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To cite this article: Sally Moskowitz & Inga Blom (2021): In Honor and Loving Memory of Anni Bergman 1919-2021, Journal of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychotherapy, DOI: [10.1080/15289168.2021.2005427](https://doi.org/10.1080/15289168.2021.2005427)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15289168.2021.2005427>



Published online: 16 Dec 2021.



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In Honor and Loving Memory of Anni Bergman 1919-2021

Sally Moskowitz, PhD and Inga Blom, PhD

Anni Bergman, PhD Biography

Sally Moskowitz, PhD

Inga Blom, PhD

Anna Emilie Rink was born in Vienna on January 10, 1919. By the time she escaped the Nazis in 1939, her parents and two sisters had died of medical causes; her two brothers set off for Italy and Australia. At age 19, she arrived in California alone, which she described as ‘a great adventure.’ In LA, she became part of a group of young musicians and students studying with Arnold Shoenberg at UCLA. She supported herself by living as an assistant and companion to the psychoanalyst Christine Olden, sparking her love affair with psychoanalysis. In Dr. Olden’s circle of European expats, she met Polish-born activist, publisher and writer Peter Bergman, whom she married shortly after moving to New York City in 1943. By then, she had completed a BA in Music and Early Childhood Education. Anni taught recorder and piano and with Florence White, wrote *Playing the Recorder*, a book still in print. Over the next few years, her sons Kostia and Tobi were born.

In 1959, after a friend declined the position, Anni was hired by Dr. Margaret Mahler who was beginning her research at the Masters Children’s Center. Working with Drs. Fred Pine, Manuel Furer, and John McDevitt, Anni was one of several psychoanalytic-researcher-observers who dictated detailed observations of children in the two nurseries at the center. One nursery, for “normal” toddlers and their mothers, was designed in an informal way so that the comings and goings between child and mother could be observed as they occurred naturally over the course of the day. These families were recruited from a local playground, representing the middle class downtown New Yorkers of the day; many of these families formed lifelong connections. In the second nursery, designed for autistic and psychotic children, therapists conducted intensive work with mother and child together. Dyadic psychotherapy was unique, if not unknown, at the time. Anni was involved in both projects, recording notes and theorizing on the separation-individuation process, and also working therapeutically with the autistic children and their mothers, helping them establish a close bond from which they could then navigate the intrapsychic processes of separation-individuation. The research with Margaret Mahler continued for more than a decade, following families in their daily lives over days, weeks, years, and culminated in the publication in 1975 of the groundbreaking and seminal book *The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant*, coauthored with Margaret Mahler and Fred Pine. In contrast to prevailing views of the day, in which knowledge about inner worlds and childhood experiences emerged only in the analyst’s office, they used observation – without judgment – as the starting point of study. Detailed observations were complemented by routine developmental and psychological testing, home visits, and interviews with parents. These methods represented a significant departure from the methods of the day, aligning with others of the era (Anna Freud, D.W. Winnicott, John Bowlby) who were increasingly interested in the subjective experiences of children in their relationships and environments.

Having received her MA from the Bank Street College of Education in 1963, Anni continued her work with autistic and psychotic children, developing what she called the tripartite model of intervention. Including parents in the clinical picture was another departure from the way things were done. With Drs. Gilbert Voyat and Linda Gunsberg, she co-founded and directed the HEW (Health Education & Welfare) grant which funded a therapeutic nursery for preschool inner-city autistic and psychotic children. The project ran from 1978 through 1984, and was endorsed and housed by the City College Clinical Psychology Program, then located at 135th Street and Broadway. Dr. Sally Moskowitz joined as a co-director of the project in 1981. The therapeutic nursery utilized the frameworks of separation-individuation theory and Piaget's equilibration theory and cognitive stages. The nursery was staffed by Bank Street trained teachers. Doctoral students in Clinical Psychology provided intensive, three times weekly treatment of child and mother together, and individual treatment for mothers. Masters and PhD level students worked as therapeutic companions for the children, bridging their worlds beyond home and the nursery. Many PhD theses and publications came out of this very important work.

In 1983 Anni received her PhD in clinical psychology from the City University of New York. Dr. Steven Ellman served as her dissertation chair and later coauthored with her two chapters on separation individuation theory. Anni continued to practice and teach dyadic work with children and their parents. Some of this work has been published in her collected paper, *Ours, Yours, Mine: Mutuality and the Emergence of the Separate Self*, which was written in collaboration with Maria F. Fahey. She was invited to become Faculty and Supervisor at the Postdoctoral Program at New York University and IPTAR, and Faculty, Supervisor and Training Analyst at the Contemporary Freudian Society. She also has been a special member of the Columbia and White Institutes and a Visiting Faculty member in the Clinical Psychology Program at the University of Padova. She has been a long-time active Board member of the Margaret S. Mahler Child Development Foundation. She contributed to many committees and for several years co-chaired the conference committees of the Contemporary Freudian Society and of the Institute for Psychoanalytic Theory and Research with Dr. Carolyn Ellman, bringing analysts from around the world to speak on innovative topics.

In 1997, as an outgrowth of a CFS study group on the emerging work and literature on infant development and parent-infant treatment, Anni and Rita Reiswig launched the Three-Year Training in Parent-Infant Studies, a course of study built on the foundation of infant observation, theories of infant development, and parent-infant treatment. In 2006, IPTAR joined the CFS as a co-sponsor of the program and Sally Moskowitz joined as one of the co-directors. At that time, the program was also renamed the Anni Bergman Parent-Infant Training Program to publicly acknowledge and honor the influence of Anni's contributions to the field of psychoanalytic work with parents, infants, and young children. Anni continued to be active teaching in the program until 2016.

