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THE EXISTENTIAL APPROACH TO
ENCOUNTER IN ROLLO MAY

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Robert Francis McEniry, B.A., A.M.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1972

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Hate is not the opposite of love.
Apathy is.

--Rollo May

In trying to give,
You see that you have nothing.

Seeing that you have nothing,
You try to give of yourself.

Trying to give of yourself,
You see that you are nothing.

Seeing that you are nothing,
You desire to become.

In desiring to become,
You begin to live.

--Rene Daumal
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______. "Thinking about Taking Part in an Encounter Group?" The Gate, III (July, 1970), 17-27.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VITA.</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. AN OVERVIEW OF ENCOUNTER GROUP LITERATURE.</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Usage of Encounter in Encounter Group Literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Central Problem of This Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tentative Avenues of Solution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interface between the Existential Movement and Encounter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Study of the Existential Approach to Encounter in Rollo May</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. CHARACTERISTICS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF ROLLO MAY'S EXISTENTIAL APPROACH TO PSYCHOTHERAPY.</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May's Position among Existentialists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characteristics of May's Existential Approach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions Underlying This Approach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE LOCUS OF ENCOUNTER IN THE HUMAN DILEMMA.</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schema: The Human Dilemma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Pole of the Human Dilemma: The Existential Situation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Other Pole of the Human Dilemma: Becoming an Integrated Person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

The astonishing vitality, which has been a mark of the whole small group movement, has also rendered its study difficult. This is particularly true of encounter groups, one of the more recent developments of the group movement. The almost tropical exuberance of encounter groups, manifest in their rapid rise, their many varieties, their wide-spread appearance and appeal, has been an obstacle to study.

But when the five year development of encounter groups is looked at against the background of the twenty-five year development of T-groups from the vantage point of growth stages, some illuminating contrasts emerge. In their turn, these contrasts can shed some light upon ways to study them.

Growth Stages of T-Groups

T-groups seem to have gone through four growth stages: 1) a cocoon stage, 2) a Mecca stage, 3) an experimental model stage, and 4) a geographical outreach stage.

The cocoon stage occurred during the summer of 1946. At that time a workshop was held at the State Teachers College in
New Britain, Connecticut. This workshop was jointly sponsored by the Connecticut Interracial Commission, the Connecticut Department of Education, and the Research Center for Group Dynamics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Thirty participants attended. They were divided into three groups of ten members each. The groups were led by Kenneth D. Benne, Leland P. Bradford, and Ronald Lippitt. They were observed by researchers Kurt Lewin, Morton Deutsch, Murray Horwitz, and Melvin Seeman.¹

When the discovery was made that the participants were more interested in the nightly review of the daily interaction in the groups by leaders and researchers than in the interaction itself, the cocoon stage ended. The shape of what would eventually become the T-group was beginning to emerge.

The Mecca stage began the following summer of 1947, when the New Britain workshop was expanded to a three week session and moved to Gould Academy in Bethel, Maine. Bethel has since become the Mecca of T-group trainers and participants.

This was followed by another stage beginning in 1948. This

centered around the gradual evolution of an experimental group model and the determination of what ingredients would be needed for a fairly well defined group format. First came a design named the Basic Skills Training Group, the BST group. This group combined interactional group process with didactic input to assist participants in understanding the ongoing interaction.

The following summer the BST group was redesigned into the model of a laboratory training in human relations. Then in 1949 another experimental training model was inaugurated, without the didactic input which had overloaded the previous BST group model. This experimental training group model, which went through several more redesign phases, evolved into the T-group. The T stands for training (in human relations).

This stage was marked with a sharp increase in the output of literature, as investigators struggled with ways of formulating a viable experimental model.

By 1955 the T-group had begun to spread out into what has become seventeen years later a nationwide network with more than 500 carefully selected behavioral scientists as trainers. This geographical outreach has been abetted by the National Training Laboratories Institute (NTL), the organization formed in 1947 as part of the Adult Education section of the National Education Association precisely to foster this growth.
Growth Stages of Encounter Groups

Within the last five or six years, encounter groups have become an exuberant newcomer in the small group movement. They have exhibited growth stages similar to the evolution of the T-group, but in a different order.

The cocoon stage of encounter groups, which came first, partially concealed in the murky past, seems to have derived from innovative experiments at free-form learning situations and from a dissatisfaction with progress rates and outcomes of conventional therapeutic modes.

Encounter groups seem to have entered the Mecca stage next in the summer of 1967, when the La Jolla Program first offered a month session of training in facilitating encounter groups. Through his description of the interactional process he observed in these groups, Carl Rogers has made La Jolla the Mecca of the basic encounter group. 2

The response was amazing. To provide experience for the trainees in acting as facilitators of basic encounter groups, invitations were sent out to people outside the program to participate as members of basic encounter groups on two successive week ends.

Rogers has reported "six hundred people showed up for the first weekend and eight hundred for the following one." Rogers has also reported that in the five years since the La Jolla Program began more than six hundred persons have been trained as facilitators of basic encounter groups.

Many of those who had been trained as facilitators of basic encounter groups fanned out over the country and started to conduct basic encounter groups soon after returning home with the fervor of a recent convert. Formal centers offering basic encounter groups began to mushroom in widely diversified geographic areas. Estimates of the number vary. Long enumerates some forty centers; Howard, over 90. Over 200 encounter groups have been reported functioning in the Palo Alto area alone. Unlike T-groups

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4 Ibid., p. 150.


which went through the geographical outreach stage last, basic encounter groups were already spreading geographically, before an experimental model had been evolved and generally accepted.

To the north of La Jolla along the Big Sur coast of California, Esalen has become the Mecca of the open encounter group under the direction of its more articulate proponents, Michael Murphy and William Schutz, after having gone through a dormant unrecorded cocoon stage. Leaders trained at Esalen in open encounter groups have also fanned out over the country with their particular variety of encounter group, before a model of open encounter groups had been well formulated.

One of the latest confirmations that encounter groups, whether plain, basic, open, or marathon, have entered the geographical growth stage is that encounter groups are beginning to be offered under university auspices, some in summer institutes, others in the curriculum.

Even given this wide spread growth, the estimate of a well-informed leader in the small group field cited by Rogers that some 750,000 individuals have probably participated in some type of intensive small group experience during 1970 boggles the mind.  

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8Rogers, Rogers on Encounter Groups, p. 149.
Rogers has not exaggerated when he called the small group movement "one of the most rapidly growing social phenomena in the United States."9

Although the encounter group has already gone through the cocoon, Mecca, and geographical outreach stage, unlike the T-group, which entered its experimental model development stage third, encounter groups seem to have entered the formulation of an experimental model stage last—during the last year or two. From 1970, encounter group literature has burgeoned.10 These are indications that encounter group investigators are searching for ways to formulate the experience of the encounter group. Judging from the similar phase in the development of the T-group, which lasted six or seven years, this trend in encounter group literature is likely to continue for three or four more years. When the configuration, encounter group, has reached a generally accepted formulation, this trend will probably cease.

---


10Three journals have, for the first time, devoted entire issues to encounter groups and related small group experiences. The Counseling Psychologist, II, No. 2 (1970); International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, XX (July, 1970), which, in an unprecedented move, invited authors without medical degrees; Personnel and Guidance Journal, IL (April, 1971).
Underlying Questions

Many questions rise to the surface from this discussion. Some are differential ones. How does a T-group differ from an encounter group? ¹¹ How do both differ from sensitivity groups? ¹² How does the basic encounter group differ from the open encounter group on one side and the plain encounter group on the other? How do these hues of small groups fit in with the overall small group movement? ¹³

Some answers to these questions have already been attempted. Others will very likely be proposed in the years ahead.

Other questions are matters of substance and similarity. What ingredients go into making an encounter group an encounter? What is the same or similar in basic encounter groups, open encounter groups, and marathon encounter groups? Can any particular elements be observed which would make it possible to determine


¹³ For a colorful personal trip through the entire group scene through the eyes of a perceptive journalist, see Rasa Gustaitis, Turning On (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1969).
whether an encounter has occurred in a group? If an encounter group is for encounter, is it not first necessary to try to decide what encounter is, what encounter means? In the present growth stage of attempting to formulate an experimental model of an encounter group, there seems to be a priority calling for an answer to the question, "What is encounter?"

The Central Question of This Study

For these reasons, this study will focus on the central question, "What does the term, 'encounter,' in 'encounter group' mean?"

Is it a synonym for "confrontation," as Leonard has suggested? Is it a hall of mirrors, as the cover of a recent magazine implies? Is it a generic category under which other types of small groups can be subsumed, as taken in a recent report? Or is it instead some sort of a species of small groups which can be subsumed under the general heading of T-groups, as


Irvin D. Yalom has done? Is it a convenient label which can be prefixed to any one of the current small group phenomena without any discernible meaningful content, as frequently done in ditto blurbs on university bulletin boards or in two-line ads in the collegiate and underground press?

Or is it possible to discover a distinctive meaning for "encounter" which could set encounter groups off from other groups as a separate phenomena in its own right?

The Purpose of This Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the possibility of a distinct meaning of "encounter." The evidence which will be presented will show that a distinct meaning of "encounter," which could be applied to encounter in encounter groups, can be found in the existential approach to encounter as expressed in the psychotherapy of Rollo May.

Consequently, this study will focus on the existential aspects of encounter in Rollo May.

May has been selected as the source of this study because of his unique position in the existential and encounter movement.

A prolific author, practicing psychotherapist, former training analyst at the William Alanson White Institute, May is also lionized as a lecturer. He has given addresses in Miami to the Association for Humanistic Psychology, in Big Sur and San Francisco under the auspices of the Esalen Institute, dialogued with Abraham Maslow, addressed church congregations, appeared on TV talk and discussion programs, and appeared in half a dozen films—all on the subject of various existential aspects pertaining to encounter. A close friend of the therapeutic theologian, Paul Tillich, May was much the theological therapist at New Harmony, Indiana in 1965 when he told in his moving funeral eulogy for Tillich how he had been gripped by powerful encounters with him. 18 May is a man for our times: he offers a believing presence in a fragmented world.

In the opinion of Michael Murphy, 19 president of Esalen Institute, May has been responsible more than anyone else for bringing the existential orientation and insight into psychology and psychiatry and has personally had an immense influence in broadening the domains of these fields.

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May's appeal is also due to his human qualities. A handsome man, May comes across in his public appearances as a sincere searcher for truth rather than as some omnipotent thaumaturge.

With his conservative clothes, square jaw, and dark brown eyes, he has become somewhat of an idol in many sections of the encounter group scene. No stuffed shirt, he has taken off his shoes and been led with closed eyes through the lobby of the Deauville Hotel in Miami in a trust walk. And yet when the jump with joy exercise became too much, he just hopped out of the room.

These are some of the reasons for choosing to study the existential approach to encounter in Rollo May.

Method of Procedure

In Chapter One an overview of the encounter literature will be given to determine the usage of the meaning of encounter. From this point of view a survey of the meaning of encounter as used in encounter group literature will be made. The chameleon-like and ambiguous usages of the term, encounter, in these writings reveal the need for a definite meaning of encounter as well as an underlying need for a total theory of encounter. Because of the

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interface between the existential movement and encounter, a definite meaning of encounter can more likely be found among existentialists writing from a psychological or theological point of view. Out of the existentialists considered in these two groups, Rollo May emerges as the most prolific and influential writer on an existential approach to encounter in this country. In describing the scope of this study, the boundaries for investigation will be set.

In Chapter Two the characteristics and assumption of Rollo May's existential approach to psychotherapy will be considered by way of preparing the ground for constructing the frame for encounter in May's description of the human dilemma. After situating May among other existentialists, the particular characteristics of May's existential approach to psychotherapy will be described. These are: 1) a distinct frame of reference, 2) a special methodology, 3) a clear set of assumptions, 4) an individual view, 5) and a personal way of describing the goal of his therapeutic process.

Then the six assumptions underlying May's existential approach to psychotherapy will be provided. In each individual human being May assumes: 1) the need to preserve centeredness, 2) the character of self-affirmation which calls for courage, 3) the need and potentiality for participation, 4) that consciousness of
self is the human form of awareness, 5) that awareness is the subjective side of centeredness, 6) and that anxiety, whether normal or neurotic, is the thread that runs through these assumptions.

In Chapter Three the locus of encounter will be shown to come in a definite place in May’s view of what he terms the human dilemma. The human dilemma according to his view is composed of two poles. One is marked by neurotic anxiety, emptiness, determinism, loneliness, objectivity, and transference. The other pole is marked by normal anxiety, freedom and responsible decision in an individual human being’s world of being with himself, and by participation, subjectivity, and encounter in his world of being with other persons.

Encounter occurs in the second pole of this bipolar dilemma. What May calls "the encounter" occurs particularly in the world of being with others. This is the locus of encounter in the human dilemma, as depicted by May.

In Chapter Four the elements which May observes occurring in the encounter will be presented. They are empathy, philia, eros, and agape. In May’s opinion all four elements must be present to comprise what he terms the total encounter, or simply, the encounter. If one or more elements are missing, then, in May’s
opinion, a partial encounter, or simply, an encounter, occurs. Should all four elements be missing, by inference no encounter happens.

In Chapter Five a synthesis of the main findings of this study will be made. Then these findings will be applied to drawing up an existential meaning for encounter according to May's description and an existential model for encounter groups. These will be couched in the form of hypotheses and corollaries.

Finally, some suggestions will be offered for the improvement of counselor education along the lines of May's existential approach to encounter. How could counseling theory gain from a consideration of May's views? How could an existential model for group counseling be developed? How could greater cooperation between members of the caring professions be fostered?

By way of conclusion, some modest proposals will be presented as tentative answers to these questions.

In the Appendix selected Media Mayana can be found: films and tape recordings on and by May with analyses of form and content.
CHAPTER I

AN OVERVIEW OF ENCOUNTER
GROUP LITERATURE

In this chapter an overview of encounter group literature will be made to find out how the term, encounter, is used. Since the survey will reveal a wide variety of usages and meanings ascribed to encounter by writers on encounter groups, a need for a definite meaning of and theory for encounter is indicated. Because of the relationship which will be demonstrated between encounter and the existential movement, the existential movement would seem to be a likely place to look for a distinct meaning of encounter in an over-all framework. And because of Rollo May's enormous influence in the existential movement in this country, a study of the existential approach to encounter in May's works would probably yield more results than in any other single author.

The Usage of Encounter in Encounter Group Literature

A survey of the literature on encounter groups reveals confusing usages of the term, encounter.
The Chameleon-Like Use of Encounter

One tendency in encounter group literature is to blur the lines of distinction between encounter groups, T-groups, sensitivity groups, and growth groups, so that encounter, like a chameleon, changes meaning when its context changes. This is the way Yalom uses encounter.

"Encounter" groups go by many names: sensitivity training groups, T-groups, human awareness groups, human relations groups, human enrichment groups, Synanon games, marathon groups, personal growth groups, sensory awareness groups, etc. Of these aliases, "T-group" is perhaps the best known and I have used this term for the entire genre throughout this book. "T" stands for "training" as in "human relations training group" or "interpersonal sensitivity training group."21

Here he is using T-groups as a quasi-genus somehow including encounter groups. According to him, encounter groups differ from T-groups because they lack trained leaders and institutional backing. Is this an accurate observation that would apply, for instance, to encounter groups facilitated by Carl Rogers?

This way of distinguishing between the various sorts of small groups becomes confusing in the American Psychiatric Association's Task Force Report.22 This report, prepared by seven recognized


authorities in the small group field with Yalom as chairman, changes the meaning of encounter by changing its context. In this report, the term, "encounter group," is used as a quasi-genus to include all other small group phenomena, with an awareness that this may lead to confusion.

In this report we shall, for stylistic convenience, refer to all the new groups as encounter groups. No doubt we court semantic confusion by attempting to cluster a wide array of group approaches under a single rubric, for there has been such a spate of new techniques that no one term can characterize the field. Some examples of these approaches are: T-groups, sensory awareness groups, marathon groups, truth labs, psychological Karate groups, human relation groups, personal growth groups, psychodrama groups, human potential groups, etc. Too much flux in the field is present, however, and too little systematic information is available to determine whether each of these types represents a discrete technology. 23

The committee's observations are well founded. There is indeed a need to have one over-arching term which would include all small group phenomena. And the flux in this burgeoning field does compound the difficulty of choosing one.

