

the TRANSACTIONAL ANALYST

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UNITED KINGDOM ASSOCIATION FOR TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS' QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

for the enemies of knowledge and the causes of war are boredom and laziness. It is hoped that the reader will find here some facts and some viewpoints which are pleasant and easy to absorb, which will be useful to him in his thinking about how to prevent the next war, and which will save him the frightening prospect of having to wade through an ocean of learned literary productions in order to get some ideas. The average man will not have a seat at the peace table, nor a room at the hotel in Geneva where he can shrewdly slip the right words into the coffee of the proper diplomat; but the steel man and the chemical man and the machine man will be there with benedictine and cigars. What influence can bring to bear on the men at the peace table that will be stronger than a mellow glass of brandy and a fine smoke? They will be interested in trade and exports, and we in men, women, and children.

The ideas written here have been presented at various times to groups of young men whose enemy is death and not deficits. The author has had the privilege of trying to help them understand the world and people, and themselves, as well as they understand blood, mud, bullets, and orders. The questions are theirs, and

A Primer for Peace – Bill Cornell considers Berne's unpublished manuscripts, page 6

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NEWS & VIEWS



FROM THE CHAIR, RACHEL CURTIS

Dear colleagues, I hope you enjoy this latest issue of the Transactional Analyst magazine focusing on social responsibility.

A year ago in this introduction – the magazine was then focused on community – I was writing about the shock of the Paris attacks about events in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, about displaced people fleeing violence, and an ever growing fear against 'the other'. What has changed? With the news focus currently on how and when Brexit might unfold and what Donald Trump as US President elect will mean for the world – we continue to live in an increasingly uncertain and hugely unpredictable era.

Social responsibility then is absolutely the right focus for this magazine, so well done Marion Umney, guest editor for this issue, for suggesting the topic to Ali and Celia, and for commissioning such thought-provoking and ultimately personally inspiring articles. Let us all consider what Leilani calls our social response 'ability'. Thank you to all the excellent contributors to this issue.

It is also membership renewal time and members have until the 31 December to renew their UKATA membership. Any applications after this date will incur a £20 late payment fee. So please renew soon!

And once again, when it comes I would like to wish you all a happy, peaceful and restorative Christmas, Hanukkah, Diwali and, for those who do not celebrate religious festivals, that you enjoy being able to stop, rest and reflect.

Warm wishes,

Rachel Curtis, Chair, UKATA
chair@uktransactionalanalysis.co.uk

CONGRATULATIONS EXAM SUCCESS

Peter Shotton
TSTA(P)(E) CTA(P)(E)

UKATA DIPLOMAS

Bena Armitage
Hannah Harris
Jules Price
Wendy Pritchett
Garry Rollins
Juliette Willett

TA AWARDS

Garry Rollins

WARM WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Karen Atkinson	Claire O'Callaghan
Lidia Babaas	Mary Ondiek
Debbie Barker	Amanda Outen
Carol Clay	Carole Palmer
Jane Cooper	Andrew Peck
Caroline Copland	Juliet Quantrill
Anne Davies	Claire Ratcliffe
Rachael English	Heather Redman
Sara Evans	Simon Richardson
Alison Foster	Sarah Rowland
John Fleming	Lisa Rundle
Jane Grace	Kim Russell
Paul Guy	Miles Sigley-Brown
James Hallissey	Paul Smith
Jonathan Hayward	Sally Smith
Adrian Hepburn	Katie Spence
Matthew Holland	Lee Thorogood
Jenny Huggett	Anne Twyford
Sharon Igoe	Rowena Umaar
Amanda Ingram-	Petranka Vasilva
Hardwick	Sara Waldron
Lilian Kelly	Eleanor Walsh
Reena Kooner	Susan Wearmouth
Katherine Lonergan	Emily White
Carol Maynard	Francesca Wilding
Laura Meffan	Georgina Williams
Christine Merrall	Donna Wood
Claire Norgate	

TSC

In the first of a regular column **SUE BRADY** outlines the Training Standards Committee's remit and introduces its members.

WELCOME TO THE new TSC column where we will inform you about the work we are doing, and invite comment, critique and dialogue as a way of helping us to work cooperatively and inclusively.

The TSC is a committee of UKATA that was set up to devise and monitor standards of TA training. Its main responsibility is to ensure all TA training delivered within UKATA meets high standards in terms of quality, fairness, and rigour throughout the UK. One of our most challenging tasks is to make sure that all training meets EATA and, for psychotherapy training, UKCP requirements, not always easy especially when they differ from one another.

What does TSC do?

TSC is very active as we need to stay abreast of political changes as well as new requirements for training from professional bodies. We maintain close links with the UKATA Council.

Key activities

We have a major role to play in:

- preparing UKATA for re-accreditation through the UKCP (our national professional body of accreditation for psychotherapy)
- considering the results of the most recent Quinquennial review (QQR) in 2015 and see what implications there are for TSC
- ensuring that Transactional Analysis training delivered within our organisation maintains its presently high standards and good nationwide reputation
- creating, monitoring and maintenance of policies
- monitoring RTEs (Registered Training Establishments) to ensure training is delivered in accordance with professional body requirements for accreditation as necessary
- maintaining consistently high training standards throughout the UK and a rigorous assessment and accreditation process
- developing and the implementation of the recently developed TA qualifications (in line with our constitutional responsibilities)

We also value TA's national and cultural focus and continue to integrate this unique aspect of our organisation through our relationship with EATA, our

international body through which we examine and certify practitioners of Transactional Analysis.

As a committee we are mindful that our focus in recent years has been about registration in the psychotherapy field. While this was necessary in line with the political agenda of statutory registration, it no longer applies.

We aim to:

- implement a new monitoring system for setting up RTEs in O, E and C fields
- establish closer links with other committees such as AAC, Diversity and Social Responsibility Committee, EPPC, Exams Committee and the Research Committee to have thorough feedback into the developing needs for training standards in the UK
- maintain an open, transparent dialogue with the UKATA membership and to encourage the membership to provide us with feedback.

Committee members

Cathy McQuaid DPsych, TSTA (P): Cathy is Chair of TSC. She is enthusiastic and passionate about research and training standards. She is currently planning training workshops in the North West for counselling and psychotherapy trainers. Cathy runs a practice in Liverpool offering research, clinical and training supervision along with CPD training and workshops.

John Baxendale PTSTA(P): John has a psychotherapy and supervision practice in Crowborough, East Sussex. He is the Vice Principal of Wealden College of Counselling and Psychotherapy, and one of the tutors on the TA training programme. He is an EMDR practitioner and includes horses and other animals in his practice.

Sue Brady PTSTA(P): Sue qualified initially as a teacher and now is a trainer, therapist and supervisor with a keen interest in maintaining standards. Her areas of interest include culture, diversity and spirituality. She is also a member of the Diversity and Social Responsibility Committee.

Pietro Cardile CTA(P): Pietro qualified in 1989, and has a private practice in Glasgow. His passion is group therapy. He has been a member of TSC since 2008.

Karen Minikin: Karen has a supervision and psychotherapy practice in East Sussex and has been a visiting tutor at a number of training institutes. She has an interest and commitment to diversity which is one of the contributions she seeks to make on TSC.

John Paradise: John is a contractual trainee (psychotherapy) with a background in training and training design. He holds a teaching qualification as well as being a NLP practitioner and a clinical hypnotherapist and a hypnotherapy supervisor. John has a private practice in Exeter and Paignton.

*To contact the Training Standards Committee:
email tsc@uktransactionalanalysis.co.uk*

Social responsibility?

Why now?

MARION UMNEY, guest editor, introduces the theme of social responsibility and asks 'why now?' and what has politics got to do with it?

IN JULY I attended the EATA conference in Geneva entitled 'Identity: Integration: Boundaries'. This was the best conference I believe I have ever attended. It was in reflecting on the reasons for that, that I proposed an issue of *the Transactional Analyst* to be focused on social responsibility. For me this includes political responsibility.

Although others may disagree, there does seem to be growing support for this view. TA was originally a social psychology, as Karen Minikin points out in her article 'The mind of our State and the state of our minds', and the radical psychiatry model developed by Hogie Wyckoff, Claude Steiner et al., to which she refers in her article, was very much rooted in the philosophy of TA at that time as being opposed to oppression at all levels. It was also clear from Bill Cornell's workshops at the conference that, at least in his opinion, TA is very much a social psychology and cannot ignore political issues. I am delighted that he agreed to share with us his recent discoveries of archive papers which indicate just how politically aware, active and sensitive Berne was, see 'Eric Berne and politics: a brief history and reflection'.

It seemed to me that the EATA conference, coming as it did in the middle of a worldwide social and political crisis, provided a much needed forum for heartfelt and frank discussion about issues which are not always addressed in TA. We talked about migration; we talked about racism; we talked about disaffection and the way politicians seemed to be losing touch with the fears and concerns of ordinary people; we talked about the rise of nationalism across Europe and about personal and national identities. My sense was that many of us, wherever we came from, felt shaken from our complacency as the boundaries of our sense of belonging shifted and we questioned our identity and what that meant for us in a fast changing social and political climate. There was a welcoming of honesty and of humility as delegates of every nation acknowledged the destructive potential in the thinking and actions of all our governments, our sense of impotence and in many cases of shame about our governments' actions and/or inaction, and our own!

At a personal level I have found my complacency shaken for some time now. The situation in Syria has impacted me more deeply than any other humanitarian or political crisis ever. I'm not sure why this is the case but I suspect the reasons are internal and external. There is no doubt in my mind this is a humanitarian crisis on a vast scale and is revealing the inadequacy and impotence of the forces for good when faced with mindless violence. I am reminded of a paragraph in the book I have reviewed for this issue *Feminine Law: Freud, free speech and the voice of desire* by Jill Gentile (2016) where she quotes a story told by Christopher Hitchens. He says 'I went on crossfire at one point, to debate some spokesman for outraged faith, and said that we on our side would happily debate the propriety of using holy writ for literary and artistic purposes. But that we would not exchange a word until the person on the other side of the podium had put away his gun' p121. It seems that there is no space for rational, compassionate thinking in this complex dispute. I am acutely aware of my personal sense of impotence as well as seeing those supposedly with power also being ineffectual and finishing up posturing rather than achieving anything.

Internally, at a personal level, I think it is that sense of impotence which has also come to the fore for me alongside outrage at what is happening around me, within mother world, my country and my neighbourhood. I first decided to get off my backside and do something when I went to vote in my local election to find that my choice of candidate was between the incumbent conservative (a man who, in my opinion has only served to undermine social justice in my local area) and a UKIP candidate. I have always been a socialist but have never been politically active or even very vocal. I grew up in a family aspiring to move away from 'working class' into 'middle class' affluence which, it was presumed, would provide opportunities for myself and my brother that my parents did not have. My family were successful thanks to hard work, and I was fortunate enough to have a free education at a direct grant school through a scholarship. However, the price I paid was oppression of my developing, social and political sense of self. Both at

home and at school I was expected to conform to the behaviour and attitudes of aspiring middle class conservatism. My protests and 'radical' thinking were generally met with derision, or with counter arguments which I was, at that time, not articulate enough to rebut. My Script decision was to stay silent and unseen; to put up and shut up, or lose my place in my beloved family and the only world I knew, albeit one I did not fit easily into. It has taken me a long, long time to take the risk of being seen and speaking my truth, but after my electoral 'shock' I joined the Labour Party, the Psychotherapists' and Counsellors' Union(PCU) and the Psychotherapists' and Counsellors' Social Responsibility network (PCSR). At the moment I am watching the debates with interest, but refraining from engaging just yet (contrary to popular opinion redecisions are slow affairs). However, guest editing this issue of *the Transactional Analyst*, although an impetuous decision at the time, has given me an ideal platform to 'come out', supported as I am by others who are also willing to speak out and take action.

All contributors to this issue are doing just that. Bill Cornell is well known for his many contributions to TA through his writing, seminars and workshops throughout the world. Karen Minikin is also a prolific contributor and has written very eloquently in the past about diversity and oppression as well as developing several original ideas and additions to TA theory. Her analysis of Brexit and beyond resonates with much of my own thinking and, I know, with the thinking of many others I have met, both at the Geneva conference and since. Sarah Osborne also refers to Brexit and can be counted in that illustrious politically aware and active band of TAers referred to by Bill. She is one of the very few of us to actively and openly take a political stance and use political means to facilitate social reform.

I seem to have spent a lot of time so far talking about politics, yet the theme of this issue is social responsibility and I said earlier that one of the things which has moved me so much recently is the Syrian crisis. I am aware that social responsibility is not just limited to immigration and the plight of refugees, however that is a pressing issue in the current social and political climate. Migration at a social and an individual level was very central to the conference which inspired this themed issue. It therefore seemed to be imperative that this subject was raised. I have the privilege of having known Fari Rassekh for many years, but have not until this time fully understood her story. Hers is an insider story of refugeeship; of hardship and prejudice, as well as humanity and resourcefulness. I was very moved when I attended her workshop in Geneva and was determined to include her story in this issue. Alongside this is Leilani's contribution which looks at the other side of the coin. Should we, can we take responsibility, as individuals for those experiencing hardship that we are fortunate enough not

to have to experience? What form can and should that action take, if any? Leilani has chosen to take practical action in a way which works for her, and offers us a way of doing similarly. Fari too, has taken practical action in a way which worked for her. Both have something to say about their experience, the ethics, the difficulties, the ramifications and the absolute freedom of choice we all have in relation to this question.

I am grateful to the editorial team for agreeing to support this issue. I hope you enjoy the contributions. I hope they get you thinking and talking and I hope they raise questions for you that you will want to debate both through these pages and in other forums. Personally, I would like this to be one of the first issues focusing on social and political issues, not the last.



Marion Umney TSTA is in private practice in East Sussex offering psychotherapy and supervision. She runs CPD workshops and a supervision training course. Her interests are diverse and include social, political and psychological aspects of psychology.

Eric Berne and politics

– a brief history and reflection

BILL CORNELL, reflects on the post-war unpublished works of Eric Berne – such as *A Primer for Peace* – and discovers some of the silenced history that resides in the very foundations of Transactional Analysis.

I WAS A young TA trainee in the early 1970s. At that time, trainees were told that politics had no place in Transactional Analysis or the therapy office. I found this very confusing, as so many people at that time were drawn to TA because they were turned off by the elitism of psychoanalysis and worked with client populations who needed much more practical and immediate help. This was certainly true for me, as I worked in a community mental health centre where we provided services in churches, schools, work places, as well as the outpatient clinic. I was working in the community mental health centre as my alternative service to the military, having fought for conscientious objector status during the Vietnam War. For me, politics belonged in the office.

I was not alone. As I became more a part of the TA world, I learned of many TAers who were deeply political. There were, of course, Claude Steiner and Hogie Wyckoff and their radical psychiatry colleagues. The final issue of the Transactional Analysis Bulletin (which was then to become the TAJ), published after Berne's death, included an article by Hogie on 'Radical psychiatry and Transactional Analysis in women's groups' (Wyckoff, 1970). The summer conference that year had presentations on radical psychiatry, women's liberation, and racial tensions. There were many transactional analysts who were of decidedly left wing persuasions and brought political and social issues into their work: Mary Goulding, Natalie and Morris Haimowitz, Harris Peck, Felipe Garcia, Denton Roberts, to name those I knew best.

