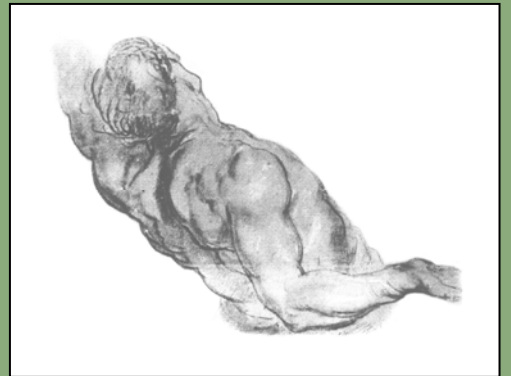


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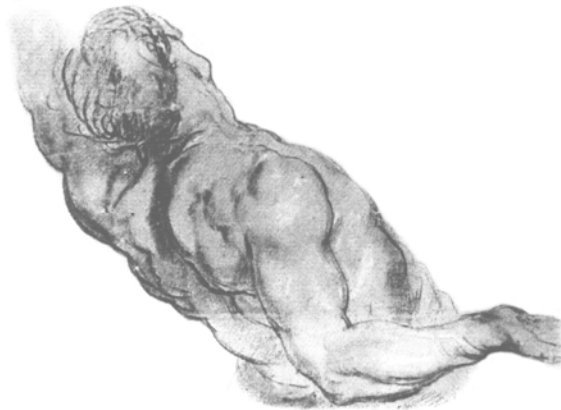


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USABP Mission Statement:

The USABP believes that integration of the body and mind is essential to effective psychotherapy, and to that end, it's mission is to develop and advance the art, science, and practice of body psychotherapy in a professional ethical, and caring manner in order to promote the health and welfare of humanity. (revised October 1999)

Voices: A History of Body Psychotherapy

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Abstract

A history of body psychotherapy, composed with the words of major figures in its development (primarily in the United States) and placed within the context of the history of contemporary psychology. Based on interviews by Barbara Goodrich-Dunn with Alexander Lowen, John Pierrakos, Charles Kelley, Malcolm and Katherine Brown, Al Pesso, Ron Kurtz, Ilana Rubinfeld, and David Boadella, conducted in 1987-88 (Stanley Keleman also was interviewed, but the recording was damaged and unfortunately his interview could not be included). One major purpose of this article was to capture some of the history of body psychotherapy as told "in their own words" by elders who have played significant roles. One of the interviewees, John Pierrakos, has since passed away. This article has been expanded from an earlier version published by the D.C. Area Guild of Body Psychotherapists.

Keywords

David Boadella - Malcom Brown - Barbara Goodrich-Dunn - Chuck Kelley - Ron Kurtz - Alexander Lowen - Albert Pesso - John Pierrakos - Ilana Rubinfeld - Voice

The last several years have seen a dramatic increase of books and articles published on body oriented psychotherapy and subjects related to the connection of the mind and body. No longer considered the province of adventurous intellectuals, rebellious nonconformists, or crackpots, the mind-body connection has become a respectable subject. What at one time could only be found in the dusty back shelves of second hand bookstores, is now discussed in best sellers cataloged under "mind and body." No less than the National Institutes for Health now has a Congress-mandated National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine that acknowledges the importance of the mind-body connection in understanding health. The climate was not always so welcoming and open.

It was only 44 years ago that Wilhelm Reich, widely considered the father of much of modern Western psychotherapeutic thought on the connection between body and psyche, died a disreputable and heartbreaking death in Lewisburg Federal Penitentiary. Reich had been put on trial by the federal government for violating an injunction against the distribution of information about a device he invented, called the orgone accumulator. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had put it in the category of quack cures and successfully petitioned the court on an earlier date to forbid the distribution of the device and any information about it. Dr. Reich was found guilty, which resulted in a prison sentence and an ignominious downfall. The FDA also burned Reich's books and pamphlets, the only time the U.S. government has torched the publications of an individual. His radical ideas, the way he conducted his court case, and his death cast a pall of illegitimacy over body/mind issues.

Advocates of Reich's theories and methods, who saw themselves as part of a leading edge movement during his days at the New School of Social Research in the late 1940's and early 1950's, withdrew into tightly closed groups or into quiet practice. His theories, the body psychotherapy he developed, and much of the discussion of the mind-body connection went underground at that time. However, this underground time was spelled by two periods of florescence. One was in the late 1960's and early 1970's, and one is happening now.

Before the current period, a person often found Reich's theories, or a practitioner of Reichian therapy or one of several offshoots, through a winding series of accidents or serendipity. For example, one of the authors of this article discovered Reich in 1970 by meeting an artist who wanted to form a "Reichian commune" that would be run on principles drawn from Reich's ideas. Besides explaining something about Reich's ideas, he spoke of the government repression of Reich's work and explained how the commune would be well guarded. While the fellow's fear and suspicion was discomfoting, the encounter stimulated a search for Reich's writings. The fact that the books by Reich in the college library's catalog were mysteriously missing from the stacks only stimulated greater curiosity, leading to the eventual discovery of his books *Character Analysis* and *The Function of the Orgasm* in a used book store (on a dusty back shelf, no less) that was the chance terminus of a 700-mile hitchhiking ride.

Roots

Although Reich was a maverick and his ideas were radical at the time, they did not form in a vacuum. Indeed, the intellectual and cultural climate of Europe during the second half of the 19th century and early portion

of the 20th century spurred developments that had deep implications for the field of psychology. Deductive argument had been the basis for answering questions regarding the nature and function of the mind from the time of classical Greece through the debate between British empiricists (e.g., Locke, Hume, Mills) and German philosophers (e.g., Leibnitz, Kant, Herbart) during the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. Empirical investigation of theories of the mind date back only about 150 years, springing from the experimental and academic work of physiologists at German universities in the latter half of the 19th century (1).

A great sea change in the study of the mind was fomented in the 1840's by students of Johannes Mueller (1801-1858), the leading physiologist of the day, at the University of Berlin. They respected the esteemed professor, but in their opinion Mueller had one glaring weakness --he advocated the doctrine of vitalism.

Vitalism attempts to explain the unexplainable, assuming that individual forces within direct and guide behavior in some purposive, yet unobservable, way. Primarily a German philosophical notion, vitalism can be traced back to the philosophy of Gottfried Leibnitz (1646-1716). He believed the universe was constructed from what he called monads, therefore every human is an aggregate of these elemental monads, with a central monad being the soul. The monads are the carriers of a universal, physical-spiritual organizing -- therefore, vital -- force (Wolfe, 1959).

Mueller believed, as a vitalist, that some life giving principle could explain physiological principles. He was certain that reducing living processes to the mechanical laws of physics and chemistry would be impossible. The organism as a whole, he insisted, was greater than the sum of its physiological parts. He reasoned there must be some vital force that coordinated the physiological activity of organs to produce the harmonious, homeostatic organic behavior that typifies living beings. Such a vital force was not open to experimental investigation, and Mueller therefore concluded that a truly experimental physiology was not feasible (Turner, 1968).

Mueller's students, however, hoped physiology could make the kind of progress accomplished by the physical sciences by similarly shunning metaphysical explanations. The most prominent of Mueller's students was Herman von Helmholtz (1821_1894), perhaps the last great German polymath. He was trained as a physician, but conducted studies in an astonishing array of subjects, including physiology, physiological optics and acoustics, electricity and magnetism, thermodynamics, theoretical mechanics, hydrodynamics, meteorology, biology, and psychology. Some of his ideas about vision and hearing still stand today. Helmholtz and several other associates, particularly Ernst von Brücke, Emil duBois_Reymond and Karl Ludwig, formed a group in 1847 called the Physical Society, known later as the Helmholtz School of Medicine. They tried mightily to wrest physiology from vitalism and vowed to reduce the principles of physiology to those of the "other" natural sciences of physics and chemistry. This pledge sparked the unity of science movement (Cahan, 1994).

The unity of science movement was based on the belief that all sciences have a common core, implying that logical links allow one science to explain a second, and a second explain a third. By explaining phenomena in one field of science by reducing them to concepts in another science, the inference arose that physical, material phenomena cause or account for psychological events (Suppes, 1981).

The Helmholtz School had a tremendous impact upon psychology. It set the stage for the next logical step taken by 19th century psychologists, which was reducing psychology to physiology by explaining mental phenomena in physiological terms. Wilhelm Wundt, the father of experimental psychology, was influenced by duBois_Reymond and had worked as an assistant for Helmholtz. Ivan Pavlov, who laid the groundwork for behaviorism by explaining behavior as the product of conditioned instincts or reflexes, was a student of Ludwig. Sigmund Freud studied under Brücke and worked in his lab.

In 1873, Freud entered the University of Vienna to study medicine, where he worked with Brücke. Freud borrowed heavily from Helmholtz's principle of the conservation of energy. The conservation of energy doctrine stated that there is a constant amount of available energy. No new energy is created and none is destroyed nor disappears. Helmholtz's doctrine led to the popularization of such concepts as force, energy, power, action, impulse, impetus, and stress. All of these concepts emerged in one form or another as parts of major psychological theories, including psychoanalytic psychology. For example, Freud believed that a finite amount of energy powers unconscious conflicts. If the energy is blocked, it will somehow find a release (Jones, 1957). In this way, Freud viewed the psyche through the lens of physics and the conservation of energy.

Freud was so steeped in Helmholtzian thinking that his first attempt to formulate a theory of mental functioning was cast in the language of classical mechanics. Freud's *Project for a Scientific Psychology* states: "The intention is to furnish a psychology that shall be a natural science: that is, to represent psychical processes as quantitatively determinate states of specifiable material particles, thus making those processes perspicuous and free from contradiction (Freud, 1895, p. 295)." Similarly Helmholtzian, Freud reduced psychological phenomena to physical principles and one motivational drive, for example, libidinal energies emerging from an instinctual id.

However, the classical mechanics of 19th century science did not go unchallenged. Freud's psychoanalytic theory, being similarly basically reductionistic, faced the same criticism pointed at the work of the Helmholtz School: too mechanistic, too materialistic, and too facile. As D. H. Lawrence fulminated in *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, "The scientist wants to discover a cause for everything (p. 61)." The people who questioned it came from a strong philosophical tradition that contrasted with rationalism. Goethe's *Naturalphilosophie* in the beginning of the 19th century through Henri Bergson's ideas about *elan vital* or "vital force" in the late 19th and

early 20th century formed a smaller, but strongly vocal opposition. Both Goethe's and Bergson's work questioned the dominance of reason, instead emphasizing the intuitive and the experiential. According to Goethe, "Naturalphilosophie saw both man and the universe as organisms, ultimately consisting of forces, of activities, of creations, of emergings - organized in basic eternal conflicts, in polarity (Sharaf, 1994, 55)." The echoes of vitalism are heard in these words, which in the latter 20th century reverberated in the emergence of humanistic psychology.

Cultural ideas, as well as philosophy and science, were in contention. A counterculture remarkably similar to the counterculture of the 1960's and early 1970's existed in Switzerland and Germany during the turn of the century period. It emphasized free sexuality, vegetarianism, freedom, the emergence of the feminine, nonreligious spirituality, and the body. Not only were the ideas of the two movements similar, so were the dress and style of life. For example, one group, called the Wandervogel (or "wandering birds"), involved bands of young people cynical about traditional conventions, who traveled about the countryside in brightly colored dress in a similar fashion to the Hippie movement of the 1960's. A health movement interested in natural sources of healing, such as water, heat, light, and touch, also flourished at this time. Artists such as D. H. Lawrence, and Herman Hesse were strongly influenced by this movement. So was the great dancer, choreographer, and theorist, Rudolph Laban, whose work forms a cornerstone of dance therapy.