In 2000, *the Journal of Infant, Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy* published its first volume, founded by Anni along with Kirkland Vaughans, Susan Warshaw, Neil Altman, Elaine Seitz, Pearl-Ellen Gordon, Steve Seligman. Dr. Vaughans has noted Anni's insistence on representing the infant in the journal's name. Humble in its origins but not in its mission, it is internationally recognized for its high quality contributions to the welfare of the most vulnerable among us, and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

During this same period, soon after the attacks on the World Trade Center, Drs. Beatrice Beebe and Phyllis Cohen conceived of a project to find and work with mothers who were pregnant and widowed on September 11th and the babies born to them. They gathered a core group of therapists that included Anni, Dr. Donna Demetri Friedman, Dr. Sally Moskowitz, Rita Reiswig, Dr. Mark Sossin and Dr. Suzi Tortora, and with them developed a model of working with traumatized and grieving mothers and their babies in mother/baby groups and individually, using video feedback of mother/baby interaction. *The Mothers, Infants, and Young Children of September 11, 2001: A Primary Prevention Project* includes her work as a supervisor and consultant.

Not long after, around 2005, Anni began working with Dr. Miriam Steele and Dr. Steele's then graduate student Dr. Inga Blom on a follow-up study of children who had been in the Masters Children's Center. Of course, Anni had been intimately involved in other follow-up initiatives, meeting with the babies as they grew into adults; she maintained relationships with many of the "Mahler families." However, this project required an integration of the ideas and methods of Separation-Individuation Theory and Attachment Theory, something that had captivated Anni after attending a research workshop with Peter Fonagy in London. Always collaborating, this also built on Italian analysts Adriana Lis and Claudia Mazzeschi's initial attachment interviews with Mahler subjects. Subsequently, Drs. Steele and Blom collaborated with Dr. Wendy Olesker, who had been involved in previous follow-up work with the Mahler subjects along with Dr. John McDevitt. Together, they focused on bridging those two theoretical positions, in light of contemporary attachment research and ongoing longitudinal data collection, and wrote and presented annually on the continuing theoretical and clinical relevance of Dr. Bergman's early work with Margaret Mahler.

Anni's professional life – clinical work, writing and speaking – continued well into her 90s, collaborating with colleagues and students close to home and around the world. Anni and her work belonged to no one institution or orientation, and lived everywhere. A coterie of graduate students stayed in her home and/or worked with her until recently, joining in her continued commitment to evolving perspectives and integrating ideas, and sharing work and life. The first presentation on the follow-up work integrating separation-individuation theory and attachment theory occurred in Padova, Italy in May 2008, where her presentation was entitled "*The Mother Observed and The Mother Recalled.*" Most recently, in 2013, Anni traveled with Daniel Polyak to her hometown of Vienna, as a visiting scholar at Sigmund Freud University, invited to do a series of courses on development in early childhood. During this later phase of her life, she continued to participate in study groups, on Winnicott, contribute to her program, and donate her expertise through guest lectures. True to form, her presentations even in later years, always lively and engaging, were rooted in the power of observation, a gift for rendering the most complex perspective into succinct and easy-to-understand language, and her incredible ability to view the world from the perspective of a child.

Anni's influence has been widespread over many generations of patients, students, supervisees, and the field of psychoanalysis. She is beloved and revered by colleagues throughout the world for her warmth, keenly sharp and open mind, and her capacity to see hope and joy in the darkest places. She presented papers around the world and brought lecturers to New York, helping to further the psychoanalytic study and discussion of infancy and developmental processes. Throughout her long career, she grew with psychoanalysis, always embracing new ideas and integrating them into the old. Her mind was creative and capacious able to bridge the worlds of research, intrapsychic processes, and various theoretical orientations.

Remembrances of Anni

Fred Pine, PhD

Anni Bergman Introduction, New York Freudian Society Conference in Honor of Anni Bergman, December 2004

I met Anni Bergman in the spring of 1961 when Margaret Mahler invited me to come as a Research Consultant for her then-in-process studies of normal development in very young children at the Master's Children's Center in Greenwich Village. Mahler's work on what she was then already calling symbiotic psychotic children was already well along, and to whatever degree possible, her wish was that these children be included in the research on normal development as we pursued it. She was clearly already following a research agenda, but wanted to see if something more formal could be developed.

There was a staff member who was working on both projects. She worked directly, clinically, with some of the severely disturbed children and their mothers, in what Mahler called a tripartite design – mother, child, and therapist in the room together for long blocks of time every day; the idea was for the therapist to operate as a bridge between mother and child, according to its symbiotic needs and its later individuating ones, absorbing some of what the mother could not cope with, facilitating individuation and relatedness when those stages were reached. I heard this staff worker discuss these children with astute sensitivity, a sensitivity and intelligence which immediately won my great admiration and respect. She also worked in the normal mother-infant observational nursery, there primarily as a participant observer – participant in that she saw to the smooth running of the nursery setting and saw to the comfort of the mothers and their children. And observer in that she recorded her observations and reported them regularly in the research meetings, some of which I gradually began to attend. There too her observations were astute, impressive – one saw a creative, intuitive, empathic mind at work. Of course that staff person to whom I refer was Anni Bergman whom we honor with this conference today. We'll actually see some of her clinical work on film today, as I understand the program plans.

Not only was she talented, but she was appealing as a person and thoroughly welcoming of the newcomer to the group – me. I soon found myself and my wife invited to her home for warmly wonderful winter holiday parties, for concerts, for professionally-connected welcoming or celebratory events and the like – all accompanied by informal yet sumptuous feasts. “Anni,” the name by which I know her and most others know her, has remained the person that I formed that respectful and affectionate impression of 43 years ago.

Even before Anni returned to graduate school to complete her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology at the City University of New York, she was publishing actively regarding her work with the severely disturbed children and the normally developing ones. She had a respected voice at the regular research meetings of the group. And, throughout, her sympathetic and imaginative sensibilities shone through. Though I am listed as second author and Anni third, after Mahler, on our summary book, *The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant*, that is in fact an historical accident; Anni was far more deeply involved with the creation of the book than I ever was.

