

# Manuscripts and Psychohistory

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A REVIEW OF SOME RECENT STUDIES of the kinds of work historians do, written by Maynard Brichford and published in the July 1973 issue of the *American Archivist*, reminds us again how closely allied the archival and historical professions are and how much new developments in historical research can affect archival work.<sup>1</sup> The much-discussed rapprochement between history and the social sciences is a case in point. In 1960 H. Stuart Hughes predicted that historians in the decade ahead would try to make their work more substantial by using quantitative methods in the analysis of historical data and by applying the insights of modern psychology to historical problems.<sup>2</sup> Fourteen years later, we know that Hughes was right. The American historical profession's fascination with quantification is, as Jacob Price described it, "almost a commonplace,"<sup>3</sup> and psychohistory, having survived a less than enthusiastic initial reception, is now the respectable subject of instruction and discussion in college seminars, scholarly journals, and sessions of historical associations. Of special interest and importance to manuscript curators are attempts by historians to combine social science theories with information from documents found in manuscript repositories. Some researchers, like the British historian Alan Macfarlane, insist that the most significant future historical work will rest on such a combination.<sup>4</sup> Manuscript curators familiar with the literature on quantitative history and data archives can appreciate the validity of Macfarlane's contention and realize the extent to which the emergence of a new tool of historical investigation can affect the work of people responsible for the sources without which any scholarly tool, old or

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<sup>1</sup> Maynard Brichford, "Historians and Mirrors: a Review Essay," *American Archivist* 36 (1973):379-402.

<sup>2</sup> H. Stuart Hughes, "The Historian and the Social Scientist," *American Historical Review* 66 (1960): 20-46; cf. H. Stuart Hughes, *History as Art and as Science: Twin Vistas on the Past* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), especially pp. 42-67.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob M. Price, "Recent Quantitative Work in History: A Survey of Main Trends," in *Studies in Quantitative History and the Logic of the Social Sciences* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1969), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Alan Macfarlane, *The Family Life of Ralph Josselin: An Essay in Historical Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 3.

new, is worthless. Psychohistory, like quantification, presents special challenges and problems. This article considers implications raised for manuscript curators, explicitly or implicitly, in the growing literature of psychohistory, stressing especially the potential impact of psychohistorical research on the appraisal of manuscripts and the development of acquisition policies.

By way of introduction, it should be noted that although the term "psychohistory" suggests an interdisciplinary amalgam of psychology and history, psychohistorians have almost invariably preferred psychoanalysis, in either its orthodox or neo-Freudian form, to other psychologies not based on theories of unconscious motivation.<sup>5</sup> It is consequently important to distinguish between psychohistory and history written with psychological insight.<sup>6</sup> The greater complexity of archival problems raised by psychohistory proper is sufficient to warrant emphasizing the distinction. The development of psychohistory has been reviewed and analyzed several times and need not be repeated here since studies of special interest to manuscript curators are discussed and cited in the text and notes that follow.<sup>7</sup> It is important to point out, however, that psychohistorians generally divide their discipline into psychobiography (the psychoanalytic study of historical figures) and group studies (the psychoanalytic study of historical movements).<sup>8</sup> If the discussion that follows seems to concentrate on

<sup>5</sup> On the relationship between history and psychoanalysis, see William L. Langer, "The Next Assignment," *American Historical Review* 63 (1958): 283-304; Fritz Wittels, "Economic and Psychological Historiography," *American Journal of Sociology* 51 (1946): 527-32; Richard L. Schoenwald, "Historians and the Challenge of Freud," *Western Humanities Review* 10 (1946): 99-108; Sidney Ratner, "The Historian's Approach to Psychology," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 2 (1941): 95-109; Bruce Mazlish, ed., *Psychoanalysis and History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Grossett and Dunlap, 1971), especially pp. 1-19; Mazlish, "Inside the Whales," *Times Literary Supplement* no. 3361 (July 28, 1966) pp. 667-69; Mazlish, "Clio on the Couch: Prolegomena to Psychohistory," *Encounter* 31 (September 1968): 46-54; Arnold A. Rogow, "Psychiatry, History and Political Science: Notes on an Emergent Synthesis," in Judd Marmor, ed., *Modern Psychoanalysis: New Directions and Perspectives* (New York: Basic Books, 1968), pp. 663-91; Robert Jay Lifton, "On Psychohistory," in Herbert Bass, ed., *The State of American History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), pp. 276-94; E. J. Hundert, "History, Psychology and the Study of Deviant Behavior," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 2 (1972): 453-72; Lloyd De Mause, "The History of Childhood: the Basis for Psychohistory," *History of Childhood Quarterly: The Journal of Psychohistory* 1 (1973): 1-3. The best available bibliography of psychohistorical studies is Hans Ulrich-Wehler, "Zum Verhältnis Von Geschichtswissenschaft und Psychoanalyse," *Historische Zeitschrift* 208 (1969): 529-54.

<sup>6</sup> See George Devereux, "La Psychoanalyse et l'Histoire," *Annales Economies, Sociétés, Civilizations* 20 (1965): 18-44.

<sup>7</sup> The most recent such review is Betty Glad, "Contributions of Psychobiography," in Jeanne N. Knutson, ed., *Handbook of Political Psychology* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1973), 296-321. Lucille Dooley, "Psychoanalytic Studies of Genius," *American Journal of Psychology* 27 (1916): 363-416, analyzes and abstracts early studies from English and foreign-language journals.

