

other party talks and in most forms both)' (p. 134). Later, in the second half of the same paragraph, Symington writes: 'Therapy of this sort holds up a mirror to the soul of the patient. The patient changes as soon as he understands himself. The therapist's job is to give birth to understanding.' (p. 13).

A mirror to the soul cannot be held up if the patient isn't allowed the space to explore their own experience. Perhaps he just means 'talking with'. Simple innit?

I confess to a personal prejudice here. I have an aversion to any book on therapy where I am referred to as a patient. It seems to reflect some biomedical and hierarchical model where the relationship is between healer (superior and all-knowing) and sick person (the opposite).

House's take on the whole process is very different from la famille Symington, where the problem of choosing a good therapist is recognized, but the tradition and practice of psychotherapy is not questioned. House has written a critical analysis of therapy as an ideology, 'which inevitably takes on a self-serving nature, being surreptitiously more concerned with preserving its own hegemony than with an honest authenticity of procedure' (p. 2).

What I like about House's book is that he tells you what he is going to do – i.e. argue one way or the other – and then he does it clearly and well. He is also prepared to take on some of the sacred cows of therapy, amongst them boundaries and confidentiality, to demonstrate the hegemony's instinct for self-preservation. In the conclusion to Chapter 4, he talks about the therapist's apparent professional expertise, where he says 'It might be also be that it serves to defend therapists from the uncomfortable reality that they do not know what they are doing' (p. 91).

This is fighting talk, and House's trenchancy is present throughout the book. He is concerned to confront rarely addressed issues, amongst them the adequacy of the therapist and how the profession protects itself from challenge. Clients are often not in the best position to issue such challenges, perhaps from the vulnerability of the 'patient' role, or because of the very issues they bring with them.

It is left to House to do this, and how refreshing it to see such arguments coming from within the psychotherapy's own ranks, in what turns out to be a surprisingly readable book. On finishing it I turn, as I often do, to that most human of perspectives, Carl Jung. Tentative, modest and poetic, a collection of his writings sits on my bedside table between Nancy Mitford's *The Pursuit of Love* and *Big Boys in Leather*.

'Wholeness is in fact a charisma which one can manufacture neither by art nor by cunning; one can only grow into it and endure whatever its advent may bring' (Jung, 1986, 279–80).

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JUNG, GENDER AND SUBJECTIVITY

Subject to Change: Jung, Gender and Subjectivity in Psychoanalysis. By Polly Young-Eisendrath. Hove and New York: Brunner Routledge, 2004; 248pp. £25.00hb.

Subject to Change, as the subtitle indicates, is a collection of essays on 'Jung, gender and subjectivity'. The author, Polly Young-Eisendrath, is a Jungian psychoanalyst who

for many years has been at the forefront of core theoretical debates in the field of feminism and analytical psychology. This volume, which collects together and traces the development of her ideas, is therefore to be welcomed. The introduction gives an up-to-date view of her present theoretical position. Young-Eisendrath describes herself as a feminist, constructivist, Jungian psychoanalyst (p. 45). The book traces Young-Eisendrath's own philosophical journey and the reader travels with her witnessing her debates on issues of gender, spirituality and the transformative nature of transference in the analytic enterprise. Calling herself a psychoanalyst is radical because Jungians rarely call themselves psychoanalysts. In this she is aiming to reclaim the common ground between the diverse psychoanalytic schools. She makes the point that psychoanalysts no longer use the term 'Freudians'.

Divided into four sections, the book demonstrates the development of ideas relating to the meaning of human subjectivity in psychoanalysis, spiritual practice and in life. Threaded throughout is the self, this is the central theme of the book a quest for understanding what it means to be a person. The first section of the book is titled 'subjectivity and uncertainty' and here the author describes how she studied Zen Buddhism long before she became a psychologist and this has always been at the centre of her understanding of psychology. Some of the most enlightening elements of the book are short Zen stories that illuminate some element of her analytic practice. Certain influences are acknowledged throughout, particularly Rom Harré's (1984) discussion of persons and Roy Schafer's (1978) work on language. In her view the self is a function of a person. Therefore she would prefer it to be considered a verb rather than a noun

because it is continuity: 'the self [is] an action of a person, rather than the actor' (p. 8).

