, America condensed into the bad father and the disobedient son. This is to say that America unconsciously became the repudiated "bad self" and "bad object" of the terrorists themselves.

The attack, and its symbolism, tells us much about the terrorists and about those in whose behalf they acted. The attacks in New York and Washington suggest an attempt at *communication* via action, and the attempt to transfer an *unbearable emotional state*, the need to be rid of it by transferring it to America. Americans' reactions -- induced emotions -- can tell us further about the perpetrators' rage, humiliation, shame, and grief. In the paragraphs that follow, I propose that the events of September 11 can be subjected to further symbolic analysis.

Further, much has been written about

"Why they [al-Qaeda, the Taliban of Afghanistan, and many Muslims in the Near and Far East] hate us." We can learn about the depths of this hate by specifically examining the castration symbolism discussed above *and* Americans' emotional responses. However, instead of trying to understand the emotional states, Americans are more likely to act on them -- to be rid of them, to deposit them back into the enemy, and to further engage the enemy. In the name of self-defense, escalation of conflict and further entanglement in it further reduces the possibility of comprehension.

An additional factor complicates the role of projective identification in the attacks upon the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and the subsequent quieter anthrax assaults via the U.S. mail. In a "successful" and preferred war effort, a group projects its bad parts and dreads into the enemy, and into its own warriors "over there" in a foreign land. "Over There" was, of course, the title of the famous American song of World War I. Europe was the battlefield onto which "the Yanks are coming." With the September 11 attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., "there" becomes conflated with "here" and free-floating anxiety cannot be rid of because home is the battlefield -- or at least *a* battlefield -- for the war on terrorism. America becomes both the site of evil for the enemy and the place where Americans struggle for a renewed sense of goodness. It seems as if part of the reaction to the shattering of the illusion of invincibility was an intense shame ("It couldn't happen to us"), as if the successful penetration of the U.S. boundary was experienced as a humiliation. Part of the response, military and otherwise, was a defense against the sense of shame. The sense of innocence can in part be traced to this defense.

It is little wonder that abundant flag-borne patriotism, decontamination efforts, and border vigilance are under way in the United States, since America (the idealized land of the good, abundant mother) cannot altogether keep good "here" and place bad "there." Moreover, New York City itself had long been a projective target *within* the United States, its image alternating between goodness and badness. The "Big Apple" (boundless opportunity, rebirth, immigrants' portal into the United States, "wholesome fun") has also at various times been the "Rotten Apple" (the alluring, sexy, defiling, destructive metropolis, the jungle). This ambivalence has been banished (repressed) since September 11. For a time, most Americans "became" New Yorkers -- by identification, by a shared sense

of vulnerability.

Recall, too, that the legendary King Kong tried to use the Empire State Building to ravish his beloved Fay Wray (Kenneth Bernard, "King Kong: A Meditation," *New American Review*, 1972). In the least, the Empire State Building -- and the World Trade Center -- represented if not flaunted American generativity to the nation and to the world -- a thought that I hope will not be rejected as obscene in the face of the recent calamity. I wonder, then: do the terrorists, and the enraged Islamic peoples in whose behalf they act as delegates, feel impotent and project their impotence into the United States? Is that, in part, what they are trying to "tell" America through their attack? To gain "theirs" must they destroy "ours"? Is potency -- personal, group -- a zero-sum-game?

I could understand how the World Trade Center could become such a *symbol* and *trophy* for those bent on destroying it and with it American morale. I did not harbor the feeling that "this could not happen here." In this world, after Auschwitz, anything can happen. My sense of void, of chilling absence, quickly gave way to grief, for who and what were lost, and for their still-incomprehensible magnitude.

Grief is where I remain. It is the victims' vulnerability, their peril, their desperation, and their death that most lingers. Over four thousand people -- people who ambivalently loved and who were ambivalently loved -- are dead. The numbers strain my imagination. Those who remain behind must grieve the loss of people, the void of missing landmark ("icon") buildings, the assault upon a city and a nation, and the loss of the sense of innocence and safety.

So many questions remain unasked, and in turn unanswered, because they do not correspond to official and popular narrative accounts and the group fantasy they sustain. If the al-Qaeda terrorists seek immortality through martyrdom, is not some amount of provocation by the terrorists involved that engages the United States (and its allies) to play out the reciprocal role of counter-player? If there is some historical truth to the accusation of U.S. abandonment and exploitation of the Near East, does the U.S. not also play an unconscious symbolic role, one which now generates its own reality? If cultures do not "get what they deserve" (a moralistic judgment), do they not at least "get what they unconsciously desire"? Do not groups "dance" in some kind of reciprocal unconscious adversary symbiosis? Can this dance with

our enemies -- who do bad things to us -- be separated from the bad things we do within our national group? (In the Soviet Union, Stalin was a master of this displacement of his own terror onto the Nazi menace and the Great Patriotic War against fascism.) Furthermore, do not the leaders and followers of currently warring groups have childhoods and families of origin, as well as political-economic realities, that affect their decision-making? What do these warring groups represent to each other, and what are the overdetermined roots of these symbolisms? Finally, what good are borders if they cannot keep their promises?

I leave this brief paper and its subject with an overwhelming sense of incompleteness. Conventional and stylized accounts are at best partial truths and at worst they are defenses against understanding the meaning of the attack. What we can know *now* is limited by the complicated process of mourning. There is so much more to be known, and felt, beyond culturally stylized sentiment and sentimentality, ideologically right thinking, nationalistic jingoism, and obligatory action.

More than anything, sorrow washes over me. People died on that terrible day because people could not be recognized to be people. People died, people were killed, and people killed others, because who and what they *represented* consumed their existence as distinct persons. Many more will die, will be killed, in the name of heaven and nation. The work of comprehending September 11, 2001 -- psychohistoric and otherwise -- has scarcely begun.