In 1984 Rebecca Trautmann edited a special issue of the *Transactional Analysis Journal* addressing the issues of nuclear disarmament. It inspired me to write my second article for the TAJ, 'Teaching people what matters' (Cornell, 1984/2008). It was, to my knowledge, the first issue of the TAJ devoted to social and political concerns.

I had been told that the expectation of TA being apolitical was handed down from Eric Berne. During his tenure of leadership in the San Francisco Social Psychiatry Seminar (which was to become the ITAA), the seminar participants contributed money for the support of

'George', an orphan in Crete. This was the single socially motivated activity of the group. I had always assumed that Berne's apolitical stance was yet another holdover from his training as a psychoanalyst. It was only a few years ago that I learned how wrong was my assumption.

In 2010 the ITAA was preparing its annual conference in Montreal to be a celebration of Berne's 100th birthday. His family members were invited, and his son, Terry, gave a moving portrait of his father, which was then published in the ITAA Script (T. Berne, 2010). I quote from it here at length:

Eric spoke several languages and was familiar with many more his study had an entire shelf lined with US Army language guides that he used on his travels, especially when researching the incidence and treatment of mental health in non-Western societies throughout the world. He traveled extensively from the 1930s right into the 1960s – visiting hospitals in cities and rural areas all over Asia, the South Pacific, islands such as Fiji and Tahiti, Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, India, Eastern Europe, Syria, and Turkey – and wrote extensively about his findings. After his death we found boxes and boxes of his written communications with mental health officers all over the world....

An interesting outcome of this research was that he suffered persecution during the McCarthy era because of his travels. In the late 1940s he was investigated by the Select Committee on un-American Activities, which was the precursor to the McCarthy investigations. He lost his job as Psychiatric Consultant to the US Army because he was deemed a security risk. He was interrogated over a period of several years, had his passport rescinded, and had to justify his reasons for visiting such countries as Turkey, Russia, Hungary, and numerous others where he had traveled while investigating the cultural differences in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses. He had also signed a petition circulated by a group of prominent scientists calling for the US government to stop politicizing scientific research by pressuring public and private foundations to cease offering financial support to

scientists whom the government deemed too liberal. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) went so far as to request a detailed list of all the maps in his possession. There was a public trial in San Francisco where my father was forced to wear a paper bag over his head and where he was referred to only as Doctor X in order to not completely ruin his reputation. (p7)

This was a stunning, truly shocking, story to hear. It may be difficult for UK readers to fully grasp the meanings of these investigations that sought to expose thousands of the American intelligentsia as Communists or Communist sympathizers. They took place as the Cold War escalated and there was a right-wing-driven hysteria that permeated the US and resulted in the destruction of the careers and reputations of many. It was this same hysteria that resulted in the prosecution and imprisonment of Wilhelm Reich.

Eric Berne never spoke publicly about these experiences. In the original 1947 edition of *The Mind in Action*, Berne included a section on 'Man as a political animal,' addressing such questions as, 'How do evil men gain followers?' and 'How does an evil leader hold his followers?' (1947, pp292-299). In subsequent editions of his book, this section was deleted. As I listened to Terry tell these stories of what had happened to his father, I had a very different understanding of Berne's declaration that Transactional Analysis and its practitioners were to be apolitical. It was as though Berne's trauma, shame, and (I imagine) fury were sealed off – the next generation were not to know the facts. What he passed on to his life's work and the members of his beloved San Francisco Seminar was a protective silence. We have seen so often the traumatised and protective silences passed on from one generation to the next. Berne attracted rebels in his profession, many people grounded in characters that defied authority, and at the same time there was to be this constraint, never explained but deeply enacted.

As I was researching old papers and other materials for an article on the relationship between the genesis of group therapies and the wars of the 20th century (Cornell, 2016), I was given access to the Berne archives, which are soon to be available online. There, truly to my shock and profound respect, was the Eric Berne that Terry had described in his talk. Here were those boxes of papers and unpublished manuscripts to which Terry had referred. I only scratched the surface, but in what I was able to read was another whole side of Berne. There are his letters requesting a deferral from joining the Army during World War II; he was not successful. There is a detailed outline (1945) of his proposal to the Committee Appointed by the Veterans Aid Council for a program aimed at the rehabilitation of veterans of the War. Berne wrote articles in the local newspaper to advise people on

'helping returning soldiers to adjust to home life'. There are two unfinished, book length manuscripts: *A Primer for Peace* and *Human Nature in Peace and War*. Both are undated but appear to have been written immediately after the War and in conjunction with the classes and groups he was running for returning soldiers, and the articles he was writing for their families and friends.

In *Human Nature in Peace and War* Berne identified himself as Captain Eric Berne. *A Primer for Peace*, written under the pseudonym of Eric Servitor, was dedicated to 'Those who brought me up to be a citizen of the world: my mother, my father, my sister, my wife and daughter; and my teachers, Dr Eugen and Dr Paul.' In the preface he writes:

'The ideas written here have been presented at various times to groups of young men whose enemy is death and not deficits. The author has had the privilege of trying to help them understand the world and people, and themselves, as well as they understand blood, mud, bullets, and orders. The questions are theirs, and the answers have been mellowed and beaten into shape by their discussions.' (undated, pp.iv-v)

I cried when I read first those words and met Berne's compassion, passion and humanity. And, inevitably, I thought (and cried for the fact) that these words could be written again and again for the men and women forced into combat in the failed American-led wars of Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. With a little more distance, I saw Berne's words as a foreshadowing of the attitude he brought to his supervision model of staff-patient-staff conferences, refusing to see only the possible pathology of patients, but to invite and strengthen their knowledge, experiences, and insights. The manuscript asks: What is Communism?; What is Fascism?; What are Reactionaries, Labor-baiters, etc.; What is Democracy?; and Which is better, Communism, Fascism, or Democracy?. Berne's was not a positive attitude:

'Whoever controls the schools, the newspapers, and the radio, can largely control the thoughts and feelings of the nation and most individuals in it. The great man is simply one who has the courage, energy, intellect, and tenacity to throw off all the prejudices he has been taught from birth and start to think for himself.' (p92)

'Most men enjoy being cruel if their consciences and their neighbors will let them get away with it.' (p94)

'Racial hatred is particularly attractive to the dumb and ignorant who really feel inferior to everybody. ... Thus the small man who wastes his time hating (hate has not been a constructive influence in this world) is allowing himself to be used.' (p95)

Here we see the pessimism that so often permeated

Berne's later writings and that lay in contrast and conflict with his optimism and his dedication to developing a form of psychotherapy that gave people more control over themselves and the quality of their lives.

Our picture and understandings of Eric Berne (and Transactional Analysis itself) will be transformed by the materials in the Berne Archives. The accessibility of the archives has been the result of the dedicated efforts of Carol Solomon, Ann Heathcote, Marco Mazetti, and Gloria Noriega to raise the funds to pay for the digitalisation of this treasure trove of letters, manuscripts, and memorabilia. Our community owes them a debt of gratitude.

I was delighted to be asked to write this brief piece to lead off this special issue of *the Transactional Analyst* to tell some of these stories about Berne and the unspoken, silenced history that lay dormant, but powerful, in the foundations of Transactional Analysis. I will be eager to read the articles that accompany my brief history.

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The mind of our State and the state of our minds

KAREN MINIKIN examines our pre- and post-Brexit experiences and urges us, as a professional community, to stay alive to our thoughts and feelings about what it means to be in our current 'state'.

A good head and a good heart are
always a formidable combination.

Nelson Mandela, 1990

I WROTE THIS article in early September. Since then, there have been significant developments concerning Brexit. Hence, I wish to preface my piece with an update. Today (6th November, 2016), Gina Miller appeared on the Andrew Marr show describing the *Daily Mail* coverage of the High Court ruling of needing parliamentary approval to trigger Article 50, as 'shameful'. She has personally been at the receiving end of serious hostile attacks. Concerning Brexit, Miller said, 'It's brought out a side of society – the dark clouds are definitely gathering. Every -ism you could think of: sexism, racism, homophobia. I was aware that there could be nastiness because anything to do with the word, "Brexit", people lose their minds.' – I couldn't say it better myself.

WE LIVE IN a postmodern age, which implies our minds are influenced by the philosophy of this era. In theory, that would mean we are a thinking people with a sceptical mind and an aversion to grand narratives. We have capacities to embrace subjectivity, deconstruct dialogues, co-create (Summers and Tudor, 2000) and mutually influence each other to create meaning. While I can draw on some evidence of how our society has expanded its consciousness, recent political and social events have left me feeling that I am part of something which is much more regressive, inflexible and concerning. Rather than the expansiveness suggested by a 'postmodern mind', it seems that there are social, economic and political trends in the West that reflect quite a different 'state'.

The Brexit debates and subsequent public interviews suggest opinionated self-interested thinking is being validated rather than creative, innovative, well-informed and insightful dialogue. I am increasingly concerned by this kind of public speaking because I think it risks

encouraging splits and rigid states of mind. All this has left me feeling alienated (Steiner et al, 1975) from the mind of our State. I wonder how I (and we) can stay connected in our community and maintain a flexibility of mind to navigate plurality of perspectives. This is the only way in my view to have a democracy of mind and heart.

In this article, I focus on our experiences as citizens this year, particularly in relation to events before and after Brexit. I hope that together, as a professional community we can stay alive to our thoughts and feelings and make use of our theories to support our thinking about what it means to be in our current 'state' and how we feel connected or disconnected to the 'mind of our State'.

The mind of our State: Brexit

'All of the great leaders have had one characteristic in common: it was the willingness to confront unequivocally the major anxiety of their people in their time.'

John Kenneth Galbraith, 1977, p330

Elections and referendums give us the opportunity to witness how those in power strive to keep it while those with aspirations to gain power seek to get it. The level of aggression, competition and undermining of opponents during the Brexit debates cannot be underestimated. We had clues about this during and after the campaign and cannot know the full extent of the games (Berne, 1964) that were played out – though we have enough indication to realise that they were serious.

In our country we are a people who have endured a period of austerity. Add to this, the competition within the labour market and a dialogue of crisis over immigration and it hardly seems surprising that anger, hate and fear arise, particularly among vulnerable sectors of society. The promise of addressing immigration by the leave campaign offered the hope of 'sovereignty', 'control' and independence that must have seemed very attractive to

many groups in our nation. I would argue that this is one way in which a state of co-dependency, or symbiosis (Schiffs, 1971) gets set up in the 'mind' of our State with the 'state' of our minds. In other words, I see this as a powerful process of mystification (taken from radical psychiatry, Steiner et al, 1975) by some of those in power, to exploit the vulnerability in the minds of our people. By this I mean there is potential political gain to be made if we as a people remain anxious, then those with influence can position their argument to address our anxiety. However, if we consider the main campaign messages, this positioning sometimes takes advantage of anxiety and creates misconceptions. Some people who voted 'out' did so on the basis that the main social and political problems were caused by the uncontrolled influx of immigrants to our country and the power of the EU over our laws and economic governance. Some of those who voted 'remain' did so out of fear of the unknown. Fear of change, scarcity and the fear of intrusion of 'otherness' offers a potent diversion from the deficiency in resources created by economic austerity.

Far from 'confronting' the anxiety of our people, the campaign messages of our leaders and those seeking leadership sought to exploit it. In consequence, our prime minister and chancellor have been displaced. However, the anxiety continues as new leaders pick up the poisoned chalice (as I see it) and are now commissioned to hold and fix the problem. This leaves me wondering how they will find their integrity and hold on to it as they are tested to deliver the over ambitious promises of their colleagues and to find ways to navigate the complexity of Brexit and our changing relationship with Europe.

The situation I describe suggests there has been some co-creative pathological encounters in the way in which anxiety has been expressed and handled. This is in contrast to other ways of responding to anxiety which could be based on genuine containment (Bion, 1961) for our Child, providing resources for our Adult and making use of sound philosophical values and principles to ensure ethical debates. I do not propose these elements were entirely absent in the Brexit debates, or in subsequent talks and actions. However, I do think they were in short supply. Vulnerability without protection is prone to be exploited and I think there were many examples of that happening that shaped the debate. Our state of mind includes our anxieties, defenses and

'Brexit has been a body blow to some and a wake-up call for many. Politically and psychologically the nation is stirred in a way that has not happened for many years.'

primitive unprocessed feelings that are more inclined to come into play when under stress. At times of economic and social stress, we are more vulnerable to swinging to undemocratic states of mind, which includes our internal racist and other extremist states.

The state of our minds: post Brexit

'I imagine one of the reasons people cling to their hates so stubbornly is because they sense, once hate is gone, they will be forced to deal with pain.' James Baldwin, 1963

Right wing political thinking evokes a state of intolerance in minds, that is, intolerance to debate and difference. Add to this a sense of urgency and needing to 'win' and humanitarian values, principles, feelings and actions can dissipate. One example of this was the way in which the murder of Labour politician, Jo Cox was handled. While this was a shock for our nation, and a devastating trauma for her family, her murder was explained as a hate crime delivered by one disturbed individual. In other words, blaming one 'mad' individual constitutes another act of mystification when it comes within a social and political context. Hate and pathological thinking is seen as residing in one person as if this was totally self-created, as opposed to being a co-created social psychological dynamic for which we all bear some responsibility (see eg Sills, 2003).

In contrast to individualism, the phrase I have heard many times since our referendum is, 'The British people have...' I understand this as a discount (Schiffs, 1971) of the 48 per cent of voters who voted to remain and a reinforcing of a simple 'yes/no' result to what is a complex situation (personal communication Charlotte Sills, July, 2016). The demographic breakdown of who voted leave versus remain is also in my view profoundly relevant and important for us to understand. In TA we have insightful ways of thinking about individual acts such as how individuals in our community are commissioned to act out aspects of the minds of our people (eg 'role lock', Sills, 2003). Since Brexit, hate crime has been on the increase and – unless I am missing information – little at the level of the State seems to be happening to contain this (see many press releases through summer of 2016. eg *The Guardian* and *Independent* reports, July, 2016).

Brexit has been a body blow to some and a wake-up call for many. Politically and psychologically the nation is stirred in a way that has not happened for many years. Whichever way we voted, the result of the referendum was a shock to many and since the 24 June our political minds have been asking questions. Some of these could have been explored more expansively and deeply in the months leading up to the referendum to ensure the vote, if we really needed to have one, was conducted with

better informed people.

