

In Memoriam: Hans H. Strupp (1921–2006)

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Hans Hermann Strupp, who deeply influenced the field of psychotherapy research for 50 years, died on October 5, 2006, of Parkinson's disease, which he had battled for a decade. He was 85 years old and lived in Nashville, Tennessee.

Hans entered the field when psychotherapy research largely focused on straightforward questions of general efficacy. Beginning with the publication of his dissertation in 1955, Hans demonstrated a keen ability of systematically applying rigorous scientific methods to phenomena that were close to the hearts of practicing therapists. Although he was interested in clear, definable, and reliable variables, he also was engrossed in phenomena that were sufficiently complex that they warranted direct observation of therapy sessions. Hans was an early advocate of the need for audio and video recording of therapy sessions for research purposes. The scientific study of the therapeutic process was a central focus of his research.

Equal to his empirical contributions was Hans's talent as a writer and what many regard as his uncanny rhetorical abilities. His evenhanded eloquence was persuasive and yet respectful of those with differing viewpoints. This balance allowed him to engage in discussions with many scientists from radically different schools, which contributed to the foundation of the movement of psychotherapy integration.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO PSYCHOTHERAPY INTEGRATION

Hans did much to advance psychotherapy integration at many levels. He maintained an uncanny ability to communicate across the theoretical battle lines that dominated most of the landscape of clinical psychology during his early career. Hans's colleagues describe his friendly and genial persona that helped dissolve many differences. Stories abound of his ability

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to communicate with others from differing theoretical schools about case material, despite stark differences in psychoanalytic, humanistic, or behavioral *languages*. He himself was from the interpersonal school of psychodynamic theory and always appreciated the importance of solid theoretical constructions in understanding cases. However, he dismissed theoretical excesses such as *metatheoretical* developments within psychoanalysis.

Beginning in 1967, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) funded Hans and Allen Bergin to explore possibilities for increased communication and collaboration among psychotherapy researchers from a variety of orientations. For the next 5 years, Hans and Bergin frequently met around the country, often with numerous experts in psychotherapy research. These interactions culminated in Bergin and Strupp's seminal work published in 1972: *Changing Frontiers in the Science of Psychotherapy*. Also during these years, the first annual meetings of the Society for Psychotherapy Research were taking place, of which Hans was a founding member.

Hans also planted the origins of the Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration (SEPI). After a meeting in San Francisco, where Hans, Marv Goldfried, Mardi Horowitz, Paul Wachtel, Sol Garfield, Barry Wolfe, Stan Imber, and Phil Kendall explored psychotherapy case descriptions from multiple theoretical lenses, Goldfried and Hans soon met in Nashville to further explore integration. Goldfried credits Hans for planting the idea of SEPI during that visit, by encouraging him to organize a formal organization for the exploration of psychotherapy integration. This idea was brought to fruition shortly thereafter with the founding of SEPI in 1983 by Goldfried and Wachtel.

RESEARCH CAREER

Hans's early educational interests were in philosophy and social psychology. However, as a doctoral student, he had been employed by the Air Force and had been expecting to do his dissertation in the area of human factors, but a change in government policy prohibited his access to this data at the last moment. As a consequence, Hans shifted his focus to psychotherapy and never looked back.

Beginning with his dissertation, Hans focused on the therapeutic process and how therapists had the ability to influence that process. Throughout his career, he developed multiple methods to uncover these phenomena. His earliest studies used films of therapy sessions as a stimulus to capture

therapists' negative and positive responses toward patients. In the 1960s, he collected a large sample of clients' self-reported experiences to their therapy. He found that clients overwhelmingly remembered personal qualities of their therapists and surprisingly little about the techniques of therapy. After his move to Vanderbilt University, Hans began to design studies that allowed better control and isolation of technique variables from personal and relational variables.

Two federally funded research projects from his laboratory at Vanderbilt University examined the foregoing issues. The studies had a lasting effect on the field and are commonly referred to as *Vanderbilt I and II* in psychotherapy research. In the first Vanderbilt study, he attempted to isolate common relational variables from therapeutic technique variables in psychotherapy by comparing fully trained psychotherapists with college professors who had no training in psychotherapy but who had been nominated for their advising skills. He discovered that the outcomes of the two groups did not differ; this finding received worldwide attention in the popular media (Strupp & Hadley, 1979).

