

POST-KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS AS DEFENSE MECHANISM: SIDNEY WEINTRAUB AS KNOWN BY E. ROY WEINTRAUB

BY
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This article traces the evolution of Sidney Weintraub's Post-Keynesian identity during the four decades following WW II, as seen through the eyes of his son E. Roy Weintraub. I explore Roy's notion that Sidney's career can be seen as the result of defense mechanisms associated with those of a borderline personality, such as splitting and projection. As Sidney transformed from an aspiring mainstream macroeconomist into a reclusive warrior for ideas, developing a polarized view of the economics profession, his work eventually became subsumed as a branch of Post-Keynesian economics. At the same time, he nudged his son into a symbiotic dependency, standing in for his career as a mathematical economist and coauthor, while also being made complicit in his adultery. Roy's eventual distancing from this role ultimately led to a rupture prior to Sidney's death in 1983. It was only then that Roy was able to establish a scholarly profile as a historian of economics and gain the understanding of his father that informs this text.

I. A SON'S PERSPECTIVE

When speaking in an interview about topics that have not yet been sufficiently addressed in the history of economics, E. Roy Weintraub said the following about the personality of his father and economist, Sidney Weintraub.

I grew up (sigh) with a father ... who saw the world ... divided into 'us' and 'them.' And 'they' would do everything possible to stop 'us.'... In psychology, splitting by

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borderline personalities is associated with splitting off parts of one's self that one cannot accept or dislikes and projecting them onto the other person. Therefore getting rid of them. I saw a great deal of that. And that was how my father conducted his academic life. It was very real and it was very ugly and it affected me because I was one of those he split from. (in Giraud 2022, p. 659)

The reader might wonder what to make of this statement. Obviously, neither Roy nor we as historians are clinicians competent to diagnose a diseased person with a personality disorder.¹ And yet, when thinking of Sidney's role in the history of economics, how could we possibly ignore Roy's point of view? Having been enmeshed in his personal and professional life, the knowledge he held of his father seems indispensable for a complete historical account. But what is the appropriate use of Roy's notion of his father's personae as a historical source?

Historically, it would have been impossible for Sidney to receive a diagnosis of borderline personality disorder. The notion emerged only a couple of years before he passed away. But even if such a diagnosis had been available, academic culture during the four decades after WW II was not yet ready to engage with the mental health issues of professorial daily life.² Instead, Roy came to view Sidney's behavior as exhibiting traits of a borderline personality—not to speak of a disorder—after many years of confronting his own career. This began around 1980 in therapy sessions that were initially prompted by frustrations in his marriage. As his father became terminally ill, Roy increasingly understood how dependent his own personal development, and career as a mathematical economist, had been on his father's. He came to understand Sidney's behavior as manipulative and morally abusive for making him complicit in both his private and professional life. When his father ultimately passed away in 1983, Roy's new-found understanding gradually led to a separation from his wife and a new career as a more independent scholar, resulting in the work for which he is known today in the community of historians of economics and beyond. In Roy's new marriage with a practicing psychotherapist, Nell, his psychological language and thinking continued to develop and influence his writings. In several publications, he had already reflected on his father's career and the impact it had on him.³ However, these accounts, he writes, “were missing context, and frequently avoided uncomfortable topics. As historical accounts, they were deliberately thin.”⁴ On the occasion of his retirement in 2016, having collected new bits and pieces of his family history, he wrote an unpublished manuscript called

¹ For reasons of readability, I use only first names instead of “Sidney Weintraub” and “E. Roy Weintraub.”

² In intellectual history, the reputation of psychobiography—of which the following is some nuanced variant—is rather negative. This should be seen against the backdrop of the history of the acceptance of mental health issues in society at large. Erik Erikson's much-criticized study on Luther was published as early as 1958. Celebrating “thick” and “rich” images of the individual but backing away from actual psychological language might reflect an antiquated hagiographic bias in life-writing in science. Despite its reputation, psychobiography keeps attracting serious scholarship (Schultz 2005).

³ See Weintraub (2002) treating Sidney's collaboration with his mathematician brother Hal (ch. 7) and his own career (ch. 8), his contribution to the special issue on Sidney in the *Journal of Post-Keynesian Economics* (2014), and his interviews (Weintraub 2012b; Giraud 2022). In several publications, he examined the psychological dimensions of (auto)biographical historiographies (2005, 2007, 2012a; and Düppe and Weintraub 2014).

⁴ See “Keynes and me complete February 20, 2019” and “addenda Keynes and me” in the E. Roy Weintraub papers (hereinafter RWP) at the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University,

“Keynes and Me,” which is accessible in his own papers. Reflecting anew and more freely on his matured understanding of his father, this manuscript is the main source of the present article.⁵

One problem one might see when using this source is that Roy is alone in putting forward the notion of Sidney’s troubled personality. Sidney’s self-understanding as well as the understandings of his friends, colleagues, and students who shared his professional image differ from Roy’s. However, if defense mechanisms can be productive for professional success, as Roy’s notion of his father suggests, this might not be a contradiction. What Roy learned to understand as defensive behavior was perceived by Sidney and his peers as the intellectual virtues of a devoted scholar true to his ideas.

Sidney is celebrated as a model of the American underdog branch of “Post-Keynesians” who understood themselves as being true to the ideas of John Maynard Keynes and in opposition to the American “mainstream” Keynesians who integrated the ever-more-powerful analytical tools of neoclassical economics.⁶ In his only autobiographical essay, the virtues Sidney attributed to his career were courage, loyalty, and perseverance ([1983] 1985, p. 510). “Courage” refers to his willingness to probe new ideas that nobody else thought of; “loyalty” refers to the consistency of pursuing his intellectual mission, notably his loyalty to the untouchable Keynes; and “perseverance” refers to his capacity to stick to his ideas despite major criticism. He saw clinging to his ideas as virtuous for being “without intimidation,” seeing himself as “seditious” for causing, like Keynes, an upheaval among economists ([1983] 1985, p. 528). He would be ready to see resistance where others, less belligerent Keynesians—think of Axel Leijonhufvud or Robert Clower—would see friendly critiques in a *shared* conversation. As his friend Arthur Bloomfield wrote about his dedication to ideas: “Weintraub is regarded by some economists as rather aggressively controversial, argumentative, and often deliberately provocative ... he feels deeply about what he believes is right, and makes no bones about saying so in vigorous terms. He is a man with a cause” (Bloomfield 1981–82, p. 297).⁷ When he perceived lack of success he would see it as the result of being strategically silenced: “in matters of philosophy and science,” he quoted William Stanley Jevons, “authority has ever been the great opponent to truth. A despotic calm is usually the triumph of error” ([1983] 1985, p. 528). To his peers, this behavior was viewed as a willingness to “sacrifice” his career as a mainstream economist for the sake of “truth” (King 1995). As his devoted student Paul Davidson put it: “Weintraub continually railed against the smug and complacent economics

Digital Materials Set RL11763-SET-0002, folder “work in progress”; also hereinafter (RWP 2019); see also the folder “recollection” for earlier drafts, and the last section for more context.

⁵ See note 4. I also used the correspondence between father and son in RWP 1, “Sidney Weintraub 1963–1983”; RWP 2, “family letters 1951–1982”; and “family letters 1956–1994”; and chronologically spread in the Sidney Weintraub papers at the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University (hereinafter SWP) over boxes 1 to 6. In addition, personal conversations with Roy clarifying these documents are cited hereinafter as “pers. com., 2024.”

⁶ Historical work on the movement is rather limited. Mata (2006) interprets the genesis of the community from a discursive point of view, and Lee (2000) from an institutional point of view. For accounts of Sidney’s Post-Keynesian identity written by those sharing the same identity, see Davidson (1983), Seidman (1983), King (1995), Kregel (1985, 2014), and the larger histories of Hamouda and Harcourt (1988) and King (2002).

⁷ Equally, John Kenneth Galbraith: “He seemed a quiet, gentle man ... (but was) an untiring advocate of what he believed to be right” (1985, p. 508).

establishment who, he believed, ignored economic realities as they increased their professional prestige” (Davidson 1985, p. 539). This was part of what the community of Post-Keynesians had built their ethos upon: holding up “truth” while others stuck to mere “power.” Sidney thought of himself, and has been seen, as a warrior of ideas.

Leaving the clinical dimensions of Roy’s notion of his father aside, what is interesting in the context of this journal is to explore its implications for the history of Post-Keynesian economics. What is striking about Roy’s perspective is not merely that it is different from what others believed about him but that it puts the Post-Keynesian discursive ethos in a different light. The community’s scholarly virtues are compatible with the behavior Roy came to understand, in folk-psychological terms, as that of a borderline personality—characterized by a hypersensitivity to criticism, unstable relationships with oneself and others, and the defense mechanisms of splitting and projection.⁸ The role Sidney played in the rise of Post-Keynesian economics and his conflicting personality mutually reinforced each other. Exploring this perspective invites us to view Post-Keynesian economics as a matter of inner attitude toward the community of economists and thus as a psychological phenomenon rather than a set of ideas. It asks us to pay attention to the thin line between devotion and doggedness, between dedication and obsession, between vulnerability and volatility, and between passion and possessiveness.

While Roy indicated that Sidney’s behavior is coherent with “the mindset of a number of members of the Post Keynesian economics community” (2014, p. 37), it must be stressed that this article is limited to Sidney only. The fact that Sidney’s *individual* behavior is compatible with the *social* identity of the Post-Keynesian community leaves open the possibility of exploring other psychological “foundations” in other historical studies.