*Howard F. Stein, PhD, a psychoanalytic anthropologist, psychohistorian, and organizational consultant, is Professor in the Department of Family and Preventive Medicine, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, Oklahoma City. An abiding area of his interest and research is the relationship between disaster, crisis, mourning, and adaptation. He has written widely on the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and on the symbolic violence of downsizing. His most recent book is Nothing Personal, Just Business: A Guided Journey into Organizational Darkness (2001). Dr. Stein may be reached at <howard-stein@ouhsc.edu>. (The author reports that this paper has benefited from conversations and*

**Wanted: In-depth Insight during Wartime  
See call for papers on page 162.**

correspondence with Drs. Richard Koenigsberg, David Levine, and Jerry Piven.) □

## Where Were You on September 11?

Paul H. Elovitz

Ramapo College and the Psychohistory Forum

On Tuesday, September 11, 2001, I knew something emotionally powerful was happening because of the changed body language of the people walking and gesticulating outside of my classroom, who I could see through a little window in the door. After my 8:00 a.m. class ended, I joined the crowds in front of the television monitors. At the beginning of my 10:00 a.m. psychohistory class, I asked the students: Where were you when you heard the news of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, and what did you feel and think about it? My questions were prompted in part by my own specific memories of where I was and what I thought and felt when President John F. Kennedy was shot. Before the scheduled end of the class, the college called off classes, which kept me from helping the students with their emotional needs but freed me to check on my own family in and around Manhattan.

Soon after the tragic events of September 11, we issued a call for papers on "Terrorism, Tragedy, Vengeance, and Mourning." When Jennifer Clark responded on the psychological effects of the attacks with her emphasis on "Where were you when the World Trade Center was attacked?" (see article on page 160), we realized that we should include this topic in the call for papers as a separate section. Howard Stein's perceptive article (see first page) started out as a part of this section but soon grew to a length where it would need to stand alone.

For a long time it appeared that we would be able to accommodate the Special Theme on Terror with the December Special Issue on Psychobiography (edited by Bob Lentz) but recently the volume of submissions on each subject made this impossible. Consequently, we decided to run the full Psychobiography Issue now with a few articles on the initial impact of the attacks on America. We will continue to accept submissions on "The Psychology of Terrorism, Tragedy, Group Mourning, Bio-Terrorism, and the War on Terrorism" for our March issue until January 15. Please see the Call for Papers on page 162.

Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, is Editor of this publication.

## Fleeing With My Baby

Vassiliki Flenga  
Ramapo College

I was in the natural ritual of the day -- up early, giving my two-year-old daughter Circe her breakfast. We were sitting near a window, two blocks away from the World Trade Center, looking at the twin towers to my right and the Hudson River to my left. It was a sunny, beautiful day. I started making plans: Writing an abstract for a conference, going out later on. Circe was busy eating and watching her television shows. The baby-sitter was coming at 10. I was going to get a lot done.

Suddenly, I heard a loud noise. A car accident, I thought. Then I looked down into our inner court -- the people gathered there were looking up. I saw what they were looking at: a flaming ball bursting from the steel and glass. There must have been an explosion. I called Joe, my mate who also teaches at the college, and left a message with the secretary -- one of the towers was burning but we were fine, nothing to worry about.

I changed the television channel and started watching the news. A plane had flown into the tower, an accident most likely. The phone started ringing. Family and friends wanted to know if we were all right. Oh, everything was fine, there was just this fire in one of the towers but it was going to be put out soon. I called my mom in Greece telling her that no matter what she heard on the news, we were okay.

Another noise made me run to the window. There was another huge ball of fire coming from the second tower. People were running screaming into the courtyard and Circe was afraid. I took my baby to the kitchen where there are no windows. We started making waffles, it would be a good distraction but then I heard on the news that there was a third plane out there. I was sure it was coming our way so I grabbed Circe and went to see if any of my neighbors were home. I desperately needed some other adult to be with us. I did not want to leave the building because I could see things flying out of the holes in the two towers. Later I learned that people were jumping out.

I was in our neighbor's apartment talking about what had just happened when we heard another noise. I screamed, "There's the third plane."

The building shook and the sunny day turned into night. Smoke filled the apartment. The first tower had collapsed. The fire alarms went off and I rushed back to my apartment to close the windows. The "wind" was fierce; everything was covered in dust, as we would be before long. We then rushed down to the lobby where everybody was standing dumbfounded. Some firefighters came in and told us we had to go -- things were going to get worse.

Silently, slowly we went out the back door and started walking down the promenade. My neighbor stopped and picked up one of the pieces of paper covering the sidewalk: a business letter with someone's signature on it. Then one of the firefighters started screaming, "Cover her face" and "run!" As I put Circe's blanket over her head, I turned around and saw a cloud of dust and smoke and ash rushing our way, swallowing up everybody behind us. I ran, fearing we were not going to make it. As I reached a building near the marina, I handed Circe over to someone who was standing at the door, someone I did not know. The cloud was near and I did not have the strength to climb up the stairs while holding her. I made it inside and we waited there until the dust and debris of the collapse of the second tower had subsided. New York Police Department boats were waiting at the marina and a firefighter told us to go there to be taken safely to New Jersey. His lips and face were white, his shirt was open and his undershirt was covered with blood. I got into the boat. The ride was rough and several times I thought we were being hit. It was just the waves.

My baby Circe still says, "Boom, boom, boom, Oh God! Towers fall down!"

*Val Flenga, PhD, is Assistant Professor of French Language and Literature at Ramapo College of New Jersey. She may be reached at <vflenga@ramapo.edu>.*

## The Psychogeography of Terrorism

**Jennifer K. Clark**  
**United States Military Academy**

The question of "Where were you when the World Trade Center was attacked?" goes much deeper than physical geography. In the events of September 11 and their aftermath we have just witnessed and experienced a change in the psychological perspective of all Americans.

