



Paul Ornstein (1924-2017) In memoriam



Declaración de la Presidencia de IAPSP (22-1-2017) tras el fallecimiento de Paul Ornstein el 17-1-2017 en Boston.

“For many years Paul has been a beloved key figure in IAPSP and in the larger psychoanalytic community. Last October, in Boston, we have payed Anna and Paul a special tribute in our annual conference. I would like to share some excerpts of the things I have said there.

In my mind, as it is probably in the minds of many, Paul was a true Kohutian, not only in his in-depth knowledge of what Kohut had taught, in his loyalty to it, and his therapeutic practice, but in his very being – his empathic immersion in the inner lives of others, his belief in, and deep acceptance of, anything human.

There's an anecdote I'd like to share with you. In the winter of 1997, I was staying with Anna and Paul at their home when Arnold Goldberg came to Cincinnati to promote his new book about perversions. At that time there was quite a buzz in the US around the "uncovering" of Madelaine Albright's Judaism. We were having dinner, and Anna remarked about how she couldn't quite understand why anyone would hide their Judaism. She mentioned the arguments she had had with Kohut over the subject. Paul intervened and said something like: But Anna, you need to understand. For Heinz, Judaism had no significance, and with the Anschluss it became a burden because of which his world turned upside down. He was displaced from his beloved environment and culture due to something he felt no affinity with. He had to start afresh here, find his place, so he wanted a clean slate and did not wish this baggage to hamper his quest of becoming an American. So he renounced his Judaism. Can't you understand that? Upon hearing this, Arnold Goldberg laughed and said, " I have always told Heinz, you know, we all like you, but Paul **LOVES** you".



But I believe it was neither love alone nor mere archaic idealization. Although some colleagues had disparagingly called the Ornsteins "loyalists", I would say that they are indeed Kohut's loyal disciples, not just his blindly admiring followers. I would rather regard their stance as one insisting on respect for the origin, advocating the importance of a continuity, where the contemporary derives its strength not only from its own creativity and innovativeness, but also from the great heritage of the past, from which it draws and on which it leans. Anna and Paul never strove to differentiate themselves from their great teacher. When you read their numerous publications and presentations, when you are in supervision with them, or when you listen to their discussions of papers by others, you can easily realize that their attitude is twofold: they are devoted to preserving Kohut's legacy, but they neither shy from treating it critically where they see fit, nor from inserting their own ideas, developments, and expansions of what they have learned.

Paul's publications, his own and those he has published jointly with Anna, are far too many to list here, but these, along with his monumental editing and introducing of the four volumes of Kohut's collected papers and letters *The Search for the Self*, make him a key contributor to Psychoanalysis in general and to Self Psychology in particular.

As Joye Weisel-Barth once said, Paul's life was a life well lived, and we are all deeply grateful for having had him in our midst, for having enjoyed the richness of his wisdom, knowledge, generosity, warmth and empathy. He will be greatly missed by all of us, and on behalf of IAPSP community I wish to extend our heartfelt condolences to Anna, Sharon, Miriam, Rafael, and their families.

In the Hebrew, words used by president Bill Clinton, I would like to say - Shalom Havver (Good Bye Friend)"

Eldad Iddan IAPSP president

With

Shelley Doctors, IAPSP immediate past president

Amy Eldridge, IAPSP national executive coordinator

Martin Gossmann, international executive coordinator

Algunas de las adhesiones a la circular de e-mail:

It is with both deep sadness and immense gratitude that I receive this news. Sadness for the passing of a true mensch, a vibrant leader of our community. Gratitude for having the good fortune to have known Paul. It was he on a visit to Vancouver in the late 80's who encouraged me to write what became my first paper, one that brought me into a psychoanalytic community that has served as my psychoanalytic family. As we know Paul exuded vitality and passion in his work and life. His 100 page introduction to the first two edited volumes of Kohut's work remains for me to this day the most eloquent and stunning introduction to Kohut's work, a reading that for me was transformative.