In historiographical terms, the difficulty in exploring Roy’s perspective is that his understanding of his father developed after the events took place. Neither Sidney nor Roy was aware of the psychological intricacies of their behavior at the time. In Sidney’s personal letter exchanges, both professional and private, only a few pieces of evidence, reported in this essay, buttress his difficult character. In addition, Roy’s later insight that emerged from therapy was itself part of the therapy as it helped him distance himself from his father’s destructive intimacy. Even the writing of “Keynes and Me” and possibly this article may have changed the colors of his memories. These difficulties certainly prevent us from taking his memories at face value. Indeed, as therapists learn early on, all human behavior is overdetermined to the extent that it can be explained in multiple fashions. Sidney’s personality, as Roy noted himself in personal conversations, could also be interpreted in terms of narcissistic character traits, notably regarding his lack of empathy, which is shown at several points in the following. However, this

⁸ In this essay, I rely exclusively on a folk-psychological notion of personality structure as it emerges from Roy’s narrative about his father. I do not refer to or imply any pathological notion of “disorder.” However, as we see in the last section, Roy’s depiction is informed by, and coherent with, some of the elements that define a borderline personality according to the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*: unstable perceptions of self and others, alternating between idealization and devaluation, along with intense anger and reactivity, are central to Roy’s memories, as are the defense mechanisms typical of borderline personalities: splitting (viewing people in extremes), projective identification (manipulating others to embody what is unbearable in oneself), and externalization (victimization and blaming external factors for personal issues).

ambiguity does not prevent us from valuing the simple truth that emerges from the kind of biographical self-reflection practiced in psychotherapy: a preliminary result of an ardent and honest effort to understand oneself despite the false beliefs implanted in our biographical system. Ultimately, the truth of a notion gained in psychotherapy depends on the quality of the experience it discloses in a personal life history. Considering that Roy's understanding of his father freed him to build a career that became manifest in many substantial contributions to this journal, it is worth dedicating this article to it.⁹

The following narrative thus traces the evolution of Sidney's Keynesian identity through the perspective of his son. Considering that Roy was not only a witness but also an accomplice in Sidney's struggle over a professional career, Sidney's conflicted Keynesian identity became the lens through which also Roy navigated his professional development; hence the title of his manuscript "Keynes and Me." During his childhood and adolescence, Sidney was a rather absent yet demanding father working at his breakthrough as a Keynesian economist in elite US institutions. The depression caused by his lack of success and the grief over his deceased mathematician brother were heavily felt in the family (section II). This was the background against which Roy was unknowingly nudged into the role of standing in for his father's career, ending up as a mathematical economist and coauthor of his father's work as well as being made complicit in Sidney's adultery (section III). Even if neither of the two was involved in the formative events of the Cambridge capital controversy of the late 1960s, I show how this event aligned the community's intellectual attitude to such an extent that Sidney's work could be integrated as a "branch" of Post-Keynesian economics in the early 1970s (section IV). As Roy's attempts to claim individuality, both in private and as a scholar, were perceived by Sidney as a threat to his own identity, Roy's further development in the 1970s at Duke University led to a series of violent confrontations and an ultimate break before Sidney's death in 1983 (section V). Only then was Roy able to build a new scholarly profile as a historian of economics, end his marriage, and gain the understanding about his father that informs this article (section VI).

II. AWAITING THE BREAKTHROUGH (1943–1960)

For the first three years of Roy's life, Sidney was physically absent. In March 1943, the day after Roy, his first child, was born, Sidney was inducted into the Army's Quartermaster Corps. This was Sidney's wish, as he did not want to stand behind his two brothers in service. However, at twenty-nine years, he was too old. He pushed for a commission but was turned down for officer candidate school three times. Still, he was determined to serve, even if not as an officer. Later, he would speak little about the war, as his experience was neither heroic nor thriving. He had to go through basic training three times and was eventually placed on detached service as a file clerk with an

⁹ I used family members as the main source for understanding the personae of economists in several other works, notably Chantal Debreu, daughter of Gérard Debreu (2012); Heide Krelle, daughter of Wilhelm Krelle (2020); Hannamaria Loschinski, daughter of Friedrich Behrens (2021a); and Sigrid Maier, widow of Harry Maier (2021b). In all these articles, I showed how specific economic practices (methodologies, ideas) are a response to specific personal needs.

intelligence unit in London.¹⁰ Roy thus passed the first three years of his life protected by “three mothers”: his mother, Sheila, and her two sisters, who shared a small one-bedroom apartment in Brooklyn. It was not before Christmas Eve in 1945, months after the war ended, that Sidney returned.

But even after his return, for most of Roy’s childhood and adolescence, Sidney remained distant, leaving child care to Sheila. When he did interact, he tended to “lecture,” putting himself in a position that was impossible to question, which resulted in occasional furious “explosions” (pers. com., 2024). He was fully absorbed by his work, spending his days teaching at St. John’s University and his evenings revising his doctoral thesis on Marshallian monopoly theory.¹¹ Sidney had completed his PhD at New York University already in 1941, but the thesis was not printed immediately due to the early death of the book editor in WW II. The book appeared in 1949, titled *Price Theory*. He had high expectations, as the preceding articles drawn from his thesis had been published in prestigious journals such as the *Journal of Political Economy* (1942a) and the *American Economic Review* (1942b). The book did make him known as one of the experts in monopoly theory but did not bring him immediate fame as, say, Paul Samuelson’s thesis did. Sidney would later rationalize the limited visibility of the book by its belated publication: “If the book had surfaced in 1943 or 1944 as planned, it would have been on the heels of the fresh texts of Boulding and Stigler” ([1983] 1985, p. 520).

With Sidney absorbed in his work, Sheila, too, was emotionally unavailable. Born in 1917 as the youngest of four, Sheila had lost her mother at age six in a dramatic story involving antisemitism.¹² Her father then struggled to support the four children, and in 1929, when Sheila was twelve, he died of stomach cancer. Sheila then grew up as an orphan with her three siblings. Having lost both parents at an early age, as Roy came to see it later, might have cast Sidney as her caregiver, her lost mother and father, a role reinforced by the strict gender norms in the postwar years (pers. com., 2024). After giving birth to Roy, she suffered further losses: two miscarriages and in 1948 the death of a daughter, who succumbed to hyaline membrane disease just two days after birth. Roy did not know of this at the time but found himself somewhat taking care of his mother. “Loss was her theme, hence her predisposition to depression,” as Roy commented from today’s perspective (pers. com., 2024).

Yet the 1950s began well for the Weintraubs. Sidney got his first taste of success when he was appointed professor at the University of Pennsylvania in 1951. As an economic theorist teaching at an Ivy League institution, he achieved the recognition he sought. His family began to think of him, as he did himself, as an important person. For Sheila, at first, the move from Brooklyn to Philadelphia meant separation from her larger family. Without work, her economic and social dependence on Sidney was reinforced by her

¹⁰ He was employed in the Combined Intelligence Objective Subcommittee doing paperwork; see SWP 25 and 26 for his war letters as used in Weintraub (2002).

¹¹ Sidney chose this topic during his visit at the London School of Economics in 1938 at the advice of Lionel Robbins (see his account in [1983] 1985, p. 517).

¹² The family story told to Roy was that a hospital surgeon refused to operate to remove an infected gall bladder until he had his fee paid in advance. Sheila’s father left the hospital to frantically borrow money from relatives, and while he was gone, her mother died. The children had been told that she was to return from the hospital that day, and put up a sign on the apartment building saying, “Welcome Home Mama” (RWP 2019).

inability to drive. But then, for her, too, the situation lightened up when she gave birth to her second son, Neil, in November 1951.

During most of Roy's childhood, Sidney pursued his breakthrough with a major contribution to Keynesian economics.¹³ While working on his thesis at the London School of Economics in 1938, he had been converted to Keynes's ideas by Nicholas Kaldor, who presented his work in Lionel Robbins's seminar. Kaldor would remain Sidney's link to British Keynesians for many years before other Cambridge Keynesians came into play. Sidney recalls that Kaldor presented Keynes as *apolitical*, which Sidney, as an aspiring theoretician, initially emphasized as well. Sidney approached Keynes by integrating the classical theory of income distribution, preparing what would become his book titled *An Approach to the Theory of Income Distribution* (1958). Starting from a Marshallian theory of wages, he developed the supply-side dimension of Keynesian macroeconomics that was absent from Keynes's works. He himself considered this his "most original book" ([1983] 1985, p. 523), a genuine contribution to Keynes's project well aligned with what others were doing at the time. Oskar Lange, Don Patinkin, and others also tried to bring Keynesian monetary theory and microeconomics into dialogue, even if they used a Walrasian general equilibrium framework. He might not have realized to what extent his focus on income distribution was unusual, particularly his notion that income distribution is not only a matter of factor markets. Later, his analysis would serve as the "path trod" for other Post-Keynesians to criticize Hicksian IS-LM. But at the time, it was meant as an original contribution aimed at precisely this audience.

Consequently, Sidney wished to appeal to the contemporary reader by presenting his ideas formally. He approved of the increasing use of mathematics by his intended audience but needed help. Neither his Bachelor of Commerce undergraduate program nor his graduate classes in economics, both at New York University, provided him with sufficient formal training. In private, during his military service, he studied a textbook, presuming he could "read himself into" mathematics in the same way he had done in economics. "I have never felt that it was a subject beyond my ken," he wrote even later in his life despite his need for help ([1983] 1985, p. 513). Instead of collaborating with a mathematician and potential coauthor, he relied on family bonds as a resource. He involved his younger brother Hal, a mathematician with a PhD from Harvard, who had taken a position at Tufts University (1958, p. viii).

