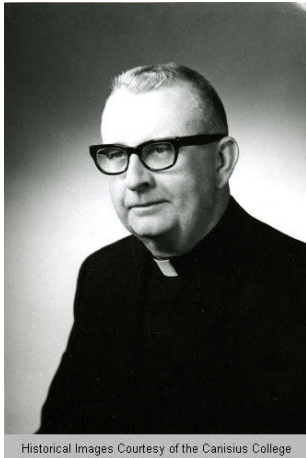


TWO JESUITS

1) Andrew J. Brady, SJ

The Master, 1958



Historical Images Courtesy of the Canisius College

Andrew Brady was the master of novices, in charge of our half of the house and the ultimate authority over our days and our spiritual formation. A man of great physical and emotional energy, he worked hard at his daily conferences about spirituality and our rules of life. He was a vigorous speaker, self-assured about his interpretation of these topics. His discussion of the rules and constitutions of the Society was well-informed and free from undue reverence for older customs. He “told it like it was” with insight and humor about the problems we would encounter. I profited much from having heard his realistic and insightful discussions the benefits and the tensions of living in community.

Brady was the first American Jesuit novice master to challenge the standard American Jesuit way Novitiate days and social interactions were managed. He changed long-standing rules about how we addressed one another, what we wore, and our daily activities. He urged us to believe that we at Bellarmine were a select group, attending a Jesuit novitiate like no other, one that was facing up to the situation of the modern world and not hidebound by old traditions.

A Jesuit historian has this to say about Brady's reforms:

Andrew Brady did not attempt to model Plattsburgh on the old New York province novitiate at Poughkeepsie. While he accepted most of the traditional house arrangements, simply because they were already in place, his general approach was not to do something because it was traditional but to do that which seemed to fit the current situation. For example, in 1956, he abandoned the formal titles by which novices traditionally addressed each other and directed his novices to use first names. He did this without discussing it with the rector, William J. Gleason, who had been master of novices at Poughkeepsie. There was a confrontation between master and rector, but the change perdured. Thus, while the juniors, who were the former novices of the rector, were held to

the traditional rule, the novices could enjoy their new freedom— in the same house.

On some of his day-long business trips, for example into Canada, Father Brady would take three or four of the novices with him. On the return journey, all would stop for dinner, which included drinks. No junior had this experience. The three volumes of Rodriguez were still read by every novice, but only once; upon completing one reading, the novice was free to choose works from a modern spiritual library which the master had collected. These and many similar small changes were significant primarily as reflecting a changed novitiate spirit, a spirit emanating from the master himself.

In an interview with Father Brady, I asked him what made him different from the traditional master of novices. After some thought, he mentioned two experiences. One was the seven years (1947-54) spent as a teacher and student counselor at Le Moyne College; this gave him a feeling for what did and did not work with modern youth. The other was a year (1954-55) spent in Rome studying ascetical theology. This experience introduced him to the new trends in theology and to many European Jesuits whose values reflected those of the theologians—chiefly from France, Germany, and the Netherlands—later to be influential in Vatican II.

Besides the two explanatory factors adduced by Father Brady, two other factors may have been operative. In describing the values that guided him, Father Brady used some of the language of the new humanistic psychology which had begun to flourish in the 1950s. He wanted the novices to establish their identity; to get in touch with their feelings; to be open and at ease with other persons, including women; to value interpersonal affectivity; and to exhibit more spontaneity and initiative than the traditional system produced. The new psychology could very well have been one of the forces shaping the master and his novitiate.

In addition to these external influences, there was the internal influence of Andrew Brady's own personality. By temperament, he was open, direct, concrete, innovative, self-assured. These personal qualities undoubtedly influenced the way he reacted to the three external experiences and constituted a fourth reason why the Brady novitiate was different.

