HANDBOOK OF INTERPERSONAL PSYCHOANALYSIS

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Chapter 1

Introduction to Interpersonal Psychoanalysis

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I

From its beginnings, over 70 years ago, the American school of interpersonal relations has had a profound, though often unacknowledged, influence on psychoanalytic thought and practice. This influence continues to this day and is a major factor in the increasing exchange of psychoanalytic ideas among adherents of its different schools.

During its 70-year history, Interpersonal psychoanalysis, like other psychoanalytic schools, has developed a complex and diverse body of thought. The American school has a unique place in psychoanalytic history and plays a critical role in the paradigmatic shift from drive theory to an interpersonal-relational model of analysis and human growth. The American school of interpersonal relations shares with the British school of object relations and post-Freudian ego psychology and self psychology a common emphasis on the psychoanalytic study of adaptation, the self, reality, defense, character analysis, and the modification of psychoanalytic technique for the analysis of personality disorders. Unlike these other schools, the American school is not tied, either in spirit or language, to classical theory.

In today’s increasingly complex and pluralistic psychoanalytic world, all of its various “schools” have evolved into complex, heterogeneous systems of thought and practice. For several reasons—a cross-fertilization of ideas, cognitive developments in theory and therapy, increasing diversity and complexity within each school, and a greater openness to pluralistic concepts in general—the different psychoanalytic schools have begun to overlap and have become more difficult to differentiate from each other. This is particularly true in the case of Interpersonal psychoanalysis, which has had such a largely unnoted impact on psychoanalytic theory and practice. The influence of the Interpersonal school on psychoanalytic technique and theory has, in fact, been so profound that its very success has tended to preclude a full appreciation of its contributions.

The Interpersonal school has evolved, over the past 70 years, into a rich and complex set of ideas and techniques, encompassing a broad range of theoretical viewpoints and clinical practices. Because of its theoretical openness, pluralistic sensibility, and conceptual and clinical flexibility, Interpersonal psychoanalysis, perhaps more than any other psychoanalytic school, is represented by a wide diversity of thought and practice among its adherents. In fact, the differences among contemporary Interpersonalists make discussion of Interpersonal ideas somewhat confusing in that it is sometimes unclear whether reference is being made to all Interpersonalists or only to some who may share a particular viewpoint not held by other Interpersonalists.

Diversity is written into the very history of Interpersonal psychoanalysis. From the beginning there were personal and conceptual differences among the individuals who were its seminal figures. Sullivan’s interest ranged over the intellectual landscape of the social sciences and led him to integrate ideas from sociology, anthropology, and education into his primary goals, which were the clinical treatment of deeply disturbed patients and the theoretical elaboration of a conception of psychological functioning and personality development that, in its complexity and originality, rivaled that of Sigmund Freud. Fromm, as much a social critic and moral philosopher as an analyst, was as committed to political and social reform as he was to helping individuals. He saw patients as victims of the pressures of social and cultural ills. Clara Thompson’s wide-ranging interests included an inquiry into the psychology of
women. Far ahead of her time, she explored the impact of gender-related expectations on the female psyche and rejected Freudian drive theory on the basis of its neglect of the potential for female emancipation and equality. Frieda Fromm-Reichmann worked for virtually all her professional life in mental hospitals with the severely disturbed and the schizophrenic. Her clinical text, *Principles of Intensive Psychotherapy*, now a classic, conveys, in simple but compelling fashion, her compassionate and insightful therapeutic understanding of her patients’ struggles with their interpersonal and intrapersonal worlds.

These various personalities, while sharing some common intellectual base and finding a common theoretical and clinical home, moved in quite different directions in their writing and teaching. Moreover, they gathered around them a group of colleagues and students who were themselves iconoclastic individuals. Many developed their own competing theories and their own competing psychoanalytic training centers. This diversity among Interpersonal theorists and therapists continues to this day.

Although many of the clinical emphases of the Interpersonal school have been incorporated into mainstream psychoanalysis, and although Interpersonal psychoanalysis is neither uniform nor unitary in its therapeutic or theoretical approach, there are, nonetheless, some broadly defining features that, taken as a whole, uniquely mark this school’s psychoanalytic orientation. Most centrally, these involve a broadly relational metapsychology; an interactive conception of the intrapsychic or intrapersonal world; a clinical focus on the interpersonal and intersubjective field in the analytic situation; a pluralistic sensibility that allows for a radical individuation of metapsychologies and clinical methodologies; an operationist perspective that endeavors to hold theoretical constructs close to empirical observation, and a pragmatic orientation and philosophy that provide room for radical flexibility and open-endedness in clinical technique.

Interpersonal psychoanalysis is, at once, a repudiation of orthodox biologism and clinical dogma and a rejection of reified notions of psychic structure. It is essentially pragmatic, flexible, and down-to-earth because it deals with what actually transpires between people and how they live (and structure) that experience. Interpersonal writings are generally couched in everyday, nonjargonistic language. Interpersonal theory addresses more or less the same body of phenomena addressed by other schools of psychoanalytic thought, but it does so without the reification of metaphors that is so common in psychoanalysis.

The most frequently used theoretical and clinical metaphor in Interpersonal psychoanalysis is the interpersonal field, that intersection of two or more persons’ experience that operates consciously and unconsciously, in the present and the past, in reality and fantasy, in the inner world and the outer one. The interpersonal field is the ceaseless and ever-changing setting of human sentience and experience. Experience and conduct take their shape and meaning from their place in the continuous series of interpersonal fields within which each of us exists from the beginning of life to its end.

II

The literature of Interpersonal psychoanalysis is mature. It has a history: major writers, many years of controversy over key issues, well-articulated positions on numerous vital theoretical and clinical questions. Yet this complex and diverse literature has not been systematically reviewed and integrated, until now. There is no current single reference source for this vast literature. Thus, a vital raison d’être for this volume: to provide a reference text for those psychoanalysts and psychotherapists who, though perhaps familiar with Interpersonal ideas, are interested in both deepening and broadening their understanding of Interpersonal theory and praxis.

All who have taught the theory and practice of Interpersonal psychoanalysis are familiar with the same question, asked by generations of students: “What is Interpersonal psychoanalysis?” That question is usually accompanied by a second one: “What should I read first?” These questions have been hard to answer, because there has never been a single, comprehensive Interpersonal text to which an instructor might refer a student, colleague, or scholar. One good place to start, of course, is the seminal writing of Sullivan and Fromm, or even Ferenczi, the intellectual mainstream father of Interpersonal psychoanalysis. But Sullivan and Fromm, like Ferenczi, were innovators, and their work, along with that of others, was the inspiration for the Interpersonal school. Their writings cannot, therefore, serve as a review. The same can be said of the work of Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, Clara Thompson, and Karen Horney. Reading these writers is necessary to an understanding of Interpersonal theory, but it is not sufficient. Much has taken place since they
published their ideas. Modern Interpersonal writers have developed and expanded Interpersonal ideas in new directions and often contradicted what came before. Thus, a comprehensive review and integration of the literature of Interpersonal psychoanalysis are needed as much by people already interested in, and familiar with, it as by those coming to the ideas for the first time. The *Handbook of Interpersonal Psychoanalysis* is intended to be both a comprehensive review and synthesis of the literature and a broad-based introduction to it. We hope the volume will be as useful to psychoanalytic scholars, Interpersonal and otherwise, as it will be to undergraduates, graduate students, psychology interns, psychiatry residents, social work students, and candidates in psychoanalytic training.

The maturity and richness of the Interpersonal literature have not necessarily brought with it a corresponding degree of renown. Despite its advantages and longevity, those who would be interested in Interpersonal theory are often unaware of its literature. There are even psychoanalysts in this position. Analysts of other orientations often have the impression that Interpersonal theory begins and ends with Sullivan and perhaps includes Erich Fromm. The cultural-Interpersonal school (which, in most definitions, includes Sullivan, Fromm, Thompson, and Horney) is frequently mentioned in analytic circles, but usually in the context of history. The assumption of many psychoanalysts seems to be that the cultural-Interpersonal school, active for a short time in the 1930s and 1940s, was a brief corrective to the overzealous biology of drive theory. It is less often recognized that the cultural-Interpersonal school was the progenitor of an entire psychoanalytic position that has continued to develop and change and that is alive and healthy today.

Outside psychoanalytic circles, these tendencies are even more pronounced. For psychoanalysts with a commitment to Interpersonal theory, it is sadly ironic, for example, that a recent compendium reviewing the contemporary school of psychotherapeutic thought known as Interpersonal psychotherapy has not a single reference, beyond a few to Sullivan, to the enormously relevant literature of Interpersonal psychoanalysis.

This example is merely one of many. It is widely recognized that Sullivan’s insights, unacknowledged, for the most part, have been absorbed, by an unconscious process of osmosis, into American psychology, psychiatry, and psychoanalysis. The same can be said of other Interpersonal writings as well. For instance, Edward Tauber’s, Benjamin Wolstein’s, and Edgar Levenson’s views of transference, countertransference, and the analytic situation are today so taken for granted in some quarters that many students pick up the ideas (or versions of them) as if they were simply part of the lore of the field. Nonattribution is actually a compliment, for ideas enter the public domain only when they make so much sense that they seem to reflect the natural order of things. But as complimentary as such unwitting assimilation of Interpersonal ideas may be, it is also unfortunate. The ideas belong to a tradition, and they take their meaning from that tradition. A full appreciation of any psychoanalytic writer’s thinking requires a knowledge and a “feel” for the intellectual and clinical context within which those ideas came to be.

Despite its widespread “underground” influence, then, Interpersonal psychoanalysis seems to be the least explicitly acknowledged and understood of the four major views in American and British psychoanalysis (Freudian, self psychology, object relations, and interpersonal). Why should this be the case? One set of reasons for this is political. Unlike self psychology and object relations theory, Interpersonal theory developed in relative independence of Freudian orthodoxy. Fairbairn, Klein, Winnicott, Bion, and Balint, on one hand, and Kohut, on the other, maintained their connections to the Freudian mainstream, even as the interpersonal thrust of their work diverged from it. Their thinking, even when it was highly controversial to their colleagues, seemed, at least, to emanate from within the political (i.e., institutional or theoretical) fold. They were recognizable as members of the same post-Freudian community.