Some months before their collaboration began in 1951, Hal had been diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease. As their father, Aaron, had passed away in 1949, and there was little contact with their other two siblings, Sidney and Hal formed a family cell shaped by their joint work and emotionally intensified by the anticipation of Hal's imminent death. Hal passed away in 1954, years before the book was published. Sidney's idealization of mathematics, clearly perceived by Roy as an eleven-year-old, was a way of dealing with his grief over Hal's early death.¹⁴ Thus, the responses to Sidney's book would mean much more than a mere debate over ideas.

¹³ Already before his move to Pennsylvania, he had put together his lecture notes in a first macroeconomic book, *Income and Employment Analysis* (1951), which was Keynesian in its concepts but rather "neoclassical" in its use of the 45-degree diagram as part of the IS-LM model (see King 1995, p. 78).

¹⁴ See SWP 26, "Harold Weintraub, materials 1950s"; "obituary material"; and Sidney's memorial poem in RWP 2, "family letters 1951–1982."

The articles preceding the book were well published in the best journals (e.g. Weintraub 1956). However, the first difficulty arose when Sidney was searching for a publisher. As his previous publisher refused to take on the project, instead of trying other academic publishers, he decided to practically self-publish the book with Chilton Company, a local publisher specializing in auto repair manuals (1958). But this did not slow him down. His ambitions were fueled by a new PhD student who got hooked on his ideas, Paul Davidson, and by an encouraging encounter during a sabbatical in 1957 in Oxford with Roy Harrod, the first biographer of Keynes. During that sabbatical, Sidney could have visited Cambridge to engage with Joan Robinson's and Kaldor's work on income distribution that was akin to his own. But instead of teaming up, he presumed differences, maintaining his perception of unique "specialness" (Weintraub 2002, p. 250).¹⁵

Then, on one day in the summer of 1957, Sidney believed he had made his lifetime discovery: the so-called Wage Cost Markup theory of the Price Level. If the average markup of prices (k) over wages is constant, inflation is a relation between wage rates and labor productivity. This claim was opposed to the then-standard view that inflation is a demand-side phenomenon, which he thought made his theory special. The theory was to replace nothing but the quantity theory of money and its constant velocity of money. His policy conclusions were also far-reaching, leading to the so-called watchtower approach to inflation, which proposed politically "supervising" wage negotiations instead of controlling the money supply. It was as if he had "found the Holy Grail," as Roy remembers his fourteen-year-old self witnessing.

I remember, while I was a junior in high school, Sidney's uncontrollable excitement that he had found the key to the theory of inflation.... Sidney worked the equation for a couple of days, checking it against the usual Department of Commerce national income statistics, staying up certainly all night that first night. By the second day of this eureka experience he began writing. He barely slept for the next five days as he produced chapter after chapter, and by the end of the week he had a short book which he titled, certainly to suggest Keynes, *A General Theory of the Price Level, Employment, and Growth*. As he told me at the time, readers would identify the central equation, the WCM, and then it would be natural to have it known, eventually, as Weintraub's Constant Markup theory. (RWP 2019)

Without being refereed, the book appeared two months later at Chilton Publishing (1959). The book description in the blurb and the introduction lacked any academic modesty. He wrote of a "sensational breakthrough" in price theory: "A new conceptualization of major importance finally solves the riddle of the price level and wage costs. ... Where Keynes's theory failed, ... a new perspective makes economics a predictive science" (cited in Lerner 1960, p. 122). Like other American Keynesians, Sidney sought to improve Keynes by making his ideas more "scientific"—here in the sense of being "predictive." This contrasts with the later Post-Keynesian program that aimed to remain true to Keynes against those who sacrificed Keynes to economics as a science.

¹⁵ Once he was adopted as one of the Post-Keynesian scholars twenty years later, he would say that he regretted that he did not engage with Joan Robinson at his visit in 1957 ([1983] 1985, p. 529). Davidson instead would project Sidney's link with Robinson back into the 1950s: "Sidney was a Cambridgephile. He loved Cambridge. So anything that Joan Robinson was writing was what his students had to read and know" (Colander and Davidson 2001, p. 88).

The response from the economics profession to the two books (1958, 1959) was vital for Sidney's personal development. Perhaps the praise could never have been high enough to meet his expectations. His sensitivity to the only moderate reactions is evident in several long letter exchanges regarding two reviews he received for the two books, the first from Robert Solow (1959) and the second from Abba Lerner (1960). The very fact that two key macroeconomists of the day reviewed self-published books in the *Journal of Political Economy* and the *American Economic Review* could already be counted as a success, but this is not how Sidney saw it. "I wish I could be more enthusiastic about this book," Solow wrote, showing that he considered the topic of income distribution important. However, he added, "The trouble is that all the important theoretical questions are buried in the shape of a curve, the things that make it shift, and the way in which it shifts.... Thus to use such a curve as a basic tool seems mainly to transform explicit theorizing into implicit theorizing and into casual statements about the shape of the function itself" (Solow 1959, p. 420).

In a long letter to Solow, Sidney expressed his "distress" (September 11, SWP 1, "Correspondence 1959"). He complained about Solow's mention of Léon Walras, whom he believed to be unable to incorporate Keynes—a Post-Keynesian move. But he also defended himself by limiting his analysis to mere theoretical analysis that should not be judged regarding its empirical value—a neoclassical move. He added a *tu quoque* argument regarding Solow's abstract growth model and his un-Keynesian use of the "45-degree type of analysis." He added in handwriting: "P.S. My wife was the angry me. Beware, of women's wrath!" Solow responded kindly, discussing each single point (September 29, SWP 1, "Correspondence 1959"). He defended the policy relevance of his own models by distinguishing useful from pointless abstractions. He also mentioned that he considered himself a Keynesian but did not see this as the point of the review. Sidney replied again, on October 5, 1959, with another defensive letter that ended the exchange.¹⁶

The same sensitivity is apparent in Sidney's response to a review essay of his second book by Abba Lerner in the *American Economic Review* (1960). Contrasting his own theory of inflation with Sidney's, Lerner denied the book its originality. He saw that Sidney's "magic k" was identical to Michal Kalecki's "degree of monopoly" and expressed doubts about its potential to replace the quantity theory of money: "Unfortunately, the new formula can confuse truism with substantive statements just as much as the old one" (p. 122). Lerner also questioned the practicability of the watchtower approach, considering the reality of how union leaders think. Possibly in anticipation of Sidney's reaction, Lerner sent him the essay for comments before publication. As Sidney considered Lerner a friend and "on the same side of the battle," the critique hit even harder than Solow's. In a long letter response, he called the review unfair, defending the originality of his genuinely Keynesian notion of inflation (January 2, SWP 1, "Correspondence 1960"). He wrote to the editor of the *American Economic Review* seeking to publish a response to Abba Lerner's article, but this did not happen.

¹⁶ Solow later argued at a symposium discussion that there is no aggregate supply notion in Keynesian economics. Davidson confronted him, stating that it was his own review that contributed to the fact that exactly this contribution of Sidney Weintraub was ignored (in Colander and Davidson 2001, p. 97). Note that this is not a negotiation about a different paradigm but an issue of priority and scientific credit occurring in the same discursive sphere.

Instead, Sidney wrote an article published in the *International Economic Review* that implicitly responded to Lerner's critique and insisted on what a Keynesian theory of inflation should look like (1960). It was in response to this article that another unpleasant line of disagreement opened with Richard Kahn in Cambridge, UK. Kahn responded to the article with a short note, writing that he was "somewhat surprised" by the lack of credit given to Robinson regarding the importance of wage bargaining for inflation (November 29, SWP 1, "Correspondence 1960"). Sidney replied with a detailed letter (December 5, SWP 1, "Correspondence 1960"). He defended himself against Kahn's "wrist-slap," arguing that he himself was not sufficiently credited by Robinson when attacking the untrue 45° American Keynesians. Robinson responded to Sidney with a short note apologizing that Kahn and she had inadvertently offended him: "If I wrote discourteously, it must be because I was in a frantic rush. Please accept my apologies" (January 4, SWP 1, "Correspondence 1961"). Again, Sidney responded with a lengthy letter emphasizing that he was part of the "old guard" of Keynesians being "jolted" by the domestic Keynesians. "I write all this in the hope that you will harbor a little goodwill toward me. If not ... well, you're not alone on the other list! You will just have to queue up, for it is a long line, I assure you. Do as you might" (January 11, SWP 1, "Correspondence 1961").

Regarding the history of Post-Keynesian economics, this letter exchange clearly shows that it was Sidney's sensitivity to critique that inhibited a possible alliance with Cambridge Keynesians that could have already been formed at this point. Sidney did not seek to develop links with "the old guard" of Keynes but tried to convince the domestic American audience. In the years to come, he would remain in friendly correspondence with, and seek praise for his theory of inflation from, American authors such as Alvin Hansen, Don Patinkin, and Paul Samuelson (SWP 1, "Correspondence 1962," "1965," "1958"), as well as Solow and Lerner. They responded in a friendly manner but without truly engaging with his ideas. It appears that Sidney wanted to win a battle at home rather than search for allies abroad.

Regarding Sidney's personal development, the letter exchanges might give only hints at the difficulty he faced after the only moderate responses to what was supposed to be his breakthrough as a great economist. Indeed, he entered a state of depression, as he himself acknowledged publicly: "If ever I had some twitters of personal depression, it was in the 1960s" ([1983] 1985, p. 524). As his books were never merely about impersonal ideas, he perceived the critiques as personal attacks, stirring up a mix of feelings, including his anxiety about being exposed, the grief for his brother, the guilt over having misused him, etc. The crisis was felt within the family. His self-devaluation resulted in withdrawal, notably through playing golf. "He began playing regularly, not only at weekends away from the family, but also on some non-teaching days not even going into the office" (RWP 2019). Sidney had difficulties accepting a subordinate role as a second-rank economist, which would have been a more adaptive and less reactive response. Instead, he "externalized" his self-devaluation by devaluing others and seeing himself as a victim not only of his current readers but of *everyone* he had dealt with in the past. In Roy's terms: "He began to see himself as victimized by others who had the good degrees—in contrast to his NYU degree—those who had had a 'good war'—in contrast to his clerk labor—and those who had good connections—in contrast to his position in Pennsylvania" (RWP 2019).

