

REMEMBERING DAVID HOLT

Obituary – Michael Whan

“Pour on; I will endure”

King Lear

David Holt's death at dawn on Easter Sunday is still a shock and a lasting grief. David was a man of unique sensibility and expression of heart and mind. His character was deeply compassionate, marked with a fighting spirit; vulnerable yet tough. He spoke from an intelligence of feeling and intuitive thought, humane and philosophically refined; sharing what is most common, though through a highly personal, at times idiosyncratic, confessional voice—a singular example of that rare species—despite the many pretenders to that title—an authentic *psychologist*. Like many who knew and loved him, I miss him greatly.

I don't feel we have yet comprehended David's original writing and thought, and its seminal role in relation to Jung's psychology. His apprehension of it was radical and extremely individual, such that his writing was not always easy of access, though he longed to be understood. He could feel hurt when he was not. David found his own path, embracing both commonality and division, alert to listen to the voice of the other and engage in dialogue, but caring for differences and controversy. Speaking of the help he attained from the reading of Jung, he wrote modestly, though no doubt with a sense of ironic self-appreciation, of building 'the rather leaky boat to which I have come to trust myself' ('45 Years In and Out of Jung's Psychology', *Bulletin of the Oxford Psychotherapy Society*, March 1993). It was a vessel many of us also learned to trust.

That '... In and Out ...' expresses the contradiction of David Holt's place. He was, in the feel of what mattered, often 'at the heart of things': as well as his own successful private practice, there was his long involvement in the Analytical Psychology Club and Guild of Pastoral Psychology, a teacher and supervisor in the earlier days of the Westminster Pastoral Foundation, an active member of the Oxford Psychotherapy Society, an astute commentator on the 'politics' of the analytical

psychology training organizations, as well as finding creative expression for his interest in theatre and what it had to offer in the understanding of human behaviour and analysis through the Hawkwood Weekends, with his lectures, seminars, and the shared enactments. His concerns drew him to the threshold between the private and the public, the 'personal' and the 'social' body, terms he creatively elaborated upon, drawn from the work of the anthropologist Mary Douglas.

Yet David was also a figure of the margin—or, as I'd prefer to say, the psychological edge. His long-standing interest and curiosity about time and timing served him well when he came up against the rebuttal he suffered when he returned to the British Isles from his analytic training in Switzerland. He applied for membership to the SAP, who refused as usual to recognize the validity of the Zurich qualification. He wrote in a paper, which arose from his meditation on frequency, 'How I Analyse Psyche', that the 'problem centred on the question of time. My training analysis ... had been tuned to twice a week ... [and] ... to once a week' (David Holt, *The Psychology Of Carl Jung: Essays in Application and Deconstruction*. Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1976/1992) Typically, David drew upon his adversity to reflect on the nature of time and timing. These matters, he felt, were 'worth dividing on', 'substantial differences as to the value of psyche itself'. Such matters are still with us. Nevertheless, I know of no-one who has given such depth of thought to these questions with his many writings on time and history: for instance, 'Sex and the Wound of Time'(1983), 'The Timing of Analysis' (1971), 'The Cost of Health: Payment, Treatment, Time'(1974), 'Alchemy and Psychosis: Curiosity and the Metaphysics of Time'(1988). It would help us much in our differences about 'frequency', I feel, if David's writings were more widely studied, shared, and discussed. To the extent that they are not, or that they are ignored, I suspect it is because we are not up to facing the challenges and rigours of feeling and thought that they cast us.

Jung wrote that 'without history there can be no psychology' (C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Recorded and Edited by Aniela Jaffe. New York: Random House, 1963. p.205). That sense of the historical was absolutely central to David's

thought and work. Jung made his remarks in the context of the alchemical roots of his psychology. This alchemical background figured a great deal in David's work, but he went beyond the rhetorical embellishment with alchemical metaphors and language. He could relate these two very different modes of practice and life, because he did not collapse historical time. Reviewing a number of articles in the journal *Ambix* (the Journal of the Society for the Study of Alchemy and Early Chemistry), he concluded: 'One important strand linking alchemy with modern technology is woven out of the human ability to speed up the time of mineral change. What does this imply for our responsibility for history, and in particular for the history of the scientific revolution ... the "invention of the method of invention"' ('Alchemy: Jung and the Historians of Science', in *The Psychology Of Carl Jung*, p.408). He goes on to link this with 'our responsibility for the *opus contra naturam*'. David could move psychologically between the most disparate of domains, as in his 'Jung and Marx: Alchemy, Christianity and the Work Against Nature'(1974), 'Alchemy, Marx and the Christian Imagination'(1977), and 'Riddley Walker and Greenham Common: Further Thoughts on Alchemy, Christianity and the Work Against Nature'(1983), in *The Psychology Of Carl Jung*). This is an astonishing list of titles. Who else could be so audacious, who else could go to the heart of the matter, so that we begin to read Jung and Marx off against each other in a way that transfigures both? It was David's deeply informed sense of psychology, history, and metaphysics that enabled him to move between such seemingly different thinkers. In his last book, *The Clermont Story: arguing christian responsibility* (Validthod Press, 2001), David devised an expression 'Caught Between History And Nature'. Such a phrase encompassed the many critical issues that his work engaged with: sexuality, psychosis, time, economy, nature, theatre, body, science, and so on. Through such engagements, he could make relevant and timely the notion of 'our responsibility for the *opus contra naturam*'.

Likewise, I know of no-one in the psychotherapy field who could write with such power and ingenuity on the relationship between money, alienation, and Jung's psychology; there is a unique richness and discovery in such writings still awaiting us. David has left us a legacy of thought and work which we cannot afford to ignore, if Jung's psychology is to argue its relevance for us.

