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Shadows in the History of Body Psychotherapy: Part Iⁱ Courtenay Young and Gill Westland

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Abstract

This article is intended to open up a discussion and to begin to name, reflect on, and gradually start healing some of the wounds that arose throughout the development of body psychotherapy, particularly during the 1960-2000 period.ⁱⁱ It highlights several problems inherent in individuals single-handedly pioneering new methods, and several systemic difficulties in the organization of the original training courses. These Shadows are not unique to body psychotherapy and similar examples of such issues can be found in many other modalities of psychotherapy and in many other communities. They have implications for the wider professional field and also the future development of the field of body psychotherapy that, once named and owned, can be utilized more positively. Because of its length, the article has been split into 2 parts. Part II will be published in Volume 13, Number 2, fall.

Keywords: body psychotherapy, shadow, history, abuse, healing, ethics

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Introduction

Acknowledging the Shadow

Individuals, organisations, countries, and, of course, the profession of body psychotherapy, all carry their Shadow aspects. Jung saw the Shadow as a merging of unconscious personal elements with various archetypal contents of the collective unconscious. The Shadow also contains the repressed parts of ourselves that we cannot accept and “the less it is embodied in the individual’s conscious life, the blacker and denser it is” (as cited in Samuels, Shorter & Plaut, 1986, p. 138). The Shadow can further contain elements that have not yet emerged into consciousness and thus this part can only be inferred, often in the form of unconscious or subconscious projections. These projections can become stronger and more irrational, individually and collectively, as the contents of the Shadow move towards consciousness. The Shadow cannot be eradicated, but it is possible to learn to live with it, and even use it constructively (Samuels, Shorter & Plaut, 1986). The Shadow and its corollary, the Light, in Jung’s terminology, **both** have dangerous and constructive characteristics. Only when we “own” the good and bad aspects (of each) can we move beyond these polarities into a more integrated Self. While I use the terminology of the Shadow, I also indicate a process towards higher levels of consciousness (viz., Thich Nhat Hahn’s poem, “Call Me By My True Names”ⁱⁱⁱ).

Jung also believed that, “in spite of its function as a reservoir for human darkness — or perhaps because of this — the shadow is the seat of creativity” so that for some, it may be that “the dark side of his being, his sinister shadow... represents the true spirit of life, as against the

arid scholar” (Jung, 1983, p. 262). Since the emergence of psychoanalysis, there has been a: ...vast outpouring of research, speculation, theorising, analysis, and controversy, resulting in a broad spectrum of schools and movements, all holding high the banners of their own truths and hostile to others (Jacoby, 1990, p. ix).

The Founding Fathers of Body Psychotherapy

Pierre Janet

Whilst Janet was almost certainly one of the founding fathers of body psychotherapy (Boadella, 1997; Janet, 1925; Kimble & Wertheimer, 1998), being an elder established pupil of Charcot's, and a contemporary of Freud's during Freud's 3-month study visit to Paris, it is somewhat remarkable that Janet had very little influence on the subsequent development of body psychotherapy. His work has only relatively recently been re-discovered by body psychotherapists, and so the impact of his Shadow on it has been relatively benign or obscure (except, perhaps, in the refusal or disdain of other continental body psychotherapists to publish widely in English).

Freud

Those familiar with the history of body psychotherapy (Young, 2006b, 2011) will also be aware that, whilst Freud originally acknowledged the importance of the body within psychotherapy, he later came to reject it, and eventually excluded those colleagues who supported it, such as Reich and Fenichel (Heller, 2012), both of whom supported a bodily oriented way of working. Freud had also previously rejected the totality of Pierre Janet's work; and, with all these exclusions and later denials (including Jung and others), Freud then started to cast something of his own Shadow especially with respect to the body.

Furthermore, at first he believed his patients who had reported sexual abuse, but later on, he revised his thinking and saw these reports instead as normal childhood longings and fantasy, developing a whole (Oedipal) theory to support this essential denial. When Masson (1985) revisited this territory, using the Freud archives, he postulated that Freud had covered up actual sexual abuse and was not surprisingly met with considerable criticism from supporters of Freud, who did not like the small boy saying, “The Emperor has no clothes.”

We have recently been presented with a further theory that Freud was an unacknowledged cocaine addict (Cohen, 2011) and that possibly a substantial part of *The Interpretation of Dreams* was influenced by this.

Finally, there is reasonably strong evidence that, within psychoanalytical circles, there was an appalling degree of complicity with the rising power of National Socialism, especially in Germany from the mid-1930s (Nitzschke, 2003). Given our theme, these are some of the possible Shadow aspects of Freud and thus of psychoanalysis; there may well be others.

Reich

Reich was one of Freud's most talented students, yet he was expelled from the International Psychoanalytic Association in 1934, about 18 months after he had first published *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (Reich, 1933). Whether this expulsion was because of his previous involvement with socialist or communist ideals, or whether this was because of his increasing interest in the body in psychotherapy, or whether this was a (necessary) separation of psychoanalysis from Reich's views about National Socialism, is difficult now to say. Even

Anna Freud (who chaired the committee that expelled him), later acknowledged that his expulsion was “unjust” (Boadella, 1973, p. 114). One result of this is that, for psychoanalysis, the body became part of its Shadow side. Again, I reiterate, the Shadow is only negative when denied or rejected; it becomes more positive and useful when owned and accepted. This denial is also a large part of our psychotherapeutic philosophy, and can be found in several religions as well.