<sup>8</sup> The distinction is clearly explained in Bruce Mazlish, "What is Psychohistory?" *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 21 (1971) and "Group Psychology and the Problems of Contemporary History," *Journal of Contemporary History* 3 (1968): 163-76.

psychobiography, it is both because there have been more psychoanalytic studies of historical figures than historical movements and because the archival implications of psychobiography can be more easily delineated.

Because historical sources assume research value in relationship to questions scholars ask,<sup>9</sup> psychohistory can be expected to have an impact on the appraisal of manuscripts. Yet, in a certain sense, the very notion of appraisal and selectivity is itself foreign to psychoanalysis. Patients in analysis are encouraged to reveal everything, even their most insignificant thoughts, and psychoanalytic investigators have developed techniques for the study of written records that can play havoc with the whole idea of appraisal. Dollard and Maurer, for example, claim that it is possible to measure the degree of tension reflected in any written communication, regardless of content, by assigning values indicative of discomfort or relief to each word in the document.<sup>10</sup> In much the same way, Daniel Boder contends that the ratio of adjectives to verbs in written records is a reliable indicator of the writer's mood.<sup>11</sup> Certainly, these provocative investigative techniques suggest that manuscript curators would be well advised to reconsider the wisdom of time-honored practices like destroying "routine" correspondence and similar items long assumed to be worthless. But if, as Alain Besancon has suggested, psychohistory threatens to reverse the traditional hierarchy of sources,<sup>12</sup> it by no means eliminates it. The fact remains that some records have proven to be, and will very likely continue to be, of greater value than others to psychohistorians. Manuscript curators who want to determine the psychohistorical research value of their holdings need to know what these records are and why they are important.

Following lines set down by Freud himself,<sup>13</sup> psychohistorians have insisted that they cannot pronounce an expert opinion on historical subjects without records containing the same kinds of information

Sudhir Kakar, "The Logic of Psychohistory," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 1 (1970):187-94 is also helpful.

<sup>9</sup> A point well made by Jan Vansina, "How the Kingdom of the Great Makoko and Certain Clapperless Bells Became Topics for Research," in L. P. Curtis, Jr., ed., *The Historian's Workshop: Original Essays by Sixteen Historians* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970), pp. 221-44.

<sup>10</sup> John Dollard and O. Hobart Maurer, "A Method of Measuring Tension in Written Documents," in O. Hobart Maurer, ed., *Psychotherapy: Theory and Research* (New York: Ronald Press, 1953), pp. 235-56.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel P. Boder, "The Adjective-Verb Quotient: A Contribution to the Psychology of Language," *Psychological Record* 3 (1940):310-43. Freud, "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 6, ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-) is the classic work on the meaning of the seemingly inconsequential. See Sandor S. Feldman, *Mannerisms of Speech and Gestures in Everyday Life* (New York: International Universities Press, 1959).

<sup>12</sup> Alain Besancon, "Psychoanalysis: Auxiliary Science or Historical Method," *Journal of Contemporary History* 3(1968):149-62.

<sup>13</sup> Freud, "Leonardo Da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood," *Standard Edition* 9, pp. 59-120.

patients divulge in analytic sessions: details of personal and family history, childhood memories, reports of day and night dreams, and complaints of physical and emotional distress.<sup>14</sup> The historical and psychological literature on revelatory personal records is, unfortunately, very small, but authorities who have considered the problem agree that the kinds of information needed for the study of personality can be found most readily in three groups of items: (1) familiar manuscript materials, commonly found in collections of personal papers, (2) verbatim and nontextual records, and (3) memorabilia and similar miscellaneous materials.<sup>15</sup> Generally, psychohistorians have made most effective use of familiar manuscript materials containing information dismissed by more conventional researchers as unimportant.<sup>16</sup> Autobiographies, diaries, and letters have formed the nucleus of most of the psychohistorical research done to date. Information from these sources has dominated psychobiography, but the insights they give into child-rearing practices and the history of family life have proven useful in group studies as well.<sup>17</sup> Manuscript curators should continue to value these items as highly for psychohistory as they would for other historical research activities.

Autobiographies range in type from elaborate confessional documents to brief curricula vitae. Psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, and psychologists have long recognized their importance as diagnostic tools and have taken special interest in the information they reveal about early childhood experiences.<sup>18</sup> Such information, while rarely included in autobiographies written before the mid-nineteenth century,

<sup>14</sup> Freud, "Constructions in Analysis," *Standard Edition* 23, pp. 260-64; "On Beginning the Treatment (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psychoanalysis)," *Ibid.* 12, pp. 121-44.

<sup>15</sup> The most comprehensive study is Gordon W. Allport, *The Use of Personal Documents in Psychological Science* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1941). See Louis Gottschalk et al., *The Use of Personal Documents in History, Anthropology and Sociology* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1942), especially pp. 3-75; J. Brower, "Personal Documents," in D. Brower and L. Abt, eds., *Progress in Clinical Psychology*, vol. 1 (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1952), pp. 63-66; Norman Kiell, ed., *Psychological Studies of Famous Americans* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1964), pp. 14-21; John A. Garraty, "The Application of Content Analysis to Biography and History" in Ithiel de Sola Pool, ed., *Trends in Content Analysis* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1959).