But when "encounter group" is used as a genus in one study and as a species in another, the term, "encounter," itself becomes a chameleon whose meaning derives solely from the context in which it is placed. Thus, "encounter" takes on a generic meaning in one

23 Ibid., pp. 3-4.
setting and a specific meaning in another. This seems to be a case of Yalom versus Yalom. Does the meaning of encounter merely derive from the position it is given in some phyllogenetic paradigm?

The Ambiguous Use of Encounter

Another tendency in encounter group literature is to treat the term, "encounter," ambiguously. Ambiguous usages of encounter abound in the rash of multilith materials, printed on rainbow-hued paper. Examples of this ambiguity are found in Lee, 24 Egeberg, 25 Blank, 26 Forer, 27 Sapunar, 28 Schmitt, 29 and Marsh. 30

---


Slipshod semantics with similar ambiguity are blatant among
the evangelical type of encounter purveyor, as described by Robert
McEniry. 31

Doctoral dissertations since 1969, the first year in which
"encounter" appears in the titles of investigations in small group
research, reveal ambiguity in the usage of encounter. Betty
Meador, 32 who designed an analysis of process in a basic encounter
group using twenty two-minute segments edited out of fifteen hours
of film covering the whole life of one encounter group, describes an
encounter group in terms of the number of participants and the dur-
ation of the group. Gordon E. Hershberger, 33 uses "encounter"
as synonymous for "relationship." James L. Montgomery, 34 and

31 Robert McEniry, "Thinking about Taking Part in an Encounter

32 Betty Meador, "An Analysis of Process Movement in a Basic
Encounter Group" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, United States

33 Gordon E. Hershberger, "Interpersonal Communication and
Encounter between the Assistant Principal and Each of His Role
Senders" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, University of Maryland,
1970).

34 James L. Montgomery, "The Effects of Awareness Training
in a Modified Encounter Group on Selected Aspects of Personality
with Kindergarten Children" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation,
University of Miami, 1970).
Sydney Rudman\textsuperscript{35} use the term "encounter" to refer indiscriminately to any interaction in small groups. Steven R. Goldstein\textsuperscript{36} and Elizabeth A. Egelhoff\textsuperscript{37} report original hypotheses invalidated by their findings. This seems to stem in part from ambiguity in the meaning of encounter. Claude Allais,\textsuperscript{38} Betty Goldiamond,\textsuperscript{39} and Jacob Lomranz\textsuperscript{40} add to the ambiguity by assigning meanings to encounter groups which do not clearly differentiate them from other small groups.


\textsuperscript{40}Jacob Lomranz, "Variants in Group Sensitivity Training and Encounter" (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Duke University, 1971).
The Need for A Definite Meaning of Encounter

The impact of this ambiguity is reflected in the journals.

William Eddy and Bernard Lubin are aware of the need to clarify the meaning of encounter groups.

The term encounter group has been used generically by some writers to refer to any group, regardless of methodology or objectives, that emphasizes intensive interaction, honest communication, and self-revelation. In this sense, all the groups described in this article can be called encounter groups. To use the term in this way, however, is to invite considerable conceptual confusion at a time when clarity is urgently needed. Part of the problem arises from the dearth of definitions about encounter groups. The literature in this area is mainly of an anecdotal nature; there has been no systematic attempt to specify methods, processes, or outcomes. 41

The Underlying Need for a Theory of Encounter

Recent books on encounter groups--five of which were published during 1969-1970--confirm the need for a distinct definition of what an encounter group is.

Recognizing this need, Arthur Burton points out a further need

of an elaboration of a theory of encounter.

The principal deficiency in encounter for me is that it lacks a theory. It borrows precisely from that medical model which it oppugns, and from yoga, which anticipated it for millennia. In logically ordering its working hypotheses it falls all over itself with the baubles and bangles of meditation, introspection, lowering sensory thresholds, deep breathing, orgasmic response, physical exercise, fantasy experience, touching, nudity, and other manifestations of preciousness. It competes in the marketplace with the psychiatrist, John Robert Powers, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, Dale Carnegie, Rapid reading, Rock, Alan Watts, and pot, for liberation. 42

In Burton's opinion the reason for this is that "encounter groups have been so busy being expressive that they have had little time to look to their theories. But history demonstrates that a technique without a rationale eventually falls into disuse. And, interestingly enough, those in the vanguard of the encounter movement, the leaders and group facilitators themselves, have been notoriously unresponsive to the self-demand for theoretical clarification." 43

Bruce Baldwin observes that "Arthur Burton believes that reluctance among professionals to engage in critical examination of encounter group theory and practice has contributed to many of the


43Ibid., p. ix.
fallacies and misconceptions currently associated with these
groups. 44

While Gerard Egan brings a wealth of literature to bear upon
the rich flavor of his own group experiences, as Fred Massarik 45
has pointed out, his efforts to bring some order into the fluidity of
small-group classification by setting up "Laboratory Training" as
a genus "of which sensitivity training is a species, 46 leave some­
thing to be desired in bringing some meaningful content into
"encounter groups."

This book is about a small-group experience that
has many names—-a basic encounter group, a
laboratory in interpersonal relations, sensitivity
training, a basic human-relations laboratory, or
an interpersonal-growth-oriented T-group.
Whatever the name, all such experiences, to­
gether with group psychotherapy and group counsel­
ing, have this in common: the participants come
together, most often under the "direction" of some
kind of leader or facilitator, in order to grow in
interpersonal effectiveness through the group ex­
perience. 47

44 Bruce A. Baldwin, review of Encounter: The Theory and
Practice of Encounter Groups, edited by Arthur Burton, in

45 Fred Massarik, "The Biblioscene," review of Encounter, by
Gerard Egan, in The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, VII
(March/April, 1971), 254-259.

46 Gerard Egan, Encounter: Group Processes for Interpersonal
Growth (Belmont, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co., 1970),
p. 4.

47 Ibid., p. i.
To Egan, a basic encounter group is but one of five synonyms for any small group meeting for the purpose of developing interpersonal effectiveness. In this classification, then, the only difference between encounter groups and other small groups is purely a verbal one. As far as Egan is concerned, an encounter group does not have any distinctive meaning which would differentiate it from any other small group.

In moving fashion Mann presents what appears to be a verbatim account (tape-recorded? transcribed from memory? reconstructed?) of the interaction during an encounter group from a Friday evening to a Sunday afternoon. He provides a peerless presentation of the intense feelings of joy and hatred, of agony and ecstasy, of guilt and acceptance which often flow into an encounter group. He is graphic in depicting the starts and stops, the turns and lurches between the participants which bring these feelings forth.

But when he tries to rise to a theoretical level, he resorts to the obvious. "An encounter requires at least two elements: that which encounters and that which is encountered." Or he turns to a common-place of group interaction. "Any encounter involves a

definite risk, since it involves contact with something that we
cannot control."^49

But is the element of risk a differentiating characteristic which
distinguishes an encounter group from other small groups? On the
contrary, risk is a common characteristic usually operative in all
small groups. The need for a meaning of encounter which will dis-
tinguish encounter groups from other small groups becomes more
evident.

In the light of the present state of ambiguity about the meaning
of encounter groups, a study to determine whether a distinctive
meaning for "encounter groups" could be articulated in some
theoretical framework would seem to meet a definite need of
students and practitioneers of encounter groups.

How can this be done?

Previous studies have approached the problem largely from the
point of view of the group: group process or group interaction. 50

\(^{49}\)Ibid., p. viii.

\(^{50}\)For a bibliography of the literature on this approach, see
*The Story of Sensitivity Training and the Encounter Movement*
The Central Problem of This Study

This study, however, intends to take a new tack by approaching encounter groups from the point of view of "encounter" rather than from the point of view of group process or group interaction.

The problem posed for this study is: can some theoretical framework be found within which a distinctive meaning for encounter can be articulated?

Some Tentative Avenues of Solution

There are several avenues of solution. A distinctive meaning of encounter might be done by way of definition, by way of etymology, by way of historical development, or by way of context.

By Way of Definition

No definitions are given for "encounter" or "encounter group" in Drever, Goldenson, other recent dictionaries, or encyclopedias of psychology. Lexicographers have not yet caught up with the swiftly growing encounter group movement.


Only three other definitions of encounter groups can be found. Rogers' way of differentiating one small group experience from another is by way of distinctive emphases. He has combined the distinctive emphases of encounter groups in this descriptive definition, widely quoted in brochures advertising institutes in basic encounter groups.

It usually consists of ten to fifteen persons and a facilitator or leader. It is relatively unstructured, providing a climate of maximum freedom for personal expression, exploration of feelings, and interpersonal communication. Emphasis is upon the interactions among the group members, in an atmosphere which encourages each to drop his defenses and facades and thus enables him to relate directly and openly to other members of the group—the basic encounter. Individuals come to know themselves and each other more fully than is possible in the usual social or working relationship; the climate of openness, risk-taking, and honesty generates trust, which enables the person to recognize and change self-defeating attitudes, test out and adopt more innovative and constructive behaviors, and subsequently to relate more adequately and effectively to others in his every day life situation.

53 Carl R. Rogers, "The La Jolla Program," Center for Studies of the Person, La Jolla, California; "Loyola Center, Growth '71," Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts; "The Piedmont Summer Program," Salem College, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; "People in Groups--A Workshop in Interpersonal Communication," Creighton Prep, Omaha, Nebraska; "The Rocky Mountain Program," Rocky Mountain Center for the Study of the Person, Boulder, Colorado. For Rogers' own group classification with his descriptive formulations of each put forth in a sketchy, tentative way, see Rogers on Encounter Groups, pp. 4-5.
Eddy and Lubin have offered this definition.

Encounter groups, as we define the term, refer to intensive small groups in which the emphasis is upon personal growth through expanding awareness, exploration of intrapsychic as well as interpersonal issues, and release of dysfunctional inhibitions. 54

Erving Goffman observes that the term, encounter, has a wide range of everyday meaning. "Sometimes it is used to refer to face-to-face meetings with another that were unexpected or in which trouble occurred; sometimes it refers to meeting another at a social occasion, the frequency of comings-together during the occasion not being the issue." 55

He adopts the following as his definition of encounter.

I limit myself to one type of social arrangement that occurs when persons are in one another's immediate physical presence, to be called here an encounter or a focused gathering. For the participants, this involves: a single visual and cognitive focus of attention; a mutual and preferential openness to verbal communication; a heightened mutual relevance of acts; an eye-to-eye ecological huddle that maximizes each participant's opportunity to perceive the other participants' monitoring of him. 56


56 Ibid., pp. 17-18.
Some convergence appears in the descriptions of encounter groups by Rogers and Goffman. Both include the ingredients of openness, communication (verbal and/or interpersonal), and the giving and validating of feedback. Beyond this overlap each includes a cluster of ingredients distinctively his own. But these ingredients, be they common or individual, seem to be distinctive elements of group process itself. They are found in varying degrees in all applications of group interaction. They would fit T-groups and sensitivity groups as well as counseling groups and therapy groups equally well. But they do not seem to include ingredients which are uniquely present in encounter groups. They do not seem to provide any distinctive aspect which would mark one group as encounter and set it off or differentiate it from other small groups. This may explain the tendency to consider group labels as interchangeable.

On the other hand, the definition of Eddy and Lubin, while understandable with adequate interpretation, is formulated at a level of global abstraction far above the concrete level in which Rogers and Goffman have formulated theirs.

So, comparing definitions as a way to establish a distinctive meaning and theory of encounter is probably premature.
By Way of Etymology

An etymological approach certainly brings some interesting light to bear upon encounter. Jacob Moreno, better known as the father of psychodrama, develops the meaning of encounter from its German original, *Begegnung*.

*Begegnung* is a German word, difficult to translate, like *Gestalt* (configuration), *Einfühlung* (empathy) and *Stegreif* (spontaneity). It has attained many connotations which no single Anglo-Saxon word conveys; several English words have to be used to express its atmosphere. It means meeting, contact of bodies, confronting each other, facing each other, countering and battling, seeing and perceiving, touching and entering into each other, sharing and loving, communicating with each other in a primary, intuitive manner by speech or gesture, by kiss and embrace, becoming one--*una cum uno*. The word *Begegnung* contains the root for the word *gegen*, which means "against." It thus encompasses not only loving, but also hostile and threatening relationships. Encounter, which derives from the French *encontre*, is the nearest translation of *Begegnung*.

The German *zwischenmenschlich* and the English 'interpersonal' or 'interactional' are anemic notions compared to the living center (sic) or encounter. *Begegnung* conveys that two or more persons meet not only to face one another, but to live and experience one another--as actors, each in his own right. It is not only an emotional rapport, like the professional meeting of a physician or therapist and patient or, an intellectual rapport, like teacher and student, or a scientific rapport, like a participant observer with his subject. It is a meeting on the most intensive level of communication. The participants are not put there by any external authority; they are there because they want to be--representing the supreme authority of the self-chosen path.
The persons are there in space; they may meet for the first time, with all their strengths and weaknesses—human actors seething with spontaneity and zest. It is not Einfühlung; it is zweifühlung—togetherness, sharing life. It is an intuitive reversal of roles, a realization of the self through the other; it is identity, the rare, unforgotten experience of total reciprocity. The encounter is extemporaneous, unstructured, unplanned, unrehearsed—it occurs on the spur of the moment. It is 'in the moment' and 'in the here,' 'in the now.' It can be thought of as the preamble, the universal frame of all forms of structured meeting, the common matrix of all the psychotherapies, from the total subordination of the patient (as in the hypnotic situation) to the superiority and autonomy of the protagonist (as in psychodrama).

Summing up, Begegnung is the sum total of interaction, a meeting of two or more persons, not in the dead past or imagined future, but in the here and now, hic et nunc, in the fullness of time—the real concrete and complete situation for experience; it involves physical and psychic contact. It is the convergence of emotional, social and cosmic factors which occur in all age groups, but particularly in adolescence (begegnung syndrome); it is the experience of identity and total reciprocity; but above all, psychodrama is the essence of the encounter. 57

Moreno's rococo etymology of encounter provides a wealth of detail for a study of encounter. Aspects of encounter, such as the meeting and presence observed by Goffman and the openness and

communication included by both Rogers and Goffman are confirmed. But an etymological approach to encounter is a sign of being on the right road rather than the road itself. Once the etymology of encounter is established, this study must continue further.

By Way of Historical Development

An approach to the meaning of encounter by way of historical development would start with Moreno, too. Available evidence indicates that the first psychological definition of "encounter" was formulated in 1914 by Moreno in the first of a series of articles entitled Einladung zu einer Begegnung (Invitation to an Encounter).

Moreno there described "encounter" as

A meeting of two: eye to eye, face to face. And when you are near I will tear your eyes out and place them instead of mine, and you will tear my eyes out and will place them instead of yours, then I will look at you with your eyes and you will look at me with mine. 58

The meaning of the term, encounter, could probably then be traced through the writings of other European existential psychotherapists such as Ludwig Binswanger, 59 Eugene Minkowski

58 Jacob L. Moreno, Einladung zu einer Begegnung (Vienna: Anzengruber Verlag, 1914).

and Erwin Straus, Paul Tournier, and Hans Trueb. While shedding light upon the meaning of encounter, this would shed little light on encounter groups in America.

But Moreno, in commenting upon his etymological description of encounter, makes a remark which has heuristic value. In reflecting on the series of articles entitled, "Invitation to an Encounter," which appeared in Daimon side by side with Martin Buber's articles, Moreno says of this series, "It was the forerunner of Austrian existentialism." Paul Johnson, a representative of the American School of Pastoral Counseling which has hewed out a working relationship between theology and psychotherapy, rightly observes that the term, encounter, has become central in the existential movement.


By Way of the Existential Movement

This is the avenue of approach which this study will take: to examine the meaning and theory of encounter as expressed in the existential movement.

To seek a distinct meaning and theory of encounter somewhere in the existential movement receives confirmation both from Rogers and Burton.

Rogers detects certain existential implications in encounter groups.

