

## **In Memoriam: Seymour Pollack, MA, MD, 1916–1982**

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Seymour Pollack, the third president of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, died on April 8, 1982 of a progressive cardiac disability. As a colleague and friend of some twenty-five years, I have been deeply moved in writing this memorial, for I shall miss his fellowship, wisdom, and counsel.

Seymour Pollack was born in New York City on July 3, 1916 and migrated to California with his family prior to entering the University of California in Berkley in 1933. He received the Bachelor of Arts degree in zoology and psychology, cum laude, in 1937, and, in the subsequent year, moved to the University of California, Los Angeles, where he gained a Master's degree in psychology, 1938.

In 1945 he was granted the MD degree from the University of California, School of Medicine, San Francisco, and completed a rotating general internship at the Los Angeles County General Hospital, 1945 to 1946. After a year of psychiatric internship at Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital, New York City, 1946 to 1947, Seymour moved uptown as a resident of psychiatry at the New York State Psychiatric Institute on a United States Public Health Service fellowship. Between 1947 and 1951, while at the State Psychiatric Institute, he was in training at the Columbia University Psychoanalytic Clinic for Training and Research as a graduate fellow where his training analyst was Dr. Sandor Rado. While in New York, he saw professional service in child psychiatry at a Guidance Clinic and, in 1951, returned to Los Angeles, where he held an appointment as chief of psychosomatic medicine in the Veterans Administration Hospital, 1951 to 1955. In 1952, Seymour was appointed a clinical instructor in psychiatry at the University of California, Los Angeles; three years later, he served as assistant clinical professor, College of Medical Evangelists, Department of Psychiatry for a period of two years and in 1956 he joined the faculty of the University of Southern California School of Medicine as assistant professor, Department of Psychiatry. Between 1956 and 1963, he was instrumental in developing an institute for psychiatry and the law for the judiciary which developed into the Institute of Psychiatry, Law, and Behavioral Science where he served as founder and director, 1965. As associate professor between 1960 and 1968 at the University of Southern California School of Medicine, he also served as director of the Division of Psychiatry and Law, at the Los Angeles County-University of Southern California Medical Center. Sey-

mour was not only professor in the Department of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, but also full professor in the School of Public Administration, and taught courses in psychiatry and the law at the USC Law Center for both undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Seymour was in charge of teaching programs in psychiatry and the law for the judiciary and was involved in a continuing series of seminars in psychiatry and the law for psychiatrists, prosecuting attorneys, and public defenders and the seminars were expanded to include family law, personal injury litigation, and corrections.

Seymour's bibliography includes some 90+ articles, chapters and symposiums, published between 1955 and 1982. At the time of this writing, numerous manuscripts are being uncovered by the current director of the Institute, Dr. Bruce Gross, PhD, JD, which will eventually be published by the Institute.

Seymour's interest in forensic psychiatry led him to active participation in the Psychiatric Section of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences and he was insistent that forensic psychiatry was but one of a group of sciences which served the Courts for legal purposes to legal ends. Seymour recognized that the level of probability in the physical sciences, although less than certainty, was undoubtedly higher than the level of probability in the biologic sciences. Medicine, one of the biologic sciences, has a modest level of error; psychiatry, due to the particular nature of psychiatric data, needed further refinement. There was little opportunity for corrective feedback in psychiatric opinion evidence for legal purposes; hence, the need for the forensic psychiatrist to receive further training to comprehend fully the needs of the law, to understand the limitations of psychiatry, and to recognize how difficult it is for opinion evidence in psychiatry to approach the "reasonable medical certainty" which is required of the law.

With the development of the American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law, 1969, of which he was a founding member and the third president, Seymour's lectures and articles covered the rapidly exploding field of forensic psychiatry and his papers ranged far and wide. By 1971 Seymour had defined forensic psychiatry as the application of psychiatry to legal issues, for legal ends and legal purposes. He considered forensic psychiatry to be concerned primarily with the ends of the legal system, i.e., with the ends and values of civil and criminal justice, in contrast to general psychiatry which is concerned with therapeutic objectives and values within the medical frame of reference. Distinct from forensic psychiatry was the group of disciplines within the category of "psychiatry and the law"; this included social, community and administrative psychiatry, the teaching function to judges, attorneys, and psychiatrists, and the application of psychiatry to

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corrections. Seymour actually defined the specific field of forensic psychiatry by relating his first principle of forensic psychiatry as "the principle of legal dominance" and, in this category, he included the many issues involving commitment, right to treatment, right to reject treatment, and so on. Seymour was an outstanding teacher of forensic psychiatry and his lectures were always well-attended. On a personal note, I recall an extraordinary three-hour lecture on malingering in 1979, in which Seymour identified malingering for legal purposes, outlined the dimensions of malingering, and elaborated on the essentials for legal proof of malingering. This three-hour discourse held the audience captive and publication of the volume, *Identification of Malingering for Legal Purposes*, is anticipated by the USC Institute.

On a more personal note, Seymour was a very private person. He married his wife, Evelyn, some forty years ago before he entered medical school, raised several children, and remained highly protective of his wife and family. Aware of the potential violence of a disgruntled offender, Seymour sought to shield his wife and family from harassment and this protective shield persists in Evelyn's personal request that the writer omit all mention of the surviving family in this biography. While Evelyn continues to maintain a dignified and detached privacy, she wishes to be remembered to Seymour's many colleagues and associates.

Seymour was active in the American Academy of Psychoanalysis, the American College of Physicians, and the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry. For the sixteen years that he was founder and director of the Institute at USC, Seymour maintained active participation with the various national societies until a progressive cardiac problem limited his participation in meetings. Initially opposed to an American Board of Forensic Psychiatry, Seymour became convinced of the need for such a certifying board that would require certain safeguards for training, prior certification by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, and written and oral examinations. At Board meetings, his attitude reflected both concern and kindness to applicants and, in discussions, his courtesy and wisdom were most appreciated.

Although his colleagues and students considered him a superb teacher, Seymour saw himself as a student. In the past sixteen years of his directorship of the Institute at USC Seymour presented several score symposia and readings for seminars in forensic psychiatry directed to judges, attorneys, public defenders, district attorneys, psychiatrists, and psychologists for the purposes of training and research.

During his directorship, the University of Southern California Institute of Psychiatry, Law, and Behavioral Science became the outstanding training

institution in forensic psychiatry and, under the mature guidance of Bruce Gross, PhD, JD, the level of excellence will be maintained.

Seymour injured a hip in a light plane accident and underwent a highly successful hip replacement procedure some 20 years ago. In the last decade, however, Seymour developed major cardiac problems which eventually led to his death on April 8, 1982. He will be missed.