

Eric Brenman

Psychoanalyst who emphasised the relationship with the patient

Eric Brenman, psychoanalyst (b 1920; q 1943 St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical School, London), died on 6 March 2012 from pneumonia

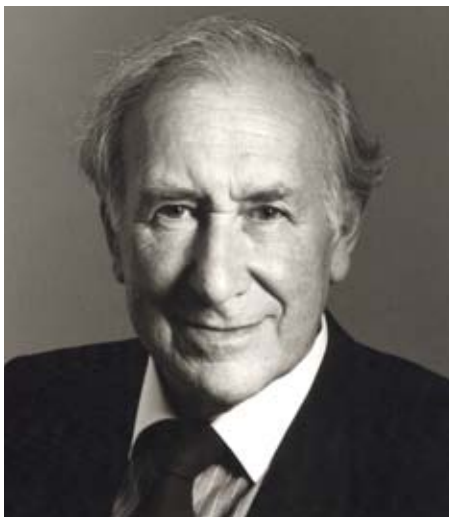
As an army doctor, early in his career, Eric Brenman found himself on Africa's Gold Coast (now Ghana) dealing with an outbreak of meningitis. He was confronted with a man who had been accused of a serious crime and who was in a disturbed state. The chief of the man's tribe said, "That poor fellow has no home for his feelings." These words, and an interest in the human psyche, stayed with Brenman, who became a psychoanalyst of international repute for his contribution to post-Kleinian theory and practice. "It was a big part of his work, the feeling of people needing a home for their feelings, a place where their feelings could be accepted and understood," said his wife of 37 years and fellow psychoanalyst, Irma Brenman Pick.

Physical illness

Brenman held a psychosomatic view of illness long before it was fashionable. "Eric believed that many physical illnesses were linked with states of mind. I think he went into psychiatry because he saw the relationship with the patient as a relationship with the whole person," said the psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Gigliola Fornari Spoto, who edited the UK edition of his collected papers, *Recovery of the Lost Good Object*, published in 2006.

As a senior training analyst and supervisor, Brenman—who died at home at the age of 92—taught several generations of psychoanalysts at home and abroad. His work built on that of his own analyst, Hanna Segal, and her idea that patients need to repair their inner worlds and reconstruct their "internal objects" (*BMJ* 2011;343:d5238). Central to his contribution to psychoanalytic thought was the idea that both analyst and patient need to recognise the value and the meaning that they have for one another. His view was that an analyst should not just provide intellectual explanations but act as a guide, "going with" patients on their difficult journey.

For Brenman it was fundamentally important for the analyst to be aware of his or her own weaknesses. "First and foremost, I am a patient," was his mantra. Brenman's stepson, Daniel Pick, professor of history at Birkbeck College, University of London, said that his stepfather's approach to psychoanalysis was



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about two people having a human relationship. Brenman felt that doctors and psychoanalysts shouldn't be aloof or present themselves as superior to the patient or free of problems: they should be aware of their own flaws.

"The very skills of analysis can lend themselves to narcissistic indulgence," Brenman wrote in his paper "The narcissism of the analyst" (*European Psychoanalytical Federation Bulletin* 1978;13:20-7). He went on, "There is the danger of an ill patient . . . being served with excessively intricate interpretations which satisfy the narcissism of the analyst at the expense of the patient being forced to bear the unbearable."

Brenman's paper "Cruelty and narrow mindedness" influenced a generation of psychiatrists in their understanding of dangerous mentally ill patients, encouraging them to find meaning in the most violent of behaviour (*International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 1985;66:273-82). Brenman thought it crucial that psychoanalysts face their own feelings of hatred and anger when dealing with cruel and destructive patients. Ronald Doctor, consultant psychiatrist at the West London Mental Health NHS Trust, said that Brenman aspired to "find truth and hope in chaos, ultimately believing that through this . . . psychic change could begin."

Born in London to a Jewish family, Brenman studied medicine at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London during the war, when events in Europe spurred him into volunteering for the air force. He was told to return when he had completed his medical training. He qualified in 1943, joined the Royal Army Medical Corps, and was on the ships that took part in the D Day rescue operation.

After the war Brenman worked as a junior registrar at the postgraduate hospital in Hammersmith, west London, and then moved into psychiatry. He was a senior registrar at Napsbury in Hertfordshire when the influential psychoanalyst Melanie Klein visited; her insights made a lasting impression on him. He never lost his love of general medicine, however, recommending the profession to young people.

Brenman secured his diploma in psychological medicine from London University in 1949 and worked at the Tavistock Clinic in London between 1951 and 1955. A desire to deepen his understanding led him into a psychoanalytic training with the Institute of Psychoanalysis, which he completed in 1954, setting himself up in full time private practice the next year.

Theoretical rivalries

As president of the British Society of Psychoanalysts between 1987 and 1990, Brenman successfully worked to break down clinical and theoretical rivalries between three groups: the Kleinians, the contemporary Freudians, and the independents. He helped initiate a seminar where differences could be acknowledged and respected, a process that continues to this day.