Reich's contribution

Reich began his medical training during the tail end of this ferment, and his work reflects the struggle to meld rationalist mechanism and vitalism. Before Reich, there was no body psychotherapy as it would be defined today, but the connection that Freud made between the body and the mind cannot be underestimated. Freud began his investigations into the psyche stimulated by his interest in conversion hysteria. By seeing physical symptoms such as hysterical deafness and hysterical paralysis as signs of disturbances in the psyche, rather than malingering, Freud was one of the first body psychotherapists. He understood that there was a connection between body and mind. It was Freud who stated in *The Ego and the Id*, "The ego is first and foremost a body-ego," contending that our first sense of self is as an embodied self.

However, this aspect of his work has been obscured because Freud chose to remain within the confines of the psyche to affect the body, and not the reverse, by pursuing the "talking cure." The talking cure involved the patient recalling past events, especially events that occurred when the symptom(s) first happened. Other probes into this hidden source of unconscious motivation were developed, such as recalling slips of the tongue, dreams, or any other phenomena related to this unconscious world. His method then expanded into an elaborate theory of personality involving a structure: the id, ego, and superego; and functions: repression, transference, projection and the various complexes (Jones, 1957).

Wilhelm Reich encountered the work of Freud in 1919 through a seminar in medical school. Reich's rise in the new psychoanalytic world was nothing less than meteoric. Within one year, "Freud permitted the young medical student to start seeing analytic patients and referred several cases to him," says Myron Sharaf, in his excellent biography of Reich, "Reich was not unique in starting psychoanalytic practice at so young an age (22 or 23) and without formal training, but there were not many in this category (Sharaf, 1994, 58)."

Reich plunged into psychoanalysis, regarding it as pure knowledge to be furthered. In the typical innocence of a young knight, he did not see the tangle of politics and emotional investments growing quickly in the psychoanalytic world and around Freud. Nor did he see the effects of his own extremely complicated personality on others.

By 1922, Reich suggested the formation of a technical seminar for younger analysts in which an open examination of analytic failures would be possible. Reich led this seminar from 1924 to 1930, and during this time he began to formulate his concept of character analysis. It was this work on character that would survive in the more orthodox psychoanalytic world even after his many exiles and expulsions.

It was also through Reich's work on character that he began to understand the importance of the body in psychoanalytic work. Initially, Reich was interested in resistance on the part of the patient as the reason psychoanalytic interpretation failed. His search for a way to work systematically with resistance led him to notice the importance of nonverbal, as well as verbal, intervention. Reich was convinced that for analysis to be successful, a memory had to be accompanied by an emotional release. The talking cure alone was not enough. Reich also observed that his patients used manner, posture, even dress to block affect. Progressively, through his clinical observations, Reich identified what he called character armor.

At first, Reich's work on character analysis was well received. However, Reich's simultaneous work on sexuality and his involvement in the turbulent political situation in Vienna in the late 1920's would eventually draw heavy fire from his psychoanalytic colleagues, and finally from Freud. His passion for scientific discovery and the subsequent attempts to repress his ideas by governments and private organizations became the leitmotif of Reich's life. This theme played through to his death.

Reich began his investigations into sexuality with the intention of extending Freud's idea that a good sexual

life was a foundation of psychological health. As early as 1923, Reich was developing his theories on genitality and the role of sexual energy in neurosis. In his clinical studies, Reich began to see that what the Freudians considered a healthy sex life, in actuality, was not. What Reich observed through speaking with his patients is that the capacity to have intercourse, and even the ability to have a release, did not constitute a freedom from neurosis.

Reich now was jumping in where angels feared to tread. Reich began to understand that many of his neurotic patients had intercourse with a local discharge of energy, but without fully releasing the entire body, so that a stasis of energy remained. The complete surrender of the organism into the act, accompanied by sensations of melting, was termed “orgastic potency” by Reich. Such a complete release did not leave a stasis of energy. He regarded this as the true sign of healthy sexual expression.

This was not simply another floating Freudian concept of sexuality. Reich believed that a damming of sexual energy in the body created and fueled what was then called actual neurosis, and only when that blocked energy was released could the neurosis be eliminated. He posited that only when his patients had a gratifying sex life, when they were orgasmically potent and discharged energy fully, could they be symptom free. His book, *The Function of the Orgasm*, was published in 1927 and a slight chill toward Reich fell over the psychoanalytic community.

Other events in 1927, however, had an even greater effect on Reich and his fate with the Freudians. On July 15, 1927, an enormous worker’s strike and demonstration took place in Vienna. Reich stopped a psychoanalytic session to join the crowds out on the street. Sometime during this violent demonstration, Reich, a man with mild leftist leanings, became radicalized. It was on that day that Reich joined the Communist party, and although later he threw his allegiance to the Social Democrats, his dealings with the Communists did not cease. Ten years after the Russian Revolution, Communism did not yet wear a totalitarian face for many people. Many intellectuals still thought that Marxism was a viable alternative, and at that time they made a distinction between Marxism and what the Leninists practiced.

Reich saw in the workers’ revolt a theme that he also saw in psychoanalysis. “Just as character analysis could free the individual from inner oppression and release the flow of natural energies, so (Reich hoped) radical Socialists and Communists would rescue the masses from external oppression and release a natural social harmony, a classless society (Sharaf, 1994, 126).” Reich saw this movement from the inner world of the individual psyche to the outer world of the mass political psyche as a natural one. The other Freudians did not.

Besides his involvement in radical politics and seeing no real division between the work he was doing in the consulting room and what should be happening in the world, Reich brought sexuality into the streets and to the lower classes. He began what he called the Sex-Pol movement, taking vans into the suburbs distributing sexual information, giving talks, and placing pamphlets under doors. He also arranged the fitting of contraceptives, and lobbied for the legalization of birth control. By 1929, Reich was establishing sexual hygiene clinics through the Socialists. Reich advocated many sociopolitical ideas that reappeared in the sexual revolution of the 1960’s and 70’s: questioning traditional marriage and the domination of women, allowing sexual relations between adolescents, affirming sexuality in children, sex education, abortion, and birth control.

It was one thing to discuss sexuality in the darkened consulting rooms of bourgeois Vienna. It was quite another to publicly advocate it. Psychoanalysis in post-Victorian Vienna was still on the fringe, and had been under attack since its inception for its concentration on sexuality. The early Freudians were quite sensitive to their public image and were still trying to legitimize their work as a science. Reich, with his strong personality and views, must have been seen as waving a red flag, directing the forces of opposition right to their door. Reich was not only crusading about the threatening topic of sexuality, he was deeply embroiled in the swirling cauldron of Austrian and German politics.

As these countries edged toward fascism, Reich applied his studies in mass psychology even more to the political situation. In 1933, Reich published the *Mass Psychology of Fascism*, analyzing why the masses were attracted to Hitler’s ideas. By then, Reich was in trouble everywhere and with everyone. The Communists rejected Reich on the grounds that he was too Freudian. The Freudians thought he was a Communist. The rising Nazis saw him as an enemy. Reich moved to Denmark, but in a matter of months was kicked out by the Danish government for fear that he might corrupt Danish youth with his ideas on sexuality. This incident began Reich’s series of exiles.

By 1934, Reich’s link with the Psychoanalytic Society was in great jeopardy. Besides rousing the hostility of his colleagues with his political activities, Reich’s progress in psychoanalytic work had brought him into direct opposition to the Master. In the 1920’s, Freud posited the death instinct as an answer to the persistence of negative psychodynamics, particularly in masochism. By 1932, Reich was ready to challenge his mentor and published a case involving masochism that questioned the death instinct.

Not only did this case fracture the schism between Freud and Reich beyond repair, it was the first published case in which Reich actively worked on a body level. Noticing some spontaneous kicking by his patient, Reich had the choice of asking his patient to verbalize his emotions or encourage more kicking. He chose the latter, with the result that the kicking led his patient to realize how much he enjoyed provoking his parents. Reich also began physically mirroring his patient’s attitudes to give him an idea of the outer expressions of his inner states. Reich

noticed that his patient's desire for pain was not a desire for pain *per se*, as Freud would have interpreted. His patient had a deep fear of being alone and was so armored that he could not feel contact. Only by abrading his own skin and causing pain, could he feel any warmth. The feeling of warmth at the skin level was the goal, not the pain. Reich first noted in this case not only a psychic rigidity, but a *physical* rigidity as well, particularly in the musculature of the pelvis. The case was published in the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, but with a note from Freud warning readers that Reich was a Communist. By 1934, he was excluded from the rolls of the German Psychoanalytic Society at its Congress at Lucerne, Switzerland.

Although he attended the Congress, it was as a guest speaker. His paper was on "Psychic Contact and Vegetative Current." In it, he began his discussion of vegetative energy that would later lead to his orgone energy theories. The phrase "vegetative current" had already been mentioned some 7 years before by a German physician Friedrich Klaus, "to describe fluid convection processes in the body (Sharaf, 1994, 189)." Within Reich's discussion of the vegetative current and the ability or inability of patients to make emotional contact with themselves and others, we see both Helmholtz's mechanics and Bergson's vitalist ideas emerge in Reich's work.

The Lucerne Congress marked Reich's split with the psychoanalytic community, so Reich was no longer tethered to any formal organization. He moved to Oslo, where he would spend the next 5 years. While in Norway, Reich took bold steps with his therapy, increasingly incorporating the body. Reich was not completely alone in his study of body and psyche, although his ideas often appear to be unmothered, springing forth like Athena from the head of Zeus. George Groddeck (1866-1934), a physician who joined the psychoanalytic movement in 1917 and is referred to as the "father of psychosomatic medicine," preceded Reich in taking a psychophysical approach by treating isolated patterns of chronic tension as psychosomatic symptoms. Ernst Kretschmer (1888-1964), a psychiatrist, correlated body types with personality characteristics, preceding Reich's work on character structure. Reich likely knew of Kretschmer's ideas through a supervisor, Paul Schilder, who was an admirer of Kretschmer (Downing, 1980). Closer to home, the woman whom Reich was with while in Oslo, Elsa Lindenberg, was a dancer who had worked closely with Rudolph Laban. Laban (1879-1958), in addition to his work in dance notation, movement choruses, and other innovations, had developed a form of analysis called effort-shape work. This analysis included movement in time and space and looked at emotion within gesture. Lindenberg had also studied with Elsa Gindler in Germany. Gindler (1885-1961) was the teacher of Charlotte Selver, who developed Sensory Awareness. Selver's work would later blend somatic therapies and body psychotherapies in the late 1960's and early 1970's. To what extent Lindenberg might have influenced Reich's theories and work, we do not know. However, it was during this time with her, that his work with the body truly developed. Reich began to use touch with his clients to break up what he saw as the armoring in their bodies.

This touch was different from massage, very pointed, and in the words of Myron Sharaf, "affectively neutral and almost medical." The touch was directed toward emotional release and was deep and hard. Reich tended to stay away from softer touch, which he felt might be interpreted as seductive.

Reich began to notice the relationship between breathing patterns and emotions. Observing the patient's respiration became almost the "free association" of his therapy. Always looking for the underlying system, Reich began to formulate his theory of muscular segments, how chronic bands of tension in different segments of the body related to blocked affect and memory, and how the muscular segments related with each other and with behavior to form an exquisitely complex defense network.