The encounter group has a clearly existential implication in its increasing tendency to emphasize the here and now of human feelings and of living one's life. This existential quality reflects much of the current development in our philosophical thinking and actual living. It illuminates the philosophical stance of Maslow and May, and of some of their illustrious forerunners: Kierkegaard and Buber. 65

After a hirsute comparison of encounter groups with the stage production Hair, Rogers adds

I do not feel competent to spell this out fully, but it is apparent that in a world which is living by an increasingly existential philosophy the encounter group will have much to contribute. 66

65 Rogers, Rogers on Encounter Groups, pp. 166-167.

66 Ibid., p. 167.
Rogers' view that the encounter group has a clearly existential implication and that its existential quality reflects much of the current development in our philosophical thinking would seem to confirm the fundamental assumptions of the existential approach of this study.

Burton strengthens this confirmation. He recognizes an interface between the meaning of encounter and the existential movement. "Encounter represents existentialism—the philosophy of the human condition—carried into the corpus of society."  

**Interface between the Existential Movement and Encounter**

Once the determination has been made to examine encounter in existential terms, many routes branch off of this avenue. Since the epoch-making article of Minkowski in 1923 which gave psychotherapy a decisive turn from its previous preoccupation with the past and faced it into the future, a wide array of psychotherapists have begun to practice this existential approach. Their chief concern is with what is existing (in the present) as over against what

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used to exist (in the past). This orientation has resulted in a re-articulation of the therapeutic process. Many who take this existential view consider encounter as a part of this process. Some have given a central place to encounter.

Encounter and Existential Psychology

Some European existentialists have insisted on the importance of existential encounter as an integral part both of the therapeutic relationship in particular and of human relationships in general. The significance of their views first caught on in this country as a result of popularized articles written for mass audiences in national magazines. But owing to cultural lag, this current did not immediately start flowing into the mainstream of serious psychological investigation. In September, 1959, the confluence occurred when the first Symposium on Existential Psychology was presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association in Cincinnati. Prominent among the American existential psychologists who readily adopted an existential approach to encounter as a much needed corrective measure to the impersonal and detached treatment of the patient as an object are James Bugental,

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For the best introduction, see Rollo May, Man's Search for Himself (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1953).


Encounter and Existential Theology

Other existentialists have written about encounter in the framework of an existential view of theology. Among the more influential have been Paul Tillich, Gabriel Marcel, and Martin Buber.


Other existentialists, like Sartre, have written from an atheistic point of view.

Methodology of This Study

How shall this study proceed through this wealth of material? To turn to American existentialists, who have already struggled with the prickly problem of translating European existentialists and who are familiar with the encounter group movement, seems only logical.

But, rather than disengage the thread of encounter from some or all American existentialists and compare the results—a worthwhile venture, indeed, but one liable to risk losing the dimension of depth—this study proposes as its procedural method to select a single American existentialist and to investigate the multifold aspects of encounter considered. Such a methodology seems more likely to provide a more inclusive vista of the meaning and theory of encounter.

An American existentialist writing from a psychological point of view will be more suitable to the purpose of this study than one writing from a theological point of view. The former are primarily concerned with the human-human encounter; the latter, with the human-divine encounter.
In order to provide as wide a range of material as possible, this study will focus on the American existential psychologist who has been more prolific and more influential than his colleagues.

A Study of the Existential Approach to Encounter in Rollo May

Rationale

No existential psychologist in this country comes closer to filling these requirements than Rollo May. Although being dubbed Mr. Existentialist is not a groundless hyperbole, May does hold an eminence among existentialists accurately reflected in this statement of David Dempsey. "For thousands of readers, disillusioned with conventional therapies, and unwilling to go all the way with encounter groups, May's approach seems to be just the one." 81

This is due, not only to his ability to respond to the psychological needs of the nation in an existential way, but to his unusually high level of productivity as well as to his widespread


82 Over the last thirty years, May has produced 10 books, over 50 articles, appeared in three films, and had six addresses commercially distributed on phonotapes.
Another reason for focusing this study upon the existential approach to encounter in Rollo May is that it has not been done by anyone. Only Vincent Das and Guybert Cahoon have undertaken studies which have some bearing on May's work. But their work has only touched the periphery of May's writing on existential encounter.

There appears to be a close affinity between the assumptions of existential philosophy and some self-psychologists, as this dissertation shows. So other combinations of existential philosophers and psychologists would appear to be potentially valuable approaches. Very closely related is the movement for an existential psychology, represented today by such thinkers asBinswanger and Rollo May, who will undoubtedly collect therapeutic and research information that could be of inestimable value.

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83 One measure of influence is frequency of citation in Science Citation Index (Philadelphia: Institute for Scientific Information, 1961, 1964-1971). For the past eight successive years, May and his works have been cited an average of 43 times per year. Viktor Frankl has been cited an average of 27 times per year during the same period, the second highest frequency rate to May.


86 Ibid., p. 420.
This study of the existential approach to encounter in Rollo May is being made with this hope. May it provide a stimulus to overcome what Max Pages has called "the atrophy of theoretical thinking" which he observed in Bethel and which also seems applicable to encounter groups.

For instance, I do not see any significant theory about groups developed in the United States since that of Lewin. The kind of "theorizing" I see and read here is mainly operational. It tells us what to do and what to expect when we do certain things. It does not say what happens in between, and why. Often the theory consists of a set of hastily produced, ill-defined concepts operating in a very limited field, with no attempt at establishing coherence with the rest of the field.

The Scope of This Study

The problematic of this study will be to investigate May's existential approach to encounter by exploring the characteristic marks and underlying assumptions of his psychotherapy in Chapter Two, by depicting the human dilemma of which the therapeutic process is a microcosm and by showing where May localizes encounter in it in Chapter Three, by assembling in Chapter Four May's treatment of the four elements which need to be present for


the total encounter, and finally, after synthesizing the findings of this study, by formulating hypotheses in Chapter Five for an existential meaning of encounter and for an existential model of encounter groups.

Other aspects of May's writings, which bear upon encounter only indirectly, fall beyond the boundaries of this study.
CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF ROLLO MAY'S EXISTENTIAL APPROACH TO PSYCHOTHERAPY

Two major conclusions have emerged from the overview of the literature on encounter groups in Chapter One. The first conclusion was that a distinctive meaning for encounter, which would have a locus, a specific content, and a particular function in some over-all structure, could probably be found only in the context of existential writings. The second conclusion was that Rollo May, being the most prolific and influential existential writer in this country for the past ten years, is the most likely existential writer to provide such a framework into which a distinctive meaning for encounter with locus, content, and function would fit.

Starting from these conclusions as the point of departure, this chapter will deal with the prerequisites for understanding May's existential approach to psychotherapy. This will provide the footing upon which May constructs his view of the human dilemma, which will be considered in Chapter Two. Only in the setting of the
human dilemma does the place and meaning which May gives to
encounter become understandable.

First, this chapter will situate May in the current of existential
writers. Second, five distinctive characteristics of May's existential
approach to psychotherapy, the basis both for understanding the
human being in his world and of the encounter for which he is striv-
ing, will be considered. Third, the six assumptions underlying this
existential approach will be presented.

The content of this chapter explains the meaning of the phrase,
existential approach, in the title of this study.

May's Position Among Existentialists

At the very outset, it will be helpful to situate May in the
current of existential writers. Although May does philosophize, he
does not belong to the stream of philosophical existentialists
stemming from Soren Kierkegaard, the melancholy Dane.
Kierkegaard saw himself as another Socrates helping to deliver a
new child--the philosophy of existence--from the classic philoso-
phies of essence by his maieutic method; May sees himself as

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89 For the work which has profoundly influenced May, see
Soren A. Kierkegaard, The Concept of Dread, trans. with introduc-
tion and notes by Walter Lowrie (2nd ed.; Princeton: Princeton
University Press, 1957); for a wider view, see Either/Or, A
Fragment of Life, trans. by David F. Swenson and Lillian M.
working out the healing aspects of a therapeutic process as grounded in a philosophy of existence. In this way May differs from studies of existential philosophy which have been done by Alasdair MacIntyre, James Collins, John Wild, Harold Blackham, Frederick Heinemann, and Kurt Reinhardt. Although he frequently cites them, he does not belong to the literary existentialists exemplified by

90 For an excellent introduction to the subject, see Alasdair MacIntyre, "Existentialism," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, III, 147-154.


Albert Camus, and Franz Kafka. Although he thelogizes, May does not belong with existential theologians such as Tillich, who has influenced him so profoundly, or with Emil Brunner and Fred Berthold of the school of encounter theology.


100 For a critique of Brunner’s presentation of divine-human encounter, see Fred Berthold, Jr., "Objectivity in Personal Encounter," *Journal of Religion*, LV (January, 1963), 39-47.
Rather, May is in the mainstream of psychological existentialists, deriving from Binswanger\(^{101}\) and Minkowski,\(^{102}\) because he is primarily concerned with an existential approach to psychotherapy.\(^{103}\)

Less easy to describe is May's relation to Viktor Frankl,\(^{104}\) another eminent existential psychologist. In essence, logos is the fulcrum for Frankl's existential psychotherapy; encounter, the fulcrum for May's. Because Frankl stresses the therapeutic value


\(^{103}\) For a concise overview, see Clemens E. Benda, "The Significance of Existential Thinking for Psychiatry and Psychotherapy," *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry*, II (February, 1962), 121-123.

of discovering meaning in existence—logotherapy, he is philosophically more heavily laden than May. But because of May's position on the therapeutic function of intentionality—the choice of realistically attainable goals from which meaning is derived, there is only a difference of degree of emphasis between May and Frankl.

**Characteristics of May's Existential Approach**

By approach to psychotherapy May means an attitude or vantage point for looking at psychotherapy. An examination of his existential approach to psychotherapy reveals five characteristics: 1) an existential frame of reference as opposed to an essential one; 2) a phenomenological methodology as opposed to an abstract one; 3) an orientation toward the present and future as opposed to the past; 4) a consideration of his views as an approach rather than as a school or group; 5) a distinctive formulation of the goal of the therapeutic process.

**Frame of Reference: Existential vs. Essential**

The frame of reference within which May constructs his views of psychotherapy is "existential." By "existential" May means that he is accepting this existing patient who is now sitting in his consultation room with him as he is existing in his own world. Within this frame May includes all the uniquely individuating aspects which go to make up both this particular person and the particular world of
other significant persons, his individual career and responsibilities.

The term "existence," coming from the root existere, means literally to stand out, to emerge. This accurately indicates what these cultural representatives sought, whether in art or philosophy or psychology—namely, to portray the human being not as a collection of static substances or mechanisms or patterns but rather as emerging and becoming, that is to say, as existing.
May's view of a human being as he is actually existing in his own world, with all the uniquely individuating qualities which make him this distinct person, is the first characteristic which makes his approach to psychotherapy existential.

May's existential position is of enormous import, since it is opposed to an essentialistic view of man. In an essentialistic view, a human being is considered only as an essence without any attention being paid to his individuation as a particular person. His "thisness" is omitted. Man becomes reduced to an idea.

This reduction of man into a mental concept has been the outcome of formulating human behavior into rigorously defined laws, scientific principles of action, norms of logical expectations, often expressed in mathematical formulae. When the sum total of cognitive formulations are constructed into sets of hypotheses and theories, the nadir of essentialism is reached. Somewhere along the way of this intellectualization, however, the patient who began as an individual existing human being, has become transformed into statistical data programmed in a computer. So he disintegrated into fragments. He has ceased to exist as a person. He has been objectified--made into an object--to be observed, studied, and conceptualized into a highly complex ideational pattern whose only existence is within the mind of the psychotherapist.
According to Jan Ehrenwald May's existential approach to psychotherapy has helped show that an essentialistic approach is actually not therapeutic. Theory is not therapy.

Indeed, the modern existentialistic school of psychotherapy holds that psychotherapy is not, and should not, as a matter of principle, aspire to be anything like scientific. Ludwig Binswanger, Rollo May, and Medard Boss have raised the point in their contributions. The existentialist rejects Freud's "reductive causalism and psychic determinism." He repudiates the concept of man as an object of investigation; he denounces the attitude of the detached clinical observer as dehumanized and antitherapeutic. 106

May helps reintroduce the human-being-existing-in-his-world as the basic unit of study within his frame of reference. His reason for taking an existential stand in psychotherapy as opposed to an essentialistic one comes from his function as a psychotherapist striving to relieve his patients of the pain they are suffering. Healing, he finds, does not come from theories or laws.

This, of course, indicates, we may remark parenthetically, why those of us interested in psychotherapy are more apt to be concerned with the existential approach than those of our colleagues involved in laboratory research or the construction of theory, for we have, of necessity, taken our stand with immediate human beings who are suffering, struggling, experiencing conflicts in a multitude of protean forms. This "immediate experiencing" is our milieu, and it gives us the reason as well as the data for our research.

We have to be genuinely realistic and "hard-headed" in the respect that we deal with patients whose anxiety and sufferings will not be healed by theories, no matter how brilliant, or by abstract laws, no matter how comprehensive. 107.

Methodology: Phenomenological vs. Abstract

In order to assist in the healing of this "existential," or existing patient before him, May adopts a methodology suited to keep the existing human being in the picture. This is the phenomenological method adopted from the pure phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, 108 developed by his disciple, Martin Heidegger, 109 applied to psychotherapy by Binswanger, 110 and carried over into May's work.

May readily acknowledges that his methodology in existential


108For one of the few summaries in English, see Edmund Husserl, "Phenomenology," Encyclopedia Britannica, 1929, XVII, 699-702. This article was retained until 1956, when the English translation by C. V. Salmon was deemed an overcondensation of the authentic text.


110For the relationship of existential analysis to the phenomenological method, see Ludwig Binswanger, "On the Relationship between Husserl's Phenomenology and Psychological Insight," Philosophy and Phenomenological Research, II (December, 1941), 199-210.
analysis is applied phenomenology, a far cry from the pure
Husserlian type. But he certainly does focus on consciousness.

I do not believe we are ready yet to build a bridge be­
tween phenomenology and psychotherapy. There exist
beginnings of this bridge: as we have known, and heard
again today, there is the exceedingly important work of
Straus and other phenomenological psychiatrists like
Minkowski and Binswanger, whose work I believe will
be increasingly more important for psychotherapy in
the future, and psychologists like Buysendijk and
Merleau-Ponty. But as Binswanger himself has been
the first to say, the connection between phenomenology
and psychotherapy is at present only indirect. There
are required several steps between pure phenomenology
on one hand and psychology and psychiatry on the other
hand; this is given by our existential problem rather
than by our lack of ability to formulate. 111

In May's opinion, the advantage of this applied phenomenology
is the endeavor to take human phenomena as given, clearing the mind
of all theoretical presuppositions, and experiencing the phenomena of
human behavior with an open mind rather than through some pre­
fabricated theoretical filter. "The more absolutely and completely
you formulate the forces or drives, the more you are talking about
abstractions and not the existing, living human being," May asserts. 112

Abstractions, according to May, do not heal this existing

111 Rollo May, "On the Phenomenological Bases of Psycho­
therapy," Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry, IV
(February, 1964), 22.

112 May, Existential Psychology, p. 18.
patient, because he is not an abstraction, but a concrete, single individual with all of the unique distinctions his own life have produced. May concludes that abstract discussion is just not therapeutic. Consequently, the second characteristic of May's approach is a phenomenological methodology which includes all individuating aspects of a human being rather than a methodology which abstracts from them. In the center of these aspects is consciousness.

Orientation: Present vs. Past

An orientation toward the present is the third characteristic of May's existential approach to psychotherapy. This stands out in sharp relief when contrasted with the orientation of Sigmund Freud. Freud, like a Heinrich Schliemann excavating for the buried city of Homeric Troy, had an archeological interest in uncovering past causes of present behaviors buried in the inner space of the patient's unconscious through the process of free association chiefly with dream material.