Reich then became a refugee, first to Denmark, then to Sweden (each on a visitor's visa for six months), and then to Norway, and finally emigrated to the USA in 1939, a short time before the Second World War, where he came under surveillance by the FBI (Bennett, 2010, 2014; FBI, 1999; Turner, 2011). He eventually died in prison in 1957. It seems, from the accounts of the newspaper campaigns against him and the investigations by the FBI and the Food & Drug Administration (FDA), who eventually took him to court, that he carried a large part of his Shadow with him. To an extent, he became his own worst enemy as he sowed, like Oedipus, the seeds of his own downfall. His books were burnt in both Nazi Germany and the USA in the 1950s (Young, 2006b, 2008, 2010) and body psychotherapy, such as it was then, had to distance itself from him, evidenced especially by Lowen (1958) hardly mentioning him in his first book, *The Language of the Body*. Later, his work was recognised and revived, and became influential within humanistic psychology (Clarkson, 1994). Body psychotherapy then re-recognised him in the 1970s, significantly with the publication of Boadella's books (1973, 1976) and his journal, *Energy & Character*.

Reich's life had had several severe traumatic experiences in it, some with a distinct sexual Shadow. He himself wrote of his early childhood sexual experiences (Reich, 1988) with a sense of self-agency, and Sharaf claimed (in a keynote lecture at the European Association for Body Psychotherapy conference, Vienna/Pamhagen, 1997) that Reich was probably sexually abused as a child, though this point is less clear in his book (Sharaf, 1983). There were definitely huge issues with his mother as well as subsequent female partners and wives that indicated he had not resolved any of these issues; and there were less obvious issues regarding ‘father-figures’ as well. Reich was certainly an iconic and controversial figure and it is therefore quite hard to come to any sort of balanced view about him. Many people have claimed that his work supported this, or that, films have been made, and his work has become the subject of pop songs, all of which he probably would never have condoned.^{iv} It is very easy to get attached to one or more of the many facets of this iconic character, and thus hail him as a genius; it is equally easy to dismiss him out of hand. Both of these are aspects of the human Shadow that he graphically illustrated so well in *Listen, Little Man* (Reich, 1948/1972).

These are some of the very early foundations of body psychotherapy. Hopefully by recognising these creative and sometimes traumatic foundations, a potentially helpful and healing dialogue about the Shadow can be re-opened. Freud and Reich's disavowal of religion (and, to an extent, spirituality) is another aspect of the Shadow that needs to be examined — more on that later.

Childhood Sexual Abuse

Irrespective of Freud's reluctance to admit to the obvious, it has also, incidentally, taken a very long time for mainstream society to acknowledge that childhood sexual abuse happens a lot more frequently than was previously imagined. So, there is a huge parallel Shadow side here.

As therapists, we are — perhaps — slightly more aware of this topic now, after the mid-1980s when the topic came out of the “closet”. It was also reacted to strongly by the ‘false memory syndrome’ whereby therapists were accused of influencing their clients in the “recovery” of traumatic memories of childhood sexual abuse. This created a huge uncertainty that has possibly allowed several prosecutions of childhood sexual abuse (long after the event) to fail. Psychotherapy has had to face this Shadow side: as a therapist who has had clients who have recovered such memories when under a spontaneous form of regression — rather than hypnosis, sedatives or probing questions — I am convinced of their veracity, especially as these memories are received with horror and shock. However, the jury is still out on this topic.

Recently, many more incidents of childhood sexual abuse are being discovered (viz: the Catholic church “allowing” priests and nuns to continue abusing people within its congregation and under its protection; and the ramifications of the Jimmy Savile affair in the UK, with similar incidences of pop stars and TV personalities abusing their charisma.

Risks Within Body Psychotherapy

In this article, we are not talking about any specific risks inherent within the modality of body psychotherapy or within body psychotherapeutic practice. This topic has been reasonably well-covered elsewhere (Young, 2006a). The specific risks of any particular psychotherapeutic method obviously need to be acknowledged, and therapists therefore need to be trained in any possible contraindications and in circumstances under which their various techniques or methods can be possibly inappropriate. Any such inherent risks:

... can be added to by unethical practice, power-trips, pervasive theories and doctrines that do not support the empowerment of the individual, lack of awareness, too hurried forms of working, goal-oriented therapy, and insufficient time for integration. (Young, 2006a, p. 7)

The four main risks, easily identified with respect to body psychotherapy, have been identified as being those around, “Re-traumatisation; Abusive Touch; the Breaking-Down of Defences; and Inappropriate or ‘Malign’ Regression” (Young, 2006a, p. 1). But these are fairly well known and also fairly easily identified and therefore do not really fall within the remit of this article about the (more unidentified) Shadows within body psychotherapy.

In dealing with the contentious topic of touch and the reactions of those adverse to the concept of legitimate touch in psychotherapy, we may carry our own Shadow when simply dismissing these opponents as either being uneducated or blinded by cultural mores around touch: this form of dismissal would allow us not to examine our own practices properly. Thankfully, there is a lot more healthy self-examination, especially around this topic, now within the field of body psychotherapy.

I deal with the risk that we carry about not doing any proper research into the effectiveness and efficacy of body psychotherapy in more detail elsewhere in this article, however, in more general terms — as with any practice, or treatment or methodology — there should be a healthy attitude towards exploring and assessing potential improvements and modifications. I have my doubts that this attitude is properly built into our professional training courses and, as far as I am aware, we have not properly considered this aspect as a professional concern until very recently. Hopefully the EABP^v Science and Research Committee, working jointly with USABP^{vi}, which was established only recently and just starting to work, will over time be given sufficient resources and influence that it will need to make the necessary

changes within our culture. There is still a basic attitude of, “Research? What research? Why do we need research? We know it works.”

So, as we progress in the establishment of body psychotherapy as a legitimate mainstream within psychotherapy, all the sorts of criticisms that are carried about other mainstreams — they are “too this” or “not enough that” — will also be applied to body psychotherapy; and some of these may have a legitimacy. We must try to guard against them. We will inevitably have our blind spots and our limitations, our areas of arrogance and complicity. As we carry the “specialness” of our particular way of working, we will always carry with it the inevitable risk of hubris.