It would be a half dozen years before any other novice master in America enacted reforms similar to Brady's, then took them even further. Brady's novices were full of energy and creative projects, a generation of creative Jesuits who would enliven many

institutions — and amplify the tensions and disruptions of the '60s. We novices felt loyal to Brady and mistrusted those older Jesuits who looked askance at his innovations.

The Boss

We were to have individual interviews with the novice master once a week. During one of these Fr. Brady asked me to take on the job of being his secretary. There had been two secretaries before me, both talented people. The job had me taking dictation, typing documents, and composing letters for routine matters. I was good at the job and valued its status. It could be fun, especially when Brady challenged me to come up with wordings: "Write a condolence card to..." or "Tell him no" or "Write a report to the provincial superior including the items on this list." I turned out to be a good wordsmith, and my typing improved rapidly. I also learned more than most of my fellows about the inner workings of Bellarmine and the administration of our Jesuit province.

One occasion Brady said to me that he was supposed to be absolutely egalitarian in dealing with each novice but that sometimes he found that difficult. I remember expecting him to go on by saying that he thought I was a lesser being he found hard to deal with. Instead he said that he found me particularly attractive and he had to be careful. I felt awkward but didn't recognize the full import of what he was saying.

In fact, Brady was a sexual predator. I was the attractive secretary being hit on every day by a lascivious boss.

I walk into Brady's office with a handful of letters that he had asked me to answer or compose an hour earlier. I hand them to him; he signs them and starts a conversation about some daily event in the life of the novitiate. I see his face begin to soften and since my business is done I get up to go. As I near the door he asks a question and as I turn to answer he gets up from his desk — here he comes again, I think, and I grab the doorknob, but before I can open the door he is over near me continuing to talk and ask questions while he backs me into the corner by the door and stands with his face slack, talking about whatever, and thrusts his hips forward at me again and again. Not quite touching. At some point either he finishes her I find an excuse in the conversation to open the door and walk out. I've survived another morning.

Whether he was actually jerking off at those times by the door I don't know. I kept trying find conversational moves that would get me out of the office quickly. What

shames me looking back is that I never cried out What are you doing? or Stop that!

Late summer, I'm in a car. A bus had brought us novices on a swimming expedition to a swimming hole perhaps an hour from the novitiate. I'm enjoying swimming in the river and suddenly Brady says he has to drive back to the novitiate and asks me to accompany him. I get in the car and we begin to go along the country roads. Suddenly he leans over and puts his hand on my stomach and reaches down past my waist under my bathing suit, he stops with his hand touching my pubic hair. Meanwhile he goes on talking about whatever. I sit uncomfortably trying to figure out what to do. Obviously what I should've done was tell him to stop. But I'm paralyzed. This is beyond even his usual aggression. I'm afraid to say no and desperate that if I do make any positive movement he will reach further down. So I sit very still and continue to chat or whatever he talks about. An interminable time later we stop for gas about a mile from the novitiate. While the car is being fueled I get out and go to the bathroom. When I return to the car I get in the back seat and close the door. Brady insists that I return to the front seat and then back on the road he resumes touching me. It's only a mile or so and then were back home. I'm glad it's over and I don't know what to make of it. The next morning Brady apologizes profusely, saying he lost control of himself, he was sorry, it wouldn't happen again. It doesn't happen again, but the other aggressions continue.

While using the power of his position to keep hitting on me, Brady could admit weakness and asked for understanding, apologizing for losing control of his urges. He would only acknowledge what he was doing when apologizing after some egregious episode like the groping in the car. His apologies left me feeling guilty for being attractive and tempting his self-control. On one occasion he spoke of loving me but his declaration made me feel guilty: I was causing a great man to lose his balance. After some months the great man image faded but then I was left in position of trying to help a wounded man who was doing important things.

It says something about my defense against his advances that I have no tales to tell of blow jobs or anal intercourse. Since with me he pretended nothing was going on, I kept pretending too. This never gave him a chance to proposition or push unless he were to break the code. I learned later that with other victims he was more open, approaching in a joking manner. He tried that with me sometimes, joking and tickling, but I refused to respond.