From his experiments with natural science, Reich also began to regard the body in Helmholtzian terms of pulses and flows of energy, expansions and contractions. Reich left Oslo in 1939, leaving behind intense pro- and anti-Reich camps, and some individuals who were well trained in his therapy. These people formed a tiny nucleus of Reichian practitioners in Europe. Their work would develop to be distinctly different than would Reichian and post-Reichian work in the U.S. Ola Raknes, Od Havrevold, and Nic Waal in Oslo, Tage Philipson in Copenhagen, and Walter Hoppe in Munich would go on to develop the work and train third and fourth generation body psychotherapists.

Reich's next move was to the U.S., arranged by Theodore Wolfe, a psychiatrist at Columbia University's medical school, who also did research for a pioneering text on psychosomatic medicine authored by his then wife, H. Flanders Dunbar. This move was just in time, because Reich was a Jew, a former Communist, a psychoanalyst, and on the record against Hitler. He would have been seized eagerly anywhere in Nazi controlled territory.

Reich's interest was now less in therapy and more in his scientific experiments. Yet again, Reich trained a core of therapists who would go on to create new schools of body psychotherapy. In spite of the fact that Reich continually traveled in a cloud of dispute and disgrace, there were always those who were fiercely loyal, interested, or electrified by his ideas. Reich, in a sense, was the avant garde in psychiatry, and the New School of Social Research offered him a position.

Memories of Reich: the interviewees remember

Alexander Lowen, who developed Bioenergetics, met Wilhelm Reich at the New School at a course Reich

was teaching in 1941 or 1942. Lowen had always been interested in his body, and had noticed through his own athletic experiences that there was a distinct connection between his emotional and physical states. He had been casting about to explore this connection with modalities such as Yoga and progressive relaxation. Already a lawyer, Lowen was studying to advance his education when he noticed Reich's course "Character Analysis."

"Reich was a brilliant lecturer," says Lowen, "And at first, I was skeptical about his emphasis on sexuality. I had already started to write about the body/mind relationship in terms of using your body to influence your feelings and how they affect you, just my own experience. But he went deeper. He had a better grasp of the relationship. At first, I was skeptical, but I knew the man knew what he was talking about. After a while, somewhere during the middle of the course, that skepticism turned completely around and I became convinced that he was right. I was convinced that he had 95% of the answer, and I still believe it."

The late John Pierrakos, who worked with Lowen in the creation of Bioenergetics and later developed Core Energetics, also had a primary experience of his own body that later led him to Reich. While growing up in Greece, Pierrakos explained, "I had a very strong perception of my own life energy as a boy -- in playing in the sea, in soccer, and in being very excited about sex and the women around me. So I perceived this energy as being my enjoyment, my aliveness, the most important thing in life. When I was 14, I saw this book and this book talked about a man who knew about the energy supply and a man who knew about the energy of the personality. I thought that I must meet this man who knows about the energy supplies. Then 4 years later, I came to the U.S. at the beginning of the war. 3 years after that, I became a patient of Wilhelm Reich. This was my unconscious working. My unconscious went through and found the mark."

Pierrakos was beginning medical school at the time. "Then I went to psychiatric training," he says, "There was a Reichian training group. The group was enthusiastic about changing the world. Reich was on a mission. He was continuing his research into the cancer biopathy. He was absolutely brilliant. The breadth and scope of his work was tremendous."

Brilliant is a word echoed by Charles Kelley, who developed Radix, "I saw him as the most brilliant psychologist in the world. I still think he has been the biggest man in my lifetime in psychology. A giant, a true giant, in psychology."

Lowen reports that although he was initially interested only in the theory, Reich lured him into a deeper experience of the work. Lowen recalls, "He said, or suggested, 'Lowen, if you really want to get into this work, you have to get into therapy.' And I was hesitant, but I got in. Once I got in, I was hooked. Because it began to open new feelings and experiences. It all made sense to me. I think I'd be pretty unhappy today if I hadn't gone into therapy with Reich and worked on my own problems."

Lowen was in therapy with Reich for 3 years, and although still teaching law, knew this work was for him. He was already planning to get his medical degree when he started practice as a Reichian therapist in 1945, "There were few of us that knew anything about this technique. I charged \$2 an hour, and I must honestly tell you I wasn't worth \$2 an hour. Still, it's something that somebody can talk to you and you try to help."

In 1947, Lowen went to Switzerland to medical school and later returned to an internship, "When I got back, things had changed in the Reichian movement, in a number of ways." Because Reich was protean in his work, and constantly evolving new theories that spanned physics, biology, meteorology, psychiatry, and sociology, how one viewed the Reichian movement in the U.S. depends on which camp the viewer espoused and which period the viewer was with Reich.

For Lowen, the changes were not good, "One of the things was that Reich himself came to the position where he believed that you could do therapy using the energy concepts he had. You don't even need to do analysis. He was working with what he called Orgone Therapy."

Charles Kelley, in contrast, remembers the Reichian movement in the 1950's as halcyon times. "Reich had a devoted group trying to study him. I knew many of them back in the Fifties. We would sit up all night in the flat of a friend on MacDougall Street [in New York City], Adam Marcocious, who helped found the *Village Voice*, talking about Reich's ideas."

Kelley, who was a research psychologist, had also been a meteorologist in the army. He was friendlier to Reich's theories of orgone, weather experiments, and orgone boxes, "We talked about Reich and his ideas and was there such a thing as a life force that Reich called orgone." Kelley was not learning to be a therapist at the time, "I wasn't learning Orgone Therapy. I was learning about it, I was studying it, and I was taking it. That was very important for me, that 9 years on the Reichian couch."

Lowen also felt the pulse of interest in Reichian ideas, "In 1946 and 1947, in certain sophisticated circles in the Village, people were excited and validly so. There was tremendous enthusiasm." But what troubled Lowen was not simply the changing ideas, but the organization that had grown up around Reich that ironically echoed the one which had eventually surrounded Freud, "The hierarchy. It was really very bad. Reich was God and now he had some top medical men, psychiatrists who were now committed to his work. They were like archangels. The people in therapy were the ones who were going to be saved and the rest of the world was damned. If you weren't in Reichian therapy, you were damned. You wouldn't know what it was all about. And the trouble was that it was assumed that if you went through Reichian therapy, you were cured, became a healthy person."

Other influences

During the 1950's, Reich attracted a good deal of intellectual attention because of his connection to Freud, his notoriety, and the vast and creative scope of his work. But Reich was not the first to bring the body/mind connection to the U.S. It had already been in the U.S. in the form of somatic therapies, chiropractic, osteopathy, massage, and dance. To dismiss the 1950's as a repressed period is easy, yet individual experimentation and pioneering work of that decade would later bloom in the late 1960's. This work was independent from Reich's influence.

Before Charles Kelley had even read Reich, he came in touch with the body/mind connection through reading Aldous Huxley's book, *The Art of Seeing*. Kelley explains he was very nearsighted, "When I got out of the army in 1946, I could see the big E on the eye chart with my better eye without glasses, and it took a letter twice that large for me to be able to see with my worse eye." Huxley had mentioned the Bates Eye Method in his book as having improved his vision. Kelley sought out Huxley's teacher in Los Angeles, Margaret Corbet, and his vision improved dramatically. Kelley says, "It confirmed what I had suspected from my reading that the establishment is often wrong in what they say. They say you can't improve nearsightedness *and* you can improve nearsightedness. This confirmed to me that you have to think these things out for yourself.

Kelley became a Bates teacher, and at Corbet's school was exposed to other body/mind disciplines. He had Alexander Technique sessions, a somatic educational discipline developed by Australian actor F.M. Alexander at the turn of the century. He had special voice lessons with a woman named Louisa Strong. He entered psychotherapy with Tony Suddich, one of the founders of the Human Potential Movement.

Al Pesso, who founded Psychomotor work (later called Pesso_Boyden System Psychomotor) with Diane Boyden, began his interest in the body via muscle building as a teenager in the 1940's, "A friend of mine and I had developed a hand to hand balancing act, the kind you would see at Radio City Music Hall, with slow shifting of the weight. At the time I was shifting into dance without knowing it."

Pesso became interested in modern dance through a dancer who was living above the gym he frequented, "There was nothing in my background that prepared me for an interest in modern dance. I was a kid from Brooklyn." Pesso walked into a dance studio run by 2 women who had studied with Martha Graham, May O'Donnell and Gertrude Schurr. "We were males," he explained, "and they snapped us up and gave us scholarships." He took classes every day and became a model for Schurr's book, *Modern Dance Teaching and Technique*. From there, he went to Martha Graham's school, "It was from Graham that I learned dedication, clarity, intellectual honesty, symbolism, and an understanding of the unconscious. It was through dance that I had been introduced to Freud before I read Freud." Pesso was given a scholarship to Bennington, where he met Diane Boyden, who was a pupil of ballet dancer Jose Limon. He did not stay at Bennington long, "I wanted to be a dance pioneer. I had thought I was a quieter person, but looking back, I can see I was driven. I was walking from one stone to another, and only in looking back can I see that pattern of the path."

Diane and Al Pesso married at 21 and, after a brief time in New York, moved to Boston where they taught at Emerson and Wheaton Colleges and started a dance company. "All the time, we were pushing our explorations," says Pesso, "We were trying to develop exercises for choreography, to refine it. We were trying to see how movement was, how it originated. We came to see movement in categories; voluntary movement, reflexive movement, and movement coming from a felt state, emotional movement. We focused on the emotional movement, trying to see how action evolved from it."

Diane Pesso had been influenced by Barbara Metzger, Pesso adds, "Also, we were studying the work of Ruth St. Denis and Isadora Duncan. We were also reading Delsartre, Dalcroze, trying to find out about natural movement and natural dancing."

Music and movement were also paths for Ilana Rubinfeld, founder of Rubinfeld Synergy work, "My introduction to body work came as a musician when I was teaching children." She revolutionized the teaching of music to children in New York in the 1950's, "I put together a very unique program for 4 to 7 year olds of how to learn music through movement rather than sitting in a chair and clapping and tapping things out. I had them really moving around the room and jumping and being all kinds of characters, teaching them how to play their instruments through moving."

Rubinfeld was led to her body by her mother, "As a Russian Jewish immigrant, my mother was particularly concerned about culture. She took me to ballet lessons, to performances, to concerts. She really started me on the path of using my body. That was one turning point and there was one other. When I came to this country I was 5 years old and did not speak a word of English. I understood Russian and Hebrew. During the first year of my life in the U.S. I deciphered what people were saying through their nonverbal actions. So I watched how people looked and listened to their tone of voice. I began as a little kid paying attention to body movement because that was survival."

Rubinfeld studied music at Julliard. "Just before entering Julliard," she says, "I was already performing on the piano and the viola. A friend of mine told me I should look into the Alexander method because my back was

hurting so badly. While studying conducting at Julliard, it got worse. Nobody there ever addressed the whole issue of body work, of posture, of moving your arms. It was quite a strenuous activity.”

Rubinfeld went into Alexander work with woman named Judy Liebowitz. Rubinfeld began to understand the convergence of body and psyche and how they needed to be linked in therapy, “I lay down on Judy’s table and she would touch me very gently. I had all these feelings. She didn’t feel equipped to handle these feelings and she was right. She wasn’t. So she sent me to an analyst who felt very comfortable talking to me, but he was uncomfortable using touch. I was doing this for 3 years, running back and forth, having her touch me and change the whole concept of my body image and the energy in my body, and having him talk to me about the issues that came up. I knew I had to get those together, the gentle touch and the analysis.”