In our TA community, Brexit coincided with a wider consideration of TA as a social psychiatry. Under Suriya's leadership, the ITAA has encouraged communication about social responsibility and EATA's recent conference on identity, integration and boundaries picked up on the global immigration crisis, the plight of refugees from Syria and other countries across Asia and Africa and the impact this is having on Europe. The suffering of these people has been shocking and traumatic to encounter even at a distance. This provokes a complex cocktail of feelings that includes compassion, despair, anger, guilt and possibly relief: potentially relief that it is 'others' suffering such traumatic loss and not us. Sustaining emotional engagement with this situation alongside a commitment to find humanitarian and democratic solutions has seemed overwhelming for our leaders. Too little has been done far too late so that the situation seems to be spiralling out of control. On the day that I write this there are protests designed to press the French government into decamping the Jungle at Calais.

Concluding thoughts

I am heartened that we are having a revival of our interest in TA as a social psychiatry. I think TA has a huge range of ideas and tools that can help deepen our understanding of how distress in groups and communities as well as individuals is co-created. I am interested in us exploring further what a contemporary TA social psychiatry looks like. How can we build on past roots and contribute renewed thinking and vigour to what has gone before? How can we commit to maintaining democratic minds and hearts at times of great provocation and difficulty? I think the edge of our development has something to do with a strengthening awareness and insight about the powerful influencing dynamics of the State on our minds as individuals and families living in communities. Fighting for a 'democratic state', I end with Plato:

'There will be no end to the troubles of states, or of humanity itself, till philosophers become kings in this world, or till those we now call kings and rulers really and truly become philosophers, and political power and philosophy thus come into the same hands.'

Plato, 380 BC taken from Allen, 2006

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Living in 'interesting times'

LEILANI MITCHELL questions whether or not we have a duty to be socially responsible.

WE ARE INDEED living in 'interesting times'. Our world is changing very quickly, new technology, expectations, capabilities, and attitudes.

I remember when I was young feeling angry with those 'old' people (you know the ones who were like, over 40!). They would drone on about the good old days and that things were not as good as they used to be. Now, being one of those 'old people' (50 plus) I find myself thinking the same thing and I ask myself:

- is it that things were in fact better in the past?
- is it my own resistance to change?
- is it that we can access more information about what is going on in the world now?
- is it that humankind is reducing its empathy for one another as we become more of a global and less of a local community?

Responsibility is an interesting word and social responsibility is an interesting subject – it raises questions for me:

- Are we socially responsible?
- Do we have social responsibility? How come? How much? Why? When? Where? What?

In fact there are probably very few questions I have not asked myself on this subject – and I am still mulling them over.

What is this thing we call social responsibility? We generally use it to mean duty or accountability but if we examine the word we are talking about response ability – the ability to respond. If we put it that way then yes, we all have the ability to respond to each other, we all have that choice and that capacity but do we have a *duty* to respond? That's another question.

In TA our philosophical assumptions focus on individual responsibility. We are all responsible for ourselves, for the decisions that we make, the life we choose to lead. We are also responsible for the changes we make.

As practitioners we aim not to influence others but to facilitate people in their own growth, we are not responsible for others but do we have a responsibility towards them?

As a therapist, trainer and supervisor I believe I have a responsibility (or duty) towards my clients, supervisees, trainees. We have a clear two way contract in which each party is aware of the job of the other, what our task is and

what the parameters are of our relationship. They pay me and I offer a service. However, when it comes to the wider community and the world – we do not have a contract, or if we do it is not clear.

Our code of ethics also invites us to be responsible to ourselves, our colleagues and the wider community. Again there is no clear contract here and this can be interpreted in many ways from many different frames of reference.

I wonder about this focus on the 'I'. It is a very western way of viewing ourselves. What do we lose as we focus on the 'I' rather than the 'we'; as society focuses on individuals rather than the collective?

There are many people in the world leading comfortable lives who don't help. There are 65 million refugees in the world, more than there have ever been. There are many more than 65 million people in the world who could help these people and yet don't.

It is interesting to me that having wealth, health, privileges, often makes no difference to our sense of scarcity. People want more, bigger, better things. We know that material gain does not make people happy and yet as a race we often strive for it. It is actually when we struggle, when things are not going well for us that we empathise more with others.

Maybe the natural state of human beings is discontentment. It is through our discontentment that we have achieved and developed so much. People were not content to walk and so created bikes, cars, trains and airplanes. People were discontented with illness and death and so created medicine, hospitals and treatments. People were discontented with living in caves and created houses, beds, curtains, heating, running water. It is through our discontentment that we've developed to where we are now – whether for good or bad.

I heard once (it might not be true) that a certain percentage of Meerkats have a higher sensitivity to stimuli and that those are the ones that are on lookout duty. In any community we see that a small proportion of people are socially minded, will help, volunteer, contribute, while a larger percentage of the group will sit back and allow this to happen. Why is this? Is it biological or are we bred to have a proportion of the population as givers while the others are receivers?

As transactional analysts we have to ask ourselves how much Script has to play in this? Is it those with a Please Others driver that are the percentage who help? Is it

those who are more likely to Rescue that feel a duty to contribute and therefore does it come from a sense of feeling 'Not Ok'? Is it about the giver feeling inadequate and wanting to feel better rather than a selfless contribution to society?

If I consider myself, I come from a culture of giving to others. My parents and grandparents were educators. They were pacifists and Quakers and interested in philosophy and belief systems. These are the introjects in my Parent ego state. As a Child even though I was the youngest I felt I had to 'take care' of my mother and others. We lived in a squat for some period and were around a wide range of people from various cultures and varied lifestyle choices. I was the strong one, the 'coper', the support. In my Child ego state there are many examples I can trigger back to of helping, giving, supporting and of course there are elements of why I do what I do that are scripty.

And what about Adult? People are in need and I can help. I live a privileged life (I have food, shelter, a car etc), I have enough, I have more than I need, I am well and I am resourced. I live a life free from threat, I have choices and freedom and my choice is to contribute to a degree.

I have not given all my money away, I have not sold my house, I have not left my family, friends, community to volunteer to help. I do some things but I don't do as much as I could. The balance is often challenging.

We cannot empathise with everyone. There is a lot of unhappiness, struggle and pain in the world.

We empathise with individuals. We don't tend to empathise with groups. Empathy is a way of building attachments and relationships, a way of keeping us in proximity with those we need/want in our lives. When we see a sea of people, or consider 65 million people it is too much; we are blinded by the crowd. It is when we see one person, we identify, we feel, we empathise and then we are much more likely to choose to respond and help.

We often talk of discounting as an unhealthy way of keeping our script frame of reference intact but/and also it is a natural survival instinct for human beings. If we empathised with each of the 65 million refugees we may just shrivel up into a ball of jelly!

When Aylan Kurdi's dead body was washed up on the beach in Turkey, something happened. People saw him as a real child, someone who could be their child and accounted for his death. Since then thousands of children have died and it has not had the same impact. What is going on?

People are experiencing compassion fatigue. I am. I am tired and feel a level of despair about what can and cannot be done. However, just because I am tired doesn't mean I will stop doing what I am doing. I can have compassion fatigue *and* continue what I am doing.

Personally, I don't think we have a duty to others, I

don't believe that we have a social responsibility, I think we have a choice. If we choose to contribute to society it makes our world a better place. I choose to contribute, you may, or may not, that is your choice. We create narratives for ourselves about whether we have responsibility or not and then we live them out. The narrative I choose is that contributing to the wider society makes the world a better place and I want that!

Many of you will have heard me quote the story of the starfish.

'An old man was walking along a beach when he came across hundreds and hundreds of starfish that had been washed ashore. As he walked further he saw a small boy in the distance bending down and then standing up again. As he got closer he realised that the little boy was picking up the starfish and throwing them back in to the sea. When he reached the boy he said: "What are you doing? You cannot save all the starfish, there are far too many." The little boy said "I may not be able to save them all but this starfish I *can* save" and he threw another one back into the sea.'

I hope that the struggles and the experiences that I have had in my life help me to empathise and make this decision. Is this Script or autonomy? It's probably both and who cares – let's not wait to fully understand our reasons, let's get on and throw another starfish back in the sea.

Leilani is involved in fundraising, collecting donations, managing a donations warehouse, arranging emotional support and educating people regarding the current refugee crisis. If you would like to support her in this work you can contact her at leilani@thelinkcentre.co.uk

Donating

Leilani collects various donations for refugees to send out to locations such as Syria, Lebanon, and Greece. She has a Wish List for you to purchase items to donate to refugee families. Prices generally start from about £1.50 and are delivered direct to Leilani. Please search Leilani Mitchell under **Wishlists on www.Amazon.co.uk** or email leilani@thelinkcentre.co.uk for the link



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In conversation with... **Fari Rassekh**

MARION UMNEY talks to Fari Rassekh about 'opening hearts and closing boundaries', and her refugee experience, first and second hand.

THE FOLLOWING IS an edited transcript of a conversation between Marion Umney and Fari Rassekh. Fari is a counsellor and psychotherapist of many years standing who was born in Iran and has lived here, on and off, since she came to boarding school in Eastbourne, aged 9. During the Iranian revolution she found herself as a displaced and homeless student in Italy and this experience prompted her to offer a workshop at the EATA conference 2016 in Geneva entitled 'Opening Hearts and Closing Boundaries'.

M. What made you do the workshop called 'Opening Hearts and Closing Boundaries'?

F. When we were in Germany at your exam, a colleague was talking to me about refugees and things like that, and so I said I was one of them. We started talking about my story, about what's it like. She got interested and it was relevant to the theme of the Geneva conference.

M. ...which was integration identity and boundaries.

F. Yes, and then you and I brainstormed it. We came up with the idea of using my experience as a refugee and my experience of having a refugee to live with me, and that's how I came to do the workshop.

M. And it was excellent. One of the things that came through to me as a participant was that love for our fellow human beings – the love people had for you as just a human being – enabled you to survive.

So tell us about your story and your experience of being a refugee. I know that started from when you were quite young.

F. Yes, when I was quite young I went to boarding school. It was before the Ayatollah regime and so I was brought up in some ways in England, I was young and this was a culture shock. One of the stories I told in the conference was about my experience of the first dinner I had at boarding school where they gave me roast beef. I had never seen roast beef before and I didn't know how to eat it, and there were these boiled vegetables which were horrible, the only thing I thought was tasty was the roast potatoes!

M. I think there are lots of native British children who would agree with you on that!

F. Of course, but for me it was a huge shock. I didn't know how to eat this and I wanted to put some salt on, but I didn't know how to ask, so I got up and walked around the table and picked up the salt and the headmistress put her hand on my hand and said 'Pass the salt please'. I didn't know what she was talking about and I thought I'd done something terrible. All I wanted to do was cry, but I was holding back and she kept saying 'Pass the salt please'. Well to me all those teachers looked absolutely emotionless – and they weren't tactile in the way I was brought up – so I couldn't read on her face that she was trying to teach me something. I thought she was telling me off, so I was misreading the body language

'It was like going back to being a baby... learning a language and learning through observation and copying.'

which was very different from the body language I was brought up with. She looked stern and cross. That's what I thought and actually she wasn't. All she was trying to do was teach me English. Eventually I realised and repeated what she said and there was a smile on her face, so the message for me was – repeat something and that's good! It's what I learned and that was my first sentence in English. That was the beginning of my understanding that everything was different, the etiquette, the body language. I remember one thing I was absolutely shocked at. In my culture if anybody blows their nose it's absolutely a social no-no. It's so rude to do in public, and if you want to blow your nose you do it very discreetly; so when one of the teachers blew her nose, I felt sick, I couldn't eat because that sound was so sickening. So that was another culture shock and something I couldn't talk about because it is so rude. Now it doesn't bother me, but as a child it was a huge shock. There were many cultural differences – you know the weather, the temperature, the way people dressed, the values they had, the mannerisms, all those things; I was only 9 or 10 years old so for me they were shocking and confusing. I had to relearn life from the beginning. It was like going back to being a baby almost, learning a language and learning through observation and copying. I observed body language to see how I could communicate, because I couldn't speak the language other senses woke up in me.

M. How long did it take you to learn English?

F. Quite a while actually, because it is so very different – the whole tuning, the writing. Latin languages are easier because the letters and writing are the same so you know how to make the sounds, whereas I couldn't. It was like going back to the beginning.

M. Had you learned English in Iran?

F. A little, but not very much. I couldn't even pronounce names. It took me ages to pronounce the name Caroline. We would pronounce it like the French and it took me a while to change and to say it in the English way. So if someone got my name wrong I understood it was difficult. In my country, my name – Farinaz is a normal name and my surname, Ghaemmaghami is a normal name.

M. Gama.....what, I'm really struggling!

F. Exactly and I had the same reaction as a child.

M. I remember you telling me a story about Christmas too

F. Oh yes, my first Christmas. I never knew what Christmas meant and what it meant to buy presents for each other so I hadn't bought any presents, but people bought me presents and so I felt terrible. I felt ashamed, even though I didn't know. No one told me because everybody thought I knew. In my country people don't celebrate Christmas, we celebrate the Iranian New Year. So from an early age I learned about being different.

M. What happened when you were in Italy when the Shah's regime fell?

F. Well, after I finished college here I decided to go to Italy as a student.

M. And by then you were naturalised British?

F. No, I was still Iranian nationality, so I had a student visa. I went to Italy because I wanted to learn another culture, another language. I went to an American university in Rome.

M. What were you studying?

F. I studied philosophy and art history. I thought Rome would be a beautiful place to do art history, so for two to three years I was there. We travelled around Italy and studied on site. Then in my third year, the Shah's regime fell and suddenly I didn't have any more status. The Iranian embassy closed and my *soggiorno* and passport expired. I couldn't get another passport because there was no embassy any more. I couldn't get a visa and I didn't know what to do. I was stuck. I couldn't get any money, visa or whatever.

M. Why couldn't you get any money?

F. My father used to send money from Iran through the banks but there was no money coming out of Iran from the banks. They froze all transfers of funds and the banks closed.

M. So with the revolution everyone who was Iranian who was outside of Iran was in the same position?

F. Yes, it was difficult, very difficult. I went to my sister but she was trying to survive on her own and I tried to survive on my own because we couldn't help each other. We were separated really in our ways, although we knew the other was there, but we were separated. Then I got homeless because the woman I lived with in the Pensione

'I didn't know where to go, what to do. So I went and lived on the street. I became homeless. I'd never been homeless... coming from a very affluent family.'

'I realised what it means when you are different... what it means when you don't have money, how people judge you and what it means to be poor. I experienced how frightening it is for people at the receiving end of that rejection. I felt rejected as a human being.'

suddenly said 'you need to give me money for the rent' but I didn't have any money so she threw me out. I didn't know where to go, what to do. So I went and lived on the street. I became homeless. I'd never been homeless, and coming from a very affluent family and suddenly becoming homeless, at first it was like 'well this is quite interesting'. I didn't think 'Oh my God', I just thought, 'well something will happen'. I had a positive attitude. Then it became kind of terrible, because at night time I ... before I used to spend time... I remember sometimes sleeping underneath a shop staying the whole night in freezing cold. The night was cold and all I dreamt about was barbecuing. I could smell meat being barbecued.

