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GORDON DERNER

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FOR PSYCHOANALYSIS AND PSYCHOTHERAPY, INC.

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This special issue of the Newsletter of the Adelphi Society for Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy is dedicated to the memory of Gordon F. Derner, Dean of the Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies and Co-Director of the Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy at Adelphi University. Serving as administrator, educator and leader, Gordon Derner endeared himself to those around him because of his wisdom and courage, and above all his humanity.

The following material attempts to capture the sense of Gordon Derner as a person and his impact upon our membership and the profession of psychology. It consists of three parts:

1. The Eulogies - Several moving and inspirational eulogies were delivered by friends and colleagues at a Memorial Service shortly after Gordon's demise. We have included those given by members of the Society.

2. The Interview - This interview was conducted by Neil Grossman with Gordon Derner. It recounts Gordon's enormous contributions to psychology and to the Adelphi Postdoctoral Programs, as well as giving us a precious glimpse of his low-keyed humor and informal style.

3. The Gordon Derner Hour - This consists of anecdotes which were told at our Autumn 1983 retreat at Jeronimo's. People sat around and shared reminiscences and nostalgia related to times spent with Gordon. The stories highlighted the personal quality of his relationships with several of our members. They also provided a view of the colorful individual we know Gordon to have been.

We were indeed fortunate to have had Gordon Derner among us; we are sorry to have lost him.

Elaine Dinitz
President ASPP

The Eulogies

I am grateful for the honor and opportunity to share with you a few of my memories of Gordon Derner. I would be remiss if I did not begin with a few words about Gordon as a psychologist, for that was such a central part of his identity. He was proud of his profession, justifiably proud of his contributions to it, and combative in its defense. I feel comfortable in asserting that the Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies has developed preeminent doctoral and postdoctoral training programs, and it is clear that if there had not been a Gordon Derner, there would not be an Institute. It will remain as a living memorial to his leadership, and its future graduates will owe a debt to him, as will future graduates of the many programs which have come to be modeled after the Institute.

Rather than expand upon the contributions of Gordon as a professional, I would rather reminisce about Gordon, the man, for as much as I valued my working relationship with him, I treasured our personal relationship. It would be impossible to do justice to the full range of his talents or the many facets of his personality, so I will restrict myself to three aspects that were of particular salience.

Gordon was probably the single most caring, compassionate person that I have known, and the generosity of his spirit was boundless. I will never forget when I first came to Adelphi and, in the first few months, required some minor surgery. Because I hardly knew anyone, and the condition was not serious, I did not expect to receive much attention. The first night that I was in the hospital the phone rang; it was Gordon, and after wishing me well, he went on to talk about some of the myriad things with which he was involved. After the conversation, I felt supported, pleased that he had taken so much time for me, and very grateful for this nice gesture. I was wrong. When he called again on the second and third nights, I realized that it was not a gesture at all, but a spontaneous expression of his genuine feelings. Over the years I don't know how many times I saw this repeated, as he always made the time to make difficult phone calls or write compassionate notes to friends experiencing personal troubles. I have never known a person with such an unerring knack for saying the right thing at the right time.

Perhaps his sensitivity to the plight of others was honed by his own delicate health, or the precarious condition of his beloved son, Kurt. This may be so, but he never imposed those difficulties on others, and my second memory concerns the zest with which he lived, the endless curiosity he displayed, and the enthusiasm he brought to all his undertakings. I always marvelled, as I persisted in overprotecting and sheltering my own children, at how he would leap from one seeming precipice to another, bringing the joy of life to all he touched. He found simple delight everywhere, in a fine meal, a creative performance, a native ceremony, conversation with literally hundreds of friends. Nobody brought as much truth to the platitude about living life to the fullest, and his contagious enthusiasm contributed to his being a memorable companion. It is rare for me to travel anywhere, identify myself as being from Adelphi, and not hear a fond anecdote about Gordon.

This being the case, the third aspect that I recall may seem contradictory, but it concerns his family, about whom his life revolved. His relationship with Margaret was unique; he quickly made Ellen a daughter, and his feelings for Kurt were extraordinary. He valued loyalty above all, and offered it to those he befriended. He easily resolved the apparent paradox of family focus and wide-spread interests by converting others into family and, indeed, the most special aspect of the Institute is its family-like quality. In times of need, such as this past week, there was a mutual concern and support that nurtured all of its members. The feelings that exist within an organization derive from its leader, and Gordon generated warmth and concern wherever he went.

I would like to close with a digression and quotation. I have always been struck by some of the commonalities between Gordon and one of my boyhood heroes, Jackie Robinson, and I think Gordon would have enjoyed the comparison with a man he also admired. They were both pioneers, charismatic figures who came to be larger than life and symbolized their causes. They both were widely appreciated by people who shared their cause, but abused by its opponents. They both had health problems which led to them being taken from us before their time, but left an unforgettable legacy behind. Roger Kahn, in eulogizing Jackie Robinson, spoke words that also fit Gordon Derner. He said, "He did not merely play at center stage. He was center stage, and wherever he walked, center stage walked with him." The Institute has lost its center stage, but we owe it to Gordon, in order to validate his wisdom and honor his memory, to develop the best damn repertory company that we can.

George Stricker

It is still hard for me to believe that Gordon Derner died. Gordon was a most unique person because he believed in his dreams... He would allow nothing, and often no one, to stand in his way. Here was a man whose wishes, whose personal vision alone directed him. It was with this passionate inner vision that he forced the world to accommodate itself to him. Whether he was pushing himself, in spite of his illness, whether travelling with Margaret and Kurt, around the world, telling Ellen to get a Ph.D., or giving birth to the Institute...There was Gordon, always trying to force the world, reality, to accommodate to him, one more time. His death was shocking because we never expected the world to beat him--it rarely had--and we expected him to continue to be our hero.

One of the things that I personally admired about Gordon was his openness and his publicness. That he did not need to hide his flaws, his boibles, and his problems; with him, it was all present. Gordon's problems, his unconscious and his humanity were as visible as his cowboy boots. Because of the presence of his unconscious, we all attached our unconscious' to him--often seeing him as a father--to love, to emulate, to fight, and to hate--With Gordon, we all had a primary relationship of great emotional intensity and turmoil and passion.