114 For a fuller treatment of the interrelationship between a purely existential approach and a phenomenological approach as well as a combination from an historical point of view, see William A. Luijpen and Henry J. Koren, A First Introduction to Existential Phenomenology (Pittsburgh, Penn.: Duquesne University Press, 1969), pp. 18-21.
But May, like a Wernher von Braun mobilizing new power sources to move man into outer space, is fascinated with ways of assisting a human being gather new strength to move beyond constricted behaviors and widen the horizons of his world in the future. Freud started in the present with his patient and worked backward; May starts in the present with his patient and works forward.

Thus, May places himself as really present with the other existing human being who is in his presence. In this way May avoids becoming a somewhat remote, clinically distant, and uninvolved observer.

This is the reason Binswanger called existential analysis Dasein analysis. By the German word Dasein--to be there--being there--he meant, "There he is; there is the existing patient." Out there: not in the therapist's mind.

Views: Approach vs. School

The fourth characteristic of May's existential approach to psychotherapy is to insist that it is only an approach, an attitude, a way of viewing a human being existing in his world and the process of psychotherapy. To look to May for a system or a set of therapeutic techniques serving as a school to learn the process of psychotherapy is to mistake his purpose.
In psychology and psychiatry, the term [existential] demarcates an attitude, an approach to human beings, rather than a special school or group. It is doubtful whether it makes any sense to speak of "an existential psychologist or psychotherapist" in contradistinction to other schools; it is not a system of therapy but an attitude toward therapy, not a set of new techniques but a concern with the understanding of the structure of the human being and his experience that must underlie all techniques. 115

Goal of the Therapeutic Process

The purpose of this existential way of viewing a human being existing in his world as expressed in psychotherapy is to unite what had become separated, to integrate what is divided, to reintegrate and put back together what had become fragmented. To May, this is healing: an integrated person comes to exist where an object had existed before.

Then the function of the systems of "therapy" (as we have noted in Stoicism and Epicureanism) is to help the person back to some unity, to help him overcome some unfavorable pattern, to give him re-education and reintegration, in contrast to education and integration. 116


To reintegrate the parts of a human being's world which have become compartmentalized is the goal May sets for his existential approach to the psychotherapeutic process. In doing so, he is taking a position opposed to the goal of satisfactory life adjustment, taken in the sense that one must, as a cog in a machine, fit into a culture managed in a calculated, technical way. May admits adjustment can be achieved with technical gimmicks. And when the patient's confined world has been made identical with the culture, he has been relieved of his anxiety symptoms.

But the patient has gained relief of anxiety at the price of giving up his potential for new behaviors--his being--which lay at the root of his anxiety. Because of his conviction that adjustment therapy involves a betrayal of the patient's very being, May also puts the goal of therapy in an existential way.

The existential therapists, rather, hold that the goal of therapy is that the patient fulfill his Dasein, that he experience his existence as real, and experience it fully, which includes experiencing his potentialities and being able to act on the basis of them.\textsuperscript{117}

In May's opinion, the adjusted patient is not "cured." He has surrendered his Dasein, his being, his being himself, his own existence.

The Avoidance of Disastrous Dichotomies

May's view of the aim of psychotherapy as a way to help a human being achieve some reintegration in his life stands out distinctly in comparison with other formulations of psychotherapeutic goals. Others may aim at mental health, rational living, insight into behavioral causality, the solution of personality problems, emotional maturity, intrapsychic adjustment, or even visceral expression. But not May.

Such psychotherapeutic objectives, in May's opinion, presuppose the very split that needs to be healed, that is to say, to be put back together. A psychotherapy aiming at health presupposes a health-sickness dichotomy. One directed toward curing mental processes assumes a mental-physical split. One having an emotional or affective goal presupposes a rational-emotional or cognitive-affective cleavage. One pointing at visceral expression supposes a head-heart division. One working for intrapsychic adjustment is functioning from a soul-body premise that takes soul or psyche as one thing and body or some as another thing.

To May, all such formulations of psychotherapeutic teleology reduce a human being to an abstraction and then to a thing. The outcome of psychotherapy functioning toward a goal formulated in terms of some dichotomy is reification—turning a person into a
thing.

In emphatic contrast, May's expression of the psychotherapeutic aim endeavors to get beneath the dichotomies of health-sickness, mental-physical, problem-solution, rational-emotional or cognitive-affective, body-mind, body-soul psychic-somatic, subject-object, head-heart.

Because dichotomies result in the destruction of a human being as a person, May concludes that a dichotomy is a cancer. "What is required is an approach to world which undercuts the 'cancer,' namely, the traditional subject-object dichotomy."\(^{118}\)

This intense attack on dichotomies is a mark of an existentialist. Jacob Needleman has observed the intensity of their opposition to the splitting up of reality into dichotomies which they trace back to Descartes.

This famous Cartesian sundering of the world into two isolated regions, res cogitans (the thinking substance, the world of consciousness, purpose, telos, will, quality) and res extensa (the world of pure extended matter, undifferentiated, quantitative), has been attacked by phenomenologists and existentialists as the most disastrous event in four centuries of Western thought.\(^{119}\)

\(^{118}\)May, Existence, p. 56.

The Importance of Well-Defined Assumptions

In order to maintain these characteristics which differentiate his existential approach to psychotherapy from others, May holds that the assumptions underlying them must be plainly set forth. In this he follows the lead of Binswanger who saw his assumptions as the differentiating feature between himself and Freud.

Binswanger meant that the real differences between him and Freud are not differences that are to be settled by continuous empirical research, but rather differences having to do with the assumptions and presuppositions that underlie all empirical research. Binswanger pointed out that Freud finds it impossible to conceive of the fact that all research is based upon presuppositions. 

Setting forth assumptions to psychotherapy is important to May for another reason. The psychotherapist who is aware of his assumptions is more able to avoid filtering out the material he hears from his patient in order to sort out the data into some present form. He is not listening to prove his theories. Realizing what his assumptions are, he is in a better position to keep them from exerting an undue bias upon him. He is then less likely to force his patient to lie on a "procrustean couch," as the mythological inn-keeper, Procrustes, who forced his guests, regardless of stature, to fit the single size beds of his inn.

These are the reasons for considering the assumptions which May postulates for his existential approach to psychotherapy.

**Assumptions Underlying May's Existential Approach.**

May makes six basic assumptions, which, underlying a human being existing in his world, also need to be presupposed as a substratum of his existential approach to the psychotherapeutic process. They can be enumerated as follows. 121

1. The Need to Preserve Centeredness.
2. The Need of Self-Affirmation: Courage.
3. The Need and Possibility of Participation.
4. Awareness is the Subjective Side of Centeredness.
5. Consciousness of Self is the Human Form of Awareness.
6. Anxiety.

To preserve a concrete, phenomenological flavor, May has described his assumptions in terms of a particular patient, Mrs. Hutchens. A precis of each one will indicate what he is assuming about a patient without demonstration or proof. Assumptions are given.

121 May, *Existential Psychology*, pp. 75-84.
Every Human Being Has

The Need to Preserve Centeredness

In the case of Mrs. Hutchens who had been suffering from an inability to speak and was only speaking with difficulty when she consulted him, May interprets her inability and difficulty in speaking as her way of shrinking her world in order to protect the existence of her centered-self from threat.

Every Human Being Has

The Need of Self-Affirmation: Courage

In order to regain her centeredness, Mrs. Hutchens needs self-affirmation. May adopts Tillich's definition, "Self-affirmation is the courage to be 'in spite of,' namely in spite of nonbeing."\(^{122}\) "Without courage," May concludes, "one loses being."\(^{123}\)

Every Human Being Has

The Need and Possibility of Participation

Mrs. Hutchens, May believes, feels that her relation with him involves a risk of losing her centeredness. So, she holds back rigidly, thereby blocking her own development. But she cannot


\(^{123}\) May, Existential Psychology, p. 77.
become a centered-self without participation by opening herself up to the world of another. Her neurosis—restriction of behavior—is precisely the method she uses to preserve her being.

Awareness Is

The Subjective Side of Centeredness

But she is participating with her therapist only at the level of awareness, which is shared by other forms of life than human. A cat, for example, will jump away if someone shakes a stick at him, because he is aware of the physical threat to his centeredness. But the principle of awareness is not enough for a human being. Mrs. Hutchens is only aware of being threatened.

Consciousness of Self

Is The Human Form of Awareness

But Mrs. Hutchens' awareness of being threatened is not self-consciousness. She needs to move from being simply aware of threat to becoming conscious of her-self-as-the-one-being-threatened. "The therapist must help Mrs. Hutchens transmute her awareness into self-consciousness."

This is the way May believes the objective-subjective gap is bridged: a human being subjectively

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124 Ibid., p. 81.
must become conscious of self-as-object. Self-consciousness is the basis for responsible decision, because Mrs. Hutchens only becomes responsible for making some decision to remedy the situation, when she becomes conscious of her self as being threatened.

Every Human Being Experiences

The Pain of Anxiety in the Human Dilemma

Anxiety, May defines as "the apprehension cued off by a threat to some value which the individual holds essential to his existence as a self." Anxiety, May emphasizes, is painful because of the threatened loss of diminution of self. In fact, anxiety can be more painful than physical pain. Anxiety is inevitable, because no values, no self is invulnerable. This is normal anxiety, which is proportionate to the threat, does not involve repression or closing up of one's world, and can be confronted constructively on the conscious

level. Anxiety becomes abnormal, or neurotic, on the other hand, when the reaction is out of proportion to the threat, involves repression, and is managed by various kinds of blocking off of activity and awareness. One way of trying to escape from the normal anxiety experienced in an age of transformation of values is to crystallize values into inflexible, unchanging dogma. And dogma, be it scientific or religious, leads to neurotic anxiety. Another way, in Kierkegaard's graphic phrase, is to become "shut-up," closed, rigid, and uncommunicative.

Since one aspect of growth and development involves the transformation of values, the experience of normal anxiety is inseparable from existing. But as one learns how to confront these anxiety-producing situations which threaten values connected with self constructively and to keep moving without retrenchment or becoming "shut-up," one's self becomes more integrated. In this way, according to May, a human being can continue becoming a more integrated person, better integrated into the world in which he exists.

Now that the distinctive characteristics and assumptions of May's existential approach to psychotherapy have been established, this study can proceed to investigate the locus of encounter in the human dilemma--the world in which a human being is existing.

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126 Kierkegaard, The Concept of Dread, p. 110.
CHAPTER III

THE LOCUS OF ENCOUNTER IN

THE HUMAN DILEMMA

After establishing the distinctive characteristics and assumptions of May's existential approach to psychotherapy presented in Chapter Two, this study will next consider May's view of the individual-human-being-existing-in-his-world. This "world" May calls "the human dilemma." 127

May attributes the human dilemma to a human being's two-fold potentiality to experience self either as object or as subject and at times to experience self as both subject and object simultaneously. This double potential forms two poles, as he puts it, of an individual human being's world. Consequently, May views the human dilemma as being composed of a bi-polar world.

"The human dilemma is that which arises out of a man's capacity to experience himself as both subject and object at the same time."

Encounter, as May visualizes it, occurs within this bi-polar world of the human dilemma.

Where does May situate encounter in his description of the human dilemma? In other words, what is the locus of encounter in the human dilemma? This is the question which will be answered in this chapter.

In answering this question, this chapter will show how May depicts the human dilemma as a setting for encounter much as a craftsman will fashion a ring as a setting for a jewel.

A brief schema will first be given to provide a vista of May's way of viewing the human dilemma. Then, May's description of

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one pole of the human dilemma, the existential situation, will be
presented. Next, his description of the other pole of the human
dilemma, becoming an integrated person, will be set forth.
Finally, the locus of encounter in the human dilemma will be
established by showing where May locates encounter in his descrip-
tion of the human dilemma.

The human dilemma, as May depicts it, is a bi-polar world
whose two poles are analogous to the North and South Pole of the
Earth. Although this representation bears similarities to Kurt
Lewin's conceptualization of a Gestalt, May is not referring to
a figure-ground relationship here, but to the human dilemma.

Within this dilemma a dialectic is operative between these two poles,
one considered as thesis, the other as antithesis.

My point is that both are necessary--necessary for
psychological science, for effective therapy, and for
meaningful living. I am also proposing that in the
dialectical process between these two poles lies the
development, and the deepening and widening, of
human consciousness.

129Kurt Lewin, Dynamic Theory of Personality (New York:
McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1935); Principles of Topological
Psychology (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1936);
Resolving Social Conflicts (New York: Harper, 1948); Field Theory

130May, Psychology and the Human Dilemma, p. 20.
A complete picture of this bi-polar world in which a human being exists can be obtained from the following schema.

**Schema: The Human Dilemma**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One Pole</th>
<th>The Other Pole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Existential Situation</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Experience of Becoming an Integrated Person</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Abnormal Anxiety</td>
<td>1. Normal Anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Emptiness</td>
<td>2. Self-Consciousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Determinism</td>
<td>3. Freedom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Loneliness</td>
<td>4. Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Objectivity</td>
<td>5. Subjectivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Transference</td>
<td>6. Encounter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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131 An excellent summary of the three modes of existing-in-the-world can be found in May, "The Existential Approach," pp. 1355-1356.
One Pole of the Human Dilemma:

The Existential Situation

Although he has described the existential situation in various ways, May returns more frequently to describing it in terms of neurotic anxiety, emptiness, determinism, loneliness, and objectivity, and transference.

Neurotic Anxiety

May sees neurotic anxiety as the substratum for the existential situation. This may be due to his own experience with it during his 18 month bout with tuberculosis in 1942 at a sanatorium on Saranac Lake in Upper New York State.

Anxiety, taken etymologically, comes from the Latin word, angustiae, meaning a narrow pass between mountains or a strait between shoals. By extension to human behavior, anxiety refers to behaviors which have been restricted or closed in between some narrow passage way. Anxiety, then, implies a constricting effect upon behavior. The reason, May explains, is that anxiety is a sort of fear. May draws a distinction between anxiety and fear.

May's explanation here grows elusive; he is grappling with a slippery phenomenon of consciousness. A phenomenologist trying to give a clear explanation of this difference is like a lepidopterist netting a butterfly. Fear is the tendency to flight from an
externally threatening object. The person who is afraid knows the
object he fears. The source of fear comes from outside. Anxiety,
however, is the tendency to flight without an externally threatening
object. A person becomes aware of it, when some internal value
linked with existence—being oneself—is in jeopardy. The person
who is anxious does not know what he is anxious about. The source
of anxiety comes from inside.

This explains the perplexity in dealing with anxiety. A delivery
boy who is fearful of an unleashed Doberman Pinscher growling at
him with fangs bared can get rid of the fear either by running away
or by destroying the dog. But when he feels anxious, he can not
eliminate his anxiety either by flight or by fight.

Differing ways of reacting to anxiety lead May to differentiate
between normal anxiety and neurotic anxiety. This distinction is
one of May's important contributions to anxiety research. Anxiety
is neurotic according to May, when it is out of all proportion to any
objective danger, involves repression, and is managed by shrinking
up activity or by some variety of other defense mechanisms. Under
the pressure of neurotic anxiety, behaviors have been shut off. As
a result, the individual feels closed in, apart, and separated from
others.132

It is this neurotic anxiety which May sees at the root of the human situation.

Emptiness: The Hollow People

Human beings experience neurotic anxiety when their world has become emptied of meaning. Existence, to them, is meaningless. In this transitional era their name is legion. Religious institutions, a prime source of meaning in life, have at times given the impression of being more concerned with institutional survival than with serving the need of their members for renewing the meaning of their existence. Having teetered on the brink of meaninglessness himself as Number 119, 104 at Auschwitz, Frankl is keenly aware of this need. His existential therapy pivots around meaning—logos.

Although encounter is the pivot of May's existential approach to psychotherapy, he has an equally poignant awareness of the multitude imprisoned in worlds bereft of meaning without tell-tale tatoos of concentration camps. One of the ways May paints the plight of a meaningless existence is in his haunting myth, "The Man Who Was Put In a Cage." 133

As May tells it, a king one day spied an average man walking by the palace. "What would happen" the king mused, "if that man were kept in a cage, like an animal in a zoo?" So, the next day, he told a psychologist about his plan and asked him to be the scientific observer of the experiment. Reluctantly, the psychologist agreed, because he was curious about what effects this would have. And a king is a king.

