ABSTRACT. On May 1, 2004, the Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists (AGLP), with co-sponsorship from St. Luke’s–Roosevelt Medical Center, The Haworth Press, and the William Alanson White Institute, organized an all-day conference in New York City entitled “Homosexuality and Psychoanalysis: New Directions.” The proceedings of the first panel focused on Historical Perspectives.

The first contributor is Kenneth Lewes, PhD, who discusses the history of the psychoanalytic theory of homosexuality. Lewes reflects on what history says about the psychoanalytic endeavor and our present situation as analysts and as people who are homosexual. He notes that although there is a great deal to celebrate in the dissolution of old prejudices, which represent
Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, PhD, begins with some autobiographical remarks about the processes involved in her admission and training as a psychoanalyst. She offers this personal history as part of her generally optimistic assessment of the way psychoanalysts within the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA) have shifted on the topic of homosexuals and homosexuality in training institutes. In her estimation, the battle within psychoanalysis as a field for training gay people has been won, and attention now needs to turn to the more subtle manifestations of homophobia. She sees the need for a psychoanalytically informed theory of homophobia and outlines her psychoanalytic theory of homophobias.

Ralph Roughton, MD, discusses the process of converting homophobic psychoanalysts and their organizations to gay-friendly. He recounts the history of efforts to change attitudes toward homosexuality within both the APsaA and the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA). He notes that adopting a nondiscrimination policy is necessary to enforce fairness and justice, but it is not sufficient to change minds and hearts and to bring acceptance. Both the APsaA and the IPA now have such policies; but only the APsaA has really accepted openly gay and lesbian psychoanalysts.

In a joint presentation, Maggie Magee, MSW, PsyD, and Diana C. Miller, MD, note, “It helps to have a sense of history and a sense of humor if one is lesbian, feminist, and a psychoanalyst.” They note that dissociation flourishes when histories, whether institutional or personal, have been marked by trauma. They believe everyone who has been part of the history of psychoanalysis and homosexuality has to fight against such defenses. By remembering together, analysts can diminish their collective and individual dissociations. Toward that end, Magee and Miller present their personal experiences as lesbian mental health professionals seeking analytic training. They then go on to chronicle the gradual emergence, primarily in institutes and organizations that were not affiliated with the APsaA or the IPA, of gay and lesbian analysts in the 1980s and 1990s.

KEYWORDS. American Psychoanalytic Association, bisexuality, closet, discrimination, gay, heterosexism, history, homophobia, homosexuality, International Psychoanalytic Association, lesbian, prejudice, psychoanalysis, stereotype, training

KENNETH LEWES, PHD

I have been asked to provide a short history of the psychoanalytic theory of homosexuality. I will do that, but I would also like to use the occasion to
reflect on what that history tells us about the psychoanalytic endeavor and our present situation as analysts and as people who are homosexual. There is certainly a great deal to celebrate in the dissolution of old prejudices. Despite the current uproar over gay marriages, the basic viability and validity of homosexual experience seem to be securely established. There is, of course, the danger they will be overthrown as we see in the case of abortion rights; but right now, at least in the case of analytic institutions and establishments, we hold the high ground. It is doubly important to understand where we have come from, so that we do not repeat the old stupidities, blindness, and cruelty.

The published psychoanalytic literature on homosexuality has been documented and analyzed (Lewes, 1988). Equally important is the nonwritten history, the tradition of private opinion and conversation, the gossip, supervision sessions and case conferences, formal and informal, things said to and about patients by analysts who either knew the published record or thought they did and referred to it a general way. This unpublished history is as significant as the written record, though it is more difficult to locate and fix into a formal discourse. It is rapidly disappearing as older, more nearly classical analysts, whose views are unpopular or discredited, die or assume a discrete silence. As a result, some younger analysts and trainees labor under the impression that claims of past analytic homophobia have been exaggerated, that homosexual patients have always been treated with courtesy and respect, and that applicants to institutes were never denied admission because of sexual orientation. The written record, however, is clear and irrefutable and can be denied only through misinformation, lack of personal experience, the distortions of memory, or simple dishonesty.

From Freud’s first discoveries up until the Second World War, psychoanalytic history can be described, I think, as moderately homophobic. Freud himself, I am happy to report, was relatively free of that prejudice. He wrote about homosexuality with respect, modesty, and genuine curiosity. Privately and publicly he opposed legal sanctions against homosexuals (Abelove, 1985) and officially, though ineffectually, forbade their exclusion from analytic training (Freud, 1921). His views were determined by his larger intellectual and scientific convictions, especially his espousal of a late nineteenth century Darwinism, and therefore saw nonreproductive sexuality as a biological anomaly. This view was for the most part free of moralistic and aesthetic judgment and was, moreover, counterbalanced by an equally deep commitment to a cosmopolitan literary culture. As a homosexual, I have never been offended by his ideas and attitudes. Frankly, I find his agnostic curiosity more attractive and interesting than our contemporary, squeamish politically correct stance, which avoids any inflamed
discussion of such controversial topics as the different developmental, dy-
namic or structural characteristics of people who are homosexual. Major
figures around Freud—Anna Freud, Ferenczi, and Glover—were similarly
inquisitive and respectful.

By the 1930s, however, the atmosphere had changed. The growing
interest in more disturbed patients had the general effect of relating
nonnormative sexual orientations to more primitive and pathological
psychic organizations: paranoia, perversion, psychosis and pseudoneurotic
schizophrenia. The term was not used then, but most published work on
homosexuality assumed it was a borderline condition. In addition, the
denial of bisexuality as a component of psychic organization had a dra-
matic effect on the theory. Sandor Rado (1940), supported by colleagues
at Columbia, denied any universal human character to homosexuality
and claimed that it was a pathological and regrettable result of psychic
development gone wrong.