Music also led Malcolm Brown, founder of Organismic psychotherapy and co-founder of the European Association for Body psychotherapy, toward the body/mind link. He had planned to become an Episcopalian priest, when at 23, “...the Bishop of Massachusetts confronted me and told me all the beliefs I had were compatible with a pantheistic humanism and not with Christian ideology. I panicked and found I had to go on and start studying psychology instead of philosophy and religion. The one theme I pursued in graduate school was the meaning of the composite state. This state was one that I would experience when I was singing. If I was singing long enough and well enough, I would experience a transformation of my identity in a way in which I was no longer in my head. I would feel a simple, mentally imageless, mentally unharrassed state of unity in my body and psyche that so fascinated me that I pursued trying to understand what it was about through academic philosophy and academic psychology, but found no answers.”

“I had been exposed to this state through a singing teacher, Jan Burr, who had taught me to sing with my whole body and not with my will. It was the first activity in my life that was without my will, more or less. It was the beginning of discovering what later turned out to be the vegetative life flow, but I didn’t know what it was in those days.”

Brown started a doctoral thesis in London on the comparison of Sigmund Freud’s theory of the self and something in a new exciting book that had come out in 1953, Goodman, Perls and Hefferline’s *Gestalt Therapy*. Brown explained, “After working on this thesis for 3 years, I decided I could not go on because Sigmund Freud did not have a theory of growth and development. I threw the thing in the wastebasket.”

Reading *Gestalt Therapy* turned Brown’s thinking around, and, after that, reading Abraham Maslow’s, *Motivation and Personality*, “Through these two books, I saw a way of reconciling what I had experienced through the composite state in singing with the theories of the self that were presented in both books. Self actualization in healthy people was very exciting to me.” Brown returned to the U.S. and began a long period of incubation at this point.

Reich’s final years

For Wilhelm Reich, after a few peaceful years in the 1940’s, the attacks began again in 1947 with an article in the *New Republic* by Mildred Brady entitled “The Strange Case of Wilhelm Reich.” This article drew the attention of the FDA and began for Reich a struggle that would last 10 years and eventually lead to his demise. This last extremely complicated conflict is one with which this article cannot thoroughly deal. There are excellent accounts of Reich’s case in Myron Sharaf’s *Fury on Earth*, and David Boadella’s *Wilhelm Reich: An Evolution of His Work*.

This period of Reich’s life set him in popular thinking as a madman, invalidating his body psychotherapy. For years, Reich had focused his time in the U.S. looking for, in essence, the source of life. He felt he had found it in a universal energy, which he called the “orgone.” The discovery of the orgone led him to further experiments with the treatment of cancer and even weather control. The story of how Reich made rain and saved the Maine blueberry crop with his orgone “cloudbuster” in 1953 is still told in that state (Clark, 1989, 129).

The United States, in the postwar era, was gearing up for witch hunts. The political climate, Reich’s outrageous reputation, his open talk about sexuality, weather, and UFO’s, and his maverick ways with science, made Reich an excellent target for sociopolitical hysteria. In addition, Reich was still on his knight’s mission, discovery for its own sake, and was not about to muzzle himself or shave the truth on what he thought he had found. Persecution after persecution, exile after exile, Reich stood and fought.

Lowen comments, “Reich had always been attacked. There was no question about it. However, it’s one thing to be persecuted and it’s another to be paranoid about it. You play into them. And they [the Reichians] were paranoid in the sense that they expected persecutors. The moment you questioned them, they got uptight. There are different ways of handling that kind of thing. If you yell ‘persecution,’ then the persecutor knows he’s got you on the run and torments you more. If you say, ‘well, these people are a bunch of jerks,’ and go on and do your work, eventually they don’t do anything to you because they don’t touch you if you don’t respond.”

On March 19, 1954, an injunction was issued by the United States District Court in Portland, Maine, declaring that the orgone accumulator was a fraud, that orgone energy did not exist, and barred the distribution of any information about the accumulator, along with the device itself. Reich had refused to appear in court to answer the accusations made by the FDA on the basis that the court could not decide scientific matters. On July 26,

1955, contempt charges were filed against Reich, followed by criminal court proceedings. Reich, acting as his own attorney, tried to portray the case as a persecution of science. The prosecution tried to paint Reich as a quack and a charlatan. In 1956, Reich was convicted of contempt for violating an injunction against “disseminating information pertaining to the assembly, construction, or composition of the orgone energy accumulator (orgone box) devices to be employed for therapeutic or prophylactic uses by man or other animals (Sharaf, 1994, 426).” He was sentenced to 2 years in prison and the Wilhelm Reich Foundation was fined \$10,000. In 1957, Reich went to federal prison and died there of heart failure . . . some say of a broken heart.

The struggle to understand Reich’s contribution

The end of Reich’s life leaves us with a multitude of questions that will only perhaps be answered by history. Was Reich mad? Certainly, during the last period of his life, he saw monumental conspiracies against him everywhere, and some of his conspiracy ideas were fairly far out. However, taking into consideration that he was persistently scourged for his ideas, many of which today we take as commonplace, would it not be understandable that he could end up hypervigilant, fearful, and trying to anticipate the tactics of some very real enemies? Was Reich’s psychological state the product only of his persecutions? Reich’s biographies portray a brilliant, difficult, sometimes tyrannical man whose treatment of friends, relatives, and colleagues may have created much pain, as well as a man who could be kind, generous, and humorous. How do his scientific theories stand up today? While Reich’s energetic theories have much in common with the new physics, it is not clear whether his theories ever have been impartially and thoroughly tested. And what about his body psychotherapy? Can the theories of a man some claim died insane (though he was found sane by a court appointed psychiatrist) be trusted? The ever increasing growth and acceptance of the body psychotherapy movement says yes to this final question.

To place Reich in a historical context, Reich’s work, like Freud’s, showed evidence of the Helmholtz School influence. For example, Reich’s concept of energetics based on the charge-discharge model is distinctly mechanistic and reflects Helmholtz’s conservation of energy doctrine. His later efforts to tie his ideas to an identifiable, quantitative energetic force that permeated the universe, called orgone energy, would be perfectly consistent with the unity of science movement by linking physics and psychology. Yet at the same time, Reich’s orgone energy also smacks of vitalism by being a universal energy that animates human life, thinking, and feeling.

Something Sharaf says about Reich in the early, more open days of psychoanalysis is revealing about the dual nature of Reich’s ideas, “It is not surprising that in Freud’s young science Reich found a fusion of soft amorphous feeling and hard empirical fact which [Reich] was searching for so assiduously in his medical studies (Sharaf, 1994).” William James, one of the first great American psychologists, described psychology as having “tough-minded” and “tender-minded” sides. According to James, “tough_minded” psychology, being more materialistic, sensationistic, and experimentally rigorous, emphasizes scientific determinism and the importance of matter. On the other hand, James said “tender-minded” psychology, being more humanistic and person oriented, stresses free will, self determination, and the importance of mind (James, 1907). The struggle between 2 opposing points of view in explaining human behavior has been going on for centuries. Plato, for example, called scientific thought, i.e., logical thought based on premises, “understanding,” and called philosophical thought, i.e., insightful and immediate apprehension, “intellectual” (Fuller, 1931). The struggle plays out as determinism versus free will, mechanism versus vitalism, materialism versus idealism, environment versus organism, and causation versus teleology (Watson, 1967). Without the “tender-minded” side to Reich’s body of work, body psychotherapy may have never progressed beyond being an offshoot of psychoanalytic psychology.

The Heirs Move On

The aftermath of Reich’s death split the Reichian movement. A group of physicians trained in Reich’s work were the Orgonomists or Medical Orgonomists, headed by Ellsworth Baker. The Orgonomists felt that they were adhering to the direction Reich was taking in his work. Reich’s treatment during the last years of his life created a fairly insular environment around Orgonomy, and only within the last 15 years has Orgonomy taken on a more public face. The Orgonomists have continued to work psychotherapeutically very much in the way Reich did, and to some extent continued his energy experiments. The training for a physician to become an Orgonomist is very long, requiring much commitment by the trainee. At present, there are 40 Orgonomists in the U.S. representing a school of psychotherapy that is more than 40 years old.

Staying out of the Orgonomy movement, Alexander Lowen and John Pierrakos took an office in Greenwich Village and began to develop Bioenergetics. The initial form of the alliance was Lowen making himself a patient and Pierrakos working as the therapist. Through this collaboration of Lowen experiencing what needed to happen for him therapeutically and Pierrakos working with him to facilitate it, came what are now standard concepts and techniques that stretch across many body psychotherapies. For example, Reichian work had been done primarily on a couch. Lowen and Pierrakos changed that, bringing forth the idea of grounding.

Lowen says, "I realized that I had to be more solid as a person. That means down, connected to the ground. I was aware of people who had that quality who were much more relaxed than I was. I was brilliant, but brilliant and grounded are not the same things." The team started to work with standing. Lowen again, "You can't get into your legs if you are lying on a couch. That's where I started, standing and trying to settle down, hip power." They also expanded Reich's work on breathing by developing a stool that helps to open the breathing of the patient.

Using the results of their work and observation of patients, they developed more theory. In 1958, Lowen published *The Language of the Body*. He says, "I seem to have a facility to read character from the body itself. When I realized I wasn't grounded, it was through observing other people that had a more grounded quality. So I was looking at people all the time. Then I began to study it carefully."

Pierrakos says of this time, "We elaborated [on Reich's work]. I studied the energy movement of the body, the different colors, how this energy changes like the weather, how life is manifested. I observed the energy field of the body. It was a continuous parade." Pierrakos also worked with the orgone concepts coming from Reich and did scientific work on the aura. "This was all taboo, of course," says Pierrakos, "At the time, I worked on the psychiatric staff of a hospital and it was sometimes very uncomfortable to have studied with Reich."

After 8 years, Pierrakos and Lowen separated their work, with Pierrakos leaning more toward the spiritual. "Reich did not want to have anything to do with the spiritual realm," says Pierrakos, "He wanted to be a natural scientist. However, I came to believe that there was something beyond the clinical aspect. Bioenergetics was absolutely scientific and I wanted to go beyond that." Pierrakos, clearly breaking away from the materialist roots of psychoanalytic psychology, went on to found Core Energetics.

Three years after Reich's death in 1957, Charles Kelley formed an organization and began publishing a journal on Reichian ideas called the *Creative Process* to fill a gap in the continuation of Reich's work. "We were young," he says, "And it was the older generation around Reich who wasn't doing anything after Reich died." The emotional chaos and disjointedness that lingered among Reich's associates threatened to overwhelm the journal. Says Kelley, "All of Reich's associates, all the people around him, reacted with a kind of fury." The trustee of Reich's estate even threatened to sue because Kelley had published data on the replication by Kelley of weather experiments Reich had done. After five years of struggling, Kelley shut the journal down and went back to California, where he would radically change his life and begin to develop his ideas.

The 60's and the New Generation

Although body psychotherapy managed to quietly develop in the rigid, conformist, and sociopolitically fearful atmosphere of the 1950's, the 1960's allowed it to flourish. A new generation of body psychotherapists developed. One of their many influences was Gestalt. Gestalt Therapy, as propounded by Fritz Perls, was not strictly a body psychotherapy, but it did significantly include the body. In *Ego, Hunger and Aggression*, Perls used digestion and the digestive system as a central metaphor for the psyche. Perls had briefly been Reich's patient and how much Reich's work influenced Perls is unknown. Perls, however, was quite open to bringing in ideas and techniques that were congruent with the central premises of Gestalt therapy, including awareness of the body.