It was actually only after the publication of that book in 1975 that Anni returned to graduate school and completed her Ph.D. She had been functioning more creatively and more prolifically than the average Ph.D. in any case, so the formality of the doctorate served only to give recognition to what had already been achieved. Nonetheless the doctorate, too, was achieved and properly both culminated and represented the contributory academic half of her professional life, complementing the integrally-linked clinical half.

The 1999 publication of her book, pulling together many of her publications, is called *Ours, Yours, Mine: Mutuality and the Emergence of the Separate Self*. The title aptly captures one major area of her contribution – ours, yours, mine. How do the three concepts emerge? From what primal sources are they differentiated? How are their earlier and later forms linked and yet different? What are their instabilities? Embedded in her clinical and observational work, the papers in her book move deeply, and yet with specificity, into all of those questions. This is all the productive outgrowth of her earlier work, work that we did in part, together, as colleagues.

But Anni Bergman has an active mind, the mind of a still-developing person, and in recent years her mind has led her in three distinct and additional directions. First, for several years now she has been engaged in follow up studies of the children we studied during their separation-individuation processes all those many years ago. Where she gets the energy for all of this as well as for what I shall now go on to describe is a mystery, but she certainly saves time for getting her jobs done by bicycling all over Manhattan to get where she has to go.

Second, among her later-in-life developing interests, she has become involved in the whole attachment literature and the large body of research based in mother-infant interaction and connection and the resources the infant is born with that translate into attachment to the mother. Her most

recent publication, this year (in *the Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*), is called *Revisiting Rapprochement in the Light of Contemporary Developmental Theories*. Her mind is open, lively, and respected.

And third, she is responsible, along with Rita Reiswig working alongside her, for the founding of the mother-infant program at the New York Freudian Society, and has long been its creative force. In that program, she teaches regularly and brings her own clinical/developmental expertise to bear on the work of the many professionals who are in that program as students.

Anni is much traveled. She is regularly invited all over the world to speak in areas of her expertise. It comes as no surprise to me that this should be so. I believe others recognize in her what I recognized 43 years ago – an intelligent, open-minded, clinically astute mind set in a warm, responsive, welcoming, appealing person. I am pleased to have known her all these years, and pleased to have been asked to introduce her for this conference.

Thank you.

Judith Lobel, PhD

Now that Anni has died I find my thoughts go back to when I first met her, more than 50 years ago, to one of my earliest memories of her, which I will recount here, because it illustrates so much about Anni's generous nature, her wish to develop curiosity in the young person I was at that time and her deep conviction in the power of her connection with a mute, and seriously autistic child, to bring that child into more complete relation to herself and to the wider world. The moment was also a pivotal one in my professional development. I was a nursery school teacher then, at a school which shared a backyard with The Masters Children's Center, the site of Margaret Mahler's dual research and treatment projects. Anni worked both as a research associate and as a therapist with children on the spectrum who fit Mahler's criteria of symbiotic psychosis.

As I tended to my nursery class I could look up from time to time and watch Anni as she followed an elfin autistic girl who moved from one piece of yard equipment to another, swinging and climbing with reckless abandon. Soon Anni became aware of my interest in what she and her patient, "Violet," were doing. She responded to my interest by inviting me to watch a therapy session through a one way mirror. During the session it began to grow dark outside, Violet climbed up on a shelf next to the window. She seemed restless and upset swinging her body from side to side. Anni said, "Violet, I think you are upset because, it's getting dark now and this reminds you of when you were at camp, and your parents didn't come for you and you thought they would never come back for you," recalling what had happened that summer, just a few weeks earlier. At this, Violet became even more violently upset, she, wailed, and struck out at the air. Anni stayed with her and talked more about how terrible and scary that afternoon in the summer had been. This was the first time I had ever seen a therapy session, the first time I ever heard an interpretation. I was greatly impressed that Anni was so confident in her connection with Violet that she could say something which she must have known would increase Violet's upset. She was also so confident that what she was saying would be comprehensible to Violet, and that feeling understood, along with Anni's continued presence, would eventually help Violet compose herself and calm down.

Later that year, Anni asked me whether I would like to spend some time with Violet at her home, to give Violet's mother a break and to serve as a bridge between Violet and the world beyond her home. Thus I became the first of several of "therapeutic companions" for Violet. (Creating this role is an example of the practical inventiveness Anni brought to the clinical setting.) I spent several hours a week with Violet over a couple of years. During this time she made amazing developmental strides. I feel I was so lucky to see this growth take place. During

her sessions with me she drew a great deal and I was as able to learn about her thinking, her inner world, through her prolific drawing. My exposure to the atmosphere of enquiry and the psychoanalytically-oriented treatment of seriously disturbed children at Masters led me to undertake a Ph.D. in Clinical psychology at CUNY, where I again had contact with Anni, as she was involved in the running of the therapeutic nursery. In fact, for many years I continued to draw on Anni's clinical insight as she became a mentor and senior colleague.

Mourning Anni

Sally Moskowitz, PhD

I was incredibly lucky to have had Anni as my first child supervisor over 40 years ago when I was a student in CUNY 's clinical psychology doctoral program, to have had her as a member of my dissertation committee, and to have continued to have had her as a mentor, close friend and colleague ever since.

Anni came to City in the early 70's when she was finishing *The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant*. Separation-individuation theory was revolutionizing psychoanalytic theory, bringing the first three years of life and relationship into the foreground of conceptualization. From early on it was clear to the City students that Anni was someone to learn from.

Anni delighted in listening to descriptions of children's play. She seemed to magically enter the play metaphor, become absorbed in it and emerge with a brilliant theoretical statement or interpretation. In her remarkable way, she conveyed joy in the work, the evolving relationships, the progress, and the accumulating knowledge. Thinking about the minds of children was a wondrous undertaking and helping children and their parents was deeply gratifying.

Anni often generously offered me zippy rides in her Renault from the uptown City campus to Chelsea where she lived and from where I could easily walk to my apartment. She would sometimes make stops along the way, pulling into tiny, questionably legal parking spots to pick up wonderful foods and treats. She sometimes invited me into her house for a snack or meal. Her house was an explosion of colors, patterns, people and objects intricately wedged together in what simultaneously and paradoxically conveyed warmth, comfort and excitement. I marveled at all these expressions of creativity, daring and exquisite sensibility.