M. *You were hungry.*

F. I was hungry, and then I used to wake up and there was no barbecue. It was like a mirage, as if you're in a desert and you see water. Then I walked round town during the day and I found the Stazione Termini and I stayed there. I slept in the toilet. That was the safest place to be really. It was a shitty, smelly horrible place, but at least it was safe. Then during the day I used to beg and also steal food from the supermarkets. I didn't steal and come out, I ate the food in the supermarket. I was so scared to be caught because if I had been caught I don't know what would have happened.

M. *What do you think might have happened?*

F. Probably deported, because I didn't have a *soggiorno*, or put in some kind of prison possibly and then deported because I didn't have papers. I didn't have a passport, I didn't have anything and, you know, that's what would have happened. So it was a very scary time until I saw a friend of mine in the street.

M. *Do you mind if I wind back a bit, because what I'm thinking is, you can sleep, you can eat; not very easily at all, but you can, but how do you keep yourself clean? Did you wash in the toilets?*

F. Well the Stazione Termini is an international station in Rome so, yes that's what I did I washed there and kept myself clean that way.

M. *And did you wash your clothes?*

F. Not really. I had a suitcase of clothes so I kept changing in the toilets and then throwing things away because they were so smelly and horrible.

M. *What about things like sanitary towels? Did you steal those too?*

F. No, I just used tissue paper from the toilets. You learn to make do and that's what I did. The worst part was, I remember getting headaches and being ill and I didn't know what to do. Period pain actually was quite hard. I couldn't get any painkillers so I had to live with the pain. Hence I've learned to live with pain to a point – I do suffer with fibromyalgia today and I have learnt to live with pain.

M. *OK, so you were saying about seeing your friend.*

F. Yes, so I saw my friend in the street and he took me to his house. He was kind. His grandmother wasn't kind at all and she said 'Who is this black girl and why do you want her?' She told him off, but he stood by me and I stayed there for a while and then eventually I ...

M. *So he insisted?*

F. He insisted, yes. His grandmother was very angry and treated me like an animal. I suppose, in a way, I was dirty and she saw me as this kind of abuser, as if I was abusing her grandson. I was going to stay there and be an abuser. I was someone with no status, no money, no anything.

M. *So she felt like she was frightened of you and you were invading her space?*

F. Absolutely.

M. *And taking her grandson?*

F. Yes, she couldn't understand why her grandson wanted to help someone who looked like me, who was poor and dirty and all of that. In her eyes I was a bum really or a tramp or whatever. I don't know exactly how she saw me but she was frightened of me. So when she said that to me I realised for the first time in my life what it is like to be on the receiving end of discrimination. I realised what it means when you are different. I realised what it means when you don't have money, how people judge you and what it means to be poor. I experienced how frightening it is for people at the receiving end of that rejection. I felt rejected as a human being. She couldn't see me as a human. What she saw was someone who was dirty, who was a criminal, who had no status, who was a nobody. She couldn't take her glasses off and see that underneath there is a person who is human, who is vulnerable and extremely scared and who has nobody; no family, no money, nothing. That sense of nothingness didn't go through her mind. All she saw was that I could be an abuser.

M. *But her grandson didn't see it that way.*

F. No. Her grandson had seen me and knew me before. We were studying at the same university so he knew who I was. If he didn't know who I was maybe he might have seen me like his grandmother. I don't know. It was only by chance that I saw him and he opened his heart and opened his door to me. From then onwards I went back to the university where I was studying.

M. *So you went back illegally?*

F. Exactly. I went and talked to the professor who was an American. He and his wife were the heads of the college and they exchanged students from the USA and also Britain. I went to them and I said 'Look this is my situation. I'm not sure how you can help me, but can you help me?' And they did. They took a chance by allowing me to stay at the university without money, although this was a private university. I started to work as a receptionist and also as a librarian in the library.

M. *So you were working as an illegal immigrant?*

F. Yes I was, but they didn't pay me money so I wasn't on their records but they gave me free education. They said, you know, 'do your classes', which was very kind of them. So I went to all my classes, but I thought I can't carry on living with this friend of mine because his grandmother was getting really upset, so eventually I found somebody who was looking for a babysitter. I went babysitting for this person and I used to sleep there as well.

M. *So a live in babysitter?*

F. Yes, all illegal. Then some of the professors from the University of Rome were looking for someone to speak English with them. Just to have English dialogue. I then had four students who were professors of the University of Rome. I used to ask them to buy English newspapers, like *The Times* or *The Guardian* and ask them to choose an article and then we would have a discussion in English.

M. *And they paid you for that?*

F. Yes they paid me for that. We used to have political discussions because the Italian professors loved politics.

M. *So now you're an illegal immigrant in Italy and you manage to find somewhere to live by bartering and you have your education by bartering and you have some English students to make enough money to buy some food. All illegal!*

F. Exactly. All illegal. They paid me cash. They paid me a lot of money actually, partly because they felt for me.

M. *So they opened their hearts to you.*

F. Yes, they did. They opened their hearts to me. They saw the person in me. They saw the human in me and

they also saw that I was doing something positive for society.

M. *Isn't it interesting the contrast. I'm thinking about how the British media reports on illegal immigrants and how the story is so often about exploitation; how illegal immigrants are brought here by people who want very cheap labour, and that underworld where it's everybody for themselves. Your story is very different in many ways because you were working illegally but it was done with a great deal of kindness and no exploitation and that real human to human contact that you were talking about.*

F. Absolutely. And you know, I feel I was privileged to go to boarding school, to have learned about other lives in England; about other cultures and have the 'common sense' of the western world which is a different 'common sense' from my own culture. I was at boarding school at a time when many of the boarders were from diplomatic families or whose parents worked for companies overseas. We had students from all over the world. I was used to people being different and it opened my mind. I had a lot of knowledge about being in the western world.

M. *I can see that, and I can see that many refugees from Syria and elsewhere now would have no knowledge at all of western ways, like blowing our noses and how to say 'pass the salt' and presents at Christmas. It must be so difficult.*

F. Absolutely. I knew all of that and a lot more. I had learned to observe. I had to and now I have become an expert in observing in order to survive!

M. *You are making me think of the lack of all that for many of the refugees coming here now. While some of them may have experience many will have absolutely none and coming as adults it will be such a culture shock and difficult to learn and adapt.*

F. You're right, hence when I took a refugee into my home I taught him these things. I taught him the little things and now after nine months – and I am interested in the 'nine months' because that is the period from conception to birth – he has gone out into the world. He has got a job and he has learnt how to live in Britain.

M. *So why did you decide to take this refugee in?*

F. Well, somebody told my husband about this man who didn't have a home. He came to this country from Kurdistan. He went to Kenya and from Kenya he got a false passport and came to England. His father died in the Iraq war when he was young so his mother was widowed very young too. She then married again and her second husband didn't really want the child and he lived with his grandmother. Shahoo, this refugee, his background was troubled and his country was troubled too and he became politically active when he was at

university in Iran, so he got into some political problems. He was imprisoned for a while. My husband heard about him and asked me did I mind if we took him in.

M. Is this the man you told me about who came into the UK on a false passport and then immediately handed himself in?

F. Yes it is, and they sent him to Newcastle, to a camp there and, maybe because he carried all his papers and he was honest, his case went through the Home Office. He was lucky and he was granted asylum but he had nowhere to live so we took him in. When he came to my house it was very strange. He was 26, quite young but also adult. He was so different in his ways, but also similar. With my husband being of Kurdish background I have a lot of knowledge. I speak the language a little bit so that was easy, and for him too. I said to him 'You have come to live here and there is stuff you don't know and you may think they are odd but I am going to teach you'. From the very beginning I used my knowledge of TA by having a contract. I told him my house rules. So if he did anything I didn't like, instead of resenting him I told him. I felt that I did not want to resent him or feel guilty about saying something to him so I took the third option and I would ask him 'Can I have a chat with you?' And I would tell him. Sometimes I think he thought I was a bit odd!

M. Did he tell you that?

F. He did actually. He told me he had never met anyone like me in the sense of honesty, that I didn't hide anything or think 'If I say this he might get hurt'. I used to say to him 'What I am going to say to you, you might get upset, but I want you to hold on to that because if you don't then I will be pained by you. But my intention is not to pain you. My intention is to communicate honestly with you.' But if I was angry or annoyed I did not speak to him because I didn't want anything coming from a place of anger. I didn't want him to respond from his own anger or to feel not good enough. I was very careful that when I had these conversations I had processed my own feelings.

M. So you owned your own part and your own feelings.

F. Yes. I took responsibility for my part. I remember getting really annoyed with him when I got home and he was sitting on my chair. I don't know why I felt it was my chair, but it was the chair I preferred to sit in. I felt that this was my house and if I was going to share it I also needed to be kind to me. I didn't want to violate my freedom in my own home.

M. I really get that.

F. I felt if I didn't say anything I would violate the freedom I have been fighting for all my life. So that was very important.

'From the very beginning I used my knowledge of TA by having a contract. I told him my house rules. So if he did anything I didn't like, instead of resenting him I told him.'

M. I think you make such a good point. For us who have never really had to fight for freedom it is difficult to understand what that means.

F. Yes but it's freedom with responsibility; without violating other people's rights. He needed to understand that because he is in this country he is not free to do whatever he wants without respecting other people. So it was important that he had me in his mind. That he was mindful of me in my house. It wasn't just me needing to be mindful of him.

M. It seems what you're saying is about mutual respect, the essence of I'm OK, you're OK.

F. It's the acting out of it which is so important. I'm OK means I have to be respectful of me and then I can be OK with the other, and being OK with the other doesn't necessarily mean being comfortable with the other.

M. I'm going back to what you said at the beginning about the human to human aspect, rather than perhaps what can be overly kind. What I see was that you were kind in opening up your home. You gave someone something they didn't have but you did it in a way where you expected your guest to respect you.

F. Yes it's true. I told him I gave him a space and that space was his room and in that he was free, but the rest of the space he was not free. He had to share with us, not in his way but in our way. I wanted him to observe me, to know about me, to be curious about me.

M. Like you did as a child.

F. And I felt safe if he did that because I felt he was going to respect me. If he wasn't curious about me but just wanted me to learn his way... which I think sometimes has gone wrong in this country, with integration, where we are expected to integrate all different cultures without others recognising they also have to integrate this culture. The mistake which is sometimes made is that we may overvalue other cultures to the point that people forget themselves. So, what we did when we clashed was we both talked about it. I want to show you this text I just received from him. He says 'I was bought up in a country where I had to be frightened of the authorities. What you taught me was not to be frightened of myself or you. With a lot of thinking and talking I saw that I could stand by

‘So the more I came to understand my shadow feelings and find ways to accept them without letting them dominate, the easier I found it to be with this person living in my house.’

myself and I saw that you stood by yourself. You live how you want to live in your own house. I can live however I want to live without being frightened of that. That has been a really big learning for me. I used to be envious of your honesty and then I learned I could be honest. I learned by practicing it with you and sometimes it was really hard. You challenged those times when it was difficult and times I wanted to run away. You made me stay in contact with you and I realised I don't have to be frightened of hard times or of being uncomfortable.'

M. That's lovely. What you did really worked. So if we extrapolate this to the global problems we have with mass migration and integration, it seems what you are saying is that not only do we need to talk to each other but we also, both sides, need to be able to tolerate and sit with our discomfort with the other

F. Yes, and that's what he says. He says 'Sometimes I misunderstood you and got pissed off with you.'

M. Which is, of course, what happens all the time between people even when they think they understand each other. So the 'Closing boundaries' aspect of your workshop was actually about holding personal boundaries. It seems to me, thinking about the theme of social responsibility that what you are saying is that part of that is our responsibility to ourselves; holding our personal boundaries and our respect for ourselves and others, rather than holding our prejudice, which we all have at some level or other.

F. Yes, but the prejudice comes from fear. If we take the risk of talking to each other from Adult, not from a Child place of anger or hurt, nor from a place of resentment or guilt, but from a thought out, honest Adult place we don't need to be afraid.

M. So what do you think might have happened if your Italian friend's grandmother had been able to talk to you?

F. I think she might have faced her own fears and found her humanity. I felt very hurt by her, and I was so young, but I think I only saw her shadow. That was all she showed me because she was frightened. But my memory of that helped me to overcome my own shadow of prejudice. I needed to stay in touch with that because when Shahoo sat in my chair it felt like an invasion. I felt really cross. I wanted to beat him up, but understanding

that helped me not to do what the grandmother did. I had more empathy with her after that! So the more I came to understand my shadow feelings and find ways to accept them without letting them dominate, the easier I found it to be with this person living in my house.

M. So as transactional analysts what do you think we can do, using our training and our skills to help with the refugee situation?

F. Well one of the things I think could really help is to go to the camps and teach communication. Not like a 101, but teach support workers to help people while they are in the camps to understand about cultural differences, about what Christmas means, about table manners, all those things I learned as a child. Teach them to observe and about contaminations and about Games.

M. Teach them how to survive and integrate into the western culture?

F. Absolutely. Teach people what to expect. Help them understand how to live in another culture but not to forget their own.

M. Is there any way we can help British people be more accepting of different cultures?

F. I think we need to talk honestly about political correctness. When political correctness helps and when it hinders. It's teaching about humanness and working out what is acceptable and what is not. Some behaviour is definitely not acceptable and we need to challenge it.

M. I'm reminded of when my children left home and then came back and I felt like I had to give up some of my house again. I would want to use the washing machine and their clothes were in it, or I wanted to make supper and they would be warming pizza in the oven. I could get very angry.

F. Yes, you felt invaded and it is easy to understand why people feel that immigrants and refugees may invade their space and be angry and frightened about that. It's like when I was burgled, twice, last year. People coming uninvited into my home and taking my things. I was invaded and that may seem a strong word for immigrants because they are not burglars, but that is the fear that it invokes in people. It can feel personal and we need to understand this even though we may feel it is not right.

M. So we come back to the debate about should Europe take an unlimited number of immigrants, refugees whatever you want to call it, or should we close our borders and say no.

F. I don't think 'should' comes into it. If any country accepts people from another country, culture, whatever then they have a responsibility to help them to integrate and it needs to be done in a way that is respectful of

'It's like a white life is so much more important than a black life.'

ourselves and respectful of them too. In a way so that neither needs to over-adapt to the other. There are just different ways and some ways are not acceptable in this country, so you need to keep those ways to your own home and adapt when you are outside. It's like I taught Shahoo in my home to adapt to my ways and keep his ways for in his room, and now he has a job and his own home, so in his home he can live in his way. But I also wanted to learn his ways – things I like and can incorporate into my ways too.

M. And if I go into someone else's home, like when I stayed with you at your friends' in Lausanne, I needed to observe and learn their ways. I was grateful that you had explained some things to me about what to expect.

F Exactly. But you know there is also a very important thing about contaminations. White people have a deeply ingrained sense of being more important.

M. I guess that comes from our imperialist past. Naughton and Tudor (2006) have written about this too, about what is taken for granted in being white, but I wonder if more needs to be explored.

F Maybe, but it shows on the news and TV when a massacre or an attack like in Nice is given so much prominence over the same things happening elsewhere. It's like a white life is so much more important than a black life.