Gordon was basically a populist. This probably came from growing up without advantages and identifying with the outsiders,

with the weak and with the poor. When most other psychologists simply talked about change, Gordon made sure to open the doors at Adelphi to Blacks and Hispanics, who wished to be psychologists. An important part of Gordon's legacy was his commitment to the poor, the weak and the disenfranchized--He was truly a great humanist.

Gordon was a person full of love, generosity, life and laughter. I am sure we each have our own memories, a special moment, a favor, some personal exchange with Gordon. Gordon never stopped--he touched people very deeply. That was his life. It is a great loss not having Gordon--I know that his memory will ignite each of us with some of his passion, commitment and openness.

Joe Newirth

This is indeed a monumental honor for me to stand before you and to speak in memoriam of a great and compassionate human being. This honor for me is as monumental as is our sorrow. Gordon, we will miss you. We will miss your gentle touch, your courage, your love, and your devotion to humanity that is so widely known. We miss you even now, and we wonder why you left so soon, why your life ended at this time. You, a person who adored life, who lived life and appreciated it more than most, should have been allowed still a few more years. We all know that according to Holy Writ, every man and woman is appointed a day to die, but you seemed to have left us so suddenly. For it seems as though it was just yesterday we last saw your smile and were uplifted by your friendship and regard. Yes, Gordon we miss you and will continue to miss from now into eternity. For your friendship, intrepidity, your rare record of service and devotion to mankind will remain in our minds, in our hearts, and will linger with us in our dealings with our fellow men. As a teacher you taught us to be free, how to live abundantly--as you did--not fettered and constricted, not fearfully, not shallow and insipid. As a mentor you cared, you gave. Your honesty, genuineness, sincerity and love have enriched our lives immensely, and knowing you, Gordon, has enlarged our own capacity for human dignity, love for our fellow men, and honesty and fairplay. You have been more than a "good-enough" mother. For you have truly been a near-perfect father, and the "average expectable" environment you always transformed into a near-perfect haven, in which one can grow, mature, and realize his/her own humanity and potential for goodness and excellence. Gordon, you gave us all so much, and you have asked for so little for yourself. We all know, though and we all know this is very well, that if there was one thing that you have asked us all for, it would be excellence. This is the way you lived, this was the way you died. Yes, Gordon, we will miss you sorely. We miss you now. But we will carry you alive in our memory; and we will put into practice those gems of wisdom so rare; we will attempt to excel in service, and love our brothers and sisters, just as you did.

Your delightful wife, Margaret, whom you have loved so dearly, and who has loved you for so many happy years misses you this evening--and for a very long time to come. But she is strong and courageous and she will survive. Your beloved daughter-in-law, Ellen, misses you very much as well. We hail you, we adore you, rest in peace, friend. Farewell and God bless you.

Erwin Randolph Parson

I was fortunate to speak to Gordon Saturday, a week ago, after George had alerted many of us regarding his worsening condition. I called California, first got Ellen's voice on the answering machine, then heard Gordon over her recording, and felt so pleased that I could make contact one more time. He sounded pretty good, at first, clear, warm, glad to talk--and I told him he had a nerve. And he said, "I have?" And I said, "Yes, your being sick and not coming back to begin this semester-- bringing back all your enthusiasm and energy; plans and project...All the news from APA". He replied that he didn't make APA this year, and then we got to talking of other things.

Well, I'm feeling mad now, for Gordon's not coming back. And he did have a nerve. Usually it paid off, for him, and for the immense number of people he touched, including me. I know especially about what he brought back each year to Adelphi--for, as many of us here tonight, I began as a student in the doctoral program. Those were the post-Kennedy 60's, when Gordon was the "great white hunter", back from his world travels in the Peace Corps, in fancy Western boots and kacki safari outfits, with American Indian jewelry, listening to Eastern or African music, and burning incense. And you should see his home, they told me. Watch out for the wild animals when you take his Friday morning therapy seminar. Margaret only warns the students she likes.

This was a renowned clinical psychologist? The chairman of a professional program, the only one of its kind in the world? How great! I felt far freer as a student than I would have without him, and vaguely protected. If he could get away with being such a full person, then there was a chance for me. I felt attracted and wanted to get to know him. He liked people who got involved--particularly in psychology and particularly in Adelphi. I became involved in both and felt complimented that he liked me. As we became friendly, and later colleagues and friends, we never much talked about psychology or psychoanalysis. I always liked what Gordon dismissed as fancy language. "Jargon, plain jargon, it's unnecessary, rich, not parsimonious...Internal object relations instead of personal....Sullivan said it much better", said Gordon, pursued for enjoyable intellectual combat. But combating was not what I enjoyed doing with Gordon, especially since it was so hard to win. Was he ever tenacious!

Still, we had much to talk about. He was, as we say now, "into" so many things, and so curious. Kurt had these adventurous qualities too, and I saw how much the son enjoyed the father's spirit, as well as Gordon's enjoying Kurt's. The secret is, Gordon, as did Kurt, loved to hang out. The world fascinated him. He was very smart and learned much. I enjoyed having fun with him-- something you can't do with everybody.

When I was with Gordon at professional meetings, or socially for that matter, he wasn't very different--he carried himself with authority, but he was informal and down-to-earth. You could feel his openness. And this was totally genuine. He proved his availability, should you ask, offering all of himself, all of his limited time, his deep feeling, his informed intellect. Many people, even those he didn't know very well, asked. I don't have to say much about Gordon's impact when you talked straight to him, because I

think almost all of us know this. He was independent and forthright and wouldn't always tell you what you wanted to hear. But, if you could risk it, he was great to talk to when you needed him. Sometime or another, he was whom you needed.

I needed him a lot, took a lot from him. I'm talking for me, but not only for me when I say, thank you for powerful caring, for your generosity, for your nonconformity and for your stability. Thank you, to use a Gordon word, for your "terrific" spirit. Gordon loved public gatherings, he loved Adelphi, he even loved speeches. I wish he could be here.