Thus began his “splitting,” or black-and-white thinking, dividing the world into friends and enemies. He developed a “Manichean vision” of other economists, who were either with him or against him—an attitude that contrasted with the light spirit of scientific cooperation enabled by the new modeling techniques practiced at MIT and elsewhere. His self-perception as a rebellious secessionist was a way to rationalize his reactive response as an intellectual virtue. As Roy argued in 2014, psychologically speaking, Sidney’s Post-Keynesian identity was formed by the early 1960s, even if he did *not* relate to those who would later form this community.

What I am suggesting is that Sidney had already, by 1960, begun to see himself as opposed to and oppressed by the macroeconomics establishment. He saw himself as shunned by the people in power in the economics profession, where folks like Samuelson and Solow and Heller advised the president instead of him, Sidney, who had the right answer about inflation. He believed that he had been kept out of the major committees and publications of the American Economic Association because he was not willing to be gracefully deferential to the major figures of the profession. (Weintraub 2014, p. 37)

While Sidney split off the macroeconomic establishment, in the early 1960s, there was only his student Paul Davidson whom he considered to be on his side. Davidson was crucial in stabilizing Sidney’s self-image by fully taking over the idea that Sidney had not received due attention.¹⁷ In the coming years, their small cell would include other young colleagues such as Donald Katzner, Eileen Appelbaum, and Miles Fleming. A discursive attitude would slowly emerge from what, for Sidney, was a reactive defense mechanism.

Within the family, Sidney could not apply the same strategy of externalization. Regarding Sheila, who faced her own personal difficulties, his self-devaluation resulted in his inability to maintain an intimate relationship. Gradually, he withdrew emotionally, leading, on the one hand, to many conflicts, and, on the other, to a search for emotional support elsewhere. It must have been around this time, as Roy later understood, that Sidney began a secret relationship with the administrative assistant of the economics department, Gladys Decker.

III. DEPENDENCY (1960–1970)

Sidney kept clinging to Keynes. The 1960s offered too much of a promise. When John Kennedy became president in 1960, friends like John Kenneth Galbraith and rivals like Robert Solow emerged as public figures, and anti-inflation measures were omnipresent in public and in academic discussions, Sidney felt he should be part of this attention. His profile as a Keynesian economist indeed grew, but the breakthrough he sought did not occur. Thus, despite moderate success, his polarized vision of the profession was

¹⁷ “Had the economics profession paid more attention to Weintraub’s *Approach* ... many of the false ‘trade-off’ prognostications of the neoclassical synthesis Keynesians could have been avoided” (Davidson 1983, p. 292).

reinforced, exacerbated by his lack of mathematical knowledge that permeated economics in the 1960s. However, perhaps Roy could make up for his lack of success?

In this section, I show how Sidney tweaked Roy into taking on a role where he stood in for both the success and lack of success of his father. Roy's early career—first as a mathematics major, then as a PhD student in applied mathematics, and later in a position in Paul Davidson's department at Rutgers University—was to stabilize his father's fragile professional identity. These processes were subtle for both Roy and Sidney and fully understood only later: "My father had planned probably since the late 1950s for me to complete his life's work, to become the economist winning the prizes that were just out of his grasp. I did not know any of this, of course, and I doubt very much whether he could ever have articulated it" (RWP 2019). From Sidney's point of view, he "helped" Roy's career by "opening some doors and closing others" (pers. com., 2024). While in many cases, this help came without Roy's knowing, and so without his consent, in other cases it came with the expectation of gratitude through which Sidney created emotional dependency. "Any pushing away was a rejection of his help," and thus an implicit criticism (pers. com., 2024).

Roy's academic orientation was overdetermined. He performed well in school, grew up surrounded by several academics in Sheila's family, and was exposed to Sidney's cynicism regarding any profession other than university professor. He thus emerged from adolescence with the belief that recognition from society at large, and from his father in particular, required excelling in the academic milieu. Entering an Ivy League school "would signal my honored specialness, and thereby his" (2002, p. 250). Being mostly absent during Roy's upbringing, Sidney stepped in when it came to Roy's academic future as it could potentially reflect back on him.

Roy applied to Harvard, Yale, Swarthmore, and Pennsylvania. He received invitations for interviews at Harvard and Yale but learned only late in his life that performance did not matter. Both interviews had the objective of weeding out Jewish candidates regardless of their academic potential.¹⁸ Accepted at Swarthmore College—where Sidney knew one of the economics professors—he waited in vain for a response from the school at which he expected sure acceptance, the University of Pennsylvania. Sidney told him that the office had never received his application. Years later, when Roy archived his father's papers, he found an acceptance letter from Pennsylvania that Sidney had apparently withheld, believing that Swarthmore held greater promise for Roy's career. At the time, Roy created his own self-narrative around the rejection from Harvard, Yale, and Pennsylvania, downplaying the academic worth he aspired to.

Entering the competitive atmosphere at Swarthmore in 1960, Roy soon found himself moving towards mathematics, which in his mind promised honor among his colleagues for being associated with "patriotic duty"—these were the post-Sputnik years. But underlying this choice, less apparent to him at the time, was the knowledge that by choosing mathematics he would gain his father's respect. In the family,

¹⁸ The policy of excluding Jews from Harvard, Yale, and Princeton is researched by Karabel (2005). Having read this book only after his chapter on his early career (Weintraub 2002, ch. 8), he later corrected the incompleteness of his account (Weintraub 2012a) (see also RWP 2, "College admissions"). Also, at high school, he faced some explicit but mostly implicit episodes of antisemitism that he understood only later (RWP 2019).

mathematics was still emotionally associated with the grief over Sidney's brother Hal, who had died six years earlier. "The time for me was pressure filled as somehow the notion that I become a mathematician took root as something that would give me both cachet among my classmates, and respect from my father whose lack of mathematical ability had, he felt, kept him away from the serious prizes of the economics profession" (RWP 2019).

The emotional charge of the choice made it all the harder to cope with the lack of success. He received little encouragement from teachers and had to deal with humiliating experiences of rejection.¹⁹ Several applications to mathematics PhD programs were unsuccessful. Having internalized his father's expectations of specialness, rejection "was a sure path to depression" (RWP 2019). Consequently, he considered a plan B, a teaching master's program. But Sidney was furious. "My son is not going to teach high school," Roy recalled him shouting (pers. com., 2024). He felt he lacked the means, financially and emotionally, to resist, and thus found himself accepted as a provisional student in the mathematics program at the University of Pennsylvania beginning in the fall of 1964. Sidney had contacts in the mathematics department, and as a faculty child Roy received free tuition. The faculty could accept him at no cost. Roy was nudged into a place Sidney wished him to be.

In fall 1966, Sidney's adulterous relationship with Gladys Decker somehow became known to Sheila. In response, she asked for a divorce. Unwilling to be left alone and to bear the guilt others would associate with him, Sidney refused and denied any such sexual relationship. Amid the confrontation, he called Roy to the house to witness their quarrel, knowing that Roy would not support a divorce. Sidney also relied on the fact that Roy, as Roy understood only then, had silently accepted the presence of Gladys Decker in Sidney's life. Roy sat through the argument without taking a side. Sheila, like many women in postwar America, had little choice as she economically and socially depended on Sidney—no work, little education, and family only far away. She eventually agreed not to leave him on the condition that Sidney would break off relations with Gladys Decker. Sidney agreed to do so.

Leaving the scene and recounting the events to a friend, Roy broke down. For it was then that he became aware of the meaning of several earlier observations, dating back to his teenage years. Until the death of Gladys's husband, the Deckers and Weintraubs had been family friends. Later, it occasionally happened that Sidney proposed "a drive" to get "ice cream" after dinner. Sheila never wanted to go, and it turned out that Sidney would take Roy to Gladys's house. Sheila was never present at those outings, and Gladys never came over to their house by herself after her husband died. When Roy and Sidney were on the same campus, Roy learned that he shared a parking pass with Gladys, which allowed him to pick her up at her house. Sidney explained that this made financial sense. However, he added, "Sheila didn't need to know about it because she would be upset or might misunderstand" (RWP 2019). While at the time Roy did not wonder, he now understood Sidney's intention to make him complicit in his adultery. And he did not stop doing so even after the confrontation with Sheila. Sidney continued having lunch with

¹⁹ During a break of an honors mathematics seminar in his senior year, the department chair called him into his office. "He informed me that I simply was not a strong enough student to attend the seminar. I was stunned and was about to leave to retrieve my books and book bag when he told me to remain in his office as the materials would be delivered to me there" (RWP 2019).

Gladys, driving back and forth to the university with her and stopping by her house on occasions when Roy was in the car and unable to escape.

His continuous refrain to me was one of injured righteousness that he was not having an affair, he had not had an affair, that Gladys was a good friend, and he was not going to stop being friends with her. ... This of course was the kind of duplicitous behavior, and Sidney's involving me in his duplicitous behavior, that was so infuriating. He made me a collaborator, one who kept secrets from Sheila, and short of my telling my mother what was going on, there was no way for me to extricate myself. (RWP 2019)

By involving Roy in his adultery, first without and then with Roy's knowing, Sidney partially shifted his responsibility, and sense of guilt, onto his son.