The history of psychoanalysis was also affected by the Second World
War and its aftermath, including the Nazi attempt to erase all signs of
Jewish intellectual achievement in Europe, the forced relocation of psy-
choanalysis from Central Europe, Vienna, Berlin, and Budapest, to London
and New York City, and last the participation of émigré psychoanalysis in
the consolidation and propagation of American social values. It may sound
like a joke to speak of psychoanalysis under the Eisenhower Administra-
tion, but many emigrant analysts labored to formulate what a “normal” and
“healthy” member of society was. Rejecting Freud’s skepticism about the
very possibility of an entirely successful individual integration into society,
such analysts as Karen Horney, the Adaptationists and those at Columbia ea-
gerly took up roles as proponents of American values, American identities,
American institutions, and cultural forms. A corresponding development,
by the way, did not occur in British psychoanalysis.

In America, psychoanalysis abandoned its role as critic of social forms
and values and became the propagandist and enforcer of them. This shift
was most apparent in the normative discourse about two vexed subjects:
the character and sexuality of women and our topic today, the “problem
of homosexuality.” The latter project reified homosexual people into a
type, “the homosexual,” who was essentially determined by his sexual
interests. He was either a pitiable psychic cripple or a morally reprehensible
sociopath, indifferent and hostile to laws and moral rules. The possibility
of high-functioning and productive homosexuals was explicitly denied,
even at the cost of denying examples of homosexual achievements in the
arts. “The homosexual” was portrayed as operating without a functioning
superego or adequate impulse controls, and as incapable of lasting personal commitment or genuine human feeling. Analysts were warned about the dangers of treating these psychopaths, who would as a matter of course rob, lie, corrupt, spread disease, and murder to satisfy their insatiable appetites. Several articles urged castration and permanent incarceration to deal with this menace.

Published clinical material is even more appalling, dwelling repetitively on the unpleasant character and manipulativeness of homosexual patients. The tone of such analysts as Edmund Bergler (1956) is smug, superior, and sardonic. They clearly hated their patients and frequently reported sudden terminations, attributing them to their patients’ failure of nerve or character. Comparisons to Nazis became a cliché. There is even some straight-faced discussion of “a final solution to the problem of homosexuality.” Several Jewish analysts claimed without irony that homosexuals were underrepresented among Jews. In the 40-year period we are discussing, no American analyst dared disagree with this portrayal or criticize the tone and spirit of hateful and offensive writing. Homosexuals could not dissent from these views about themselves, because no open homosexual could be accepted for training at a major institute. This homophobic discourse was virtually unanimous and lasted well into the 1980s. The American Psychoanalytic Association (ApsaA) managed to scuttle onto the gay-friendly bandwagon barely in time for the turning of the millennium, fully 35 years after Stonewall and 25 after both APAs deleted homosexuality from the list of mental disorders. All that has passed, and the love that dare not speak its name now seems to be homophobia and the theory that gave rise to it.

I would like to urge that we not lose ourselves in celebration and congratulation. I do not believe the war has been won, although the most recent victories seem to be ours. For one thing, we cannot claim that homophobia represents a regrettable lapse from an otherwise commendable record of analytic solicitude and neutrality. Except for the first years of its history and the last 10, psychoanalysis has consistently and unwaveringly been homophobic in its basic stance, postulates, and procedures. As a discipline it has always maintained a deep, hidden and complex relation to homosexuality. The two are essentially and dialectically related, each requiring the existence of the other. The discourse that mediates between them is homophobia. We should be aware of this possibility if we are to be alert to a new, comparatively benign, but nevertheless insidious recrudescence, even in the bosom of the gay-friendliest of therapeutic endeavors.

We may well ask what has happened to the old homophobia? Do some analysts merely maintain a prudent silence, or have they changed their
minds? What actually become of the theory that for so long required
the demonization of same-sexed relations? More important, why has there
not been a general reevaluation of that theory and an attempt to account
for its most egregious lapses? After all, we demand no less of George
Bush. If psychoanalytic theory is either essentially homophobic or inclined
to homophobia, it is important to understand what change has allowed
traditional establishments to welcome gay people into their ranks. There
are two general answers to this question. Either analytic theory has changed
or gay people are different from what they were once thought to be.

I would like to spend a few minutes evaluating the second claim. But
before I do, there are also a few things to say about changes in analytic
theory, in particular the recent shift toward more “relational” varieties.
The major weakness of these new ideas is that they are undertheoretized.
They therefore can provide no counterweight to common sense or common
prejudice in making clinical judgments. While most contemporary analytic
norms are relatively benign, I think we should have learned not to trust the
good will and sound judgment of others, especially in times of emergency
or ideological crisis. The pundits of the 1950s were all decent and well-
meaning people, but they caused an enormous amount of suffering and
grief. Current norms among “relational” schools of thought, though for the
most part inoffensive, tend to a milky, sentimental blandness that shies away
from taking on difficult issues. If we have no theoretical ideas to support
the validity of individual experience, their place will be taken, as they were
in the past, by common sense and prejudice. At this point, psychoanalysis
could once again become a political and propagandistic force.

We can see signs of this already happening when we turn our attention
to the second possibility, the way gay people are said to have changed. In
the old, bad days, the reified stereotype was the diseased and envious out-
law, hostile to rules of civilized life, particularly the family. Owing more
to racist fiction and ancient anti-Semitic propaganda than to acquaintance
with the larger world and its culture, this discourse denied a membership in
the community to those who denied its basic values and sought instead to
corrupt, undermine, and sabotage, ungratefully refusing the compassionate
ministrations of those who tried to save, convert and cure him. This old
stereotype has been abandoned, but it has been replaced by a new one: what
I call the “analytic gay” who fits comfortably into conventional values and
norms. Though a likable enough guy, he is as much a fictional stereotype
as the old Wandering Jew pariah. He wishes to outgrow and abandon his
prowling sexuality and to establish permanent ties of attachment and a sta-
ble and respected social position. He longs to be readmitted to his family
of origin and to raise his own children, hoping to find his deepest identity in ethnic roots, religious heritage, and spiritual nature by returning to the family, church, and (God forbid) even the Republican Party. Though he may harbor some dissatisfaction with the way things are currently run, he is happy to be a happy citizen. Most important, he does not dissent in any essential way from the way things are or the way they are supposed to be. This is the gay man or lesbian who fits most easily and comfortably into analytic establishments and whose mental health is most likely to be certified.