After the man had been caged, the psychologist sat down on a chair outside the cage to make his clinical observations. At first the caged man was bewildered; then he protested angrily and at times with rage. Then the man grew silent, but the psychologist observed hatred smoldering in the man's eyes. Gradually, the man lost his fight as he saw its futility. Then he started to talk again but in a monologue with a flat, empty voice. He now spoke of having chosen this life of security, where he was being fed and cared for, for himself. His monologues became more one-tracked, until he would confine himself to such simple statements as, "It's fate." Then he grew silent again and would just sit all day with an empty look on his face and a distant stare in his eyes. When he started to speak again he never said, "I." He was without anger, without feeling, without will, without reason. He was empty.

That night when the psychologist wrote up the day's findings, he
had a feeling of emptiness himself, thinking this is the sort of experiment that should never be done. It had left only a void. After he went to sleep, he dreamed that the man in the cage was shouting, "It is not my freedom that has been taken away. Your freedom has been taken away, too. The king must go."

As the psychologist awoke with a feeling of hope, a voice spoke within him, "It's just a wish fulfillment."

"The hell it is," said the psychologist climbing out of bed.

"Maybe some dreams are to be acted on."134

Determinism: The Driven People

Another facet of the neurotic anxiety experienced by people in the human situation pole of the human dilemma is to feel completely determined. May illustrates this by citing Rogers' response in his exchange with B. F. Skinner.

Along with the development of technology has gone an underlying philosophy of rigid determinism as illustrated by a brief exchange which I had with Professor B. F. Skinner of Harvard at a recent conference. A

paper given by Dr. Skinner led me to direct these remarks to him. "From what I understand Dr. Skinner to say, it is his understanding that though he might have thought he chose to come to this meeting, might have thought he had a purpose in giving his speech, such thoughts are really illusory. He actually made certain marks on paper and emitted certain sounds here simply because his genetic make-up and his past environment had operantly conditioned his behavior in such a way that it was rewarding to make these sounds, and that he as a person doesn't enter into this. In fact, if I get his thinking correctly, from his strictly scientific point of view, he, as a person, doesn't exist." In his reply Dr. Skinner said that he would not go into the question of whether he had any choice in the matter (presumably because the whole issue is illusory) but stated, "I do accept your characterization of my own presence here." I do not need to labor the point that for Dr. Skinner the concept of "learning to be free" would be quite meaningless. 135

At first glance, this poker-faced lampoon might seem to be an attempt to ridicule all determinism out of existence. May leaves no room for doubt that he recognizes deterministic areas in human behavior at this pole of the human dilemma.

The data we get from our work with patients in psychotherapy seem to me clearly to support my thesis. When people come for therapy, they typically describe themselves as "driven," unable to know or choose what they

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want, and they experience various degrees of dissatisfaction, unhappiness, conflict, and despair. What we find as we begin working with them is that they have blocked off large areas of awareness, are unable to feel or be aware of what their feelings mean in relation to the world. They may think they feel love when actually they only feel sex; or they think they feel sex when what they actually wish is to be nursed at mother's breast. They will often say in one way or other: "I don't know what I feel; I don't know who I am."

In Freud's terms, they have "repressed" significant experiences and capacities of all sorts. The symptomatic results are the wide gamut of conflicts, anxiety, panic, and depression. 136

May successfully steers a course between the Scylla of unlimited determinism and the Charybdis of unlimited freedom. No starry-eyed Rousseauian, he recognizes the existence of deterministic behavior. Rogers confirms this: "In the Umwelt, in the relationship of man to his environment, they are, he [May] says, complete determinists. But they think it a serious error to deal with human beings as though their only mode of existence were the Umwelt." 137

But he is not a bilious pessimist either: he recognizes a potential for limited freedom. May's contribution here is a limited determinism--a needed corrective to Freud's pan-determinism in which a mechanistic determinism of cause and effect is applied to the entire range of human behavior and human personality as a whole.

136 May, Psychology and The Human Dilemma, p. 174.

Loneliness: The Isolated People

Another aspect of this pole of the human dilemma, in May's opinion, is loneliness. People are describing this feeling of loneliness when they say that they feel left out, are outsiders, are on the outside looking in. More sophisticated people, who feel they are isolated, say they feel alienated or estranged. May sees this feeling encapsulated in such blues songs as "Me and My Shadow, All Alone and Feeling Blue," immortalized by Ted Lewis. Recently, Paul McCartney has captured the same element in the motif of "Eleanor Rigby."

Eleanor Rigby picks up the rice in the church
Where a wedding has been; lives in a dream.
Waits at the window,
Wearing a face that she keeps in a jar by the door.
Who is it for?
All the lonely people. Where do they all belong?

Eleanor Rigby died in the church
And was buried along with her name. Nobody came.
Father McKenzie wiping the dirt from his hands
As he walked from the grave. No one was saved.
All the lonely people. Where do they all come from?

Loneliness comes from emptiness in May's opinion.

The feelings of emptiness and loneliness go together. When persons, for example, are telling of a break-up in a love relationship, they will often not say they feel sorrow or humiliation over a lost conquest; but rather that they feel "emptied." The loss of the other leaves an inner "yawning voice," as one person puts it.

The reasons for the close relation between loneliness and emptiness are not difficult to discover. For
when a person does not know with any inner conviction what he wants or what he feels; when, in a period of traumatic change, he becomes aware of the fact that the conventional desires and goals he has been taught to follow no longer bring him any security or give him any sense of direction, when, that is, he feels an inner void while he stands amid the outer confusion of upheaval in his society, he senses danger; and his natural reaction is to look around for other people. They, he hopes, will give him some sense of direction, or at least some comfort in the knowledge that he is not alone in his fright. Emptiness and loneliness are thus two phases of the same basic experience of anxiety. 138

By linking loneliness and emptiness with anxiety, May indicates one of the underlying assumptions of his existential approach to psychotherapy. He finds two reasons for this. One is the need every human being has for relationships with others in order to fill the inner void.

The other, more basic one, is the need of others to acquire validation of his self.

Nor is the longing for others simply an endeavor to fill the void within one's self--though this certainly is one side of the need for human companionship when one feels empty or anxious. The more basic reason is that the human being gets his original experience of being a self out of his relatedness to other persons, and when he is alone, without other persons, he is afraid he will lose this experience of being a self. 139

The fear of being left alone is the driving force behind the need people feel to get invited places. The pressure to keep "dated up" derives from the fear of being left out in the cold. The "yatata" of the cocktail party merry-go-round is a primitive tribal ceremony calculated to appease some demon: the specter of loneliness which hovers over the merrymakers like fog creeping over San Francisco. The specter of death is the symbol of ultimate loneliness and isolation. May even interprets the exile of Oedipus, first by another and finally by himself, as this aspect of isolated loneliness. 140 An existential Sophocles would have Oedipus pilgrimage to Delphi to hear the oracle utter, "Your exile is self-ostracism."

139 Ibid., p. 25.

The Sophoclean trilogy, the tragedy of Oedipus Rex, has evoked many interpretations. Aristotle explained the tragic in the human labyrinth as due to a fundamental flaw in the protagonist. Freud reinterpreted the tragic flaw by fashioning the Oedipal complex. May refashioned Freud's formulation of the Oedipal complex and detected another way Oedipus mirrors the tragic in the human predicament. Exile is a symbol of loneliness.

Possibly Oedipus reflects the tragic in still other ways. One of the tragedies of tragedy is its tragic uselessness. Oedipus' fall from his throne because he was flawed with blindness, real and symbolic, failed to atone for the shameful crime of having unwittingly married his mother, Jocasta. Even the punishment of exile was tragic: it was not therapeutic. Exile did not heal Oedipus. He exited as he had entered: an orphan.

Another way of interpreting the tragedy of Oedipus would be to take it as an unconscious phantasy. In terms of this hypothesis, Oedipus had not married his mother in reality. But he had transferred infantile affect and behavior from his mother to his wife, Jocasta. Needing to be mothered, he would have unconsciously made his wife into his mother. Hypothetically, then, maybe Oedipus' tragic flaw was a transference neurosis. And maybe Eleanor Rigby was Jocasta.
Objectivity: The Depersonalized People

One of May's major concerns in describing the pole of the human situation in the human dilemma is objectivity. By objectivity he means the reduction of a human being to the level of an object among other objects. A human being can be reduced to an object in several ways. He can be used as a thing; he can be used as a means to an end; he can be manipulated through the application of impersonal forces. When an individual has been pressured down to the reified level, he has become depersonalized. That is, he has ceased being a person. This is the rock bottom of the pole of the human situation.

Although May finds depersonalization endemic in many areas of contemporary culture, he is particularly critical of higher education on this score.

If the IBM machine is the chief member of your admissions committee, your college cannot avoid tending to select those students who best fit the machine; and this inescapably becomes part of the pressure in education to make the student over into the image of the machine.\textsuperscript{141}

When a college student is validated only by scores, he feels he is worthwhile only in terms of a mark on a scale. External methods of validation shrink a student's consciousness.

May perceives something fundamentally wrong in graduate education.

Apples have dropped on people's heads since man first stood upright on two legs and walked under apple trees. But Isaac Newton was the one to perceive the significance of this event. And it took only one thump of an apple on Isaac's head. Our contemporary student in his graduate work is hit on the head so many scores of times by academic apples and gets so groggy that his sensitivity and perception are numbed and he has less and less chance of perceiving the significance of what is going on. So all he can do is resign himself to counting how many apples drop and making a nice formula as to the ratio of times they hit his head. From what students say, there lies here, in heads bruised by apples, a dreary commentary on much modern graduate education. These inevitably depersonalizing processes unfortunately fit much of what we have been teaching for many years.¹⁴²

May¹⁴³ explains campus unrest as protest against depersonalizing processes of education and campus protest against the war in Vietnam¹⁴⁴ as refusal to accept the application of impersonal power consequent upon impersonal, computerized answers. The result, he concludes, has been a widespread diminution of human consciousness of self on college campuses.

¹⁴²May, Psychology and The Human Dilemma, p. 48.

¹⁴³Ibid., pp. 40-54, for a perceptive analysis of elements in student unrest.

Transference

When patient and therapist try to relate on the basis of transference, May believes they are only shadows in the human situation. The concept of transference, one of the great contributions of Sigmund Freud, presents unending difficulties without a norm of relationship. So May understands transference as the distortion of encounter.

For the implications of transference to existential therapy centered in encounter, see May, Psychology and the Human, pp. 118-120; Existence, p. 79; "On the Phenomenological Bases of Psychotherapy," Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry, IV (February, 1964), 28-30.

The Other Pole of the Human Dilemma

Becoming an Integrated Person

In his ways of verbalizing the opposite pole to the human situation in a globular way May has shown a progressive development since his first book, *The Art of Counseling*. His qualifications were originally, "mature," then, "healthy," occasionally, "whole," and finally, he has been fairly consistent with "integrated," possibly under the later influence of Tillich. When a human being has been able to integrate the chief elements of this pole, normal anxiety, self-consciousness, freedom and responsibility, participation, subjectivity and, finally, encounter, May terms him a person. Being a person differs drastically from being a human being stunted by neurotic anxiety, emptiness, deterministic behavior, loneliness, depersonalization, and transference. The extent to which a human being actuates his potentialities is the degree to which he becomes a person. May observes a process of movement in his existential approach to psychotherapy from one pole of the human dilemma to the other. Whether this process is called growth or development, May perceives it as tending toward the goal of therapy: becoming an integrated person.

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Umwelt

Under the influence of Binswanger's Daseinanalysis May has adopted three modes of being: Umwelt, Mitwelt, and Eigenwelt. He explains the meaning of these modalities.

Binswanger was invited by the Vienna Society of Medical Psychology to give an address at the eightieth birthday celebration of Freud. He delivered a classical paper, unfortunately not yet translated into English, in which he held that Freud had advanced the understanding of man as a part of nature more than anyone since Aristotle. But he went on to point out that Freud dealt with homo natura (sic), that is, natural man, man in what the Germans call the Umwelt, the environment, the natural world of drives and instincts. Freud dealt only epiphenomenally with man in the Mitwelt, that is man as fellowman, in interpersonal relationships (in Sullivan's term); nor did Freud deal adequately with the self in relation to itself, namely, the Eigenwelt. Hence, Binswanger continued, art, religion, love (in its full sense), creativity, and other human activities in which man transcends the simple natural world environment, are not adequately dealt with in Freud's psychoanalysis. 149

When May examines the being-in-his-world of a person, the three modes of being in the world take on new significance. The first mode of being is being in the surrounding world (Umwelt). In the Umwelt of a person in the second pole of the human dilemma, May pays particular attention to normal anxiety. The second mode of being is being in the world between Ego and self (Eigenwelt). In

a person's Eigenwelt, May focuses on self-consciousness, freedom and responsible decision. The third mode of being is being in the world with others (Mitwelt). In the Mitwelt, May is fascinated with participation and subjectivity which culminate in encounter.

**Normal Anxiety**

In his long search for a common denominator in anxiety theory, May has come to an important conclusion. Some anxiety is normal. It is a concomitant of being human. Feeling anxious is a normal reaction to a threat to the existence of one's self or to values intertwined with existing as a self. Decisions to actualize one's potential can be fraught with anxiety. Choice and anxiety are two sides of becoming a person. But May sees a creative use of anxiety. "The characteristic of creative endeavor is that the gap between expectation and reality is overcome by the activity of the person."\(^{150}\)

In becoming a person, a human being learns to convert the quanta of anxiety into fuel for action. By creating new behaviors he becomes capable of moving beyond his anxiety instead of constricting his behaviors and shutting himself up in a self-wrought prison. To do so requires a value held more strongly than the one threatened.

\(^{150}\)May, "Toward an Understanding of Anxiety," p. 31.
Self-Consciousness

May considers self-consciousness to be the distinctive characteristic of man. To him, consciousness of self is the source of his highest qualities. But what does it mean to experience one's self as a self? This is May's answer.

The consciousness of one's identity as a self certainly is not an intellectual idea. The French philosopher Descartes, at the beginning of the modern period three centuries ago, crawled into his stove, according to legend, to meditate in solitude all one day trying to find the basic principle for human existence. He came out of his stove in the evening with the famous conclusion, "I think, therefore I am." That is to say, I exist as a self because I am a thinking creature. But this is not enough. You and I never think of ourselves as an idea. We rather picture ourselves as doing something, like the psychologist writing his paper, and we then experience in imagination the feelings that we will have when we are in actuality doing that thing. That is to say, we experience ourselves as a thinking-intuiting-feeling and acting unity. The self is thus not merely the sum of the various "roles" one plays -- it is the center from which one sees and is aware of these so-called different "sides" of himself. 151

"In actuality" is the key to understanding May's meaning of consciousness. He does not take unconscious--conscious as repressed-unrepressed in terms of Freud's topography. Rather, May redefines unconscious-conscious existentially as potential--

151May, Man's Search for Himself, p. 80.
actual. He says, "I propose as a definition the following:

Unconscious experience is the potentialities for action and awareness which the person cannot or will not actualize."

So, for him, unconscious is the sum of potentialities a human being has for action to become a person; consciousness, the actuality of becoming one.

But when May adds self to consciousness and tries to describe the phenomena of self-consciousness, he is moving out into a salient at the phenomenological-existential frontier.

But when we turn to the mode of Eigenwelt itself, we find ourselves on the unexplored frontier of psycho-therapeutic theory. What does it mean to say, "the self in relation to itself"? What happens in "insight" when the inner gestalt of a person reforms itself? Indeed, what does the "self knowing itself" mean? Each of these phenomena goes on almost every instant with all of us; they are indeed closer to us than our breathing. Yet, perhaps precisely because they are so near to us, no one knows what is happening in these events.

An explorer pioneering unmapped terrain does not chart his route with the precision of the surveyors who follow him. Despite the impression he gives of struggling to put the observation of preverbal phenomena into exact words, May is content with asserting that self-consciousness is the center of unity in a person.

\[152\] May, Psychology and the Human Dilemma, p. 125.

\[153\] May, Existence, p. 64.

Despite the difficulties here, there are profound consequences to May's notion of self-consciousness. One important one is that without self-consciousness the "world" encroaches upon the ego, so that the ego is unaware of what the self is actually experiencing, be it joy, anger, hurt, pain. Another is that only through self-consciousness is it possible to relate to one's "world."