Anni became central to my personal and professional life. She generously invited me, my husband Michael who was also her student, and many of her other students to wonderful parties and holiday celebrations where people of many ages, from many fields and countries mixed. During a particularly memorable evening, I met Dan Stern and Margaret Mahler and heard them disagree about theory.

At City with Gilbert Voyat and Linda Gunsberg, Anni soon created a nursery program for autistic and psychotic children. After graduating, I supervised and later briefly co-ran the program with her. There too, she brought people together from different disciplines, and created a community dedicated to learning about and helping children and families many psychoanalysts thought were beyond the help understanding could bring. She was able to see what was best in each person, patient or therapist, and how their strengths could be brought to their work or development. She hosted weekend retreats at her house in Connecticut for all the project's doctoral student therapists, therapeutic companions, teachers and staff where we cooked, hiked and swam in between work sessions during which cases were presented and discussed in close and fascinating detail.

A few years later, when I had children and Anni had grandchildren very close in age, some of the best times of my life were spent sitting on park benches with Anni watching children and talking through what we saw – the ways children formed connections, created order on the playground, expressed their inner lives and fantasies, and related to each other, us and their carers. We talked about our families, politics, patients, and analytic training. We spent some vacations and holidays together.

I watched her swim across cold lakes and take one of my children deep into the ocean. These years during which I knew her so personally are the years I most treasure. She was generous and fearless. She saw beauty everywhere. She could combine disparate elements to create something new.

When I finished analytic training, Anni encouraged me to join a study group she was in which was led by Beatrice Beebe. Continuing to study and think on the cutting edge was essential to Anni and I am so grateful that she nudged me along. Through this we became part of the group of therapists brought together by Beatrice to work with mothers who were pregnant and widowed in the September 11th World Trade Center attacks. I also entered the Parent-Infant Program that Anni and Rita Reiswig had founded and later became a co-director with them. She is woven through my personal and professional lives.

Anni's courage, discernment and radiance permeated her clinical work and projects. She worked, presented, traveled into her 90's until she could no longer fight her declining mind. Even then, she still attended the Parent Infant Program, by then renamed in her honor. She would often startle the group by suddenly awakening from what seemed like a deep and perhaps befuddled sleep to comment incisively about an aspect of the material being presented. I began to mourn her then and feel grief now even more at the finality of the loss.

Remembrance of Anni

Steven Ellman, PhD

Having another occasion to memorialize Anni Bergman again reminds me of how important Anni Bergman was in my life. I was a Professor at City College and for some of that time I was the Director of the Ph.D. program in Clinical Psychology. Anni was seeing a number of children who were considered to be autistic and some of our students served as therapeutic companions for these children. Several of the students (I remember Mike Moskowitz, Chip Crosby and Fran Reiter most clearly) told me what an important experience it was working with these children under Anni's supervision. With Larry Gould and other clinical faculty members we decided to use part of our clinical facilities to treat these children. Under Anni's supervision we wrote a grant (Gilbert Voyat was the Principal Investigator) and a number of our students received valuable training treating these children. The program lasted almost 15 years.

While Anni was running this program, Larry Gould and I convinced her to get her Ph.D. in our program. It was somewhat absurd since she was an international figure and undoubtedly had more to teach us than otherwise. Of course, we customized a program for her, and I was fortunate to be her thesis sponsor. I should say that I was listed as her sponsor but in reality, I learned a great deal going over her thesis. Her thesis resulted in several coauthored publications where Anni included me as her coauthor. She even wanted to place me as first author in one or two publications but even I was unable to take advantage of her generosity.

The publications of course were mostly Anni's, but she was generous to a fault and my understanding of Anni's and Mahler's work was greatly enhanced by this collaboration. I could write many other things about her wonderful parties and how she related to my children. However, I don't know if many people realize what a gifted athlete she was. One time when my daughter was about 10, Annie was over and she told my daughter that she had worked in a circus in Vienna. My daughter, true to our family traditions, was somewhat skeptical and asked her what she did in the circus? Anni said various gymnastic tricks and my daughter said show me one. Anni then told her she would stand on her head and my daughter now was alarmed and was worried that Anni would hurt herself. She said no, no, I believe you, but Anni nevertheless stood on her head and much to our relief did not at all hurt herself. She was also a good runner and an excellent swimmer. Once when we were in Morocco together, I went to play tennis on a very cold day. As I was walking back to the hotel, the person I was playing with was surprised to see someone in the swimming pool – he said it must be a polar bear type person. I knew at once it was Anni. I miss her.

Ann Marie Sacramone

At the CUCC Anni invented the concept of a therapeutic companion. Therapeutic companions were students who wanted to become psychoanalysts and accompanied psychotic and autistic young children on their “missions to explore the world outside in many different ways.” During these explorations, meaningful relationships were formed between the child and the companion, and between the child and the world. Because of this, of course, the inner worlds of these children changed as they related to the world around them.

I learned about therapeutic companions after Anni and I had worked together and been friends for a few years. At the time I didn’t realize how profound this concept was. I had not read her writing about it and instead listened to her offhand remark about therapeutic companions giving the CUCC mothers a needed break.

Unknowingly, I think I mostly reincarnated the therapeutic companion into the developmental partner in my Square Width Model at Lincoln Square Community Center in 2011. There, community members who were concerned about a child got together with the child and me. Our purpose was to dream up what might be reparative for the child *within the world of the community center*. After this was dreamed up by me, the child, and community members together, a volunteer college student was brought in and spent time with the child to do what we had all dreamed of together. This relationship, based on the deep meanings of these children changed everyone involved. The world became a safe adventure for them.

I think the therapeutic companion and the developmental partner are a way in which a troubled children can relate differently within the world around them, by doing so together with a companion that has their deep meanings in mind all the while.