It is too early to say if this figure represents the new gay men and lesbians who have been allowed to explore and discover their essential nature undistorted by social hatred and distaste, or if a new coercive stereotype, which dictates what people should want for themselves if they are to be considered acceptable. There are already signs that psychoanalysis is once again abandoning its projects of sympathetic and disinterested listening to individual experience and criticizing repressive social forms and conventions and returning to its old policing role of encouraging conformity and mediocrity. As the cowboys in power are playing harder and harder ball, we seem to be countering with mere inoffensive blandness. We back away from more difficult projects of recognizing and dealing with psychological difference as we seek instead to smooth out the abrasive edges of exigent sexualities and individual longings or to deny the detritus of decades-long resentment and rage. I do not think the time for reconciliation has arrived.

Let us say it outright. In the 1950s, our culture was saved from a stultifying blandness and conventionality by the dissent and criticism of Jews. In the 1970s, it was gays who provided the necessary scorn and parody. Today we have no one. Psychoanalysis claims to stand apart from the fray. When it does get involved, it frequently takes the side of convention and age-old tradition. It is still too early to say what is really fermenting below the crust. Although we should by all means rejoice at our new freedom and equality, let us be wary.

**ELISABETH YOUNG-BRUEHL, PHD**

To set the context for what I would like to contribute to this panel, I would like to begin by making a few autobiographical remarks about my own training as a psychoanalyst.

During the 1983–84 academic year, when I was teaching philosophy at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, I started a psychoanalysis with Dr. Hans Loewald. Among my intentions was to consider whether to apply to
the Western New England Institute for Psychoanalysis in New Haven for psychoanalytic training. I did decide to apply, at about the same moment that I made a decision to accept an offer made by the executors of Anna Freud’s estate to undertake a biography of her (Young-Bruehl, 1988).

For my application, I wrote an autobiographical statement in which I made it quite clear that I was at the time living with a woman and would want to discuss with the Admissions Committee what the attitude of the Training Institute was toward training candidates who were homosexual or bisexual. I indicated that I considered myself bisexual, but also that these sexual preference designations had little meaning for me. The Committee accepted me for training, and I accepted the Institute after having asked the three training analysts who interviewed me for their views on the topic of training homosexuals and on the topic of the then—common Freudian view of homosexuality. These training analysts were very open-minded, and there was a lively piece of homophobia at hand for us to discuss, as the very week of the interviews legislation ruling sodomy between consenting adults a crime in the state of Georgia was upheld by the Supreme Court.2

I did one year of training in New Haven, and then interrupted my course for various practical reasons. I resumed training six years later when I had relocated to Philadelphia. In 1992, I wrote another application, this time to the Philadelphia Association for Psychoanalysis, and once again I declared frankly that training of homosexuals would have to be a topic between the Admissions Committee and me. Again, there was no reservation among the training analysts, and I launched upon the five years of didactic training.

In Philadelphia during the 1990s, the revolution in psychoanalytic theory and practice over homosexuality meant that my colleagues were basically beyond the idea that they should cure their patients—or their candidates—of homosexuality. There were, among the senior analysts, a few holdouts, but only a few, including one very narcissistic man who, I knew, had completely ruined with his homophobia the analysis of a closeted lesbian psychiatrist who trained a few years ahead of me. I was fortunate in my supervisors, one of whom, Homer Curtis, when he was president of the American Psychoanalytic Association (ApsaA), had been very progressive in leading the Association to its more tolerant attitude toward homosexuals—an attitude manifest in the well-publicized panel on homophobia the Association sponsored in 1998 (Hoffman et al., 2000). My own training analyst in Philadelphia was completely supportive of me.

However, the generally evolving atmosphere in Philadelphia did not mean that homophobia was absent from my training institute. Let me note two different kinds of manifestations. I took the required course on “The
Perversions” in my fourth year. It was taught by a well-known and respected but somewhat flamboyant and “wild” analyst, a decidedly narcissistic character, who had written very interesting papers on the pre-Oedipal roots of neuroses and perversions. The syllabus took us through sadomasochism, voyeurism, exhibitionism, fetishism, and so forth, and ended up with two weeks on homosexuality—only male homosexuality. During the first meeting of the course, I protested the inclusion of homosexuality among the perversions and asked why we were not reading literature—which existed then—that questioned the scope and use and meaning of the concept of perversion. The training analyst thought that reading such theoretical papers would be a good idea, because the concept of perversion had obviously been under scrutiny from many theoretical directions. But he then went on to say that homosexuality was on the syllabus because it always had been, and it was important for us all to learn the history of our field so that we could question it well. I said that I thought this was a ridiculous and contradictory position to take—and the argument went on, now and again, all semester.

The next semester, in an advanced course where a number of papers on adolescence were read, another controversy erupted. The teacher, a very obsessional character, assigned a paper by Moses Laufer (1981) of the London Center for Adolescents in which Laufer stated that he never took actively homosexual adolescents into treatment without first securing a pledge from them that they would cease their homosexual activity, on the understanding that the treatment would cure them of it. I protested this controlling, obsessional idea, asking if anyone in the room took patients into treatment conditionally, or if anybody subscribed to the old idea—common among the early Freidians—that patients should agree to a moratorium on, for example, major life decisions such as whether to marry (heterosexually) or whether to divorce. All the candidates in the room—but not the training analyst instructor—thought Laufer’s policy was “not psychoanalytic.” But then one of the candidates was candid enough to admit that she was very worried about her adolescent son’s sexual orientation and found comfort in imagining a Laufer-like clinician who would make him promise not to engage in homosexual activity while in treatment. We had a very important and, in the end, touching class on this question, and my fellow student had, with us, a moment of realization about how her fears were influencing her own theory and technique. This woman was not really homophobic; she was confused and had been made even more confused by her own analyst’s inability to explore her fears about her son. Despite the attitude of the instructor, the class did for her what a good training class can do: it
took her right to something in herself that needed analyzing and showed her how it had not been touched in her training analysis.