Geographically speaking, I was in my office at West Point when a co-worker ran in to tell

me that two planes had hit the World Trade Center. I went to find a television and a few minutes later watched in disbelief as the tape of the second plane hitting the World Trade Center was replayed, followed a few minutes later by the incomprehensible news that a third plane had just hit the Pentagon. I was in a classroom at the United States Military Academy with some of America's best and brightest as we watched the horrific events and contemplated all of our futures. It was then that I suddenly felt truly linked to America's history. On that terrible day I finally understood why any one of my parents' generation could remember exactly where they were when John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

Where we were geographically does not compare, however, to our more important psychological location. Before September 11, I was an idealist. My only fear was that when I have children I will not feel safe sending them out on their bicycles to ride around the neighborhood as I used to do, simply telling my parents that I would be back by dinner. I took for granted, as many of us did, my freedoms and my feelings of safety. I had never before felt unsafe in the world or threatened for simply being an American. Now I have just discovered that the idea that I can feel free to stop by the dry cleaners on my way home from work and then order pizza for dinner is hateful to someone, and I am having extreme difficulty accepting that.

Historical events move us psychologically. It is impossible for an individual to stay in the same psychic location from one minute to the next, when during that minute they have become aware of the life-altering nature of events surrounding them. Tragic events such as those of September 11 remind us that we are part of a greater humanity. In psychology we spend so much time dealing with the individual and his or her place in his or her life that we often forget our larger membership. Now Americans are suddenly among the ranks of the internationally terrorized. "Where were you when...? should perhaps more importantly be "Where are you now?"

*Jennifer Clark is Research Psychologist in the Engineering Psychology Program at the United States Military Academy. She has earned her*

Inform colleagues of our March, 2002,  
**Psychology of Terror Special Issue.**  
 Contact Paul H. Elovitz, <pelovitz@aol.com>.

*Master's degree and is currently pursuing a PhD in Clinical Psychology from the Fielding Graduate Institute. She may be contacted at <lj5030@exmail.usma.army.mil>.*

## No Place to Hide from Terror

**Charlotte Kahn**  
Private Practice, New York City

On September 11 I was by myself in a "borrowed" apartment in Berlin, Germany. When the telephone rang a friend's voice sounded ominous. He told me the news. I was stunned. Soon I tried unsuccessfully to call my family members at home in Manhattan. Finally at night my husband reached me at another friend's house.

Almost everyone expressed surprise. I was upset but not surprised. About two months before -- it wasn't the first time -- I had expressed concern to my husband about both a possible *jihad* and the state of affairs in the U.S. We decided there's no place to go, no place to hide. This time we cannot emigrate as we had as children from Germany, fleeing the Nazis.

I was scheduled to return to the U.S. on September 13 but the airports were closed to foreign flights. I wasn't too concerned about staying on in Berlin -- though I worried about my patients who were expecting to see me after a month's absence. However, President Bush's rhetoric about war and vengeance caused me extreme anxiety: What if he dropped a few bombs? The world would be afire! Then I might not be able to travel home to the U.S. for who knows how long. I wondered whether my fears were old fears. Was this like leaving Belgium and arriving in England only one week before World War II broke out, arriving in a London already prepared for an air attack, in a state of blackout? I decided to prepare for the worst. I went to the *Deutsche* Bank, opened an account, and sent a fax to my bank in New York City requesting a transfer of sufficient funds to sustain me for a few months. My anxiety abated.

Then came the anger. It hasn't left me. It isn't anger at the perpetrators. It's rage at our incompetent elected officials and government agencies. Their isolationism, arrogance, greed, and false sense of grandiosity and invulnerability left them and us unprepared -- despite warnings from foreign intelligence services.

I've been home now for five days. Thankfully, the family is all right and today I met with

my patients. But the world is not all right. I don't know what's coming but I believe it won't be good for a very long time.

*Charlotte Kahn, EdD, is a psychologist and psychoanalyst in Manhattan and New Jersey. She may be reached at <c.kahn@rcn.com>.*

## Our Denial of Terrorism

**Brian Castner**  
Ramapo College

The events of September 11 will remain with all of us who are old enough to recognize their significance for the rest of our lives just as my parents' generation remembers where they were when they heard that JFK was assassinated and my grandparents' generation recalls where they were when they first heard of the Japanese strike on Pearl Harbor.

I had just awakened at nine o'clock to the news on my clock radio. I then turned on the television and watched live as the second plane hit the World Trade Center. I did not go to class but instead immediately called my mother at her work to find out if she knew what happened and if she knew if anything else was under attack. Boom! The Pentagon was hit. I feared we were being invaded.

The truth is that we had already been invaded months and maybe even years before September 11. The terrorists had been living right under our noses. Yet the attacks were "a complete shock" and "without warning" -- at least none we cared to listen to. But we had been attacked before: The blowing up of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, the attack on the USS Cole in 2000, and the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center. Osama bin Laden had declared war on us in 1996 but we ignored him. So why were the terrorist attacks of September 11 a shock to us?

*Brian Castner is a student in a psychohistory course at Ramapo College of New Jersey.*

## Searching for the Right Script

**C. Nathan DeWall**  
St. Olaf College

I was speechless when a friend stopped me and said that New York and Washington had been attacked. Although I understood every word he had

said, I was completely unable to comprehend what had happened. America had been attacked? As I tried to understand the source of my and many other Americans' confusion, I eventually realized that the source of this mass confusion is that we do not possess the necessary tool that would help bring clarity to this situation: a script.

People use hundreds of scripts to get through each day. When I walk into my morning coffee shop, I see Ruth Ann, wish her good morning, respond that I am doing well when she asks how I am, and order my usual drink. She collects my money; I put one sweetener and one cream in the drink, stir it, say good-bye, and then leave. This is my morning coffee script. I don't need to tediously think about each action because they have all occurred previously. I know, with a great deal of probability, what will happen next in the sequence of events and can thus rely on these prior experiences to understand the situation.