The Post-War Shadows of Body Psychotherapy

Cooperation & collaboration

As post-World War II psychotherapy developed, particularly from the 1960s onwards, body psychotherapies, far from being marginalised as they had been, began to proliferate, often emerging around a talented, charismatic founding individual. John Rowan writes about bodywork in his 1976 book on humanistic psychology, but unfortunately he muddles together body therapies and body psychotherapies, but observes that ... “with the exception of Boadella (1987)”:

One of the problems with the body therapies is that they seem to lead to a proliferation of individual practitioners each with a method about which he or she is completely dogmatic. For some reason, this seems to be much more the case in the body therapies than in any other approaches (Rowan, 2001, p. 91).

If we accept this comment about proliferation of dogmatic methodologies as semi-factual information, perhaps we can use the rest of the quote for reflection: it really may be the “dogmatic” aspect that has subsequently haunted us as a Shadow within body psychotherapy.

For a long time, until about the mid-1990s, the various different body psychotherapy schools often saw themselves as competing with, rather than complementing, each other and thus *their* particular method as being implicitly “better than” another’s or any others: a factor (perhaps) of the egotism of some of the founders of those particular methods. There was a fairly constant background of consistent critical reflection and comparison between different body psychotherapy methods that was not particularly healthy or supportive. And thus, what Petruska Clarkson (1999) described as schoolism would seem to have been very prevalent within body psychotherapy as well (Westland, 2010).

The situation has improved with the strengthening of the two main professional associations (USABP & EABP) over the last 10-15 years and the founding of some other similar associations in Australia and South America, but there is a long way to go to get any degree of real cooperation, coherence, and collegiality: there are, within Europe, the inevitable “cultural” North-South divides, where people from the Northern (Germanic) countries are seen as much too concerned with rules and regulations, and those from the Southern countries claim a more relaxed and laid-back attitude to organisational issues, as well as the historic East-West divide, reinforced by the post-war Iron Curtain, where the Western countries seemingly flourished and grew and those from the Eastern countries felt somewhat resentful and impoverished. Some of these Shadows still haunt us, especially at conference times, and with the fee structures. However, there are ways of working with this and the EABP has begun to grapple with these ways.

Now, at this point, we need to take a slightly deeper look at some of the factors or trends that went into creating some of the various Shadows within the different body psychotherapy modalities (and among their founders), but for obvious reasons we do not wish to “name names”, nor report salaciously or from rumour or speculation.

Humanistic Psychology

Reich's views were first taken up in his lifetime, often by small groupings of psychiatrists interested in his ideas in Scandinavia and then in the U.S., which he tended to influence and control (especially in the U.S.), setting rules that still exist to this day (e.g. that only medical doctors should become proper Orgonomists). Whilst there are some good reasons for this, it creates an exclusivity or hierarchy, which often covers a Shadow. It may (or may not) be significant that, since his death, the Orgonomists have kept themselves very much to themselves and, “ploughed the same furrow: over and over again”.

He became much more popular, particularly in the 1960's, 70s, and then the 80s. These post-Reichian developers of body psychotherapy in the U.S. (such as Alexander Lowen, John Pierrakos, Chuck Kelley, Malcolm Brown, Stanley Keleman, Ilana Rubinfeld, etc.) and Europe (Ola Raknes, Jay Stattmann, David Boadella, Lisbeth Marcher and Gerda Boyesen) were all bold and creative innovators (Young, 2008, 2010 & 2011). These innovators all caught the spirit of the times, and the growth wave of humanistic psychology, but, apart from the first two body psychotherapists listed, none really knew Reich and all of them had borrowed (or diluted) some of his ideas. They were all also quite risk-taking pioneers, but, with their creativity and challenging of the cultural norms, they also sometimes brought about ways of working and organising trainings that had some problematic elements, especially when viewed through later contemporary eyes. Reich's daughter Eva was the only one of his children to follow in his footsteps and she softened his work with her form of “Gentle Bioenergetics”^{vii}, strongly influenced by her work as a paediatrician. However, her father might not have agreed with her if he had still been alive. She may have also used the term ‘Bioenergetics’ in the title of her work as an implicit criticism of Lowen's “harsh” form of Bioenergetics.

Much of this period of development in body psychotherapy was within the context of, or as a result of, the Human Potential Movement (Marlock, 1996), and the 1960's hippie movement. Major structural changes were happening in society, where previously repressed elements were finding freer expression, and overly restrictive structures were being overthrown. Many of Reich's ideas were eagerly taken up by Fritz Perls' Gestalt therapy (though not ever properly attributed to Reich), the Beat Generation (Turner, 2011), and even passed into the counter-culture. Humanistic psychology at this time had its “mavericks, innovators, charlatans, and would-be-gurus” (Smith, 1990) and body psychotherapy was also developing within this context and therefore carried (or was labelled with) some of these components as well. Again, the incredible cultural changes of this era led to certain permissive attitudes in psychotherapy, as well as outside it, that are now considered unwise, inappropriate, or totally unprofessional.

There were, for example, several instances of trainers and therapists sleeping with group members, or patients/clients. This was not at all confined to body psychotherapy; it was part of the “scene”. There were also several more specific instances of encounter with group processes that became abusive or even violent (Boadella, 1980), and whilst most of these were not necessarily directly connected with body psychotherapy, it took a body psychotherapist to be one of the first to condemn them.

Anti-Intellectualism

Within humanistic psychology, there was also a fairly strong anti-intellectual component and this was also evident within several of the developing body psychotherapies in those days. It was one component of balancing an over-intellectualised view of human beings within psychology (and especially psychoanalysis) at the time. Humanistic psychology valued highly subjective experiences, wanted to find much more of a place for people's feelings and the senses, and thus put great emphasis on these. Whilst the psychodynamic theory of childhood trauma and repression was intellectually accepted, now — with the developing techniques of regression and abreaction — it could actually become experienced.