For Ilana Rubinfeld, meeting Perls in 1966 was seminal in bringing her work together. Perls became Rubinfeld's mentor, and she began to integrate touch with Gestalt therapy. Rubinfeld recounts, "One of the most dramatic things that he asked me to do in 1968 and 1969 happened when he would ask one of the participants to come up to the hot seat and the empty chair, and ask me to sit on the other side [next to the person]. He'd do all the talking and ask me to touch. I could see that each time I touched people, I went to places they needed and it supported experimentation. Before I met Fritz, I was experimenting with my clients. They were sitting in chairs and when they got into something very emotional, they might laugh or scream or cry, and I put my hands on them in certain places. I wouldn't stop the emotional release. In Alexander Technique that was not encouraged. "Fritz Perls attracted me because he was much more action oriented than passive," Rubinfeld explains, "That attracted me because by creating experiments and moving around more, my whole somatic system got to feel. Gestalt fit in perfectly with the body work I was doing. The touching was very much in the moment, and I saw how memories came up, how memories were locked in the body, how early memories seem to never come out through talking. They need to come out through touch."

Gestalt Therapy also brought Ron Kurtz, creator of the Hakomi Method, into body psychotherapy. Already involved in experimental group work, Kurtz became attracted to Gestalt in San Francisco in 1966 through Stella Resnick. Already acquainted with traditions that emphasized mindfulness, such as Taoism, Kurtz immersed himself in the Human Potential Movement in California, working with Bill Schutz, Dick Miller, and Larry Heider.

Kurtz was a mathematical psychologist, but in typical 60's fashion mathematics went out the window once he was turned on. "I stopped teaching statistics," Kurtz says, "I told [my students], 'Listen, if you want to learn statistics, come to me and I'll tutor you, but in class, you're going to do this stuff.' I even asked the people who assigned rooms at San Francisco State to find me a rug. They didn't know why a statistics class would need a room with a rug, but I got it anyway. I'd lay the students down, put them in a light trance, do guided imagery, various exercises."

Kurtz had begun to give workshops. “They were really crude, the idea was to just exhaust yourself and get emotional,” he recalls, “I would say that I was terrible at it. The state of the art was not so good at the time either.” Then Kurtz became interested in Janov’s Primal Scream work, and went for an intensive. He left after 2 weeks, “I thought it was terrible. There was a lot of expression going on that was totally phony. They were just pushing it and pushing it.”

The violence of the Primal Scream work is in high contrast to the style of gentle awareness that Kurtz later developed in Hakomi. Kurtz then went to Albany, New York, and with the help of a friend started a private practice. He put the money he earned back into his own growth. “I spent my first money getting Rolfed,” Kurtz says, “Then I went into Bioenergetic Therapy as a client. All the time I was working on myself and in private practice, too.” Kurtz was working with Gestalt and slowly incorporating the body. He comments, “Gestalt incorporates posture and gesture in the immediate sense, in the now, to track your experience that way. Primal therapy only uses the body very crudely to deprive you of your addictions, to increase the anxiety and the pain. Rolfing was the first experience I had that was direct body work with an ultimate psychological goal. I wouldn’t say the body is the only thing. It’s the only thing you can get your hands on.”

Gestalt was also a powerful force in the thinking of Katherine Ennis Brown, who helped Malcolm Brown develop Organismic Psychotherapy. Brown was an undergraduate student at Georgia State in the late 1950’s and early 1960’s when her teachers, Gestalt therapists Joan Fagan and Irma Shepherd, began to bring people such as Fritz Perls and Jim Simpkin to Atlanta. “I was really very fortunate because I was still a student, but was accepted into a lot of professional workshops for my own growth and to see what was happening,” Ennis Brown says, “At the time, while I was studying, I didn’t sign up for anything about body psychotherapy. It was all too much head and too much analysis for me.”

Ennis Brown at the time had also been greatly influenced by Sid Girard from the University of Florida. Girard was one of the first people writing about touch at that point, training nurses and helping them understand the necessity of touch in working with their patients. Ennis Brown then went on to study extensively with Charlotte Selver and Charles Brooks in Sensory Awareness. “So much of that for me was an experience of discovering myself in terms of sense perceptions and learning to trust how it really was instead of how it should be,” says Ennis Brown, “It’s very quiet and subtle work and I now had a way of really understanding it. I was often at sea with what I was doing, but it was as Charles Brooks says, ‘the rediscovery of experiencing’ that held me to that. The work is not psychotherapy, but it’s very therapeutic.”

Ennis Brown was in the process of turning her life upside down. She says, “I had no doubts about doing it, although I had no real goal. It was step by step, much of it unconsciously moving, but it gave me an understanding of psychology that went much beyond analytic work.” Including the body in psychotherapy was natural for Ennis Brown. She says, “I was a patient at the Atlanta Psychiatric Clinic, which was really quite an avant garde place then. They would hold patients and touch patients. They didn’t do any body work, but at least that.”

“The first paper I ever wrote was on body contact in psychotherapy, because it had been my first therapy,” Ennis Brown recalls, “So, for me, body contact was part of the therapeutic process. I didn’t even realize all the furor. It was not until I delivered that paper at the Georgia Psychological Association and sent a copy to its journal that I realized how radical it was.” Ennis Brown had not yet encountered Reich or Lowen. Gestalt was a primary influence for her. She was the director of a day care center in Atlanta run on Gestalt and Sensory Awareness principles. She had experienced the work of Al Pesso and been influenced by that. But her real work in body psychotherapy would begin when she met Malcolm Brown in 1972.

Malcolm Brown had returned to London in the mid-1960’s to renew writing his thesis. Brown had been electrified by some time spent with Carl Rogers, an innovator in using existential techniques in humanistic psychotherapy. His thesis topic had changed to a comparison of Carl Rogers’ theory of personality to Earnest Schachtel’s, a perception specialist who worked with the Rorschach, and he began practice as a Rogerian psychotherapist.

While writing his thesis, Brown discovered Wilhelm Reich’s concept of muscular armoring and that helped him discover what Rogers was really talking about. However, being deeply into humanistic theory, he was put off by its “heavy link to Freudian thinking.” It was during this period that he also discovered 2 other books that would change his thinking. One was *The Organism* by a Gestalt psychologist and a neurologist, Kurt Goldstein, who presented a system of energy dynamics in the human body that was less mechanistic and more holistic than Reich’s. “That grabbed me as much as Maslow’s book grabbed me earlier,” Brown recounts, “I reread it and reread it because it did justice in describing what was behind my experience with the composite state. So I played around with that and Reich a bit, and then I discovered a book, the *Physical Dynamics of Character Structure* [later titled *Language of the Body*] by Alexander Lowen, and that book grabbed me in my evolution. I read it many times religiously.” In 1966 or 1967, Brown wrote Lowen from London, and Lowen wrote back, “Why don’t you get in touch with David Boadella?”

European connections

David Boadella, an Englishman, connected to Reich and Reichian work in the 1950's. Reich had referred Boadella to Ola Raknes, one of the principal therapists he left behind in Norway. Boadella also worked with Davis Howard, a pupil of Od Havreold, who had also studied with Reich in the 1930's. Finally, he had worked with Paul Ritter, an intuitive Reichian analyst based in Nottingham, England in the 1950's. Boadella, who is the editor and publisher of *Energy and Character*, a journal dealing with body psychotherapy, has for years been highly instrumental in bringing together different threads of body psychotherapy and disseminating them again to a wider audience. In practice since 1956, Boadella calls his work Biosynthesis, which has undergone a long evolution, drawing from many sources.

In 1968 and 1969, Boadella helped Gerda Boyesen from Oslo establish herself in London. Boyesen, who had also trained with Raknes, created Biodynamic Psychology. She used forms of touch to free blocked energy, as determined by placing a stethoscope on the intestinal area to evaluate the quality of the peristalsis. Her work later spread to many European countries, Australia, and the U.S. Boadella trained with Boyesen and later led training groups on her methods.

Around the same time, Boadella, with Malcolm Brown, brought Alexander Lowen to London. Brown says of this time, "It was a very exciting experience because the majority of participants of the first training program in Europe by Alexander Lowen were from the London Jung School. There were a few Freudians, including Marion Milner, who was a very creative neo-Freudian. Lowen did 3 weeks of workshops in my bedroom. David was present and a hodge-podge of other people. This was the beginning of it."

Boadella had been influenced by Boyesen and Lowen, but also strongly by Stanley Keleman. He says, "Stanley has a broad and rich background, not only from Bioenergetic Analysis, but from the Center for Religious Studies in Germany led by Karlfried Durckheim [author of *Hara: The Vital Center of Man*], and Nina Bull, Director of Research in Motor Attitude at the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Columbia University. Keleman taught me how to read the expressive qualities of a person, the central importance of formative process, and how to understand the emotional anatomy of the body." Francis Mott, a psychoanalyst working on depth studies of womb life, originally used biosynthesis, the term Boadella uses to describe his work. Boadella says, "Mott was a patient of Nandor Fodor, who had been a patient of Otto Rank [a psychoanalyst generally known for coining the term "birth trauma"]. Mott was in discussion with Robert Assagioli, the founder of psychosynthesis, one day. Mott said that his work was a biosynthesis because it dealt with the organic roots of the life process in embryonic existence." However, in practice, Mott never worked with the body, only with dreams.

An Englishman named Frank Lake expanded Mott's work in prenatal psychology. Boadella says that Lake practiced a deep form of regressive therapy using LSD in the 1950's. Later, Lake began to use breathing techniques to achieve similar effects. Lake was associated with the British Object Relations School, incorporating the work of W. R. D. Fairbairn and Harry Guntrip. Boadella says of his own work, "I began to see that my approach to therapy involved the bringing together of 3 different traditions that had developed from Freud: one traced through Reich, Lowen, and Gerda Boyesen, focused on the libidinal energy flow; one originating with Rank, and coming down through Francis Mott, focused on prenatal experience; and one, coming through Melanie Klein, the object relations therapists, and Frank Lake, focused on the mother-infant relationship."

And meanwhile, in the United States . . .

Back in Boston, in the 1950's and 1960's, Al and Diane Pessso were developing a body psychotherapy springing from an entirely different source -- dance. Say Al Pessso, "From a neutral stance called the 'species stance,' we discovered that emotional movement could be provoked by an image, and from that movement, the individual would move into more associations. We had touched the psyche."

The Pessos followed this work deeper into the exploration of the Self and began to explore the nature of catharsis. Working with their movement categories in groups, they noticed that people would sometimes move alone and sometimes move with others into dyads and triads. They noticed that when individuals moved alone, there would often be expression, but that would be followed by depression. When the dancers came together improvisationally to form small groups, there would be expression, but followed by confusion. Each participant would experience the other participant within a private emotional sphere of projection, but there was no meeting between the projections. Thus, one mover in a group might experience another as her mother, while the other was experiencing the first as her brother. There was no congruence."

From this, the Pessos began to create the idea of "accommodation." Pessso says, "We realized that the emotions needed satisfaction. Without that, there was no meaning. We came to believe in an emotional bill of rights: these emotions exist for a reason and they had a right to satisfaction, that there was a correctness to expressing them, at least at a symbolic level. When action arising from emotional energy goes out into a void, there's meaninglessness, confusion, depression. When the action is matched, there is relief, life, completion of the emotion."

In 1961, the Pessos began to evolve what was called “the structure.” At first, they provided negative figures for accommodation, a person who would act as the negative mother for instance. They soon noticed, however, that this was incomplete. They began to understand that anger came from deficits in early nurturing and so created the figure of an ideal parent to begin to fill those needs.

Pesso comments, “This was a radical shift, and at that point we crossed the line. We were no longer just in dance. We were dealing with a polarizing process, and not just working with negative affect. We were seeing the absence of nurturance and abuse as things that needed to be answered. The emotions were all natural, and in them, the nervous system was anticipating answers.” The innovative work of the Pessos was well received at the time, and they received grants to do work at the Boston VA and McLean hospitals, where they instituted the position of Psychomotor Therapist.