<sup>16</sup> William Saffady, "Fears of Sexual License During the English Reformation," *History of Childhood Quarterly* 1(1973):89-97.

<sup>17</sup> John Dollard, "The Life History in Community Studies," *American Sociological Review* 3(1938):724-37, and G. W. Allport, J. S. Bruner, and E. M. Jandorf, "Personality under Social Catastrophe: Ninety Life-Histories of the Nazi Revolution," in C. Kluckhohn and H. A. Murray, eds., *Personality in Nature, Society and Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), pp. 347-66.

<sup>18</sup> D. M. Kelley, "The Autobiographical Study as an Aid to Psychotherapy," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 102 (1945):375-77; Norman A. Polansky, "How Shall a Life History Be Written?" *Character and Personality* 9 (1941):188-207; A. F. Davies, "Criteria for the Political Life History," *Historical Studies of Australia and New Zealand* 13 (1967):76-85; Charlotte Buhler, "The Curve of Life as Studied in Biographies," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 19 (1935):405-09; Ernst Kris, "The Personal Myth: A Problem in Psychoanalytic Technique," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 4 (1956):653-81.

is a fairly common feature of modern autobiographies,<sup>19</sup> a point to be kept in mind by manuscript curators whose holdings contain twentieth-century papers. Psychohistorians have made good use of autobiographical documents containing more emotion than fact and therefore neglected by other researchers. Charles Kligerman, for example, likens the confessional autobiography to a psychiatric personal history "without the contaminating presence of an interviewer."<sup>20</sup> Persons responsible for the appraisal of manuscripts should be aware that highly subjective, factually inaccurate, autobiographical documents can be as valuable as highly objective ones.

Unlike autobiographies, diaries reveal immediate rather than remembered emotions. Analyzing the entries in Leonardo da Vinci's diary, Freud studied the relationship between the artist's childhood memories and later psychosexual development, and when Freud presented a preliminary version of his findings at a meeting of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, the discussion that followed centered on the emotional significance of diary-keeping and the revelatory character of diaries as personal documents.<sup>21</sup> Siegfried Bernfeld, one of Freud's early followers, described diary entries as representations of reality distorted by conscious and unconscious tendencies and defended their use by investigators interested in both manifest and repressed wishes and feelings.<sup>22</sup> Peter Bos, following Bernfeld, likened the diary to a confidante to whom things that cannot be shared with real people are confessed.<sup>23</sup> Peter Loewenberg, a psychohistorian who has relied heavily on Bos's ideas, used diaries as the major primary source in studies of Heinrich Himmler and Theodor Herzl.<sup>24</sup> For Loewenberg, as for Alexander and Juliette George who used Colonel House's diaries to analyze his feelings about President Wilson,<sup>25</sup> diaries are a candid and uniquely valuable psychohistorical resource. Diaries can also shed valuable light on child-rearing practices and, consequently, on the very roots of childhood development. Charles Strickland used one such

<sup>19</sup> Edna Oakeshott, *Childhood Experiences in Autobiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960); Emma N. Plank, "Memories of Early Childhood in Autobiographies," *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* 8 (1953):381-93; Bruce Mazlish, "Autobiography and Psychoanalysis," *Encounter* 35 (1970):28-37.

<sup>20</sup> Charles Kligerman, "A Psychoanalytic Study of the Confessions of St. Augustine," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 5 (1957):469-84.

<sup>21</sup> H. Nunberg and E. Federn, eds., *Minutes of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society*, vol. 2 (New York: International Universities Press, 1962), p. 343; Arthur Ponsonby, *English Diaries* (London: Methuen, 1923), pp. 2-4.

<sup>22</sup> S. Bernfeld, *Trieb und Tradition im Jugendalter; Kulturpsychologische Studien an Tagebuchern* (Leipzig: T. A. Barth, 1931).

<sup>23</sup> Peter Bos, *On Adolescence: A Psychoanalytic Interpretation* (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1962), pp. 94-96.

<sup>24</sup> Peter Loewenberg, "The Unsuccessful Adolescence of Heinrich Himmler," *American Historical Review* 76 (1971):612-41, and "Theodor Herzl: A Psychoanalytic Study in Charismatic Leadership," in B. B. Wolman, ed., *The Psychoanalytic Interpretation of History* (New York: Basic Books, 1971), pp. 150-91.

<sup>25</sup> Alexander George and Juliette George, *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House: A Personality Study* (New York: John Day, 1956; Dover Books, 1964).

diary, created by Bronson Alcott as a record of the behavior of his three daughters during their earliest years, to analyze one Transcendentalist's philosophy of child rearing.<sup>26</sup>

Letters can convey a wide range of information of interest to psychohistorians and are especially valuable in revealing the dynamics of interpersonal relationships.<sup>27</sup> Ernest Jones, Freud's biographer and one of the earliest exponents of the psychoanalytic study of history, showed how an exchange of correspondence indicated latent homosexuality in the relationship between Louis Napoleon and his brother.<sup>28</sup> The Georges cited evidence from Woodrow Wilson's letters as proof of his great need for approval from relatives and friends.<sup>29</sup> Like autobiographies and diaries, letters have proved a mainstay in psychohistorical studies.