The first generation of Interpersonal psychoanalysts, on the other hand, broke with their Freudian colleagues quite openly in the 1930s, so that thereafter, in the eyes of the Freudian orthodoxy of the time, the psychoanalysis these independent thinkers founded was seen as adversarial, and the analysts who practiced it as heretics. Unfortunately, Interpersonalists seemed to their former colleagues no longer to be part of *homo psychoanalyticus*.

Sullivan was not formally trained as a psychoanalyst and so was free to develop his ideas and psychoanalytic sensibility in relative freedom from Freudian orthodoxy. Fromm, Horney, Fromm-Reichmann, and Thompson, however, were all trained in Freudian institutes.
and taught in them as well. These analysts renounced their affiliations over issues of freedom of speech and thought, and, along with Sullivan and others, they pursued the independent development and expansion of the Interpersonal cultural agenda. (These events are described in more detail in chapter 2.)

The political reasons for the lack of recognition of the contributions of Interpersonal psychoanalysis are, however, quickly evaporating. There is today an increasing intellectual freedom in mainstream psychoanalysis, and one of its manifestations is an enthusiasm for comparative theorizing. In the postmodern world, it has come to seem less and less likely that it will ever become possible to make a judgment as simple as which theory is right and which is wrong. All serious, internally consistent theoretical systems deserve study; and so it is generally accepted today that it is more important to clarify divergent points of view than simply to accept or reject them.

Interpersonal psychoanalysis developed in relative independence for intellectual, as well as for political, reasons. Sullivan did not intend to be a psychoanalyst; he preferred to call his clinical discipline “psychiatry.” Though he certainly wanted his patients to understand the unconscious distortions in their experiences of him and even claimed that no treatment was truly under way until such an episode had been successfully negotiated, he did not particularly focus on transference and countertransference phenomena as sources of information. He did not see analysis of transference-countertransference as the core of the treatment, as many (or most) Interpersonal psychoanalysts do today. Quite the contrary: Sullivan’s goal was for the clinical situation to be so smooth that it essentially disappeared, becoming an immensely effective medium within which the detailed inquiry about extratransference matters could take precedence.

Not all of the early Interpersonal analysts subscribed to this credo, but Sullivan’s conception of the detailed inquiry was certainly the dominant understanding of clinical technique during those years. To the extent that Sullivan’s colleagues and students modeled their clinical practice after his own, then, the earliest Interpersonal approach to clinical work was not fully psychoanalytic. In this sense, it is thus understandable that mainstream psychoanalysts would not have identified the Interpersonal group as close psychoanalytic relatives.

What most mainstream analysts did not acknowledge in those days was that there were important members of the Interpersonal circle, such as Thompson, Fromm-Reichmann, Mabel Cohen, and Margaret Riech, who continued to use psychoanalytic concepts of unconscious processes, self, and transference-countertransference, along with Sullivan’s “psychiatric” notions. Many of these analysts, including Fromm, continued, correctly, to consider what they did psychoanalysis. Eventually, writers deeply influenced by Sullivan took a step that Sullivan himself did not take fully but that was implied and foreshadowed in his concept of the interpersonal field: they were among the first, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, to insist on the critical informative value of countertransference. The study of the mutual participation of analyst and patient in the analytic situation has been at the center of Interpersonal interest ever since, as detailed in the four chapters of Part V (The Analytic Relationship).

Today, all the reasons for the historical isolation of Interpersonal psychoanalysis, political and intellectual alike, either are on the decline or have disappeared completely. The time is right for comparison and mutual respect. Perhaps the result will be integration; perhaps it will be continued separate development (though one hopes the developments in each group would be known to the other). In either case, an important reason for undertaking an inclusive review of the literature of Interpersonal psychoanalysis and for tackling the immense difficulties of bringing to fruition a large, multi-authored, original volume was to bring Interpersonal psychoanalysis to the attention of a wider contemporary psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic readership.

There is another reason for pulling together a comprehensive review of the Interpersonal psychoanalytic literature. Interpersonal writers have not all used the same terms, nor have they built incrementally on a fundamental, shared theory. One of the greatest strengths of the Interpersonal perspective has always been its conceptual diversity and tolerance of pluralism and the resulting intellectual freedom, characteristics that have recently begun to take firmer root in the broader psychoanalytic community as well.

Sullivan was strongly opposed to abstraction and reification in theory. In fact, his philosophical bent and his personal predilection were to eschew theory whenever possible and replace it with direct observation. He was determined to forge a psychological understanding free of Freudian jargon. It is therefore a particular irony that the language and conceptual scheme
Sullivan devised as a means of avoiding the stuflifying aspects of the Freudian one were themselves esoteric. We have included in the volume a Glossary of Interpersonal terms, many of which are Sullivan’s. An appreciation of these terms is important in understanding Sullivan, although few of the writers who have been influenced by Sullivan have adopted his language in toto. They have preferred to use their own terms or have adapted traditional Freudian ones to their own purposes and use old language for new theory. In other instances, writers have negotiated meanings between the two conceptual schemes and attempted to maintain a link with both schools. The Glossary is intended to make Interpersonal terms and concepts accessible to the contemporary reader.

III

One of the most difficult problems in planning this volume was the question of whom to include and whom to exclude as Interpersonalists. To review a school of thought, one must be able to specify who belongs to it; and specifying who belongs to it requires a criterion. How should the boundaries of Interpersonal psychoanalysis be defined? Who is to be considered an Interpersonal analyst? By what criteria?

These questions are complex. In the first place, psychoanalysts are, first and foremost, citizens of their profession, rather than their particular theoretical orientations. Moreover, any particular psychoanalyst’s theoretical commitment may, for the reasons noted earlier, be nowhere nearly as neat and simple as the idea of belonging to a “school of thought” might make it seem. The same analyst who might be identified as an Interpersonalist may also feel a degree of attraction, commitment, or both to object relations theory, self psychology, or contemporary Freudian theory. The converse is equally true: those who identify themselves as object relations analysts or contemporary Freudsians may also be attracted to, or feel a degree of commitment to, Interpersonal concepts.

Nevertheless, the task of reviewing and integrating the Interpersonal literature required some method of drawing its boundaries. We hoped that we could devise conceptual markers that, when applied, would select only those chapters all four editors could agree were Interpersonal. Not surprisingly, the task proved impossible. We ultimately settled the problem by the pragmatic solution of reviewing only work by writers who had had something to do with the Interpersonal school and who felt that their work could be fairly called Interpersonal. In order to determine which psychoanalytic writers would be considered “Interpersonalists,” we devised a rule of thumb involving self-definition. That is, any writer who called himself by that label was acceptable to us for inclusion. In most cases, this criterion resulted in straightforward decisions and little controversy. With a few writers, however, there was some uncertainty; we were unsure whether these authors would accept the designation. In these cases we simply contacted the writers in question and asked whether they felt that their work was identified with the Interpersonal perspective. We also concluded that writers from outside the Interpersonal tradition, no matter how compatible their ideas or parallel their theories, could not be included, except in passing reference or in brief comparison. Thus, for example, the work of the British object relations theorists is only sketchily represented in this volume.

The most thorny decision of this kind was whether or not to include the work of Karen Horney and the writers who have developed and expanded her tradition in psychoanalysis. Horney was among the founders of the cultural-Interpersonal school, though she broke off from them early in her history of the group (see chapter 2). Nevertheless, Horney’s later work and ideas remained closely related to Interpersonal views. To include Horney’s work, though, as well as the vast literature included in the American Journal of Psychoanalysis (the journal of the group most influenced by Horney), seemed unfeasible. Moreover, despite the fact that some of the professionals trained at the center founded by Horney (after she broke off with the other cultural-Interpersonalists) have interacted with, and enriched the work of, the Interpersonal group, the Horney training center (the American Institute for Psychoanalysis) and the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis, and Psychology (the major center for Interpersonal training) and the clinical and intellectual traditions each have spawned have developed relatively independent of one another’s influence.

Given these considerations, the writings of Horney and those psychoanalysts most closely identified with her point of view were included only when that work was clearly an important
factor in the development of Interpersonal ideas. Horney, therefore, was included in the chapter on the history of Interpersonal psychoanalysis, in the discussion of diagnosis from an Interpersonal perspective, and in the chapters on anxiety, narcissism, and gender and sexuality.

A further problem regarding whom to include and whom to exclude in this volume was the question of whether or not to include a review of those writers who do not identify themselves as psychoanalytic in orientation but whose work has much in common with Interpersonal thinking. Many teachers, scholars, and mental health practitioners and contemporary movements in academic psychology, cognitive and behavioral treatment, and family and group therapy have drawn on the ideas of the Interpersonal school of psychoanalysis. They have discovered, as have contemporary non-Freudian psychoanalysts, that Interpersonal concepts provide powerful ways of understanding and treating problems in human living. Nevertheless, on simple, practical grounds, we thought that we could not address the immense literature involved in a comprehensive review that would include developments in these cognate fields. While, in many cases, this work involves the application of Interpersonal ideas rather than an extension of them, it is an important and growing literature that is based on the Interpersonal viewpoint, and it could be meaningfully reviewed and integrated at a future time.

Another important choice was whether or not to compare Interpersonal theory with other views, psychoanalytic and otherwise. Delineating the relationship of Interpersonal theory to other models would be of great help in clarifying all the ideas concerned. A systematic comparison of Interpersonal theory with object relations theory, for instance, would be immensely useful. As we began to realize how much material there was to cover, however, we saw that we had no choice: a comparative approach would have to await another project.

There was a vast Interpersonal literature to review and synthesize, and that task was the priority. We therefore purposely have kept comparisons to a minimum. Theories are compared only when such a comparison is necessary to the explication of an Interpersonal idea. Sometimes clinical or theoretical issues have arisen specifically because they were challenges to other psychoanalytic orientations. In these cases, the original view and the Interpersonal alternative to it are both discussed.

