

INTRODUCTION TO A NEW SERIES OF INTERVIEWS ON THE FUTURE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

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When Elliot first took over as editor of *Psychoanalytic Psychology* and invited Jeremy to join the editorial board, we met for lunch to brainstorm about new directions for the journal. One of the schemes we hatched was the idea of developing a special issue consisting of articles by prominent figures in the field, reflecting on the future of psychoanalysis.

It has become a truism that psychoanalysis is in a state of crisis as a result of a number of factors that are not necessary to recite here. At the same time, many of us feel that despite the growing marginalization of our field, within the United States psychoanalysis is experiencing a tremendous sense of intellectual and theoretical vibrancy and renewal. Historically, the alliance of psychoanalysis with the medical profession played an important role in establishing the United States as the international center of psychoanalysis. This success came with a cost, however, as psychoanalysis became part of the establishment and developed a conservative and elitist character that contributed to its subsequent undoing. The marginalization of psychoanalysis has been further exacerbated by its tendency to isolate itself from the academic world.

These days, psychoanalytic training is no longer a sure path to prestige and financial success within psychiatry, and anyone who is going to commit the time and money necessary to complete psychoanalytic training needs to find the intrinsic motivation because extrinsic motivation is in short supply. With psychiatry's turn away from psychoanalysis, the number of medically trained psychoanalysts has decreased exponentially, and the majority of psychoanalytic candidates are psychologists and social workers. Many of the most novel and exciting intellectual contributions to American psychoanalysis within the past 2 decades have been made by psychologists, and the growing body of empirical evidence establishing the effectiveness of psychoanalytically oriented treatments has also been conducted primarily by psychologists who have the necessary methodological sophistication.

When we first developed the idea for this series, we hoped to identify leading figures in the field of psychoanalysis whom we would encourage to push the envelope in terms of their thinking and earnestly apply themselves to the task of thinking about the future of psychoanalysis rather than simply repeat positions they had already articulated in previous papers and books.

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We then came up with the idea of conducting a series of interviews rather than asking for paper submissions. Rather than publish all of the interviews in a single issue, we decided to run the interviews over several issues as part of an ongoing series. This would give us an opportunity to let our decisions about who to interview evolve over time and would also decrease the amount of time elapsed between interview and publication.

Our first interview was conducted by Jeremy Safran with Lewis Aron. Lew is director of the New York University (NYU) Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, author of *A Meeting of Minds: Mutuality in Psychoanalysis*; an associate editor and one of the founders of *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*; coeditor of the Relational Perspectives book series (originally with Stephen Mitchell and now with Adrienne Harris); coeditor of a number of books, including *The Legacy of Sandor Ferenczi* (with Adrienne Harris); past president of APA Division 39 (Psychoanalysis); past (and first) president of the International Association for Relational Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy; cochair of the Sandor Ferenczi Center at the New School for Social Research; and a leading figure in the development of relational psychoanalysis. The interview was conducted on August 14, 2008, in Lew's office at the NYU postdoctoral program in New York.

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