Manuscript collections open to psychohistorians a wealth of familiar primary sources that never find their way into print. Drafts, as manuscript curators well know, can frequently prove more revealing than the published product. Emendations, corrections, and slips of the pen combine with changes in handwriting to reflect moods lost in the cold finality of print.<sup>30</sup> The final version of John Stuart Mill's famous *Autobiography*, for example, omitted several indirect unflattering references to the author's mother and toned down recollections of harsh paternal child-rearing practices, changing the first draft's frank insistence that "Mine was an education not of love but of fear" to "I hesitate to pronounce whether I was more a loser or a gainer by his severity."<sup>31</sup> Along these same lines, manuscripts often contain potentially revealing bits of marginalia. Ray Allen Billington, who is not himself a psychohistorian, showed how Frederick Jackson Turner's need to sign his name repeatedly in the margins of his personal papers reflected his personal insecurity,<sup>32</sup> while Anne Jardim used jottings and underscorings found in Henry Ford's personal copy of Emerson's *Essays*, now in the Ford Archives, to analyze the dynamics of business leadership.<sup>33</sup> Editors omitted the "insignificant" jottings

<sup>26</sup> Charles Strickland, "A Transcendentalist Father: The Child-Rearing Practices of Bronson Alcott," *History of Childhood Quarterly* 1 (1973):4-51.

<sup>27</sup> Gordon W. Allport, *Letters from Jenny* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1965), especially the introduction.

<sup>28</sup> Ernest Jones, "The Case of Louis Bonaparte, King of Holland," *Essays in Applied Psychoanalysis* (London: Hogarth Press, 1951), 1, pp. 39-54. For another example of the use of letters as historical evidence in an early work of applied psychoanalysis, cf. I. F. Grant-Duff, "A Psychological Study of a Phantasy of St. Thérèse de l'Enfant-Jesus," *British Journal of Medical Psychology* 5 (1925):345-53.

<sup>29</sup> George and George, *Woodrow Wilson*.

<sup>30</sup> B. Mitchell, "Manuscripts Tell Most," *MSS* 15 (Winter 1963):29-30; Arthur Ponsonby, *More English Diaries* (London: Methuen, 1927), p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> Jack Stillinger, ed., *The Early Draft of John Stuart Mill's Autobiography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961), p. 13.

<sup>32</sup> Ray Allen Billington, "Manuscripts and the Biographer," *MSS* 16 (Summer 1964):30-35.

<sup>33</sup> Anne Jardim, *The First Henry Ford: A Study of Personality and Business Leadership* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970), p. 128.



from the printed version of Jonathan Swift's *Journal to Stella*, but Phyllis Greenacre later demonstrated that the strange baby-talk with which Swift filled the margins of his manuscript contained important insights into the author's personality.<sup>34</sup> The entire area of handwriting analysis has been unfortunately neglected by psychohistorians, despite the valuable resources manuscript collections can offer in support of such research.<sup>35</sup>

Collections of personal papers found in repositories frequently include creative and projective documents ranging from drafts of published literary works and sketches done in preparation for paintings to brief compositions written in childhood and doodles scribbled to pass the time. Manuscript curators should be aware that such records can prove as valuable to psychohistorians as autobiographies, letters, and diaries. Creative writings and artistic works have long provided psychoanalytic investigators with significant material for the interpretation of repressed feelings and wishes. Several investigators, for example, have pointed out similarities between creative writings and compositions solicited during the administration of psychological tests, like the Thematic Apperception Test.<sup>36</sup> Others contend that works of art differ little from more conventional forms of communication; like letters, each has a sender, a receiver, and a conscious and unconscious message.<sup>37</sup> Thus Freud could demonstrate repressed parricidal thoughts in Dostoevski's writings,<sup>38</sup> Ernest Jones could suggest latent homosexuality in the paintings of Andrea del Sarto,<sup>39</sup> and, most recently, Robert Waite could show how Hitler's doodles reflected his fear of castration.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Phyllis Greenacre, "The Childhood of the Artist: Libidinal Phase Development and Giftedness," *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* 12 (1957):47-72.

<sup>35</sup> Werner Wolff, *Diagrams of the Unconscious* (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1948), especially pp. 134-43, and 323-55; Martin Ninck, "Die Jugendschrift Conrad Ferdinand Meyers," *Beihefte zur Schweizerischen Zeitschrift für Psychologie und Ihre Anwendungen* 20 (1953):74-79.

<sup>36</sup> Saul Rosenzweig, "The Ghost of Henry James: A Study in Thematic Apperception," *Character and Personality* 12 (1943):79-100; R. R. Holt, "The Nature of TAT Scores as Cognitive Products: A Psychoanalytic Approach," in J. Kagan and G. Lesser, eds., *Contemporary Issues in Thematic Apperceptive Methods* (Springfield, Illinois: Thomas Publishing Co., 1961).

<sup>37</sup> Ernst Kris, *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Art* (New York: International Universities Press, 1952), especially p. 16; Nolan D. C. Lewis, "The Practical Value of Graphic Art in Personality Studies: I. An Introductory Presentation of the Possibilities," *Psychoanalytic Review* 12 (1925):316-22; John P. Foley, Jr., "A Survey of the Literature on Artistic Behavior in the Abnormal: I. Historical and Theoretical Background," *Journal of General Psychology* 25 (1941):111-42; David Beres, "The Contribution of Psychoanalysis to the Biography of the Artist: A Commentary on Methodology," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 40 (1959):26-37; Martin Waugh, "The Scope of the Contribution of Psychoanalysis to the Biography of the Artist," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 5 (1957):564-75.