In this volume, we set out to provide a comprehensive overview and synthesis of the Interpersonal literature. Our aim was to present the complexity and diversity of this literature. The prospect was daunting. The sheer mass of the literature, hundreds of books and thousands of articles, was the first challenge. Much of the early literature in Interpersonal psychoanalysis appeared in Psychiatry, a journal Sullivan was instrumental in founding. Apart from Psychiatry, however, not many journals in the early days of American psychoanalysis published psychoanalytic work that was not Freudian in nature, so that early Interpersonal writings are scattered about. (Sanikis, for instance, the journal of the Indian Psychological Association, which published important early articles by Clara Thompson, Ralph Crowley, and Edward Tauber, is one notable exception.) Finally, though, in 1965, Contemporary Psychoanalysis was launched as a joint venture by the William Alanson White Institute, the psychoanalytic training facility most closely identified with the Interpersonal perspective, and the William Alanson White Society, which is composed of graduates of the White Institute. Since then, Contemporary Psychoanalysis has published four issues each year. The theoretical orientation of the writers in Contemporary Psychoanalysis has been diverse, as one might expect from a psychoanalytic institute that has always been pluralistic, but, of course, the major advantage for students of Interpersonal theory was that there was now a journal in which one could find a large proportion of the most significant Interpersonal writings. Other frequent venues for Interpersonal writers have been The Journal of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis and, more recently, the new journal Psychoanalytic Dialogues. There have also been numerous edited compilations of articles that have been either wholly or partly composed of articles by writers associated with the Interpersonal point of view. Many articles by Interpersonal psychoanalysts are scattered in other books and journals; and all of this comes before we even begin to discuss the hundreds of single-authored books.

This huge body of literature had to be broken into manageable and conceptually sensible parts. The literature was organized into categories that would reflect or articulate the central issues and concerns of Interpersonal psychoanalytic thought. We formulated categories that seemed to follow the natural
lines of division in the literature itself, and we attempted to accomplish comprehensiveness without undue repetition. One large cluster of topics seemed to form around theoretical issues that were not directly clinical in nature; the other, around issues in clinical theory. In the first cluster appear chapters on broad theoretical issues in the study of personality (Part I: chapters 2–8), on psychological development (Part II: chapters 9–12), and on problems in diagnosis and psychopathology (Part III: chapters 13–22). The clinical material fell into the following categories: an overview of the analytic process (Part IV: chapters 23–24), the analytic relationship (Part V: chapters 25–28), aspects of technique (Part VI: chapters 29–32), and special clinical topics (Part VII: chapters 33–37). The volume begins with a section on the history of the major figures of early Interpersonal psychoanalysis and ends with an appendix containing the Glossary of Interpersonal terms. The authors of the various chapters were asked to define common themes and to illustrate the central Interpersonal positions in their selected topic areas. The emphasis was on explication rather than critique, though the latter was included when necessary to articulate or clarify contrasting Interpersonal positions on various points of theory or therapy.

Within each part of the volume, the chapters are organized, as much as possible, in a sequence that reflects their relevance, importance, or conceptual standing within the Interpersonal framework. Thus, although there has been relatively little Interpersonal writing on narcissism as a diagnostic category, narcissistic issues, in both the broad and narrow sense, are central to all Interpersonal views of psychopathology. Therefore, the chapter on narcissism precedes the others in this section. Similarly, Interpersonal conceptions of the contents of the mind as being inextricably shaped by interpersonal experience necessitate a conception of cognitive process as central to psychological function, so these ideas have been presented at the beginning of the section on personality.

During the planning stages of the volume, we realized that authors of some of the chapters had made prior contributions to the very literature they were now being asked to review. How should they refer to their own work? It seemed awkward to switch suddenly out of the third-person voice and into the first person and then just as suddenly, when moving on to cover another writer's work, to return to the third person. In the interest of preserving continuity, we therefore asked writers of the chapters to refer to their own work in the same third-person voice they used throughout.

V

There is today an increasing understanding among analysts of all theoretical convictions that the psychoanalytic situation is fundamentally an interpersonal field of experience and must be studied in terms of the mutuality of influence between analyst and patient. We believe that the ideas developed by Interpersonals, reviewed in the following chapters, will help contemporary psychoanalysts to forge a new interpersonal, two-person understanding of human problems in living. The techniques for working with transference and countertransference developed by Interpersonals are powerful and versatile therapeutic tools for the treatment of all patients. Moreover, Interpersonal views of development in infancy, adolescence, and throughout the life cycle offer useful and unique clinical perspectives on the processes of psychological growth and change. Interpersonal conceptions of cognition, affect, anxiety, and other personality processes provide new alternatives to models of personality functioning that derive from drive theory. New Interpersonal conceptions of psychopathology applied to the traditional nosological categories offer a fresh view of human suffering and the human potential for self-transformation.
Chapter 2

History of the Founders of Interpersonal Psychoanalysis

Dale H. Ortmeyer

Interpersonal psychoanalysis is rooted in the American culture of the early years of the twentieth century, a culture shaped by the pragmatism and egalitarianism characteristic of that era. Classical psychoanalysis, on the other hand, is a product of fin-de-siècle Vienna and evolved in response to the intellectual and psychological climate of Europe at the turn of the century. Interpersonal psychoanalysis, while using European psychoanalytic thought as a starting point, has developed along lines that are clearly in keeping with the cultural characteristics of the United States (Kurzweil, 1989).

Harry Stack Sullivan has been called “psychiatrist of America” (Perry, 1982), and the Interpersonal theory of psychoanalysis that originated with him clearly bears the imprint of its American heritage. Pragmatism, pluralism, and egalitarianism are characteristic of, and fundamental to, the Interpersonal approach to psychoanalysis. Even though some of the European-born, early Interpersonalists had been trained in the classical tradition, they welcomed the greater egalitarianism of Sullivan’s thinking, since they themselves had already come to question aspects of classical psychoanalysis prior to their departure from Europe.

This chapter gives students of the Interpersonal approach an understanding of how Interpersonal psychoanalysis came to be and how its tenets evolved from the particular histories of the early Interpersonalists, histories that were shaped by the cultures of the countries these analysts came from, by world events, and by individual family backgrounds. Analysts are interested in their patients’ individual histories and experiences since they help understand the patient. Similarly, the understanding of Interpersonal theory and technique is enlivened and enriched by some acquaintance with the varied personal and professional experiences of those analysts who are generally considered the pioneers of the Interpersonal tradition in psychoanalysis.

THE INTERPERSONAL SCHOOL OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

The Interpersonal school has its beginning in the work of Harry Stack Sullivan. While Sullivan did not formally refer to himself as a psychoanalyst, he was a member of the American Psychoanalytic Association and is recognized today as the founder of Interpersonal psychoanalysis.

Beginning with Sullivan’s own development as a frame of reference, this chapter focuses on the contributions of the following major inter- personal and cultural analysts: Sándor Ferenczi, Clara Thompson, Erich Fromm, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, and Karen Horney.

Sullivan, Thompson, Fromm, and Fromm-Reichmann are generally viewed as the founders of the school of Interpersonal psychoanalysis. Karen Horney, while not considered an Interpersonalist, nevertheless shared much of the Interpersonal sensibility while going her own way in her thinking about character and culture.

Sullivan, Thompson, Fromm, Fromm-Reichmann, and Horney came from different cultural backgrounds and from different continents; most of them did not know each other in the early years of their respective professional careers, and they developed their clinical approaches and theories independently. As they became acquainted, however, they developed personal and professional ties, began to share ideas, and influenced each other’s thinking. They were firmly convinced that cultural and economic realities contribute to character formation as well as to psychopathology, and they emphasized that knowledge of an individual’s cultural and environmental realities, past and present, is required for understanding people’s strengths and weaknesses.

The emphasis on cultural and economic realities represented a major break from the Freudian tradition in which pathology and
development were thought to be determined by the vicissitudes of drives and how these drives are discharged. Given Freud's stature in the early years of psychoanalysis, it was rather remarkable that Interpersonalists dared to reject drive theory, the universality of the Oedipus complex, penis envy, and other concepts central to Freudian theory. It required personal conviction and integrity to oppose Freud's theoretical and clinical influence. Rejection of some of the fundamentals of Freudian thinking could well have meant professional suicide.

Sullivan, Thompson, Fromm, Fromm- Reichmann, and Horney all valued aspects of Freud's pioneering work; however, they put their own imprint on some of his concepts while discarding others and simultaneously developing their own perspective. For instance, Interpersonal analysts agree that transference is an important element of the analytic undertaking; however, their notion of transference takes on a broader meaning than that postulated by Freud.2

Interpersonalists have difficulty with Freudian concepts that are not open to empirical verification; for example, they reject the concept of libido and related issues of psychosexual developmental stages. The first generation of Interpersonalists believed firmly in a clinical approach that was not dictated by theory or abstract concepts. They were willing to avoid theoretical speculation in the interest of discovering how to be most helpful to the individual patient.

Sullivan's pragmatic approach to treatment arose from his work with the kind of patient who could not benefit from classical psychoanalysis, which mandated that the patient be able to free-associate and that the analyst be a blank screen. Sullivan was not alone in questioning the basic rules of classical technique, and his doubts were shared by the other Interpersonalists. As a result, the analytic process itself, the clinical dialogue, underwent profound changes that set it apart from the classical model that followed the requirements of free association. Communication in the consulting room had to take on a different character to make room for understanding the more severely disturbed patients. Since the clinical inquiry (which Sullivan also called the psychiatric interview or inquiry) is central to Sullivan's thinking, a brief discussion of some of the major characteristics of such an inquiry will further the understanding of the Interpersonal approach to treatment and of Sullivan himself.

HARRY STACK SULLIVAN
(1892–1949)

The Clinical Inquiry
As stated earlier, the cultural climate of twentieth-century America had an intellectual impact that affected psychoanalytic theory. Sullivan, in keeping with the spirit of his time, was a pragmatist, and he did not approach the clinical dialogue from some preconceived, theoretical vantage point. Instead, he saw it as taking place within a setting where two people meet. One is a patient beset by "difficulties in living" and the other is an expert who uses his expertise to help the patient understand himself better so that he or she can deal more effectively with life. Sullivan's phrase "difficulties in living," has profound implications in terms of his view of patients. He does not consider patients to be different from other people, not even from therapists. The clinical dialogue takes place between equals; the therapist's position differs only by virtue of his expertise in enabling patients to clarify their difficulties and to understand themselves.

The skillful therapist clarifies meanings and validates his patient's thoughts and feelings. The language of patients is frequently personalized, emotional, and judgmental; descriptions are often suffused with, and determined by, assigned motivations; actions and communications of others may be interpreted or misinterpreted according to some private meaning; reality may not be differentiated from wish or fantasy, and expectations are confused. William James (1890) talked about selective attention in discussing the "normal" personality. Sullivan (1956) ascribes many of the difficulties in communication and in interpersonal relationships to "selective inattention," whereby private meanings obscure reality.