M. And that is being spoken about with anger in America now with the problems which are emerging.

F Yes, and we need to talk about it too. The EU is an ideal of all being together, but nobody talked about what it means to be European. The Italians like being Italian and the French like being French and the Germans like being German and the British have now left because they feel they have lost their British identity. So we need to talk and respect what it means to have a cultural identity and how to hold on to that and have respect for that while we still become integrated in other cultures.

'If any country accepts people from another country, culture... then they have a responsibility to help them to integrate and it needs to be done in a way that is respectful of ourselves and respectful of them too.'

M. Well we have loads of ideas here and I'm sure many people will be wanting to respond. So thank you Fari. It has been a really interesting afternoon.

Reference

Naughton, M. and Tudor, K. (2006) 'Being White', Transactional Analysis Journal, 36:159–71.



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Politics and psychotherapy

SARAH OSBORNE, both an elected politician and a psychotherapist, shares her personal perspective on how social and political responsibility are intrinsically woven together in her work.

AS AN ELECTED politician and a psychotherapist I was pleased to be asked to write some of my own personal thoughts and experiences about the place of social and political responsibility in the profession. While I understand that there are differing opinions in the counselling and psychotherapy world about how far we can and should be actively involved in social and political issues, I was surprised to learn just how reticent some psychotherapists, and those from other TA applications, are about mixing politics and psychology. I will return to why I was surprised later. For me, so far, combining the two has proved to be a comfortable and valuable co-existence, with both roles informing and enriching each other. How so?

Readers may well understand why I say that my training and work as a psychotherapist helps me to be a better politician. I am sure most will agree that personal therapy and TA training provides a unique opportunity to be a psychologically healthier and better functioning human being. Our years of training enhance our ability to empathise and communicate clearly and not just in a therapeutic way. We scrutinise and are scrutinised on the variety of ways we communicate with others, we learn to be authentic more often and above all we learn how to really listen.

It is this ability to listen and the opportunity to hear detailed personal accounts of many people's lives that puts us in an unusually privileged position, which can be of huge benefit to socially responsible politics. We are often in the position of witnessing the impacts, unintended or otherwise of those in power, including our politicians past and present. Take for example education policies. The recent announcement by Government to extend grammar schools prompted a client of mine to talk of the impact failing the 11+ had had on her. Going to a secondary modern school meant, 'university wasn't for the likes of me'. She went from one low skilled job to another until she finally dared to apply for a degree in her 30s. She says a degree and two masters later she is still 'haunted by being labeled stupid at eleven'.

Or consider the impact of drug policies. Despite calls from health professionals and public health bodies that drug misuse should be a health issue and not a matter for the courts and prisons, government maintains its war on

drugs resulting in people being harmed first by drugs and then harmed again by the punishment meted out, instead of being helped to kick or contain the habit. In my experience clients have reported that their prison sentences for possession caused them further harm, including greater exposure to drugs in prison and the severing of family relationships. On release their criminal record also proved to be a barrier to education and employment thus restricting opportunities for healing and rehabilitation.

We see and hear of the effects of decisions made and of the distress which can be caused by a lack of informed, empathic and effective decision-making. We see the distress caused by the grossly unequal distribution of resources in our country. We see how the singling out and deriding of certain groups can lead to people, who identify as part of that group, feeling deeply shamed.

This was certainly a part of my own experience and was a strong influence on my decision to enter politics. I was brought up by a single mother at a time when many politicians derided single motherhood. I remember how my mother visibly winced in response to castigating speeches or newspaper headlines. I remember feeling confused and angry at the time but I didn't realise until decades later, when I too found myself as a single mum, that I felt shamed too. Now it seems other groups are similarly scapegoated, not least immigrants and asylum seekers.

What I have noticed is that, whether it is behind the closed doors of my therapy room or when making speeches in public, I consider carefully the impact my words and deeds might have. I ask myself the same question in both my roles: is my intervention in the best interest of my client? – that is both my therapy client and the resident I am elected to represent.

How can my being actively involved in politics enrich the world of psychotherapy?

We can all have an indirect role on the place of psychology and psychotherapy in the world through direct and indirect action if we choose to speak out, but as an elected politician I have a platform from which I can promote the benefits of talking therapies and the need for better mental health services (and I do at every

'I ask myself the same question in both my roles: is my intervention in the best interest of my client? – that is both my therapy client and the resident I am elected to represent.'

opportunity). I have voted on policy and have access and some influence on other people who are making policy decisions that are likely to impact on people's mental health. I am in a position to both privately and publicly challenge those spouting misinformation and toxic lies about mental health. Finally being a politician has provided me with influence which has enabled me to set up a much needed low cost counselling service for survivors of domestic abuse, supported by charities, the blue light services and council staff.

So how do I think my work with clients benefits from my political role?

First, I think my work with clients benefits from my political role because I benefit. We are quite rightly encouraged to take care of ourselves as transactional analysts, to retain our curiosity and to seek balance in our own lives. Balance for me includes doing what I can to leave this world a better place than it currently is. Politics is the way I can make this happen at a macro level and in a practical way. Psychotherapy is the way I can do this at a psychological and individual level. My enthusiasm for both roles is maintained in part because I don't solely concentrate on either and I can use the different levels to inform each other.

Through my two roles I meet lots of people from all walks of life and they enrich me. I learn from their experience. I also find that being part of a team is a good balance to the often solitary experience of being a therapist and a politician.

Second, I believe my clients benefit from my attention to the impact of politics on them and me, now and in the past. In my opinion we are all political animals. Everything we are and do takes place within a political framework, for me it does not make sense to artificially separate this from the inner world of our clients or ourselves.

So back to my surprise at some transactional analysts' reticence about mixing politics and psychotherapy. Surely neither we nor our clients exist in a vacuum untouched by politics. Surely it is delusional to think that politics is absent in sessions with clients. Governments and government actions are sometimes directly or indirectly responsible for personal harm. The harm to mental health experienced by those who have had their benefits stopped or are facing cuts has been widely reported. Workers at a company administering tax credits have

reported people crying down the phone every day and of having to deal with people claiming they were going to commit suicide. Another example is our current housing crisis, which, although less widely reported, actually impacts on a far larger number of people. The deliberate policy of selling off council houses and the subsequent failure of successive governments to provide sufficient affordable housing has left millions of people in expensive, poor quality, over crowded and insecure housing and many thousands homeless. Inadequate housing poses a significant risk to mental health directly and it can impact negatively on physiological health and subsequently on psychological health through cyclical or chronic ill-health and a feeling of powerlessness and despair.

I have observed that those who indeed were powerless to avoid being harmed, nevertheless often appear to blame themselves. They self-criticise as not being good enough rather than accept their powerlessness and so increase their sense of despair.

And what of the impact of huge external events?

I'm sure I'm not alone in experiencing Brexit as an example of how a huge external event can make visible what is going on at an unconscious level. Following the EU referendum on the 23rd June every client of mine wanted to talk about how they felt about the UK's decision to 'Leave'. Interestingly all clients spoke with a presumption that I had voted remain, though we had never spoken about the issue previously. Some clients seemed deeply impacted at a deep psychological level by this event, over and above any perceived direct effect on their external world. Since then I have observed increased anxiety in some clients as a result of the current political rhetoric around immigration; both from those who are non-UK passport holders and by UK citizens about those who may be directly impacted.

Party politics – is that the cause of some discomfort?

I wonder if it is the rhetoric of party politics, which causes some concerns for psychotherapists and the feeling that there is no party which represents their views in totality. In my case, I have chosen to be a Lib Dem because it most closely represents the ideology and presents most often the policies that I personally believe can improve our world. However I do not discount other peoples' ability from different party affiliations (or none)

'We are all political animals. Everything we are and do takes place within a political framework, for me it does not make sense to artificially separate this from the inner world of our clients or ourselves.'

to do the same. I do not believe that the Lib Dems have a monopoly on what is good and I have no problem supporting campaigns or policies proposed by others.

For me the underlying philosophies for the Lib Dems and transactional analysts sit very well together. Lib Dems sign up to building a fair, free and open society, seeking to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community, and one in which no one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity. They champion the freedom, dignity and wellbeing of individuals, and respect their right to freedom of conscience, aim to disperse power, foster diversity and to take part in the decisions, which affect their lives.

Our constitution notes we 'reject all prejudice and discrimination based upon race, colour, religion, age, disability, sex or sexual orientation and oppose all forms of entrenched privilege and inequality.'

This, for me, is a rather wordier version of what Berne advocated: that people are OK; that everyone has the capacity to think; and that people can decide their own destiny.

Berne also stressed the importance of the transactional analyst's authenticity and advocated open communication and accessibility. I am open about my politics, making regular appearances in the media and using one publicly accessible Facebook and Twitter account for postings on either politics or psychotherapy matters. I believe it would be not only inauthentic, but also patronising and probably futile in this modern internet age to hide my politics from my clients.

I believe Berne also said that 'anything that can't be said in front of the patient isn't worth saying', so I try to keep that in mind before broadcasting!

Finally, these are some thoughts that I hope might encourage more therapists to get politically active.

Whether we like it or not, ultimately it is politicians who largely decide what is and is not a priority and allocate resources both at a local and national level accordingly. If we want social injustice to be addressed, we need to speak up. If we want mental health services to improve we need to lobby. Although fellow Lib Dem Norman Lamb MP's campaigning has achieved parity of esteem between physical and mental health (at least in principle if not in practice) there is still much more to be done to achieve equal rights of access to treatment on a timely basis between physical health and mental health. Unfortunately, I know from experience that those who shout the loudest at the moment are the ones that get heard.

Lastly, many people, it seems, blame their disinterest and disengagement from politics on their perception that politicians are out of touch, don't listen and are inauthentic.

Sounds to me like we could really do with more politically active therapists!



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REVIEWS

MARION UMNEY



WE HAVE JUST two book reviews this quarter, both chosen as they reflect something of the theme of this issue. Both have a social and political orientation and so in some ways are different from many of the books we would normally read for our professional development. However, I

would argue, they both have something to teach us as transactional analysts.

The first book to be reviewed is Sue Lieberman's *After Genocide: How Ordinary Jews Face the Holocaust* and the reviewer is Augusta Wolff. The book explores the transgenerational effects of the Holocaust, both on those whose families survived and those whose families did not. As Augusta acknowledges, transgenerational trauma is a topic close to her own and her husband's experience and that shows in her review. My experience of editing this issue has been that when something speaks to you or touches on your own experience it is always easier to write about it, and to write well and engagingly, than when it does not, it can also be difficult to know how much of yourself to share. I am grateful to Augusta for doing this review. I know she enjoyed the book, but I suspect the review was hard to write and something of the double-edged sword of reading and reviewing a book touching on an issue as difficult as this certainly comes through in her sensitive summary and critique.

The second book *Feminine Law: Freud, Free Speech and the Voice of Desire* by the psychoanalyst Jill Gentile has been reviewed by me, so I am not going to attempt to review my own review! Suffice it to say I enjoyed the book and I hope you will enjoy the review.

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After Genocide: How Ordinary Jews Face the Holocaust

By Sue Lieberman

Published by Karnac: London, 2015

Reviewed by AUGUSTA WOLFF

RECENTLY I VISITED Berlin with my husband and one day during our visit we sought out the apartment building in which his father, the only child in a Jewish family, had been born and brought up until he arrived in England just as the Second World War began. After a few minutes of looking up at the windows and peering in through the locked gates, we walked away. Just a few doors down the street we came across another house, with a cluster of the golden cobblestones inserted in the Berlin pavements on which are inscribed the names of Jews who had lived nearby; the death camp where they had perished and the year. It was a warm summer day and I am not Jewish myself, but the juxtaposition of these two households chilled me to the core; such near neighbours, each caught in an unimaginable act of genocide.

With each year that goes by there are fewer and fewer survivors of the Holocaust. The elderly men and women who remain were children then, and gradually the testimony of those who witnessed persecution at the hands of the Nazis and survived the death camps moves from first-hand accounts into the history books. Sue Lieberman is an Edinburgh-based group analytic and integrative psychotherapist and in this book she explores the complex feelings which Jews without any immediate family connection to the Holocaust – 'ordinary Jews' – still feel towards it. She asks whether these feelings can be considered a collective trauma. Are they simply to do with the Holocaust or are other parts of Jews' lives and inheritance involved? How do these feelings unconsciously shape contemporary Jewish suppositions and reactions to the world? Lieberman's belief is that ordinary Jews need to become more actively engaged with the consequences of this legacy, through putting their own experience into words. 'The Holocaust is an historic event that, while it continues to resonate through

the lives of the descendants of survivors, largely now lives in the realm of meaning and association; and to that realm we cannot fail to bring the material of our own lives, lives which are inherently full of personal hopes, longings, aspirations, and experiences.' (pxv)

However, the audience for this book extends far beyond the bounds of those who might think of themselves as 'ordinary' Jews. Lieberman understands how many gentiles '...can find in the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews a fit representation for their own suffering' (pxiii), and this careful exploration of intergenerational trauma will hold meaning for a much wider audience than the book's title suggests. Her research is based principally on interviews with many ordinary Jews and, using many direct quotations from her participants, she has established chapter themes which have universal meaning. Beginning with the introduction subtitled 'I don't know why this affects me this much', she explores 'A traumatised people?', 'A profound sense of loss', 'The broken contract', 'It's all very frightening', 'Guilt or shame', 'So conflicted', and finally 'Held captive?'.

I have found myself struggling in writing this review with what to self-disclose about my personal experience of these themes, what I wish to share of my own experience of intergenerational trauma and how this book holds personal meaning, what is private and belongs to my husband and his family, as well as the short step from the personal to the political: modern day Israel and the Middle East. I would have liked to hear more of Lieberman's own voice since I suspect that my struggle is parallel to the process of ordinary Jews, among whom Lieberman includes herself. The postscript of this book contains a powerful piece of reflexive writing in which Lieberman describes how, in over forty years of riding a bicycle, she has only had two accidents. The first occurred one month into starting to write and the second was three weeks after she had finished. She brushed off the first as distressing but 'one of those unpredictable things which had just happened' (p207). The second had a more lasting effect: weeks of considerable pain, shock, distress, and anger and a period of being unable to use a keyboard. She describes how she found herself silenced, unable to write, just when she had been expressing how important it is that ordinary Jews begin to structure a personally-owned narrative about themselves and the Holocaust through the difficult task of putting their own thoughts and feelings into words. I think this book would be even more compelling, and relevant to its very subject matter, were the author's reflexivity to be placed centre stage rather than in the postscript.

As a transactional analyst I found myself pondering how these themes might have impacted on the ordinary Jews who founded TA. Eric Bernstein was born in Canada to a Jewish family originally from Russia and

'As a transactional analyst I found myself pondering how these themes might have impacted on the "ordinary" Jews who founded TA.'