The dependency between father and son would soon be reflected professionally. Faced with the prospect of being drafted for the Vietnam War after initially failing his preliminary exams, Roy had a final opportunity to pass and thus maintain his student deferment. In May 1967, as he prepared for the retake, he discovered a new National Science Foundation-sponsored PhD program at Pennsylvania in applied mathematics. PhD students in mathematics were to write dissertations in an applied field with the advantage that students would be examined in only two fields of mathematics instead of three, along with one field in the applied area. The program thus increased his chances of passing the preliminary exam. Lawrence R. Klein, a faculty colleague of Sidney's and a family friend, cochaired the committee. And so, Roy faced the choice to become a *mathematical economist*. He knew what was at stake: "I recall being in a high state of distress, not sure of what I was getting myself into as an economist and Sidney's son. I knew that such a move would change me forever. I could please my father, finally, and get a Ph.D. [However] I could lose my autonomy" (RWP 2019). He chose the program, passed the preliminary exams, and began writing a dissertation on the stochastic stability of general equilibrium systems under Klein's supervision in May 1967. "At least in some other field my mathematics background would be a major status-creator" (Weintraub 2002, p. 254). Applied mathematics opened the possibility to excel by helping the unwashed, as he expected "in a guilty fashion" (pers. com., 2024).

The turn to economics made exposure to Sidney unavoidable. If Roy was going to become an economist, Sidney felt it was his task to train him correctly. Sidney wanted Roy to join him in Hawaii and attend the two classes he was to teach there over the summer. Roy declined, Sidney became furious, and Roy acquiesced, leaving his new girlfriend alone in Philadelphia. Sitting in his father's two undergraduate economics classes, he summarized his summer in the following terms:

The time in Hawaii was terrible. Each morning Sidney and I would walk up to the campus, and I would take a seat in the back of the classroom for the three hours of Sidney's lectures first on intermediate price theory and then on intermediate macroeconomics. So it was there, in Hawaii, that I met Keynes head on for the first time as Sidney's macro class went through *The General Theory* chapter by chapter by chapter. The micro course involved our going through Sidney's relatively new *Intermediate Price Theory* book, chapter by chapter by chapter. What I got that summer was a formal official take on Sidney Weintraub and Keynes. (RWP 2019)

From Sidney's perspective, the same experience is described in very different terms. He was proud of Roy, as he wrote to Paul Davidson from Hawaii. "Roy attends my Price Theory course. He is doing marvelously; he is discovering some major math ideas for application.... I am pleased beyond words; you will be too, I know. It is the best experience of his life."²⁰ Sidney enjoyed showing his son how the world works and expected him to be grateful for the experience. Roy's divergent perception of this summer was reinforced upon returning to Philadelphia, where he learned that his girlfriend had left him for his best friend.

Shortly afterward, Roy met Margaret Edwards, a graduate of Vassar College. It was she who sought him out. "I was quickly maneuvered into taking care of her," he writes in retrospect (RWP 2019). From today's perspective, his attraction to her was related to the familiarity of the role he played in relation to his father and thus to the terms of being loved. This is not unusual, considering that feelings of intimacy are learned in families. But in this case, this might also have meant that Roy tried to "fix" his relationship with his father through a functioning relationship with someone like him. Against the resistance of both of their parents, the relationship developed into marriage, set for August 1968. When Margaret's mother refused to keep her promise to arrange the wedding, Sidney stepped in. He proposed that Gladys help Margaret plan the wedding. Again, the connection with Gladys was not to be shared with Sheila.

In the same year, 1968, Roy finalized his thesis and began looking for a job. As a graduate student in mathematics, he knew little of the economics job market and was unaware of the high demand for mathematicians in economics as a result of the shifting values in the discipline. He thus was surprised by invitations from Tjalling Koopmans at Cowles, Robert Dorfman at Harvard, and Howard Raiffa at the Harvard Business School. None of these encounters went well, however, as he had no interesting economic interpretation of his model. Yet, as Sidney Weintraub's son and a potential supporter of Paul Davidson's cause, he was offered a job as a mathematical economist at Rutgers University. When he moved from Pennsylvania to New Jersey in August 1968, his career thus remained fully entangled with Sidney's sphere as he was immediately identified as one of Davidson's people.

Around the same time, Sidney's second son, Neil, approached college age. The impact Sidney had on Roy's career echoed strangely in Neil's life choices, though his struggle for autonomy began earlier. Neil, too, was maneuvered into pursuing an academic path. Mistakenly believing Roy had enjoyed his college years, Neil enrolled at Swarthmore in 1969. He became involved in the intense four-year period of Vietnam protests. After graduation with a major in philosophy and mathematics, he first moved to Boston to try to become a fiction writer. But family pressure was such that he gave up his plans and enrolled in none other than the economics graduate program at the University of Pennsylvania! There, Sidney tried to "help" Neil become an economist in the same way he had helped Roy. In the early 1970s, as we will see below, Sidney would coauthor economic articles with both of his sons, Neil and Roy.²¹

²⁰ July 3, 1967, box 25, "Sidney Weintraub," 3 of 3, Paul Davidson Papers (hereinafter PDP) at the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University.

²¹ In Sidney's papers are two manuscripts coauthored with Neil (RWP 2, "family letters" 1951–1982): "a theory of socio-economic utility constraints" and "the theory of socio-political economy policy." Neil was

IV. POST-KEYNESIAN TIES (1966–1972)

Davidson had arrived at Rutgers two years earlier, in 1966. He was about to bring together a group of like-minded scholars, establishing the department as the place of the first cohort of American Post-Keynesian economists in opposition to what they then identified as mainstream American Keynesians.²² Around the same time, Joan Robinson began using the term “Bastard Keynesians,” and the two groups at Rutgers, NJ, and Cambridge, UK, began to connect.²³ Davidson’s doctoral student Jan Kregel, after graduation, became Robinson’s research assistant in 1968—Roy served on his committee to get the dissertation through. Davidson himself spent a year visiting Cambridge in 1970. Hyman Minsky visited Rutgers, reporting about his visit to Cambridge in 1969, where he had access to Keynes’s preparatory work for *The General Theory*—later published as volume 13 of his *Collected Works* (Keynes 1978a, 1978b). The discovery of these documents would become vital for the community’s claim of representing the “real” Keynes. But more importantly, Robinson’s critique of MIT growth theory in the late 1960s marked *the* signal event for the formation of the community, later known as the so-called Two Cambridges controversy.

Even if Sidney played no role in this controversy, it is worth recalling the events, as they were formative regarding the Post-Keynesian ethos with which Sidney would later identify. In short, what initially began as a technical issue of the production function that determines the path of substituting different forms of capital (say, different technologies) was subsequently magnified by Cambridge, UK, into a political, then paradigmatic issue. The events go back to a seminar Robinson gave at MIT in 1961 when the two camps still considered partaking in the same discourse. Her talk triggered a symposium on problems of the production function, published in a major journal, the *Review of Economic Studies* in 1962. Yet the issue remained marginal for American economists until Samuelson picked it up in 1966 in the symposium on “Paradoxes in Capital Theory” in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. As a result of this symposium, for the Cambridge, UK, community, the theoretical problem was proven to deserve serious attention and required the abandoning of marginal productivity theory. The Cambridge, US, community, in contrast, simply accepted the additional assumption identified by Samuelson and went on with its own research agenda. The lack of reaction from the Cambridge, US, community was consistent with its values of economic modeling but would be perceived as strategic silencing by the Cambridge, UK, community.

However, the notion of two opposed camps was not formed until Geoffrey Harcourt was invited to write a review of production theory for the *Journal of Economic Literature*, published in 1969. While the invitation signaled the perceived interest of the general reader in understanding the debate, for Harcourt, it was an occasion for delineation and polemics (see Mata 2006, pp. 189–195). Solow

reading Sidney’s works as Roy did, and with his preliminary academic knowledge of mathematics, Neil also explained one or the other theorem to Sidney.

²² Before Roy, Davidson had recruited Joseph Seneca, one of his students from the University of Pennsylvania, as well as Roger Hinderliter, a student of Hyman Minsky. Alfred Eichner came after Roy.

²³ Substantial contacts between Davidson and Robinson date to around 1967, exchanges that were commented on and directed by Sidney (see Sidney to Davidson, 21 June 1967, SWP 2; and PDP 25, “Weintraub”).

responded to Harcourt in private that he “retired from this debate” (cited in Mata 2006, p. 191), reinforcing, in Harcourt’s view, the notion of an unanswered challenge. This opened the door for Robinson to argue that the division dated back much earlier and reflected a misuse of power and political premises, notably the unfounded trust in the social function of the profit motive. Reinforced by the 1968 student movement milieu, the political division between the two Keynesian “schools” developed further. In 1972, next to the book version of Harcourt’s essay, Davidson’s *Money and the Real World* substantiated the notion of “them” being unrealistic and “us” being truthful.²⁴ It was from this point on that the institutions of the Post-Keynesian community emerged (see Lee 2000; Cohen and Harcourt 2003; Mata 2006). Their shared feeling of being strategically “silenced” and denied due credit aligned the community’s intellectual attitude with the attitude Sidney had already developed in the early 1960s in response to the lack of recognition for what he considered his path-breaking discoveries.²⁵ Of course, the underlying psychological “foundations” of the individuals involved in the debate, from which this intellectual attitude emerged, would require another inquiry.