Charles Kelley, after ending the publication of *The Creative Process*, returned to California and began to take a hard look both at Reichian theory and his own life. He began to read the works of Ayn Rand. He met and began a long term friendship with Nathaniel Brandon, who was Rand’s associate at the time. Kelley says, “This was quite different from what I had been doing in Reichian work and Bates work, which was freeing up of the armor.” He was also reading the work of a 19th century psychologist, Theodule Armand Ribot, who had written a book called *The Psychology of Attention*. Ribot had drawn a contrast between spontaneous and voluntary attention. Ribot had stated that voluntary attention was always associated with changes in breathing and muscular tension. Voluntary attention was necessary for will, voluntary movement and voluntary behavior.

Kelley says, “I realized that this was exactly the muscular armoring that Reich had worked on. The armor was the agent of the will and the executor of behavior that comes not from feeling, but from thought. Only man is able to behave on the basis of thought, and at variance with his feelings. He needs an enforcer to be able to do that. The enforcer is the muscular armor. It is the armor that makes it possible to go against his feelings, impulses, to delay satisfaction, exercise self-discipline and so forth. Reich’s villain of the piece was also the hero of the piece. It’s what makes man different from the animals, and all of the best in man, as well, as all of the worst in man is tied into Reich’s muscular armoring.” Kelley began to put together all that he had learned, “I developed a practice in my head that would combine the Bates Eye Education and Reich, and then added Rand to bring the dimension of purpose into the picture. And I gradually worked toward a time when I could work out of my research job and into a new program that would become Radix Education in Feeling and Purpose. Education in Feeling is rooted in Reich. Education in Purpose is rooted in the other side of my background.”

Another strong influence on Kelley was his interaction with the early Synanon, a treatment center, which then was located near him in Santa Monica, California. He says, “I got involved with Synanon to learn what they did to help people become more purposeful, because I saw them as becoming quite successful with drug addicts, people who had a lot of trouble with the purpose dimension of their lives.”

Kelley’s work differs from other Reichian offshoots in that he does not call it a psychotherapy, although many psychotherapists have adopted its theories and techniques. Radix Education in Feeling and Purpose is just that, education. He explains, “I was trying to help people develop beyond where they were, not trying to repair damage that had been done to them by their parents when they were young, but to help them grow beyond their present stage in dealing with their feelings and with their purpose and with the relationship between them.” With the aid of his wife Erica, Kelley began to give workshops in 1968. In addition to work in Santa Monica, he taught at Esalen in California, the Institute for Bioenergetic Analysis in New York, Oasis in Chicago, and Quasitor in London.

The 1960’s were an expansive time in humanistic therapy. Ilana Rubenfeld says, “It was very, very exciting. When I came to Esalen, there was a lot of experimentation. There was a lot of paying attention to the somatic system. This was new, different.” Perls, Will Schutz [known for his work with encounter groups], and Virginia Satir, the family therapist, were all at Esalen. “I walked in,” says Rubenfeld, “And it was ‘oh my god.’ It was happening right there with those three people.”

Rubenfeld is careful to note that it was not all happening in California. “Much of the pioneering, integrative work started in New York,” she comments, “The development of the marathon, work in addictions at Phoenix House, were begun in New York. The Jungian movement also was powerful in that city in the 1960’s. Fritz originally started his work with Laura Perls, and Charlotte Selver started Sensory Awareness, in New York City. John Pierrakos and Alexander Lowen were here. I was in a lucky place, to be here where it was happening.”

The Legacy of Humanistic, Phenomenological, and Existential Psychology

With the emergence of humanistic psychology, along with a push from the Human Potential Movement, the pendulum began to swing back to “tender-minded” psychology and away from the “tough-minded” side that had been ascendant since the mid-1800’s. The humanistic point of view is, to a degree, a continuation of the vitalism movement that was almost discarded in the 19th century. Both hold that explanations of human behavior require human concepts, not explanation by analogy from animal behavior. Vitalism relates well to the psychology of becoming, a cornerstone of humanistic psychology, through its tenet that there is within each person a vital force

for growth and development. The humanistic notion that humans have an inner direction is also akin to vitalism. An example of this inner direction is the humanistic belief that human phenomena involve a life seeking and life propelling drive, and within each individual dwells a tendency to seek, to strive, to preserve that which is basically human.

Abraham Maslow coined the term “third force psychology” to refer to all those psychologies not represented by the materialistic psychologies of behaviorism and psychoanalysis (Maslow, 1954). Humanistic, phenomenological, and existential psychologies most clearly represented these new “third force” psychologies (Goble, 1970). These threads, linked to perception, are found in the work of many body psychotherapists.

The core idea of humanistic psychology is that humans are purposive beings. Many body psychotherapists espouse values and practices that stem from humanistic psychology. For example, a de-emphasis on diagnosis in the fashion of the biomedical model is drawn from the idea that abstractions are unnecessarily simplistic. Another example is that the goal of personal growth comes from the humanistic idea that each person possesses a growth potential that stimulates one to realize and to develop into whatever and whomever they are to become. A third example is that cultivating spontaneity and the use of imagination, often used in body psychotherapy techniques, are connected to the idea that people are basically spontaneous (DeCarvalho, 1991).

Phenomenological psychology emphasizes perception. Its primary premise is that reality is in the eye of the beholder, not in some external reality. One understands others by looking at their perceptions rather than their surrounding stimulus world, and looking at wholes rather than parts. The Gestaltists and the work of Carl Rogers were major vessels for phenomenology in humanistic psychology (Misiak, 1973). The broad influence of process-orientation in body psychotherapy also can be connected to the contributions of these therapies.

Existential psychology changed the role of the therapist. This has much to do with the existentialist belief that the subjective can be studied objectively. Existentialists reason that much of knowledge results from subjective experience. Therefore, truth is more quickly discovered when one is involved and subjective. One example of this is the idea that the therapist should be a “participant observer,” as suggested by H. S. Sullivan. The therapist does not sit back, observe, and make notes about the verbalizations of the client. Rather, the therapist participates in the therapeutic process and communicates his or her own feelings and attitudes about the client as a person and what the client is saying. The idea is that the more one becomes involved in the situation, the better the therapy. This places the emphasis on emerging and becoming, rather than on analysis or abstraction. Other legacies of existentialism are a de-emphasis of the historical past, avoiding interpretations of client behavior or placing the client in a theoretical mold, and placing greater importance on the verbalizations of the client, rather than those of the therapist (May, 1969, Gendlin, 1997).

Gestalt Therapy, which is distinct from the Gestalt psychology of Wertheimer, Koffka, Kohler, Lewin, and Goldstein (though to what degree is a matter of hot debate), also draws from humanistic and existential psychologies and also has bequeathed a legacy to body psychotherapy. Perhaps the idea with the most impact is that the present, the “here and now,” is more valid and valued than the past. Drawing attention to the present avoids abstractions, which are considered substitutions for reality. Another key idea is that concentration on nonverbal activities can guide the client away from abstractions, which allows the client’s perception of his or her present style to emerge. Many nonverbal mannerisms are body centered, e.g., swinging legs, tapping fingers, and gesticulating with one’s arms. Yet another is that interpretation is to be avoided. Interpretation heightens the client’s tendency to become more abstracted, less in the present moment, and thereby less solidly living in reality (Korb, 1989).

Moving into the 70's

The Human Potential Movement embraced Bioenergetics in a big way, but Alexander Lowen did not embrace the Human Potential Movement, “The problem with the Human Potential Movement was that they never said potential for what. It’s true that people need to break out of a neurotic structure. That’s really what therapy is about, to help you become free. But the way they were doing it was destroying the structure, just smashing out without any sense of where they needed to go, and basically, there was not enough understanding of the problems.”

Lowen continues, “One of the things about Bioenergetics is that it is very potent. We can give people a high that’s really quite great, but we don’t work on that level. What we do is try to understand you, and build your energy so that you can try to deal with that problem. That’s the thing you have to work with. They [Human Potential Movement proponents] didn’t want to take the time to look at the problem. What they wanted to do was break out and go for it. It was very ungrounded because people didn’t know what the problems were. A lot of people cracked up under those things.”

Pierrakos and Lowen spent the 1960's refining the theories and techniques of Bioenergetics. They began to place less emphasis on catharsis, and more on grounding. The analysis and understanding became very important. Lowen says, “I try to see the whole person. I don’t start, ‘well, you need to let go.’ I try to understand the characterological problem for that person. Each one is unique. You need to work subtly and slowly to have

that person get in touch with themselves and begin to open up a little bit, confront their fears, be able to deal with their deep feelings like rage.”

Lowen studied the relationship between the armoring, emotional release, and proper movement. “Often,” he says, “A breakthrough occurs at the weak part of the structure. The stronger holding of tension in the body isn’t even affected. It took me ten years of watching people let out their suppressed anger to find out why certain ways of hitting didn’t really release the tension. You have to learn how to hit correctly. You have to have techniques that work with the body in such a way that you end up being free and coordinated physically. Slowly, the individual feels this. They sense this. They’ll say, ‘I can feel my back. I never felt that before.’”

Inspired by his work with Lowen, Malcolm Brown returned to the U.S. in 1970, intending to work in affiliation with him. Brown had also worked with Ola Raknes and Gerda Boyesen in London, and had incorporated the softer techniques coming from the European neo-Reichian tradition. Called direct touch, these involved long, supportive touches with still (non-moving) hands, allowing feelings to emerge over extended periods. Upon working briefly with Lowen, Brown became convinced that their styles of work were too profoundly different to work in association, and Brown went to Berkeley, California, to start his own institute and further investigate the use of direct touch and softer methods. In a way, Brown was seeking the “tender-side” of the neo-Reichian opus.

In 1972, Katherine Ennis Brown, who was practicing massage in Atlanta, met Malcolm at a lecture he was giving in Atlanta, and in 1973, went to Berkeley to live with him. Katherine began working adjunctively with his patients. Very slowly, she was incorporated as a second psychotherapist into the work he was doing. She was present in his groups. “But mostly,” she clarifies, “I was present for extra weight to do techniques of compression on heavily armored individuals. I also did a lot of touching, but always at Malcolm’s direction.”

As they were working together, they discovered that the touch of the therapist was not neutral, that there were profoundly different effects, depending on whether the therapist was a man or a woman. Malcolm Brown says, “Once Katherine and I began working together, and she became more autonomous in the work, it opened up a whole new set of body therapy techniques for guiding the archetypal courses in the client through the repressed unconscious and repressed instincts. This was done in a man-woman, mother-father framework, and it became very exciting for us as we read more Jung.” During this time, Malcolm Brown also began to develop a different concept of grounding than the one Lowen had established. Lowen’s grounding involved standing and having one’s feet on the ground, along with being able to be feeling while retaining ego control. Brown began to draw on David Smith’s ideas of vertical grounding and horizontal grounding. Smith identified Lowen’s grounding as vertical. However, he also identified another kind of grounding that has more to do with allowing diffuse and undirected states of feeling and awareness, which he termed horizontal grounding. Brown had begun to experience horizontal grounding in his own work and understand its importance. He posited the individual needs both, along with the ability to move between them as necessary. He also saw the individual could be vertically overgrounded, which he describes as unable to let go, rest, relax, and become non-purposeful in their awareness. In contrast, the vertically undergrounded individual has difficulty taking and holding a stand, containing emotions when needed, and becoming directed.

The Browns periodically would visit Europe to give training groups in Zurich, Oslo, and Amsterdam. In 1975, they decided to move to Europe and, after a year in Corfu, settled in a small village in Northern Italy.