The confusion pervading America is because we do not have a script to think and feel through an event such as the terrorist attack of September 11. This is a unique situation for Americans not just because it is so uncommon for an attack of such enormity and surprise to fall upon us but also because it is an act of war by an invisible enemy. It becomes more confusing when we try to use the similar yet distinct script of the attack on Pearl Harbor to understand our current situation.

It would be overly simplistic to conclude that I will never forget where I was the morning of September 11 because there was a novel change to one of my personal scripts, my morning coffee script. If there is something positive that can be garnered from this recent display of destruction and alarm, it is that Americans now have the beginnings of a script that can help them cope with and survive a situation like the terrorist attack. Let us hope, though, that Americans will never have to use such a script.

*C. Nathan DeWall is a senior psychology major and teaching and research assistant at St.*

**Call for Papers**  
**Children and Childhood in The**  
**21st Century**  
**June, 2002**

500-1500 words, due April 15  
 Contact Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, Editor  
 <pelovitz@aol.com>

**Call for Papers**  
**September 11 and the**  
**Psychology of Terrorism**  
**Special Theme Issue**  
**March, 2002**

Some possible approaches include:

- Initial Emotions: Shock, Disbelief, Sadness, Anger, Hate, Humiliation, Victimization, and Frustration: Case Studies
- Fears, Fantasies, and Realities of Anthrax, Bio-Terrorism, and Nuclear Terrorism
- Group Feelings of Victimization and Entitlement in the Face of Trauma
- The Power of Symbols: Blood (Shed and Donated) and Flags in the Face of Trauma
- The Power of Altruism in the Face of Danger: The Psychology of Fireman and Other Relief Workers
- The Psychological Defense Mechanisms of Israelis and Others in Facing Terrorism
- Bush's Personalizing the Hydra-Headed Monster of Terrorism
- The Psychobiography of Osama bin Laden and Various Terrorists
- Islamic Fundamentalism: America as the Great Satan
- Why Many People Hate the U.S.
- Presidents Bush as War Leaders
- Psychohistorical Perspectives on Terrorism: Case Studies
- The Sense of Obligation to Avenge the Dead: Turning Anger into Vengeance
- Cycles of Terrorism, Retaliation, and Violence
- Denial and Disbelief in Facing Terrorism: Fortress America and "It Can't Happen Here"
- Why Intelligence and Security Were Negligent or Ignored
- Security, the Cloak of Secrecy, and the Open Society
- Effects on America's Children
- Nightmares, Dreams, and Daydreams of the Attack
- Mourning and Closure
- Survivorship and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

500-1500 words, due January 15  
 Contact Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, Editor  
 <pelovitz@aol.com>

*Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. He plans to attend graduate school next fall to earn a doctorate in social psychology. DeWall may be contacted at <dewalln@stolaf.edu>. □*

## Bulletin Board

The next **Psychohistory Forum WORK-IN-PROGRESS SATURDAY SEMINAR** is on **January 26, 2002**, when **Eli Sagan** will speak on "**The Great Promise and Anxiety of Modernity**" from his forthcoming book, *Citizens and Cannibals: The French Revolution and the Origins of Modern Society*. There will be some discussion of Islamic resistance to modernity. The panel session of artistic and creative psychoanalysts discussing the nature and process of creativity, which the Forum is working to sponsor in conjunction with the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis (NAAP), will be held in 2002. Last November 10, the Forum held a session on Terrorism with panelists **Irene Javors, Jay Gonen, Ted Goertzel, and Paul Elovitz**. **CONFERENCES:** The **International Association for Relational Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy (IARPP)** has scheduled a January 18-20, 2002, conference, "Relational Analysts at Work: Sense and Sensibility," at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City. See <www.iarpp.org> for details. The **International Psychohistorical Association (IPA)** meets in Manhattan June 5-7, 2002, and the **International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP)** is scheduled to meet on July 16-19, 2002, in Berlin, Germany, and July 6-9, 2003, in Boston. **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES:** **Ralph Colp** is editing Charles Darwin's diary of health. **Isaac Ziemann** spent October and November in Switzerland and Germany lecturing and giving workshops on "Problems of Remembering the Third Reich," "The State of Israel from the Point of View of an American Jew," and "Milestones of the Life of a Jewish/Holocaust Survivor." **Paul Elovitz** gave a workshop on teaching psychohistory at the Mid-Atlantic World History Association (MAWHA) conference, "Global Interactions and Interdisciplinary Perspectives," at Ramapo College on October 12 and a lecture on teaching psychohistory at the Association for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society (APCS) conference at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, on November 9. Professor **Tom Blass** of the University of Maryland has established an informational Web site on the work of Stanley Milgram at

<www.stanleymilgram.com>. **Flora Hogman** is giving a course at New School University on "The Holocaust and Evolving Memory." **Anie Kalayjian**, class of 1979, last May was given an honorary doctor of science degree at Long Island University. **CONGRATULATIONS:** To **Denis O'Keefe** who received a Forum Young Scholar Award Membership in September. **OUR THANKS:** To our members and subscribers for the support that makes Clio's Psyche possible. To Benefactors Herbert Barry, Andrew Brink, Ralph Colp, and Mary Lambert; Patrons Mary Coleman, Jay Gonen, H. John Rogers, and Peter Petschauer; Sustaining Members Kevin McCamant and Robert Pois; Supporting Members David Felix, and Olga Louchakova; and Members Richard Booth, Paul Elovitz, Charles Gouaux, Margery Quackenbush, and Richard Weiss. Our thanks for thought-provoking materials to Jim Anderson, Herbert Barry, Brian Castner, Jennifer Clark, Ed de St. Aubin, Nathan DeWall, Alan Elms, Marilyn Fabe, Val Flenga, Kate Isaacson, Christine Jazwinski, Charlotte Kahn, David Lotto, Elizabeth Wirth Marvick, Dan Ogilvie, Suzanne Ouellette, Robert Pois, Robert Rousselle, William McKinley "Mac" Runyan, Todd Schultz, Caroline Scielzo, Dean Keith