Unfortunately, sometimes the regressions, often in the form of re-birthing, could be done excessively without the necessary integration of the experiences or in some cases the regressed person might have been left in a fairly regressed and deconstructed state, which would now be considered bad therapy. Some of the abreactions that were encouraged took a person so far out of the person's normal “comfort zone” that great difficulty would be experienced with re-integrating.

Within body psychotherapy itself, there was still an emphasis on “breaking through” the (identified) body armouring and the character structure, to a (supposedly) core aspect of the person, who had never really been able to develop this core. Many of the therapists of the time saw the key to body psychotherapy as being in the catharsis: the “breakdown” or the “breakthrough”, and not — as is now much more generally acknowledged — in the “softening of” the ‘armour’ so that the fragile or undeveloped core may grow and expand, using the therapeutic relationship as a medium.

The Californian growth centre, Esalen, was founded in 1962 to explore “unrealized human capacities” (Esalen, 1996) and generally blended Eastern and Western perspectives, mostly experientially, as did many body psychotherapy trainings, some of which still happen there. Yet there was absolutely no place for this sort of study within any of the universities at that time. So, a body of humanistically based, body-centred, experiential, and often hands-on competencies and therapeutic skills emerged and flourished, with less attention paid to any sort of conventional academic intellectual rigour or investigational research parameters. There were often statements made such as: “Get out of your head and into your body”, and a cultural form of anti-intellectualism arose. This was evident in that virtually no written work was ever demanded of us in our particular body psychotherapy training in the late 1970s and early 1980s — and we were not unique. The relationship of body psychotherapy to academia and universities still carries some of this aversion. This is another aspect of our Shadow that we are now being asked, and required, to address.

If body psychotherapy becomes more university-based, with Master's degree-level trainings, it may well have to lose some of its experiential expertise and richness, and instead favour a bit more academic discipline, critical thinking, scientific testing, and proof of efficacy — none of which has really been done properly, yet. As a result, we may find that many of our favoured body psychotherapy theories over the years just do not stand up to any sort of appropriate scientific testing, and therefore have (perhaps) as much relevance as the long-held theories that the sun moves around the Earth, or that the Earth is flat or sits on the back of a giant turtle.

However, in contrast, many of the university-based trainings are dry, flat, and predominantly academic — their own Shadow — and so the formation of links whereby accreditation is afforded to training schools by recognised universities is probably a more favourable route.

But this demands the training school have some academics attached to it, with at least someone with a PhD prepared to do a lot of hard work to get the accreditation process set up. However, it would be worthwhile and there would be many valuable spin-offs, including the publishing of theses and dissertations, and involvement in research programmes.

Nowadays, most humanistic psychotherapy courses in the UK are being validated by universities at Master's degree level and yet have managed to retain their experiential component (for example, Gestalt psychotherapy at the London Gestalt Centre, Metanoia, another psychotherapy training school in London, and Karuna, a Buddhist-oriented psychotherapy training school in Devon). There are also several UK university-based Dance Movement Psychotherapy training courses.^{viii} All of these arts therapy Master's programmes have substantial experiential learning as part of their training; and so, if these, why not also body psychotherapy? Mainly because we are not putting in the effort: there is a resistance, or an "edge", which could well be part of our Shadow.

Finally, as a part of this anti-intellectualism, the appalling paucity of any proper research (until very recently) into the efficacy and effectiveness of body psychotherapy cannot really be excused. This is definitely part of our Shadow, in that we may not want to think about the possibility that proper research might demonstrate that body psychotherapy is no more effective than any other psychotherapy, and we may also not be very well prepared to do the actual research as there are few "proper" academics amongst us.

It is true that these points can apply to other psychotherapies as well: much of the research actually shows that they are all equally effective (the Dodo Bird hypothesis: "All should have prizes", according to Luborsky et al., 1975), and it is also true that randomised controlled trials and other accepted methods of scientific research are not the most suitable for assessing the "natural" science of psychotherapy and body psychotherapy (Young, 2012a). But there is no excusing the fact that, until recently, no one really attempted to do proper research into body psychotherapy. We may soon be forced to change.

The Anti-Psychiatry Movement

In Europe, in the 1970's, there were the remnants of the pre-war Reichian school in Norway: Jay Stattmann was working in Amsterdam; David Boadella was working in England; and Gerda Boyesen had moved from Norway to "swinging" London to teach her Biodynamic Psychology (Southwell, 1988). London was very fertile ground then for psychotherapeutic experimentation: R.D. Laing (Laing & Esterson, 1964), Joseph Berke, Morton Schatzmann and others were working in Kingsley Hall and later established the Arbours Association. There were other therapeutic communities starting up, like the Philadelphia Association and the Richmond Fellowship, as well as the more radical "People, Not Psychiatry" movement. Also present were a host of cutting-edge spiritual and psychological opportunities.

There was a wide cross-fertilisation of ideas and experimentation amongst these people. For example, Jerome Liss, the Harvard-trained psychiatrist and body psychotherapist worked with Laing before going to Italy, and Jenny James (Ward, 1982) worked first with David Boadella, then for "People, not Psychiatry", and then founded Atlantis, an experimental therapeutic community in Ireland.

Meanwhile, body psychotherapy effectively stood on the side-lines and ducked many of the anti-psychiatry or radical psychotherapy issues; this, despite the fact that we possibly had much greater insight into what was actually happening within people when they went out of their heads and their bodies sometimes took over. It took people like Stan Grof (Grof & Grof,

1990), who founded the Holotropic Breathwork form of body-oriented therapy technique (incidentally, not a form of body psychotherapy), to envisage and include Kundalini-types of experiences into the different forms of 'spiritual emergencies' that he described coming out of his work with LSD and at Esalen.

Boundary Issues

The opening up to greater sexual freedom and individual sexuality (with the almost simultaneous development of the contraceptive pill) in the 1960's, liberated some of the more sexually repressive elements in society, but without sufficient thinking-through of all its implications. Within many humanistic psychology and also body psychotherapy trainings in the 1970's, there was more emphasis on catharsis and in-depth experience, and sexual boundaries were often quite fluid. However, by the 1980's, various people were beginning to question some of the methods being employed in the name of body psychotherapy.