The clinical interview helps the patient attend to aspects of reality that he has selectively inattended. It elucidates, at the same time, the patient's fantasies about these aspects, so that they need not obscure the reality and can actually enrich it. The reality so examined encompasses both the patient's experiences in his life past and present and events in the consulting room in his relationship to the therapist. In short, the clinical inquiry is a process of clarification where language, words, and images are contextualized, and experience becomes consensually validated. Inquiry,3 for Sullivan, is the essential tool of analytic work. It is different from free association, where the analyst often
intuits the “truth” from the patient’s associations and interprets their meanings and origins. Sullivan is particularly interested in patients’ misuse of language (Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983). Misuse of language serves to obscure and conceal meaning; when it occurs, it usually is evidence of parataxic distortions, which add to difficulties in living and which can then be explored in the context of therapy. Sullivan has described his views of the clinical interview in a series of invited lectures at the Washington School of Psychiatry in 1944 and 1945. These lectures were subsequently published under the title The Psychiatric Interview (Sullivan, 1954).4

In summary, the inquiry is a spoken communication between two people, expert and client, who are voluntarily talking together to understand the characteristic patterns in the life of the client. To accomplish this the psychiatric interview must address the details of a given event with, when, where, who, and what questions which are designed to help the patient recapture what actually occurred. The who and what questions help the patient describe the significant others involved in the interaction, what they have said to one another and to the patient; how and why questions are directed at the patient’s view of his past, his motivations, and his values as they relate to present experiences. Sullivan thought this kind of detailed investigation and inquiry necessary to reveal “the relatively enduring patterns of recurrent interpersonal situations which characterize human life” (p. 111), patterns determined by the individual’s life experiences within his family and within his culture. Only when these patterns are recaptured in the course of the clinical inquiry can earlier personality warps be delineated and corrected (Kvarnis, 1978).

Sullivan’s Personal Life
Perry’s (1982) biography paints a vivid picture of young Sullivan, who spent an intellectually impoverished, isolated childhood in Chenango County, upstate New York. An only child, he grew up with a semi-invalid mother who dominated her husband, a relatively uneducated farmer. Mother made much of Sullivan’s own frailty and actively discouraged him from helping his father with farm chores. Sullivan had little opportunity for sophisticated verbal interactions. Intellectual and social skill acquisition was possible only by means of books. But even this reading was relatively unguided. Occasional visits from a literate aunt offered some intellectual stimulation, although it was clearly minimal.

Sullivan’s teens and early 20s were turbulent. The transition to adulthood was not easy, and while Sullivan was successful in his professional life, he nevertheless developed into a complicated and, in some ways, troubled adult (Chapman, 1976; Chatelaine, 1981). Sullivan remained single throughout his life, and it is generally understood that he was gay. Given the stigma attached to homosexuality in the early years of the twentieth century, it is understandable that only a few of his closest colleagues were aware of his being gay. At one time, Sullivan actually proposed marriage to Clara Thompson; however, neither he nor Thompson took this proposal seriously. Despite his gay orientation, Sullivan missed not having a family of his own, and he adopted a son, James, who lived with him for many years. Sullivan was an omnivorous reader, and he befriended highly educated people, among them William A. White, Edward Sapir, Adolf Meyer, and Clara Thompson. All returned his friendship, despite the fact that he also had the reputation for being at times acerbic, difficult, and sardonic, particularly when he supervised the work of younger colleagues. Sullivan’s whimsical and playful nature is best illustrated by the Zodiac (Perry, p. 354) group, where each member, in accordance with Sullivan’s request, was to select an animal as personal symbol. Sullivan himself chose to be a horse, Thompson became a puma, William Silverberg a gazelle, and Horney a water buffalo. Despite the humorous labels, the Zodiac group met for serious and fruitful discussions of theoretical issues and patients. In a lighter vein, however, the meetings often were followed by a visit to a local pub or nightclub. This combination of the serious and the playful characterized much of Sullivan’s life in New York, where, in addition to his professional work, he took advantage of the many cultural activities offered by the city.

Sullivan was brilliant, sensitive, and aware of the feelings of others. Since he had to struggle to learn language skills and to feel comfortable in relating to others, he became particularly attuned to the communication difficulties of his patients. His understanding of juvenile and preadolescent life, his emphasis on current experience, and his refusal to see developmental issues of the first few years of life as the sole determinants of later adjustment all had their origin in his own experiences. Similarly, Sullivan’s awareness of the importance of culture

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4. The lecture series was published as a book and later reprinted in a collection of Sullivan’s writings. It offers valuable insights into the development of Sullivan’s therapy approach.
and of social class in mental illness and his interest in language, communication, and semiotics all can be traced back to his own impoverished background.

Sullivan's professional experience with hospitalized schizophrenic patients had significant impact on his view of clinical work. He worked at Sheppard-Enoch Pratt Hospital in Towson, Maryland, from 1923 to 1930 and became director of research in 1925. Ross McClure Chapman, superintendent of Sheppard, gave Sullivan the freedom to devise techniques for working with the patients at the hospital. Sullivan demonstrated his talent for reaching and communicating with the young male schizophrenics at Sheppard-Pratt, and he developed his own dynamic approach to working with these patients. He took Adolf Meyer's view that catatonia represents a defense as a starting point and gradually refined his own ideas about the split between self and other. The use of a detailed, structured interview enabled Sullivan to help very disturbed patients give up pathological thought processes and the intense affect accompanying them.

While much of Sullivan's approach was based on his own clinical experience with patients, he also became acquainted with the ideas of others in the field. Clearly, Adolf Meyer played an important role in Sullivan's thinking. Meyer, who had come to the United States from Switzerland, where he had been acquainted with Jung and Bleuler, began work at Kankakee State Hospital in Illinois in 1892. Meyer had a distinguished career; he moved from Kankakee to Worcester Hospital and Clark University and later became director of the Pathological Institute of the New York State Hospital. Meyer made the latter a leading training center for psychiatrists and encouraged the use of psychoanalytic techniques in the treatment of hospitalized patients. Eventually, Meyer became director of the Department of Psychiatry at Johns Hopkins Medical School, and here Sullivan became acquainted with him. Meyer had personal experience with psychoanalysis, and his thinking was influenced by Abraham in Berlin and Bleuler and Jung in Zurich (Leys, 1985, 1991). Sullivan shared and appreciated Meyer's conviction that hospitalized patients were accessible to dynamic treatment.

Sullivan's Intellectual Milieu

Sullivan's interpersonal perspective has its roots in the mainstream of American thought, as represented by William James and Charles S. Pierce at Harvard and the social scientists at the University of Chicago, especially George Herbert Mead and Edward Sapir, as well as Adolf Meyer and Charles Horton Cooley. William James's philosophical theory is characteristically American. In contrast to German idealism, it embraces pragmatism, empiricism, and pluralism. James shunned reductionistic thinking and suggested that confusion, ambiguity, and uncertainty are fundamental to the empirical approach. The task of the empiricist is to chart thoughts and things, to describe their functions and their relationship to experience. James objected to the Freudian view that theoretical validity can be demonstrated by symbols, myths, and causality. He preferred to test the validity of theory by means of actual experience. James, mistrusting hypothetical constructs of causality, rejected Freud's notion of instinct and childhood sexuality. Instead, James talked about the concept of self and postulated that the subliminal self is on a continuum with the conscious mind, a notion markedly different from Freud's structural theory. Sullivan's open-ended formulations about patients' difficulties in living, his distrust of theoretical abstractions, and his insistence on experiential data all echo William James's American psychology.

Despite his intellectual kinship to James, Sullivan does not mention him in his writings; through Adolf Meyer, he had become acquainted with James' philosophy, and Meyer's influence proved more direct. Sullivan, like Meyer, focused on the healthy aspects of personality rather than exclusively on pathology. Meyer's refusal to adhere to the Cartesian duality of subject/object finds an echo in Sullivan's insistence that the study of human experience must take place in the interpersonal realm. Psychiatry must use the dyad as its focus of study.

Meyer and Sullivan also had similar views on developmental issues. For both of them, childhood begins with the use of language and signs. Sullivan's "juvenile era" coincides with Meyer's "Big Injun" years; and both Sullivan and Meyer emphasize the importance of same-sex friendships in the preadolescent years. Meyer clearly shared much of William James's thinking; however, he was also intimately acquainted with the works of Charles Pierce and John Dewey (Mandelbaum, 1958). Pierce's philosophy of choice, that is, a philosophy that stresses the importance of having choices, resonates with Sullivan's view that the clinical interview aims to clarify meanings so that
informed choices become possible. In general, the views of the members of the so-called Chicago school are, in many ways, mirrored in Sullivan’s thinking. Sullivan refers to G. H. Mead within his own discussion of the self-system, and gives him full credit for pioneering the concept of self, a concept that is much different from the Freudian notion of ego.

Given Sullivan’s interest in culture as it contributes to personality formation and in the empirical approach, it is not surprising that he would go beyond the study of psychiatry, forge joint studies with other disciplines (Sullivan, 1964), and eventually address broader social and political issues on the international scene. Sullivan worked intensively with a number of social scientists. In the late 1920s he collaborated with Lawrence K. Frank, Harold Lasswell, and William Alanson White in setting up the First and Second Colloquium on Personality Investigation (Sullivan, 1929–1930). The colloquia were designed to bring together social scientists and psychiatrists to develop joint studies. Sullivan’s interest in such joint studies was further demonstrated when, in 1933, he collaborated with Edward Sapir, Ernst E. Hadley, Lucile Dooley, William Alanson White, and A. A. Brill in setting up the William Alanson White Psychoanalytic Foundation, to be renamed later the William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation for the Fusion of Psychiatry and the Social Sciences. A few years later the Psychiatric Foundation created two training and research institutes: the Washington School of Psychiatry was started in 1936 and began publishing the journal Psychiatry in 1937; the New York Division of the Washington School of Psychiatry was started in 1943. It became independent of the Washington School in 1946 and was renamed the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis and Psychology.