These autobiographical remarks reflect my generally optimistic assessment of the way psychoanalysts within the APsaA have shifted on the topic of homosexuals and homosexuality in training institutes. If I were speaking about the independent institutes, where the vast majority of social workers who want psychoanalytic training enroll, I would be even more optimistic. At the same time, I know many stories from fellow candidates at other institutes of the APsaA that make it clear that homophobia is alive and well in theory and in training—even in San Francisco, which, within the APsaA, has always been the center of progressivism. Generally, it is the senior analysts—the training analysts and directors of training—who are slow to change, while the younger people, and certainly the candidates, are people of the era in which homophobia is becoming less acceptable—or, to say the same thing, more tied to individual motivational variants.

In my estimation, the battle within psychoanalysis as a field for training homosexuals has been won and attention now needs to turn to the more subtle manifestations of homophobia. It is here that the need for a psychoanalytically informed theory of homophobia is most obvious. Institutional change has been made on the model of change to acknowledge racism and sexism in the society at large. To go further, a theory comparable in complexity to those that have, slowly, emerged to compass racism and sexism needs to be formulated and worked with. I think it is not an exaggeration to say that most of the theoretical work to combat prejudice that has been done within psychoanalysis in the last decade has come from relational and intersubjectivist theorists, many with feminist backgrounds, who have focused on using postmodernist work on the history and theory of sexuality to loosen up normative developmental thinking, to make way for more complex, less rigid and stereotyped ideas about gender identity and sexual preference—in short, to continue by psychoanalytic means the work of depathologizing homosexuality that was the original focus of the gay liberation movement’s battle with the American Psychiatric Association.

Although this work of theoretical revision is obviously crucial, I also think it has been pursued to the neglect of the theoretical work that I believe is just as important; that is, the theoretical work of developing a rich and multifarious psychoanalytic understanding of homophobia.

Just before I entered into training in Philadelphia, I completed a book called *The Anatomy of Prejudices* in which I advanced a psychoanalytic theory of prejudice types that correlated prejudice types to character types. I worked with a Freudian scheme of three basic character
types—obsessional, hysterical, and narcissistic. Homophobia, I argued, is really not a single prejudice but a cluster of prejudices—the homophobia; and there is a different type of homophobia for each of the three basic character types: obsessional homophobia, hysterical homophobia, and narcissistic homophobia. For homosexuals, homophobia is a complex prejudice to be targeted with and also to combat, because it takes such different forms. Women of color have always been aware that the sexism they experience and the racism they experience are quite different, and women of color who are lesbians are also aware that the homophobia they experience is quite different depending upon who—and what kinds of groups—are targeting them. But this kind of knowledge has not made its way into social science, which has, since the end of the Second World War, been dominated by the idea that prejudice is a single thing—that is, that anti-Semitism, racism, sexism, and then homophobia were all variations of one kind of thing, prejudice, which operates in the same psychodynamic way across the different forms. Social science further assumed there is one type of prejudiced person—known in the immediate post-War period as “the authoritarian personality,” and given various other labels since then. I believe, to the contrary, that prejudices are like mechanisms of defense—I call them social mechanisms of defense—and that different people need and use different ones for different defense purposes. Institutions, too, have defensive characters constituted by the defensive styles prevailing among their members, particularly their senior members, that is, their authority figures. Psychoanalytic training institutes are, like a school or church, charged with training the young, particularly intent upon stamping into the young their prevailing defensive style and ruling out of membership those whom they perceive as threats to their defenses.

I’ll come back to this line of argument. But let me first briefly sketch the three character types and their characteristic defenses.

*Obsessionals*, who characteristically defend themselves with great rigidity against their own sexual and especially their aggressive desires, sustain and make thicker their defenses with images of objects who are trying to penetrate their defenses, undermine them, infiltrate them. Their prejudices are against people whom they conceive of as, on the one hand, dirty and polluting, and, on the other hand, shrewdly able to accumulate wealth. Their victim groups are commercial and educated peoples, in one way or another clannish, who exist among them as “strangers” or interlopers or itinerants or middlemen. The Jews are the archetypal victim group of obsessionals, but homosexuals (including Jewish homosexuals) can be hated in this way, too. When homosexuals are thus hated, their “degeneracy” is
emphasized. They debilitate everything and everybody they touch, which can mean, as far as male homosexuals are concerned, that they feminize (by anally penetrating) or castrate. Money power is attributed to them. They bankroll politicians because they are supposedly more affluent as a group, they buy up media, promulgate “The Homosexual Agenda” guiding liberal politics, infiltrate political parties and government agencies, gain control—if admitted—over military men, and, worst, they teach, transmitting their way of life to innocent children. Now, they carry AIDS and are being punished by that disease for their diseased state—a punishment that should proceed apace because they have begun to infect the heterosexual community. Ultimately, obsessional homophobes want the homosexuals eliminated; there should be some kind of Final Solution for them.

_Hysterics_, who characteristically split themselves into (at least) two “selves,” one higher, more intelligent, more chaste, usually more feminine, and one lower, less intelligent, primitively sexual, and usually more masculine, need objects of prejudice who help sustain their split. They make the best racists: their lower objects are darker, associated with the night and with the dark colors of feces, pubic hairs, body orifices. But hysterics also make good homophobes: They keep homosexuals (including, of course, dark-skinned homosexuals) “in their place,” which means, fundamentally, making them available for actual or fantasy debased sexual service. The most common service homosexuals are needed for is acting out the Oedipal desires that those prejudiced against them will not admit in themselves or cannot act upon for themselves. Homosexuals provide a masquerade. “They” can love people of the same sex, and “we” (the heterosexuals) can punish them for it. “They” can do what is forbidden, and “we” can be the good ones by signing over our forbidden wishes to them. But meanwhile “we” can enjoy their loving vicariously, watch them on pornographic films, imagine ourselves as their lovers, even perhaps sojourn or experiment with them and then return to our world, “forgetting” that we ever left or that we did what we did. It is very important, then, that “they” live nearby, not of our world but in it; they should have the servant’s quarters of a subculture, say a bar culture, where they can be a secret. Homophobes of this sort do not want to eliminate homosexuals, they want to use them, enslave them.