The early 1970’s saw interesting developments concerning body psychotherapy in Europe. While there had been a small, but growing, Reichian tradition all along, Americans with new innovations and theories came to Europe to reseed and popularize body psychotherapy. The visits of Lowen, Pierrakos, and their trainers spread Bioenergetics over much of Europe. Later, and separately, Pierrakos’s Core Energetics would take a foothold. Al Pessó brought Psychomotor work to Europe, establishing a strong base in Holland. The Browns began trainings in Switzerland, Germany, Scandinavia, and Italy. Reflecting how strongly the Americans were influencing humanistic and body psychotherapy in Europe, a comic article was published in the late 1980’s in a New Age magazine in Zurich entitled, “How to be a Successful Psychotherapist.” The first recommendation was, “Have an American name or something close to it.”

The early 1970’s saw Ron Kurtz tucking more knowledge under his belt. He worked with John Pierrakos and Al Pessó. Also, he studied with Moïshe Feldenkrais, an Israeli who had developed a unique style of body work and had written a book on the body/mind connection called *The Body and Mature Behavior*.

Kurtz says, “I was around some real master therapists -- Pierrakos, Feldenkrais, Pessó.” It was around that time that he met Hector Presterá. Presterá was a professional Renaissance man -- cardiologist, internist, acupuncturist, Rolfer, and Gestalt therapist. Presterá became Kurtz’s Rolfer and at one point Kurtz brought Presterá in to do a workshop. Kurtz, having learned something about body reading from John Pierrakos, began to show Presterá photographs and slides of people’s bodies to read. Presterá said, “You know, we could do a book.” And that was the origin of their book *The Body Reveals*.

Hakomi came together through the workshops Kurtz was doing because of *The Body Reveals*. Although he had read Reich and worked bioenergetically, Kurtz says, “I didn’t have a natural bent for that. I’m too lazy. The therapy of Lowen and Pierrakos is very active, busy. They are very highly energized. It’s totally against my grain. However, I did learn an enormous amount about character.”

Kurtz’s own character also led him to develop differently. He was somewhat of an actor, being able to

change character in midstream, "That's the kind of character I have. I could change to whatever the situation required and not even know that I was doing it, not even knowing there was another way to be. Any kind of therapy like Gestalt or Bioenergetics that was asking you to do something, like bang on the bed to get your anger out, was not really the best for me. I could do role playing, but it would not put me in contact with myself. Therapies that work for me are the ones that evoke the spontaneous. Hakomi is very much that way, a very evoking therapy."

In the late 1970's, while teaching body reading in Europe, Kurtz found that simply teaching interpretation of body position and tension patterns was not enough. "I started developing techniques to reveal the emotion behind the position," he explains, "I would ask the person to be mindful and quiet and go inside. I would say something and notice what their reaction was. I would know what to say from having watched and listened to them, so that sometimes what I said would have a very powerful effect. Another technique was called 'taking over,' where a person is doing something with their body and I take that over. I offer to take that from them so that they can relax. When you do this with people and you get a big, tall, strong guy who is standing up and bracing himself, if he is using his muscles to hold himself up and you hold him up, he will relax a little bit. He will relax and get into weakness and sadness. It can be instantaneous."

1971 brought Ilana Rubinfeld in contact with another person who would be significant in the integration of her work, Moïshe Feldenkrais. A small group experienced in doing body work that she was part of invited Feldenkrais to Esalen for the first time. Working intensively with Feldenkrais for 6 weeks, Rubinfeld says, "That was a big turning point for me in that it showed me a large group of people could learn things that I thought they could get only through touching. They could learn some of the changes in their bodies and release some of the material with gentle movements." Rubinfeld began to see how the Alexander and Feldenkrais methods complemented each other, but Feldenkrais was less sure. He had studied with F. M. Alexander in the late 1940's and early 1950's and got into a personality clash with him. However, as Rubinfeld trained with Feldenkrais more extensively, she became convinced. She had already been working for 10 years, integrating psychotherapy and gentle body work. Rubinfeld places herself in a second generation of pioneers. Perls, Selver, Feldenkrais, Ida Rolf, and Alexander preceded her and created a field in which she and others would bring more innovation and integration.

In the middle 1970's, she began to see another influence in body work and body psychotherapy -- Asian philosophy and martial arts. Although Asian philosophy had been studied on the East and West Coasts for quite some time, the body aspect began to take hold. Rubinfeld says, "I come from a European background and am very attracted to that. People in Reichian work, Pierrakos, Lowen, and Selver were also from a European background. However, working through the body/mind work, I also began to see Tai Chi and Aikido emerging into the body work culture. Judo was already there. Feldenkrais was an expert in Judo and a great integrator of the Eastern and Western." Perls' Gestalt Therapy had brought her the feeling of Zen Buddhism and meditation, emphasizing the approach of going inside. A great influx of Tibetans into Berkeley with Trungpa Rinpoche also brought more awareness of Asian approaches.

Jung also became important in Rubinfeld's work. "I really see the person who volunteers to come to the center of the room becomes the archetype or the universal theme that everyone in the room is feeling," says Rubinfeld, "Their issue when I work with them and touch them brings up everything that is going on with me and the people in the room. I think the whole issue of the myths that our bodies carry are not just a few years old. I travel all over the world. And everywhere I go, the same issues repeat themselves over and over again in people and between people."

The 80's and Beyond

The 1980's brought new focus in body psychotherapy and also some reconsiderations. For Alexander Lowen, the emphasis progressively shifted toward looking deeply at sexuality. Lowen's belief is that even though a person's hangups can have early roots, the hangups themselves interrelate with sexuality. "Sexuality is a basic release mechanism for emotion and energy," asserts Lowen, "If you can't release it in a nice way, all the work that you do in your head won't go anywhere. Releasing is always downward and if this doesn't open up, you can't really release fully."

Although Lowen's therapy has always dealt with sexuality, the opening of discussion on the sexual abuse of children highlighted this even more. Lowen observes, "Now we are realizing more and more the degree that children are sexually abused by their parents at least 33%. What you call abuse can vary. It doesn't have to be actually physical, it can be emotional." Lowen is also concerned that Oedipal issues are ignored in the therapeutic process. Lowen asks, "Can a therapist work anything out with a patient if he hasn't worked it out for himself? If you don't see the Oedipal issue in your own background, then you don't see it in your patient and you can't work it out, that's all."

For Lowen, the proliferation of somatic therapies since the 1970's created confusion concerning what therapy

is about. According to Lowen, therapy is a process of self-knowledge, and self-knowledge requires analysis. What he objected to in the late Reichian movement, that solely energetic changes in the body would create healing, is what he still finds a problem in the somatic therapies. Lowen says, "The Reichians thought it would do it, and obviously if you are doing therapy that takes years, you look for shortcuts. I don't blame them for trying. But I do blame people who don't see it won't work." Lowen does not view himself as a healer, "I don't go in for healing. I think fundamentally the body heals itself. You can help the body heal itself."

John Pierrakos' work was focused on energy and consciousness. Pierrakos said, "Energy is the leading force of consciousness. Consciousness itself contains energy. It contains the elements of motility, of expression, of perception. The total manifestation of energy is pleasure, the stuff of life. We crave it and we kill it. We are afraid of it. It is taboo and so many things in our culture make it taboo." The pleasure function that Pierrakos speaks about is not the pleasures of hedonism or materialism, "It is the inner pleasure of living. Pleasure is a total vibration of life, joy, and expansion."

It is through the organism, the body, that Pierrakos saw the opening of both consciousness and life's pleasure. He continued, "The energy function and the expansion of the organism will create consciousness. It gives life to life. It is inherent to life. If there is no energy, the organism is diminished. Life becomes solely a mental process. There is no feeling. We work with energy. When you open the energy in the body, it furthers the spiritual self. I feel the greatest meaning in life is to release the energy connected to consciousness through going with the feelings and the mind."

Al and Diane Pessos' Psychomotor work has also continued to evolve. Al Pessos says, "The center of our work is the belief in biological life, the belief in evolution, the truth of the soul, that within the body is the treasure of the history of all that is liveable. Diane and I have spent our lives finding trust in life, to have the courage to leave the known to go to the unknown and to go to the unknown through living."

The Pessos were, in the late 1980's, looking at the construction of the ego, the mapping of consciousness, and the mapping of resistance. For Al Pessos, this was an essential step in the development of Psychomotor work. "We had been trying to work toward the center of truth with the client," he stated, "Before in our work, this primarily had to do with affect. Now it also has to do with ego. The work was good, but it couldn't be integrated with the ego because of insufficient tracking of the ego state." Pessos' work with clients occurs in structured scenes during which a few or more people may be used to aid the process of the client. Pessos became dissatisfied with something in this structure, however, "I was the driver of the structure because of my knowledge. The client became aware of affective states through my mind, my approval or disapproval. Originally, I was the pilot of the structure but the client needed to be the pilot. I needed to step away from my ability to do what some call magic, the ability to release the unconscious structure. Now, with the client as the pilot, the effect may not be as dramatic, but it is better that the client be able to run the ship." For Pessos, having the client be the pilot does not simply mean that the work is client directed, which it also can be. The pilot also is a conscious state which, according to Pessos, "Allows thoughts associated with affective experience come into awareness. A thought may be a residue of a past experience that has become a belief or value. In the therapeutic structure, we externalize this. We enroll people to play out these thoughts and beliefs."

Ilana Rubinfeld felt that in the 1980's her work went through a quantum leap. "My work is growing geometrically," she said, "It isn't like 1 and 1 equals 2. It's like 1 and 1 equal 10. I'm doing much less in my work, and more is happening. That's a big turning point. Another development is that I am obsessed with concern for the practitioner. I'm very concerned that self care has been one of the last issues in training. People are interested in theory and technique. They are taught technique, how to touch, how to lift, what to do where, to take care of others, but not to take care of themselves." In Rubinfeld Synergy method™ training, at least half of the training is on practitioner self care.

Synergy is the name Rubinfeld has given to her work, and she sees the synergy of her work relating to the larger synergy of the universe, "The health of our universe depends on synergy. My work has been based on bringing together diverse elements . . . When we say bodywork, it looks like we're dealing only with the body and its language. We can never do just bodywork. I really work with the whole system, which includes the feeling of the individual, their spirit, their ancestors. Every cell in their being is a microcosm of our total being and of the universe. I think bodywork lets us see how we are connected to the universe. Everything that happens to our cells and our bodies is expressed over and over again in the universe."

For Ron Kurtz, the 1980's brought both an expansion and consolidation of the Hakomi method. "Shortly after the first full Hakomi training I gave," says Kurtz, "I began to get a lot of further insights into the overall process and that hasn't stopped." For Kurtz, it is important that the knowledge that has come over years of experience become available to society in general. "My energies don't go into protecting what I know," he says, "They go into increasing it, learning more. I would give it all away. I would just touch people's heads and give it all away if I had that kind of power. I want it out there in the world. I don't need to save it for me. It's not part of me. I'm working for the universe."

Charles Kelley retired as the Director of the Radix Institute in 1986. However, he is still working with the ideas that created Education in Feeling and Purpose. For Kelley, although Radix was successful, it became imbalanced from his original conception. Radix was intended as education in both feeling and purpose, but

imparting the necessity of the purpose work was difficult for him. As part of his philosophy, Kelley says he left the decision on how to balance the work to his students.