Richard Billow

History of the Adelphi Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy

Some time ago, I asked Gordon Derner for information about the "beginnings" of the Postdoctoral Program at Adelphi. We agreed that the best approach would be to tape Gordon talking about our history. What follows is the interview I conducted with Gordon in February, 1983.

Dr. Derner: I have to give you a little background before I get to the Postdoctoral; otherwise there is no contest. I came here in 1951. I was a professor at Columbia who was very happily ensconced in a program and was due for a promotion. Then the University froze promotions because this was the slump that followed the great increase in enrollment after World War II. By freezing promotions, this is one way to contain the faculty. I got a raise which was the same raise I would have received with a promotion, so that wasn't it. I was told by my Department Chairman, Murray Shafter, that I would get a promotion next year. In the second year, there was a continued freeze on promotions and the chairman said that I would get a raise and that the title of my office wasn't that important, that I was doing all the things that I wanted to do. He was quite right. I was doing all that but then I learned that someone did get a promotion. I went to him and told him that Chuck Morris got a promotion. I think it is wrong when the University has a freeze on, no one should get a promotion. I felt he didn't support me. So I started looking for jobs. I got 14 job offers. This was right after World War II and I was an experienced practitioner by this time and I had good credentials.

This place - Adelphi - offered me the job of Director of Clinical Training. I was 36 years old, just a schoolboy professionally. This was a fancy job. At this point, there probably were no more than 20 clinical psychology doctoral programs in the whole country. So this was a plum. Except it was a plum in a place that nobody ever heard of. In fact, when I was told about the job at Adelphi, I inquired "What's Adelphi?" The curious thing is that I got the job through recommendation of one of my students who was teaching at Hofstra who I then got a job at Iowa. And he got me one here.

Dr. Grossman: Did they have APA approval at this time?

Dr. Derner: Here, no, they didn't even have a program.

Dr. Grossman: Adelphi didn't have a program then?

Dr. Derner: In 1950, they had an on-paper program which they designed by taking the University of Pennsylvania course schedule with the titles of courses, writing what they thought were probably the courses for those titles, and this was the program. They didn't know that much about it so some of them were absolutely redundant in their course descriptions. The same course seemed to be taught two or three times with the same title. There were five people on the Faculty.

There were some students here in some non-organized programs which were supposed to be for the doctorate and the requirement for the doctorate was professional maturity. How this maturity was to be determined was fairly unclear. Did they have to take some courses? Maybe or maybe not. Did they have to take exams. Maybe or maybe not. They did have to do a dissertation and have some languages and this was it. So I came in 1951 to organize it (the program). I had already been at William Alanson White and felt, as typical of this time, that the doctoral program was not sufficient to claim one to be a private practitioner. They really needed postdoctoral training and since I had become quite enamored with the analytic model - particularly interpersonal - my thought was to try to expand the clinical doctoral to include that other. As to how this would be done, I really didn't have very good ideas except that there would be some kind of postdoctoral stuff.

Dr. Grossman: So this is how you came?

Dr. Derner: I came with the idea of Postdoctoral training. To go into details - I will set the doctoral program aside - are two exceptions. One was that I was very anxious to get APA accreditation. So I began those steps necessary to do this by inviting APA consultants to come in. We had the title of a college at this time and we were a small place. We were sort of overextending ourselves in a little place like this. One of the fellas from the Education and Training Office called me up one day and asked me if I was looking for a position and that he had a good lead for a position for me. I said I was really trying to get this place accredited. He said, "when you are ready to leave, let me know". I said "what is the implication?" "We can't get accreditation at Adelphi?" He said, it was going to be difficult. I said "that is not the question." He said the fact that it was a small college would make it impossible. He was equivocal on this. We tried in 1957. I was not yet here 6 years. We applied for accreditation. The people who came to look at it - (one of whom was Irv Berger, a good friend. The other Les Phillips, another person I knew). Irv didn't want to come because he knew he would have to turn it down. I was amazed, as it was a good program, so they both said they supported it. The Committee on Accreditation support it (the application) and it then had to go to the Education and Training Board, all Department Chairmen, who looked at this little school and turned us down. The appeal was quite a little battle. We got approved and the argument they gave us for turning us down was just a lot of Mickey Mouse stuff. Suppose someone wants to take graduate sociology? Well, we have that. Or anthropology. Well, we have that. They weren't doctoral programs. I was told that "I was 15 years ahead of time. If they should accredit you with your forthright statement of training for professional practice, then other programs will start to do this". We were trying

to maintain the primary goal in the scientist professional model which is to stay in Science. They were saying that my primary goal was to train practitioners. That battle has never ceased, by the way. Not in the most recent APA review but in the one we had five years ago -- that battle was still going on,

Dr. Grossman: That is amazing.

Dr. Derner: We put up the last fight, as far as I think we'll ever have to, five years when they decided we were approved but that instead of having a visit in five years, it had to be at the end of two because they didn't think the curriculum was OK. So I appealed and we got that knocked out. Throughout this whole professional school business, they are very concerned that our goal will be deviant from the more traditional research directed programs - which it is. But the research directed programs don't train any more researchers than we train. We are just people who want to go into clinical psychology who are more interested in practice than research.

The other is our battle with Psychiatry. We immediately set up a clinic here. At this point we got Mental Hygiene Department license and in order to have this, you had to have a psychiatrist director. My feeling is that this a co-equal partnership between psychiatry and psychology. The psychiatrist we hired was a well-qualified guy, who graduated from New York Psychoanalytic and we seemed to have a very OK relationship. But it became clear after a short period of time that he though he was the boss, not my colleague as a senior administrator but the boss. He said that all of the therapy supervision done by qualified people, who are trained analysts, had to be reviewed by psychiatrists who were schoolboys who would come in here to get some possible referrals. They were ninety day wonders from the Army Psychiatric program. They weren't psychiatrists at all. They were by their title but not by training. They were supposed to supervise us. I put up a big fight. They psychiatrist recommended that I be fired because of my insubordination.