_Narcissists_ seize upon various marks of difference, depending on which difference is most charged and meaningful and threatening to them. For many narcissists, the key difference is anatomical sexual difference, but this elemental difference can also be displaced into the realms of, for example, mental difference or cultural difference. At one and the same time, narcissists deny this difference and accentuate it. They need to be with people
whom they consider like themselves, who can mirror them and reinforce
the lineaments of their identities, but they also say these people are not me.
Women are for narcissistic men both phallic women—that is, like men—
and castrated beings of inferior capacity. Homosexuals can be the same:
like and less. In both homophobic and non-homophobic cultures, men also
form same-sex peer groups that are as crucial to their identities and their
social orders as their families are—often more crucial; but in homophobic
cultures, such groups are additionally structured by being defined as non-
homosexual. Men’s groups, teams, clubs, military units, and so forth allow
their members safe homoeroticism if they can be demarcated clearly from
homosexual groups; their groups can even contain homosexual activity if
there is a border, “not like them.” Psychologically, what the same-sex peer
groups give their members might be called genital supplementing. Men
feel their sexual potency, their phallic power, augmented when they are
with buddies; more than one penis is necessary to men whose ambitions
are large but whose self-esteem is not secured inwardly, who suffer great
castration anxiety. They expand, so to speak, to be the equals of their fa-
thers; they dis-identify with their mothers. Women, too, feel supplemented
and defined as nonhomosexual in their groups, but they also tend to merge
with their mothers through such groups as much or more than they use
them for individuating from their mothers. For narcissistic mother-bonder
women, lesbians are an allure but also a disrupting menace.

To this way of thinking, homophobia is the hardest prejudice to study
systematically, as well as being the one that is hardest to combat or de-
construct, because it is the prejudice that is character-syntonic to the most
character types. This is not even taking much into account that homophobia
is a prejudice cluster that involves variants for men and women, and for
masculinity and femininity, in the prejudiced and in their targets.

Nonetheless, distinctions made along characterological lines can pro-
vide a particular lens on the forms homophobia takes at any given historical
and cultural moment. Such distinctions can also illuminate the prevailing
forms of homophobia in a given institution at a given time.

In psychoanalytic training institutes, the notion that homosexuals or
bisexuals are perverse—as the syllabus in my Philadelphia training in-
stitute insisted—or arrested in their development is the most commonly
articulated homophobic theory. To my mind, this theory of arrested devel-
opment is itself a product of obsessional and narcissistic thinking. That
is, thinking that insists upon one normal developmental course for all
people—rule-bound thinking—and thinking that says all people must be
just like me (which usually means masculine like me). The prevailing
styles in most institutes are also obsessional and narcissistic, very seldom hysterical—so gays and lesbians are seldom pressed into sexual service in the institutes (and the sexual service that is required is required largely of woman by men, on a narcissistic basis).

**RALPH ROUGHTON, MD**

The religious right and a few die-hard psychoanalysts still try to convert homosexual individuals to heterosexuality. So I want to discuss converting homophobic psychoanalysts and their organizations to gay-friendly. I say this, not as an outsider, but as an inside participant in changes within the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsaA) and the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA).

In 2004, our score is “one down, one to go” in gaining full acceptance of the idea that sexual orientation simply does not matter when it comes to being a psychoanalyst. Adopting a nondiscrimination policy is necessary to enforce fairness and justice, but it is not sufficient to change minds and hearts and to bring acceptance. Both organizations now have such policies; only one has really accepted us.

Now two acknowledgements: First, psychoanalysts lagged far behind psychiatrists in fairness and justice. The American Psychiatric Association did it in 1973 (Bayer, 1981). The APsaA finally did it 18 years later, in 1991 (Roughton, 1995); but not until 2002 was the International forced to follow suit.

My second acknowledgement is that, in the United States, the APsaA lagged far behind other psychoanalytic groups in contributing new ideas about sexual orientation. Look at the professional affiliations of the speakers on this program today, for example. Those of us identified with the APsaA are a definite minority.

Exploring the multiple reasons is beyond the focus of this panel. Suffice it to say that rigidity of theoretical thinking, and an arrogant attitude that we could teach others, but not learn from others, left the APsaA isolated in its ivory tower, as the world moved on in attitudes about sexual orientation.

This is rapidly changing. In the 1990s, we saw a sea-change in how our Association dealt with homosexuality. After all, Freud had said in 1921 that homosexual individuals should not be barred from becoming psychoanalysts if they are otherwise qualified.

In adopting Freud’s position—only 70 years later—the APsaA concentrated first on fairness and justice. Prior to 1990, if any “known
homosexual had ever graduated from our institutes, it was a well-kept secret. In 1988, our Association’s president refused to bring up Richard Isay’s nondiscrimination initiative, saying it was “too controversial” (Isay, 1996). But only three years later, the Executive Council was almost unanimous in adopting a nondiscrimination policy that said choosing candidates and promoting faculty must be based on qualities relevant to functioning as a psychoanalyst, and not on the basis of sexual orientation. Vehement opposition from Charles Socarides was resoundingly defeated.

Just six years later, again the Council voted almost unanimously for a resolution supporting same-sex marriage (Hausman, 1998). We have since adopted policy statements that favor gay and lesbian parenting, that oppose treatment attempts to change sexual orientation, and that reaffirm our support for gay marriage in the recent Massachusetts lawsuit legalizing same-sex marriage.