Up until the early 1970s, Sidney had not actively related to the Cambridge, UK, community. In his early work (1958), he saw himself in competition with the Cambridge conception of income distribution. Instead of cooperating, he distinguished himself from other approaches to Keynes and preferred throughout the 1960s to remain an “academic loner,” as John E. King described him (1995, p. 83), or a “lone wolf,” as Samuelson noted about his work in 1964 (cited in Davidson 1985, p. 537). In response to the 1966 symposium and Robinson’s notion of profit, Sidney wrote to Samuelson: “I do feel closer to you in policy than to anyone else I might name” (March 11, SWP 1, “1966”). To Robinson, instead, he wrote in 1968: “The recent ‘switching’ controversy should have some healthy, as well as amusing, by-products. But I doubt there will be any quick ‘style-switches’” (February 28, SWP 2, “1968”). The distance he felt between his own ideas and the emerging “research program” in Cambridge, UK, is apparent in that, still in 1969, he wanted to provide a *synthesis* of the two views in the Cambridge controversy (see King 1995, p. 76): “The influence over him of other Post Keynesians at this stage in his career was so small as to be negligible” (King 1995, p. 81). Instead of teaming up with others, he wanted to be “his own product,” as his friend Arthur Bloomfield would write in retrospect (Bloomfield 1981–82, p. 297). Not being in a community and clinging to his own ideas, as I showed above, allowed him to put the burden of critique onto others’ lack of understanding and maintain his sense of being unique. He protected himself from the judgment of others that might have been too difficult to bear.

Instead, Sidney tried to create his own academic “family” to control. Following a lost struggle over the promotion of Davidson in 1966 that resulted in Davidson’s

²⁴ Davidson exemplifies how the Post-Keynesian attitude emerged from the experience of being silenced. He had published a critique of James Tobin, who did not respond to it (Colander and Davidson 2001, p. 91). When Tobin then published his celebrated “q,” Davidson considered the notion equivalent to his own notion of “spot versus forward prices” developed from Keynes. This disappointment led into the book published in 1972. Its origin was a struggle for priority over one and the same result, not a different paradigm.

²⁵ Note that opposition was a personal choice. While Davidson chose an oppositional spirit, possibly unconsciously taken over from Sidney, other Keynesians such as Robert Clower or Axel Leijonhufvud adopted a more accommodating attitude. The difference between Clower’s and Sidney’s relationship with the American mainstream in macroeconomics lies more in their attitude than in their ideas.

move to Rutgers, he increasingly felt alienated in the economics department at the University of Pennsylvania (RWP 2019).²⁶ In 1969, he had the opportunity to become an outside department chair at the University of Waterloo in Canada.²⁷ He began recruiting his former pupils and loyal young colleagues who shared, and reassured him in, his self-understanding as the oppressed underdog.²⁸ But his hiring decisions failed to build up a new hub for Keynesian ideas. He hired Vivian Walsh as a mathematical economist, who brought in, with Roy's help, Sidney Afriat from the University of North Carolina. Afriat, in turn, brought in his former Oxford friend, the Canadian Robert Mundell, who quickly replaced Sidney as chair. After two years, in 1971, he thus returned to Pennsylvania. In these two years in Canada, there was, compared with the group at Rutgers, little academic connection with Cambridge, UK. Only by coincidence, Sidney grew closer to Robinson, as she often visited her daughter near Waterloo. But intellectually, this made little difference. When Sidney, still in Waterloo, proposed to Davidson the foundation of a journal that would alleviate the challenges they faced in publishing their increasingly polemical work, he suggested a title that would distance the journal from Robinson's community (Colander and Davidson 2001, p. 93).

In the years that followed, Sidney promoted the policy for which he is most known, the so-called tax-based income policy that he developed jointly with Henry Wallich from the Fed in 1971. He proposed taxing corporate profits to limit inflationary wage increases (see Isard 1973). This policy earned him moderate success and marked the beginning of the recognition of his work in a larger audience. He was asked for economic advice and gave lectures all over the globe.²⁹ But still, he remained outside the more prominent Keynesian versus monetarist debates of the same years. Instead, mostly through the influence of Davidson as one of the spokespersons of the emerging community, his work on inflation was *adopted* as a "branch" of Post-Keynesian economics.³⁰ Apart from an emphasis on unemployment, one could question to what extent their work overlapped theoretically. More important than their ideas was, as I argue in this article, that Sidney's community at Pennsylvania, Davidson's at Rutgers, and Robinson's in Cambridge shared the same discursive ethos, marked by a strong attachment and loyalty to ideas, an emphasis on controversy, and a high sensibility to criticism. Considering the contested theoretical unity of the community, as surveyed by Mata (2006), one might investigate further to what

²⁶ After his graduation in 1959, Davidson returned to Pennsylvania as an associate professor in 1961. When he was refused promotion to full professor in 1966, Davidson accepted the decision and left for Rutgers University. Sidney, instead, took it as a personal attack against himself and launched a departmental fight (Colander and Davidson 2001, p. 90; RWP 2019).

²⁷ For his ambitions at Waterloo, see the interview in the university newspaper *The Gazette* of March 4, 1970 (SWP 26, "1951–1979 and undated"). The tax arrangements between the US and Canada were such that he would temporarily pay neither US nor Canadian income taxes. This prohibited him from traveling for longer periods to the US, which was welcome to Sheila, who hoped that this would end the ongoing relationship with Gladys.

²⁸ He hired his old students John Hotson and Hamid Habibagahi, together with friends without stable positions such as Ivor Pearce and Don Katzner, as visiting professors.

²⁹ See Bloomfield for a list of advising activities (1981–82, p. 293).

³⁰ See, for example, Davidson's tabular overview of "political economy schools of thought" (1972, p. 4).

extent the origin of this attitude of other members, too, was primarily psychological rather than intellectual.

V. BREAKING AWAY (1970–1983)

Roy found himself in an unhappy situation at Rutgers, struggling to fit into an economics department. His background was not sufficient to meaningfully contribute to the Cambridge capital controversy; however, “personal loyalties required my taking sides with Paul Davidson against all comers” (RWP 2019).³¹ Appropriated by Davidson without fully understanding what they were after, Roy soon developed the wish to move away. Within a short period of time, he succeeded in publishing several articles from his dissertation in top journals including the *American Economic Review* (1970a, 1970b). As a result, he was invited by Wassily Leontief to present at the doctoral dissertation session at the American Economic Association meetings in December 1969, where his paper was discussed by Lionel McKenzie. In addition, he had around twenty job interviews. “My stock was sky high” (RWP 2019). The offer from Columbia University was the most distinguished, but the one from Duke was the most attractive.

From Sidney’s point of view, Roy’s move to Duke in 1970 created the opportunity for collaboration—that is, “helping” Roy with his career while benefiting from Roy’s assistance in polishing the mathematics of his papers. From Roy’s point of view, he remained vulnerable to his father’s demands, as he lacked an academic agenda of his own. And so, at Sidney’s suggestion, father and son became coauthors, notably on a so-called full-employment model that sparked some discussion in the journal *Kyklos* (1971, 1972, 1974). Later, King praised these articles for marking the moment when Sidney turned into a true Post-Keynesian economist because only then they argued that “the money supply is endogenous” (Weintraub and Weintraub 1971, p. 522; King 1995, p. 77). Thus, Roy continued to be identified with his father, even if Roy, as he recalled, “never really saw the point of it [the joint work] and did it only to keep my father from bothering me” (RWP 2019). Making Roy complicit in his professional cause, Sidney continued making him complicit in his private life. When he came to visit Roy’s family in Durham, without asking, he drove with Roy to Chapel Hill to visit Gladys’s brother, resulting in a fight in the car. This and other similar events made clear to Roy that he could establish *personal* distance to Sidney only if he also was to develop his own *academic* profile.

This turn took shape during a visiting appointment in Bristol in 1971. With Sidney’s friend Miles Fleming as department chair and Jan Kregel and Tony Brewer as junior faculty members, Bristol was a true Post-Keynesian bubble. But Roy’s readings, notably the empirical investigation by David Laidler (1969) and a lecture by Harry Johnson, made him doubt the Post-Keynesian consensus. He realized that “there was a big world of economics outside the little macro enclave I had thought of as the mainstream of sensible macroeconomics” (RWP 2019). More importantly, the year in Bristol opened

³¹ His relationship with Davidson echoed that with his father. It was Roy who explained to Davidson the meaning of the term “ergodicity,” which he knew from his thesis on stochastic processes (RWP 2019). The term became one of the catchwords of Davidson’s book *Money and the Real World*, with non-ergodicity as non-probabilistic uncertainty warranting the relationship with the “real world.”

him up to an entirely new literature: economic methodology. In a reading group with Brewer and others, he read Imre Lakatos's then-recent paper "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes" (1970). "That paper, with its alternative to the framework Thomas Kuhn had laid out in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, was the first breath of a new sophistication in economic methodology. I was hooked, and ... my intellectual development was marked" (RWP 2019). The Post-Keynesian interest in Kuhn's notion of paradigm and Lakatos's notion of research programs, particularly Alfred Eichner's, was to explain the experience of the Cambridge capital controversy, that is, the fact that they were not heard despite being right. For Roy, instead, Lakatos was an occasion to turn away from writing mathematical papers in economics and focus on writing non-mathematical papers about economics, notably the methodological appraisal of what he knew best, general equilibrium theory. This would develop into his first coherent research agenda for the coming decade. Naturally, this would also result in a major shift in his relationship with Sidney. For Sidney, Walrasian economics was part of what he felt rejected by.

A first manifestation of Roy's new research agenda was a review essay of Kenneth Arrow's and Frank Hahn's seminal *General Competitive Analysis* (1971), published in 1974. With Sidney's questions of Keynesian macroeconomics and Lakatos's framework in mind, he was in position to place Sidney's work in a larger context. Roy considered the two approaches as separate research programs with their own evaluation criteria. The review occasioned Mark Perlman, then the new editor of the *Journal of Economic Literature*, to invite Roy to write a survey article on the microfoundations of macroeconomics. In one of the first drafts of this paper, he placed Sidney's early work on aggregate supply curves as derived from Marshallian wage theory as an "idiosyncratic" version of a Keynesian microfoundation. Most likely in response to this draft, he received the following undated note from Sidney.