Young-Eisendrath describes her 'analysis' with Jung. Jung had died 10 years before she discovered his writings, in 1971, but at this time she began a dialogue with his writings and it is this she describes as her analysis with him. It began with an idealizing transference, which later gave way to a negative transference as she faced the problems of being a Jungian analyst in a post-modern world – his anti-Semitism and his attitude to women – his essentialism.

Part 2 is titled 'gender and desire', which is also the title of one of her previous publications (Young-Eisendrath, 1997). The topic of gender, female role and female authority are revisited. The myth of Pandora in relation to beauty and its effects is discussed. She challenges essentialist, biologically determined views of gender and self and presents a view of gender as cultural. There is a lively discussion of contrasexuality (Jung's particular contribution in this area) and projective identification. Her understanding of this developed over many years through her work with couples.

The double bind of female role is described by considering two types of women, those who 'espouse female authority fall prey to evaluating themselves . . . in terms of their negative subjectivity.' They think that they are too intense or too much. The second group are the opposite of this, 'the women who ascribe to the "less than" female categories and express themselves as more passive and less competent (than men and other women) . . .' (p. 108). In order to consider 'new categories for female persons' to develop female authority she suggests the following conceptual categories, which might reverse the meaning of this. These are: '(1) personal freedom as "personal

authority” (as distinct from illusions of independence, mental separatism, and individualism); (2) foundational experience as “dependence” (as distinct from self-reflective subjectivity, individual freedom, and social isolation); and (3) beautiful appearances as “personal power” (as distinct from narcissism, compensation, and selfishness)’ (p. 108). This is complex she is attempting to find a way in which women in analysis might deconstruct and then reconstruct the meaning of their lives. This could be regarded as a form of reframing from a negative to positive psychological attitude. This is an area of inquiry that has interested the author for many years and is the subject of other publications on issues such as *Female Authority* (Young-Eisendrath and Wiedemann, 1987).

As the book progresses it becomes more spiritual and, with anecdotes from clinical practice, more clinical too. The third section takes us into the transference and is also a discourse on love within and outside the therapeutic setting. She discusses how difficult interdependence is because we tend to experience ourselves as separate individuals. The aim of psychotherapy she suggests is acceptance of interdependence through transformative love (p. 142). This is a result of what she calls ‘the containing-transcendent transference’ (p. 149). It is the failure to recognize that the transference is not personal – that is when the therapist identifies with the power of the transference – that leads to ‘destructive errors and actions’.

In the last section called ‘transcendence and subjectivity’ she suggests that Buddhism offers a model for the transformation rather than the medication of suffering (p. 153). These chapters are rich in anecdote and illustrated with Zen stories. I enjoyed these as a vivid way of conveying some simple truths about analysis and the

need not to take ourselves, as analysts, too seriously.

Seven of the chapters in this book are new and the other 12 have been previously published but ‘edited and changed to fit the needs of this particular work’ (p. 15). Inevitably this leads to some repetition, particularly in the introduction to a few of the chapters. Young-Eisendrath admits this and considers that this gives the reader a sense of how she has developed her ideas and sometimes changed her mind on certain subject matter. This is one of the strengths of the book; her openness in revealing her own philosophical and analytical path, as well as the personal motivations behind it, bring the book to life. This along with anecdotes from clinical practice and from Zen stories makes the book very readable and insightful. The dialogue with her patients comes to life as does her warmth and care for them.

The book is not overtly about politics and yet by its very nature of revisioning and questioning psychoanalysis and its role in the lives of people and culture it is political by implication. This is both a professional autobiography and a philosophical treatise, we witness her respectful dialogue with Jung and a similarly respectful dialogue with her patients. It is not easy to do justice to such a rich book in a review but I hope that by giving a taste of the wealth of experience and variety of topics addressed, the reader of this review will feel moved to explore further by reading the original. I recommend this book, it is an erudite treatise – a must for all interested in the topics under discussion, psychology, psychoanalysis philosophy, spirituality and the politics of psychoanalysis.

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