So much for all this background. My relationship with psychiatry was less than cordial. Approximately 1958 or 1959, we started thinking about how we could move ahead and have the additional training necessary so that someone could go out and be able to hold up their head among the best qualified whether they were psychiatrists or psychoanalysts, or whatever, and that led to the thoughts of planning a Postdoctoral Psychotherapy Psychoanalytic Institute. A group of us got together. Don Milman, who was on our faculty already, was a graduate of NPAP; Jack Huber, who was not a graduate but had gone to William Alanson White; Harriette Kaley, who was an Iowa type fellow with no analytic training. We invited in Bob Lane who was trained by the Joe Levi group, however, and Jack Fisher who had been an old friend. We got a group of people together and said how the hell do we get a post-doctoral program going here? We finally launched it but the internal battles were horrendous. In order to get a program approved at the University (we were still a college), we had to go through the curriculum committee. The graduate curriculum committee consisted

of five people plus the then provost (who was called the Director of Training) who was opposed because he thought this should be a small liberal arts college. He didn't even like the doctorate. The chairman of the committee (who was an old-time educator here) thought that this was more than gilding the lily. It was absolutely unnecessary and worse still that we would go into such an exotic and esoteric area. She was opposed and two of the other members were opposed so only me and one other person were in favor of it. I went to the President of the University and said "this is a grand thing". He pictured himself as a kind of psychologist himself. He had an honorary doctorate which was given to him by this University and he always called himself "Doctor". He was very proud of his doctorate. His interest then being mental hygiene, he thought himself something of a psychiatrist-psychologist. He was sort of supporting it even though he didn't know what he was supporting. I had to use his leverage. Anyway, we didn't get through that committee. Then by parliamentary maneuvering, I got it before the graduate council but unfortunately those same three people who were voting against were there as was the provost and I picked up another vote or two, but in the end, it was turned down here. I then got the President of the University and said "we are throwing away a good thing" and he agreed but the provost who had his ear said "it should not be allowed to start until it was self-supporting". So we agreed. It will not cost the University one penny. It was set up as a kind of extra arm of the University. Then the provost said it has to be able to have enough money available so that it could phase out because if we tell somebody "we are going to give you a diploma", we have to be able to do that. We have to have enough money to hold and carry it over. We agreed we would have (I have forgotten the dollar amount) - but it was a gigantic amount like \$10,000 in the coffer. Don Milman and I, Don was a very hard worker, went out and collected money but we didn't quite get that amount.

Dr. Grossman: Where were you able to get this money from?

Dr. Derner: We asked people for 100 bucks a head. We asked our graduates, the people who were going to be on Faculty, each of us gave ourselves (we were getting paid maybe \$8,000 a year). A hundred bucks was a hell of a lot of money. In any event, we collected money, but we didn't have enough. Then we got the faculty to teach the first year free. We got the biggest names in the business to do the teaching - Theodor Reik, Emanuel K. Schwartz, Haim Ginnott (who was not an analyst but was very distinguished), Sarah Brist, Ken Fisher, Jessie Zizmer (who was part of a New York group), we really had some classy professors.

Dr. Grossman: They must have really wanted this to go for them to teach for free and put that type of effort into it. At this time, was there anything like this in any other place?

Dr. Derner: No, but NYU was trying to do the same thing at the very same time. We were ready to go in 1960 but were held back by that money. NYU launched their program in 1961 and we came in 1962.

Dr. Grossman: So the first year's faculty taught free.

Dr. Derner: That is correct.

Dr. Grossman: What happened after that?

Dr. Derner: Well, our first flood of students were mainly Adelphi doctorates, from here, but many of them were very experienced and it is only that they didn't have certificates that they were not on the faculty. Guys like Jim Rahman and Harry Popper and so on, they were really the old-timers. They had maybe five years out already by that time. Maybe even six years out. So they weren't the beginners that we tend to get now with only one or two years of experience. Sometimes they are fresh out of graduate school having just one additional year to get themselves licensed. The program was developed by this core of people we got from Post-doctorate Center, William Alanson White, and NPAP; so that we had a meld of local talent so we wouldn't be parochial. We didn't want to be a Rogerian place or a Freudian place or a Sullivanian place or anything of the sort. I think we have avoided this. I was Director of the Program and I needed a right-hand man so Don Milman was appointed as Associate Director. Don, however, felt that after a period of time, he would like something that suggested the great commitment he had to the Program and so he was made Co-Director. To honor Don, I called myself Co-Director also. From the beginning Don did what an associate would do. He planned schedules, collected information about the professors to be sure that we had information about their qualities and he decided those who were not functioning well we wouldn't keep anymore, and those who were having problems, he tried to help them improve. I remember Manny Schwartz was a great guy for lecturing off the back of his shirtcollar. Don told him to straighten up and Manny began to have an organized presentation instead of just coming in and adlibbing for an hour and a half. As talented as he was, to not have any organization, really wasn't a good teaching technique. So Manny shaped up. Some of the other people along the line didn't stay with us because their teaching wasn't that good. We went out and continued to recruit what we thought would be good teachers. We had a group of psychiatrists with us in the beginning and they were forced out of teaching for us. They had the choice of keeping their hospital affiliation which they wanted or teaching with us because of this battle between psychiatry and psychology. The local neuropsychiatric society (NP) society meanwhile had been watching our clinical doctoral program and in 1963, when we announced that we were about to open a clinic for the purpose of giving low-fee service to the community and having a clinical facility for our trainees and candidates, they launched a lawsuit stating that we were in violation of medical practice.

Dr. Grossman: So that suit was in regard to the postdoctoral clinic or the doctoral clinic?

Dr. Derner: The postdoctoral clinic, because they had a sheet of paper which said we have a clinic associated with the program that gives psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, there were no ifs, ands or buts. In the doctoral program it got a little tricky because they argued that people should not offer a Ph.D. - that this really invades academic issues; but a program to train people to be by name psychotherapists or psychoanalysts, they thought they had a case. They didn't like it

earlier. In fact, when we started a psychological society out here, the head of our clinic who was a psychiatrist was constantly interrogating me because he had to carry it back to the psychiatric society.

Dr. Grossman: What psychological association?