### Forthcoming in Clio's Psyche

- Among the already submitted articles on "The Psychology of Terrorism, Tragedy, Group Mourning, Bio-Terrorism, and the War on Terrorism" are:
  - "Apocalypse Now"
  - "A Nation Mourns"
  - "Terror Victims"
  - "Enemy Images After 9-11"
  - "Pearl Harbor & World Trade Center"
  - "Terrorism in a Global Context"
  - "Mohamed Atta" and "Osama bin Laden"
  - "Torture Interrogation of Terrorists"
  - "Delayed Reactions in Children"
  - "Violence in Hollywood Action Films"
  - "Terrorism in 11th-Century Spain"
- "Home" Symposium by Peter Petschauer with responses by Michael Britton, Dan Dervin, Paul Elovitz, Amy Hudnall, Anatoly Isaenko, David Lotto, Evelyn Sommers, and Howard Stein
- Interviews with Distinguished Psychobiographic Scholars Ralph Colp and Elizabeth Wirth Marvick

Simonton, Anna Song, Howard Stein, Cushing Strout, and Victor Wolfenstein. To Monika Giacoppe and Mel Kalfus for editing assistance as well as to Anna Lentz and Darlenson Roldan for proof-reading and to Dan McAdams for notifying colleagues of the "Psychobiography" call for papers. □

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**Call for Papers**  
**Psychobiography**  
 Special Theme Issue  
 December, 2001

Some possible approaches include:

- Original psychobiographical vignettes
- Psychobiography-focused mini-interview with distinguished psychobiographers such as George, Mack, McAdams, Solomon, Strouse, and Tucker
- Symposium on Erikson's *Young Man Luther*
- Your experience in researching, writing, and publishing psychobiography
- Developments in psychobiography in the last 15 years
- Issues in doing psychobiography:
  - pathology and creativity

**Call for Papers**  
**Psychobiography**  
 Special Theme Issue  
 December, 2001

Some possible approaches include:

- Original psychobiographical vignettes
- Symposium of the pros and cons of Erikson's *Young Man Luther*
- Your experience with psychobiography
- Recent developments in the field
- Issues in doing psychobiography:
  - pathology and creativity
  - the use of empathy
  - evidence and interpretation, reconstruction, and reductionism
  - countertransference
  - assessing childhood's influence
  - interpreting dreams
  - assessing living individuals
  - alternative approaches
- Reviews / review essays

**Call for Papers**  
**Children and Childhood in**  
**The 21st Century**  
 Special Theme Issue  
 March, 2002

500-1500 words, due January 15  
 Contact Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, Editor  
 <pelovitz@aol.com>

- the use of empathy
- evidence and interpretation, reconstruction, and reductionism
- countertransference
- assessing childhood's influence
- interpreting dreams
- assessing living individuals

- alternative approaches
- Reviews / review essays of psychobiographies by others
- Woman's (or Feminist) psychobiography
- Your choice(s) for exemplary psychobiography(ies)
- Oral history as psychobiography
- Film and docudrama psychobiographies

**The Best of**  
**Clio's Psyche -**  
**1994-2001**

New for 2001.  
 This 132-page collection of many of the best and most popular articles from 1994 to the September, 2001, issue is now available for only \$25 a copy.

It will be distributed free to Members renewing at the Supporting level and above

**Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting**  
**Saturday, September 29, 2001**  
**Britton, Felder, and Freund**  
**"Freud, Architecture, and**  
**Urban Planning"**

**Call for Papers**  
**PsychoGeography**  
**Special Theme Issue**  
**March, 2001**

"PsychoGeography is the study of human projections upon geographic space and the psychic interaction between people and geography" (Elovitz). It investigates "how issues, experiences, and processes that result from growing up in a male or female body become symbolized and played out in the wider social and natural worlds" (Stein and Niederland).

Some possible approaches:

- The gender of geography (e.g., "motherlands" and "fatherlands")
- Psychogeography of rivers, islands, mountains, etc.
- Borders and borderland symbolism
- Cities, states, and countries as symbols of

**Call for Nominations**  
**Halpern Award**  
 for the  
**Best Psychohistorical Idea**  
 in a  
**Book, Article, or Internet Site**  
 Contact Paul H. Elovitz, <pelovitz@aol.com>.

**Invitation to Join**

Join the **Psychohistory Forum** as a Research Associate to be on the cutting edge of the development of new psychosocial knowledge. For information, e-mail Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, Director, at <pelovitz@aol.com> or call him at (201) 891-7486.

**Call for Papers**  
**Psychological Uses of Law**  
**Special Theme Issue**  
**June, 2001**

Possible approaches:

- The diffusion of law into every aspect of life (i.e., "the legalization of life")
- Emotional uses of law (e.g., legal expression of anger, law as intimidation)
- Jury psychology
- Law as a system of gridlock

**Group Psychohistory**  
**Symposium**

- Insanity and the law
- Dysfunctional family courts

**Presidential Election 2000**

**Book Reviews**

**There are no negatives in the unconscious.**

**Halpern Award**

The Psychohistory Forum has granted a **Sidney Halpern Award** to Bob Lentz, Founding Associate Editor of **Clio's Psyche**, for Outstanding Work in Psychohistorical Editing.