I think about not fitting into the world in a way that brings joy and I remember Anni fleeing Austria with no choice to stay home as her country was traumatized. How important it must have been to her to become a part of a new world . . .to be embraced by it. How important the idea of a therapeutic partner is now, as we come to terms with so many ways in which we do not accompany and imagine the deep meanings of people whom we do not experience as sharing our world.

Anni was my partner as I entered the world of psychoanalysis. She nurtured my psychoanalytic thinking as we adventured in the world. We wrote together as we walked, swam and skied. The day I knew I was a psychoanalyst was not when I graduated an institute. It was the day that Anni and I went swimming at a lake. Anni waded in and swam across. When she returned we struck up a conversation with the one other woman who had come there. Because she was so sad, it was not long before we knew that she had just lost her husband. As Anni and I spoke with her, the two of us thought in concert. Anni had been my developmental companion in my analytic development, and we were connected on the lake shore, as we helped this woman. Anni’s thinking was in mine. It still is.

Anni had a long life. At the end, as she changed, I learned to think like her once again. Our long talks, writing, skiing, swimming, hiking all translated into the language of movement, dance, gaze, joint attention, rhythm and touch. We communicated in a different language of love. We loved each other in a different way. Now that she is gone, this has changed again. The Anni that I joyfully explored a world with, changed and developed with, is not beside me but inside me. It feels sad and at the same time, this writing is another discovery with Anni. A new intimacy and adventure.

My reflections on Anni Bergman

Linda Gunsberg, PhD

I met Anni in 1974, at a meeting of child therapy supervisors in the City College Ph.D. Program in Clinical Psychology. Shortly after, I was faced with a crisis in my private practice where the father of a child I had seen for several years was going to secretly abduct his son under the Domestic Violence identity protection program. Upon the advice of the father’s therapist, he called me to tell me about this

in advance, and gave me the following option: if I wanted to see his child one last time I had to promise I would not tell the child about the father's plans. If I felt I would need to tell the child about the father's plans or that the next session would be his last, the father would not bring him to another session.

I immediately sought consultation with three senior child therapists, one with Anni. I cannot remember the details of what she told me at the time, but she approached this from the "child's perspective" rather than from a "technique perspective." We talked about what would be the child's experience of being ripped away from the only home he knew, his school, his friends, his mother, and his therapist, in one fell swoop, without any emotional preparation.

As a child therapist, I would give each child a big box of their own in which they could put things they drew, wrote, or made during treatment. In that final session, we went through his box together, reminiscing about each item and its relevance to our work together. He threw out some things, kept others, and I told him he could take his box home with him that day. I made no mention of this being our last session, but I am sure he knew, and could sense something was different about me.

Many years later, I got a voicemail message: "Hello, my name is Jamie T. but my name when I was a child was Richard A. Are you the therapist I saw when I was a child? I am having trouble remembering who I was as a child and I thought you might be able to help me with this." Jamie/Richard and I resumed his therapy via telephone since he now lived far away. Like the therapy box, I was the container holding his childhood, ready to give it back to him when he returned to claim it. Anni had prepared me for this very precious responsibility.

I continued to consult with Anni about other patients. I would happily arrive at her home once a week at 7:30 am, and hot coffee was always waiting. This was very special to me. I brought up the issue of payment for the supervision, which she flatly refused. To Anni, this was her contribution to training the next generation of child therapists, as she hoped I would do for the next generation after me. And I did, and continued the

tradition of the hot cup of coffee too!

Two years later, Anni asked me to join her and Gilbert Voyat, a Piagetian and professor at City College, in writing a grant proposal to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, to study the cognitive and emotional development of young psychotic children. I fondly remember the three of us sitting together day after day, night after night (with the guidance of Larry Gould, then director of the City College Ph.D. Program in Clinical Psychology), developing a model for our psychoeducation project. This consisted of a school classroom for 5 young psychotic children with specially trained teachers, a tripartite treatment program with each child and mother seen by a Ph.D. student therapist, and a therapeutic companion, another student who would take the child when they were able, on excursions into the outside world, the other-than-mother world. Some trips might be on the subway, others might be to a park. Supervision was of the team working with a particular child: the teacher working with the child in the classroom, the therapist, and the therapeutic companion.

More than 25 years later, original members of the grant reconvened at Anni's home. We remembered vividly each child and mother, and our work as teams. We remembered each other at earlier points in our careers, and we remembered Anni's directive to get into each child's skin, to understand what they were communicating to us. Like Saint Exupery's Little Prince, where the fox teaches the prince to see important things with the heart (which are invisible to the eye), Anni showed us all how to enter the inner world of the young psychotic child in order to understand their desire to communicate and connect, along with their anxiety in doing so.

We all got older, not only Anni. When Anni stopped seeing patients, she started to feel isolated from her psychoanalytic community. She reached out for opportunities to remain involved. I invited her to join our classes in the Family Law and Family Forensic Training Program at Washington Square Institute, which I chaired. She loved being there and contributing. It was my turn to give back to her.

Anni always had available the child within her, and this was perhaps the most important lesson she imparted to us—to not become adults who forget we were once children, since in some ways, we still are. She reminded us to cherish childhood, to bring it forward with us in life, and never to relinquish it.

Thank you, Anni, for being my mentor and dear friend.

Remembering Anni Bergman: Side by Side in The Early Years of the Infant Program 1995-97

Rita Reiswig

Anni Bergman died on October 2, 2021 at the age of 102. Since then, memories of her frequently enter my mind. I want to put words to my remembrances of a specific period, the early years between 1995–1997 when Anni and I spent a lot of time together on weekends in the summer, side by side, planning the three-year infant program. In 2006 the infant program was renamed The Anni Bergman Parent-Infant Program to honor her and publicly acknowledge the influence of her ideas. Now, beginning our twenty-fifth year the Program moves forward without her but we carry her intention—her ways of seeing and her spirit – inside.