Other times he would declare, in our local slang, that he was "tight" and ask me to accompany him on long drives, perhaps stopping for a meal. We went to interesting

places, Lake Placid, Whiteface Mountain, or toward Montreal. Those drives were not times he would hit on me but I would be on edge the whole time, careful to lead conversation in harmless directions. If on those drives I had given any indication he would've jumped into sex mode very quickly. Yet it's also true that he was also genuinely looking for relaxing company. His making himself vulnerable served as another tactic, just as asking for pardon was a way of prolonging the abusive relation.

In later years I fantasized what might have happened if at this gas station I had called the police that day in 1958. Yet at that time I had no vocabulary to describe what was being done to me and I wonder how the police would have reacted in 1958. Or if I had gone to the house superior, who, when I got to know him later, would have been very sympathetic and appalled. But I did none of those things, gripped by that strange paralysis. Even later I wondered what might've happened if I had said to him in the car "hey if you want to stop at a motel and hump me, let's do it." From what others told me, I think he would have jumped at the chance for the sex. But I also wonder whether such frankness would have spoiled his pleasure in domination.

It's October, after lunch, I am standing at the dining room window looking out over the lawn. A flood of voices and images has broken through my filters; my mind is out of control, racing and swirling; I am a cork tossed in the turmoil. Yet I am also watching it all happen, aware aware of my self separate from this roiling tangle, but powerless to control or turn away from it. I was losing my hold. Unable to handle the situation, I go to Brady. I give no explanation for my state; at that point I am not capable. He takes me to the infirmary where the brother in charge gives me a spoonful of some green liquid; later I suppose it was something like liquid Valium. I go back to my room and sleep for 14 hours. I feel like I have been given a chemical equivalent of electroshock; my racing thoughts still abruptly and I am utterly fatigued.

Recuperation took several days during which I was excused from normal activities and given non-spiritual novels. Then I resumed my daily activities. It's the closest I ever came to "a nervous breakdown" and though short it remains vivid. I don't know if Brady was terrified thinking that he was the cause. He showed no sign and did not stop hitting on me during those final months of my secretary job. The novice who succeeded me as Brady's secretary was later institutionalized for mental illness. I have no idea why, but when I heard the news I imagined that Brady's desires had messed up a good person.

The Invalid, 1964

It's the winter of 1964. I had moved from Plattsburgh to to the Jesuit house of philosophy studies at Shrub Oak, near Peekskill NY. Now in my third and final year there, I walk into the dining room at the philosophy house at Shrub Oak to find Andrew Brady sitting at the faculty table. I had heard earlier that Brady had broken down the previous fall while preaching the long retreat to the novices. Now I see the man a shadow of his former self, haggard and confused. He stays for a few months gradually recovering his energy. He had, in fact, been through electroshock therapy. As his memory and personality come back together he asks to go on walks with me.

I and some of his other "friends" now found ourselves caring for a shadow of the energetic man we had known. With me he came across as needy and somewhat pathetic. For the most part my busy schedule kept us apart. I had grown enough that I was no longer so unsettled by him. He no longer tried to hit on me, but asked for companionship on walks. I felt mostly pity. A close friend who had been one of his intended victims told me, though, that even then Brady still hit on him and chased him around the desk.

After a few months Brady recovered his energies and was a was appointed to another position supervising young Jesuits. His games went on, I presume.

The Reunion, 1980

Around 1980 Anne and I drive from Maine to Connecticut to attend a reunion of ex-Jesuits at Fairfield University. To my surprise, Andy Brady is there. He's had a series of heart attacks and looks weak but still forceful. He and I and Anne walk along the driveway under the trees. The unsaid looms on all sides. We talk quietly and don't bring up the past. He inquires about the 15 years since we last met. He says that he is now teaching and advising students at his old haunts at LeMoyne College in Syracuse. I don't play guilt cards; perhaps I should have but it seemed unfair for the man in his weakened state. As always with him, there's this combination of pity for him and vulnerability for me, fear of making everything explicit, genuine concern for him, and maintaining a smooth surface. I'm content that Anne has a chance to meet him after the stories I have told her. We part after the brief walk. We never meet again.