Self implies world, and world, self; each concept—or experience—requires the other. Now contrary to the usual assumption, these vary upward and downward in the scale together: broadly speaking, the more awareness of self, the more awareness of world, and vice versa.155

**Freedom and Responsible Decision**

May's treatment of freedom and responsibility is given over against the popularized picture of the patient in orthodox, classical Freudian analysis, whose hang-ups have been thoroughly analyzed, but who still remains inert upon the couch, neither taking nor making a responsible decision about them. This dialectic is a central feature of May's existential approach to psychotherapy, standing out with great clarity, solidly grounded upon his phenomenological methodology.

Freedom, to May, is not unlimited, nor is it opposed to determinism.

Freedom is thus not the opposite to determinism. Freedom is the individual's capacity to know that he is the determined one, to pause between stimulus and response and thus to throw his weight, however slight it may be, on the side of one particular response among several possible ones. 156

May sees responsibility arising from the person's self-consciousness of his world.

This inseparable relation of self and world also implies responsibility. The term means "responding," "response to." I cannot, in other words, become a self except as I am engaged continuously in responding to the world of which I am a part. 157

May observes a paradox in conscious determinism and freedom.

What is exceedingly interesting here is that the patient moves toward freedom and responsibility in his living as he becomes more conscious of the deterministic experiences in his life. That is, as he explores and assimilates how he was rejected or overprotected or hated as a child, how his repressed bodily needs drive him, how his personal history as a member of a minority group, let us say, conditions his development, and even as he becomes more conscious of his being a member of Western culture at a particular traumatic moment in the historical evolution of that society, he finds his margin of freedom likewise enlarged. As he becomes more conscious of the infinite deterministic forces in his life, he becomes more free. 158

156Ibid., p. 103.
157Ibid., p. 103.
158Ibid., p. 103.
From his discussion of freedom and responsible decision, May draws up three criteria for the existential bases of freedom.

1) "Freedom is a quality of action of the centered self."¹⁵⁹

By locating freedom in the "centered self," by which he means the person acting as a unit, May is correcting the departmentalized model of man abstracted either into faculties of mind and will or into a structure of id, ego, super-ego. The existential is over against the essential.

2) "Freedom always involves social responsibility."¹⁶⁰ This is the limiting principle of freedom. Freedom is neither license nor doing as one pleases, because freedom is limited by the fact that the self always exists in a world to which it has a dialectical relation.

3) "Freedom requires the capacity to accept, bear and live constructively with anxiety."¹⁶¹ May refers here to normal anxiety. He believes that the definition of mental health as "freedom from anxiety" has actually undermined freedom. To be free, to May, is to face normal anxiety; to run away from it means to surrender freedom and embrace neurotic anxiety.


¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 205.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 206.
All of us, to be sure, are in favor of freedom from neurotic anxiety—the kind which blocks people's awareness and causes them to panic or in other ways to act blindly and destructively. But neurotic anxiety is simply the long-term result of unfaced normal anxiety. 162

Mitwelt

Participation

May uses the term, "participation," to refer to a particular quality of being with another. 163 This is clear from his following statement.

At this point we see the rightful emphasis of Martin Buber in one sense and Harry Stack Sullivan in another, that the human being cannot be understood as a self if participation is omitted. 164

By participation May means to participate, to take part, to share in the world of the other, to assume the risk of being open to the other's world.

He describes, by way of illustration, a patient who had frequently phoned for an appointment only to cancel. Finally he is

162 Ibid., p. 206.


164 May, Existential Psychology, p. 78.
sitting anxiously before May with mixed feelings of mistrust and hope. He would like to allow May to participate in his inner world—to open up his inner world to another. But this tendency is struggling with his long-founded behavior of withdrawing behind his barricade and closing others out.

This struggle is understandable, for participating always involves risk: if he, or any organism, goes out too far, he will lose his own centeredness, his identity. But if he is so afraid of losing his own conflicted center—which at least has made possible some partial integration and meaning in his experience—that he refuses to go out at all but holds back in rigidity and lives in narrowed and shrunken world space, his growth and development are blocked. This was the common neurotic pattern in Freud's day, and is what he meant when he spoke of repression and inhibition. Inhibition is the relation to the world of the being who has the possibility to go out but is too threatened to do so; and his fear that he will lose too much of course may be literally the case.165

But the danger May sees today is not underparticipation or repression but overparticipation. By overparticipation, May means taking part in the world of too many people. Some seek acceptance by one and all out of the anxiety of being rejected. But this far-flung dispersal diminishes consciousness of self. Rather than resulting in a gain of acceptance, overparticipation results in

the loss of self-consciousness itself. Consciousness is thus drained of meaning. A human being alone in the labyrinth. Many in this era prefer to be castrated— to surrender the power of being— rather than to run the risk of suffering the anxiety of rejection. Consequently, an individual suffers a loss of meaning and experiences the anxiety of meaninglessness. Behaviors bloated beyond the limits of self-consciousness need shrinkage.

**Subjectivity**

In order to grasp May's meaning of "subjectivity," as he applies the term to this pole of the human dilemma, his enigmatic statement that "the task of the therapist is to help the patient transmute awareness into consciousness" needs to be understood.

I find two principles helpful to me here, one having to do with awareness and the other with consciousness. The distinction between these two is critical for our problem. I will state them, beginning with awareness, in reference to my original concept of centeredness, namely, the subjective side of centeredness is awareness. Awareness is a capacity we share with animals and much of nature. 167

He then describes how the family chow dog has an amazing awareness of animals and persons coming in at the farm gate a

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166*ibid.*, p. 183

167*ibid.*, p. 181.
considerable distance from the house. Some compulsive patients, he goes on, also can possess great awareness. He narrates how he listened to a supervisory tape of a patient who had been in analysis for nine years. He talked volumes about the defensive behaviors his wife was using against him. But he was without any consciousness that he himself had had any input into her behaviors toward him. He lacked consciousness of his self, being in the world of his wife.

"I felt," May says, "as though I were in a ghostly room hearing a voice but with no person there. Awareness without consciousness is highly depersonalizing." 168

Such a patient needs to move from awareness to consciousness.

Consciousness is the distinctly human form of awareness--the particularly human capacity not only to know something but to know that I know it, that is to experience myself as a subject in relation to an object or as I in relation to Thou. 169

When this occurs, the patient becomes conscious of his self as being-in-a-world-with-another and as being able to respond to this world by making a responsible decision to act on it.

168 Ibid., p. 181.
169 Ibid., p. 181.
May explains his reasons for adopting the existential term, encounter, for this culminating phase of the second pole of the human dilemma.

To be able to sit in a real relationship with another human being who is going through profound anxiety, or guilt, or the experience of imminent tragedy taxes the best of the humanity in all of us. This is why we emphasize the importance of the "encounter" rather than "relationship." I think the term relationship psychologizes it. Encounter is what really happens; it is something much more than a relationship. In this encounter I have to be able, to some extent, to experience what the patient is experiencing. My job as a therapist is to be open to his world. He brings his world with him and therein we live for 50 minutes. Learning to do so may be highly taxing; to experience somebody else's anxiety may be extremely painful. It is painful enough to experience one's own, when one has no choice but to experience one's own world. Practically speaking, this is why therapy for oneself is so important; my own psychoanalysis certainly helped me in being able to accept this in patients, not to try to push aside the pain that I must share or the anxiety, or guilt, or tragic possibilities. In addition, it requires that we ourselves be human beings in the broadest sense of the word. This brings us to a point where we can no longer talk about it merely psychologically, in any kind of detached way, but must "throw" ourselves into the therapeutic encounter. 170

The therapist has been trying to encounter the patient all along. But when the patient starts to encounter the therapist in a similar way, a mutual encounter between the two happens. This is the

Encounter occurs when the patient becomes conscious of his self-being-in-the-world-with-another-human-being. For the therapist is also part of this patient's world.

Encounter is the culmination of subjectivity in May's existential picture of the bi-polar human dilemma. The Mitwelt of the patient is becoming complete, starting to fill up with meaning. Having achieved encounter with one person, his therapist, the patient can then move on and work toward achieving encounter with one person in his world after another.

This is the locus of encounter in May's cartography of the human dilemma as well as in his existential approach to psychotherapy.

The person who has encountered another has moved beyond neurotic anxiety, emptiness, determinism, loneliness, objectivity, and transference. Encounter does not come in the human situation, the first pole of the human dilemma.

May situates encounter in the Mitwelt of a human being becoming an integrated person. By integrating a creative response to normal anxiety, through self-consciousness, limited freedom, responsible choice, participation, and subjectivity, one person encounters another. This is the acme of the second pole of the human dilemma.
CHAPTER IV

ELEMENTS IN ENCOUNTER

"The essential point in encounter is our way of 'taking' the other person; it depends on quite specific attitudes and assumptions," 171 May writes.

The assumptions which in May's opinion must be presupposed for his existential approach to encounter have been presented in Chapter Two of this study. Specific attitudes about human beings, and, in particular, the place to look for encounter in May's paradigm of the human dilemma can be garnered from Chapter Three.

What distinguishes an existential approach to psychotherapy, according to May, is "the fact that it takes the experience of encounter seriously." 172 Other approaches to psychology and psychiatry, he observes, have concentrated heavily on gleaning data on persons. As a result, they have left a study of the actual


172Ibid., p. 1354.
experience of encounter to chance or intuition. But, to take encounter seriously and not leave it to chance or hunch will involve a grasp of the elements May finds in encounter.

In this chapter the four elements which May considers to be integral to encounter will be examined.

1. The element of empathy.
2. The element of philia.
3. The element of eros.
4. The element of agape.

Since May recognizes that the phenomena of encounter need very much to be studied, a compilation in one place of May's treatment of these elements in many places may serve as a point of departure for further investigation.

**Empathy, The First Element in Encounter**

The first element May detects in encounter is empathy. Through empathy individual human beings meet, to use Goffman's term, if only for just a moment. To May, empathy does not have something to do with time, but with the quality of the meeting. In empathy an interchange goes on between two individual human beings: a looking into each other's eyes which may be merely an

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instantaneous expression, a fleeting glimpsing, or a grasping of each other in a way which seems to have been there for hundreds of years.

Empathy, May suggests, can occur in a few sentences with a taxi driver or in a telephone call with the grocer. However briefly it occurs, empathy is a qualitative element of encounter.

Definition

Like Moreno, May takes empathy to mean the actualized potential human beings have of "feeling into" each other. This is the definition first formulated by Theodore Lipps, a contemporary of Freud. 174

"Empathy" comes to us as a translation of the word of the German psychologists, "einfühlung" [sic] which means "pathos," meaning a deep and strong feeling akin to suffering, prefixed with the preposition "in." The parallel with the word "sympathy" is obvious. But whereas sympathy denotes "feeling with" and may lead into sentimentality, empathy means a much deeper state of identification of personalities in which one person so feels himself into the other as temporarily to lose his own identity. 175


175 Rollo May, The Art of Counseling: How to Gain and Give Mental Health (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1939), p. 75. Despite being May's first book, this is still one of the most down-to-earth, common sense introductions to counseling breathing with human warmth.
By clearly differentiating empathy in its fundamental etymological sense of an "in-feeling" from sympathy in the sense of a "with-feeling," May infers that sympathy is not an element of encounter.

In May's opinion, empathy is the basic element of encounter, because empathy is the first step, so to speak, of encounter. Empathy comes first. 176

Description

One of the most poignant descriptions of empathy which May has given is of a college student who came to him. 177 The student, smiling apologetically, offered a clammy handshake. As the student started speaking, May relates how he sat relaxed and let his eyes gaze on his face.

With his eyes fixed on the floor, the student related in trembling voice how his father used to beat him during his boyhood on the farm and how he had grown up without any parental love or understanding. At that moment, May reports he felt the pain of those beatings as though he were receiving the blows himself.

176 For a contrasting parallel in basic encounter groups, see Rogers, Carl Rogers on Encounter Groups, pp. 33-34.

177 May, Art of Counseling, pp. 76-77.
As the student went on to tell how he had struggled through high school with the burden of an overpowering sense of inferiority, May acknowledges he himself felt depressed as though the inferiority had been his own.

This is the sort of empathy, from intent, open listening, that May considers the basis of the encounter. Empathy comes from this certain kind of listening.

A corollary of this is the strange phenomenon in psychotherapy that when the patient feels some emotion--eroticism, anger, alienation, or hostility--the therapist normally finds himself feeling that same emotion. This inheres in the fact that when a relationship is genuine, they empathetically share a common field of emotion.\textsuperscript{178}

Explanation

May compares such empathic response to two tuning forks or two violins one of which will resonate at the same pitch as the other.

when it is vibrating. "If you pluck a violin string, the corresponding strings in another violin in the room will resonate with similar movement of their own. This is an analogy, of course: what goes on in human beings includes that, but is much more complex." 179

He draws a conclusion from this.

I propose the hypothesis that in therapy, granted adequate clarification of the therapist, it is not possible for one person to have a feeling without the other having it to some degree also. 180

Empathy, A Form of Participation

A corollary of this hypothesis is that there is necessarily some empathic resonance in the Mitwelt, a person's mode-of-being-with-another. When such empathy is missing, its absence is an indicator that some blocking on the part of the therapist is occurring. Another corollary to this hypothesis May learned from Frieda Fromm-Reichmann. 181 She used to say that her best way of telling how her patient felt was to become conscious of how she was feeling within herself. While calling for the bracketing of the therapist's own


180May, Human Dilemma, p. 122.

distortions, empathic response does provide one way to participate in the patient's world.

Participation in other persons or objects give us an understanding of them which is far more intimate and meaningful than mere scientific analysis or empirical observation. For "under-standing," be it of things as difficult as a rubber ball and a period of history, actually means this identification of subjective and objective resulting in a new condition which transcends them both. 182

By his expression, the bracketing of the therapist's distortions, May is using the metaphor of putting something in parentheses or setting them off. So, when the therapist puts one of his distortions into parentheses, he tucks it in, rather than letting it out, so that he can ruminate about it.

**Philia, The Second Element in Encounter**

The second element of encounter according to May is philia, the Greek word for friendship in its simplest form. 183 The Greeks called this sort of friendship philia.

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Definition

By philia the Greeks meant the meeting in mutual affirmation of the other and the enjoyment of the other person's presence. Thus, philia helps assuage the loneliness to which all human beings are heir. For this reason May reveals that, even though he may have been in a bad mood because of insufficient sleep the night before, in psychotherapy he finds that he himself enjoys the fact that the patient has come.

Philia is the relaxation in the presence of the beloved which accepts the other's being as being; it is simply liking to be with the other, liking to rest with the other, liking the rhythm of the walk, the voice, the whole being of the other.184

All that philia requires is to accept the other, to be present with him, to enjoy him. Philia does not require that anything be done for the other or to put the other before oneself. Philia, then, is friendship in its simplest, most direct form.

In the element of philia, persons accept each other along with their idiosyncracies, and, using Tillich's phrase, "accept being accepted."185 Out of this acceptance, persons develop faith in

184 May, Love and Will, p. 317.

185 Tillich, Courage, p. 164, "One could say that the courage to be is the courage to accept oneself as accepted in spite of being unacceptable."
and share with each other in a way that will foster trust between them. Gradually May concludes "we trust—for we have seen each other a lot—that the other has some genuine concern for listening and understanding."186

Value

May finds that philia is looked upon with nostalgia by people who lead fast-paced lives as a remnant of the days of yore when people had the time and leisure to indulge in friendship. When people rush from a hasty breakfast to work, from meetings to appointments, from bucking rush-hour traffic to a late dinner, they lose the contribution that philia could make to their lives.

We are the independent men who, often taking our powers too seriously, continuously act and react, unaware that much of value in life comes only if we don’t press, comes in quietly when it is not pushed or required, comes not from a drive from behind or an attraction from in front, but emerges silently from simply being together.187

Origin

In tracing the source of the potentiality for philia, May finds it in what Harry Stack Sullivan termed the "chum" period of human


development, which normally occurs roughly between the ages of eight and twelve. During this "chum" period, the capacity for really liking to be with another person of the same sex is usually actualized. Girls are inseparable during this time. Boys learn how to become pals. Both are actualizing the potential for philia—liking to be with another person. May thinks that the importance of the chum period has been confirmed by Harry Harlow's experiments with rhesus monkeys. Monkeys, denied peer play with monkey chums, were later unable to relate heterosexually.  

