

# Clark University Vicennial Conference on Psychology and Pedagogy

We owe to our European guests, Professor Freud and Dr Jung, the demonstration that what is at work in the center of the stage is a complex or group of complexes. . . .

Adolf Meyer, Clark Vicennial, 1909<sup>1</sup>(p398)



**A**LITTLE MORE THAN 100 years ago, on August 21, 1909, Carl Gustav Jung and Sigmund Freud were invited to Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, where both Jung and Freud had received invitations to speak and to join 6 other prominent figures in psychology and pedagogy, including Adolf Meyer, in receiving honorary degrees.<sup>2</sup>

Freud was encouraged by Jung to accept.<sup>2</sup> At the time Freud was little known in America; none of his works had been translated into English. Knowledge of his psychoanalytic activities and writings in Vienna had reached the English-speaking world largely through their adoption by Eugen Bleuler, director of Burghölzli, the leading Swiss psychiatric hospital, and through the research of his first assistant, Jung. Jung's belief that his studies in word association provided experimental support for Freud's theory of repression led him to begin a dialogue with Freud several years earlier. Freud's invitation primarily stemmed from G. Stanley Hall's interest in his work on children's psychological development and on sexuality. For Freud the visit, his only one to America, was important because of the external recognition it provided for his work after being marginalized in Vienna. For Jung it both intensified his engagement with psychoanalysis and planted the seeds for his final break with Freud 4 years later.

Jung's experimental studies led Clark University independently to offer the 33-year-old lecturer from Zurich an honorary degree<sup>3</sup>; he remains the youngest person to be so honored by Clark University. Jung's newly devised methodology for psychophysical investigations in word association documented correlations of reaction time to stimulus words with respiratory rhythm and the galvanic skin response using the galvanometer and pneumograph. Meyer (shown standing to Jung's left in the group photograph) was vitally interested in the association experiments.<sup>4</sup>

Earlier when Meyer was director of the Pathological Institute of the New York state hospital system, he arranged for Frederick Peterson, a leading neurologist and a professor at Columbia University, to join Jung in Zurich to conduct association experiments. Their 66-page article had been published in *Brain* in 1907. Meyer found in Jung's work potential experimental confirmation for his views about the importance of a psychobiological approach and a dynamic psychiatry. Meyer brought Jung's association test and new insights into dementia praecox (schizophrenia) to a wider audience. However, Jung put greater emphasis on neurotoxic models of schizophrenia than did Meyer.

Besides Freud and Jung, the degree recipients in psychology and pedagogy groups were as follows: Franz Boas, anthropologist from Columbia University; Meyer, psychiatrist newly appointed to the Johns Hopkins Medical School; Herbert S. Jennings, biologist, also from Johns Hopkins University; Edward B. Titchener, noted psychologist and coeditor of the *American Journal of Psychology* from Cornell University; Leo Burgerstein, internationally recognized school-hygiene specialist from Vienna; and William Stern, psychologist from the University of Breslau.<sup>3</sup>

The lectures were presented from September 7 through 11. Freud spoke at 11 AM each day.<sup>2,3</sup> Jung spoke about the experimental foundation of his theory of complexes in individuals and among individual family members, on the application of psychoanalysis to education, and on "Psychic Conflicts in a Child." In this last talk he first introduced the term *introversion*.

In the photograph of attendees taken September 10, 1909 (**Figure**), Hall is in the center of the honorees, who all stand in the front row. To his left stand honorees Freud, Jung, Meyer, and Jennings, and to his right stand honorees Burgerstein, Stern, William James (not an honoree), Titchener, and Boas. Pragmatist William James, Hall's PhD advisor and author to the James-Lange theory

of emotion whose classic textbook launched psychology as a discipline in America attended only that day.

James expressed an interest in meeting Freud and Jung and had joined them as guests at Hall's home the previous evening and spoke with them both. Later he wrote to Théodore Flournoy that Jung made a favorable impression, but his views of Freud were mixed. He hoped that Freud and his pupils would

push their ideas to their utmost limits so that we can learn what they are. They can't fail to throw light on human nature, but I confess he [Freud] made on me personally the impression of a man obsessed by fixed ideas.<sup>2</sup>

Following the Clark celebration, Freud and Jung spent 4 days at Putnam Camp in the Adirondacks with Harvard neurologist J. J. Putnam. For Freud, his contacts with Putnam (who was to become the first president of the American Psychoanalytic Association) and Ernest Jones at the meeting and afterward proved crucial to the spread of psychoanalysis in America.