The years of World War II had a profound impact on Sullivan. He became actively involved in trying to apply his interpersonal understanding to international issues of war and peace. He was particularly interested in the work of the World Health Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In 1943, with his friend, G. Brock Chisholm, the first director of the World Health Organization, Sullivan arranged for a series of lectures to be given both in Washington, D.C., and New York City. The lectures were published by Sullivan (1947) under the title “Remobilization for Enduring Peace and Social Progress.” Three years later, in 1950, Sullivan was one of eight participants in Paris in the UNESCO Tension Project. Six countries and five disciplines collaborated in the project, which resulted in Sullivan’s (1950) paper “Tensions Interpersonal and International: A Psychiatrist’s View.” Sullivan’s interest toward the end of his life in integrating psychiatric psychoanalytic thinking with other disciplines and with cultural and international issues found an echo in Fromm’s work 30 years later.

Sullivan was passionate in his belief that psychoanalysis and the social sciences could play a major role in preventing the kind of atrocities and terrors endemic to war and nuclear dangers. Despite frail health, having contracted bacterial endocarditis in 1945 and advised to refrain from strenuous activity, he opted to remain involved in the World Mental Health Organization, even though this entailed much intercontinental, strenuous traveling that could threaten his health. Far from entertaining grandiose notions about his own powers to change the course of world events, however, he is said to have regarded his own decision to remain active in international affairs through participation in UNESCO and the World Mental Health Organization with the kind of wry humor he was known for: “It appears that I’m about to make even more of a fool of myself than usual, but, by God, I’m going to try it!” (Perry, 1982, p. 404).

The European Heritage

Sullivan’s earliest papers were written within the framework of Freud’s ideas (Crowley, 1975). Among the early European analysts, however, Sandor Ferenczi became particularly important to Sullivan. Sullivan had heard Ferenczi in 1926 gave his paper on “Present Day Problems in Psychoanalysis” at the meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in New York City in 1926. In the following year, Sullivan, with William A. White, discussed Ferenczi’s paper “The Genital Theory” (Ferenczi, 1927). Around that time, Sullivan is said to have told Clara Thompson that Ferenczi was the only European analyst that he would trust and that she should go into analysis with him. Thompson followed Sullivan’s suggestion and started analysis with Ferenczi in 1928, and she continued over the next five summers to see him. Thompson discussed her experience as Ferenczi’s analysand with Sullivan, but it is not clear why Sullivan never saw Ferenczi himself; instead, he had a brief period of analysis with
Thompson. Sullivan and Ferenczi share some analytic views that differentiate them from the classical analytic thinking of their time, but it is only recently that the similarity of their views has garnered the attention of contemporary Interpersonal analysts (Wolstein, 1989).

SÁNDOR FERENCZI (1873–1933)

Fin-de-siècle Budapest, with its conservative medicine, its inequality with Austria, its tradition-bound Hapsburg monarchy, and its general malaise, seemed hardly a fertile ground for psychoanalysis to develop. Yet develop it did, perhaps because of a cultural liveliness that infused the arts, as well as the intellectual, economic, and industrial climate of Budapest. The fine arts were thriving; Bartók and Kodály were writing music; the secularist art group was active (Meszaros, 1991); economic and industrial development, with a fast-growing middle class, was expanding. Psychoanalysis had a lively press. Ignátus, together with Ferenczi, founded the Hungarian Psychoanalytic Society. Ignátus was the editor of Nyugat, a liberal journal read by the educated, and psychoanalysis became popular among the progressive intellectuals. In this climate Ferenczi read Freud’s books as they were being published; nevertheless, he resisted Freud’s ideas initially. But by 1907 he changed his mind and became eager to experiment with psychoanalysis. Ferenczi met Freud through Fölöp Stein (Vikar, 1991), who had studied under Jung and Bleuler. Freud had already heard about Ferenczi through Jung, and he and Ferenczi quickly became friends and colleagues. Freud’s Clark University Lectures evolved from his conversations with Ferenczi.

During the early years of their friendship, Ferenczi was close to Freud in his thinking. As he began to experiment with his own innovative ideas, however, he began to differ from Freud in some fundamental ways that moved him closer to what later became the Interpersonal view of psychoanalytic theory and treatment (Haynal, 1991). Ferenczi had pushed some aspects of Freudian theory to its limits, only to find that this could create serious problems in treatment. For example, Ferenczi extended Freud’s concepts of abstinence and neutrality to such a degree that he found it precipitated intense, regressive transference neuroses in some patients. Moved by the intense suffering of these patients, Ferenczi abandoned his neutral stance and came to reject the conflict model of neurosis in favor of the concept of early maternal deprivation and trauma. Ferenczi concluded that patients who had experienced early trauma need a corrective emotional experience in treatment. Treatment can provide such an experience only if the analyst does not insist on clinical aloofness. Clinical aloofness serves to create intense anxiety and in that way duplicates the childhood experience of deprivation (Stanton, 1991).

Ferenczi resembles Sullivan in his attention to the level of anxiety in his patients. He, too, worked toward anxiety reduction so that patients feel relatively safe in the analytic venture. A safe atmosphere enables patients to become aware of threatening thoughts, fantasies, and experiences that have been dissociated. For Ferenczi, anxiety can be contained in a variety of ways, and he has included physical relaxation techniques in his work with patients. Relaxation technique, according to Green (1964), can be likened to a corrective emotional experience, and while Interpersonalists do not generally recommend relaxation therapy, it has sometimes been suggested as an adjunct to treatment (Ralph Crowley, personal communication).

Ferenczi, like Sullivan, came to question the usefulness of absolute analytic neutrality. The analyst who presents himself as a blank screen encourages idealization and transference distortions to such an extent that treatment may become bogged down or unnecessarily prolonged. Transference, or parataxic distortion, as Sullivan would call it, must be analyzed. In divergence from Freud, however, both Sullivan and Ferenczi believed that analytic attention must be paid to both positive and negative distortions. Idealizing transferences to the analyst do not get resolved by interpretation alone; the patient needs to experience the analyst as human, as someone who is not always detached and objective.

While agreeing that idealization of the analyst makes for difficulties in treatment, Ferenczi and Sullivan differ in how they go about discouraging it. Sullivan focuses his inquiry on patients’ distortions in their dealings with others in everyday life. Ferenczi, on the other hand, articulates his own countertransference reaction to being idealized. This helps the patient become aware of the idealizing distortion and its impact on the analyst.

Ferenczi and Sullivan agree that social and economic issues play a role in mental illness. Sullivan, through his extensive psychiatric experience in the selective service, the armed forces, and the Veterans’ Administration, had firsthand
data about the impact of social class and poverty on psychological development and mental health. Ferenczi was similarly convinced that social class, ethnic kinship, and poverty had their own unique effect on how an individual came to function in his particular society and to what extent his functioning might be indicative of mental illness. As will be seen later in this chapter, Fromm was concerned with similar ideas, as shown by his research dealing with blue-collar workers during the time of the Weimar Republic and by his attention to the interplay between society and character formation. Recently, the relationship between social class and mental health has been explored further in the Blue-Collar Project of the William Alanson White Institute (Caligor et al., 1979) and in the work of Grey (1966).

Despite Ferenczi’s kinship to the Interpersonal approach to treatment, it must be stressed that not all of his views would have met with the approval of Sullivan or later Interpersonalists. Ferenczi was given to the innovative and experimental and suggested, at times, rather extreme changes in technique. His concept of “mutual analysis” was one example where Ferenczi stretched the interpersonal insistence on equality between patient and analyst to its limits, since in “mutual analysis” one analytic hour was spent on analyzing the patient, while the next hour was devoted to an analysis of the analyst by the patient. While this technical innovation expressed concretely the mutuality inherent in the analytic process, a mutuality certainly deemed essential by Interpersonalists, its enactment as a rule and without thoughtfulness was eventually questioned by Ferenczi himself. Contemporary Interpersonalists, such as Wolstein (1959), Epstein (1977), and others, have developed their own ideas about the role of mutuality in the analytic process and stress the importance of countertransference analysis and the mutual exploration by patient and analyst of the experience between them.

CLARA THOMPSON (1893–1958)

Clara Thompson, one year younger than Sullivan, was his most intimate, loyal colleague and friend. Sullivan first heard Thompson lecture at the Phipps Clinic at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and they soon became close friends, remaining so until Sullivan’s death in 1949.

Little has been written about Thompson’s family and early years. Coming from a New England background where privacy may have been particularly valued, the absence of biographical information is not surprising. Whether there were additional personal reasons that motivated Thompson to keep family data to herself cannot be determined. Whatever the reasons for Thompson’s reticence regarding her personal background, she proved to be remarkably open in her later years as director of the William Alanson White Institute. During summers on Cape Cod, her house was open to students and analysands alike, and present-day analysts who worked with her have fond memories of her gracious hospitality.

Thompson has been described as a hardworking professional who was excessively untalented and modest. Socially shy, she was forceful and outspoken when professional principles were violated or when colleagues were unjustly attacked. Her analyses and supervises describe her as spare in her comments. What she did say was pithy, to the point, and free of jargon.

Thompson’s professional development is well documented. Her medical career started at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, where she was first a student and then a resident from 1916 until the early 1920s. Thompson knew many of Sullivan’s colleagues, among them Edward F. Kemp, William A. White, and Adolf Meyer. While Thompson and Sullivan always lived in separate households, they became increasingly close, particularly after James Inscoe, at age 15, began living with Sullivan.

Thompson worked at the Phipps Clinic for several years but then, in 1926, was forced by Adolf Meyer to leave her position because she would not stop seeing Joseph Thompson (no relative), a naval medical officer at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital, in treatment. Shortly thereafter Sullivan urged Thompson to start a new analysis with Ferenczi (Green, 1964).

Thompson’s career within the analytic community includes some dramatic highlights. It is not generally known that she was one of the cofounders of the American Psychoanalytic Association. Her membership in that organization came to an end, however, when she resigned from it in protest against the decision of the New York Psychoanalytic Institute to revoke Karen Horney’s teaching and training privileges. (See section on Horney for details of her censure.) Thompson’s decision to give up her membership in the American Psychoanalytic Association, which was the prestigious analytic professional organization of its time, speaks to Thompson’s passionate sense of loyalty to a friend as well as to the seriousness of
her commitment to the principles of Interpersonal psychoanalysis.