**Psycho-**  
**biography**  
**of**  
**Ralph**  
**Nader**  
**Special**

**Call for Papers**

**Theme**  
**March, 2001**

Possible approaches:

- Psychodynamics and childhood
- Nader's appeal to intellectuals and Inde-

**Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting**  
**Saturday, January 27, 2001**  
**Jay Gonen, Mary Coleman, et al**  
**"Role of Law in Society"**

**Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting**  
**Saturday, September 15, 2001**  
**Britton, Felder, and Freund**  
**"Freud, Architecture, and Urban Planning"**

**Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting**  
**Saturday, March 31, 2001**  
**David Lotto**  
**"Freud's Struggle With Misogyny: An Exploration of Homosexuality and Guilt in the Dream of Irma's Injection"**

**September 10, 2001**  
**Forum Meeting**  
**Confront the**  
**Process**

**Call for Papers**  
**Psychology and Law**  
**Special Theme Issue**  
**June, 2001**

**Call for Papers**  
**Crime, Punishment, and Incarceration**

**Special Theme Issue**  
**September, 2001**

**500-1500 words, due July 10**

**Contact Paul Elovitz, <pelovitz@aol.com>**

Possible approaches:

- The diffusion of law into every aspect of life (i.e., "the legalization of life")
- Emotional uses of law (e.g., legal expression of anger, law as intimidation)
- Jury psychology
- Law as a system of gridlock
- Insanity and the law
- Dysfunctional family courts
- Legal rights of children
- The law and individual freedom
- Humor in the law and lawyer jokes

**500-1500 words, due April 10**

**Contact Paul Elovitz, <pelovitz@aol.com>**

**Call for Nominations**  
**Halpern Award**  
**for the**  
**Best Psychohistorical Idea**  
**in a**  
**Book, Article, or**  
**Internet Site**

**Contact Paul Elovitz, <pelovitz@aol.com>**

### **Call for CORST Grant Applications**

The Committee on Research and Special Training (CORST) of the American Psychoanalytic Association announces an American Psychoanalytic Foundation research training grant of \$10,000 for CORST candidates (full-time academic scholar-teachers) who have been accepted or are currently in training in an American Psychoanalytic Association Institute. The purpose of the grant is to help defray the costs of psychoanalytic training. Payments will be made over three years of training in installments of \$3500, \$3500, and \$3000 directly to the candidate.

The application is: a) A brief statement of 1000 words about the research proposed, b) A letter from a scholar in the field (e.g., department chair, colleague, or dissertation advisor) attesting to the validity and significance of the research, c) A letter of endorsement by the Education Director of the institute certifying the candidate is in, or has been accepted for, full clinical psychoanalytic training at an institute of the American Psychoanalytic Association, and d) An up-to-date Curriculum Vitae.

**Applications are to be submitted in three (3) copies by April 1, 2001, to Professor Paul Schwaber, 258 Bradley Street, New Haven, CT 06511.**

## The Psychology of

### Call for Papers The Psychology of Crime, Punishment, and Incarceration

Special Theme Issue  
September, 2001

Some possible approaches include:

- Emotion in the courtroom
- Jury psychology
- Children and women in prison
- Immigrants and the INS
- The crime of punishment
- Comparative international studies
- Case studies
- Crime and punishment on TV
- How cameras change the courtroom dynamics

500-1500 words, due July 10

Contact Paul Elovitz, Editor  
<pelovitz@aol.com>

Next Psychohistory  
Forum Meeting  
Saturday, September  
15, 2001  
Britton, Felder, and

### The Best of Clio's Psyche

This 93-page  
collection of many of the  
best and most popular  
articles from 1994 to the  
September, 1999, issue is available for \$20 a copy.

It will be distributed free to Members

### Call for Papers

### Our Litigious Society

Special Theme Issue  
March, 2001

Possible approaches:

- Psychodynamics

### The Makers-of-Psychohistory Research Project

To write the history of psychohistory, the Forum is interviewing the founders of our field to create a record of their challenges and accomplishments. It welcomes participants who will help identify, interview, and publish accounts of the founding of psychohistory. Contact Paul H. Elovitz, <pelovitz@aol.com>.

See Calls for Papers  
on pages 164 & 165:  
PsychoGeography  
Psychobiography of Ralph Nader  
Psychological Uses of Law  
Crime and Punishment

### *The Best of Clio's Psyche*

This 93-page collection of many of the  
best and most popular articles from 1994 to the

Saturday, November 10, 2001  
Psychohistory Forum Meeting  
Psychoanalysts Confront the  
Creative Process

## Clio's Psyche of Psychohistory

### Call for Papers

- Violence in Mass Mur-  
cide
- The Future  
the Third  
2000)
- Assessing  
Millennial-  
2000
- Psycho-
- Election  
biographies  
Gore,  
et al
- The Psy-  
tion and
- Legalizing  
Society
- Psychobiog-
- Manias and  
nomics and
- The Role of  
server in
- Psychohis-

## Volkan Honored

In honor of the retirement of **Vamik Volkan** and the work of the Center he created, the University of Virginia Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction (CSMHI) conducted a major conference entitled "Identity, Mourning and Psychopolitical Processes" on May 25-26. The featured presentations and discussions were on the human processes that lead to ethnic tension, conflict resolution, and the healing process. The speakers came from several disciplines -- psychoanalysis, psychiatry, psychology, political science, history, and anthropology -- and hail from the U.S and abroad. **Peter Loewenberg** of UCLA presented "The Psychodynamics of a Creative Institution: The Bauhaus, Weimar, Dessau, Berlin, 1919-1933" and **Howard Stein** of the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, "Mourning and Society: A Study in the History and Philosophy of Science."