Poland and later in life changed his name to the anglicised version, Berne; Claude Steiner's Jewish mother and Christian father fled Hitler's invasion of France for the safety of the US; Fanita English was born in Romania the only child of a Jewish couple and she also escaped the Nazi invasion of France in 1941. Lieberman's writings leads me to hypothesise about how Jewish persecution and the Holocaust might have activated their personal experiences and influenced TA; how it might have shaped our cultural inheritance as transactional analysts; and how this particular past might continue to affect reactions, beliefs, and expectations within our community.

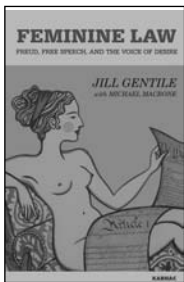
In the chapter 'Guilt – or shame?' Lieberman quotes Lentin: 'The young Israeli state constructed itself in opposition to the passivity implied in the discourse of Jewish victims allegedly "going to their death like lambs to the slaughter"'. It met Shoah survivors upon their return from the Nazi hell with silence' (p136). For me, this description resonates with Shadbolt's (2012) article in the *TAJ* where she describes the shame felt by those who fail their CTA exam: 'In our Transactional Analysis culture, exam success is, quite rightly, greeted with huge celebration. But there is another side to this....In Transactional Analysis, there seems to be a cultural meaning to failure and trying that is conflated with winning and losing, and Transactional Analysis loves winners' (p8).

With the EATA conference taking place in Berlin next summer, I hope that there will be an opportunity for us as transactional analysts to explore our complicated relationship to the Holocaust and its aftermath.

Lieberman spent seven years working on this book and I hesitate to suggest the subject of her next book but, as a psychotherapist, I am curious about the transference dynamics of working with 'ordinary' Jews and clearly she is very well-equipped to help clinicians in this area.

I encourage transactional analysts to read this book as there is much to ponder. The complicated territory of how Jews individually and collectively face the Holocaust is illuminated with clarity and compassion, and I found my understanding of the impact of genocide and intergenerational trauma was challenged and expanded. It offers a way of hypothesising about the presence of unacknowledged trauma within our own community.

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Feminine Law: Freud, Free Speech and the Voice of Desire

By Jill Gentile with Michael Macrone

Published by Karnac: London, 2016

Reviewed by MARION UMNEY

THE TITLE OF this book made me want to review it. I did not really have any clear idea what the book was about, and this too was appealing. I now do have an idea what the book is about and was fascinated by the premise upon which it is based.

Jill Gentile basically pulls together three apparently different topics and draws parallels between the historical developments of each to propose that we are not as free to speak as we may think we are – particularly if we are female.

The three themes are what it says on the tin: Freud and the development of free association in psychoanalysis; free speech, largely as it is experienced in the US through the use (and misuse) of the first amendment; and the voice of desire as it relates to women, and particularly sexual desire and all that that may represent in our culture.

Did I like this book? Actually I loved it, although I fear I cannot do it justice in this short review. It is complex but very readable. Some of the arguments Gentile puts forward I was not entirely in agreement with, but that is normal and I would have worried about my critical faculty if I had agreed with every word. Her writing style is engaging and, although the ideas she offers are complex, the metaphors and examples she uses help enormously to clarify her argument.

She very eruditely analyses the 'law' of free association in Freudian and post-Freudian psychoanalysis and the limitations on freedom which always exist in any relationship. This however is a very masculine law and that is the underlying essence of the book. She draws on Lacan and others to introduce the idea of the signifier and the recognition that what we say is not always what we mean. In this she acknowledges Freud's attempts (albeit limited) to understand his female patients. She says: 'The truth Freud sought requires courage in the face of fear, for it requires speaking truth, exposing secrets in the face of inner forces that – and others who – favour repression and silencing' p53. Later she says: 'Freud (like the founding fathers) privileged reason – but he also was dedicated to the laws of unreason and deciphering the realm of passion, to decoding the symbols and signs of disordered desire' p57. She follows the development of

the relational turn in psychoanalysis and how that has affected our understanding of a person's ability to speak utterly freely in the therapeutic context. Throughout she draws parallels with the cultural change in freedom of speech in the US which has strong echoes with our own experiences in the UK.

I was particularly struck by the parallel movement in social and political thinking and in psychoanalysis. For example in terms of who was deemed suitable for treatment and which groups were effectively disenfranchised in both spheres; the stifling of creativity during World War II and the pathologising of homosexuality. She brings us up-to-date and puts us in touch with modern prejudice, the role of blasphemy and 'hate speech' in modern society which have, in the UK led to a culture of political correctness she describes as 'refraining from speaking anything potentially critical or offensive to another group' p119. In her opinion this leads to us treating underprivileged groups as 'blocs' rather than individuals and has led to an increase in intolerance of minority groups.

The book then moves more obviously to her third theme, the voice of female desire. She approaches this first through a discussion of Greek philosophy and freedom of speech which excluded women. She draws on long established feminist and other arguments relating to the unequal power relationships between the sexes in society and how these have been represented through psychoanalytical metaphors. She argues that female sexual experience is rarely talked about either in the social and political domain (note the uproar about the mention of tampons in the House of Commons, and similar uproar in the US Senate about the use of the word vagina in a debate on women's health), nor in the psychoanalytic encounter. Her ultimate claim is that, by repressing this aspect of human life and relationships we are effectively suppressing a freedom of speech and experience for both men and women. That our world and our psychological health would be better if we could allow this freedom of speaking and that we will never be truly democratic if we do not.

As you can imagine the book ranges from very pragmatic and historical facts and experiences through psychoanalytic encounters; through very practical everyday thinking, political thinking, the role and limitations of social responsibility and complex psychoanalytic theory. For me that made it a really interesting read. Although some of the psychoanalytic ideas made little sense to me as a transactional analyst (which is sometimes, but not always, the case) I enjoyed challenging my thinking. I don't think this book will change the way I work as a practitioner very much, but I certainly feel educated and informed by this book as well as challenged to be aware of what freedom of speech *really* is.

Asperger's in the therapy room – 3

In the third of his series of articles about working with clients who have been, or may be, diagnosed with Asperger syndrome, **PETER FLOWERDEW** looks at the psychology of Asperger's.

THERE ARE FIVE major theories used to understand the behaviour and psychological profile of people with autism and Asperger's [Baron-Cohen 2008:51ff]. Three of them, considered here, give a framework to understand almost all of the social problems that Aspies experience, and indicate where TA may be able to help.

Weak central coherence

I am going to suggest a different name for this feature, but 'weak central coherence' is the designation widely used in the literature. As usual in medical models it focuses on deficit, whereas I think it useful to identify a difference. I call it: Detail vs context.

The postulation is that people with Asperger syndrome have problems integrating information to make a coherent global picture. Instead, they are said to focus on the small local details in a scene.

The Neurotypical (NT) mind is more likely to attend to gist rather than the nitty-gritty, the AS mind is more likely to attend to the detail than to the overview. These tendencies are described as 'strong central coherence' and 'weak central coherence' respectively.

One of the tests for this characteristic is called the 'Embedded Figures Test' (see Figure 1). Aspies tend to spot the embedded shape quicker than NTs.

As I do not have copies of this these formal tests I

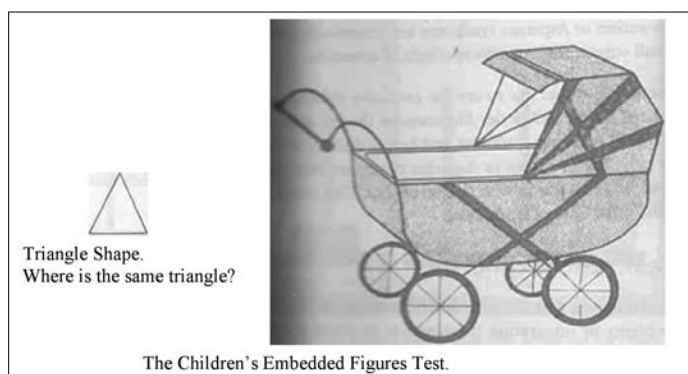


Figure 1: The Children's Embedded Figures Test

explore the same talent using the more available 'Where's Wally?' cartoons. The little book that I keep handy is: M Handford's (2011) *The Phenomenal Postcard Book*. London. Walker Books.

Neurotypicals usually take several minutes to find the hidden figure, Wally. Almost without their being aware of it, their attention is diverted by the humour in the many little scenes in the picture.

Aspie clients flip through the pages – 'there he is; there he is' – usually with no comment on the scenes depicted. Their brain is engaged in pure pattern recognition without any distraction from finding social meaning in the scenes.

Attention to detail

This ability to 'spot the difference', usually applied in life as 'spot the defect' has provided Aspie clients with employment as varied as:

- a plasterer: the client produced perfect walls; when I asked 'what do you do that is different?' he pointed out a number of defects in the plastering in the room we were in, none of which I had noticed before
- a tiler: the client produced perfectly regular tiling in a sports centre and in the homes of aristocracy
- a bricklayer: the client produced perfect brickwork for millionaire homes
- engineering: several clients were employed debugging and improving safety-critical software
- record keeping: working administratively in a variety of situations from the NHS to archaeological digs.

These examples, particularly the last two, also relate to an Aspie tendency to become absorbed in a 'special interest' and a very common need, a drive, to create order and predictability.

Bottom up vs top down

Aspies and NTs also tend to perform differently to The Navon Test of local versus global perception. In this test large letters are formed from small letters, for example a one large letter 'A' would be formed from a number of

‘Children with autism and Asperger syndrome are slow to understand deception.’

small letters for example ‘Hs’.

Aspies tend to register the small letter first, and then ‘see’ that this makes a larger letter. NTs tend to do the other way around.

Aspie clients might notice a tree, then another (different) one, and another – and then register that this is a wood, where an NT would see a wood, then look at the trees.

Researchers refer to this tendency to focus on detail as local bias, and it seems to have a neurological basis. The Connectivity Theory (Baron-Cohen 2008) claims that in autism and Asperger’s syndrome there is short-range over-connectivity – more nerve cells or neurons making lots of local connections in the brain – but long-range under-connectivity, that is, fewer neurons making connections between more distant brain areas.

Mindblindness

Imagine living in a world where you could see and understand physical things but were ‘blind’ to the existence of: thoughts; beliefs; knowledge; desires; intentions.

You may experience these things yourself, but not detect them in or attribute them to others – you would exist inside a social bubble, cut off from the information that gives meaning and context to social life.

The significance of the loss of ‘why?’

Imagine you are watching a short video. It shows someone walk into a bedroom, walk around while looking around, and walk out.

Now, write down what you imagine might be the reason for him doing this:

- maybe he was *looking* for something he *wanted* to find, and he *thought* it was in the bedroom
- maybe he *heard* something in the bedroom, and *wanted to know* what had made the noise

‘While the typical 9-year-old can interpret another person’s expressions from their eyes, to figure out what they might be thinking or feeling, children with Asperger syndrome tend to find such tests far more difficult.’

– maybe he *forgot* where he was going: maybe he really *intended* to go downstairs.

A mindreader can generate a longish list of such ‘maybes’ to explain this behaviour – and it is a safe bet that most of them will be based on projecting or attributing mental states.

In the examples above, the mental-state words are printed in italics to make it easy to pick them out.

Mindreaders have the capacity to imagine or represent states of mind that we or others might hold.

A mindreader’s thinking about mental states is prefixed by ‘maybe’ because we are never 100 percent sure what we or others are thinking (since mental states are to some extent hidden from view).

Nevertheless we find it easy to imagine what others may be thinking.

Developmental difficulties

A typical 14-month-old child shows joint attention (such as pointing or following another person’s gaze), during which they not only look at another person’s face and eyes, but pay attention to what the other person is interested in. Children with autism and Asperger syndrome show reduced frequency of joint attention, in toddlerhood. They point less, look up at faces less and do not turn to follow another person’s gaze as much as a typical child.

The typical 24-month-old child can engage in pretend play. When they interact with someone else who is pretending, they need to use their mind-reading skills to be able to understand that in the other person’s mind, they are just pretending. Children with autism and Asperger syndrome show less pretend play, or their pretence is limited to more rule-based formats. For example, they may simply follow a make-believe script from a movie, or science fiction, where the pretend world is specified in terms of a set of ‘facts’ about that pretend universe.

The typical 3-year-old child can pass ‘the seeing leads to knowing test’ (see Figure 2). To pass the test question,

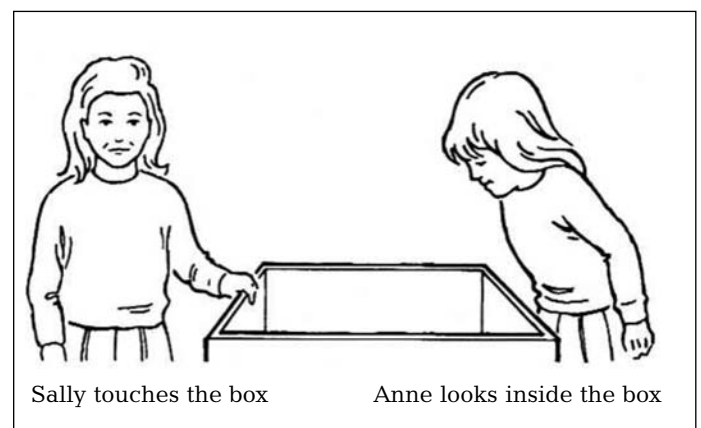


Figure 2: The ‘seeing leads to knowing’ test

Deception

The Snow White story also reminds us that mindreading is not only important when it comes to making sense of and predicting other people's behaviour, but it is also key to deception.

Deception is easily understood by the typical 4-year-old child. While this may be socially discouraged, the fact that typical children understand deception and may attempt to deceive others is a sign of a normal Theory of Mind(ToM). This is because deception is nothing other than making someone else believe that something is true when in fact it is false. It is the process of manipulating another person's mind. Children with autism and Asperger syndrome are slow to understand deception, again a sign of a delay in the development of ToM. This means they are more at risk of being exploited for their gullibility. They tend to assume everyone is telling the truth, and may be shocked by the idea that other people may not say what they mean.

This makes them vulnerable to a particular form of bullying, involving misdirection and misinformation.

A second limitation of this theory is that while mindreading is one component of empathy, empathy also requires an emotional response to another person's state of mind. Many people on the autistic spectrum also report that they are puzzled by how to respond to another person's emotions.

This second limitation is addressed by the biaxial diagnostic tool associated with the systemising empathising theory, which allows us to identify different kinds of minds, and answer the question – so what is the opposite of an Aspie?

That will be in the next part published in the winter 2016/17 issue of *the Transactional Analyst*.

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 M Handford's (2011) *The Phenomenal Postcard Book*. London. Walker Books.

the child needs to notice that while Sally touched the box, Anne actually looked into it, and since seeing is one way to get knowledge, Anne is the one who must know what's in the box. Children with autism and Asperger syndrome are delayed in passing this test.

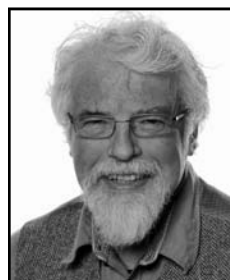
The typical 4-year-old child can understand the existence of a 'false belief': the child can understand that, in the story of Snow White, the girl is being deceived by her wicked stepmother who wants her to believe the apple is tasty, while all the while it contains poison.

