

change. Finally, there are chapters on methods, on counselor responsibilities to self and society, and on becoming a counselor.

Throughout, Combs stresses the search for personal meaning as central to effective psychotherapy and counseling. He also stresses the need for counselors and psychotherapists to develop their own belief systems to be effective in their work. He suggests that these systems may be highly tacit in the therapy hour but critically affect the perceptual field of the client. The ground for change in psychotherapy and counseling is in the client's capacity to fully explore his or her perceptual field free from threat and in an atmosphere of interpersonal trust.

A similar view of the richness of the subjective perceptual and experiential field and its inevitable potential for change is put forth by Combs and his coauthors in the second book. Intriguingly entitled *Perceptual Psychology: A Humanistic Approach to the Study of Persons*, the book is said by Combs to be a summary statement of the conceptual and empirical bases of his thought and work; though coauthored, the book surely carries Combs's imprint of the evolution of his early perspective into a more finished "perceptual psychology," a perspective only hinted at in a different climate in his 1949 volume with Snygg.

Perceptual Psychology is an undertaking that covers vast areas in psychology, education, psychotherapy, and counseling. In 492 pages the authors address topics such as learning as the differentiation of personal meaning, the importance of a perceptual psychology to personal meaning, the adequacies and inadequacies of personality, the phenomenal self and its development, perceptual psychology and research, and the general implications of a perceptual psychology for the individual and society.

A feature of the book that might be useful for teaching is the list of selected references and resources, including films and videotapes, at the end of each chapter. The total references run to more than 1000 entries, many of them classic, and they read as a virtual history of the time they cover.

A strong case is made in the book for Combs's special concept of a rich, extensive, and continuously available perceptual field as a crucial component in human growth and development. Indeed, that field and the search for personal meaning in that field are seen as important to the concept of the fully functioning person, as are openness to experience, a positive self-view, and feelings of oneness and identification with others. Both books are tributes to Combs's adventuresome, pioneering spirit.

I found confusing at times the interrelated usage of the terms *perceptual*, *phenomenal*, *experiential*, and *humanistic*. There are also few references after 1980. The so-called New Look in Perception, on which much of

Combs's theorizing and writing is based, took a sharp turn in the 1960s around the issue "If we perceive only what we want to perceive, why do we perceive so well?" In this regard there is no mention of Neisser's (1967) classic text on the social and contextual factors of perceiving and remembering, a book that moved perception heavily into cognition, but which might still support Combs's contentions. Another concern is that the assumption is made over and over again that self-actualizing persons are socially altruistic—an idea that to my knowledge has never been substantiated.

A story told by Combs in *A Theory of Therapy* perhaps best captures his approach to his profession and his life:

I remember . . . my behavior with a deeply paranoid client who was having difficulty deciding whether I really could be trusted. Thinking some dramatic demonstration was called for, I walked to my file, took out her folder, tore it in two and laid it in her lap, saying something like, "I think you'll be more comfortable having these in your own hands. I promise you I will never make any more notes so long as we are working together." It was just the right touch needed to get us moving again. In fifty years of counseling, I never did that before nor have I since. (p. 102)

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Acts of Will: The Life and Work of Otto Rank, by E. James Lieberman. New York: Free Press, 1985, 485 pp.

It could be said that, with the introduction of their 1924 book, *The Development of Psychoanalysis*, the Austrian Otto Rank and the Hungarian Sandor Ferenczi invented psychotherapy.

Rank and Ferenczi (Freud's favorite students and colleagues) were less concerned with analyzing than with helping patients. They advocated a brief, active, intensive therapy focused on the present instead of the past and on

actual emotion rather than on intellectual understanding. They recommended setting a termination date; introduced the notion that there may be reactions to the analyst in his or her own right, not merely those transferred from the past; and suggested not concealing the therapist's true feelings from the patient. It may surprise others, as it did me, to learn that Rank, not Freud, introduced the concept of *denial* and Havelock Ellis's concept of *narcissism* to psychoanalysis.

Also in 1924, Rank published *The Trauma of Birth*, in which he concluded that anxiety, both neurotic and normal, derives from birth—primal separation. Afterwards comes the trauma of weaning, then the fear of castration.

The one-two punch of the book on psychotherapy and the book on birth trauma—improving on method and eclipsing the primacy of the Oedipal—staggered the edifice of orthodoxy. Only a fierce personal attack on Rank would allow psychoanalysis the breathing room to recover and quietly digest his ideas as its own.

Otto Rank was born Otto Rosenfeld in Vienna in 1884. At 21, a self-educated locksmith, Rank was presented to Sigmund Freud by Alfred Adler. The "professor," impressed with the young man's thinking and writing, immediately admitted him to the Wednesday Psychological Society.