Jewish tradition says that in every generation there are 36 Tzadickim (righteous persons) They are called lamed vavniks after the Hebrew letters lamed and Vav, that denotes the number

36



This week we have lost a genuine lamed vavnik. I express my heartfelt condolences to Anna and family. With love

Max Sucharov

We have lost a wonderful colleague and a great scholar. Paul was a foundational leader of Self Psychology. A generous person and a great loss for all of us. I have loved him and Anna. I am so sad. God bless and keep him. Best,

George Hagman

Every tradition rests upon its inestimable gratitude to its pillars of which Paul and certainly Anna are a part. Our grief represents our depth of appreciation for Paul's contributions, which created an un-excelled foundation for intellectual discourse which challenged us to explore, interrogate, disagree, and learn from the broad spectrum of our deepest beliefs. Thank you Paul and thank you Anna.

Phil Ringstrom

My heart goes out to Anna, particularly as my own husband died last week. He (my husband) was a classically trained deeply Freudian New York psychotherapist and psychoanalyst but, like me, felt there was something missing, and was an easy convert to the more empathic and humane way of self psychology when I shared my discovery and sense of 'coming home' with him.

Paul was my first introduction to self psychology, leading a pre-conference workshop ahead of the main conference. He taught so clearly, so simply, and with such great empathy for all who crossed his path. One of the participants asked 'what do you do with the difficult patient, the one who just can't seem to move on from their intractable psychic pain?' and Paul replied softly 'you say to him--/ would say to him, "we will just sit with this. I will sit with you through this until it begins to ease".' And I knew he would, too.

My heartfelt condolences to Anna and all the family.

Margaret Akmakjian-Pitz

Carmarthen, Wales

Let me add my voice to our grieving group, remembering Paul Ornstein's immense contributions to our community and profession and sending loving wishes to Anna and the family. May his memory be a blessing.

Joye Weisel-Barth



Dear Friends,

I've been deeply saddened by the news of Paul's passing. I shall always cherish my moving contacts with him. He was a wonderful teacher and guide and a touchingly caring and generous friend.

With love to Anna at this time of great loss,

Doris Brothers

I am deeply saddened to hear of Paul's death. And I also wish to celebrate, as we have over the years, what Paul, often with Anna, has

given us. Thank you, Eldad, for your wonderful description of Paul.

My love and heartfelt condolences to Anna and their family,

James L. Fosshage, Ph.D.

It is with great sadness that I write this brief note. Paul was my mentor/tutor as I tried to understand Kohut. The marvelous four volumes of Search for the Self that he so skillfully edited were my very best education in grasping the full extent of Kohut's work. His wonderful introduction in Volume 1 was my guide to reading Kohut's writings. It is so sad to lose him. When I think of Kohut's Forms and Transformations paper, I am reminded that the transformation of narcissism brought with it wisdom, creativity, humor and an acceptance of the transience of life itself. This captures Paul's life beautifully. My deepest sympathy is extended to Anna and their wonderful family.

Rosemary Segalla

Paul Ornstein was a remarkable human being whose spirit and energy touched so many of us. He was a gifted clinician and dedicated theoretician, whose significant body of work has contributed to the development and dissemination of the Self Psychology vision as it developed among Kohut, the Ornsteins and others in Chicago. His relationship with Anna, has always been a gift to experience and to learn from. I miss his enthusiasm, relentless energy and generosity, but also feel privileged to have learned so much from him and Anna about their work. Thank you Eldad for your touching message. We mourn together.

Steven Knoblauch

Paul Ornstein is such a great loss to Anna, to his children, and to all of us, that our words fail us, and yet there have been so many good words. I want to add one about his careful work so long ago to create the four-volume Search for the Self, making available to so many of us the work of Heinz Kohut that we would never otherwise have found. Nor would we have been able to see how his thinking developed and fit together. For me these books were a precious resource, once read straight through, and then referred to ever after.

In his later years, Paul wrote from his love of Dostoevsky, especially The Brothers Karamazov and the House of the Dead, both books with a profoundly ethical orientation.

I already miss Paul's passion, and once again send my love to his family.

Donna Orange



Dear Anna,

It is not easy to put together so many memories and capture them in a concise way.