Boadella (1980) had already questioned the sometimes extreme levels of violence that existed in some encounter groups, as well as humanistic psychotherapy and body psychotherapy groups, and he quotes Eva Reich commenting that her father, Wilhelm Reich, never hurt people and was "against drastic manipulations and heavy muscle-pushing" (Boadella, 1980, p. 9).

Greater thinking about appropriate sexual boundaries occurred throughout the 1980's and this led to several articles, such as Southwell's (1991) article, "The Sexual Boundary in Therapy".

During the 1990's, some more, or deeper, reflection was beginning to be given to ethics and practice in body psychotherapy, for example, the work of MacNaughton, Bentzen & Jarlmae (1993). Other books were also being written like *Touch in Psychotherapy* (Smith, Clance & Imes, 1998) and *The Ethical Use of Touch in Psychotherapy* (Hunter & Struve, 1998), which were trying to establish proper boundaries in a (now) fairly de-regulated field and regarding a very contentious issue.

There was also some implicit questioning of the style of teaching in some body psychotherapy trainings, where a guest trainer (with considerable charisma) might fly in from abroad bringing huge expectations of powerful new methodologies. Sometimes these expectations would be fulfilled, sometimes they were disappointing, yet there would never be anything considered essentially "wrong" with the charismatic, international trainer, him or herself. There was also little opportunity for feedback, open discussion, or debate. Sometimes, the quite powerful interventions, methods, or techniques used by these trainers would be quite provocative; yet this was — in the *métier* of the times, still considered "good therapy" — and so people came back for more.

This form of idealisation could carry forward into the group member(s) having enormously powerful, individually reactive experiences, but afterwards it would be the local or resident therapists, who would have to help pick up some of the pieces, or help the trainee or group member re-integrate. Occasionally, the person would have a psychotic episode, and the trainer would often take very little of the responsibility, preferring to blame the person rather than examine the method.

Yet, it was not all extroversion and catharsis; some of the theorists, like Boadella (1986) and Davis (1984), were also beginning to recognise the value of the 'in-stroke', as well as the 'out-stroke', and that containment and expression of feelings each had its place and value. In her trainings, Gerda Boyesen also said frequently, "Less is More", and spoke of a

“subtle approach” to body psychotherapy; and yet, there were still instances of people having (seemingly) psychotic episodes after Biodynamic therapy sessions, or experiences in training groups, which were often put down to the “powerful effects of Kundalini rising” in addition to the person having “insufficient ego strength to cope with the powerful forces of the id”. This is a disavowal of responsibility for the technique, and might also indicate a lack of consideration for contra-indications, or even of doing a risk assessment of the appropriateness of that technique for that person.

Most of these types of uses or abuses within body psychotherapy (as well as in other psychotherapies) happily got “ironed out” in the 1990’s. However, some therapists, who may have initially trained in those earlier unbounded periods, did not curtail their abusive practices and continued to give therapy in what became increasingly unacceptable ways.

One such (dare we say it, body-oriented) psychologist and psychotherapist ended up in court, with a three-year sentence, two in prison and one year on probation, and an eight-year limitation on practicing, with fairly substantial damages being paid to the four complainants, although there were possibly at least another 160-180 people that he had “treated” in this so-called “scientific” method. He had called it “experimental embryonic skin contact work”, but this included both participants being naked, and the client or trainee’s clitoral and vaginal areas being stimulated. In his formative years as a therapist, it was not the custom to take notes or keep medical records, so his defence that this was “scientific” was ignored. One judge asked, appropriately, whether the therapy worked only for women, and then only for women of a certain age. Apparently, he “has taken little notice of frontiers” and imagined that he was “a pioneer” and was giving these people “the warmth and security” that they had had to do without.^{ix} A lot of the so-called theory behind this particular form of abuse was wrapped up in pseudo-scientific work to do with pre-natal and peri-natal psychotherapy about risk factors in the womb (Krens & Krens, 2006).

Unfortunately, this one publicized example might be just the tip of the iceberg. We may, in due course, need to track this back to the charismatic therapist(s) who trained him; and we may also need to track this forward to the therapists and trainers that he trained or inspired. This sort of Shadow is (unfortunately) quite pervasive and pernicious as it links into several politico-social stereotypes and it is also very difficult to eradicate, as — even after investigation — a lot of in-depth re-education is necessary.

It is worth noting that, by all accounts, this sort of behaviour has also been ascribed to people from other modalities: there are salacious stories about Ferenczi, Jung, Perls, and Kahn, though none of these were ever taken to court or successfully prosecuted. There are similar prosecutions today of eminent psychiatrists, psychologists, and psychotherapists — as well as doctors, dentists, etc. — being prosecuted for long-term sexual abuse of clients.

The Loss of Values and Spirit

The catastrophic wars and social upheavals of the early 20th century, the loss of established conventions, the widening of the industrial revolution into a technological and materialistic tsunami, population explosions, ever increasing numbers of refugees, youth unemployment alongside increasing materialism, have all helped to create a degree of rootlessness, a senselessness that not only prompted the primacy of conscience and greater religious freedom epitomised in the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), but that also made various religious and spiritual cults and sects — set up by those people who said that they knew the answers — much more attractive, especially to the young.

The trouble is not so much that we have totally lost touch with the little that is left of our Christian traditions but that we have lost or thrown overboard all of our traditional values.

The modern world is bored; and because it is bored, it is in anguish; and because it is in anguish, it is mad. But the root of our madness is our boredom, and the root of our boredom is the fact that we have lost all sense of spiritual values. (Zaehner, 1974, p. 24-25).