The typical 9-year-old child is capable of figuring out what might hurt another's feelings and what might therefore be better left unspoken, ie they can recognise faux pas. Children with Asperger syndrome are delayed by around 3 years in this skill, such that it is only when they are about 12 years old that they perform at the level of a typical 9-year-old, despite their normal IQ.

While the typical 9-year-old can interpret another person's expressions from their eyes, to figure out what they might be thinking or feeling, children with Asperger syndrome tend to find such tests far more difficult. This persists into adulthood.

Conclusion

A strength of the mindblindness theory is that it can make sense of the social and communication difficulties in autism and Asperger syndrome, and that it is universal in applying to all individuals on the autistic spectrum. Its shortcoming is that it cannot account for the non-social features, such as sensory sensitivity and synaesthesia.



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Written assignments

Encouraged by her trainers, **KAREN WILLIAMS**, third year student at Contact Point in Bristol, has courageously offered her second year essay on the Redecision school for publication.

Q Five schools of TA have been presented on the course: Classical, Redecision, Cathexis, Integrative and Relational. The Classical school underpins the other four. Choose one of the other four and outline the major aspects of the theory. Explain in more detail the concepts that you would find most useful when working with clients.

A I HAVE CHOSEN the Redecision school and I will outline the major aspects of the theory. The reason for this choice is because I realise I have touched on this work using visualisation in my own practice, without recognising that it comes from a TA background. I was taught the techniques when I studied Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. I like the fact that it is a brief, focused and effective therapy which as the Gouldings point out seems to be needed more and more due to insurance companies asking for brief therapy sessions of 6-12 weeks (Goulding, 1997).

Redecision therapy is based on the idea that children make decisions early on in their young lives about what they are like, what others in the world are like and what happens to people like them. We could say we decide our own destiny by these early decisions but as they have been made they can also be changed by being re-made or re-decided.

The Redecision school theory was devised by Bob and Mary Goulding (1960-1970) at their Western Institute for Group and Family Therapy in California (Tudor, 2004, p84). They combined Berne's Script theory with some of the Gestalt techniques of Perls, and developed a brief narrative therapy to be employed primarily in groups for group therapy (Tudor 2004, p84).

However, developing a brief narrative therapy does not seem to have been their intention at the time. This was to be more immediate and concrete to help people change their lives. The approach is brief and it was one of the first therapies to deal directly, specifically, and primarily with peoples lives (Tudor, 2004).

There are five stages to this process (Tudor, 2004).

Stage 1: This is the therapeutic contract.

A contract of therapeutic change sets things for and is the focus of later therapeutic interventions. In Redecision therapy it is the therapist's task to make certain that the

contract is for change and that the goal is measurable, achievable and meaningful. The therapist has the job of phrasing the contract in a way that both the therapist and client will know when it has been met.

Example

I realised that one of my private client's goals did not meet this criteria. When asked what their goal was they replied, 'To see a way out of anxiety and depression'. What the meaning of this goal meant to the client needed some exploration and on reflection I realised that this may not be achievable in the six sessions that we had contracted for. Also how would we know when the client felt he had found a way out of anxiety and depression?

Stage 2: This is the development and expansion of a key scene related to the contract.

Clients are asked to develop a key scene which is related to the contract (Tudor, p 84).

Example

A client developed a key scene when she was going on holiday at about eight years old. She was travelling up an escalator when she lost her family, she felt invisible and that no one would worry or even notice she was missing.

Stage 3: This is the introduction of some new information, experience or emotion into this early scene.

The therapist usually utilises enactment, experiencing and experimenting in the here and now. This can be achieved by using a two chair conversation between the client and a significant other from the past (Tudor, 2004).

Example

I introduced the Empty Chair technique when a client felt she should not have been born to tell her mother how she felt.

Stage 4: This consists of rededecision proper.

The Gouldings helped their clients to re-enact a scene that was important to them and introduce something new into it. This enables the client to make a different decision from the original one made. The client makes the rededecision guided by the therapist (Tudor, 2004).

Example

A client who was told by his father that he was never going to make it as a singer and has actually become a

successful opera singer, decided to forgive his father after realising that his father had wanted to make it as a singer but hadn't. The client introduced to the scene his fellow music professionals to back him up and to remind him of his success.

Stage 5: This is maintenance-planning and re-integration back into family, work, groups and community.

For each client this included setting up positive re-enforcers to support their new decision. One way is to surround the client with people who are going to offer them continued support.

Life is an enactment of a life story or script. After clients have made their redecision therapists then have the job to help them translate it into ordinary daily life. The Gouldings suggest asking clients to close their eyes and imagine they are back home or working (Tudor 2004).

Example

The therapist asks the client to:

- notice the changes you are making and notice how you feel, behave, and think
- ask yourself how others are responding: do they notice any changes in you – is anyone pleased or displeased with you?

My personal experience of a redecision while training.

I was in a group of six students and we were checking in at the beginning of a study day. A student mentioned something about me that took me back to a scene from primary school and I started to feel very lonely and to openly cry. What was said was that the student was glad I had spoken up regarding an issue as sometimes I don't appear part of the group but by speaking up I did. The trainer stopped anyone else speaking and concentrated on me. At first she asked me what image I was seeing? I answered that I was standing in my primary school playground feeling very lonely. The trainer asked me what item would help me feel better to have in the scene with me? I said a puppy by my side would help me feel less lonely and I was encouraged to imagine a puppy by my side in the scene from school. This really helped as a puppy gives unconditional love which is what I felt I needed. Whenever I felt lonely after that I visualised the puppy and felt very comforted and not on my own. A redecision had been made that I was not lonely and alone.

Looking at this redecision from an ego state model: in the playground I was in my Adapted child as my mother had frightened me saying school was a horrible place that I had to go to. I already felt scared and alone but had adapted to this by doing what my mother did which was withdraw from people. With an imaginary puppy by my side giving me that unconditional love, I felt I was in my

Free Child happy and skipping and making friends. As far as being in the here and now, I shifted into my Adult ego state while in a group that was no longer so scary and felt I was no longer that little girl standing on the outside.

Case study – client 'T'

A client that I was working with came for therapy, due to her father dying recently. She had always felt she was trying to gain her parents' approval when she was young through dancing and singing as they expected of her. T was an only child and had spent most of her young years in pubs with adults and told to perform a song each evening. She was always missing school, was not allowed any treats such as ice cream as she would be fat. Her young formative years were made up of missing out on friends, moving schools many times, as her parents carved out her career. As an adult she could present to her friends as spoilt and always showing off wanting attention. She had come for therapy at this point in her life as her father's death had highlighted to her that there was so much more to her than what she presented but did not know what to do about it. At times part of her felt invisible. This was to be a short term piece of work, so we contracted for eight weeks.

I asked T to close her eyes. We did some relaxation where I took her on a journey on a magic carpet and visualised a blue lagoon where she could relax and get in touch with her centre. Back in the therapy room T reported she felt refreshed.

Where are you? How old are you? Go back and be that young person again.

What are you feeling?

What are you saying to yourself?

Imagine your father is sitting in this chair. What would you like to say to him?

T: 'Father, I don't always want to perform. I want to go to school and have friends like other children. I want to go to bed at a reasonable time not always coming to a pub and singing for your friends. I can only get your attention if I do this or if I have a tantrum! I feel I am fulfilling your dream not mine! I always thought I was thick at my school work but I did not have a chance to excel in this area. I would like to go to university and study for a degree in psychology but would have been petrified to have gone for a career other than show business!

What do you think your Father would say back to you?

My father would have said 'You? Go to university? You must be joking! I want you to become a big star, do you know what I have done for you?'

What do you need to happen, or who/what do you need to have with you to be able to stand up to your father?

T: I would need someone with me to back me up perhaps, a brother.

I asked T to imagine she had a brother with her in the scene, and to say again what she wanted to say to her father. This time she was able to tell her father that she wanted to go to university. From an ego state model T had moved from her Adapted Child to her here and now Adult ego state.

T realised that she was fulfilling her father's dream, it was not hers. This was such a relief to her and she felt she was in tune with herself for the first time in her life.

T has gone on to re-carve the career she would like and has taken up yoga and relaxation. She has fewer tantrums and her friendships have changed.

Conclusion

I like the way that the Redecision school is a brief, focused and effective therapy. I have used it in my practice many times with much success. I have also had personal experience of working in this way.

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Poems, spells and therapy

OWEN GRIFFITHS muses on the power of the 'speech act'.

IN 14TH CENTURY Italy Francesco Petrarca did something that would change Europe forever. He wrote a poem. The revolutionary ingredient of Petrarca's poetry was that it no longer gazed at nature in order to draw attention to the majesty of the Creator, rather it re-oriented the reader's attention inwards, to their own emotions. For this Petrarca will forever be known as the father of the Renaissance.

Through its human-centric focus the Renaissance sought to revolutionise how humanity saw itself and its place in the cosmos. The project of de-enchanting the natural world had begun. Europeans were encouraged to no longer see themselves as cohabiting their continent with supernatural creatures such as demons and ghosts. Nor were they to consider themselves as being at the mercy of those capable of weaving words into magical formulae and casting them as spells and curses. A movement sparked by the poetic power of words sought to strip words of their magical power.

The Reformation continued this project with its attack on the Roman Catholic mass and the belief that words spoken by the priest miraculously turned bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus. The words in question, *hoc est enim corpus meum* (for this is my body), were mockingly reduced to, 'hocus-pocus'. Mass-rejecting protestants, however, could not quite escape their own enchanted world and still held their witch-hunts for those who could breathe the life of magic into the spoken word.

It was left to the Enlightenment to attempt to complete the job. Its thinkers introduced us to a world that could be described, measured and predicted; a mechanistic world of cause and effect where change is brought about by forces that can be defined and manipulated. Words were now mere symbols used to describe a clock-work universe.

And yet, it would seem, the Enlightenment had gone too far. As John L. Austin, recovering an insight first achieved by Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century, pointed out, words can and do effect changes in our world. To speak is not merely to describe, it is also to act. Austin's speech act theory was subsequently developed by John R. Searle and Anthony C. Thiselton, among others.

Speech act theory analyses texts and speech by assessing the kinds of action they perform. Any form of words that accomplishes something merely by its utterance is said to have illocutionary force.

Thus the words, 'I name this ship Boaty McBoatface' have illocutionary, and not merely symbolic force since an act is performed merely by their utterance, that of naming a ship.

There are numerous categories of speech acts. For example, directive speech acts include requests and commands, whereas promises and offers are commissive speech acts. An example of the category of speech act known as indirect speech acts would be Berne's idea of ulterior transactions. Here the illocutionary force of the transaction operates on the psychological level and acts against the face-value of the spoken words. As such it relies on a psychological knowledge that is shared by both parties, which is the characteristic that identifies it as an indirect speech act.

It is not, however, the classification of various forms of speech acts that intrigues me, so much as the fact that words possess power to accomplish the very act they symbolise and describe. The relevance of this to TA is to be seen in relation to TA's developmental theory. The significance it accords to injunctions and the enchanted world of the magical child suggest the potential of a fruitful dialogue between these two theories.

Within a therapeutic context permissions are a very good example of speech acts. Permissions, which belong to the directive speech act category, have the power to liberate a soul from years of incarceration by an injunction. As we know, however, statements granting permission alone are not enough. Words only possess power within a certain context and when spoken by a person with real potency. For a permission to be a liberating act it needs congruence and timing on the part of the therapist. The power, therefore, does not reside in the words alone, but in the words as spoken by a powerful individual. Spells, after all, are meaningless sounds unless spoken by a person with real magic.

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Owen Griffiths is integrating his work as a TA therapist with his role as a church minister in the Rhondda Valleys.

The layer is very thin

JUDE GODDARD returns from the Trump/Clinton debate wondering about our emotional development.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, WHICH is essentially understanding and being in control of our own emotions, is a concept that has grown in acceptance in recent years. It feels like we haven't developed emotionally as a society at the same rate as we've developed technologically in the past fifty years. It seems as though society is like a child who has all the toys it could wish for but doesn't know what to do with them. We have become seduced by our toys to the point where they are playing us instead of the other way round. The more we have, the more we want – we are unable to be satisfied with what we've got – we expect to be able to get wherever we want to in the world at the drop of a hat and order goods to be delivered to us the next minute.

People have, to an extent, become disconnected. We focus on self-gratification and when we encounter difficulties, we look around for people to blame. On a micro-level that blame might be put on the person delivering our goods. More disturbingly, on a wider societal level blame gets put elsewhere: look at the massive increase in hate crime against immigrants – intolerance and bigotry seems to be increasing.

I was in Las Vegas last week and felt the power and the fear, mine or otherwise of the Trump/Clinton debate. The atmosphere was electric, the security fierce. This makes Carl Jung in *The Undiscovered Self* an interesting and shockingly accurate read.

'Everywhere in the West there are subversive minorities who, sheltered by our humanitarianism and our sense of justice, hold the incendiary torches ready, with nothing to stop the spread of their ideas except for that critical reason of a fairly intelligent, mentally stable

'Rational argument can be conducted with some prospect of success only so long as the emotionality of a given situation does not exceed a certain degree.' CG Jung

stratum of the population. One should not over estimate this thickness of the stratum.'

The EU referendum campaign and the US presidential campaign hold real similarities in process. The populist movements they represent threaten our Adult perspective.

Is this the point in history that society has to move forward or do those who Chomsky would say are 'bewildering the herd' forever to doom us? Blame and recrimination, borders and higher walls will not help us make this leap; empathy and understanding of different points of view are a beginning and will make the difference. Jung suggests it only takes 20 per cent of the population to shift our norms in a significant way – have we unearthed that number, enabling bigotry and social division to rise up again?

Recent headlines in certain newspapers purport that they are upholders of democracy; people who criticise Brexit are labelled as 'Remoaners' with one paper saying they should be locked up for 28 days until they understand what democracy is. With 48 per cent of people voting 'Remain' and many in the 52 per cent already expressing buyers regret this doesn't sound like a very Adult argument, does it? What it does do is to inflame passion and anger and turn people against one another appealing to the hurt Child and encouraging the critical Parent to tell others they need to shut up!

CG Jung profoundly writes: 'Rational argument can be conducted with some prospect of success only so long as the emotionality of a given situation does not exceed a certain degree... a sort of collective possession rapidly develops into a psychic epidemic. Under these conditions all those elements whose existence is merely tolerated as asocial under the rule of reason come to the top.'

The layer is very thin, how near we are to breaking point is up to us.

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Jude Goddard is a facilitator & mediator. After leaving the NHS as a Director of Strategy she trained for four years in psychotherapy. She is an independent organisational consultant in the public sector.

GRACE NOTES XX

How can we take on more social responsibility?
asks **DR SALMA SIDDIQUE**

HANNAH ARENDT (1993) DEFINED social responsibility as both an individual's values and a political presence of belonging or suffering and acting or doing which '...needs the presence of others before whom they can appear.' (Arendt, 1993: 154).