In 1995, a study group of child and adult psychoanalysts at the Contemporary Freudian Society met regularly at Anni's home to follow mutual interests in the burgeoning fields of infant observation, developmental psychology, attachment theory, infant research, and dyadic treatment with mothers and infants. We were a group of 10 or 12 who sat around Anni's coffee table, which always included refreshments of wine and cheese and chocolates and grapes. Anni's living room was filled with books, small artifacts and statues, cut glass and Meissen China and a baby grand piano. Furnishings from another era, positioned in a colorful and patched together way, appeared reminiscent of a parlor in Vienna where early psychoanalysts might have talked together about ideas and theory. The atmosphere in her living room was collegial, and a heightened enthusiasm filled the air.

Eventually the group came to the idea of offering a short course that could be designed for members of the Society to determine their interest. The response to the course was encouraging. The challenge was then to expand this sequence of ideas into a three-year program that could reach a wider audience of qualified participants. The outline of the program included close observation of infants and mothers (or fathers) in the naturalistic setting of the home. This core experience led to theories of infant development originating in the circular influences between parent and infant, based on intrapsychic processes and relationships, and several classes on neuroscience, attachment theory and infant research and finally a clinical year focused on helping mother/infant pairs in a dyadic therapy.

Our planning work took place on weekends in East Hampton, where my husband and I owned and ran a small hotel that Anni loved visiting. I knew Anni was energetic and vital for her age, which was 85 or so at the time. Physically strong, she could bike, hike, swim, plunge into cold water, and walk long distances at a quick pace. I witnessed her skill and participated in some of these activities with her. Although I'm a strong swimmer I didn't like plunging into icy water as she did, but I could easily walk with her for long distances if the terrain wasn't too steep. Everybody who spent time with her stood in awe of her physical vitality. These qualities revealed her independence, bravery, determination, risk taking and resilience.

Working closely, she and I gradually laid out a roadmap for the infant program. We made phone calls and wrote letters to ask colleagues and friends around the world if they would like to visit and lecture to our students. At these moments Anni was surprisingly shy about reaching out and sometimes worried certain individuals wouldn't remember her. We practiced what to say in advance. Many of the luminaries were thrilled to hear from her and many traveled long distances to visit and lecture in the program.

One poignant vignette comes to mind of our work together during that time. After a particularly long day, and a delicious meal and talking into the night, she retired to a well-appointed room and a bed of comfortable covers. The next morning at breakfast she spoke about the bed, calling it a nest and revealing a kind of childlike delight in her wish over time to try out all the beds in the small hotel.

I could see in her facial expression both pleasure and longing briefly revealing a different facet of her personality, a desire to be cared for in satisfying moments and a wish to repeat the experience numerous times. Perhaps she was reliving some earliest feelings of being cared for. In working side by side with Anni I saw another and more vulnerable part. This revelation made her both more complex and more loveable to me.

Remembrance of Anni Bergman

Maria Fahey

It feels fitting that I met Anni Bergman in 1986 at a party at her house, where I was invited to hear Edward Aldwell play Bach. Soon after, I began to work as Anni's research assistant on the adult follow-up of the separation-individuation study. Anni was extraordinarily welcoming and loved to bring people together, her beautiful house a place of work and pleasure, art and science.

Ours, Yours, Mine, the title of one of Anni's early papers that we eventually chose as the title for her collected works, captures the idea that a sense of separate self and other – *mine* and *yours* – has its foundation in an earlier sense of togetherness – *ours*. For Anni, being with another person made her or his mind knowable, however cryptic communications might at first seem. Anni's commitment to *ours*, to the power of being together with others, was unmatched, not only in her therapeutic work but also in her research and writing. She welcomed others to think and write with her, much as she welcomed them into her house. Anni's conviction that human experience can be understood and expressed was linked to her conviction that this difficult and essential work is made possible by supportive communities.

Although I spent countless hours with Anni in her 20th Street office, we often worked outside the city in places where writing and thinking together was punctuated by swimming, something we both loved. Anni knew it was easier to think clearly and creatively when near nature – whether out on her porch in Bethlehem or up in the hills of Capri. The oceanic feeling of being in lakes and seas buoyed up our work.

Anni liked to tell the story of how Arnold Schönberg explained a musical cadence, namely, that when something ends, something new can begin. And now, as Anni's life has ended, I hear this idea of cadence, which she found so meaningful, as a call to action. May we, in these terribly disjointed times, begin anew a commitment to *ours*: may we endeavor to welcome each other into our lives and minds and to forge more fully realized and joyous relationships from which *yours* and *mine* can emerge. Anni has shown us the way.

William Singletary, MD

President of the Margaret S. Mahler Research Foundation

She gave so much to me and to so many others. She was an inspiration for me before I had the honor of knowing her both through her writings and hearing about her amazing clinical work with children on the autism spectrum. I was told by a friend that she had received a standing ovation when she presented her clinical work at Chestnut Lodge many years ago. I also had the honor of hearing her deliver a standing room only lecture at the Tavistock when she was in her 90s, a time when she was already struggling with Alzheimer's. She was a person of such energy, courage and determination. It's most amazing to me that she came to this country as a trapeze artist working in the circus. That image of her taking chances, trusting, and reaching out into the unknown will always stay with me.

Adriana Lis

Clinical psychologist and Child Analyst, Senior Professor University of Padova Italy

Anni was a very long lasting friend and colleague. As colleague we shared research, lectures, meetings in Europe and the States about Separation-Individuation Theory, infant observation and attachment. With her brilliant mind, she was a mentor for me. We spent long hours discussing these topics. As for our

friendship, her home was a place where I stayed so many times and I felt there I was with my family. Our tradition was “the risotto” party, where we enjoyed a fish risotto which I cooked in her kitchen and we shared with friends. But also unforgettable were our long walks, all through Venice- three hours of walking – or from her home on West 20th Street to about 100th Street. She will always be affectionately in my mind.

Beatrice Beebe, PhD

New York Freudian Society Conference in Honor of Anni Bergman, December 2004

I didn’t really **meet** Anni – though we had certainly crossed paths many times, and we lived 2 blocks from each other – until 1992, when I had returned from a year in Boston. I met her at a party for Christopher Bollas. I was starting up my research program in New York again, and she offered to help me obtain some private research funding. This remarkable generosity is so typical of Anni. It made a huge difference to us in being able to get our research going again.