<sup>38</sup> Freud, "Dostoevski and Parricide," *Standard Edition* 21:175-98.

<sup>39</sup> Ernest Jones, "The Influence of Andrea Del Sarto's Wife on his Art," *Essays in Applied Psychoanalysis*, vol. 1, pp. 22-38.

<sup>40</sup> Robert G. L. Waite, "Afterword," in Walter C. Langer, *The Mind of Adolph Hitler: The Secret Wartime Report* (New York: Basic Books, 1972).

Occasionally, psychohistorians are fortunate enough to find truly unusual sources of information. G. M. Gilbert, prison psychologist at Nuremberg, was able to administer psychological tests to Nazi war criminals and drew on the results in a study of the psychodynamics of dictatorship.<sup>41</sup> MacAlpine and Hunter had access to detailed physicians' reports on the physical condition and behavior of George III,<sup>42</sup> while Elizabeth Marvick made effective use of a diary maintained by the childhood physician of Louis XIII.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps most fortunate of all were Edith and Richard Sterba whose psychoanalytic study of Beethoven drew heavily on entries in "conversation books" created by the composer when deafness forced his relatives and friends to communicate with him by writing. The books record the conversants' words and contain enough clues to permit reconstruction of Beethoven's questions and replies.<sup>44</sup> It is obviously impossible to discuss appraisal standards for such unusual materials. Psychohistorians must rely on the good judgement of manuscript curators who, in turn, must rely on their own familiarity with psychohistorical work in identifying valuable records and calling them to the attention of researchers.

Turning from manuscripts and written records to less traditional historical sources, verbatim and nontextual records afford psychohistorians the opportunity to examine emotions too easily hidden behind the written word.<sup>45</sup> Oral historians early recognized the affinity between the techniques and content of their own interviews and those of psychoanalysts. Several psychiatrists, in fact, participated in the first meeting of the Oral History Association,<sup>46</sup> and psychological journal citations remain a staple item in oral history bibliographies. Psychohistorians, especially those who received their formal training in psychoanalysis rather than history, have relied heavily on information derived from oral interviews. Erik Erikson questioned a number

<sup>41</sup> G. M. Gilbert, *The Psychology of Dictatorship* (New York: Ronald Press, 1950); Douglas M. Kelley, *Twenty-two Cells in Nuremberg: A Psychiatrist Examines the Nazi Criminals* (New York: Greenberg, 1947), especially p. ix. For another study of statesmen based on the results of psychological tests, cf. J. B. McConaughy, "Certain Personality Factors of State Legislators in South Carolina," *American Political Science Review* 44 (1950):897-903.

<sup>42</sup> Ida Macalpine and Richard Hunter, *George III and the Mad Business* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), especially pp. 3-175.

<sup>43</sup> Elizabeth Wirth Marvick, "The Character of Louis XIII: The Role of His Physician," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 4 (1974):347-74; cf. E. A. Weinstein, "Denial of Presidential Disability: A Case Study of Woodrow Wilson," *Psychiatry* 30 (1967):376-90; Hector Bolitho, "The Doctor and the Biographer," *Texas Quarterly* 11 (1968):52-60; Alfred M. Tozzer, "Biography and Biology," *American Anthropologist* 35 (1933):418-32.

<sup>44</sup> Edith Sterba and Richard Sterba, *Beethoven and His Nephew: A Psychoanalytic Study of Their Relationship*, trans. W. R. Trask (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954).

<sup>45</sup> On distortions and elaborations in written words, see Edwin F. Alston, "Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Conducted by Correspondence: A Report of Therapy with a Patient Hospitalized for Tuberculosis," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 38 (1957):32-50.

<sup>46</sup> Elizabeth I. Dixon and James V. Mink, eds., *Oral History at Arrowhead: Proceedings of the First History Colloquium on Oral History* (Los Angeles: The Oral History Association, 1967).



of Indians who knew Ghandi,<sup>47</sup> Robert Lifton interviewed survivors of Hiroshima, and Meyer Zeligs recorded interviews with Alger Hiss.<sup>48</sup> For manuscript curators responsible for the maintenance of verbatim records, psychohistory again raises familiar questions about the propriety of editing, transcribing, and then destroying actual voice recordings in favor of a written transcript.<sup>49</sup> Several psychiatric investigators have convincingly demonstrated that rate of speech and breathing activity are useful indicators of emotional response during interviews.<sup>50</sup> Those who edit stuttered pauses and subsequently destroy voice recordings should be aware that they may be destroying information of considerable psychohistorical value.

Researchers using social science theories or methodologies customarily insist on the importance of still photographs or motion pictures as valuable supplements to written documents and oral interviews.<sup>51</sup> Robert Akeret's recently published work on the psychoanalytic interpretation of photographs is of special interest to curators who want to understand the relationship between pictorial records in their holdings and psychohistorical research.<sup>52</sup> Akeret, a New York psychoanalyst, contends that photographs can yield significant information about personality to the insightful observer. Taking President Nixon's childhood and adult photographs as an example, he demonstrates that variations in expression on the two sides of the subject's face help explain the much-discussed dichotomy between the "old" and "new" Nixon.