Volkan, who will retire later this year after 38 years on the University of Virginia staff, is currently the director of the CSMHI and a former president of the International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP). Volkan founded CSMHI in 1987 as an interdisciplinary center to specialize in conflict resolution and peace work, primarily in Eastern Europe and subsequently the newly independent countries from the former Soviet Union. He has developed theories for caring for severely traumatized populations in the wake of ethnic tension. "At the Center, we study preventive medicine for ethnic issues. In that sense, the Center is very unique," Volkan said. "When large groups are in conflict, people die, they become refugees, they lose homes and their loved ones, and so they have to mourn. Without mourning, they cannot adjust. Ethnic identity is related to mourning. When people do not mourn, their identity is different." The Center is on the forefront of studies in large-group dynamics and applies a growing theoretical and field-proven base of knowledge of issues such as ethnic tension, racism, national identity, terrorism, societal trauma, leader-follower relationships and other aspects of national and international conflict.

For further information on Dr. Volkan and the Center for the Study of Mind and Human Interaction, visit the Web site, <<http://hsc.virginia.edu/csmhi/>>.

## the Forum

American Life and  
der as Disguised Sui-

of Psychoanalysis in  
Millennium (June,

Apocalypticism and  
ism Around the Year

Geography

2000: Psycho-  
of Bradley, Bush,  
McCain, Buchanan,

chology of Incarcera-  
Crime

Life: Our Litigious

raphy

Depressions in Eco-  
Society

the Participant Ob-  
Psychohistory

torical Perspectives

## Call for CORST tions

The Committee  
cial Training (CORST)  
choanalytic Association  
can Psychoanalytic  
training grant of \$10,000  
(full-time academic  
have been accepted or  
ing in an American Psy-  
tion Institute. The pur-  
help defray the costs of  
ing. Payments will be  
of training in install-

## Grant Applica-

on Research and Spe-  
of the American Psy-  
announces an Ameri-  
Foundation research  
for CORST candidates  
scholar-teachers) who  
are currently in train-  
choanalytic Associa-  
pose of the grant is to  
psychoanalytic train-  
made over three years  
ments of \$3500,

## Clio's Psyche of the Psychohistory Forum

### Call for Papers

- Violence in American Life and Mass Murder as Disguised Suicide
- Assessing Apocalypticism and Millennialism Around the Year 2000
- PsychoGeography
- Election 2000: Psychobiographies of Bradley, Bush, Gore, McCain, Buchanan, et al
- The Psychology of Incarceration and Crime
- Legalizing Life: Our Litigious Society
- Psychobiography
- Manias and Depressions in Economics and Society
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a Model for Healing
- The Processes of Peacemaking and Peacekeeping
- The Psychology of America as the World's Policeman
- Entertainment News

**Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting**  
**Michael Britton**  
**"Countertransference:  
 Royal Road Into the Psychology  
 of the Cold War"**

**Saturday, September 23, 2000**

**Contact Paul Elovitz, Editor**  
**See page 51**

- Television, Radio, and Media as Object Relations in a Lonely

### Call for Papers

## The Psychohistory of Conspiracy Theories

Special Theme Issue  
 December, 2000

#### Possible approaches:

- Psychodynamics and childhood roots of conspiracy theories
- Case studies of conspiracy theories in American history
- Survey of the psychohistorical and psychological literature on conspiracy theories
- Film and television treatment of conspiracy theories

**Contact Bob Lentz, Associate Editor**  
**<boblentz@cliospsyche.com>**

## The Best of Clio's Psyche

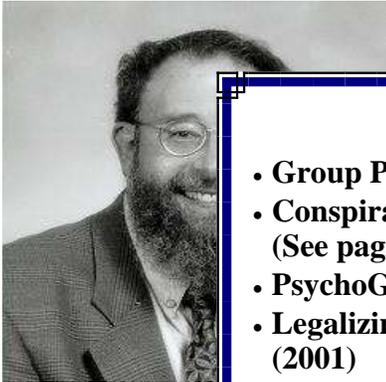
This 93-page collection of many of the best and most popular articles from 1994 to the September, 1999, issue is available for \$20 a copy.

It will be distributed free to Members renewing at the Supporting level and above as well as Subscribers upon their next two-year renewal.

Contact the Editor (see page three).

**Clio's  
 Psyche**  
 Now on

## Letter to the Editor



**Howard F.  
Stein**

(Editor's Note:  
We welcome  
scanned pic-

### Call for Papers

- Group Psychohistory (December, 2000)
- Conspiracy Theories (December, 2000)  
(See page 100)
- PsychoGeography (March, 2001)
- Legalizing Life: Our Litigious Society (2001)
- The Psychology of Incarceration and Crime (2001)
- Television as Object Relations

Contact Paul Elovitz, Editor  
See page 51

### Dreamwork Resources

The **Historical Dreamwork Method** is available to help the biographer better understand the dreams of the subject and other aspects of psychobiography. **Clio's Psyche** welcomes papers on historical dreamwork for publication and for presentation at Psychohistory Forum meetings. Contact Paul H. Elovitz (see page 51).

## Book Reviews

## Letters to the Editor

**Life: Our Litigious Society**  
Contact the Editor (see page 3)

## Nader, Political Nightmares, and Leaders' Morality

### Editorial Policies

### Invitation to Join

Join the Psychohistory Forum as a Research Associate to be on the cutting edge of the development of new psychosocial knowledge. For information, e-mail Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, Director, at <pelovitz@aol.com> or call him at (201) 891-7486.

Call for Papers on  
**The Psychology of Incarceration and Crime**  
Contact the Editor (see page 3)

Psychohistorians probe the "Why" of  
culture, current events, history, and  
society.

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• **Letters to the Editor**

## The History of Psychohistory

**Clio's Psyche's** interviews of outstanding psychohistorians (see "An American in Amsterdam: Arthur Mitzman," page 146) have grown into a full-fledged study of the pioneers and history of our field. Psychohistory as an organized field is less than 25 years old, so most of the innovators are available to tell their stories and give their insights. Last March, the Forum formally launched the **Makers of the Psychohistorical Paradigm Research Project** to systematically gather material to write the history of psychohistory. We welcome memoirs, letters, and manuscripts as well as volunteers to help with the interviewing. People interested in participating should write, call, or e-mail Paul H. Elovitz (see page 119).