With his wife, Brenman taught extensively abroad, in the United States, Australia, Brazil, India, Israel, South Africa, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, and Norway, but he was especially influential for a generation of analysts in Italy, where he ran a series of seminars in Milan in the 1970s to '90s and where he was particularly valued for the attentive and respectful way in which he listened to patients. It was here that his collected papers were first published in 2002.

Brenman leaves his wife, Irma Brenman Pick, and two sons from his first marriage, to the painter Ishbel McWhirter (who is still alive). He also leaves a stepson, Irma's son Daniel Pick.

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Solomon Bender

Former consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist Chester (b 1914; q Liverpool 1937; MD, FRCOG, FRCS (Edinburgh), d 7 March 2012

Born in Belfast, Solomon ("Sol") Bender served in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve in the 1940s. After moving to Chester in 1955 he continued to teach and write, publishing widely over the following decades. He was assistant editor of the (now) *International British Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* from 1971 to 1976. His guest lectures were well received in 13 countries outside Britain. Before retiring from the NHS in 1980, Sol had entered medicolegal practice, advising mainly on obstetric factors in babies with brain damage and on complications of tubal sterilisation. His wife Clara, whom he had married in Canada in 1942, died in January 2007. He leaves four children and four grandchildren.

**Solomon Bender
Ruth Bender Atik**

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David Anderson Black



Former general practitioner, Seaton Delaval, Tyne and Wear (b 1919; qualified Durham 1955), died from neurogenic shock after a fall fracturing the thoracic spine on 9 December 2011.

David Anderson Black became a chemist's apprentice while still at school. In 1940, he joined the Royal Air Force and served in Egypt, running a hospital pharmacy and taking an interest in Arabic. After the war he gained a degree in pharmacy and became a shop manager with Boots, from which he financed his study of medicine. On retirement in 1985, he continued his study

of languages including Italian, French, German, Portuguese, Greek, Spanish, and Arabic, attending classes in the latter in his late 80s. His interests included golf, bird watching, gardening, opera, and cars. He leaves his wife of 47 years, Kathleen.

Ian Makkison

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Dion Christopher Burford



Consultant psychiatrist St Ann's Hospital, Tottenham (b 1945; q Cambridge 1973), d 2 April 2012.

Dion Christopher Burford ("Chris") came to medicine after first studying history at Peterhouse College, Cambridge. In his work he pioneered a team based approach with multiprofessional working and flattened hierarchies. He advocated less reliance on medication and more psychological and sociological treatments, including family interventions. He suggested courses on anger management techniques to people with irritability and anger. His ideas were then considered radical and controversial, unwelcome by the establishment. After receiving a diagnosis of renal cell carcinoma and chronic lymphocytic leukaemia in 2006 he coordinated various specialists' treatments, remaining mostly stable and active until he died suddenly at home. He leaves his sister and five nephews and nieces.

Scarlett McNally

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Kathleen Dalzell



Former community paediatrician, north Wales (b 1926; q Liverpool, q 1950), d 22 March 2012.

Kathleen Byrne married Tony Dalzell in February 1951, both having studied medicine at Liverpool University. Kathleen supported Tony throughout his professional life as a general practitioner and developed a career in community paediatrics in north Wales from 1966 until her own retirement. She promoted the cause of community services at national level. Kathleen was awarded a Miner's University scholarship, gained honours in medicine, and served as a justice of the peace. The couple dedicated their lives to the provision of healthcare to the communities they served and to their children.

Mark Dalzell

John Dalzell

Lesley Dalzell

[Cite this as: BMJ 2012;344:e3688](#)

Errol Mendus Edwards



Former consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist, Cheltenham General Hospital (b 1921; q London 1943; MS, FRCOG), d 11 February 2012.

Errol Mendus Edwards signed up as a medical officer with the Royal Army Medical Corps in 1943 and was deployed to India. He returned to St Thomas' in London, where he had qualified, in 1948 before gaining his postgraduate qualifications at various other hospitals and being appointed consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist for Gloucestershire in 1961. He based his practice in Cheltenham, where the then St Paul's Maternity Hospital developed a national reputation for having the lowest rates of caesarean sections and the highest rates for breast feeding in the country. Errol served in many professional bodies throughout his career. His dream had been to become a cathedral organist, which he pursued in his retirement.

He leaves his wife, Hetty; their children; and their grandchildren.

Deirdre Edwards

Elinor Haf Mendus Edwards

[Cite this as: BMJ 2012;344:e3684](#)

Kenneth Newton Lloyd



Former consultant rheumatologist (b 1913; q London 1937; FRCP), died from bronchopneumonia on 1 January 2012.

Kenneth Newton Lloyd ("Ken") started studying medicine in 1932. His training was interrupted by the second world war, and he volunteered for the Royal Air Force. After marrying Phyllis in 1941 he was posted to North Africa. He later completed his training at the London Hospital. In 1949 he was appointed physician in charge of the physical medicine department at United Cardiff Hospitals and became consultant rheumatologist to the newly built University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff in 1972, where he continued to deliver pioneering work. Throughout his career, Ken was active in local and national medical affairs and served on many professional bodies and charities. He retired in 1979 and emigrated to Melbourne in 2000. He leaves his son, his daughter, and four grandchildren.

John Jessop

George Nuki

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