Even before he had received his Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Vienna, Rank had published four major books: the first book published on psychoanalysis by any member of the Vienna group other than Freud, *The Artist* (1907); *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero* (1909); his doctoral thesis, *The Lohengrin Saga* (1911); and *The Incest Motif in Poetry and Legend* (1912). Rank also produced the first record of the psychoanalytic movement: four volumes (1906-1915) of minutes of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. His other major publications include *The Trauma of Birth* (1924), *Art and Artist* (1932), *Will Therapy* (1936), *Truth and Reality* (1936), and (posthumously) *Beyond Psychology* (1941).

After 20 intense years in psychoanalysis's inner circle, as Freud's "faithful helper and co-worker" and "foster son," Rank tired of the politics. He recognized "that the psychoanalytic movement as such is a fiction but men who make a movement are no fiction, and for those who are now eager to work at a psychoanalytic movement I confess, I have no liking" (Taft, 1958, p. 100). Eventually, he even gave up producing in favor of merely living. The psychiatrist James Lieberman, Rank's biographer in *Acts of Will*, explains Rank's view: "The ultimate artistry was living an affirmative life, ceaselessly creating that which one will be from that which is given" (p. 324). Confronted with the difficulties in transmitting and acquiring genuine knowledge, Rank declared, "I haven't anything to 'teach' and can't have any kind of a 'school'

—not even an undogmatic one—whereas most people (and 'good' people for that matter) want that, need it" (Taft, p. 187)! For a time he abandoned writing, observing that "there is already too much truth in the world—an overproduction that apparently cannot be consumed" (Taft, p. 174). When asked about his books, Rank did not hesitate: "Read them if you want to," he advised, "but forget them, don't act on them. Read *Huckleberry Finn*—everything is there" (Lieberman, p. xxxvi)! Otto Rank died in 1939, the same year as Freud (though 28 years his junior). His last word was, "Komisch" (comical, strange, peculiar).

Lieberman's portrayal of Rank's life and work is both rich in details and broad in scope. Carl Jung and Ernest Jones come off badly, tarnished by antisemitism and compromises with the Nazis. (Jones suggested sending Isidor Sadger to a concentration camp to suppress the publication of a manuscript.) Freud is amply portrayed in his broadmindedness and pettiness, an account that does not diminish his greatness.

A broad pattern that interests me is how the formidable force of ideology unites and divides its own enthusiasts, not merely around personality but around functions: theorizing, research, training, publishing, organizing professional associations, and so forth. Freud, for example, was an investigator ("conquistador," he said). From his observations, he formulated the basic ideas of psychoanalysis and fought off invasions of ideas that did not unite with these observations. Thus, Adler's outspoken socialist views, such as, "There is no principle more generally valid for all human relationships than 'on top of' and 'underneath,'" (Lieberman, p. 124) did not unite with Freud's investigations of "individual mechanisms." He declared Adler's ideas "to be wrong and, as far as the development of psychoanalysis is concerned, dangerous" (p. 125).

As Adler's star fell, Jung's ascended. "If I am Moses," Freud wooed Jung, "then you are Joshua and will take possession of the promised land of psychiatry" (Lieberman, p. 106). Ironically, Jung's flirtation with other substitute religions clashed with Freud's plans for psychoanalysis. On the subject of occult phenomena, Freud cautioned, "Keep a cool head, for it is better not to understand something than make such great sacrifices to understanding" (p. 105). His advice unheeded, Freud declared that his "crown prince" was "crazy," and they parted ways.

In 1913, Adler and Jung having departed, Freud presented Rank, Karl Abraham, Jones, Ferenczi, and Hanns Sachs (a Viennese lawyer who had translated Kipling's poems into German) each with an antique Greek intaglio that, when mounted on a gold ring, identified the owner as a member of psychoanalysis' secret Ring Group. Abraham, the German, managed a train-

ing program in Berlin that preserved and strengthened the orthodox ideas of psychoanalysis, uniting with Freud's purposes. The Englishman, Jones, as a "fanatic" (Freud's word) promoter of orthodoxy, likewise aligned with the founder's goals for psychoanalysis. A true believer, Jones was even ready to sacrifice Freud himself for the sake of the "movement." In a letter to Abraham, Jones declared

It would be a strange irony if we lost some of Prof's intimate friendship through too great loyalty to his work, but it may possibly prove to be so. We may have to choose between Psa [psychoanalysis] and personal considerations, in which case you may be sure I for one shall have no doubt. (Lieberman, p. 223)

Their territories staked out and united by a dependence on orthodoxy, Freud, Jones, and Abraham formed an uneasy alliance.

In contrast, Rank, inclined toward art, sided with Freud's imagination, openness to creativity, and warmth rather than his methods, orthodoxy, or the economic advantages he offered. Although he was closer to the person of Freud, he strayed further from Freud's dreams for psychoanalysis.