I don't want this around me. I resent deeply your patronizing reference. All I did was to stand alone, independent. ... Nothing of my bringing together micro-macro, of getting in monopoly, of injecting the money wage in a meaningful way, allowing scope for the price level, seeing that distribution could not be handled in the old ways. And for this, a smart-aleck reference from a son who is so much smarter—20 years after.... All this is, I know, so scientific. ... Rest at peace. I will not write you again. (RWP 2, "Sidney")

In fact, Sidney did write a second undated letter shortly thereafter, which was likely in response to Roy's review of the conference proceedings edited by Geoffrey Harcourt on the topic of microfoundations.³² The tone was no less upsetting:

I would have returned your 'paper' but it would not be worth the postage. So I just tore it up. It might contaminate the place. I am old fashioned: I think patricide should be performed, if at all, privately.... I suspect that I will survive your fresh evidence of insolence and impudence. You're hardly my most formidable antagonist. Hateful,

³² In this conference, Hicks brought together the two camps: Koopmans, Grandmont, Malinvaud, and others on the one side, and Paul Davidson, Geoffrey Harcourt, and other Post-Keynesians on the other. Roy emphasized the misunderstandings resulting from the diverging "perspectives" of the two fronts (1978). This review and the *Journal of Economic Literature* article served as the basis of the book on microfoundations in the Cambridge series edited by Perlman (1979).

maybe. Formidable, not. Remember me? Your father. Your psychiatrist must be a queer. I don't want to hear from you again, except in the most impersonal terms. Considering your genius, you might consider changing your name to demonstrate what you can do on your own. I have taken some pride in my name, something you haven't been able to understand in your profound moments of reflection on unkindness and ingratitude. (RWP 2, "Sidney")

What could possibly explain the intensity of the anger of these letters from Sidney's point of view? Recall that in the mid-1970s the Post-Keynesian community took shape notably by the historical reconstructions of their own marginalization. Sidney wanted to be part of this as he was preparing a book titled "Economic Thought: 1945–1965," which was based on his class and reconstructed the errors of the profession in a quasi-historical fashion.³³ Roy's article put him in competition with his own historical ideas, different from what a mathematician coauthor does. More concretely, Sidney might have expected from Roy a similar article as the one by Eichner and Jan Kregel in the *Journal of Economic Literature* (1975), which followed up on Harcourt's 1969 article in creating the history of the Post-Keynesian diaspora. This article was formative for the Post-Keynesian identity as it spoke of a new "paradigm"—a "borderline work," as Mata called it (2006). Sidney might also have worried that his peers would identify Roy's contribution with his own since they were still seen as coauthors and "on the same side of the battle."

But none of this explains the inappropriateness of the letters' fury. The shock of receiving such vicious insults was a wake-up call for Roy to stop pleasing his father and to begin protecting himself. The potential of destabilizing Sidney in such a fashion showed how strongly he depended on Roy in maintaining his self-worth. The fury of the letters can be understood only against the background of Sidney's brittle self-confidence and Roy's projected role in stabilizing it. As an example of what Roy later identified as splitting behavior, Sidney's rage was a response to the fact that Roy was not unambiguously for "him" or "them," putting Roy into a "gray-zone"—a zone that must not exist for a personality with borderline issues. As the article was not clearly in Sidney's favor, it could be counted only as an assault against him.

By the time the *Journal of Economic Literature* article was ultimately published in 1977—without the mention of Sidney's "idiosyncrasy"—Sidney had understood the inappropriateness of his response and wrote a conciliatory note: "You can take much pride in your fine article. I say this not because of your reference to me—I can do with less praise than most men—but I no longer view it as an attack on me. More to the point, you showed much courage and fortitude in executing it. I can still admire character—even more so than ability" (April 10, 1977, RWP 2, "Sidney"). But this note might have come too late for an open scholarly debate between father and son.³⁴ For Roy, eventually, enough was enough. It had been around this time that Roy began refusing

³³ Unpublished class lecture notes in SWP 15, "Books: Unpublished Works."

³⁴ This open debate regarding Roy's versus the Post-Keynesian understanding of the nature of general equilibrium theory took place in the summer of 1977 in a letter exchange with Paul Davidson, showing what Roy held back in his exchange with Sidney (PDP 25, "E. Roy Weintraub"). Roy argued that general equilibrium is not confined to a static world, as Davidson believed, and that Davidson overlooked the contributions of Clower, Grandmont, and others who take disequilibrium adjustments seriously.

to have further contact with Sidney for a period of several years. In 1978, when Sheila begged Roy to accept an invitation, he declined, referring to the “anger, frustration, and hurt that goes beyond your imagination. Pop can’t understand, truly understand, that I am not a six-year-old who sees everything in such clear terms of right and wrong, guilt and innocence, my fault or your fault.”³⁵ And when Sheila wrote how “deeply he (Sidney) feels the lack of contact,” Roy would draw clear boundaries, responding that “it is not Pop’s feelings which concern me, but rather my own.”

Around the same time, not only Roy but also his brother, Neil, emancipated himself from Sidney. During graduate school in economics, partially under the influence of his partner, Neil had already tried to withdraw from Sidney’s “help.” In a long undated letter, he informed him of the intention to quit the doctoral program and pursue research instead of a university career, to pursue demography instead of economics, and to do empirical instead of theoretical research. Even this seemingly minor change of direction required the force of a full break in anticipation of Sidney’s fury: “This is what I want to do, these are the directions that I want to take. ... I sincerely hope you can understand that I’m not crazy or impulsive or irresponsible. ... Just as there is free speech, there is free exit” (RWP 2, “family letters 1951–1984”). But only in 1978, at the occasion of his marriage, was Neil able to draw a full boundary. The conflict escalated over the treatment of a family secret related to the identity of the natural mother of Sheila’s niece. Neil called off the wedding and then disappeared. Without telling anyone, he got rid of his first name, Arthur, took the last name of his wife, Owen, and vanished without leaving an address. There was no way to get in touch with him.³⁶ In 1979, the Weintraubs were split up.

Around 1980, Sheila also tried to break away from Sidney in her own way. In an attempt to commit suicide, she took a large number of sleeping pills. From the hospital, Sidney called Roy to inform him what had happened. It was on this occasion, in the hospital, that father and son met again. While Sidney did not mention the reason for her attempt, Sheila, going in and out of consciousness, told Roy that she simply could not “stomach” [*sic!*] that she had learned that Sidney was still seeing Gladys. Neither Sidney nor Roy let anybody in the family know what had happened. The next morning, Sheila was allowed to leave the hospital, and she would deny the attempted suicide, saying that she took the pills by accident. No one ever mentioned the event again. In addition to being complicit against his mother, Roy was now also complicit in the misery caused by Sidney’s conflicted personality.

As disastrous as the family situation was, by the end of the 1970s, Sidney had come professionally into his own. In 1977, he cofounded the *Journal of Post Keynesian Economics* with Paul Davidson, placing him at the center of this emerging community.³⁷ Through this journal, various groups in the US and UK together formed a distinct,

³⁵ June 12, 1978 (RWP 2, “family letters 1951–1982”). See also Sheila asking Margaret to get back in touch and Margaret responding (RWP 1, “Sidney Weintraub 1963–1983”).

³⁶ See the wedding invitation, 20 June 1978, RWP 2, “family letters 1951–1982.” Neil’s first name, Arthur, came from his godfather, Arthur Bloomfield.

³⁷ Davidson soon complained in a letter from March 1978 that Sidney tried to dominate the journal, ignored Davidson’s recommendations, and accepted articles without showing them to Davidson (PDP 25, “Sidney”). Sidney accepted articles easily if they were written by close affiliates and would edit the texts before publication without informing the authors (see Colander and Davidson 2001, p. 96).

self-proclaimed anti-mainstream faction of Keynesian economists. While Sidney's professional identity stabilized, his health began to decline. After suffering a first heart attack in 1975, he was soon diagnosed with congestive heart failure. In November 1982, he suffered a final heart attack from which he would ultimately not recover. Once Sidney was hospitalized, Neil resumed contact. Sidney even turned over management of the family's financial assets to Neil. As the relationship with Gladys continued even after Sheila's suicide attempt, Sidney made the nursing staff cooperate in keeping visits from Sheila and Gladys separate. Terminally ill, he had Neil cosign for a safety deposit box, where he placed a new will. In this will, half of his assets would go to Sheila and the other half to Gladys. He changed the insurance beneficiaries in favor of Gladys and left his car to her as well. Sidney arranged his new will as if he had always had two wives. To protect Sheila's financial security, Neil destroyed the second will and did not inform the insurance companies of the changes.³⁸ To further protect Sheila, he also destroyed Sidney's diaries, which Sidney had kept for many years and likely contained the full story of his relationship with Gladys.

Sidney died shortly after his sixty-ninth birthday in June 1983. The memorial service at the university was well attended.³⁹ Gladys was there, too. On the way out, she briefly stopped to tell Roy how sorry she was that Sidney had died. What to respond?

VI. WORKING THROUGH (1983–2019)

For Roy, the time around Sidney's death was transformative. Professionally, his turn towards the appraisal of general equilibrium theory proliferated, resulting in an article on the history of the proofs of a competitive equilibrium, based on several witness accounts. It appeared in the *Journal of Economic Literature* on his fortieth birthday in March 1983, which he then developed into a book (1985). This research resulted in several conference invitations in the emerging community of new methodologists and historians of economics (Giraud 2022). "I experienced myself as a real scholar for the first time, more self-directed, more confident, and beginning to move away from Sidney's controversies and toward new ideas and possibilities" (RWP 2019).