Dr. Derner: We founded the Nassau County Psychological Association. I was a leader in this. I was the organizer, their first president, in fact, I was the first everything when we started it. If I can go on an aside, when I came out in 1951, the mental health society contacted me sometime that Fall and requested that I review their list of private practicing psychologists to see if they met some criteria that we had in psychology. The fact is that we had no criteria. There was some kind of in-group thinking that you ought to have a doctorate plus two years of experience but there was no licensing. She showed me the list and on the list there was a social worker, as well as a B.A. doing school psychology which was all she ever did. She was on the list for private practice. One of our graduate students who was on this list didn't have any academic experience or quality. He was still a student. It was this kind of a hit-and-miss list. I said "who the hell am I to decide who should be on the list or not?" Let me get a group of local psychologists. She thought this was a dandy idea. But I sat down with them and said "who are." I can invite you and half a dozen or a dozen people in here who are going to decide for everybody. We have got to have a society. And this is what we did. For the first two years when I was in there first as the ganze macher, I did everything. I collected quarters at the meeting so I would have money for mailing of postcards. I wrote the postcards or my secretary sent out the postcards. I chaired the meetings. I kept the minutes and had them typed up. There was no organization. But we had 25 or 30 people. Our first election for president had 23 people present. I got 12 votes, the chairman at Hofstra got 11, as he brought his whole faculty over and they all voted for him. I almost got knocked out of the first presidency with Matt Shappel, who was the second president. So we formed the Society and for the next several years, all we did was argue as to what should be the standards for being on the private practice list and the guys with the least training wanted the standards low enough so that they would be on there. So if you only had a Bachelor's degree and two years experience, that's what you were shooting for. There was a series of debates. We set our standards for membership the same as the APA which, at that point, was a Master's degree or two years of experience having had a year of graduate study without a Master's degree. Anyway, we formed the society and the NP society was very worried about that.

We were having all kinds of battles in Albany. The law got passed sometime in 1956 so I am talking about the years 1951 to 1956. We got our licensing law passed (first it was called certification law), in 1956 and psychiatry was trying to figure out what to do about us. By 1963, we had given them a case. We said we did psychotherapy. We said we trained candidates to do psychotherapy. So they (the NP) society launched a lawsuit against us. The vote was something like 18-11 to do it, with a membership of about 80 psychiatrists. There was a handful who were very vehemently opposed to us. One of them quoting me inappropriately or inaccurately said that I had suggested we get together which I did. But what I suggested was that the two of us join hands - psychiatry and psychology - to fight the social

workers. What I really said that night was that the two groups are in here fighting, meanwhile the social workers are doing the psychotherapy. They took us to court saying that we were in violation of the medical practices act. In the first court, a one-judge court, it was thrown out on a legal technicality which is the way we fought it. The legal technicality is that the harm has had to happen to you so they had to prove that it was harmful to the neuro-psychiatric society. Number two is that the harm has had to occur. These are two requirements of the law. For example, if you were injured, your wife couldn't sue for your pain. Only you could sue for your pain. If you had a man next door who had a big police dog who was very vicious and might bite you, you couldn't sue because the dog was vicious and bites, until he bites you. On these grounds, it got thrown out. In order to fight this case, we got the backing of Thurman & Arnold. At that point, Abe Fortas was also part of this law firm who later became a Supreme Court Justice. Thurman was the great trustbuster of the Roosevelt era. Porter was head of the NRA. This is still APA's top-rated law firm. Thurman Arnold participated himself in - he didn't prepare the brief - but discussed the case, the issue with us, and APA gave a brief in support of psychologists doing psychotherapy which is one of the excellent documents. It is not in the literature. It is very painful and I can't find my copy of it anymore and nobody else can find theirs. It was a marvelous defense of psychologists to be allowed legally, ethically and morally to do psychotherapy. We had the backing of NYSPA and they had Mariano and Mashalla. Mashalla was the legal secretary to the speaker of the assembly, Joe Carlino, a very fancy law firm. John Mariano was the chief of this pair of lawyers. So we had a very good legal representation plus our own University lawyer, whom I guess did no more than go along for the ride. On legal grounds, and that is the way we fought it, it got knocked out of Court 1. Now the psychiatrists decided to appeal. By the way, we had all these fancy attorneys and I love to say they had somebody's brother-in-law. They used as their attorney the brother-in-law of the psychiatric society president. They appealed and it went to the Court of Appeals - the Appellate Division - a three judge court. There one of their wonderful dramatic moments occurred when the one judge said "what's the violation of the medical practices act?" The attorney said that it is a violation of the medical practices act if psychologists do psychotherapy. The judge asked "what part of it?" The attorney now proceeded to read the medical practices act. When he was finished, the judge said "I didn't hear anything said about psychotherapy." The attorney said "well, that's the interpretation of that law." The judge said "whose interpretation?" The attorney said "the medical society's". The judge said, "counsellor, you know the medical society doesn't interpret the law. The courts interpret the law. The other one was that we have this course of study here. They said "who approves the course of study?" The answer was the State Department of Education. The judge asked "are you then going to sue the State Department of Education for dereliction of duty if they are not properly meeting the requirement for curriculum in colleges and Universities?" He couldn't weasel out of that and finally he decided that the State Department of Education, if it approved, this could be in violation of the Education law. They still weren't satisfied. They then took it to the Court of Appeals. The Court of Appeals looked at it

(They then got thrown out on a technicality, by the way) and said "it hasn't happened to you and no harm has been proved". When it got to the Court of Appeals, they now claimed that it would Psychiatry. that people won't join their society because we are teaching Psychotherapy. In that case, they pointed out that it was unclear as to whether psychologists could or could not, but the law had not yet been definitive on this issue. It need to be defined. But since it wasn't defined, there was no reason psychologists couldn't do psychotherapy. It was a victory that was only 95 instead of 100%. But, as far as the psychiatrists case went, it was thrown out. They then tried to get a writ, to have it heard by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court turned them down. That was it.

Dr. Grossman: Did they ever get - on a more national scale - the Medical Society to join in?