But of course, I knew her work from the Mahler, Pine and Bergman book, “The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant.” I taught this book, chapter and verse, to a decade of graduate students in clinical psychology at Yeshiva University, where I began teaching in 1978. Fred Pine helped me get this job at Yeshiva and became a generous mentor and friend.

“The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant” was published in 1975 – though the work for it began in 1959. When Fred Pine notes in his preface to the 2000 edition that “These ideas rapidly found their way into the thinking and work of dynamically oriented theorists . . . and . . . clinicians . . .” this is quite an understatement. By the time I was teaching it, in 1978, this book had the field of psychoanalysis on fire.

The importance of this book to psychoanalysis cannot be over-estimated. It provided psychoanalysis with a developmental center.

As Anni notes in her preface to the 2000 edition, it was revolutionary in 2 ways:

- (1) it located the first 3 years of life as a time of critical importance in its own right, not just as a prestage on the way to the oedipal period
- (2) it located child development observational research as a critical tool relevant to psychoanalysis

Pine describes the revolutionary nature of the book as a “midwife” to the turn from ego psychology to a distinctly American Object Relations theory grounded in observational studies of mothers and infants in interaction.

Stern’s critique was published in 1985, in “The Interpersonal World of the Infant.” Stern, Trevarthen, and Brazelton and Tronick all began video and film analysis of mother-infant face-to-face communication around 1970. I began working with Stern in 1969.

Stern based his critique on experimental evidence of the infants’ perceptual and cognitive capacities, as well as research showing delicate split-second reciprocal adjustments that mothers and infants make to each other’s movements of head, face, body, and vocalizations, even in the early weeks of life.

Stern’s critique was that infants in the early weeks and months of life were certainly aware of the environment. They could not be thought of as either merged with or undifferentiated from the mother.

In his preface to the 2000 edition, Pine answers this critique with the concept of “moments” of merger, such as experiences of melting into the body of the other, which have a developmental significance outweighing their mere duration. He suggests a mixture of early differentiation and merger experiences are key to early organization.

When I met Anni in 1992, she was intensely interested in studying the new empirical infant research. Anni’s love of ideas, and her interest in infant research, was the first basis for our bond. She convinced me to start a study group for her and a number of her students, which began in 1997. Imagine how honored I felt that she wanted to study with me!

Anni was remarkably open to and excited by new ideas, eager for intellectual engagement. This was one of her defining essences, which kept her young and vibrant.

At the same time Anni keeps her separation-individuation framework, seamlessly integrating the new and the old. As she notes in her preface to the 2000 edition, her thinking now balances attachment with separation-individuation.

The study groups that Anni encouraged me to form have been a privilege for me. I have come to know and admire a large group of her students from the mother-infant treatment training program that she runs with Rita Reiswig at the Freudian Society. I have come to know first-hand the elegance of the training in this program.

From 1997 – 2001, through weekly study groups and many late-night suppers at Le Zie, Anni and I became very special friends. During this period I also came to know and admire a number of her students and colleagues.

So when 9/11 came, we were in the fortunate position of having a mutually supportive core group of people who were trained in mother-infant treatment, and who were conversant with video micro-analysis of mother-infant communication. This group decided to embrace the challenge of finding the women who were pregnant and widowed on 9/11, and trying to help them and their children. The 9–11 group included Anni Bergman, Phyllis Cohen as the co-director, Sally Moskowitz, Mark Sossin, Rita Reiswig, Kerstin Kupferman, Donna Demetri Friedman, Suzi Tortora, Nancie Senet, Helge Deaton, Kristen Peck, Sarah Moaba, Naomi Hirschfeld, Linda Taylor, Kathryn Adorney, and well as key graduate student assistants such as Michael Ritter, Sara Markese, Nicole Selzer, and Claudia Andrei.

We were fortunate to have the full endorsement of Joseph Jaffe, who agreed to put at the disposal of this project all of our resources in the Department of Communication Sciences, NYSPI, Columbia University.

We could never have done this 9/11 project without Anni Bergman. Her intellectual input into the ongoing attempts to formulate the interventions, her emotional courage and calm stability, and her support in the face of continuing and mounting obstacles, have been invaluable.

When mothers did not attend our groups, often for many weeks in a row, our therapists felt “abandoned.” Anni’s position was, as long as the therapists continued to meet as group, “We do have a project.” These words became the emotional backbone of the project.

I am grateful to Anni for her ongoing outstanding intellectual creativity and openness across the 55 years since the Mahler project began in 1959; for encouraging me to run study groups and introducing me to the group of her marvelous students; for her magnificent contributions to the 9/11 project; and most of all for her loving friendship.

Wendy Olesker, PhD

Anni was one of a kind. I began working with her on the follow-up study of the Mahler babies in 1990, along with John McDevitt. She had such a rich understanding of the complexity of each of now 25 year old subjects as well as a love and dedication to them if they came to her for help. In most recent follow-up, 20 years later, she told me of her experience with one of the subjects, (she now in her late 80’s) of a bicycle expedition, many miles over a number of days in the northeast, where they shared the joys of exercise, nature, and subjective experience. Her spirit of exploration, adventure, and dedication was unequalled.

Aaron Thaler, PhD

Anni hosted the monthly IPTAR study group on Winnicott continuously from 2001 to 2015. A warm, open welcome into her living room and excitement about offering food and wine at the start of each meeting conveyed the spirit of a holding environment and gave us all a feeling of belonging. Anni had a natural sympathy with Winnicott in many ways. Having been so immersed in her work with children and babies, she had a deep resonant sense of early childhood experience. The intensity and vividness of

childhood play and discovery were clearly alive for her and this brought a lot of insight and fun into our meetings. Anni had been my first clinical supervisor when I was a therapeutic companion with psychotic children beginning in 1980, and I felt very fortunate to be with her again in co-leading the study group.