Thompson was one of the cofounders of the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis and Psychology. More than any of the other founders, she was instrumental in crafting and directing the early growth of the Institute from its inception in 1943 until her death in 1959. Thompson was the director of the Institute for 16 years, and while she herself did not develop a major theoretical approach, she agreed with much of Sullivan’s thinking. In addition, she extended his approach to areas he had not explicitly discussed or been interested in. Thompson’s Selected Papers (Green, 1964) includes chapters on female psychology, the single person, masochism, alienation, and so on.

Thompson “recognized the potentialities of those whose problems often involved overt conflict with the conventional restraints of our society . . . , the homosexual, the single woman and the schizophrenic” (pp. vii–viii). In addition, Thompson was vitally interested in issues of psychoanalytic training and education, and the training requirements of the William Alanson White Institute still carry her stamp.

Despite her responsibilities as director of the W. A. White Institute, Thompson found time to write prolifically. She discussed the works of Ferenczi, Sullivan, and Fromm and made original contributions to the treatment of women and the understanding of female development. Perry (1982) suggests that it was actually Thompson who, in large part, wrote Sullivan’s (1972) chapter on female development. Thompson (1955) shared Sullivan’s view of the importance of the detailed inquiry in treatment and writes,

Therapy consists of the gradually clarifying for the patient the kind of things he is doing to and with other people, as a result of his distortions of them . . . he (the patient) must, in addition [to reconstruction] see clearly what function it [the distortion] serves in the present and how it is meeting his needs [p. 536].

**ERICH FROMM (1900–1980)**

Erich Fromm was a central figure in the development of the Interpersonal approach to psychoanalysis and was closely acquainted and friendly with the other Interpersonalists. Perhaps he is best described as a renaissance man, a scholar with a flair for the dramatic who could alternately impress his colleagues with his brilliance and, at other times, antagonize them with his arrogance. It is reported that when some of his supervisees complained about his habitual lateness for supervisory sessions, he replied, “I thought they should be glad that they get to see me at all (Gerard Chrzanowski, personal communication, 1989).”

Fromm, like Frieda Fromm-Reichmann and Karen Horney, came to the United States because of the political developments in Europe, and, like them, he spent his early years in the United States in a variety of academic settings. Fromm became friend and colleague of both Sullivan and Thompson in 1934, when he left Chicago for New York and joined the faculty of the International Institute for Social Research at Columbia University. Fromm’s friendship with Sullivan and Thompson continued until their respective deaths in 1949 and 1958.

The present section summarizes particularly important relationships and events in Fromm’s life, the importance of his religious background, his political-social concerns, and finally his analytic career. Since so much in Fromm’s life and views is interrelated, however, overlap between the various aspects is inevitable (Landis and Tauber, 1975; Burston, 1991).

**Personal History**

Fromm’s personal history is complicated, not only because of geographic dislocations caused by political events but also because of the various personal connections between him and the other European-born Interpersonalists.

Fromm met Frieda Fromm-Reichmann in Heidelberg, Germany, in the 1920s. He had gone into analysis with her at her clinic, which had an orthodox Freudian orientation. The analysis was terminated when Fromm and Fromm-Reichmann fell in love. They were married in 1926 and subsequently lived in Heidelberg, Frankfurt, and Berlin. Four years later Fromm, having contracted tuberculosis, went to a Swiss sanatorium. Fromm-Reichmann left Germany for Palestine around the same time. The couple met again in the United States, and their marriage was formally ended in 1940. Despite the divorce, Fromm and Fromm-Reichmann remained friends until the latter’s death in 1957.

Erich Fromm’s friendship with Karen Horney dated back to the late 1920s, when they were both at the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute. When Horney moved to Chicago in 1932, she invited Fromm to join her at the university. This invitation may have saved
Fromm's life began at a time when Hitler took power in Germany, and Jewish analysts began to flee from the Nazi regime. For the next ten years, Fromm and Horney were intimate friends and colleagues; however, their relationship came to an abrupt end when Fromm, a nonmedical analyst, was deprived of faculty status at Horney's Institute. In a gesture of friendship, Thompson also severed her connection with Horney and founded, together with Fromm, Sullivan, Fromm-Reichmann, and David and Janet Riech, the William Alanson White Institute in New York City. Not long after this, Fromm moved to Mexico, where he founded the Department of Psychoanalysis at the medical school of the University of Mexico. He directed that department until 1965.

Fromm spent the last decade of his life with his third wife near Zurich, Switzerland, and from there he renewed his contact with Germany. He gave radio broadcasts, had speaking engagements, and wrote a number of articles. He had an ever-present hope for an improved humanistic and cultural life in Germany, the same country that under Hitler had destroyed every value Fromm stood for and that would have killed him, had he remained there. The highlight of Fromm's reconciliation with Germany was to take place in Frankfurt, the city of his birth. He was to be awarded Frankfurt's highest honor, the Goethe Medal, on his 80th birthday. Six days before his birthday, on March 17, 1980, Fromm died of heart failure in Muralto, Switzerland. The Goethe Medal was given posthumously to his widow.

In discussing Fromm's contributions to the interpersonal approach to psychoanalysis, it is important to note that he was particularly knowledgeable about religion, political-social-cultural science, and psychoanalysis.

Religion

Fromm, an only child, was born into a religious Frankfurt family. His father was a successful businessman who was ashamed of his "capitalistic" work, wanted to be a rabbi, and study the Talmud full-time (Knapp, 1989). Fromm's mother had a Talmudic background as well, and Erich studied the Talmud for many years. Gradually, however, he turned away from the study of Judaism and entered the University of Heidelberg in 1917. He majored in sociology and became interested in Buddhism, Martin Buber's Judaic existentialism, and Meister Eckhart's German mysticism. Fromm's doctoral dissertation attests to his continuing interest in Judaism, albeit from a sociopsychological point of view; it is titled "Jewish Law: A Contribution to the Sociology of Diaspora Judaism." In it Fromm compared three Jewish sects: the Karaites, the Hassids, and the Reformed Jews. Fromm's ongoing interest in religion as it relates to ethics and psychoanalysis is further expressed in the Terry Lectures that he and Ralph Linton gave jointly at Yale University in 1948 and 1949. Later on, Fromm joined Suzuki and gave a seminar on Zen Buddhism and psychoanalysis in Cuernavaca, Mexico. In short, Fromm continued to grapple with religious issues throughout his adult years.

Fromm's religious interest may well account for the importance he attaches to the humanistic potential of man, a potential that leads men to pursue humanistic goals instead of seeking material acquisitions. His belief in man's humanistic potential suffused his thinking with a sense of hope for humanity, and he is unique among analysts in suggesting that the concept of hope deserves a place in psychoanalytic theory. In the latter part of his life Fromm (1970) was increasingly drawn to Buddhism. He meditated daily, devoted time to concentration exercises, and remained faithful to the principles laid out in his book *Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis*.

Political, Sociocultural Concerns

Fromm's political and sociocultural thinking makes an important contribution to both psychoanalysis and humanism. His interest in politics and sociocultural issues dates back to his early years in Frankfurt, where, with Leo Löwenthal, he was active in the Free Jewish Academy. Löwenthal introduced Fromm to the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research at Frankfurt University. Fromm became a tenured professor and eventually director of psychosocial research and consulting analyst. The faculty of the Frankfurt Institute consisted mainly of Marxist scholars, among them Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse. With Hitler's rise to power in 1933, the institute went into exile. At the invitation of Nicholas Murray Butler, then president of Columbia University, the Frankfurt Institute became the International Institute for Social Research at Columbia University. This institute was consistently avant-garde in its assault on mass culture (Hughes, 1983). Its journal, the *Journal of Social Research*, edited by Horkheimer, published scholarly articles and reviews, many written by Fromm. These articles formed the basis for many of Fromm's later books.
They include Fromm’s (1962) thinking about social character and about the development of a new social psychology based both on Freudian psychology and on Marxist socioeconomics (Fromm, 1962) as well as Fromm’s (1970) thoughts about matriarchy, a concept that he had taken from Bachofen (1973), and his view of human destructiveness (Fromm, 1973). Fromm applied his understanding of sociocultural issues and their impact to psychoanalysis as well. He discussed the impact of societal characteristics on the psychoanalytic treatment process and highlighted the development from the more authoritarian European Freudian model to the American egalitarianism of the Interpersonal approach. Influenced by Georg Groddeck and Ferenczi, it was easy for Fromm to accept the spirit of mutuality inherent in the psychoanalytic inquiry.

Fromm’s interest in the impact of social class on psychological adaptation and psychopathology dates back to 1930, when he developed, with Ernst Schachtel, E. Herzog, Paul Lazarsfeld, and others, a questionnaire study of the working-class population of the Weimar Republic (Fromm, 1930). Some of the data of this study were lost during the Hitler years; the remaining data were published in 1944 in English under the title The Working Class in Weimar Germany: A Psychological and Sociological Study. Fromm concluded that the data indicated that the left-wing political orientation of German workers was neutralized by their underlying authoritarian personality traits, a conclusion all too sadly proven by developments under Hitler.

Given Fromm’s socialist and Marxist leanings, it is not surprising that he joined the American Socialist Party in the mid-1950s. With Irving Howe, Murray Kempton, Upton Sinclair, and others, he wrote the party’s platform in 1960. When the party won few votes in the 1960 election, Fromm left, then helped organize SANE and became an active proponent of the humanist movement. Beyond the Chains of Illusion (Fromm, 1962) contains Fromm’s personal statement on humanism. In it he maintains that neurosis is alienation and that hope is an active feeling directed by a vision of the possibility of a “new man” committed to world order, reason, and peace. Fromm’s radio broadcast over the South German Radio in 1974, later published as For the Love of Life (Fromm, 1986), echoes his hope for a new Germany that does not forget its past but aims to further reason, peace, and humanity.