During the years 1907-1913, Jung worked closely with Freud, involvement that he always considered collaborative; he never fully concurred with all of Freud's views. At the beginning of their correspondence on April 11, 1906, Freud wrote that what pleased him most about Jung's paper "Psychoanalysis and the Association Experiments" was that it confirmed his views. He wrote, "I am confident that you will often be in a position to back me up."<sup>5</sup>(p3) Yet the following year, Jung wrote in *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox*:

Fairness to Freud, however, does not imply, as many fear unqualified submission to dogma; one can very well maintain independent judgment.<sup>5</sup>(introduction, pXVI)

He noted that accepting Freud's views on dreams and hysteria does not require acceptance of his views on infantile sexual trauma or the extent that Freud focuses on the sexual libido. Jung's views did not change. In retrospect, the

crucial juncture in their relationship occurred en route to the Clark conference in 1909 when Freud and Jung were analyzing one another's dreams. Jung later wrote to Freud that

Our analysis, you may remember came to a stop with your remark that you "could not submit to analysis without losing your authority." The words were engraved in my memory as a symbol of everything that was to come.<sup>3(p246)</sup>

For Jung Freud was placing his personal authority above seeking the truth. In 1957 Jung revealed to the pastoral psychologist John Milton Billinsky<sup>6</sup> that dreams that Freud would not discuss were of a personal nature he believed related to Freud's relationship with his sister-in-law. She had privately confided in him her concerns about her "intimate"<sup>6(p42)</sup> relationship with Freud when Jung had visited Freud's home. "It was a shocking discovery for me, and even now [50 years later] I can recall the agony I felt at the time."<sup>6(p42)</sup>

On December 18, 1912, Jung wrote to Freud

May I say a few words to you in earnest? I would, however, point out that your technique of treating your pupils like patients is a *blunder*. . . . You go about sniffing out all the symptomatic actions in your vicinity then reducing everyone to the level of sons and daughters. . . . For sheer obsequiousness nobody dares pluck the prophet by the beard. . . . [and] ask him "who's got the neurosis?"<sup>5(p252)</sup>

Freud replied that his colleagues in Vienna reproached him for the exact opposite. Offended by Jung's tone, he suggested they break off their personal relationship but continue to work together professionally.

The final break came in 1913, the year Jung returned to America to give his Fordham lectures where Jung presented views on psychoanalysis that were not congruent with Freud's. Jung's position was increasingly closer to the pragmatic views of James and Meyer. Later in Zurich, responding to a paper Freud submitted, "An Evidential Dream," Jung wrote that Freud's wish-fulfillment theory "touches only on the surface, that it stops at the symbol, and that further interpretation is possible."<sup>5(p1913)</sup> Later Jung proposed that dreams were adaptive and might also reflect fears; mirror the actual life situation; and have prospective, anticipatory, and creative functions. Their differences came to a head at the Munich Psychoanalytic Conference in September where, when Jung stood for reelection for president, 22 of 52 participants abstained from voting so that



Figure. Psychology conference group photograph, Clark University, 1909.

the vote would not be unanimous. The next month, hearing secondhand that Freud no longer supported Jung's bona fides as journal editor of the *Yearbook*, he resigned and Bleuler resigned as the journal director. The Zurich Psychoanalytic Society voted 15 to 1 to resign from the international association because Freud had "established an orthodoxy that impeded free and independent research."<sup>7(p201)</sup> In April 1914, Jung, knowing his views differed from the majority of members, resigned his presidency of the international association.

The conflicts between Freud and Jung disturbed Meyer. Meyer supported the establishment of a scientifically based, dynamic psychiatry. He believed that American psychiatry, with its pragmatic emphasis on common sense, was superior to dogmatic, sectarian European psychiatry. Soon after the Phipps Clinic opened in April 1913, Meyer's relations with Jung that had begun so promisingly came to a close, as did his relationship with Freud; Meyer pursued his new American psychiatry.<sup>4</sup>

Throughout his relationship with Freud, beginning while still at Burghölzli, Jung found a "fatherly friend" in Flournoy, a well-regarded psychologist and philosopher from Geneva, Switzerland, and a personal associate of James. In a chapter not included in the final edition of his collaborative memoirs, *Memories, Dreams, and Reflections*, Jung described the importance of his relationship to Flournoy and James as his time ended with Freud. He writes that Flournoy clarified Freud's theories for him, particularly Freud's intense rationalism that gave him "his oneness."<sup>8</sup>

Flournoy attended the congress in Munich in 1912 for support when Jung broke with Freud. Afterward Flournoy

was a counterpoise to Freud for him. Jung wrote, "with him it was perfectly possible to discuss all the scientific problems occupying my mind." He wrote, "Freud had a dynamic and penetrating way with him: he wanted his cases to prove his theory."<sup>8</sup> Flournoy taught Jung to be more objective. As Jung noted, "Under the influence of Freud I acquired knowledge but not clarity."<sup>8</sup>

The new Jung scholarship seeks to explore the knowledge that Jung did acquire by examining his early contributions to experimental psychology and neuroscience. Neuroimaging studies bear witness to the fruitfulness of his psychophysical investigations. His views on the neurotoxic origins of schizophrenia expressed to Meyer and throughout his career now seem prescient.

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## REFERENCES

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