Manuscript curators have long been puzzled about the proper disposition of nonmanuscript materials sometimes associated with collections of personal papers, largely because the relationship of those materials to research has never been adequately clarified.<sup>53</sup> Psychohistorians maintain that the things a person considers important enough to keep, the books he or she reads, the hobbies he or she

<sup>47</sup> Erik Erikson, *Ghandi's Truth: On the Origins of Militant Non-Violence* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), especially pp. 68-80.

<sup>48</sup> Robert Jay Lifton, *Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima* (New York: Random House, 1967); Meyer Zeligs, *Friendship and Fratricide: An Analysis of Whittaker Chambers and Alger Hiss* (New York: Viking Press, 1967).

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Saul Benison, "Reflections on Oral History," *American Archivist* 28 (1965):71-77.

<sup>50</sup> Frieda Goldman Eisler, "Individual Differences Between Interviewers and the Effect on Interviewee's Conversational Behavior," *Journal of Mental Science* 98 (1952):660-71; "Speech-Breathing Activity—A Measure of Tension and Affect During Interviews," *British Journal of Psychiatry* 46 (1955):53-63; "Speech-Breathing Activity and Content in Psychiatric Interviews," *British Journal of Medical Psychology* 29 (1956):35-48.

<sup>51</sup> Clyde Kluckhohn, "Needed Refinements in the Biographical Approach," in S. S. Sargent and M. W. Smith, eds., *Culture and Personality* (New York: Viking Fund, 1949), pp. 75-92.

<sup>52</sup> Robert U. Akeret and Thomas Humber, *Photoanalysis* (New York: Peter H. Wyden, Inc., 1973).

<sup>53</sup> Richard C. Berner and M. Gary Bettis, "Disposition of Non-Manuscript Items found among Manuscripts," *American Archivist* 33 (1970):275-81; Wilcomb E. Washburn, "Manuscripts and Manufacts," *Ibid.* 27 (1964):245-50.

enjoys, contain important clues to themes in emotional life.<sup>54</sup> In an interesting example of the uses of memorabilia associated with collections of manuscripts, Renzo Sereno showed how a seemingly insignificant facsimile of a letter of Cesare Borgia, found among the personal papers of Machiavelli and transcribed in his own hand, actually revealed the political philosopher's frustrated lust for power.<sup>55</sup>

If any single overriding consideration emerges from the analysis of the kinds of materials that are useful for the study of personality in history, it is an appreciation of the importance of what Arnold Rogow calls the "nits" in psychohistorical research.<sup>56</sup> Those responsible for the appraisal of manuscripts must be constantly aware that seemingly trivial bits of information often supply the principle clues to personality development. Betty Glad emphasized this point in her psychobiography of Charles Evans Hughes which relied heavily on "unimportant" bits of evidence that together formed an eloquent picture of Hughes' role-performance style: his attitude toward an old schoolmate in financial need, his strict adherence to an exercise regimen, his preference for Brooks Brothers clothes, and his penchant for solitary mountain-climbing vacations.<sup>57</sup> To the alert psychohistorical investigator, there are few records so insignificant that some use cannot be made of them.

Turning from appraisal to the related subject of the development of acquisition policy and collecting strategy, we should note at the outset that the manuscript curator's cooperation as collector and preserver of research materials is crucial to the continued growth and development of psychohistorical research. Criticism of psychohistory has centered not on the validity of psychoanalytic theory as applied to historical figures and movements but on the possibility of applying any theories to the investigation of subjects about which insufficient information is available. Thus historians like Jacques Barzun, literary scholars like Bernard De Voto, and even psychoanalysts like Ernst Van Den Haag have written off the psychoanalytic study of the past as a mere parlor game that provides too many ambiguous answers on the basis of too little relevant data.<sup>58</sup> Even psychohistory's proponents complain about

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Victor W. Eisenstein, "Obsessive Hobbies," *Psychoanalytic Review* 35 (1948):151; E. Victor Wolfenstein, "Some Technical Aspects of Applied Psychoanalysis," *Psychoanalytic Study of Society* 5 (1972):175-84.

<sup>55</sup> Renzo Sereno, "A Falsification by Machiavelli," *Renaissance News* 12 (1959):159-67.

<sup>56</sup> Arnold A. Rogow, "Review of Victor Wolfenstein, 'The Revolutionary Personality,'" *American Political Science Review* 62 (1968):604-606.

<sup>57</sup> Betty Glad, *Charles Evans Hughes and the Illusions of Innocence* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966).

<sup>58</sup> Jacques Barzun, "History: the Muse and Her Doctors," *American Historical Review* 77 (1972):36-64; Bernard De Voto, "The Skeptical Biographer," *Harper's* (January 1933); Ernst Van Den Haag, "Psychoanalysis and its Discontents," in Sidney Hook, ed., *Psychoanalysis, Scientific Method and Philosophy* (New York: New York University Press, 1959), pp. 113-14. Cf. Roland H. Bainton, "Luther: a Psychiatric Portrait," *Yale Review* 48 (1959):405-10; John A. Garraty, "The Interrelations of Psychology and Biography," *Psychological Bulletin* 51 (1954):560-82; Fritz Schmidl, "Psychoanalysis and History,"

the general lack of the most essential information. Wyatt and Willcox, for example, found that the papers of Sir Henry Clinton in the Clements Library contained just enough information to "fascinate and frustrate" but not enough to be truly useful.<sup>59</sup> Obviously, the hope of psychohistory lies in the development of programs for the purposeful preservation, rather than the chance survival, of materials of value to psychohistorical investigators.