**Psychoanalytic Career Path**

Knapp (1989) suggests that Fromm’s interest in psychoanalysis dates back to early adolescence, when he was upset both by the suicide of a young girl, a talented painter, and by the events of World War I. As mentioned earlier, Fromm was briefly in treatment with Frieda Fromm-Reichmann. Later on, he studied psychology and psychoanalysis under Wilhelm Wundt and under Karl Landauer in Frankfurt, both trained by Freud. From Frankfurt, Fromm moved to Berlin and studied at the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute under Hanns Sachs, Sandor Rado, Franz Alexander, Karen Horney, Theodor Reik, and Wilhelm Reich. He became a member of the Berlin Institute in 1930 and had a private practice while also working at the Institute for Social Research. After a year in Davos, Switzerland, where he recuperated from tuberculosis, Fromm moved to Chicago. Some of Fromm’s career moves in the United States have been described earlier. It bears mention, however, that while on the faculty of the William Alanson White Institute, Fromm also lectured at Michigan State University, at New York University, and at Yale. All the while, Fromm was in private practice as well. During these years he wrote several books, among them Escape from Freedom (Fromm, 1941).

Fromm’s move to Mexico City was partly motivated by the fact that his wife, Henny, was severely arthritic and required a warmer climate. By the time of the move, however, Fromm had also become increasingly critical of the marketing, materialistic characteristics of urban America, and he had become convinced that if one lives in a pathological culture, one should leave it. It seems reasonable to assume that Fromm’s disenchantment with the United States contributed to the decision to leave. Never at a loss for professional activity, Fromm became professor of psychoanalysis at the University of Mexico and was then appointed to the directorship of the Psychoanalytic Institute of that university. Fromm continued to write, lecture, and teach throughout his Mexico years. He interspersed his stay there with frequent trips to New York, where he lectured on his evolving views of psychoanalysis and supervised candidates and graduates at the William Alanson White Institute.

Fromm was an outspoken spirit who did not hesitate to criticize psychoanalysis. While he remained a clinical psychoanalyst throughout
his life, he wrote little about psychoanalytic technique and maintained that working with patients is a creative and individualistic process. Were he to write about technique, he felt he would create "Frommians" rather than assist intuitive analysts to become more creative.

As mentioned before, Fromm never gave up hope for peace, for the possibility that differing views, as well as countries, could coexist, as long as there was room for dialogue. In keeping with this, he cofounded, with Gerard Chrzanoski (United States), Herman Schwidder (Germany), and I. A. Caruso (Austria), the Federation of International Psychoanalytic Societies, later named the International Federation of Psychoanalytic Societies (Chrzanoski, 1975). Fromm, like Sullivan before him, was interested in furthering peace and dialogue among nations. Sullivan had made UNESCO his vehicle for promoting peace; Fromm looked to mental health professionals of various nationalities to maintain an international dialogue.

**FRIEDA FROMM-REICHMANN**

(1889–1957)

Frieda Fromm-Reichmann was deeply influenced by both Sullivan and Fromm. Little is known about Fromm-Reichmann's earlier years. Her medical career, however, beginning with her work during World War I, is well documented. She initially worked with Kurt Goldstein at the Koenigsburg Hospital in Berlin and became an expert in brain injury, which was the presenting symptom of many of the soldiers who had returned from combat. After the war, Fromm-Reichmann began to be interested in psychiatry and psychoanalysis; she worked in the Sanatorium Weisser Hirsch near Dresden and started her analysis with Wilhelm Wittenberg. She later continued analysis with Hanns Sachs in Berlin, where both she and Erich Fromm, by that time her husband, were finishing their psychoanalytic training.

Leaving Berlin, the couple returned to Frankfurt, where they founded the Psychoanalytic Institute of Frankfurt, an institute that no longer adhered to the classical Freudian view of analysis; this was also the time when both Fromm and Fromm-Reichmann rejected Jewish orthodoxy. Perhaps the liberal climate of the Weimar Republic (Gay, 1968) contributed to their rejection of conservative orthodoxy in both religion and profession.

Fromm-Reichmann opened a private practice during the stay in Frankfurt. Fromm himself, who had contracted tuberculosis, moved to Switzerland, a move that was customary for tuberculosis patients. The couple's separation became extended when Hitler came to power. Fromm was invited to Chicago; Fromm-Reichmann escaped to what then was Palestine. In 1935, Fromm, by then established in the United States, suggested to Dexter Bullard that he might invite Fromm-Reichmann to work at Chestnut Lodge. She accepted the invitation and lived and worked at Chestnut Lodge for the remainder of her productive years (Ricoch, 1986).

Not long after her arrival at Chestnut Lodge, in Rockville, Maryland, Fromm-Reichmann became acquainted with Sullivan. They quickly became friends, and Fromm-Reichmann (1950) dedicated her *Principles of Intensive Psychotherapy* "to my teachers Sigmund Freud, Kurt Goldstein, Georg Groddeck, Harry Stack Sullivan." It is noteworthy that Fromm-Reichmann expresses her indebtedness to four outstanding colleagues who differed vastly in their professional orientations.

Initially, Fromm-Reichmann adhered to the classical Freudian position in her work with neurotic patients (Berman, 1982). Gradually, she came to appreciate that her creative approach to severely disturbed patients also had its merits in work with neurotics. Like Sullivan, she did not believe that neurosis and psychosis were qualitatively different.

Fromm-Reichmann is best known for her views on long-term psychotherapy with schizophrenic patients. She contributed her own versatility, emotionality, and imagination to the clinical inquiry with these patients. According to Robert Cohen, Fromm-Reichmann proposed that therapists' comments should be directed to the immediate situation. Often they are usefully phrased as questions or possibilities... never as assertions... one should stay close to what one observes and experiences... one must constantly attend to his own feelings as possible clues to what seems obscure; sometimes even mimicking a patient's behavior might illuminate current relational problems [p. 93].

Working with inarticulate schizophrenic patients, Fromm-Reichmann paid close attention to nonverbal communication. She not only clarified verbally a patient's behavior but also related nonverbally in her attempt to develop empathy and trust with the patient. Her intuitive ability allowed her to understand...
nonverbal behavior, and her expressive ability permitted her to respond empathically. Like Sullivan, she sought consensual validation in her work with patients. In summary, Fromm-Reichmann extended the application of the detailed inquiry to a range of patients previously thought to be unanalyzable. Her work with severely disturbed, hospitalized patients represents a pioneering effort not often replicated. Searles (1965) and Will (1979) later followed in her footsteps.

In order to appreciate fully Fromm-Reichmann’s contribution to the therapy of schizophrenic or psychotic patients, it must be remembered that she was working at a time when tranquilizers had not yet become part of the psychiatrist’s armamentarium. For Fromm-Reichmann, who was a petite woman, to be able to confront an agitated patient towering over her required an empathic calm that is not easily maintained in the face of irrational onslaughts. Fromm-Reichmann’s respect for her severely troubled patients clearly facilitated the work with them. Rather than being a threatening authority, she revealed her shared humanity, even to the then unusual extent of acknowledging to a patient that she may have failed him or her. In addition to her own work with patients, Fromm-Reichmann spent time creating a milieu in which the staff’s relationships to patients became an important part of the program. She was convinced that staff training and staff awareness of patients’ needs had to be an integral aspect of the treatment plan for patients.

While Frieda Fromm-Reichmann has not been as prolific a writer as her Interpersonalist colleagues, her *Principles of Intensive Psychotherapy*, published in 1952, continues to be viewed as a major contribution to dynamic psychiatry and is much valued both here and abroad.

**KAREN HORNEY (1885–1952)**

Karen Horney was the only woman among the founders of the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute, and as such was a major figure in the analytic circles of prewar Berlin until she left Germany for Chicago in 1932. Regarded as a Freudian in Berlin, her major contributions to cultural and Interpersonal psychoanalysis stem from her professional years in New York City. Horney’s writings emphasize the role of culture in character formation, but much of her thinking, particularly her view of women, has been both influential to, and influenced by, the Interpersonal tradition.

**Professional History**

Horney was in analysis with Karl Abraham in Berlin and by 1911 had become a respected member of Abraham’s group of colleagues. She was highly respected in the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute, particularly since she had become a member of that institute’s Committee on Education in 1920. The tripartite model of psychoanalytic training, consisting of a training analysis, supervision, and a didactic course of study, was originally developed by her.

Horney’s initial adherence to Freudian thinking is evident in one of her early lectures, titled “the Technique of Psychoanalytic Therapy” (Horney, 1917). Nevertheless, the seeds of Horney’s interpersonal and gender views must have been germinating, nurtured perhaps by the more liberal climate of the Weimar Republic as well as by Horney’s native independence of spirit.

A cultural-artistic explosion, emphasizing equality and sexual liberation, characterized Berlin during the 1920s (Friedrich, 1972; Gay, 1968; Nelson, 1969). Horney, raised by an authoritarian father in an authoritarian culture, no doubt felt a new sense of freedom in liberal Berlin. She became an early feminist. The so-called war-to-end-all-wars had depleted Germany of a generation of young men. Professional training, in particular, psychoanalytic training, became open to women; however, only after Horney’s arrival in the United States did she become a major force in cultural-interpersonal psychoanalysis. Horney’s major contribution to the cultural and interpersonal approaches to psychoanalysis is represented by her firm conviction that culture is a major parameter affecting both psychoanalytic theory and practice and that women’s development is not a carbon copy of men’s development. She asserted that both culture and gender must be attended to in psychoanalytic work.

In 1932 Horney was invited by Franz Alexander to come to the United States. Alexander offered her the associate directorship of the newly formed Chicago Institute of Psychoanalysis. Alexander himself had come to the United States in 1930, when he joined the medical faculty of the University of Chicago. Knowing of the danger faced by Jewish analysts in Germany, Horney invited Fromm, whom she had known from Berlin, to join her in
Chicago and to become a member of the University of Chicago faculty. Following Fromm’s arrival from Europe, Horney and he not only became colleagues but also became intimately involved with one another. Horney’s marriage having ended in 1925. Of her three daughters, one remained in Germany and pursued a successful acting career. The others eventually joined her in the United States, where one of them, Marianne Eckardt, became a prominent analyst in her own right.

Horney was clearly sensitive to the plight of Jews in Hitler Germany. She not only was instrumental in facilitating Fromm’s immigration to the United States but also sponsored others for entry into this country, at times offering her apartment for a brief stay to the newly arrived immigrant (Carola Mann, 1993, personal communication).

Horney had moved to New York City in 1934 and remained there until her death in 1952. By 1935, she became a member of the faculty of the New York Psychoanalytic Institute. She also taught with Clara Thompson at the Washington-Baltimore Institute and at the New School for Social Research in New York City. She became a member of Harry Stack Sullivan’s inner circle, the Zodiac group (see section on Sullivan), where she was dubbed the water buffalo, possibly because of her love of the water.