How did such a turnaround come so quickly? First, Dick Isay, almost single-handedly, deserves credit for the first major step toward fairness and justice. As chair of the Program Committee in the mid-1980s, he organized panels around this “new” idea that homosexuality was not necessarily pathological. Then, as a persistent gadfly, he lobbied, and then demanded, that the leadership act on a nondiscrimination policy. At just the right time, a new president took office, and finally the battle for justice won by an overwhelming majority. But in doing so, Isay’s necessary tactics and his personal style had left such mutual anger and resentment that he could not lead the next stage—the process of winning the hearts and minds of the members.

Others took up the cause. Adopting a policy was necessary but not sufficient; something more was needed to implement the policy. A Committee on Gay and Lesbian Issues was formed; but, with Isay’s alienation, there was no openly gay member to appoint. I was still married and in the closet, but I had begun to speak about the issues. So I was asked to chair it and did so from 1992 to 1998, succeeded first by Susan Vaughan and then Gary Grossman.

The Committee was never limited to an exclusive, or even a majority, gay membership. Initially this was necessary in the absence of gay members. Some of us were still in the closet when we began. Others were supportive straight colleagues, who were just more open-minded, or who had gay friends or relatives. But later, as more of us came out, and as our ranks increased with openly gay candidates and new graduates, it was a conscious choice to maintain a gay-straight alliance. This has been one of the Committee’s strengths.
The initial task was to become aware of persisting bias and discrimination, both in the national organization and in local institutes, and to facilitate changes through consultation and education. Theoretical and clinical challenges were addressed by the Committee on Scientific Activities, culminating in the publication of the massively researched book *The Course of Gay and Lesbian Lives* (Cohler and Galatzer-Levy, 2000).

Committee members made consultative visits to a majority of the institutes and developed official guidelines for evaluating gay and lesbian applicants. At our national scientific meetings, we sponsor workshops and discussion groups. A special reception, paid for by the Association, welcomes gay and lesbian participants. Beginning in 1998 an award is given annually to recognize a contribution to the literature on homosexuality. A Committee on Gay and Lesbian Issues has been established within the candidates’ organization.

One source of support surprised us. An organization of our size should have had at least 100 gay members, and we had one. Exclusion and intimidation explained that. But straight analysts also have siblings and kids, with the usual percent being gay. It turned out that several who volunteered for our committee had a gay family member. Often they would not mention this for some time, and we became aware of another kind of closet, best articulated by one senior woman analyst who finally “came out” about having three lesbian daughters. For years she had not told even her closest colleagues. Our theory at the time would have blamed her for her daughters’ being gay, and she had her own internalized shame and homophobia to work through. This led us to organize a discussion group for analysts who are parents of gay kids. They continue to meet regularly.

Two major milestones on this journey of organizational change: In 1998, the Committee on Public Information initiated and invited *us* to join *them* in putting on a major public forum on homophobia (Hoffman et al., 2000). In 2001, the Program Committee invited me—by now “a known homosexual”—to give the Plenary Address at the annual meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association (Roughton, 2002).

The road was not always easy. Our task required educating our leaders and fellow members. Initially, we were dealing with a president who, for all his good-hearted support, would still thoughtlessly speak of “homosexuality and the other perversions.” I’m convinced that he was genuinely and naively puzzled by our objections. But he and others were willing to look at their insensitivities. This is an important point. Certainly there has been sufficient cause to justify the term ’homophobia in relation to
psychoanalysis. But I firmly believe that, for most of our current members, as for this president, it was more immersion in heterosexist culture and in outmoded psychoanalytic theory than it was hatred and fear and scorn. That is, more “homo-ignorance” than “homo-phobia.”

That president, who had to be cajoled out of his bad habit of saying “and the other perversions,” was the same one who rose to defend our Committee when Socarides and his cronies continued to attack us with lies and distortions in the Association’s newsletter, claiming that we were gay activists trying to take over the organization. The Executive Committee countered with a statement that we were an officially appointed committee of the Association, carrying out approved policy and backed by the Executive Council.

He was also the same one who, as president, publicly acknowledged the past errors of the Association that, he said, had undoubtedly resulted in many potential psychoanalysts being denied acceptance because of their sexual orientation (Margolis and Roughton, 1996). He was the same straight man, Marvin Margolis, who appointed me to chair the committee, at a time when he knew me as a straight, married man. Four years later, when I decided the time was right in my personal life for me to come out, I was concerned about his reaction. But his response was, “Ralph, this isn’t going to change the way people feel about you; this is going to change the way they think about homosexuality.”

Another important point. Once the doors to equal opportunity were forced open, changing hearts and minds happened at the personal level. Nothing dispels stereotypes and prejudice like knowing individuals. When we began visiting institutes, over and over we heard senior analysts say that they did not know any gays or lesbians except as patients. One benefit of admitting bright, competent gay and lesbian candidates to our institutes was that faculty members did get to know someone who was not a patient. Perhaps that changed things as much as anything else.

We had to overcome the grave injustice to the qualified potential analysts who were denied training, and we had to recognize the grave self-inflicted injury to our organization by suppressing diversity. It is sobering to think how many talented contributors we must have lost by excluding gay men and lesbians from our ranks. In addition we had to overcome a negative image among mental health professionals and society at large. Now, the American Psychoanalytic Association has become a gay-friendly organization; of equal importance, it is a stronger and more honest organization for having opened itself to inclusion and to rethinking the issues regarding sexual orientation.
Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the International Psychoanalytic Association. Bitter battles have been fought, and a marginal accept-
tance has been hammered out. But the division continues, and I doubt that
many minds have been changed by the formal nondiscrimination policy.

In 1999, as a member of the IPA's House of Delegates, I introduced
a nondiscrimination resolution. After long and acrimonious debate, a
watered-down, generic statement was passed: “We don’t discriminate
against anyone for any reason.” But not specifying sexual orientation al-

dows some institutes to continue excluding homosexual individuals, based
on their contention that it represents disqualifying psychopathology, not
discrimination.