Dr. Derner: They had a variety of backings which including Queens County NP Society charging every member a \$25.00 legal fee that went into this hopper. They had a brief from the American Psychiatric and so on, but they did not have a fully concerted effort. There were some psychiatrists who were a little wary, in part, that losing this case would not be a good thing. When in doubt, it is better to tell a person that I am going to threaten you rather than have him discover a gun with no bullets in it. It is better to shoot your gun and there are no bullets in it. I have a feeling that they didn't get the kind of support nationally that we got because there was this fear that it was the wrong case. One aside, I was about to go off for a trip around the world when the subpoena came out. They subpoenaed George Goldman, as Director of the clinic because his name was on their sheet and the president of the University and the Chairman of the Board of the University and everybody else. I was very frightened that the University would back off. I talked to the President about it. I had just had another breakdown with tuberculosis so I was home in bed. I was planning a trip around the world and I got a call that George Goldman had gotten a subpoena. His wife was just flattened that he was going to end up in jail because of his involvement with this Mickey Mouse program. There were some horrendous days here. The President of the Neuropsychiatric Society who had a kind of cockemamie appointment here at the University - he taught a couple of electives in one of the health education courses and was a very well known guy in the community. He was a sort of Dean of local psychiatry. He came and resigned with great bravado told the President of the University what was happening and that every medical office in this county would have a note in it saying "don't give any money to Adelphi which is teaching medicine illegally". That threat never got there. Anyway, this was the cause celebre. The guys at NYU once told me that it was unfair that we were sued and not them because we got such marvelous national publicity out of it.

Well, this is the history of the beginning. A group of us sitting down, with training in analytic work from various points of view, I did my work at William Alanson White. Ken Fisher had done some at William Alanson White. Harold Pivnick had done his at the Postgraduate Center. Bob Lane from the Joe Levi Group. Don Milman was with NPAP.

We tried to have this diversity of distinguished people. Théodor Reik was the most distinguished analyst in America, the last of the group who was around Freud and the last of the guys had the Freud ring to wear. So this was a very substantial program. It has not changed in any great amount since that time excepting the following: Object Relations Theory, which I happen to think is just an extension of Sullivan anyway, has become more solidified. It didn't have quite this name earlier and so obviously is now more solidified. And the newer names have come in that we didn't talk about before including guys like Kernberg, Winnicott, and even Melanie Klein who was then active but had less status than she presently has in analytic thinking. So there is this change. The subject matter has changed some. I think we still maintain the model of a unified, psychodynamic approach but how one looks at those psychodynamics may vary amid degree in meta-psychology. If you want a kind of Freudian viewpoint, this falls within the purview of what is OK with faculty and fellow students. If your primary focus is in Object Relations or whatever, we seem to have any of these. We require atypically an amount of supervised practice, based upon personal experiences of a patient so first you could have a better understanding and secondly, you could see what the process was like because you felt it from the opposite side of the couch (if there were no couches, I would practice it) and those are essentially the same ingredients. They are continually being brought up-to-date but still based on Freud which is the basic discipline of all psychotherapy whether it is analytical or behavioral. They don't always know it but it pervades the whole of psychotherapy. That is the story. The present faculty are paid a very modest amount. They are paid \$550 for 8 sessions which is nominal since many of the people come from New York and some from Connecticut -- we are talking about somewhere around 4 hours of time including transportation so obviously anyone who teaches here must do so because they have some kind of a commitment to the idea of a University teaching psychoanalysis.

Dr. Grossman: Do you think there will be any great change in the future? I know that there is a system where you have committees that oversee, but just in predicting, can you predict any major changes?

Dr. Derner: I don't really see any reason to make major changes. We have just done a review again of the administrative structure in which some people have different perceptions as to what it is about. Let me point out that an academic institution has its academic program run by the professors. This is true of our postdoctoral program and our pre-doctoral program. The professors run the program. When I say run the program, I mean that they set policy. They select their own colleagues. They decide which among who can be admitted and which among those people admitted have satisfactorily completed the work and what the curriculum should be. All of this is decided by faculty. Because of the way we began in which the small group and also the faculty, the administration and the faculty were identical. As time went on, we had invited some students to sit in simply because they were grown-up folks to start with and we just liked to have some easy liaison to candidates and to faculty. Then the Adelphi Society was established which became affiliated with the international group and we then said "why don't we have some of our graduates come back and help?" So gradually the administrative body of faculty got in line with these other people and some people began to lose sight of the fact that the administrative committee was a faculty committee and

because our faculty is 100% part-time, even the administrators are part-time, like Don and me, George, George Stricker, we didn't have frequent faculty meetings so all faculty functions were delegated to this smaller group called the administrative committee. There has been great debate as to whether the administrative committee is really a faculty committee or not, whether the society should have greater or lesser involvement in it, my personal attitude is that it is still a faculty committee representative of the faculty committee instead of having the whole faculty assembled as we do for the Postdoctoral Program-I mean the pre-doctoral program-we only have a small number and they serve as a representational government. Then just to have liaison, we have other people there but it is still a faculty committee. Now this is not the attitude of some faculty who argue that it is not a faculty committee and some members of the society who decide that it is not longer a faculty committee that it is random. This perception doesn't bother me. As I see it, the administrators. Don Milman, George Goldman and George Stricker and me have implementation responsibility. In the absence of anyone there to make policy, if it has to be made right away, we make it too. That is fairly minor stuff, however. A good example would be if somebody has been doing a poor job teaching, it is generally dealt with from an administrative point of view. You don't come into the total faculty, students, and candidates and say "Dr. Smith has some bad references and we are thinking of dropping him." That just seems a little too callous. What happens in those instances is that Don and I would probably talk about (maybe Don, George and I) and then say what is the best way to handle this. Usually it is done by Don sitting down with the guy and saying look this is our finding about your course. What is to be done? If in the long run, we feel that it cannot be effectively remedied, then Don and I decide. That is the kind of thing that would be done administratively but as policy. The opposite way doesn't work. That is Don and I don't decide who is to be on the faculty. We recommend. We would argue for anyone we think is a good person. On the other hand, anybody else can recommend somebody. So the policy on faculty, aside from what I just told you, is made with the total faculty, candidates and students of the society. I don't see that this is going to change much. The present clinic is administered very well. We have one of the largest out-patient facilities in the country with some 500 patients being seen at least once and sometimes three and four times a week. We have established a Group Program. The Child program has not done well but I think our focus there is wrong. I am not the majority by any matter. Otherwise, it would be different. I do not think we should make it so analytic because I think there are lots of people who are interested in working with children who could benefit by and be interested in additional training in working with children or adolescents who aren't interested in going through any big thing about self-analysis. I think if in that program, we didn't require analysis, encourage it is one thing but requiring it is another, or let that person-and I would focus on the interpersonal aspects of the therapist in the supervision-"How do you feel about the kid?" "What is going on in you?" and use this in a more therapeutic-like supervision than the other, I think this would handle it better. Then we could go out to a lot of school psychologists with doctorates who would like to have a more intensive experience, I think