People flocked to get the Radix feeling work, but the purpose work was neglected. Kelley observes, "The people who needed to work on purpose in their lives were scared of it. They didn't like being confronted. They didn't like being required to look at themselves. It was unpleasant and went against the grain of their feelings. They would rather lie on the mat and have someone work with them and have eruptions of crying or anger or fear or pleasure. It felt better to them to yield to their spontaneous feelings, discharge, free them up, rather than sit in a group and face difficult feelings in their lives, face knowing themselves better, face the capacity to live for a long range goal, to make the hard decisions that would make their lives work over time." For Kelley, this imbalance may run through all body oriented work that focuses only on breaking down armor and the expression of feeling. Kelley says, "People who are exposed to this alone lose a lot of their abilities to function long range, to function with discipline, toughness, and clear-sightedness, to have the ability to delay satisfaction, the ability to work now for what will happen next week, next year, 20 years from now, even in a generation or two. The ability to work for the future comes from something very different than working to free your feelings and live in the here and now."

Malcolm and Katherine Brown have been refining concepts of centers of being within the body. For Malcolm Brown, "It's one of the most exciting things that I've clarified for myself theoretically. There are differences, emotionally, energetically, and spiritually in the body. The front half of the body for me provides the clue to all authentically religious experiencing and also all transpersonal authentic experiencing between people. Between myself and the cosmos."

Brown theorizes that the centers of being begin as instinctual centers in the body/mind stimulating the growth of the organism and eventually evolve into centers through which the individual mediates experiences of soul and guides self-actualization. Thus, the chest and face that begin as a center for bonding and relatedness, evolve into what the Browns call the Eros center, mediating an agape type of love for one's loved ones and the world. The belly, which begins as a barometer of safety and security, becomes the Hara center embodying all the self-wisdom and self-knowledge that the Japanese concept of Hara implies. The head and upper back start as a center for cognitively and perceptually differentiating oneself from others. From this, Logos develops, which is the ability to understand and give meaning to experience. Finally, the lower back and legs that begin as the ability to become aggressive, to take stands, and to move oneself become the center of the Spiritual Warrior, the quality of which is the ability to see something through for its own sake. When the centers are allowed to be energized and to work without interference from emotional and body armoring, their synergy creates the experience of soul.

Malcolm Brown says, "The archetypal constellations of Jung can be understood in terms of these four being centers when you work with psyche and energy directly. At some point in everyone's evolution into self actualization, one goes through periods of meeting archetypal images, and then that individual passes beyond those periods when the energy has centered itself, becoming increasingly embodied and grounded in the soul. When that happens, people no longer need archetypal imagery in order to claim the archetypal courses which are always instinctual-spiritual polarities that we have by nature."

Although body psychotherapy, or at least the concept of the body/mind, has become more respectable, the opinions on the future of body psychotherapy run from high optimism to deep pessimism. For Alexander Lowen, from his perspective in the late 1980's, the future was bleak and intricately tied to the moral character of our times, "There isn't any future. I'm not optimistic about stopping this narcissistic, dangerous trend in the world. It will get worse, not better."

Al Pesso felt that body psychotherapy must include far more than the body. "Working only with the body is a mistake," he says, "We need all the basic information of the person; not only the body but ideals, thoughts, and values. There has to be consciousness and reality. We must also tend to relationship. This is what gives feelings and symbols meaning."

Ilana Rubinfeld saw the future bringing integration, "I think in looking at the language of the body, the somatic system, health, immunity, and psychosomatic medicine that the body work field will be a wonderful complement to the medical world and there will be an integration with that and the spiritual world."

Charles Kelley echoed this sentiment. Kelley says about the character of the times of the late 1980's, "There's really a revolt against purpose in the world. The thing of going with your feelings can't work out in the long run. It's related to the rise in crime, the rise in irresponsibility, and unhappiness." Kelley does see, however, that if the de-armoring of the body and releasing into feeling is accompanied by work with purpose, that at least a growthful balance can be struck.

Ron Kurtz believed, "We're still in that flux, that disturbance that was in the 1960's and 1970's. There is enormous potential and energy waiting to be shaped by the idea of holism and the paradigm shift." Kurtz did not see body psychotherapy being integrated into the mainstream of psychology. It is too big a jump. He believed that it will continue to exist as a separate field.

Malcolm and Katherine Brown also saw a parallel existence for body psychotherapy and the mainstream. For them, "The future of the movement really hangs on the integrity of the individuals who are practicing. And the training aspects are very necessary, because the depth that people go into when body and psyche are combined really need a depth of maturity in order not to throw the patient into chaos. If the therapist doesn't know what he

or she is doing and doesn't have faith in the healer within, it can only generate chaos and disillusionment in practice."

Perhaps John Pierrakos had the most sweeping outlook on the role of body psychotherapy in the future. He believed it would accompany the inexorable evolution of consciousness. He said, "Life is now spinning at a tremendous rate. The elements that are not in truth are breaking down. This releases the dead energies of life. There is confrontation with these dead energies and a release. It is a great time of transformation. We are in a crucible. This time is bringing invisible and deep connections."

Conclusion

In summary and returning to the historical perspective, body psychotherapy is unusual in the world of psychology in that it embraces 2 of the 3 core ideas in psychology -- perception, motivation, and learning -- while most areas encompass one. *Perception*, which is linked to body psychotherapy via humanistic psychology, which in turn is linked to phenomenological and existential psychology, and the Gestalt philosophers and psychologists, is one (2). *Motivation*, which is linked to body psychotherapy via psychoanalytic psychology, is the other (3). In the voices of body psychotherapists like Alexander Lowen, John Pierrakos, Charles Kelley, Malcolm and Katherine Brown, Ilana Rubinfeld, Ron Kurtz, Al Pesso, and David Boadella we hear echoes of earlier voices . . . Sigmund Freud, Wilhelm Reich, Carl Jung, Fritz Perls, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, F. M. Alexander, Moïse Feldenkrais, Kurt Goldstein, and many others.

Learning, which was primarily associated in the first part of the 20th century with behaviorism and experimental psychology (Bormann, 1980,7) and more recently with cognitive theory, historically has not had as much affinity for body psychotherapy. For clarity's sake, the preceding statement refers to learning theory as promulgated in academia, and defined as, "a process in which behavior capabilities are changed as the result of experience, provided the change cannot be accounted for by native response tendencies, maturation, or temporary states of the organism due to fatigue, drugs, or other temporary factors" (Runyon, 1977, 196). It does not refer to education and the use of the term education or learning by various body-oriented methods that also may seek to differentiate themselves from therapy or the therapeutic process.

Considering the preceding paragraph about learning in more depth, since about 1960 learning theory has moved away from behaviorism, which suggests that responses are learned products of environmental conditions rather than innate factors, and toward cognitive psychology (Schwartz and Reiberg, 1991, 16). Cognitive theories constitute the second major approach to the study of the learning process. These theories do not view learning as the establishment of a connection between a stimulus and a response. Instead, they argue that learning is a more complex process that utilizes problem solving and insightful thinking, in addition to repeating a stimulus-response chain (Robertson, Zielinski and Ward, 1984, 199). To put this another way, cognitive theory stresses that learning occurs as a result of internal mental processes. That is, cognitive research seeks to describe the role of the person's own mental activity in learning and remembering (Schwartz and Reiberg, 1991, 2). This perspective views people as problem solvers who actively use information from the world around them to master their environment (Solomon, 1992, 105). This broader perspective regarding people opened learning theory to humanistic concepts, one of the threads of body psychotherapy ideas. Cognitive theory's influence also has made learning theory and body psychotherapy more accessible to each other by emphasizing events that take place within the learner.

The strong interest shown at USABP national conferences in the early child development research of Allan Schore, Catherine Weinberg, and Ed Tronic reflects an emerging compatibility between the ideas represented by these researchers and those central to body psychotherapy that may be one of the first girders in a bridge between body psychotherapy and the third core idea of psychology. Perhaps the story of the body psychotherapy of the 21st century will be the evolution of an integrative body psychotherapy that intertwines perception, motivation, and learning.

Postscript

The authors make no claim that this article is a definitive history of body psychotherapy. This article is titled "Voices: **A** History of Body Psychotherapy" rather than "Voices: **The** History of Body Psychotherapy" for several reasons. A comprehensive, definitive history -- assuming that were achievable -- would require a work of much greater length than would be possible for this journal to publish. For the same reason, some elements under the umbrella of body psychotherapy were not specifically included, such as Bodydynamics, Somatic Experiencing, Dance Therapy, Integrative Body Psychotherapy, Lomi, Hakomi Integrative Somatics, Body Mind Centering, and others. Similarly, the authors chose to focus primarily on body psychotherapy's historical connection with psychology, so the somatic and movement (e.g., Alexander, Feldenkrais, Sensory Awareness, Rolfing, massage/bodywork) connections were not explored as much in this article. In addition, at the time of the

interviews (1987-88), the elders whose voices form the core of this article were the only major developers of body psychotherapy that the author who did the interviews knew. More recent developments are also harder to place in a historical perspective due to their relative “newness.” The historical view sharpens with time. We hope this article will stimulate further discussion of body psychotherapy’s history and invite others to write about whatever aspects this article may not have addressed.

Notes

(1) Besides experimental methods, Germany has been the home source of psychoanalytic, existential, phenomenological, and Gestalt, psychology -- among the major theoretical backgrounds of psychology, except behaviorism. The applied fields of psychology (testing, educational, industrial, and others), along with behaviorism, are primarily Anglo-American creations.

(2) Examples of the perception lineage are James' belief that feelings, desires, and cognitions were essentially perceptions of oneself, Dewey's belief that self awareness is a perception of one's own consciousness, and the Gestaltists' emphasis on the perceptual field of the individual. Body psychotherapy connects with this line through humanistic, phenomenological, existential, and Gestalt ideas and methods.

(3) Examples of the motivation lineage are psychoanalytic and social theorists emphasizing internal and mental impellers of action, encompassing conative or emotional factors. Body psychotherapy connects with this line through psychoanalysis, along with neo-Freudian and neo-Reichian ideas and methods.

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Interviews

Interviews by Barbara Goodrich-Dunn, 1987-88, with:
David Boadella, by correspondence;
Malcolm and Katherine Brown, Cassano Valcuvia, Italy;
Charles Kelly, by telephone;
Ron Kurtz, by telephone;
Alexander Lowen, Pudding Hill, CT;
Al Pessa, by telephone;
John Pierakkos, New York City, NY;
Ilana Rubinfeld, by telephone.

Biographies

Barbara Goodrich-Dunn, M.A. has been a body psychotherapist, with adjunctive training in massage therapy, since 1974. Her principal training has been with Dr. Malcolm Brown and Katherine Ennis Brown in Organismic Psychotherapy. Interested in how body and soul intersect, she focuses on body psychotherapy through a Jungian perspective. Her interviews with such analysts as Marion Woodman and James Hillman have appeared in books and magazines. Together with Elliot Greene, she co-directs a 4-year training program at the Washington Institute for Body Psychotherapy and teaches courses in massage and body work training programs on the psychological aspects of somatic practice. She is a co-founder of the United States Association for Body Psychotherapy and the D.C. Area Guild of Body Psychotherapists, having served on the Executive Committee and Steering Committees of the both.

Elliot Greene, M.A. has been a body psychotherapist since 1975. His principal training has been with Malcolm Brown and Katherine Ennis Brown in Organismic Psychotherapy. As part of his graduate training and interest in the interconnection of the mind and body, he also completed a training program in massage therapy in 1974. With Barbara Goodrich-Dunn, he co-directs a 4-year training program at the Washington Institute for Body Psychotherapy and is co-authoring a book on the psychological aspects of massage therapy, bodywork, and somatic practice, to be published by Lippincott, Williams, and Wilkins in late 2002. He is currently serving as president of the United States Association for Body Psychotherapy. He has also served as national president of the American Massage Therapy Association.

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