

# E.M. Jellinek Revisited & Revised



"You two should have much to discuss," said Professor Jellinek, introducing temperance worker Virginia Calvin, daughter of D. Leigh Calvin, 1946, and the

# Summing Up – But How?

- **Well, let's see...**
- **Judit and her team have accomplished a great deal – which is to say, there is much we did not know that their inquiry has unearthed**
- **But, and of course, there is still a lot left to be accomplished – particularly relating to**
  - **Jellinek's files and correspondence**
  - **Archived collections still unfound and unsecured**
  - **Additional documentation**
  - **Multiple independent sources**



# E.M.J.'s Contributions to Alcohol Science

- **Saw big picture**
- **Served as “front man”**
- **Bridged different and vying camps, achieved synergism**
- **Offered new “cultural ownership” for mainstream science regarding alcohol – displacing “temperance science”**
- **Nimble and flexible: shifted value orientations & ideological commitments**
- **Recognized education & information diffusion as priorities**
- **“Cooled out” dries**



e.g., cooling out dries

## ALCOHOL STUDIES FLOURISH AT YALE

---

Varied Group Sees Problem  
in Relation to Society—  
Usefulness Found Wide

---

Special to The New York Times.

"I notice several elementary school teachers from the Southern states," a Canadian inquired. "Can there be much drinking in those grades?"

"Not at all," an attractive young woman from Florida replied, "but we do have very powerful prohibitionist elements in the home to contend with, and knowledge is the best weapon against any intolerance."

# Hungarian Caper & Ferenczi Period

- **Great advantage of team's resident command of the Hungarian language – plus periodic visits to Hungary**
- **Turns out Hungary's history and culture need careful "translation" for non-Hungarians at many points**
- **Great advantage of new or rekindled interest in EMJ and Roheim by our Hungarian friends**
- **Ties linking EMJ's early interest in psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic interpretation of culture w/ his work at Worcester and in alcohol studies**
- **The currency trading caper: a great mystery and defining episode in EMJ's life and career**



# The 1920s Decade: “The Shadowed Years”

- Especially shrouded period in EMJ’s life
- Turned to indirect sources of info
- O. Henry (William Sydney Porter) fled to Honduras -- which had no extradition treaty with U.S. -- from July, 1896 to Feb. 1897 to avoid prosecution for mismanagement of bank funds. He coined the term “Banana Republic” and wrote *Cabbages and Kings* about his experience there.
- A number of books and other sources about the United Fruit Company and banana-based agriculture and culture
- Once again, EMJ landed on his feet and mastered a new scientific territory
- Pursuit of his ethnographic studies, especially in Africa, is unknown



# “The Shadowed Years” – Parallels?

- From Richard O’Connor, *O. Henry: The Legendary Life of William S. Porter*, 1970.

**Will Porter was thirty-two years old when the cruncher came....Consistently, since early youth, he had exerted his considerable charm and used his friends and in-laws as a crutch whenever necessary. Charm had got him by thus far, but it wouldn’t work with the law. He was winsomely irresponsible when it came to handling money, either his own or someone else’s, but a federal bank examiner would not be impressed by his blithe and boyish personality....The strongest element in his character, and the most enduring, was the way he clung to the privilege of youthful irresponsibility.**

**(p. 44)**

- From O. Henry, *Cabbages and Kings*, 1913.

**There is a quaint old theory that man may have two souls — a peripheral one which serves ordinarily, and a central one which is stirred only at certain times, but then with activity and vigour. While under the domination of the former a man will shave, vote, pay taxes, give money to his family, buy subscription books and comport himself on the average plan. But let the central soul suddenly become dominant, and he may, in the twinkling of an eye, turn upon the partner of his joys with furious execration; he may change his politics while you could snap your fingers; he may deal out deadly insult to his dearest friend ; he may get him, instanter, to a monastery or a dance hall ; he may elope, or hang himself — or he may write a song or poem, or kiss his wife unasked, or give his funds to the search of a microbe. Then the peripheral soul will return; and we have our safe, sane citizen again. It is but the revolt of the Ego against Order; and its effect is to shake up the atoms only that they may settle where they belong.**

**(pp. 48-49)**

# E.M.J.'s Worcester Experience

- Still much to be learned about EMJ's Worcester experience
- A one-disease – i.e., schizophrenia – focus
- Concerned with basic issues of definition, identification, variation, & physiologic character
- Served as methodological & statistical guru as well as scientific generalist
- Inspired admiration & loyalty from colleagues & staff
- Worked within a framework defined by a wealthy patron
- Distinguished himself professionally & scientifically

**“In the 1930’s, psychopathology consisted of a vast variety of conceptual models on the one hand, and of carefully collected systematic data on first admissions, releases, mortality rates, etc., but the theorists ignored the measurements while the data collectors had no concept of the theories....It was not until the Biometric movement was introduced into psychopathology, by men like Jellinek at Worcester State Hospital in the 30’s that scientific studies became possible.”**

**-- Joseph Zubin, “Confessions of a Biometric Psychopathologist,” 1986.**



# E.M.J.'s Life and Thelma's Splendid Letters

- Two of Thelma's letters – 12/2/63 & 4/16/88 – particularly rich in biographical content, esp. in relation to EMJ's youth and private life
- Single source problem – though single sources offer leads to others, lending potential buttressing or revisions
- The search for Ruth's collection of biographical materials continues

And now, today, comes your letter re the biography of Bunky! Well — am I to think God doth in wondrous ways His wonders perform? In any case —

You are most flattering to think I might be able to write Bunky's biography. I, myself and me have a great many doubts, among which are:

1. I have been away from the field of alcohol for a great many years.
2. My knowledge of Bunky's professional and/or personal life is very scanty from 1946 on.
3. I have so little knowledge of what may be in the archives of the Center, NCA, AA, etc. that could be useful in terms of filling gaps in my knowledge.
4. I do know something of what Dunci collected for Smithers, . e.g., tapes, correspondence, etc.
5. Although I own an autographed copy of THE DISEASE CONCEPT and ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS, I never read either.
6. I see the need for several months of research required to gather together materials which might be relevant, for quantities of correspondence (unless archives might suffice) to get information from Canada, Chile, WHO, and God knows from what other whence to fill the large gaps in my information.
7. Perhaps largest doubt of all is the question of my ability properly to present the amassed material.

Beyond all these doubts are the matters of practicality. Money (doesn't it always?) heads the list. I cannot not afford, nor do I wish, to subsidize such a project. I think with a little more...

# Summing Up

- EMJ project has made excellent start, opening revealing doors
- More resources needed to flesh-out the research – including travel support to key sites
- We know untapped resources exist in a number of places
- Hungarian period has produced the biggest biographical advance so far, thanks partly to the work of our Hungarian friends abroad
- All of the project's work so far only further evidences how valuable a fully researched EMJ biography will one day be

Mark Keller (1970) on Jellinek:

**What was to become known as 'the scientific approach' to alcohol problems is indelibly associated with his name....it was Jellinek who imaginatively created the tools, projected the researches, stimulated the studies, guided the analyses, enriched the reporting, which made the scientific approach a reality. For him this achievement was possible because his inexhaustible good will toward man, combined with a scintillating intellect and a limitless store of learning, captivated both the hearts and minds of all who came within his sphere of influence.**

# Bank St., Wallace (with rainbow)