Personally, he began to understand how his relationship with Sidney had been mirrored with that of his wife Margaret.⁴⁰ They had ongoing arguments as Margaret held Roy responsible for her emotional states. His stress worsened when he was diagnosed with myasthenia gravis, a potentially degenerative neuromuscular disease. While the illness could be managed with medication, he sought mental health support from a therapist. The focus of the sessions immediately turned to the abusive relationship with Sidney. It took three more years, complicated by the presence of the children, before the marriage with Margaret ended in 1987.

³⁸ As Neil had to suspect that Sidney had let Gladys know about all the provisions he was making for her, for years he anxiously awaited Gladys's taking action against him. But this never happened.

³⁹ For the condolence letters, see SWP Accession 2009-0178, 1938–1983.

⁴⁰ The relationship mirrored that with Sidney almost literally: he was "cajoled" into writing Margaret's master's thesis in education at UNC. The thesis on "infant temperament scales" received an A and, according to Roy, was later plagiarized by the supervisor in a well-recognized journal of early childhood behavior (RWP 2019).

His new personal freedom resulted in another intellectual turn during a sabbatical at the National Humanities Center between 1988 and 1989. There, he became friends with scholars in Duke's English department, Stanley Fish and Barbara Herrnstein Smith, and began reading Bruno Latour, David Bloor, and Harry Collins, but also Stephen Greenblatt, and Hayden White. He thus broke with the Lakatosian appraisal of research programs, moving towards the historical analysis of how scientific communities function using insights from what then was labeled "new historicism." This led to his book *Stabilizing Dynamics* (1991), which substantiated his profile as a historian of recent economics inspired by the human sciences. His work came to be known for defending the independence of the history of economics from economics, from heterodox economics in particular. Evidently, this profile is consistent with his attempts to break away from his father and others who abuse history for buttressing their brittle self as economists.

During the same sabbatical at the National Humanities Center, Roy also met his second wife, Nell, herself a practicing psychotherapist. Nell had been immersed in the academic debates taking place in the British Psychoanalytical Society when she was visiting London in the 1960s.⁴¹ With Nell, Roy began habitually using the psychological language that is present in "Keynes and Me":

Over time as I shared my experiences of therapy, and we talked about our different families of origin, I began using the language and vocabulary that she normally used to frame my own thoughts and ideas. After we married in November 1989, and I continued to find the social conversations of economists dull and uninteresting, I was also finding that the large Triangle community of psychologists, psychiatrists, and therapists that had been Nell's social community much more interesting than my own professional colleagues. (pers. com., 2024)

It was then that Roy began to better understand how he had been instrumentalized by his father as an ally in both academic and private affairs, manipulated into a symbiotic dependency that was ultimately reflected in Roy's own first marriage. He came to see his relationship with his father as a case of what is called "projective identification," where Sidney manipulated him into a role that bolstered his own unstable self-worth. This explained the "unhappy dance" with his father, where every assertion of individuality was perceived by Sidney as an existential threat (RWP 2019).

The understanding of his father developed further when Roy was depositing Sidney's papers as the first entry into what would later develop into the largest collection of economists' papers at Duke University Libraries. In the mid-1990s he worked through his father's papers as part of the project, resulting in his widely read book *How Economics Became a Mathematical Science* (2002). He was particularly interested in

⁴¹ With clinical degrees in social work (though not an MD), in 1965, Nell began training as a child analyst at the University of London's Institute of Psychoanalysis. While interning with child psychiatrist Dora Black, she attended lectures by eminent psychologists such as Dorothy Burlingham and Donald Winnicott, thus witnessing the emergence of object relations theory, which underlines the notion of borderline personality. Having to choose between an academic career and returning to the US with her then-husband, she chose the latter. Following her PhD in 1985, she accepted an appointment as a professor of clinical social work at East Carolina University. At the time Roy and Nell met, she was seeing clients in private practice and worked in several children's clinics.

the period around his birth, Sidney's wartime letters, his clash with military authority, and his desperate attempts to "read himself into" mathematics during his service—foreshadowing his later struggles with mathematics (2002, p. 229). As Roy's later role in standing in for Sidney's lacking mathematical knowledge would echo that of Hal, Roy easily identified with Hal when reading the letter exchanges between the brothers (2002, ch. 7). After the publication of the book, even Paul Davidson was shocked at how bungling Sidney's knowledge of mathematics was, falling below the standard of introductory calculus college classes.⁴² Sidney made up an ideal self, immune to reality, according to which he was well in control of mathematical knowledge.⁴³

Having retired in 2016, Roy got hold of bits and pieces of his family history that shed new light on the transgenerational origins of his relationship with Sidney.⁴⁴ He understood to what extent issues of social status and the experience of social exclusion were prominent in his family in the early twentieth century. Like Roy, so did Sidney feel that he had to make up for what his parents, his mother in particular, had not accomplished. Sidney's father, Aaron, was from the Ukrainian part of Galicia, which supposedly was traditional, closed, and backward-oriented. After emigrating to New York in 1904, he opened a grocery shop. He was neither religious nor devoted to intellectual or cultural pursuits. However, he ended up marrying Martha Fisch, a second-generation American of German Jewish descent who looked down upon the "uncultured" first-generation Ashkenazi. Martha believed she had married beneath her and was known as a sour and unhappy woman. As a result, her children represented, on the one hand, a constant reminder of her social place, and, on the other, the hope that they would rise above the station in which she had found herself. The cultural division between Sidney's parents was passed on to the next generation through Martha's rejection of Sheila for being poor and unconnected. Sidney had to navigate complex conflicts between the two families organized around social prejudice and status. It is also against this background that Roy better understood Sidney's attraction to Gladys who reflected the ideal partner as conceived by his mother, Martha: "Ivy League educated, worldly competent, socially poised, physically attractive, and coming from a well-known family" (pers. com., 2024). In short, Roy came to understand that Sidney's professional ambition to excel, his need to prove himself through success, his sensitivity to criticism, and his incapacity to maintain intimacy with Sheila might have had origins in his family history.

It was against the background of this acquired understanding of four decades of complex history between him and Sidney that he wrote the manuscript "Keynes and Me," addressing also the more "uncomfortable topics" that informed the preceding narrative.

⁴² See PDP 25, "E. Roy Weintraub."

⁴³ Roy had a continued interest in Keynesian historiography (e.g., 1994). It gave occasion to hint at other dimensions of Sidney's character little covered in this article, notably his conservative attitude—"misogynistic, homophobe, and racist" (pers. com., 2024). When his friend Harrod told him about Keynes's homosexuality, which he consciously silenced in his biography of Keynes (1951), Sidney refused to believe so.

⁴⁴ Regarding Sheila's family history, he read the self-published memoirs of one of her aunts, Rosalie Seligson Singer-Abend (1980).

VII. CONCLUSION

Fortunately, questions of mental health are less stigmatized today than they were during the four decades of Roy's and Sidney's relationship. They are increasingly integrated into most corporate health regimes as the choice and practice of a profession are obvious parts of personal development. Moreover, as Sidney's career exemplifies, mental predispositions impact professional choices and practices in the sense that one's professional life can act as a defense mechanism against difficult underlying emotions. As obsessive-compulsive behavior, for example, can promote success in several professions that require narrow-mindedness, so can other behavioral patterns lead to success in specific communities. Defense mechanisms, though impeding personal development, can be strong forces in various professional settings. If unconscious motivations can explain career choices, they can also explain choices of disciplines, methods, or schools of thought—thus, topics in intellectual history. This paper aimed to establish this perspective. The belief in one set of economic ideas over another, which is the object of the history of economics, is, apart from other things, also a matter of different personality structures that bring about these ideas.

Roy's memories and reflections are no diagnosis. But they are no less a genuine witness of Sidney's struggle in maintaining a narcissistic equilibrium—the task of every human being to maintain a positive self-image that can be nourished by, but is not dependent on, the validation of others. His sensibility to criticism, his perception of his specialness, his tendency to idealize as well as devalue himself, his boundary issues in projecting positive and negative traits onto others, his need for recognition and simultaneous tendency to separate from others, his fury, and his lack of empathy were rich topics in Roy's therapeutic sessions. Rather than judging Sidney's personality, I argued that any attempt to capture his role in the history of economics is partial if one ignores this knowledge gained by his son. The social and discursive identity of Post-Keynesian economics, notably its reactionary character resulting in a simultaneous vicinity and distance to neoclassical Keynesianism, its attachment and loyalty to ideas, the insistence of the truthfulness of assumptions instead of analytical convenience, and the emphasis on controversy, as well as its tendency toward factionalism, are compatible with Sidney's underlying personality traits. When David Colander asked Davidson: "Was Sidney upset about never being accepted into the mainstream?" Davidson's wife responded, rather than with an obvious "yes": "I think he liked the fight, too" (Colander and Davidson 2001, p. 97). In fact, he needed the fight to project elements of himself towards others and thus to create relative emotional stability. If the only alternative to idealizing oneself is to degrade oneself, accepting one's place as a second-rank scholar would have been equal to giving up on oneself. In this sense, Sidney inadvertently looked to be in the situation of the misunderstood underdog. He found in the Post-Keynesian ethos a community that fit his personality structure.

The preceding narrative is limited to Sidney's case and does not extend to other members of the Post-Keynesian community. The compatibility of Sidney's psyche with Post-Keynesian discourse leaves open different psychological underpinnings. The reader possibly thinks of other communities that hosted characters similar to Sidney, though a technical-oriented "mainstream" economics might be less likely among them—as this article exemplified by the frictions between Sidney and Roy. One might also

hope that today, four decades after Sidney passed away, the conditions that allow a troubled personality to thrive in the economics profession no longer apply. But this may be wishful thinking.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The author declares no competing interests exist.

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