As an educator in the field of counselling and psychotherapy I am surprised at the lack of debate, recognition or acknowledgement, that the problems of clients, their families and communities, may not have originated solely from themselves. There is very little literature in the field of counselling and psychotherapy identifying a discourse of fairness and justice.

I have always felt a sense of responsibility as an educator training therapists, to encourage them to act as ethical practitioners and to minimise adverse effects. In dialogue with therapy trainees at the start of another academic year I pose the question of whether the task of counselling and psychotherapy is to support the client to 'adjust to fit', or to challenge, the system (British). I invite students to question where their role begins and ends with therapy and our relationship with society. What's our role as therapists in the world? I will question the fraying boundary between the external and internal world. If we navigate our life courses between our man-made crises and natural disasters do we sleepwalk through life? In therapy I hear all too often the tragic monologue of survivor's guilt of managing to hold on to a relationship, job or health or social support. Notions of freedom and responsibility (Massey, 2006) vary depending on the context, education, kinship, culture, and religious conviction which ultimately offer a frame through which to view the world. Therefore our life experience shapes, views and influences, behaviours in our ego states. The therapy room is much like a lost and found office where clients unburden themselves of feelings of shame, blame and guilt of not being able to do enough.

In realising my personal power as a partner, friend, colleague and sibling and with my professional power as a therapist and academic I close my eyes and take a 'leap into faith' into the open arms of the totality of experience.

I usually find the experience challenging if not worrying and even frightening! We live in a capitalist society where the measure of worth is usually calculated by how much one is paid by the hour and one must be seen to be productive in order to be valuable to society. Franz Kafka's stories speak of chaos and the absurdity of things in the emerging contemporary scientific-technological world-view of suffering and alienation and offer an interesting metaphor for how one arrives at self-realisation. Maybe Kafka and other novelists understand more than others the human condition of the therapy room as a space where loneliness is experienced and despair is shared. In Kafka's book (1915) *The Metamorphosis*, Gregor's life position in society is narrated. Gregor's transformation from man to insect, from mobility to immobility, from resource to burden on family, friends, colleagues and in turn society is shown. Society is quick to reject individuals. Gregor alone and isolated in his bedroom starves to death from neglect. The parental existential messages are that members of society earn their space and place for leisure and happiness through work – this informed Gregor's self-identity – in failing at this he subsequently dies.

More and more I am experiencing the loss of hope in those who are marginalised and in communities that are rendered invisible, and I despair at witnessing the persecution and distrust which can seem all enveloping. We as a profession have generally chosen to fall silent as therapists in the services and institutions we inhabit. As a therapist is there not a social responsibility in creating and maintaining an 'I'm OK, You're OK' (Berne, 1964) social contract of wellbeing and of equity? (English 2006; Massey 2006), are we too caught up in the present despair – how can we take on more social responsibility?

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Reflections of a Lupus patient

ELIZABETH BRADSHAW shares her experience of a slow and painful diagnosis

WHEN I WAS first approached by a member of the Diversity and Social Responsibility Committee to write an article on Lupus, I was happy to have the opportunity of sharing my experience of this autoimmune disease. However, on starting the process of writing about my experience I found myself becoming increasingly anxious at the prospect of revisiting the journey to a diagnosis.

My experience is of an illness that took more than thirty years to diagnose. My symptoms started in my teenage years with aching joints, inflammation and general malaise; significant bouts of ill health in my twenties and thirties again drew no diagnosis from medical practitioners; and it was only in my mid-forties that a referral to a rheumatologist raised the possibility of Lupus. A referral to St Thomas' Lupus Clinic was a breakthrough for me. I was seen by a consultant who specialised in this disease who took my medical history, arranged a battery of tests, and diagnosed Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE).

Treatment consisted of antimalarial drugs, steroids and non-steroidal pain relief and antidepressants. I had been pre-warned that it could take upwards of three months before any benefits would be felt.

Transactional Analysis perspective

Illness has two effects on the individual: physical and psychological. Most medical practitioners treat the physical symptoms, not the psychological.

It is traumatic for the individual to be told he/she has a life threatening disease. It is possibly more traumatic for the individual to be aware that he/she is ill, but to be left undiagnosed. Reflecting on the time it took for diagnosis and the many occasions on which I was informed by rather brusque and disinterested consultants that I had no arthritis, rheumatoid or otherwise, I was reminded of the impact on my sense of self.

I found the 'OK Corral' (Stewart and Joines, 2012, p123), a useful tool to express the effect. When I was not experiencing what I now know to be a 'flare', I was in the I'm OK, You're OK position, or the 'healthy position'. When a flare struck, I would move rapidly into I'm not OK, You're OK position and withdraw from family and

Get-Away-From (GAF) Depressive position I-U+	Get-On-With (GOW) Healthy position I+U+
Get-Nowhere-With (GWF) Futility position I-U-	Get-Rid-Of (GRD) Paranoid position I+U-

Figure 1: The OK Corral

friends. With no respite from the discomforts of the disease and no medical support, I would sink into I'm not OK and You're not OK position, feeling the total futility of either seeking or receiving help.

For the Lupus patient, there is the added complication that he/she looks well, glowing skin, and outwardly fit and healthy. The glow comes from a low level temperature, and appearance of fitness from loss of appetite and so perfect body mass index levels.

What is Lupus?

Lupus is Latin for wolf. Early physicians gave the name to a variety of skin rashes that resembled the markings on a wolf's face. The facial rash is more commonly referred to now as the butterfly rash. Lupus is an autoimmune disease in which an excess of blood proteins called antibodies cause problems by attacking the skin, veins, kidneys, heart, brain, lungs, joints and connective tissue. Lupus is a form of arthritis that mainly affects women, the ratio is 9:1 female to male. There is no cure.

Ethnicity – the disease is worldwide with 1:250 Jamaican women affected; high incidence is also common in the Far East. As sunlight is a factor, it is more common in Mediterranean countries and islands, than in the north of Britain. For Caucasian women the incidence is 1:750. In the US prevalence is greater among Afro-Caribbean women. UK studies indicate that women from West Africa have a higher prevalence compared to Europeans but lower than Afro-Caribbean women.

Awareness of Lupus lags behind other illnesses; a US survey of 18-34 year olds (the age range most affected) suggested that 72 per cent had not heard of the condition. In the US diagnosis takes approximately six years compared to the UK where it is seven years. Lupus is a disease with genetic and environmental features. The cure may not lie in pharmaceuticals.

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- Lupus Foundation of America: www.lupus.org—



Elizabeth Bradshaw is a third year trainee psychotherapist, at Wealden Institute of Psychology, Crowborough, East Sussex.

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BDSM in the Therapeutic Relationship

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BDSM, the terminology, legality and use of kink. We will consider the avoidance of mentioning sexual practices, specific issues that BDSM'ers might bring to the relationship, how to work effectively with them and how your own experience and culture may influence your thinking and practice.

Course Tutor: Deborah Fields

Introduction to Educational Transactional Analysis

19th/20th November

An introduction to what it means to be an educational transactional analyst as well as reconnecting with what it means for us to be learners and educators. A look at education, different perspectives on teaching and learning practice, within a TA frame of reference. The workshop will be particularly relevant for school teachers, adult trainers, informal educators and those already in the TA field.

Course Tutor: Giles Barrow

Free Wellbeing Evening – “Do we have a social responsibility?”

Weds 16th Nov 7pm – 9pm

Free evening event – Leilani Mitchell speaks on “Do we have a social responsibility?”. There is also the opportunity to network, and find out about our part-time counselling and psychotherapy courses and workshops.

Diploma in Supervision

Starts 28th January 2017 (6 weekends over 7 months)

For those who already have significant experience working as a practitioner within their field who want to further their career and qualify as a supervisor. Now in its 9th year, this cross-modal course covers a range of topics, including the supervisory relationship, working ethically, differing models of supervision, philosophy of supervision, responsibility and others. For those that want to, this course will help to prepare you to apply for BACP accreditation as a supervisor.

Course Tutor: Mark Head

TA101 Introduction to Transactional Analysis

28th/29th January, 25th/26th March

Want to understand yourself and others? TA is a great tool for personal awareness and professional development. This weekend course will introduce some of the main concepts of TA including: life script, psychological games, ego states and transactions. It leads to an internationally recognised certificate and is a starting point for those wishing to continue with further counselling / psychotherapy training.

Course Tutor: Leilani Mitchell

Open Day

Saturday 25th February 2017 – 12.30pm to 1.30pm

Visit us during one of our training weekends – get a flavour of the Link Centre by meeting tutors and students and see our training environment.

Part-Time Counselling / Psychotherapy training courses

Part-time weekend courses (10 weekends a year between October and July), leading to national and international accreditation. Start to plan now for starting in October 2017 – come and visit us, get a flavour of TA on our TA101 weekend, and then start the application process.

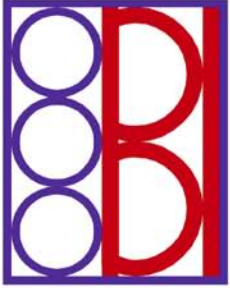
Workshops and Events coming up in Spring 2017

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the Link Centre

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The Berne Institute

*Training in TA Psychotherapy and Counselling
at the Centre of England*

Director: Adrienne Lee BA TSTA

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With **Giles Barrow TSTA(E)**

Dates: 23/24 January 2017, 30/31 March, 22/23 May

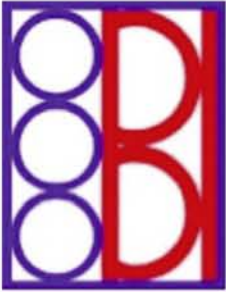


This course programme is the first of its kind at The Berne Institute. It sets out to provide a rich encounter with ideas and experiences about education. Designed for anyone interested in teaching and learning, the course will lead into educational philosophy, theory and practice and through to the experiential and reflective realms. The building blocks of the programme are drawn from a range of ideas about education, including social pedagogy, transformational learning, holistic education, indigenous education and, of course, educational transactional analysis. Combining a range of methods, including story making and telling, crafting, sensing journeys, partnering, collective support, dialogue, individual reflection and taught input, the course will provide a head, heart and hands experience.

Fee: Berne Institute members - £650; Non-members - £750. This fee covers attendance at all the six modules of the course and marking fees. Booking deposit (non-refundable) - £100.

For detailed course information and bookings, please contact The Course Registrar, The Berne Institute, Berne House, 29 Derby Road, Kegworth DE74 2EN, 01509 673649, Email via website www.theberne.com

The Berne Institute: Promoting Excellence and Autonomy.



Professional Excellence Workshops at The Berne Institute, UK

Dates: 24-26 February 2017, 28-30 April, 8-10 September



Do you want to enhance your professional skills in TA? Then the Professional Excellence Workshops are for you!

The PEWs - run regularly twice per year since 1992 - have been a "springboard" from which many participants have gone on to gain success in EATA/ITAA examinations, both CTA and T/STA. The workshops have also proved their value as preparation for the EATA/ITAA Training Endorsement Workshop (TEW). Whether or not you have an exam or TEW in view, these workshops offer you an excellent opportunity for advanced training and supervision. You will have the chance to sharpen your TA skills, and network with colleagues, in a supportive group setting.

The workshop leaders are **Adrienne Lee, Ian Stewart,** and **Mark Widdowson**, Teaching and Supervising Transactional Analysts. As a team with in-depth experience of the PEW format, they can offer you an outstanding environment for learning. Adrienne, Ian and Mark are committed to continual development of the PEWs—and they hugely enjoy leading each workshop!

Workshop format is highly flexible. You list your wants and needs at the beginning of the workshop, and we tailor the programme contractually to suit you.

Activities typically include:

- Multi-level supervision
- Tape presentation
- Discussion of theory and ethics
- Practice exams (CTA or TSTA)
- Supervised teaching
- Personal work

For much of the time, we carry on several different activities simultaneously, using sub-groups. This lets you get maximum value from the time you spend in the workshop.

Personal therapy time is available, within contractual boundaries, as an integral part of the workshop. This gives you the opportunity, if you wish, to deal immediately with any personal issues that may arise for you in the course of the day's work.

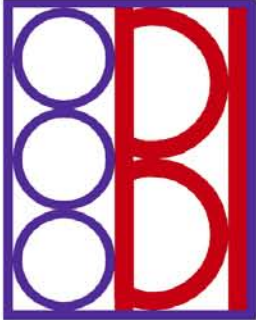
Venue: the PEWs are held at The Berne Institute, near Nottingham, UK. We ask you to arrange your own accommodation. We will send you directions to the workshop and lists of accommodation, in various price ranges, when we confirm your booking.

Attendance: for the best learning experience, we strongly recommend that you attend for the complete duration of the workshop. If you can only attend for part of the time, the full fee remains payable.

Accreditation: CTA trainees can log the hours spent at the PEW as Advanced TA Training and/or supervision, as specified in EATA regulations. Qualified TA professionals can count the hours as CPD.

Fees: the workshop fee is £395*. Please send payment to register your application for a place. Please make payment in UK £ only, by Eurocheque, I.M.O., or cheque drawn on a UK bank, made payable to The Berne Institute. *Fee may increase 2017

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The Berne Institute

*Training in TA Psychotherapy and Counselling
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Masters' Degree in Transactional Analysis Psychotherapy

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MSc by Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) If you have already qualified as CTA (either at The Berne Institute or at another EATA-accredited centre) you are eligible to apply for the award of MSc via Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL). You may begin the APL process at any time of year, and there are currently places available. If you are interested in APL, please contact our Course Registrar and we shall be glad to send you more information.

For further details of all training courses, information on our programme of workshops, seminars and other TA events, or any other enquiries, please contact:
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CPD Workshops 2017

Working with Shame. *Carol Wain PTSTA(p)*

Sat 18th February 2017

There is an awareness that the experience of shame is at the core of many psychological difficulties. This workshop is a relaxed space for trainee or practising counsellors or psychotherapists to come and explore how to work with unhealthy shame. We will engage in some theoretical discussion but the focus will be on experiential work and learning how to apply this with clients through skills practice.

Exploring and Working with Anger. *Brian Simpson Dip. Couns.*

Sat 25th March 2017

Anger is neither bad nor good. Rather, like all emotions, it is a response that tells you something about yourself and your environment. But often our behaviours don't get us the result we want. This workshop will both enable you to explore your own anger and to work with others around their angry behaviours.

Working with bodily experience: *Dr Celia Simpson PTSTA(p)*

Sat 1st July 2017

People working in the mental health and well-being arena are increasingly realising that we need to pay attention to our own 'interiority' and to that of those we work with. This workshop will outline reasons why body experience is important. We will engage in some experiential work to develop our own body awareness and grounding. We will also think about working with clients to support their somatic awareness.

All workshops run from 10am to 5pm (6 hours CPD).

Cost per workshop: £75 (£65). £140 (£125) if 2 are booked together. £200 (£180) if all 3 are booked together. (Costs in brackets are for Red Kite trainees)

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