Reconsideration two years later had the same result—which outraged
many of our straight American colleagues and our elected officers. So we
decided to call the bluff by requesting an official opinion from the IPA as
to whether the policy of not discriminating “for any reason” did in fact
cover sexual orientation. This forced the answer—yes, it does cover sexual
orientation. At the next meeting, with strong endorsement from the IPA
Executive Committee, the Executive Council voted to put it in writing. A
nondiscrimination policy that includes “homosexual orientation” was
adopted (Roughton, 2003).

But in the IPA, such a policy has little clout. Those who opposed it
still oppose it. There is no committee to implement the policy or to win
the minds and hearts of members. With more than 10,000 members in
30 countries; with wide diversity of culture, language, and theoretical
perspectives; and with far less control over constituent societies than in the
American organization, change will be much slower. But at least the first
step has been taken.

In concluding, I emphasize my belief that most of our colleagues are
reasonable people who will rethink their heterosexist biases and are willing
to learn about what it means to be gay. Most of the pain, anger, and
misunderstanding is behind us, at least in American psychoanalysis. Of
course there is more to be done, and our future now lies in the hands of the
large number of gay and lesbian psychoanalysts who have begun the next
task of rewriting the psychoanalytic literature on homosexuality.

It was important to separate the fight for justice from the need to construct
new theories of sexual orientation. You can vote on issues of justice and
get that done fairly quickly. You can educate people to new theories over
time, but constructing those new theories takes even more time. But it is
the personal touch, knowing people as individuals, that brings real change
in attitudes and true acceptance.
When we gave our first presentation on female homosexuality and psychoanalysis in 1990, here in New York, we said, “It helps to have a sense of history and a sense of humor if one is lesbian, feminist, and a psychoanalyst.”

We still think humor and a sense of history helps with the situation.

We could use our time today to tell war stories. Ralph Roughton has just described the battles within the American Psychoanalytic Association. We know, however, that although there have been substantive institutional policy changes, the war continues in the trenches. Gay and lesbian patients remain at risk of receiving emotional scarring and treatment that is downright inadequate because their analysts are homophobic, homo-ignorant, or because their nonanalytic therapists rely on psychoanalytic models of sexual development to understand their gay and lesbian patients.

When histories, whether institutional or personal, have been marked by trauma, dissociation flourishes (see Drescher, 1998). We forget events; we smooth over experience; we pay selective attention in order to survive. We believe it will take everyone who has been part of the history of psychoanalysis and homosexuality to fight against such defenses. By remembering together, we can diminish our collective and individual dissociations. The following comments are our contributions to remembering how it was.

We each applied for psychoanalytic training in 1984. At that time we knew of no gay or lesbian therapists who had ever been accepted to psychoanalytic training having been open about their homosexuality. At meetings of the Association of Gay and Lesbian Psychiatrists (AGLP) we met psychiatrists who had been open and rejected from training; we met a few who had been closeted at admission and had come out during their training. We met some who had never been open, even with their own analysts. In Los Angeles we knew two lesbian analysts socially. Neither had identified as lesbian during her training and both would remain conflicted about disclosing that aspect of their identity for years.

**DCM:** I considered applying to a local American-affiliated institute where my analyst was a training analyst. I thought my medical degree and child and adult psychiatric training would stand me in good stead. I was cautioned by various members of the analytic community, including my analyst, that my relationship with Maggie was too well known for me to be admitted. My analyst said, “There are some who would be quite willing to admit you, but others will prevent that.” Some colleagues urged me to apply,
saying that if I was rejected, my case could help establish the pattern and practice of discrimination in the American Psychoanalytic Association. But I did not want to be a legal case statistic; I wanted to be a psychoanalyst. Fortunately, other LA area psychoanalytic institutes were not affiliated with the American. So I applied to a newly established, multidisciplinary institute. During my application process, both the institute and I followed a practice later made familiar by the U.S. Department of Defense: ”Don’t ask; don’t tell.” I did not mention my relationship with Maggie in my written application, and I was not asked in oral interviews about my personal relationship.

**MM:** I applied openly to a nonmedical, non-American psychoanalytic Association institute and was accepted. At that time Diana and I had been together seven years, and I made it plain to my admissions committee that this was a life partnership. One member of my application committee said, “Oh well, you really haven’t decided about that yet, have you?”

We had been accepted into training, but where were our homosexual colleagues? Our search for openly gay and lesbian psychoanalysts continued. Maggie complained to her analyst, “There aren’t any other gay analysts.” “Of course there must be,” she said. “I know one. His name is Bert Schaffner.”

In 1988 we read Elisabeth Young-Breuhl’s *Anna Freud: A Biography.* Although Anna and Dorothy Burlingham did not, of course, define themselves as lesbian, we were moved by reading their story and by the generative power of their relationship. Anna was in analysis with her father during some of the same time that he was treating the 18-year-old lesbian patient who was the subject of his 1920 paper on female homosexuality. The nameless patient defied her parents, rejected Freud’s interpretations of her feelings, and insisted that she “could not think of any other way to love.” Ann D’Ercole (1999) would later say of that nameless young woman: “[hers] is not a voice that makes its way into psychoanalytic theory” (p. 119).

Meanwhile we continued looking for gay and lesbian identified analysts. In 1988 we read Ken Lewes’ *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Male Homosexuality,* an extensive literature review and critical history of psychoanalytic theory on the topic. Lewes wrote: “There has never been in the history I have sketched a single analytic writer who could identify himself as homosexual.” The following year Richard Isay published *Being Homosexual: Gay Men and Their Development.* However, Isay did not identify as gay in that text.
Finally, in San Francisco in 1989 we saw our first openly gay and lesbian psychoanalysts. In very small print in the annual program of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis we found the following panel: “Psychoanalysis Re-examines Love and Sex among Gays and Lesbians.” The panel’s chair was Bertram Schaffner. We had found him! That day we also met Jack Drescher, Karin Lofthus Carrington, a Jungian analyst, Joseph P. Merlino, and Alan Kagan. In the hallway on our way to that session we met a colleague from our institute who asked where we were going. When we showed her the panel listing she pulled away. “Oh, that’s for a special group,” she said and fled. Indeed a very special group was beginning to form, gay and lesbian analysts who had found training outside the American Psychoanalytic Association, who were finding one another, sharing with each other their experiences in training, and beginning their own writing and presentations on homosexuality.