this would be more attractive. That view is not held by anyone apparently but me. So right now, it is in effect a sort of half-way spot between a child psychoanalytic program and a straight child therapy program. I think that's a problem. Will it change? I don't know. We have some awfully nice talented people teaching in the child program, including some excellent child psychiatrists, and it is the first time we have been able to attract any classy child psychiatrists in a long while since those battles way-back-when when our program got started. Some of those psychiatrists, by the way, are now involved with the Long Island Psychoanalytic Institute in the development of which I have very much favored.

Dr. Grossman: That is the place that is taking psychologists and psychiatrists which maybe says that the battle is over.

Dr. Derner: For that group of people, George Goldman, Don Milman and I along with Rollo May and some other psychologists are on their advisory board. I am perfectly high in supporting them fully. I think there are enough candidates around that both programs can be handled. I doubt that there will be many psychiatrists interested in taking our program. We have had a few but it is not primarily attracting psychiatrists. We attract psychologists. We have attracted a few social workers, psychiatric nurses, but we demand a doctorate, and there are fewer in those two disciplines. I have personally resisted any attempts to recruit MSWs in it for two reasons: one, I think that the just-trained people at MSW is too low a level and two, we say that is good enough in social work but how can we say to an MA in Psychology, we don't think you are well enough trained but we think an MSW with a Masters is. It just seems too inconsistent. There are some people who feel that those who come from either social work or nursing don't have the same richness of background as psychologists and it may or may not be true. This sounds a little chauvinistic. I don't see any great change administratively. Some day George Goldman will retire and we have had changes in the Assistant Director as Ann McMahon has replaced Lorelle Saretsky and I assume there might be change of personnel one of these days. I am retiring and I would assume Don will take full directorship as he does the majority of the administrative work although it is done consultantly.

Dr. Grossman: Do you have any tentative date on retirement?

Dr. Derner: Sure, 1985. That's two years yet. If I could get a sabbatical next spring, I plan to do this. I am attempting to do this although the University's financial circumstances at the moment are such that it may be difficult. In addition to which, the president of the University has high regard for what I can do here, and I am sure he is not willing to see me retire. He has mixed feelings about this. He would like me because of health pressures not to overdo but he also wants me around. So I don't know about next spring. If I take the sabbatical next spring, then I would be here the Fall of 1983, Fall, 1984 and the Spring of 1985. But this is a long way off. Legally, I could retire. I could be forced to retire at this point. I assume that if I wished I could stay on beyond that but I really am thinking that retiring is a better idea. I would hope that even if I retire, when I retire, not if, that I could work out some system because I

hope to live part-time on the West Coast and part-time here. I would like to be here from September until Christmastime so I could teach my pre-doctoral course in Ethics which I probably can teach better than anyone else here because much of the history I teach, I personally was involved in directly and sometimes in leadership and to teach the postdoctoral course on Sullivan because I enjoy doing that or the Case Seminar and that would keep me here in the Fall Semester and spend the end of December, January, February, and March out in California and teach a course either up at USIU or at the California School of Professional Psychology at San Diego, for which I have been a consultant for many years. They want me to be on the faculty but I don't want to do more than that. I don't want an administrative job. In both instances, here or there, allows me to have contact with young folks and this is a very good way to stay young yourself and also I can earn a few extra dollars which will better my income when I leave this job obviously and then come back in April, May and June here and spend July and August in California. So these are my plans starting the summer of 1985. Meanwhile, this June I am going to take a cruise around the British Isles. This is a trip I am looking forward to with great excitement. I will see how my lungs will handle it.

Dr. Grossman: It sounds like you have a lot in store for you.

Dr. Derner: (chuckling) Yeah. Meanwhile I have this goddam office to clean up.

Dr. Grossman: That will take you a while. Gordon, thank you very much for your time and giving us a background on the program.

Dr. Derner: I am mighty proud of this place. When I think that I came here with five people including a chairman of the department, a physiological psychologist (physiologist actually) all fresh. (He was an instructor but actually he was a graduate assistant just having gotten his Master's degree.) Bob Cranston who was here from Columbia and had been my student and one of the few people who ever got a C in one of my courses, it turns out he used to come to my classes on Saturday mornings with a hangover and did very badly on exams, but was a brilliant and able guy. Dorothy Discher who was one of a handful of woman psychologists around and who did work on olfactory issues with infants and Phillip Kitay who is a well-rounded social clinical psychologist - this was the faculty. From this we have built an internationally known clinical doctoral program with 700 applicants every year, of which we take 25, and a postdoctoral program which is one of two in the whole nation and now is used as a prototype. Rutgers is looking at one like this, CSPP in Berkeley is establishing one and a number of other institutes are looking to us for leadership as to how we did it. Washington D.C. wants to establish a branch. For me, I would establish this branch. Don Milman is reluctant to do so since I will be leaving here in a few years. However much I extend it, still has to be very few years. It doesn't seem fair for me to say to Don "like it or not, you have to do it". We could establish one in San Diego, Chicago, and Washington D.C. I would just like to take the package of the postdoctoral program and move them over the country.