In May's experience, American men particularly often lack the element of male friendship, probably out of a mistaken fear of homosexuality.

Relationship to Empathy, Eros, and Agape

May sees philia as growing out of empathy, because a shared feeling is the ground for enjoying the presence of another. Agape, in its turn grows out of philia, because affirming another as oneself is the school in which one learns how to affirm another before oneself.

Philia broadens and deepens eros by giving it time to grow its roots into the soil of the total encounter.

188Ibid., pp. 318-319.
Eros, The Third Element in Encounter

The third element of encounter May calls eros. May views eros, not just simply as sex, but as sex with the feeling of excitement that goes on in meeting someone, particularly of the opposite sex.

The Sexual Aspect

Meeting an attractive woman, for example, is like finding a bouquet of flowers on the table: she makes the environment more alive. And hopefully she reciprocates the same feeling. Eros, as May uses the term, includes sex; but in May's mind eros also includes the aspect of excitement or of an incandescent effect. May pictures the individual who seeks sex without love, unlike the Victorian who sought love without sex. Both need reintegration.

When I was doing supervision with her some years ago, Clara Thompson once said to me something I've often pondered, that if one person in the therapeutic relationship feels active erotic attraction, the other will too. Erotic feelings of his own need to be frankly faced by the therapist; otherwise he will, at least in fantasy, act out his own needs with the patient. But more importantly, unless he accepts the erotic as

one of the ways of communication, he will not listen for what he should hear from the patient and he will lose one of the most dynamic resources for change in therapy. 190

The Creative Aspect

The Greeks defined eros as the god that, by shooting his poisoned arrows into a human being, made him subject either to healing and joy or to anguish and despair. They believed that eros led a human being to higher and higher forms of creativity and human love. So eros is the total human being reaching for new being; new being, not only in creating a child, but new being in creating his self. In a real love relationship, May finds that a person discovers something new in himself as well as finding something new in the person he is encountering.

So, in May's view, eros also includes the important ingredient of creativity. 191 But when eros is split off from creativity, May holds that eros becomes destructive instead of creative.


Destructive eros May calls "the daimonic." 192

Bodily Awareness and Eros

Eros becomes destructive due to the fact that people today are too often actually out of touch with their bodily feelings. For this reason, May sees value in the bodily awareness exercises currently popular in some types of encounter groups. 193


193 Applications of this principle in a variety of encounter groups can be found in the following tape recordings. ENCOUNTERTAPES for Vocational Education Groups (Atlanta: Human Development Institute, n.d.), Phonotape; Betty Berzon and Jerome Reisel, ENCOUNTERTAPES for Personal Growth Groups (Atlanta: Human Development Institute, 1970), Phonotape; John Heider, Overview of Encounter Technique, (San Rafael, CA.: Big Sur Recordings, 1971), Phonotape; Thomas P. Malone, Mark Vlosky, Daniel Mermin, and Nancy M. Phillips, INTIMACY: An Encounter Program for Couples (Atlanta: Human Development Institute, 1970), Phonotape; Freeman Pollard, Betty Berzon, and Dan Mermin, ENCOUNTERTAPES for Black/White Groups (Atlanta: Human Development Institute, 1970), Phonotape; John Poppy, Encounter in Human Relations, (San Rafael, CA.: Big Sur Recordings, 1971), Phonotape; William Schutz, Comments on Couples' Encounter, (San Rafael, CA.: Big Sur Recordings, 1971), Phonotape; William Schutz, Principles and Philosophy of Open Encounter (San Rafael, CA.: Big Sur Recordings, 1971), Phonotape, Rules of Thumb for Open Encounter, (San Rafael, CA.: Big Sur Recordings, 1971), Phonotape; Lawrence N. Solomon and Betty Berzon, ENCOUNTERTAPES for Employee and Team Development (Atlanta: Human Development Institute, 1970), Phonotape. Under the aegis of HDI, a new 26 cassettes series is available: Carl Rogers, How to Use Encounter Groups.
I believe very much in body awareness and these contemporary movements to help people in the expression of their emotion as well as the awareness of the nuances of feeling in their bodies. But we must not forget that body awareness and the expression of emotion are really correctives for a very sick world. Only in a sick society do people lose contact with their bodies and with their feelings. One of the most serious criticisms of this tremendously mechanized world we live in is that it has taken our bodies away from us. Our bodies now belong to the x-ray labs, the hospitals, or somebody who monkeys with them. 194

In this technological juggernaut of a society corrective methods are needed to bring back awareness of the body, awareness of breathing and awareness of feeling, May believes. But these are essentially corrective. May maintains that to believe bodily awareness exercises are the basis in themselves for a new kind of life is a great error.

They are not the basis of new being in themselves, because awareness of feelings and bodily awareness must then be put within a structure. The fact is that the body does have limitations. The body gets tired, sick, and ultimately dies.

194 Rollo May, Self-Other Encounter[Motion Picture](Santa Ana, California: Psychological Films, 196-). This film, one in the sensitively photographed and professionally directed series, ROLLO MAY AND THE HUMAN ENCOUNTER, provides a single media source for May and encounter. For a thumbnail sketch, see Lawrence M. Brammer and Everett L. Shostrom, Therapeutic Psychology (2nd ed.; Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), pp. 474-475.
The Need for Structuring of Feeling

Once a human being starts to become aware of his feelings, they need to be structured by the mind, the distinctive ability which distinguishes man from the rest of nature. This structuring is absolutely necessary. Otherwise, the emotions are going to disperse like water in a river that has no banks.

This structuring of life has its logical side, its ontological side, and its psychological side. A human being needs to apply his mind logically to search out the fundamental truth of his bodily experience, ontologically to search out the truth that underlies sex, and psychologically to bring sex into relationship, relationship into love, and love into fidelity.

For May, the glory of determinism in the Umwelt, being in the world of a determined environment, is that the awareness of being determined can prove enormously helpful. Limited bodies cannot go beyond their limits without some loss of integration. Bodies are limited in time, energy, strength, and health, to name a few. Lack of awareness of these limits leads individual human beings to transgress far beyond their limits and invite disintegration. Awareness of determined limits is absolutely necessary for creativity.

Determinism, in the sense of determined limits, is like river banks containing the flow of water within its channel. The creative
flow, channeled within determined physical limits, can stream out with more significance. Directed toward constructive goals chosen as realizable within the realistic limits, the creative stream then becomes a spring of new bring. When not channeled within the limitations of time, energy, strength, and health, the creative stream floods over its banks and becomes a havoc-wreaking torrent.

**Agape, The Fourth Element in Encounter**

The fourth element in encounter May calls agape. He does not consider agape either as a derivative or as a sublimation. Sublimation is transformation of libido into behavior without going through the direct sexuality stage, as Dry Ice is transformed into vapor without going through the liquid stage, unlike ice-water-steam. Thus, to Freud, agape was a symptom of repression. May disagrees.

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Agape cannot be understood as derivative, or what is left over when you analyze our exploitative, cannibalistic tendencies. Agape is not a sublimation of eros but a transcending of it in enduring tenderness, lasting concern for others; and it is precisely this transcendence which gives eros itself fuller and more enduring meaning.  

Thus, agape means the potential or capacity "which I think inheres in Mitwelt of self-transcending concern for another's welfare" beyond one's own welfare. To affirm the welfare of the other for his own benefit beyond any recompense or pleasure given in return is what May means by agape.

Agape As Charity

"Charity, as the word is translated in the New Testament, is a poor translation, but it does contain with it the element of selfless giving," May asserts. Agape is the kind of love the Lord God has for man. It means human beings have the potentiality of caring for other persons beyond caring for oneself, despite all the cynicism in our society about this.

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198 May, Human Dilemma, p. 119.


200 May, Love and Will, p. 319.
Agape As Caring

May uses the term, "care," for agape in the same sense as Tillich's use of the term, "concern." "Paul Tillich's term, concern--used normally with the adjective 'ultimate'--I also take to be a synonym for what we are now discussing. But I prefer for our purposes here the simpler and more direct term, care."201

May then goes on to clarify what he means by "care." "Care is a state in which something does matter; care is the opposite of apathy."202 To bring out his meaning of "care," May quotes Heidegger. "When fully conceived, the care-structure includes the phenomenon of Selfhood."203 Then May continues.

When we do not care, we lose our being; and care is the way back to being. If I care about being, I will shepherd it with some attention paid to its welfare, whereas if I do not care, my being disintegrates. Heidegger "thinks of care as the basic constitutive phenomenon of human existence." It is thus ontological in that it constitutes man as man. Will and wish cannot be the basis for care, but vice versa; they are founded on care.204

In the vortex of Vietnam, May finds that the war photographer,

201Ibid., pp. 291-292.
202Ibid., p. 289.
203Heidegger, Being and Time, p. 370.
204May, Love and Will, p. 290.
"who represents the unconscious of us all," has discovered a new aspect of war.

From these photographers come pictures of wounded caring for each other, of soldiers taking care of the injured, of a marine with his arm around a wounded comrad, the wounded one crying out in pain and bewilderment. What comes back in the photos is, on this elemental level, care.

The Total Encounter

When all four elements of encounter are present between two human beings, May usually calls this particular encounter, "the total encounter," or simply, "the encounter." When he uses Buber's expression, "I-Thou," he is referring to the total encounter, the encounter.

When the encounter--total encounter--occurs, the four elements of empathy, philia, eros, and agape are always present. The degree in which they are present will, of course, differ. They may be present together only minutely when people first meet. To start with, for example, there may be little agape. But unless some agape at least is present, the other person will feel he is being manipulated. And rightly so. To be a person, to accept

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205 Ibid., p. 287.

206 Ibid., p. 288.
another as a "thou," in an I-Thou relationship means the potentiality of affirming the other for his benefit.

When one or more of the elements of encounter are missing between two human beings, then an encounter occurs between them. Encounter has been partial. A partial encounter has happened. This difference between the encounter, in the sense of the total encounter, and encounter, in the sense of a partial encounter, needs to be born in mind to grasp May's full meaning of encounter.

The encounter, to May, is the tremendously fascinating and important area of life in which a person is capable of knowing, feeling, grasping, and experiencing others, and in return of feeling an affirmation of his self. One's own heart and mind then work more richly when one is conscious of really encountering another person.

The encounter with the being of another person has the power to shake us profoundly and may be potentially anxiety-arousing as well as joy-creating. The therapist is often tempted for his own comfort to shield himself from the encounter and its power to move him by abstracting himself, by thinking of the other as "just a patient," or by focusing only on certain mechanisms of behavior. 207

In this moving power of the encounter May sees its special value. In May's estimate, "this total encounter, which I have said can be our most useful medium of understanding the patient as well as our most efficacious instrument for helping him open himself to the possibility of change," is beneficial to both therapist and patient. The gain to the therapist is that the total encounter is seen as a medium of understanding the patient. The gain to the patient from the total encounter is to increase his power for changing his behaviors.

The empty individual is in need of empathy to be filled. The driven human being is in need of philia to find rest. The lonely one needs agape to find companionship. The depersonalized needs creative eros to move out of the paralysis of neurotic anxiety.

The encounter, as described by May, meets the needs of human beings in the labyrinth of the human situation. For this reason, the crux of May's existential approach to psychotherapy is the encounter.

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May, Human Dilemma, p. 121.
CHAPTER V

SUMMATION, APPLICATION, IMPLICATION

Summation

This study has focused on the question, "What does the term, 'encounter,' in 'encounter groups' mean?" Other studies have investigated the interactional aspects of group process in encounter groups. The point of departure of this study, however, was the encounter aspect of encounter groups. Specifically, the aim of this study has been to answer the question, "Can a distinct meaning of encounter be found which, applied to encounter groups, could clearly differentiate an encounter group from a T-group on one hand and a sensitivity group on the other?"

A survey of encounter group literature was made to determine the usage of encounter in encounter group literature. The outcome showed encounter group literature to be rife with ambiguity in the usages of encounter. Some of this ambiguity seemed to stem from using encounter in two or more contexts. Different contexts gave different meanings to encounter. Some authors used encounter as a
genus in one setting and as a species in another. Evidence showed encounter used in some dozen ways. The global impression of the usage of encounter in encounter group literature is one of being higgledy-piddledy. Ambiguity wrapped in confusion underscored the need for this and similar studies.

A fundamental hypothesis of this study was that a distinct meaning of encounter could more likely be discovered within the existential movement than elsewhere. Eminent investigators have pointed to an interface between the existential movement and encounter. Preliminary survey indicated the existential approach to psychotherapy in May might yield a rich vein. This was predicated upon the body of his work, impact upon the encounter scene, and prominence among existentialists in this country.

After situating May within the mainstream of the existential movement, the base for this study was established by presenting the characteristics and assumptions of May's approach to psychotherapy. This was shown to be marked by: 1) an existential frame of reference; 2) a phenomenological methodology, centering on consciousness; 3) an orientation toward the future; 4) a consideration of his views as an approach or an attitude; 5) personal reintegration as the goal of the therapeutic process. In regard to assumptions,
May was shown to presuppose in his patients: 1) the need to preserve centeredness; 2) the need of self-affirmation or courage; 3) the need and possibility of participation; 4) awareness as the subjective side of centeredness; 5) consciousness of self as the human form of awareness; and 6) anxiety, be it normal (dealt with creatively) or neurotic (dealt with restrictingly).

To show the locus of encounter in May's existential approach to psychotherapy, his way of depicting the human dilemma was presented. May pictured the human dilemma as being composed of two worlds or Gestalten, each with its own pole. One pole of the human dilemma is seared and smudged with neurotic anxiety, emptiness of meaning, complete determinism of behavior, loneliness, objectivity, and transference. The other pole is alive with a creative response to normal anxiety in the Umwelt, limited freedom and responsible decision in the Eigenwelt, and participation, subjectivity, and encounter in the Mitwelt.

According to May, encounter occurs in the second pole of the bipolar dilemma, particularly in the world-of-being-with-others.

Encounter, to May, contains four elements: 1) empathy—sharing the same feeling; 2) philia—enjoying another's presence; 3) eros—having a sense of creative excitement; and 4) agape--
caring for the self of another. All four elements being mutually present between therapist and patient, the total encounter, or simply, the encounter, occurs. One or more elements being missing, a partial encounter, or simply, an encounter occurs. Should all four elements be totally missing between two human beings, no encounter comes about.

Application

May's Existential Meaning of Encounter

This being said, what remains is to draw up a concise description of the meaning of encounter, faithful to May's words and intent. Two hypotheses are offered here. The primary hypothesis adheres close to May's words; the secondary hypothesis, to his intent. But both are substantially the same. Both suppose the characteristics and assumptions of May's existential approach to psychotherapy as well as the backdrop of the bipolar human dilemma. Explicit cognizance needs to be paid to this.

Goffman's notion of encounter as meeting is adopted here, because the connotation of close contact in meeting seems to fit. Other connotations of meeting such as chance, as observed by Goffman, are excluded.
Primary Hypothesis: The encounter is a meeting of two persons in mutual empathy, philia, and agape.

Secondary Hypothesis: The encounter is a meeting between two persons, sharing the same feeling, enjoying each other's presence, having a sense of creative excitement, and caring for each other's self.

This experience is what May calls the total encounter.

Two corollaries follow from this.

Primary Corollary: An encounter is a meeting of two human beings either in mutual empathy, or in mutual philia, or in mutual eros, or in mutual agape, or in any two or three of these, but not in all.

Second Corollary: An encounter is a meeting between two human beings, either sharing the same feeling, or enjoying each other's presence, or having a sense of creative excitement, or caring for each other's self, or any two or three of these, but not all.
This is the experience May calls a partial encounter.

An Existential Model for an Encounter Group

Since an encounter group is composed of eight to twelve participants, these hypotheses and corollaries could probably be applied to them with equal validity.