In November 1990 we gave our first paper, a critical review of psychoanalytic theory on female homosexuality to the National Committee on Psychoanalysis, a psychoanalytic social worker organization. The paper’s title, “She Foreswore her Womanhood,” comes from Freud’s way of understanding his aforementioned 1920 patient. We had no idea what to expect that day. We wondered if anyone would even show up for our presentation. The small room filled up, but people kept coming in. Women sat on the floor, in the aisles, outside in the hall. It was hot; if we closed the blinds against the heat, the room was too dark for us to read our paper. The slide projector malfunctioned. Diana went down into the audience and manually moved the slides. A woman beside her touched her arm and said, “Sappho would have loved this day.” There was great hunger in that room for new thinking about homosexuality.

A year or so later we attended a conference in Los Angeles sponsored by Division 39 of the American Psychological Association. The keynote speaker was stimulating. After her presentation everyone at our table, all women in our institute, were enjoying their food and wine. Our colleagues began to ask Maggie and me questions about our relationship, our personal histories, about homosexuality. There was great hunger at that table for new thinking about homosexuality. The keynote speaker came down from the podium and asked if she could sit with us. “What are you talking about? You are the most animated table in the room.” That dinner speaker was Elisabeth Young-Bruehl. We took her to the airport the next day. When we told her we were writing about female homosexuality, she encouraged us. We spoke of Isay’s work and how, although we knew him to be a member of AGLP, he had not come out yet in print as gay. “But he’s not gay; I’ve
had dinner with him and his wife,” Young-Bruehl said. In an instant we had stumbled into one of those uncomfortable exchanges all too common at that time, when too many had to live double lives and were closeted for professional safety. In his 1996 book *Becoming Gay*, Isay would later describe the cold and rejecting responses of many analytic colleagues, including his analyst, when he did come out professionally.

We see 1993 as a turning point in the history we are discussing. Noreen O’Connor and Johanna Ryan, English therapists, published *Wild Desires and Mistaken Identities: Lesbianism and Psychoanalysis*. The New York University Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis organized an historical conference “Perspectives on Homosexuality: An Open Dialogue.” It was the first psychoanalytic conference on homosexuality in which gay and lesbian analysts were at the podium as presenters. More than 600 people attended. The panels included some who are on this program today: Ronnie Lesser, David Schwartz, Bertram Schaffner, and ourselves. Jack Drescher spoke from the audience. In 1995, Thomas Domenici and Ronnie Lesser edited *Disorienting Sexualities: Psychoanalytic Reappraisals of Sexual Identities*, which included papers from that conference.

In 1997, our book *Lesbian Lives: Psychoanalytic Narratives Old and New* was published. We had undertaken psychoanalytic training in the belief that through such training we would understand the psychological etiology of female homosexuality. But we found we could not in fact distinguish our lesbian patients from other patients by their family dynamics or their early object relationships. They had no characteristic defensive structures or distinguishing transference presentations because, of course, homosexuality is not a clinical category. It is one variety of sexual desire and it can accompany any psychic organizations.

There are, however, some things that do distinguish lesbian women from other women. They are the developmental consequences of being homosexual and of growing up gay and identifying as homosexual in a culture that treats one’s love and desire, one’s very body and being as criminal, sinful, and abnormal. The anxieties and defenses developed in response to such forces are indeed a fitting area for psychoanalytic study and treatment.

We know that Freud was supportive of the male homosexual civil rights movement (Abelove, 1985), and in *Lesbian Lives* we have written of his affection and support for lesbian women such as H.D. and Bryher. But in an effort not to pay selective attention, we also maintain that beginning in 1905 with *The Three Essays*, Freud’s conceptualizations lent themselves only
too easily to seeing homosexuality as a deviation. However much Freud believed that inversion was evidence of neither degeneracy nor immorality, and was not synonymous with disturbed functioning, he could not see same-sex desire as a fully legitimate sexuality. The ultimate goal of the sexual instinct, however troubled its trajectory, and whatever obstacles it may encounter on the way, was genital primacy and reproduction. Homosexual sex is an off-the-mark deviation.

Freud (1905) begin the first essay with a misremembering:

The popular view of the sexual instinct is beautifully reflected in the poetic fable which tells how the original human beings were cut into two halves—man and woman—and how these are always striving to unite again in love. It comes as a great surprise therefore to learn that there are men whose sexual object is a man and not a woman, and women whose sexual object is a woman and not a man. (p. 136)

The poetic tale to which Freud alludes is that of Aristophanes in Plato’s Symposium. But in Aristophanes’ tale all the original human beings were not, as Freud said once half man and half woman. There were also two other kinds of human, one in which both sides were male, and one in which both were female. All three kinds—man, woman and androgyne—were cut in two and all searched for their lost other half. In Aristophanes tale same-sex partners find in their union the same on-target completion and fulfillment as do heterosexual pairs. The “great surprise” Freud speaks of, therefore, could only be a product of his own dissociation, of his keeping from consciousness the full version of that tale.

We conclude with a reminder that even psychoanalysts contemporary with Freud focused the discussion of homosexuality differently. In 1923 Georg Groddeck wrote: “The question is not whether homosexuality is perverse—that does not come under discussion—what we have to ask is why it is so difficult to consider this phenomenon of passion between members of the same sex . . . without prejudice” (p. 195).

NOTES

3. I use this now quaint term with a touch of irony to convey the attitude that would have greeted an openly gay psychoanalyst in that pre-1990 era. Older readers will recognize the common journalistic reference to “known homosexuals,” when being
“known” was no longer necessarily a scandal but neither was it a simple statement of fact.

4. See Merlino (2001) for a biographical sketch of Bertram H. Schaffner, MD.

5. Now known as the American Academy of Psychoanalysis and Dynamic Psychiatry.

REFERENCES