The idea of collecting and preserving such materials is not a new one. Harold Lasswell insisted over forty years ago on the value of preserving records that would enable historians, biographers, and political scientists to study the personalities of their subjects.<sup>60</sup> Psychologist William Stern suggested the collection of diaries, youthful compositions, handiwork, minutes of meetings, and similar materials for the study of individual and group dynamics.<sup>61</sup> Gordon Allport, commenting on Stern's suggestion, wondered why such an "archive" has not yet been formed.<sup>62</sup> Arnold Rogow suggested that, since it is "no secret that a number of men in public life have been psychoanalyzed or have visited psychiatrists," such persons might authorize their doctors to make their case histories available after their deaths.<sup>63</sup> Failing such gracious cooperation, psychohistorians interested in the greater availability of research materials must realize that many of the most significant records are destroyed long before manuscript curators arrive on the scene. Questions raised about the possibility of psychobiography by André Maurois over fifty years ago remain relevant today. "Who," he asked "is keeping a record of Bertrand Russell's dreams so that Freudian biographers may interpret them at a later date. . . . How are we to foresee that a man is going to be great? Who is to choose the subjects for observation at a youthful stage?"<sup>64</sup> Unfortunately, important historical figures cannot be so identified in childhood or even early adulthood. Occasionally, a man does not emerge as a significant figure for historical study until he has died and, as Rogow points out, has "taken his dreams and fantasies, his Oedipus complex and identity crisis, with him."<sup>65</sup> Yet, admitting the

*Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 31 (1962):532-48; Cushing Strout, "Ego Psychology and the Historians," *History and Theory* 7 (1968):279-97.

<sup>59</sup> Frederick Wyatt and W. B. Willcox, "Sir Henry Clinton: A Psychological Exploration in History," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3 ser., 16 (1959):3-26; cf. William B. Willcox, "The Psychiatrist, the Historian and General Clinton: The Excitement of Historical Research," *Michigan Quarterly Review* 6 (1967):123-30.

<sup>60</sup> Harold D. Lasswell, "The Problem of Adequate Personality Records: A Proposal," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 85 (1929):1057-66; *Psychopathology and Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930; "The Scientific Study of Human Biography," *Scientific Monthly* 30 (1930):79-80.

<sup>61</sup> William Stern, *General Psychology from the Personalistic Standpoint*, trans. H. D. Spoerl (New York: Macmillan, 1938), pp. 66-67.

<sup>62</sup> Allport, *The Use of Personal Documents*.

<sup>63</sup> Rogow, "Review of Wolfenstein."

<sup>64</sup> André Maurois, *Aspects of Biography*, trans. Sydney C. Roberts (New York: Appleton and Co., 1929), pp. 100-103.

<sup>65</sup> Rogow, "Review of Wolfenstein."

impossibility of obtaining full documentation on any men and women except those literally born to the purple, there do seem to be some things curators can do to increase the availability of research materials of psychohistorical value.

First of all, in the collecting of personal papers, careful attention should be given to the acquisition of materials reflective of the donor's personal as well as public life. Again remembering the importance of seemingly insignificant items in psychohistorical research, the manuscript curator should seek out childhood writings, photographs, library lists, scrapbooks, and similar materials. Along these same lines, greater consideration should be given to the acquisition of papers of entire families. Manuscript repositories have long recognized the importance of acquiring the papers of persons associated in social or organizational units like labor unions. Why not extend this idea to include the most basic of all human units? As an illustration of the value of such an approach to the understanding of the personality of individual family members, Leon Edel pointed out that the discovery of the diary of Robert Louis Stevenson's mother confirmed psychoanalytic suspicions that "having as an infant been denied his mother's breast he sought ever after to gratify his oral needs—which was why he dreamed up Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and hinged the story on the swallowing of a potion, or why he could hold his own so splendidly at the prodigious day-long feasts in Hawaii and Samoa."<sup>66</sup> Likewise, recently acquired knowledge about the father of Daniel Schreber, the psychotic German public official whose autobiography provided Freud with valuable insight into the relationship between paranoia and homosexuality, has proven indispensable to reinterpretation of Schreber's emotional development and the etiology of paranoia.<sup>67</sup>

Extending this stress on the importance of acquiring personal information and data about family history to the field of oral history, would it not be possible for interviewers to obtain more information of psychohistorical value from their subjects? Leaving any in-depth probing of personality dynamics aside, routine inquiries about the subject's early family history, position in the birth order, number of siblings, and so on would provide a valuable opening to any interview. An example of such skilled questioning can be found in Rosner and Abt's published interviews with artists and scientists. The interviewers tactfully probe childhood memories, emotions, and dream-life in an attempt to understand the origins of creativity.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Leon Edel, *Literary Biography* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1957), pp. 56–57.