In April 1941, psychoanalytic politics began to interfere with Horney’s position at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute. The institute’s Education Committee decreed that Horney would no longer be able to teach, and this ruling was supported by a majority of the New York Psychoanalytic Society. Particularly outspoken criticism was leveled against Horney by Lawrence Kubie, Franz Wittels, and Gregory Zilboorg. Horney was accused of indoctrinating candidates with theoretical and clinical views that were contrary to the principles of psychoanalysis. Horney walked out of the faculty meeting where she was thus censured and in protest resigned her membership at the institute. She was joined by Clara Thompson, Charles Robbins, Nora Ephron, Herman Kelman, and 14 candidates. A year later, Sándor Rado and others left as well. This latter group subsequently formed the Columbia Psychoanalytic Institute.

Having left the New York Psychoanalytic Institute, Horney, with Thompson, Fromm, Sullivan, Blitzen, and others, formed what was to become the American Institute of Psychoanalysis. When Horney, two years later, championed a ruling that nonmedical analysts could not be part of the institute, Fromm, Thompson, the Rioschs, and Sullivan resigned in protest. William Silverberg, Charles Robbins, and Judd Marmor left Horney’s institute about the same time and set up a psychoanalytic training program at New York Medical College.

The 1940s were clearly tumultuous years for New York psychoanalysts, and they have been referred to as the years of the psychoanalytic wars. To some extent, the issues among the groups arose from professional convictions; however, the complex and intimate relationships between some of the protagonists in this “war” also played a part in promoting shifts in the alliances among the various analysts.

The professional upheavals left New York City with three major cultural-interpersonal training institutes: the William Alanson White Institute, the American Institute of Psychoanalysis, and the New York Medical College Psychoanalytic Institute. Until recently, only the White Institute has maintained the tradition of consistently training psychologists as well as psychiatrists. This was in no small measure due to Clara Thompson’s leadership as director and Fromm’s position as chair of faculty.

The Cultural Perspective

Horney had been thinking and writing about the impact of culture on psychoanalytic work long before she left the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute. As early as 1928, she invited Fromm to speak at the Berlin Psychoanalytic Institute on the topic of psychoanalysis and lower-class patients, and by the time Horney had arrived in the United States in 1932, she had parted company with Freud (Kurzweil, 1989). In 1935, Dr. Clara Meyer, dean of the New School for Social Research, appointed Horney to teach a course on culture and neurosis (Rubins, 1978). In addition, through the Zodiac club, which counted among its members a lively group of analysts, social scientists, and intellectuals, Horney became acquainted with Hortense Powdermaker, an anthropologist, as well as with Sullivan and Thompson. According to Rubins, “[S]he [Horney] learned sociology from him [Fromm] and he psychoanalysis from her” (p. 193). Friendships with Margaret Mead, John Dollard, and Ruth Benedict further broadened Horney’s cultural perspective. For instance, Horney maintained that the cause of neurosis lies in the dehumanizing conditions of society and saw this as particularly true for women who, in Western culture, were
expected to be cheerfully compliant and to accept dependent relationships to men.

Horney's growing conviction that attention to gender was important for psychoanalytic theory and practice had its beginning in her early years with Freud. The prevalent Freudian view of female gender issues was represented at the Sixth International Psychoanalytic Congress in Holland in a paper by Abraham (1922) titled "Manifestations of the Female Castration Complex in Women." Horney (1924) replied two years later with a paper of her own, "On the Genesis of the Castration Complex in Women." While this paper represented only a mild dissent from the classical Freudian position, it proved to be the forerunner of 14 papers by Horney, all dealing with the psychology of women (Quinn, 1987).

Initially, Horney attempted to integrate her views with Freud's notion of the castration complex. At the same time, however, she concluded that the penis is overvalued and that girls identify with mother. Horney postulated that the girl experiences disappointment and rejection in the relationship to her father. In response to that experience of disillusionment, the girl retreats, withdraws, or rebels and alternately becomes passive or denies her femininity. Horney intended her theory of character, conflict, and development to apply to men and women alike; but, in fact, her major contribution rests on her understanding of female psychology and development (Westcott, 1986). Horney thought of neurotic character as resulting from conflict between self and others and involving defensive movements of compliance or aggression, distancing from others, distancing from self, and externalization.

In the last decade of her life, Horney turned more and more to writing. She continued to be interested in learning and in new experiences. For her, the goal of man was to find the authentic self. In the search for that goal, Horney, not unlike Fromm, was drawn to Zen Buddhism as represented by D. T. Suzuki, the Japanese interpreter of Zen Buddhism to the West. In 1950, Horney, her actress daughter Brigitte, Suzuki, a Japanese psychiatrist, and others planned and later undertook a five-week visit to some of Japan's Zen monasteries. This visit was to Horney a most important experience in her search for authenticity and spirituality. Horney discovered in Zen Buddhism her kinship to William James, who had described Zen and spiritual training as a means of transcending illness through concentration and enlightenment (James, 1911). Horney, in her last paper, proclaimed what may be the most concise statement of her philosophy of life: "Life is not a problem to be solved, but an experience to be realized" (Horney, 1952, p. 4).

Horney, like Fromm, did not write much about clinical technique. Some of her comments, however, bear a close kinship to Interpersonal theory. She shares the Interpersonal emphasis on the here and now, on experiencing reality as it is. Horney valued experience over and above problem solving, and, like other Interpersonalists, she doubted that idealization of the analyst was helpful to the patient. Interpersonalists criticize Horney for overemphasizing cultural issues and for paying insufficient attention to the role of development and of family history. Overall, however, much of what Horney has stood for is compatible with the Interpersonal approach.

SUMMARY

Sullivan's contemporaries, the early Interpersonalists, had different backgrounds, training, and experiences. Yet all held similar views about the common humanity of man, whether patient or analyst, about psychopathology and its origins in experiences with others and with the culture, about the importance of the detailed inquiry, about mutuality in the consulting room, and, ultimately, about pragmatism over and above theoretical abstractions.

Sullivan's concepts were not carved in stone, and contemporary Interpersonalists have continued to expand and develop his ideas. In concluding this chapter it is appropriate to give a brief overview of how some contemporary Interpersonalists have come to view and develop some of Sullivan's ideas concerning the psychiatric interview.

Contemporary contributors in any field usually set out to address issues that are not clear in the work of their intellectual forebears. In this vein, today's Interpersonalists are engaged in trying to reframe earlier interpersonal approaches in terms of ongoing developments and experiences in the field of psychoanalysis. Contemporary discussions of the analytic dialogue emphasize the role of the analyst, his countertransference, and his analytic stance. Wolstein (1954, 1959, 1989, 1991) has written extensively about transference and countertransference. Like Ferenczi, he discusses and interprets in his work the me-you relationship between patient and analyst. Levenson (1983, 1988) is particularly interested in the nature of
the psychoanalytic dialogue, since the specificity of that dialogue can facilitate change in self-perception. Levenson (1988) puts it as follows:

"[The secret core] of psychoanalysis ... lies in the pursuit of the particular, and the peculiar deconstructed mosaic of data ... which emerge whether presented in the form of fantasy, free-association, or Sullivan's "detailed inquiry." The common denominator among experienced analysts ... may well be the ability to elicit sufficient data, under sufficient pressure to allow psychoanalysis to take place [pp. 14–15]."

Epstein and Feiner (1979) discuss countertransference and its place in the inquiry. They advocate a more active use of countertransference and echo Fromm's confrontational stance. Havens (1977) approaches the clinical interview from the point of view of projective identification. To understand the patient, the analyst must ask himself, What would I have seen and heard, had I been there?

Wittenberg (1978) contends that the clinical dialogue is ultimately directed at giving up the quest for certainty; for him, the open-ended nature of the analyst's query models the concept of uncertainty. It also shows that the analyst is searching for understanding and meaning as a collaborator with the patient, not as an authority. Chrzanowski (1987) conceives of the inquiry as a catalyst for the seriously disturbed patient. In his view, however, Sullivan's detailed inquiry does not allow for the necessary degree of psychological resonance, which is the prerequisites for a novel experience.

This brief exposition of some current thinking about the clinical interview is meant to indicate the extent to which Interpersonalists continue to rethink and develop Sullivan's original approach to the clinical dialogue. The detailed inquiry remains the hallmark of the Interpersonal view of treatment. To the extent that it focuses on experience in the here and now with significant others, the analyst included, it is unique for each patient-analyst dyad. Interpersonalists continue to develop and refine their views of the analytic encounter, while always respectful of the fact that the actual experience in the consulting room between equals has to take precedence over theoretical constructs.

NOTES

1Sándor Ferenczi was not one of the founders of the Interpersonal school; however, because of his theoretical and clinical influence on Interpersonality, he merits being included in this chapter.

2For an extended discussion of the Interpersonal view of transference, see chapters 26 and 27.

3Following Sullivan's usage, inquiry and interview are used interchangeably, as are the terms therapeutic, psychiatric, and clinical.

4Even though Sullivan labeled his interview "psychiatric," he did not restrict its use to medical practitioners. His lectures were addressed to a variety of mental health professionals.

5Sullivan (1962) writes: "Meyer produced that year (1917) a statement which constituted the point of departure of the writer's research work." In this paper Meyer (1919) looks at catatonia as a defense mechanism and as amenable to therapy.

6Mead's thinking on doubt had been influenced by James, since he had intimate contact with James when he lived in James's home and tutored his children.

7Michael Balint, Ferenczi's student and analyst, has concentrated on the deficit theory of pathology.

8This event bears a striking resemblance to Horne's earlier exclusion from the teaching faculty of the New York Psychoanalytic Institute. Once again Thompson's sense of loyalty and fairness to a friend became evident. She did not support Horne's view that only psychiatrists should be trained as analysts and founded her own institute, the William Alanson White Institute for Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis and Psychology.

9Fromm was a disciplined and enormously productive writer, whose written work comprises 23 volumes. In addition, extensive essays and notes are being published, posthumously, by the Erich Fromm Foundation. Fromm's lifestyle was such that mornings were set aside for writing, afternoons for seeing patients, and evenings for teaching and supervision. This rigorous schedule may have come easy to Fromm, who was raised in the rabbinical tradition of scholarship and study.

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History of the Founders