Rank's ideas threatened the orthodoxy. Although Freud was content to let time decide their value, Jones lobbied that such thoughts (though presumably not necessarily bad in themselves) lent themselves to misuse by "ambitious or reactionary readers" (Lieberman, 1985, p. 211). Is this familiar? No question about it: Rank was bad for business.

While Jones and Abraham led the counterattack in Europe, Jones teamed up with the American A. A. Brill to slander and cripple Rank in Britain and the United States. They effectively did so by labeling him as "sick" and by eliminating nonmedical analysts from membership in the leading professional organizations. Rank was expelled (in 1930) from the American Psychoanalytic Association, thus ending his professional practice. With Freud's enthusiastic approval, he had been the leading nonmedical analyst in the world.

Though damaged financially, Rank continued breaking new theoretical ground. The two great streams of psychology, after World War I, were psychoanalysis and behaviorism. One credited causation to internal conflicts, the other to conditioning by the external environment. To this day, they continue to cohabit, as Lieberman suggests, because of their common "focus on the past, and a contempt for the will" (p. 356). Rank insisted that "in order to pretend that control and prediction are possible, one had to deny the individual's own will, his emotional instability, and the large part chance plays in the sphere of our psychical life even more than in our cosmic life"

(Taft, 1958, p. 142). By insisting that choice is *also* a factor in human development, the foundation of humanistic psychology was being built.

The will that Rank promoted was optimistic. He believed in the worthiness of his patients and toiled, "not with the idea of finding out new things about human behavior from a patient, but just helping to put him on his own feet" (Lieberman, p. 282). Freud, on the other hand, appeared pessimistic. "Only a few patients are worth the trouble we spend on them so that we are not allowed to have a therapeutic attitude," he complained, "but we must be glad to have learned something in every case" (Weiss, 1970, p. 37). If not positive, Freud was at least practical. He advised Jung, "Just give up wanting to cure; learn and make money, those are the most plausible conscious aims" (Lieberman, p. 106). Though he worked for money to the exclusion of everything else, Freud did not conceal his contempt for Americans. He advised Rank that the way to bear a "sojourn among such savages" was "to sell one's life as dearly as possible," quipping that "analysis fits the American as a white shirt the raven" (Lieberman, p. 228). Until competition for clients threatened their pocketbooks, professionals in the United States took to Rank and his methods. The psychiatrist Abram Kardiner said, "He had a method to cut down neurosis at the main trunk instead of picking at leaves and twigs. We all flocked to him" (p. 234).

Rank was pleasant and accessible. A patient related that

with Rank, there was no dogma. . . . Nothing was imposed on you. Rank was not looking for disease, he was not trying to eradicate anything. He wanted you to open up and be as you might want to be but didn't dare to. He had an overwhelming force but it did not take away from anything else, it gave you a force of your own. (Lieberman, p. xxxvi)

In Rank's approach, as described by a student in 1938,

the actual therapeutic relationship is the curative factor. . . . To Rank the neurotic is a person with strong creative urges who through having his will predominantly organized on the negative side . . . is unable to internalize urges along creative channels. (p. 383)

Rank's own creativity exceeded its cultural boundaries: he published in German; lived and worked in France; and conducted much of his psychotherapy in English.

"To each particular case," Rank explained, "I apply no general therapy or theory. I let the patient work out his own psychology, as it were" (Rank, 1966, p. 17). Anaïs Nin (later his student, muse, and lover) affirmed this view: "He

was not practicing mental surgery. He was relying on his intuition, intent on discovering a woman neither one of us knew. A new specimen. He improvised" (Nin, 1966, p. 272).

Commenting on Jessie Taft's legendary permissiveness, Rank said, "The therapist may do whatever he [or she] believes is pertinent to the process and *moment of therapy* with a particular individual as long as he takes responsibility for and deals helpfully with what he precipitates in the patient" (Lieberman, p. xxxvi).

Rank was also among the first to stress that "If you treat a patient you also affect the lives of other members of the family" (Lieberman, p. 337). His ideas influenced the "Rankian" Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic. (Although Rank avoided such jargon, he kidded that Frederick Allen, then the director, was more Rankian than himself.)

James Lieberman summarizes: "Freeing the trapped or downtrodden human will was Rank's special mission. He felt it could only be done with honesty, humor, humility, and a will of one's own" (p. xxxviii). Lieberman's own scholarship, thoroughness, his precise, affable (and, at the same time, no-nonsense) style—that is, just plain good writing—reproduces the adventure of the life of Otto Rank, which tried to answer the Shakespearean epigram to his first book. *The Artist*: "Is it possible, he should know what he is, and be that he is?"

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