In the post-WW2 era, the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi influenced the Beatles; Bagwan Shree Rajneesh had an enormous following from the mid-1960s onwards (Mann, 1987); Charles Manson founded his “Family” in California in 1968; Jim Jones set up the catastrophic Jonestown in Guyana in 1973; Sun Myung Moon started the more successful Moonies (Unification Church) in the mid-1950s, which now has over five million members; and the Scientologists were started by L. Ron Hubbard in about 1953. There were many other smaller sects and cults.^x

Many of these movements were not all bad, but many of them were also a little crazy (Singer & Lalich, 1996). In a world where almost “anything goes”, anything that gives someone a better sense of direction, an internal focus, a sense of self, and a new method to get inside the body-mind (rather than the head) can seem very attractive. But these new ways often seem attractive as they offer a different value system.

Some people, in some aspects of body psychotherapy, also capitalised on some of these trends with the proliferation of competing methods, all with their unique answers, sense of finding deeper values and getting back to the “core”, often under the guidance of a charismatic founder. Thus, it has to be said, some trainings, schools, or institutions within body psychotherapy became a little bit more like sects than professional trainings.

At the same time, with the easing of morality, and the changes in value systems, especially after the 1960s, there were many values that now seemed to be old-hat: hard work, professionalism, research, discipline, thrift, etc. Some of these new trends seemed to ally themselves with the new materialism, the “let-it-all-out” and the “have-it-now” cultural trends. We may have thrown the baby out with the bath water. The pendulum certainly swung; it may have started to swing back a bit, but we shall see. It is still too early to look back in retrospect.

Michael Heller, in his (2012) encyclopaedic work on body psychotherapy, points to some of these long-term changes in trends and attitudes, especially when he writes about “Starting with the Certitudes of the Soul and ending with the Ambivalences of the Mind” and “The Limits of Dividing Reality into Distinct Realms of Knowledge”.

Closed Communities

Much of this experimentation was, out of necessity outside the mainstream of psychotherapy. But body psychotherapy also functioned without much recognition and operated almost as an underground movement (Boadella, 1991). It was hard to get articles and books published by international publishing houses, and therefore much material was self-published, un-edited, not peer-reviewed, and very self-referential. The trainings were organised as private businesses, sometimes owned by an individual or family, and each taught its own versions of *its* methods and theory. Many smaller trainings or encounter groups happened within private spaces, or larger rented centres, or in association with other centres (like Quaesitor or the Open Centre in London) and/or communities like (or in association

with) centres run by (something like) Bagwan ‘sanyasins’ (disciples) — and thus could (perhaps unconsciously) hide themselves away a little. The trainings tended to be small and quite cliquy. This did not change significantly in Europe until about the 1990s (Westland, 2002; Young, 2011).

In the U.S., in the 1960’s and 1970’s, the main body psychotherapy trainings were essentially Lowen’s Bioenergetic Analysis and John Pirrakos’s Core Energetics, with possibly Chuck Kelley’s Radix work in third place. The Orgonomists, the inheritors of Reich’s way or working, kept themselves very much to themselves, with quite exclusive criteria, even though their journals were more widely available.

The other body psychotherapy trainings all tended to be quite small and very individual prior to the 1990’s: Stanley Keleman and a few others worked quite individually, and as the 1980’s progressed into the 1990’s, Ron Kurtz’s Hakomi work started to grow and Ilana Rubinfeld started training small groups in her form of body psychotherapy, Rubinfeld Synergy, in New York. People in these trainings did not communicate much with other psychologists, psychotherapists, or even with other body psychotherapists. Most of the interface was done, if at all, through the main trainers, or through the founders visiting other centres, which meant a less reflective form of communication. We took their word that “this” was good or that “that” was not — and often these views were quite pejorative.

Larger workshop centres, like the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, or the Omega Institute in Rhinebeck, up-state New York, were often used to host such trainings and also to lend a degree of respectability to these otherwise quite small and obscure training courses. There were very few conferences where wider views could be disseminated, a relatively small number of journal articles often disseminated new concepts and methods only to the adherents, and there were virtually no research projects. This form of closed community has been another part of our Shadow.

It wasn’t until the 1990s that some educational centres expanded into universities, and the whole academic side began to get much more involved. One of the first was at Naropa, in Boulder, Colorado. Then came JFK University in Berkeley, CA, the California Institute of Integral Studies (CIIS) in San Francisco, and later the Santa Barbara Graduate Institute, which unfortunately was recently bought out by the University of Chicago. All of these were running accredited Masters (and some Doctorate) programs in Somatic Psychology.

By the 2000s, there were also a plethora of body-oriented training courses: Lomi, Rubinfeld Synergy, Bodydynamics, Rosenberg’s Integrative Body Psychotherapy, Keleman’s Formative Psychology, and Malcolm Brown’s Organismic Psychotherapy, etc. (see Young, 2010), and some of them were now more solidly based within psychotherapy, rather than just in a psychologically-oriented body therapy. This form of differentiation was apparent between the first US Body Psychotherapy conference in Beverley MA, in 1996 — which was very open and included many forms of body therapy, dance therapy, etc. — and the first USABP conference in Boulder, CA, in 1998, which was only for body psychotherapists. Ironically, by “closing the door” and defining body psychotherapy more precisely, a greater clarity and subsequently an improvement in standards and ethics has occurred.

In Europe, up to the 1980s, there were the remnants of the “golden age” of body psychotherapy in Scandinavia, the Character-Analytic Vegetotherapists, with a few spin-offs, like Lillemor Johnson, Lisbeth Marcher’s Bodydynamics, and eventually Gerda Boyesen’s Biodynamic Psychology. Jay Stattman was developing his Unitive Psychotherapy; David Boadella was developing his form of Biosynthesis; and there were a few transatlantic

influences, with Lowen and Pierrakos coming over and doing training workshops. Some Europeans made the journey across and trained in the USA and then brought the method back over. But all of these trainings and methods were — up to then — relatively closed.