My Failures

I'm still not sure why I never summoned the courage to confront Brady or demand that he should stop. Or maybe I do know; awful as the abusive relation was, openly acknowledging and protesting it would have upset so much: my plan to be a Jesuit, my

post as secretary in a special group in a special institution where Brady was making himself vulnerable, asking for help, in effect daring me to bring down him and the whole revolutionary experiment.

Only later did I discover that I was far from his only victim. Some of the victims gave in and spent nights with him. I avoided that fate but at the cost of developing a defense against openly admitting sexually charged dimensions of situations; this caused me trouble later on.

While I suppose it's understandable that I did not call the police that summer day, given loyalty to the organization, plus ignorance of what was possible and uncertainty about how the police would have reacted, I am ashamed that I did not talk to our superiors. I mentioned earlier that I mistrusted the people who questioned the success of Brady's innovations at Plattsburgh. When I moved to the other half of the house there, the superior there was a good person. I worked closely with him as representative of my class, and I should have talked to him about Brady. Then there was the superior of the Jesuit province, who visited once a year — a forbidding man whom I later came to respect — I should have complained to him too. But so should have many other people, and to this day I do not know for sure whether anyone did. Such reticence was all too common. Years later I learn that Brady died before the uproar about pedophile priests. I wish he had lived to face it. You can imagine how I felt when I saw the 2015 film *Spotlight*.

2) William J. Richardson, SJ

The Scholar



It's 10 PM at Shrub Oak, near Peekskill, NY, 1962. Lights out. Some of us slip from our rooms, sneak out of the building and assemble at a house on the grounds of the seminary. Thirty of us crowd into a room; the curtains are drawn; no light escapes to indicate this clandestine lecture. The visiting scholar takes his chair and continues his exposition from the previous nights. Our visitor is expounding Martin Heidegger, who is definitely not on our official syllabi of official Jesuit philosophy, medieval inspired but with modern accents. William Richardson's delivery is mesmerizing and dramatic as he opens up the weird vocabulary and exciting questions in Heidegger's philosophy. We thrill listening to forbidden wisdom. After a few days our lecturer departs back to Europe.

Months later I and Leo O'Donovan face a huge stack of pages. We are part of a team proofreading William Richardson's on Heidegger and explains, against the current interpretations, what basic ideas bring his thought. It's a daunting task to proofread 1200 pages of dense philosophical prose and thousands of footnotes in English and in German, but our group handles it. We feel professional and proud to assist and learn what it takes to be a real scholar .

After those visits when he gave the secret talks and we did the proofreading, William Richardson was assigned to teach at Shrub Oak in the fall of 1963. When that winter Andy Brady appeared there after his breakdown. It was Bill who helped me get a proper understanding of my whole situation with Brady and who freed me from any lingering attachment to Brady's view of the world, pointing out the shallowness of Brady's spirituality and the compulsive quality of the training he had given us in the novitiate.

The Friend

Two years later, during my second year teaching at Fordham, Bill moved to a room down the hall from me in the Jesuit residence. His teaching at Shrub Oak had ended abruptly when his wider intellectual horizons and radical questions frightened more conservative members of the faculty. He had been exiled to a Jesuit college in Jersey

City, then given some leave time, and now he had been assigned to teach at Fordham. I found his presence life-sustaining.



I was teaching mostly undergraduates and he mostly graduate students. When I could, which was not often, I would sit in on his classes. At night though, we would meet over glasses of Scotch in his room. Then there was time to talk about Jesuit politics, about philosophy, about his writing, about my hopes and anxieties about religion and the Jesuits.