<sup>67</sup> Daniel Paul Schreber, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, trans. and ed. Ida Macalpine and Richard Hunter (London: William Dawson and Sons, 1955); Freud, "Psychoanalytic Notes upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia," *Standard Edition* 11:12–85; William G. Niederland, "Schreber's Father," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 8 (1960):492–99; Morton Schatzman, "Paranoia or Persecution: the Case of Schreber," *History of Childhood Quarterly* 1 (1973):62–88.

<sup>68</sup> Stanley Rosner and Lawrence E. Abt, eds., *The Creative Experience* (New York: Grossman, 1970).

Finally, more attention should be given to the acquisition of materials of psychohistorical value in the broadest sense: documents that reveal the emotional climate of the times, psychiatric hospital records, and sources reflective of child-rearing practices, as well as attitudes toward sexuality and death. Efforts should increasingly be directed toward overcoming the problems associated with the acquisition of the professional files of physicians and lawyers, two potentially great sources of valuable information.<sup>69</sup>

A word needs to be said in conclusion about the potential effects of psychohistorical research on the relationship between manuscript curators and donors, especially donors of personal papers. Barbara Kaiser has reviewed problems met by curators who must deal with donors of contemporary collections, stressing their role in advising donors concerning the stipulation of appropriate restrictions on personal papers.<sup>70</sup> Psychohistory complicates this always difficult task. Freud, whose sensitivity to the propriety of revealing personal information about his patients led him to take every possible precaution to conceal individual identities in his published case histories, believed that few people would reveal their private thoughts if they knew they would be put to scientific use and disseminated widely.<sup>71</sup> As Erik Erikson noted in his analysis of distortions in autobiographical records, "nobody likes to be found out."<sup>72</sup> Henry James destroyed much autobiographical material in defiance of future psychological analysis,<sup>73</sup> and other writers, like Willa Cather, have placed the severest restrictions on access to their personal papers.<sup>74</sup>

Occasionally, reverent literary executors have assumed responsibility for protecting the reputation of the dead without regard for historical truth. Rudolph Binion had an especially difficult time with Ernst

<sup>69</sup> See Philip D. Jordan, "The Challenge of Medical Records," *American Archivist* 23 (1960):143-51; Seymour V. Connor, "Legal Materials as Sources of History," *Ibid.* 23 (1960):157-65; Frederick C. Potte, "Notes on the Importance of Private Legal Documents for the Writing of Biography and Literary History," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 106 (1962):327-34; James L. Clifford, *From Puzzles to Portraits: Problems of a Literary Biographer* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971), pp. 58-60.

<sup>70</sup> Barbara J. Kaiser, "Problems with Donors of Contemporary Collections," *American Archivist* 32 (1969):103-107.

<sup>71</sup> Freud, "Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria," *Standard Edition* 7:3-124.

<sup>72</sup> Erik Erikson, "On the Nature of Psychohistorical Evidence: In Search of Ghandi," *Daedalus* 97, no. 3; reprinted in Mazlish, ed., *Psychoanalysis and History*.

<sup>73</sup> Edel, *Literary Biography*, p. 27.

<sup>74</sup> Jean Preston, "Problems in the Use of Manuscripts," *American Archivist* 28 (1965):367-79. On problems of restricted access and the propriety of using confidential information from manuscript collections, see Edgar R. Harlan, "Ethics Involved in the Handling of Personal Papers," *Annals of Iowa* 16 (1929):615-17; Noel C. Stevenson, "Genealogy and the Right of Privacy," *American Genealogist* 26 (1949):145-52; Paul F. Cronefield, "Some Problems in Writing the History of Psychoanalysis," in George Mora and Jeanne L. Brand, eds., *Psychiatry and Its History* (Springfield: Thomas Publishers, 1970), pp. 49-50; James L. Clifford, "How Much Should a Biographer Tell? Some Eighteenth Century Views," in Philip Daghelian, ed., *Essays in Eighteenth Century Biography* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968), pp. 67-95.

Pfeiffer, executor of Lou Andreas-Salome's literary estate.<sup>75</sup> Admittedly, it is difficult to relish the thought of being portrayed before future generations "warts and all,"<sup>76</sup> but, for good or ill, this is what psychohistory aims to do. Because of the frankly denigrative quality of much psychohistorical research, manuscript curators must be especially sensitive to difficulties inherent in the study of living subjects. The refusal on the part of several granting agencies to fund a projected psychohistorical study of the 1970 presidential candidates only emphasizes these difficulties. Bruce Mazlish, the principal investigator of the study, recalls that the agencies felt that the project was an interesting and worthwhile one but that support for it would be "politically inadvisable."<sup>77</sup> For manuscript curators, respect for donors' feelings must be carefully balanced against obligations to scholars trying to increase man's store of knowledge. Obviously, psychohistory here presents manuscript curators with an unenviable responsibility.

<sup>75</sup> Rudolph Binion, "My Life with Frau Lou," in Curtis, ed., *The Historian's Workshop*, pp. 295-306; cf. Harry Elmer Barnes, "Psychology and History," *American Journal of Psychology* 30 (1919):360-61.

<sup>76</sup> Lewis Namier, "King George III: A Study in Personality," in *Personalities and Powers* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1955), pp. 39-58.

<sup>77</sup> Bruce Mazlish, "Towards a Psychohistorical Inquiry: The 'Real' Richard Nixon," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 1 (1970):39-105; *In Search of Nixon: a Psychohistorical Inquiry* (New York: Basic Books, 1972), especially the introduction.

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