## Awards and Honors

### Award

The Psychohistory Forum has granted a **Sidney Halpern Award** of \$300 to Bob Lentz, Founding Associate Editor of **Clio's Psyche**, for Outstanding Work in Psychohistorical Editing.

**CORST Essay Prize** • Professor Janice M. Coco, Art History, University of California-Davis, winner of the First Annual American Psychoanalytic Association Committee on Research and Special Training (CORST) \$1,000 essay prize, will present her paper, "Exploring the Frontier from the Inside Out in John Sloan's Nude Studies," at a free public lecture at 12 noon, Saturday, December 20, Jade Room, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York City.

### Sidney Halpern Award for the Best Psychohistorical

**Idea** • The Psychohistory Forum is granting an award of \$200 to Michael Hirohama of San Francisco for starting and maintaining the Psychohistory electronic mailing list (see page 98).

### Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting

Saturday, January 30, 1999  
Charles Strozier

### THE MAKERS OF PSYCHOHISTORY RESEARCH PROJECT

To write the history of psychohistory, the Forum is interviewing the founders of our field to create a record of their challenges and accomplishments. It welcomes participants who

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### Call for Papers Special Theme Issues 1999 and 2000

- The Relationship of Academia, Psychohistory, and Psychoanalysis (March, 1999)
- The Psychology of Legalizing Life [What is this???)
- Psychogeography
- Meeting the Millenium

### Call for Nominations

**Halpern Award**  
for the  
**Best Psychohistorical Idea**  
in a

**Book, Article, or Computer Site**

This Award may be granted at the level of Distinguished Scholar, Graduate, or Undergraduate.

Contact Paul H. Elovitz, Editor -- see p.

### Free Subscription

For every paid library subscription (\$40), the person donating or arranging it will receive a year's subscription to **Clio's Psyche** free. Help

THE MAKERS OF PSYCHOHISTORY  
RESEARCH PROJECT

The Psychohistory Forum is pleased to announce

## The Young Psychohistorian 1998/99 Membership Awards

**John Fanton** recently received his medical degree and is doing his five year residency in Providence, Rhode Island. Currently, he is at the Children's Hospital, Women and Infants Hospital, and the Butler Psychiatric Hospital. His goal is to become a child maltreatment expert working in the area of Preventive Psychiatry. At the IPA in 1997 he won the Lorenz Award for his paper on improving parenting in Colorado.

**Albert Schmidt** is a doctoral candidate in modern European history at Brandeis University who plans to defend his dissertation in April when his advisor, Rudolph Binion, will return from Europe for the occasion. Rather than do a biography of SS General Reinhard Heydrich as originally intended, he is writing on the German protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia under Heydrich's dominance. In the last four years this talented young scholar has been awarded nine fellowships, grants, or scholarships.

### Dreamwork Resources

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☆☆☆

### Call for Nominations

#### Halpern Award for the Best Psychohistorical Idea in a Book, Article, or Computer Site

This Award may be granted at the level of Distinguished Scholar, Graduate, or Undergraduate.

There are no negatives in the

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Contact the Editor (see page 51).

Letters to the Editor

### Call for Papers

#### Special Theme Issues 1999 and 2000

- The Relationship of Academia, Psychohistory, and Psychoanalysis (March, 1999)
- Our Litigious Society
- PsychoGeography
- Meeting the Millennium
- Manias and Depressions in Economics and Society

Contact the Editor at

### Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting

Saturday, October 2, 1999

Charles Strozier

"Putting the Psychoanalyst on the Couch: A Biography of Heinz Kohut"

Letters to the Editor on  
Clinton-Lewinsky-Starr

## Book Review Essay

### Next Psychohistory Forum Meeting

Saturday, January 30, 1999

Charles Strozier

"Putting the Psychoanalyst on the Couch: A Biography of Heinz Kohut"

## Call for Nominations for the

### Best of Clio's Psyche

By July 1 please list your favorite articles, interviews, and Special Issues (no

## Clio's Psyche of the Psychohistory Forum

### Call for Papers

- Violence in American Life and Mass Murder as Disguised Suicide
- Assessing Apocalypticism and Millennialism around the Year 2000
- PsychoGeography
- Election 2000
- Psychobiography
- Manias and Depressions in Economics and Society
- The Psychology of Incarceration and Crime

## Call for Nominations for the

### Best of Clio's Psyche

By July 1, please list your favorite articles, interviews, and Special Issues (no more than three in each category) and send the information to the Editor (see page 3) for the August publication.

- Legalizing Life: Our Litigious Society
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission as a Model for Healing
- The Processes of Peacemaking and Peacekeeping
- The Psychology of America as the World's

## Clio's Psyche of the Psychohistory Forum

### Call for Papers

- Future of Psychohistory and Psychoanalysis in the Light of the Demise of the Psychohistory

## The Best of Clio's Psyche

The Psychohistory Forum is pleased to announce the creation of The Best of Clio's Psyche.

This 94-page collection of many of the best and most popular articles from 1994 to the current issue is available for \$20 a copy and to students using it in a course for \$12.

It will be distributed free to Members at the Supporting level and above as well as Two-Year Subscribers upon their next renewal.

## Call for Nominations

### Forthcoming in the June Issue

- Interview with a Distinguished Featured Psychohistorian
- "The Insane Author of the *Oxford English Dictionary*"
- "Jews in Europe After World War II"
- "A Psychohistorian's Mother and Her Legacy"

## Hayman Fellowships

The University of California Interdisciplinary Psychoanalytic Consortium announces two \$5,000 annual fellowships to aid psychoanalytically informed research on the literary, cultural, and humanistic expressions of genocide, racism, ethnocentrism, nationalism, inter-ethnic violence, and the Holocaust.

The

## The History of Psychohistory

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