Next, through a series of case studies from the Vanderbilt I data, Hans identified critical patient-therapist relationship issues by systematically comparing successful and unsuccessful patients who were treated by the same therapist. Additional empirical studies by Hans and his research group (including Gomes-Schwartz, Hadley, Hartley, Moras, & Sachs) from the Vanderbilt I data emphasized the importance of general relationship factors such as participation, warmth, the therapeutic alliance, negative therapeutic processes and effects, and patient-therapist matching.

The findings from the Vanderbilt I data and exploration led Hans to propose a method for training therapists that focused on addressing problematic issues in transference and countertransference. His 1984 collaboration with Jeffrey L. Binder, *Psychotherapy in a New Key: A Guide to Time-Limited Dynamic Psychotherapy*, was one of the first treatment manuals to be studied with adequate statistical power. In collaboration with colleagues and students (including Binder, Butler, Henry, & Schacht) Hans found that training with the manual did not influence outcomes with regard to the Vanderbilt II data. Once again, interesting findings emerged from subsequent and detailed examination of interpersonal processes between patients and therapists. For example, adherence to the manual was correlated with some indicators of poor interpersonal processes.

Later in his career, Hans became more attuned to the need for prolonged and intensive training. Both therapy training and psychotherapy largely involved *educational experiences* of complex interpersonal processes that required involvement of both patient and therapist in the context of propitious life events.

INAUSPICIOUS BEGINNINGS

Hans Hermann Strupp was born on August 25, 1921, in Frankfurt, Germany. His family was middle class, and Hans was the first in his extended family to attain a university education. As a child, Hans dreamed of an academic career. However, no one on either side of his family had ever attended a university or attained a high school diploma. Worse, hopes for formal academic study were dashed by external events: the death of his father when Hans was 9 years old and the emerging social upheaval of Germany in the 1930s. As a teenager, Hans became an apprentice in costume jewelry in order to enhance his chances of emigrating from Germany in the months preceding the Holocaust. That's because it was believed that chances for emigration were better if one had a skilled trade relative to being a university student. In the aftermath of Krystalnacht—The Night of the Broken Glass—Hans was briefly detained by authorities, who were looking for young men to work in concentration camps. In 1939, Hans immigrated to the United States. He had nothing but \$10 when he arrived with his brother and his mother, who was frequently ill.

Hans worked full time to support himself and his mother while attending night classes at George Washington University, where he earned his bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees between 1939 and 1954. In 1951, he married Lottie Metzger, who was also from Germany. Lottie was his lifelong partner and frequent coeditor for the next 55 years. They often hosted colleagues and friends in their home in a most delightful, welcoming manner.

Hans was a *complete*, complex person and citizen of the world. He personally exuded many of the positive interpersonal processes that he wrote about. He was warm and involved, and he engaged with others. Many remember his deep, sonorous voice, his genuine interests in others, and numerous acts of kindness. Yet he was also a private, deeply shy, and sensitive person. His communication talents ranged from finding the exact and clear definition of a concept to finding the word or phrase that could unlock multiple meanings and uncertainties. He was a self-confessed romantic at heart yet settled for nothing less than critical, disciplined, and rational analysis of problems.

Despite the many early obstacles in his life, Hans lived intensely and fully; he loved and worked well. He had an unquenchable thirst for resolving the puzzle of *how* humans successfully emerge, through their relationships with other persons, from the many discontents of civilization. There is little doubt, and perhaps it is fitting, that his life story itself holds clues to this riddle! And he taught us well.

HONORS AND SURVIVORS

Hans wrote more than 300 publications and 16 books. Among his numerous honors were the APA Distinguished Contributions to Knowledge award, the Distinguished Career Contribution Award from the Society for Psychotherapy Research (he said he was most proud of this award), the Distinguished Professional Achievement Award of the American Board of Professional Psychology, and the Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award from APA Division of Clinical Psychology. Hans's first full academic position was between 1957 and 1966 in the Department of Psychology and Psychiatry at the University of North Carolina. His most fruitful contributions were made during his 40 years at Vanderbilt University (1966–2006), where he was named a Distinguished Professor.

He is survived by his wife, Lottie Metzger Strupp, of Nashville, Tennessee; daughter Karen Strupp of Houston, Texas; daughter Barbara Strupp and husband David Levitsky of Ithaca, New York; his daughter-in-law Dana Strupp of Nashville, Tennessee; his brother Werner Strupp of Bethesda, Maryland; and 5 grandchildren. He was preceded in death in 2002 by his youngest child, John Strupp.

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