Use our present faculty to come out there in 12 hours stints (Friday night, all day Saturday and Sunday morning) and get air fare and expenses and \$1000 for doing teaching and have 2 of those people come out each semester. Use this faculty and then we could use local people to do supervision and give seminars. We could put this into practice immediately. But Don is reluctant to do it. So we have not moved ahead. George would like to do it and I would like to do it but Don is the one who would have to do the administrative end. We also have our annual Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy conferences which are the brainchild of George and Don (they are nationally and internationally famous). As you know, they have put out a dozen or more books on various leading topics in psychotherapy. They offer psychoanalysis and have to get a twist to make them psychoanalysis but they are on important issues. It is probably the most important conference of this kind in the country. And those two men are to be thanked for such a fine effort. It has not received the attendance that it should, even among our own people, because they bring some very substantial books into print. Anyway, proud I am (chuckling). Thank you Neil.

The Gordon Derner Hour

I was applying for a job as a school psychologist in the New York City School System. Part of the requirement was an oral exam. They had three psychologists sitting in back of a table. I came into this room and when I looked down I saw cowboy boots. My first thought was, "My God, they got somebody from Texas to examine me. This must be really important." Gordon was the chief interviewer and the other two mainly sat and listened to his examination of me. I came away with the sense that he was a very forceful, sharp psychologist. I didn't know that years later I would meet him again.

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When I think of Gordon, I think of radios. Many different radios--large ones and small ones, and I think of cassettes and I think of the Peace Corps and I think of India. Gordon and I worked together in the Peace Corps. We were down in Washington and in Pennsylvania and it was great being with him because whenever I was with Gordon, I felt good. I felt his dignity and his strong presence, his dealing with reality and cutting through whatever fluff there was. He made me feel like a professional but then it was easy to be a professional with Gordon. There was no pretense. There was a kind, warm, supportive human being and I was amazed that he had so much to give to so many people. When I think of Gordon, I think of his desk and I see manuscripts and term papers and projects that were piled three feet high. Once I said, "My God, when are you going to do all this?" And he said, "When I have time," and he got to it. He got to it by the end of the term or when he came back from his summer trip. Then his desk would be cleared and, in between, he would listen to the Indian music and the phone would ring. But he got through it. Gordon also meant to me coffee and cookies. He would come up front Friday night, bring his boxes of cookies and get the coffeemaker going. That was Gordon's secret. No one knew how to work that coffeemaker and no one knew where the coffee was and where the filters were and he got up there and the coffee was on. He was so giving in so many ways and he made Adelphi feel like home. I felt that I had another family and he made me feel part of it as he made many of my classmates feel part of it.

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Once I told him I had to present a case and was very anxious about it. He said to me, "It's a good test, you should always take tests." He always encouraged you and he said don't worry about it. That was Gordon.

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I remember Gordon at meetings. He cut so incisively through all the crap, got to the heart of the matter and moved meetings along in a really positive, aggressive way.

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It struck me that Gordon did everything with a sense of enjoyment and put jobs in a perspective that was very workable. The man did many, many things and I think he was able to because he put things in a light that made them possible.

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I remember meeting Gordon with his animals. There was a very fancy pet shop and I was looking at the fish and Gordon came in and had on his shoulder an ant-eater animal.

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One time I was having clams in a seafood bar and Gordon came in with Margaret. I was with my nephew and we all sat down to eat clams on the half shell. He was eating them with such relish that I was looking at him and saying, this man really enjoys food. A few weeks after that I met him in a homemade-ice-cream place. It seemed as if he knew all the good places to eat, all the specialty shops. Thinking of Gordon with the clams and the ice cream and the music and the films and the different radios, he had a real love for life. He was full of life. He would just appreciate every sliver of it. Margaret told me about how she was in San Diego with Gordon during his last few hours when he wasn't able to eat because he was quite weak. He asked her to give him some orange juice and she brought some. She told me he said, "This orange juice is so delicious, it tastes so good." It sounded just like Gordon talking about the clams and the ice cream. It is difficult to imagine that he isn't going to be around any more.

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He loved to talk. He was a man who loved to talk. I remember one evening he was talking and walking and panting. But he wouldn't stop talking and I was wondering, "He's having so much difficulty breathing but he doesn't stop talking", and it was marvelous.

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I remember one time Gordon was discussing a case that he was working with. A boy called him to ask if he could be in treatment with him because, the boy said, "You have to be the world's best therapist, you cured my mother of smoking." This kid's mother had called once and asked about therapy for smoking. Gordon said to her, "I don't want to spend a long time on the phone but briefly I can tell you that it will involve finding something else that you would rather do or that you would enjoy more than smoking." So she said, "Fine, I think I have the idea", and she never kept the appointment, and that one phone call cured her. Gordon said, "I don't know what she's doing instead of smoking but she is not smoking anymore."

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When you gave Gordon a memorandum before you sent it out, he would rewrite the whole thing. It was also not unusual for him to re-write it after you sent it out, and send it back to you corrected. One time I sent him a memorandum and he corrected it and sent it back. I took his corrections, had it redone and sent it back to him as if I was going to send it out again. He recorrected his own corrections. Some things never changed. He usually made things much better. I don't know where he found the time. It is unbelievable that he would do this. About a year or so ago, I sent out a memorandum and he put down that it was a very nice memorandum. I was going to frame it. This was the first time I have seen anything that he didn't change. I felt very pleased at the time--it was like getting an "A" on a paper.

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This is one of the funniest stories that I think of. You know Gordon with his pants and boots and everything. On Halloween, we got lost and we were driving around and he figured he would go up to a farmhouse and use the phone or ask for directions. He knocked on the door; this kid came to the door, looked at him, walked back in the house and came out with one of those trick-or-treat bags.

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He had a little problem with his time sense. When I first came to Adelphi we used to get upset. Once Gordon was flying in from someplace in the world and had asked a friend to meet him at the airport at 10:30 on a Sunday morning. The friend got up very late and said, "I am not going to rush. I am going to get there late. This is one time that Gordon is going to wait for me. I'll be damned if I am going to wait for him." The friend got to the airport about an hour late and Gordon's plane was still circling.

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I remember one time I gave Gordon directions. I misdirected him and he never showed up. He never got there and he never said anything about it and never kidded me or in any way made me feel bad about it. He just accepted it. I gave him the wrong street and it took him 2 hours. He had to go back home because he couldn't find it.