Anni was often good at helping us get in touch with the actuality of a child's position and feeling. On one occasion, we focused on Winnicott's ideas about early ego-integration at the stage of "I AM," when coming together as a person involves being highly vulnerable and raw and undefended. Anni gave a moving account of seeing such moments in very young children, which really brought out how the sense of trust in a holding environment is so essential to a child who risks "being" newly aware and alive and truly herself.

Like Winnicott, Anni was also involved in treating very ill patients, both children and adults, and she saw the symmetry in early childhood needs and the transference needs of regressed patients. She understood and was very comfortable with dependent needs and therapeutic regression and she shared her experiences in this area. I think her faith in this kind of work informed some of her pioneering ideas about the treatment of autistic children with multiple, intensive inputs from an individual therapist, classroom teachers, and therapeutic companions. I know that everyone in the group felt very enriched and grateful for Anni's presence and many contributions. Learning from her special understanding of early growth and treatment was a wonderful gift for me.

Inga Blom, PhD

Many of us know Anni, and know of the work, the writing and observing, for which she is the most famous. However, anyone who knows her well, also has had the experience of being relentlessly confronted with new details of Anni's experiences, her many and varied interests and activities. When I met her in 2005, these included Italian lessons and daily yoga practice. In the beginning of my days in New York City, I was blown away when she arrived at a seminar on Jungian dream analysis on her bicycle. The seminar was in midtown. By the time she invited me to swim with her at Chelsea Piers, I was no longer surprised by her fearless stamina, and simply got to wonder what she was up to that I would get to discover. Anni was always making a point to learn things she had always wanted to know, and to stay 'up-to-date' on old interests. Anni was also always happy to socialize. She became a trusted companion at my husband's concerts on the Lower East Side, always excited when his band debuted a new song. Later, she took the subway to meet my new baby, insisting she wanted to see us at home. She was an old soul, who was always young. New and important relationships and important contributions were always emerging. For decades, her home on 20th street was a place where people arrived for a few hours or a few days, sometimes for a few hours that turned into a few days. I've gone there to work on something with her, only to run into a Tony award-winning director, Australian philosopher or Italian psychoanalyst who planned risotto parties. Her Christmas celebrations were filled with live music from musicians of all kinds. Anni had a way of connecting with people, connecting people with each other, and a way of connecting ideas and bodies of work that transcend categories, genres and orientations. Guaranteed there's a lot I don't know about Anni's work and life. I first started working with Anni in 2005, when so much important work had already happened, and by which time, although I had no idea until much later, her mind was starting to lose its sharpness.

Anni's identity as an analyst was always a point of refuge for me, as someone trying to find a footing in the analytic world while retaining parts of myself in the community and the clinic. Many people seem to remember Anni's help with this. She had essentially trained everywhere – everywhere in NYC for sure, and in many parts of Europe. Her calendar was filled with events to attend from all institutes around town. In her 90s, she participated in study groups on Klein and Winnicott. She was a part of one of Fonagy's research seminars in London. When I told her about my new group, *Das Unbehagen*,

Anni wanted to know how to join, and offered her time. She came to lecture, as she always did when I taught child assessment, excited to engage with ‘the clinicians that will continue the good work.’ In the years I worked for her, Anni wrote and presented on the experience of Otherness in her own life, and in the life of her patients. She’s said, that it was her own Otherness that helped her clinical work. She was a trailblazer who was undaunted by limits and expectations, a person of great generosity. She gave much to me and to so many others, through her writings, research and her clinical work, and her humanity. I will miss her tremendously.

Memories of Anni

Linda Mayers, PhD

As a psychology graduate student, I had often heard of Anni Bergman through her books and publications or had seen her at meetings but had never actually met her. I was introduced to Anni by a mutual friend Kersten Kupfermann. From the first time I met her, Anni and I connected, realizing we shared many interests in common.

So began a lovely friendship. Anni and I did many things together. We went to concerts, museums, restaurants or had leisurely, delicious dinners at her home where we would sit for hours with the young people who lived in her townhouse exchanging jokes, stories, observations, ideas. And we often went on long walks – her energy level in her 90’s was well beyond mine- chatting all the way about so many things – psychoanalysis, writing articles, music, politics, all sorts of different subjects.

By the time I met her, Anni had already retired but she often mentioned that even though she knew it had been time to stop she wished she could have a job. She said she didn’t quite feel quite herself without working.

Being with Anni was never boring, it was always fun. She had an impish sense of humor. I particularly remember when she and I would sit down to play duo piano together – most often to no avail. There was more laughing than playing, but also a great appreciation of the music and our attempts.

Coincidentally, as I was writing this, I came across a poem by Jorge Luis Borges that I think Anni would have liked and resonated with.

There is nothing in the world
that is not mysterious
But the mysterious is more evident
in certain things than others:
in the sea, in the eyes of elders,
in the color yellow, and in music.

We can all testify to Anni’s brilliance, intuition, psychological astuteness and acumen but what I much appreciated about Anni was her sense of wonder and curiosity. Even when her memory was beginning to fail, she continued to get pleasure from and was interested in so many things. She never complained, she soldiered on, even when things became more difficult.

Part of Anni’s life story is that when she was young, she wanted to join the circus. I now imagine Anni sitting on a trapeze in the sky, a broad smile on her face as she begins the next part of her journey.

Daniel Polyak, MA, LP

I got to know Dr. Anni Bergman at a very particular time in both of our lives. I was only beginning my path toward psychoanalysis – I knew that I wanted to be a psychoanalyst, but I was still figuring out how that would come together for me. Dr. Bergman was moving toward retiring from professional and clinical activity and, my sense was, looking for ways to process that transition. I think that what I remember most about our time together was how Dr. Bergman would casually reveal simple and profound insights about human nature. One that has stuck with me over the years was her conviction

that complaining is often the beginning of transformation. I have never thought of complaining in the same way since. I am so grateful to have gotten to know her. She will be greatly missed.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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