When I first started to teach self psychology, I met you and Paul and asked you for materials about aggression. Paul immediately put together a package of papers published and unpublished and sent them to me. I use these materials even today and many students, I am sure, benefited from them.

Then we asked for Paul's assistance when we founded the Tel Aviv Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis.

We needed an international board. Paul said immediately that he was willing to chair this board and encouraged others to participate.

Paul's ideals and courage always inspired us. Paul's generosity, and yours, were limitless.

You and Paul were for many of us a model of shared understanding, a couple that shared so profoundly, who cultivated similar ideas and helped each other to express them.

It is very painful to lose Paul.

But, as you said in Boston, his work and yours is a legacy for all of us and in that sense it remains alive and meaningful.

With love,

Gabriela Mann

"My dearest Anna,

Though we all knew, how fragile Paul's health was, nevertheless: he was still alive. Now he is dead, but in our memory he is still present and alive.

You have lost your almost lifelong partner.

In the following, I quote a bit from Lincoln's letter to Mrs Bixby (1864) who was "the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. ...I feel how weak and fruitless must be any word of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save; leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

In your case, dear Anna I write "the solemn pride that must be yours to have shared the greatest part of your life with Paul. Kohut's Self Psychology would not exist as it does now without Paul and you, who devoted your professional life to Selfpsychology. And that will last.

With my heart and soul, with my thoughts I am with you, your children and the memory of the beloved Paul

Yours Lotte Köhler"

I found Heinz Kohut via Paul and Anna's wonderful teaching of his work, and it changed my life.

Heinz regarded both Paul and Anna Ornstein as two of the most remarkable people he had ever known. Self Psychology has lost one of its most important proponents, a vitally intelligent, compassionate man who enriched it enormously, to the benefit of untold numbers of patients



and therapists.

Jacqueline and I lovingly join Anna and her family in mourning their loss.

Howard Bacal

I wish to add some of my thoughts to those that are beginning to be shared, expressing grief and sharing memories in the wake of our loss of Paul.

Though we were aware that Paul had been ill for awhile, I, like everyone, was thunderstruck by the news, for Paul was a giant in our community--a father and grandfather to us all. I've written a note to Anna and to her children and their families, but I feel moved by Eldad's example to share a memory that immediately comes to mind and which might interest others.

Those who have been part of the Self Psychology community even before the establishment of IAPSP will remember that in days gone by there was often a tension between (what was once dubbed) the "loyalists" and the nascent Intersubjective Systems Theory group. I think it speaks to Paul's ever-present intellectual curiosity and his genuine interest in understanding the "other", that he complimented me by asking me to meet with him to talk about the two theories and their relation to each other. And so we met, several times, prior to Self Psychology meetings. Paul the humanist, totally incapable of being petty, wanted to explore the overlap between the theories and their differences. I was honored, of course, for not only did I get to talk about ideas with Paul (!!), best of all, he became a friend as well as an admired teacher.

Yes, Paul was a first-rate scholar (editing the four volumes of Kohut's papers), but first he was a warm, accessible, kind and lovely man, incredibly generous in his interactions with a very large number of acquaintances, colleagues, and friends, while always seeming, implicitly, to be an exemplar of the central importance of emotional ties--an idea that animates everything from the theories he loved to the people who were lucky enough to know him well enough to love him. And their number is legion.

To find a brilliant teacher who is a figure on the world-wide stage is wonderful in itself, but to know he is also a "mensch" is totally inspiring, as it means that it's somehow possible to create "the good life". Paul has graced us with his presence and with an indelible example of what results from the mixture of a big heart and a powerful intelligence. I was fortunate to have had the good luck to have been in his orbit and am stricken, grieved by the loss all of of us feel.

While we will want to find ways to honor his contributions, for the moment I'm grateful that we have this on-line way of sharing our feelings and memories.

In sympathy with all who mourn,

Shelley Doctors

El INSTITUTO DE PSICOTERAPIA RELACIONAL (Madrid, España), se une a las condolencias y expresa su pesar por la pérdida de tan relevante figura.

Alejandro Ávila-Espada, Ph.D, Presidente de Honor de IPR

Carlos Rodríguez-Sutil, Ph.D., Presidente de IPR