Any closed community, such as a religious order, cult, sect, prison, or residential facility, has certain vulnerabilities because of its inward organisation. These communities can provide a protective space for the development of new ideas, or for focusing on a particular outcome (like rehabilitation), but closed communities are also characterised by embedded ways of being and working together, without the natural checks and balances that come from dialoguing with different perspectives or conforming to external standards and regulations. Through their closure, they can also hide abuses.

Open communities are more expansive and welcoming, can be evangelistic, and may seem very successful, but may lose out on quality and depth. There is clear evidence of this in the wide-ranging spate of fairly open alternative communities that developed, especially in the 1960’s and 1970’s period for example, Findhorn (Scotland), Esalen and The Farm (USA), Auroville (India), as well as many others especially when contrasted with the more closed sects or trainings. One community called Damanhur (in Italy) opened up after being very closed at first, which is rare.

Such communities may have been founded by charismatic leaders, who were sometimes credited with quasi-religious status, being considered something like a guru or messiah, but such leaders actually inhibited the survival of these communities (Brumann, 2000).

The recognition of potential difficulties within closed communities is significant because between 1960 and 1980, within body psychotherapy and in several other forms of psychotherapy, there was a tendency for relatively more closed systems of organisation, especially within the actual body psychotherapy training schools. This allowed the fairly charismatic leaders essentially quite a free reign to do what they liked, charge what they liked, structure the training how they liked, and also determine who succeeded in the training, and/or who should leave. There were few checks and balances, little internal democracy, and no external regulating forces. Inevitably, there were also some abuses.

Again, we reiterate that we do not wish to “name names”, nor to report salaciously, or from rumour. However, a number of body psychotherapy communities, like that within Radix and also, to an extent, the Hakomi community, did split, and by all accounts the splits were quite emotionally painful for those involved. In London, the Boyesen Biodynamic Psychology community also split in the early 1990s, and whilst one branch flourished, turning into the Chiron Centre and later with another spin-off into the Cambridge Body Psychotherapy Centre, the original branch (containing the founder, Gerda Boyesen) diminished and eventually had to be totally re-founded as the London Biodynamic School. All have now embraced wider horizons and are also moderated externally through their status as member organisations of the UKCP^{xi}, which, interestingly, did not exist until the early 1990s. Similar splits have happened with other schools and within other modalities of psychotherapy (viz. psychoanalysis and also Psychosynthesis).

By all accounts, the transition within Bioenergetic Analysis, from being almost totally controlled by Lowen, to becoming an independent professional and international association and training organisation, was also not without its own severe difficulties, tensions, and cliques. That it has survived and is still flourishing is greatly to its credit, but it has also done so by having relatively little contact with other body psychotherapy organisations (like USABP & EABP) and so can be considered still somewhat closed in this context.

The transition from a small closed school, centred around an often gifted or charismatic founder or leader, to a wider, more open community, with perhaps several centres and differing parameters, is a difficult one. Where these transitions have not happened easily or been managed well, there is often long-lasting pain and hurt. This is therefore also part of the Shadow side of body psychotherapy.

One of the reviewers of this article commented: “Similarly, the intolerance for deviance among pupils is a well-known phenomenon in most psychotherapeutic modalities. For psychoanalysis, excellent references are Makari, G. (2008) and Haynal, A. (1987).” There are also similar examples in various religious sects and cults.

Psychotherapy Regulation

Meanwhile, the Church of Scientology, founded by L. Ron Hubbard in 1953, had groups and offices in many cities internationally and offered personality questionnaires and a new way of being called “getting clear”. There was, and still is, great concern about this organisation and whether it is a cult or whether, as it has stated, it is a new type of psychotherapy (Miller, 1987). When Scientology started actively attacking psychiatry and psychology, a British government inquiry was set up, chaired by Sir John Foster. With perspicacity, Foster recognised the inherent problem of psychotherapy, namely dependency and pioneering of methods. He reported:

...I have become convinced that it is high time that the practice of psychotherapy for reward should be restricted to members of a profession properly qualified in its techniques, and trained — as all organised professions are trained — to use the patient’s dependence which flows from the inherent inequality of the relationship only for the good of the patient himself, and never for the exploitation of his weakness to the therapist’s profit (1. para. 258).

Since then, the debate on psychotherapy regulation in the UK and Europe has rumbled on. The stated motivation for regulation was the raising of training standards, the protection of patients, and the establishment of a new profession, which would also enable the employment of lay psychotherapists in the UK National Health Service (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 1983). However, the largely unacknowledged (Shadow) reasons seem to be an irrational fear of sects and cults.^{xii}

There are also, it must be stated, some very valid fears and worries about over-regulation, unnecessary controls and structures, a distancing of client and therapist, abuse of organisational power, and the lack of any real evidence that regulation produces better therapists or outcomes (Postle, 2000). Some of these views are also held strongly by some body psychotherapists.

There are also strong views held that having trained as a different psychotherapist (say, in a gestalt or psychodynamic training course), one cannot then just do a “conversion course” or 2-year additional training in the essence of body psychotherapy. On the one hand, this sort of facility is available in nearly every profession and would apply in reverse; an already trained body psychotherapist can do a 2-year gestalt conversion course: on the other hand, it is claimed that – as body psychotherapy is essentially done from a felt experience – it is necessary to have an extensive (4-year) grounding in that experience. So, we may have to look at the Shadow of this sort of exclusivity.

These criticisms are some of the Shadows of increased professionalism within psychotherapy and body psychotherapy.