In the autumn of my third year at Fordham I say to Bill that I feel as I am cowering in my house, besieged on all sides by God and religion demanding that I open the door and surrender. I refuse but the tension is tearing me apart. Bill says "to escape the tension you could remove the roof of the house, make no decision yet, but open yourself to time, to uncertainty, to what may come."

After the Jesuits

Several years later, still teaching at Fordham, Bill would live alone in a small apartment on Riverside Drive while he was being trained as a psychoanalyst. Meanwhile I had gone on from Fordham to my last Jesuit residence in Baltimore, then left the Jesuits and was studying for a PhD at Yale. I could drive from New Haven and visit Bill in his NY apartment. As always we would talk.

It is the autumn of 1971. I have driven down to visit Bill and stayed overnight on a couch in his apartment. I have to return for an early class in New Haven. Bill is still asleep and as agreed the night before I slip out without waking him. As I leave, catching sight of his slumbering form in his bedroom I'm gripped with the feeling, that he'd died during the night. The conviction is strong, but I don't test it. The next day I speak to him by phone about this strange experience. In psychoanalyst tones he replies "so why did you want to kill me?"

From 1973 to 1979, now a certified psychoanalyst, Bill worked at the Austin Riggs Institute in Stockbridge, MA. Most of that time I was teaching in Chicago so we met mostly at professional meetings. After I moved to Maine in 1977, Anne and I visited Bill in Stockbridge several times. Then in 1979 a change of administration at Riggs ended

Bill's job, and he moved to Boston College. Now Anne and I could visit him when we came to Boston to see my sister and mother. After we moved to Oregon, those visits tapered off.

Autumn 1976, I'm visiting Bates College and I have made arrangements with a friend of my father who owns a small island off the Maine coast. Bill and I park my car and walk down to the rocky shore. Using a borrowed key we unlock the rowboat and load it with food and water and books. The island floats like a ship anchored offshore. We row over, carry our supplies up to the cabin and awaken its systems. Then we survey our kingdom. Perhaps 75 yards long and 20 wide, the island sits in the ocean off one of the peninsulas in central Maine. We've come there for a few days. Mornings I swim in a narrow cove on the island, but not for long in the frigid water. During the day we read and talk. Evenings we purchase lobsters from a nearby boat and cook them in seaweed and saltwater, adding mussels gathered from the island's rocks. The weather cooperates; the experience is primal. I don't remember what we talked about, and we had our own books to read, but it was a time to share and we both remembered it later with great affection.

As the years went on our conversations contained less counseling and more sharing. We read each other's writings. My work on Hegel and modernity moved away from his on Heidegger and religion. I came to doubt some of his readings of Heidegger. He had little interest in my work. But we maintained strong concern for events in each other's lives and we discussed church and Jesuit issues even after I had left both. Gradually our visits became fewer.

While I had been teaching in Chicago Tony Meyer, John Muller, and Tony Koltz had begun yearly picnics around Columbus Day in the Berkshires. This group included my closest friends, and Bill was at its core. Once we moved to Maine Anne and I began attending these picnics, real reunions with a steady core group plus others who came and went. Good food, intense socializing and friendship for one afternoon. Then the group would scatter, except when one of the members fell ill or died. In later years we met on occasion in DC and New York City. When Bill died we mourned, but the group continues on.

Most of us in the group had left the Jesuits. Given the many difficulties his Jesuit superiors had caused Bill, we wondered why he stayed in the Society. The one time I came close to asking him, his reply was something like "when one gives one's will to God one doesn't take it back". Promise keeping was a solemn value for him. At his memorial service, Leo O'Donovan, one of Bill's closest friends, said:

In my last extended conversation with Bill, I asked him whether he was in any pain and he told me that he was not. "Few people at 96 are cared for as well as I am, Leo," he added. What was he thinking about? I asked. And he said that he was "spending his time trying to make sense of these last days." And that was, in many ways, what he had been doing all his life. Making sense of things through a life at the center of which was his giving his word and keeping it. His faith was fierce, wrested from the absurdity of life and won, through grace, again and again.