



Biography

Freud's Wizard: Ernest Jones and the Transformation of Psychoanalysis

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Don't judge a movement by its earliest adepts, advised Friedrich Nietzsche. He might have been talking about psychoanalysis, except that he died in 1900, the year that Sigmund Freud gave birth to the idea by publishing *The Interpretation of Dreams*. The secret committee of psychoanalytic pioneers supporting "The Professor" in the early years of the movement included three physicians, a psychologist and a lawyer, whose main means of communication left treasures for historians: hundreds of typed letters with carbon copies circulated between Vienna, Budapest, Berlin, and London.

London-based Ernest Jones (1879—1958) formed the committee when Carl Jung split with Freud in 1913. He overcame a series of indiscretions as a young neurologist to become the best-known spokesman for psychoanalysis and, in the last years of his life, author of a monumental biography of Freud, the man he revered, fought and commiserated with, and brought out of Nazi Austria. Jones is now the subject of an absorbing human story by Brenda Maddox, the accomplished biographer of Margaret Thatcher, Mona [Mrs. James] Joyce, W.B. Yeats, and D.H. Lawrence. She benefits from the recent publication of the Freud—Jones correspondence—671 letters!

Jones was the only non-Jewish member of the inner circle, a matter of import to Freud, who was afraid his project would be seen as a “Jewish science.” Like Freud, Jones was a neurologist before becoming an analyst. His early years as a doctor in London and Toronto were plagued with missteps: accused of misbehavior with children and women patients, he could no longer gain a hospital appointment. Nevertheless he became editor of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* and was President of the International Psychoanalytic Association for many years. He published a Freudian analysis of Hamlet that influenced James Joyce (*Ulysses*) and Laurence Olivier. Jones knew D.H. Lawrence, other literati and Britons of influence; some of whom helped get Freud into England in 1938.

A man who could be acerbic, reckless, and mendacious, Jones was also witty, romantic, cultured, and versatile: figure skating and chess were serious pursuits. Women found him very attractive. He cheated on his wealthy common-law wife, Loe, with her maid; Loe, analyzed by Freud, married an American. Jones denied having sex with his patients, but at least one—later a prominent analyst herself—pursued him romantically for years. Jones married a singer from Wales only to be widowed in little over a year. He then married Kitty Jokl, Viennese and Jewish. When their first child was born, Freud sent congratulations, adding that parenthood “is one of the queerest and most exalted situations in life, the beginning of infinite happiness and endless cares.” This daughter, Gwenith, died at age seven of pneumonia. Jones wrote in response to Freud’s condolence: “When you lost Sophie [his grown daughter] you wrote to me that you wished you could die too. At the time I only partly understood this, but now I do so fully. I am finding it hard, and as yet impossible, to discover enough motive to go on living and to endure the present and future suffering that this blow has brought.”

The enigmatic Jones, a native of Wales, knew how it felt to be a target of discrimination, and liked to call himself an “honorary Jew.” His wife and (genetically) his children were Jewish. But he antagonized Ferenczi (his former analyst) and Rank with anti-Semitic remarks; to no avail they pressed Freud to dump him. Not long after, Jones wrote to Karl Abraham that Freud might have to be dumped in order to save psychoanalysis from the liberals (Maddox omits this). Jones was upset, for example, that Rank and Freud favored admitting qualified homosexuals to practice psychoanalysis. Soon Rank went his own way; Abraham died, then Ferenczi. Freud’s mantle fell to Jones, even though he supported Melanie Klein’s theories against those of Anna Freud and her father. Readers can find post-Jonesian perspectives in *Freud and His Followers* by the late Paul Roazen and *Freud: Darkness in the Midst of Vision* by Louis Breger (both cited by Maddox).

This biography renders a compelling portrait of a quirky, talented, ambitious man who matures to become Freud’s champion. Maddox leaves readers well informed on the evolution of a movement—a quasi-science that influenced Western culture for a century and produced a new

form of human communication: the psychotherapy hour.