First Hypothesis: The existential encounter group is composed of from eight to twelve persons of whom at least two meet in mutual empathy, philia, eros, and agape.

The meeting of two participants in the total encounter would seem sufficient justification to name it the existential encounter group. Total encounter between more participants would add validity to the nomenclature. A group, meeting to achieve total encounter and failing to do so, would then probably merit being named the existential group only in a potential way.

Second Hypothesis: The existential encounter group is composed of from eight to twelve persons of whom at least two participants meet in sharing the same feeling, enjoying each other's presence, having a sense of creative excitement, and caring for each other's self.
This is merely another way of describing the existential encounter group.

Two corollaries, similar to those following the primary and secondary hypotheses of existential encounter, follow.

**First Corollary:** An existential encounter group is composed of eight to twelve participants, at least two of whom meet either in mutual empathy, or in mutual philia, or in mutual eros, or in mutual agape, or in any two or three of these, but not in all.

To be consistent, when May's existential view of partial encounter is applied to a group in which two or more participants achieve some partial encounter, this group would seem to be an existential encounter group, because an encounter between some of its members has been the outcome of the group process. Should a group which met with the aim of arriving at an encounter between some of its members fall short of its goal, then this group could probably be called an encounter group only in the potential sense. The group process would have still been capable of arriving at an encounter between some of its members but stopped short of the mark.
Second Corollary: An existential encounter group is composed of from eight to twelve members of whom at least two participants meet either in sharing the same feeling, or in enjoying each other's presence, or in having a sense of creative excitement, or in caring for each other's self, or in any two or three, but not in all.

This is another way of describing an existential encounter group.

What has been said previously about failure to achieve an encounter in the group can be repeated here for the sake of clarity. A group which met to get to an encounter and stopped short of the mark is still potentially an encounter group, because the process of the group still has the capacity to arrive at an encounter, if it endures long enough.

To preserve this distinctive meaning of encounter, this study would like to propose that the epithet, "existential," be added to encounter group, when used with May's meaning of encounter: existential encounter group. This does not seem to be a needless
multiplication of qualifiers. Existential encounter groups would then retain a distinct meaning, while allowing for the use of encounter group as a synonym for various applications of group process as well as for the nomenclature, basic encounter group and open encounter group.

Implications for Counselor Education

Of the many questions raised by this study calling for further research, two are being selected for special mention because of their paramount importance.

The first question is, "How could May's position on the centrality of self-consciousness be clarified?" Despite the obstacles involved in reexamining the data of consciousness phenomenologically, the present status of ego-theory, and self-theory, a reexamination of this particular area merits the serious attention of existentialists with expertise in phenomenology.

The second question is, "How could May's existential approach to encounter be applied to the improvement of counselor education?" Some modest proposals are offered. A few suggestions are made for bringing May's existential approach to encounter into counseling theory, for forming existential models of group counseling along
these lines, and for more cooperation between members of the
caring professions.

Counseling Theory

Some may lodge an objection against introducing May into
counseling theory. "Counseling is counseling and therapy is
therapy." And never the twain will meet, may be added. The
implication is that psychotherapy, theory and clinical training,
belong exclusively in departments of psychiatry.

As a result, departments of counseling education have suffered.
They have become either Apollonian or Dionysian. Apollonian
departments offer head trips through counseling theory. With
granite determination they insist on the primacy of the cognitive.
Affectivity is on the black market. Dionysian departments offer gut
trips through counseling theory. The affective is really all that
matters. Intellectuality is bootlegged.

Both are scars of the dichotomy which May explained has
plagued Western man, lo these many years. With the exception of
Cecil Patterson\(^\text{209}\) and Mother Emmanuel Fontes\(^\text{210}\) few texts on

\(^{209}\)C. H. Patterson, \textit{Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy}

\(^{210}\)Mother Emmanuel Fontes, \textit{Existentialism and Its Implica-
counseling theory give more than a passing nod to an existential approach to counseling. But this is insufficient to bridge the cognitive-affective split which plagues counselor education.

The introduction of May's existential approach to encounter in counseling theory would be a step in the direction of personalizing counseling theory. Too often the person--client and counselor--has gotten lost in the cognitive-affective shuffle. The time is ripe for adequate chapters on May in texts on counseling theory. All that need be done is to substitute counseling for psychotherapy, bringing winces to counselors and therapists alike, and allow the analogy between them resolve the differences. Because psychotherapy is the prototype for counseling. Counseling is modeled upon psychotherapy. Counseling stops where pain begins. Therapy begins where pain begins.

What May predicates of his existential approach to encounter in psychotherapy is highly applicable to an existential approach to encounter in counseling. True, May probably envisages therapy as lasting fifty minutes per session, meeting three or four times per week for a year or more. And counseling sessions probably last thirty minutes, meeting once a week for a month or two at most.
Such structuring certainly affects the content. But the content is not the determinant of the approach.

An existential approach to encounter in dyadic counseling would probably be beneficial, because the presentation of a viable alternative to the Apollonian-Dionysian split is in itself healing.

**An Existential Model of Group Counseling**

An existential model of group counseling along the lines of May's existential approach to encounter also needs to be developed. Texts in group counseling and group guidance are conspicuously silent on the subject. Kemp, Glanz and Hayes are exceptions, although their brief existential references need to be expanded. This might be done by applying the first and second hypotheses and corollaries set forth in this chapter.

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Cooperation between Caring Professions

An awareness of the need for cooperation between members of the various caring professions is growing. The time when each department was an independent fiefdom, walled and moated, is over. Steps have already been taken in some departments to move beyond the days of yore. A few have been courageous and successful.

But resentments and resistances to these steps linger on, seeping out in defensive games of one-up-man-ship or one-down-man-ship, depending on the point of view. These are no-win behaviors.

Courage is needed to recall that Theodore Reik, Erik Erikson, and May himself are outstanding examples of what Freud called the lay analyst. What all have in common—the relief of personal pain—is actually a bond which may become strong enough to override the threat cooperation involves.

Should cooperative seminars be offered in which both faculty members and trainees in departments of psychiatry, psychology and counselor education could meet as peers sharing their mutual expertise, all participants would stand to gain.
APPENDIX

May's views on various aspects of his existential approach to encounter are also contained in media pertinent to the themes of this study.

These media are applicable to instructional settings. Some counseling educators are ready to use them. Others, hesitant about applying media for the purpose of instruction, are in need of an adequate rationale and implementation of instructional media. These needs are still unfulfilled.

A selection of Media Mayana, suitable for instructional purposes in counselor education, is provided in this appendix.
Films

The Humanistic Revolution: Pioneers in Perspective

With an unmistakable air of authenticity, this film, done in low-key black and white, introduces eight pioneers of what has come to be called The Third Force—psychologists who have blazed a trail between psychoanalysis and behaviorism. In company with Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Paul Tillich, Fritz Perls, Viktor Frankl, and Allan Watts, Rollo May describes his journey from having been a Freudian psychoanalyst to becoming an existentialist. This film could well serve as an introduction for the characteristics and assumptions of May's existential approach.

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1 The Humanistic Revolution: Pioneers in Perspective [Motion Picture] (Santa Ana, California: Psychological Films, 196-).
Self-Self Encounter

Beautifully photographed in stunning color by Rod Gould, May convincingly demonstrates how he himself is in the human dilemma by being both object and subject. As he tells how he feels closed in when he treats himself as a machine producing two pages an hour, the camera cuts to office employees riding in an elevator. But when he tells of his constructive feelings of anger rebelling against the compulsive pressures of assembly line production which bring him to decide to regard himself as a subject and write the way he wants, again the camera cuts to the elevator door opening and the occupants walking freely out into the lobby. The content and symbols of this film provide a sharp focus for May's views of the human dilemma.

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2Rollo May, Self-Self Encounter [Motion Picture] (Santa Ana, California: Psychological Films, 196–).
Self-Other Encounter

A more classic presentation of May's picture of the total encounter could hardly have been created. Warning against the error that all that is needed for encounter is to have an affective catharsis, May shows how the total encounter with the four-fold elements of empathy, philia, eros, and agape structure the meeting and make it last. This goes beyond the ephemeral evanescence of a partial encounter in which any one of the four elements is absent. The camera symbolically cuts back and forth from May to an idyllic scene of him chatting with a beautiful woman beside a crystal mountain stream and admiring the wood flowers they have plucked in the surrounding forest.

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3Rollo May, Self-Other Encounter [Motion Picture] (Santa Ana, California: Psychological Films, 196-).
Manipulation and Human Encounter

Encounter, May explains in this imaginatively produced color film, is distorted when one or more of the elements of the encounter are lacking. He chiefly talks about the distortion of encounter either when agape alone is present or when empathy alone is present, although he briefly touches on encounter-distortion when there is just philia or just eros. When he mentions a psychotherapist who is using empathy to get a patient’s number, the camera cuts to such a scene. The therapist is writing on a yellow pad of paper as his patient squirms anxiously in her chair. A close-up of her face reveals her distress. A close-up of her hands shows her nervously twisting a piece of Kleenex between her hands. The therapist keeps on writing. May then turns his attention to transference as a distortion of encounter. This film will serve as the opposite side of the previous film presenting his views on the elements of the encounter.

\[4\]Rollo May, Manipulation and Human Encounter [Motion Picture] (Santa Ana, California: Psychological Films, 196-).
The Sexual Encounter

May gives his views on the current obsession with sex as the camera moves from him and his audience to a pastiche of night club scenes reminiscent of North Beach. May interprets the obsession with sex as a blank check for supposedly managing encounter in party behaviors and in the advertisements of perfume, toothpaste, and automobiles. He finds these distortions of encounter apathetic and devoid of eros. "The fig leaf today," he observes, is worn over one's face to conceal the absence of total encounter." In May's opinion this obsession is due to a repression of fear of death! As a presentation of a pseudo-erotic encounter, this film can serve as an extension of the previous one on distortions of encounter.

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5Rollo May, The Sexual Encounter [Motion Picture] (Santa Ana California: Psychological Films, 196-).
Search and Research: Psychology in Perspective

This black and white film focuses on the plight of a young woman who is seeking a way out of her troubles. After a moving account of her plight, the process in which she could be healed is discussed in terms of an existential approach by May, in terms of a client-centered approach by Carl Rogers, and in terms of a behavioristic approach by Harry Harlow. This film might be used by way of resume of the content of this seminar.

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6 Search and Research: Psychology in Perspective [Motion Picture] (Santa Ana, California: Psychological Films, 196-).
Phonotapes

Existential Psychology

In this dialogue, recorded at Sonoma State College in northern California, May and Maslow compare notes on their respective existential views. Maslow gives an absorbing account of how he arrived at formulating his hypotheses about self-actualizing persons after having studied rhesus monkeys with Harlow according to the rigorous experimental approach. May responds by comparing his own existential premises with those of Maslow. This would be a pedagogical foil for communicating the existential bases of encounter as drawn up by May.

According to May, western man seems to be afraid of the creative aspects of his unconscious just at the point where it leads him to break out into some new behavior. By way of example, he cites the way TV master of ceremonies shut him up just when he is going to say something original. In May's interpretation this happens when someone senses "the rumbling of the earthquake." That is to say, some new expression is going to come out which might shake some old pattern. Why are people so afraid of someone creating something new? May's answer is that creativity rubs counter to the assembly line mentality that all human behavior must be predictable. This phonotape is a significant counterpoint to the creative aspect of the element of eros integrated into the total encounter. May narrates the striking account of how he abandoned his psychoanalytical hypothesis that anxiety is the result of early maternal rejection with instantaneous vividness, while walking to the subway, in favor of the other that it is due to rejection that is lied about. The anxious person who has been rejected by a parent who pretends to be accepting cannot understand his world.

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May's theme in this talk, recorded at Esalen Institute, is that phenomenology is the bridge between the person and his world. The more modern science, he says, is pursued, the farther the investigator gets away from the object of investigation. He becomes engaged instead in the formulation of mathematical formulae. This process of abstraction rests, in May's opinion, on the Cartesian dichotomy of extension and intention. Descartes postulated the pineal gland as the link between the world of extension and the world of intention. But his only guarantee for his postulate was faith in God.

May sees phenomenology as the link bridging the split between the three dimensional object world of extension and the subject world of intention, which has the added dimension of consciousness. In his analysis, the object-subject split stems from an intense epistomological loneliness. Leibnitz, for example, stated that monads have no windows and no doors. May interprets this as a statement of Leibnitz' lonely isolation.
These themes fit the characteristics of May's existential approach to encounter like a glove. So this phonotape could serve as an instructional medium to present them.

Violence and the Daimonic

In this phonotape, May shows the relation of the daimonic and the violent upsets during the Spring of 1970. He sees a parallel between the present era and that of St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo in Northern Africa. We are threatened today with being wiped out by thermo-nuclear weapons just as the Roman Empire was being threatened with collapse by the Goths in the fourth century. May quotes Augustine saying, "God allows evil only for the emergence of greater good."

Established institutions of education, government, and religion, May thinks, are undergoing changes as sympta of one civilization dying out and a new one being born. These institutions are drying up because of the arid application of technical reason. Vietnam May takes as the symbol of the death of western civilization. No one can any longer be a mere bystander to this cosmic event. The killing of four bystanders at Kent State demonstrate this.

May draws his notion of the daimonic from Socrates whose daimon told him his death need not be evil. Prior to good and evil, the daimonic only becomes destructive (evil) when not integrated with the other elements of the encounter.
This phonotape can serve as a highly relevant way of presenting May's views of the human dilemma.

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Violence and Spirituality

In this sobering address, May ponders the point where the revolutionary state of the country and the structure of spirituality overlap. He is actually examining the human dilemma from the vantage point of war and peace.

Self-transcendence is an expansion of self and ego, May holds, rather than a loss of either. This is one structure of spirituality. May recounts a moment of transcendence in his life. He was contemplating Mount Blanc. He was caught up in an experience larger than himself. Participating more fully in being, he sensed his consciousness expanding.

War, May claims, has similar advantages. War's attraction is its horror. After hanging Billy Budd, May notes, his crewmates cheered as they rushed to man the guns. Why, May asks? Many regret the loss of lyric meaning, purpose, importance, comradeship, trust and self-transcendence discovered in war when peace comes. In peace, many people sink back into the pole of the predicament in the human dilemma.

This phonotape will provide strong input for presenting May's vista of the human dilemma.

Freud's greatest contribution, May proposes in this address, was to show the futility of the Victorian reliance on will power. An individual was not guided by his decisions made in church on Sunday morning as much as by his fears, dreads, urges, and drives which Freud formulated into the unconscious. This was an epoch-breaking discovery, because it broke the mold of one model of man.

From this, the assumption was made that all human behavior is entirely determined. The man in the street felt confirmed in feeling like a puppet and a pawn, powerless and impotent to influence his fate.

Freud certainly had held the theory that his patient was completely determined. But he had had the genius to be inconsistent in practice and nurtured the patient's freedom of choice. Some psychoanalysts however try to avoid the inherent contradiction in this position. Roger Knight, for example, held that the illusion of freedom must still be fostered in the patient. May is convinced however that accepting this model makes the change process impossible.

This address is stunning material for understanding why May was lead to form the assumptions underlying his existential approach.

12Rollo May, Will, Wish and Intentionality [Phonotape] (San Rafael, California: Big Sur Recordings, 196-). 1 reel (5 in.); 3 3/4 ips.; M343A.
Some Suggestions for Application

Highly creative professors will find their own innovative way of applying these media for instructional purposes. Instructors with less creativity actualized will probably find their own choice and sequence of media will turn out more effective than anticipated.

The electricity in an innovative seminar such as is envisaged here will probably derive from the members having a sense of participating in something new. So what happens to the members of the seminar after the media input had been fed in is much preferable to superimposing some prefabricated design upon the seminar. Whatever reactions occur need to be followed.

In the event however that nothing happens the following suggestions could be considered. Members of the seminar could engage in a group discussion of the media presented. This could be done either in a large group discussion composed of all seminar members, in small group discussions composed of six to ten members each, or various combinations of both.

Another approach could be to form task groups of members of the seminar, each group to produce a project as the objective of the seminar. The rest of the actual seminar time could be devoted to task group planning.

Another alternative would be to combine all three approaches.
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