BIOGRAPHIES

Courtenay Young trained in body psychotherapy over 30 years ago, with Gerda Boyesen, David Boadella, and with significant inputs from John Pierrakos, and later Stan Grof and Arnold Mindell, amongst others. He is now an accredited psychotherapist, working within humanistic, transpersonal and body-oriented modalities and also working as a counsellor and psychotherapist in the National Health Service in Scotland. He has served on the Boards of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP), the European Association of Body Psychotherapists (EABP), and the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP). He has recently been heavily involved in a project to establish the Professional Competencies of a European Psychotherapist for the EAP (www.psychotherapy-competency.eu). He has written a number of articles for the EAP’s *International Journal of Psychotherapy*, for the *USABP Journal*, the *Journal of Body, Dance & Movement in Psychotherapy*, and *Energy & Character*, and has also written other articles in other journals as well as chapters in books. He has had one book published, *Help Yourself Towards Mental Health* (Karnac Books, 2010) and has published another, *First Contacts with People in Crisis and Spiritual Emergencies* (AuthorHouse, 2011). He also publishes a series of collections of body psychotherapy articles on various topics, as a director of Body Psychotherapy Publications. He is currently editing the English-American version of the *Handbook of Body Psychotherapy and Somatic Psychotherapy* with Gustl Marlock & Halko Weiss, due to be published by North Atlantic Books in 2015.

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Gill Westland is Director of Cambridge Body Psychotherapy Centre (CBPC) and a UKCP registered body psychotherapist, trainer, supervisor, consultant and writer. She has worked as a body psychotherapist for many years and has been training body psychotherapists for the past 30 years. She worked originally as an occupational therapist in the National Health Service in Mental Health at the Maudsley Hospital, London, and then at Fulbourn Hospital, Cambridge, as a clinician and then as a manager, clinical supervisor and teacher. She is a full member of the European Association for Body Psychotherapy (EABP); an External Examiner for the Karuna International Institute in Devon, U.K. and the London School of Biodynamic Psychotherapy, London, U.K; and a supervisor on the M.A. Body Psychotherapy programme at Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK. She is also co-editor of the journal, *Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy* (Taylor and Francis). The Body Psychotherapy training offered at CBPC is rooted in a psycho-spiritual perspective.

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**Editor’s Note: Because of its length, this article has been split into two parts.
The References and Endnotes are located at the end of each part.**

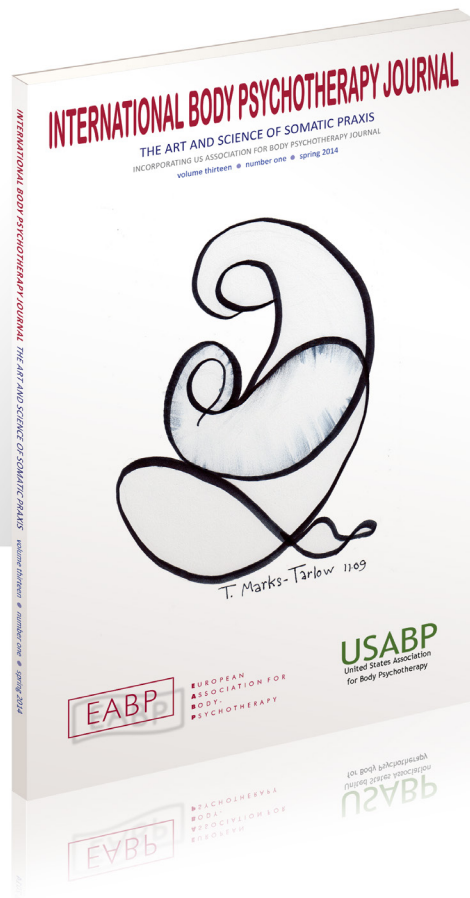
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ENDNOTES:

- ⁱ The original version of this article: "The History & Development of Body psychotherapy: Part 5: 'Qui custodiet ipsos custodes?'" [Latin: Who guards the guardians themselves?] was written by Courtenay Young as part of the series in the *Journal of Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*. The original version was then published in "The Historical Basis of Body Psychotherapy (Young, 2011). It was also extensively rewritten and developed in conjunction with Gill Westland and this present article is a subsequent development of that revised version.
- ⁱⁱ Being an editor myself, I don't often like disagreeing with other editors, who have their own styles, etc. and that there are different editorial conventions from different sides of the Atlantic, but I have to register a slight personal protest at the de-capitisation of Body Psychotherapy throughout this article.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Thich Nhat Hahn's poem: 'Call Me By My True Names' www.quietspaces.com/poemHanh.html
- ^{iv} However, Philip W. Bennet (2010, 2014) is currently running a campaign (in his own iconic manner) to show that Reich was a victim of the FBI and a form of McCarthyism; and there is also a new film about Reich by Antonin Svoboda (2012).
- ^v EABP: European Association of Body Psychotherapy: www.eabp.org
- ^{vi} USABP: United States Association of Body Psychotherapy: www.usabp.org
- ^{vii} Gentle Bioenergetics – essentially developed from a form of massage for premature babies – developed by Dr. Eva Reich: www.gentlebio-energetics.com
- ^{viii} Masters degree Dance Movement Psychotherapy trainings currently exist at Goldsmiths (U. of London), Roehampton University, Derby University, Canterbury Christchurch University, and Queen Margaret University (Edinburgh).
- ^{ix} From an account of the Roermond (Netherlands) court records in the prosecution of Hans Krens (14/02/2007) on 4 counts of repeated statutory rape under Article 249.2.3 of the Dutch Penal Code §174 (Criminal Code) concerning sexual abuse by taking advantage of a consulting, treatment, or equivalent care relationship. Two of the victims spoke of long-term abuse (about 8 years); the other 2 for shorter periods.
- ^x Sects and cults: this is a descriptive use of these words, rather than a pejorative use of these words. These terms usually refer to a small religious or philosophical group; but more recently the pejorative usage has crept in. The early Christians and the Essenes were sects (in their time). In the USA, the FBI (1999) analysis focused on apocalyptic religious groups, doomsday cults and (New World Order) conspiracy theories.
- ^{xi} UKCP: United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy.
- ^{xii} In France, this fear of sects is much more openly acknowledged and the recently proposed new French law on psychotherapy is based on legislation from the 16th century against witches (Oakley, 2004).



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