For his funeral, David had prepared a 'personal reading' for those gathered there in the church, and for a wider sharing. Read by Pat Watts, it began: 'What have the living and the dead to celebrate together when we meet like this at a funeral?' He

answered: 'We meet together to keep time.' As with much he said, that reply is surprising in its wise simplicity, yet remaining complex and elusive. It touches us in the most intimate and most metaphysical way. David found a means to address us at his own funeral, to address us all, reminding us of the discourse that needs to continue between the living and the dead. Time matters to both, as does language and remembering. In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung speaks of the nature of his psychology in the same terms, characterizing his work as 'attempts, ever renewed, to give an answer to the question of the interplay between the "here" and the "hereafter" (p.299). Psychology comprises a mediumistic reply, for, says Jung, the dead are 'waiting to hear what answer we will give to them, and what answer to destiny'. David wrote in his final address that we must take 'this and every funeral with us into the world.' In these words, we can hear the trace of David's life and death; the memory of a gifted and generous spirit of a man. He calls us to a responsibility for past, present, and future time.

I feel the best ending of this act of remembering David, is to quote fully from a letter sent to him by the great English poet, Ted Hughes. It fully appreciates the impact of David's writings on an equally inspired and inspiring man. Finally, I'll let the last four lines from his funeral address sound in our ears with the lasting echo of his words. David had sent Ted Hughes a collection of his Hawkwood papers, *Theatre and Behaviour: Hawkwood Papers 1979 to 1986*, (privately published, 1987). Hughes replied:

Dear David Holt,

Somehow your note to me, and your "Theatre and Behaviour", slipped through a crevasse in this mountain of paper on which I live. I found it only a couple of days ago. Thank you for your words and for your lectures. They are so full of things - emerging from real work, insight grappling with the Proteus, not riffling through the card index. Reading them is putting me through a surprising process. I am seeing all kinds of things afresh. Thank you again.

Sincerely, Ted Hughes.

(reproduced in *The Clermont Story*, p.62)

And David's last lines: 'There is never enough time. There is all the time we need. Somehow (God only knows how) both are true, if only we can catch the beat. Which is why we are here. Now. Hereafter. Like it was and like it will be, it is still "once upon a time". Still. A still beat. We are come together, you and I, to catch that beat.'

Thoughts provoked by David Holt's Dramatic Model

Charles Hampton

I was fortunate to work in supervision with the late David Holt, but sadly arrived after the drama workshops which he and others held at Hawkwood House in the early 1980's. The introductory talks on these occasions were published privately in 1987 as *Hawkwood Papers* and provide a tantalising glimpse into what was, by all accounts, a memorable experience. The Dramatic Model, as employed at Hawkwood, was however often a feature of our supervision, for it was used to elucidate not only plays but therapy as well. David was content to allow the analogy between the stage and the consulting room to bear fruit without ever forcing it to a particular conclusion: I commend it to you in the same spirit.

David was a profound thinker. I write this not to place him apart: he would hate that, being always keen to communicate his ideas. Rather, he was attracted to deep structures for their power to inform living and liberate action. In the 1970's, he was part of a course at Westminster Pastoral Foundation that taught ontology – the science of human being – and the Dramatic Model, first drawn in 1972, is very much a part of this preoccupation with how the psyche inhabits and experiences space and time via the body. I will quote from and comment upon the model as set out in *Make Believe and Identity* (1979) – chapter one of *Hawkwood Papers*.

The basic version (there were to be numerous extensions) consists of a quadrant, with the vertical axis having **Author** at its summit and **Plot** at its base: the horizontal axis has **Actor** at the left and **Audience** at the right. (You might like to sketch your own in order to play with what follows.) We are working with assumptions made familiar by the *Narrative Study of Lives* series (Josselson and Lieblich editors, Sage, 1993 to present) and the social construction of reality approach to psychology (Rom Harré, Kenneth Gergen and John Shotter) – namely that our lives are shaped by the stories we

are told and tell ourselves, and that this fact places importance both on the content of the story and the manner of its telling.

In the position of the author, my life is what I make it. I feel responsible for what I do, and for what happens to me. I describe myself as the master (*sic*) of my fate. I claim that my life is my own, that it is up to me to make it as I will.

In the position of actor, my life is a doing rather than a making. I feel responsible for the how of my living rather than the what. There is a sense of freedom, but [it is] different to the author's freedom to make as he wills... In the position of audience or spectator, my life is a reflecting, an observing, a judging. The bias of my interest is towards why's ... My sense of responsibility, and of freedom, is critical, analytic, rather than existential, behavioural.

In the position of plot, my life is determined. I am a creature of circumstance. It is a case of just one thing after another. The eventfulness of living is a matrix within which I am embedded, at its best a tapestry of warp and woof, at its worst the stickiness of a fly paper... We can't pick and choose, we can't modify. We are stuck with it. All we can do is to get stuck into it. But that can be a beginning.

... We are not ever wholly in one of these positions, though we do tend to get caught in one or other of them. Life is a trying business, and we are trying, many of us, to inhabit as much of this model as we can.

It is interesting to ask where various therapeutic approaches might locate themselves within the model. Gestalt practitioners, for example, could well think of themselves as improvising on stage alongside their clients, in Mike Leigh fashion without a script.. A T.A. therapist would take the author to task and set about rewriting the plot. Both might think of the therapeutic session as a rehearsal. For the person-centred counsellor and the psychoanalytic therapist however, it is surely a performance: and where are they to be found – the former in the prompt corner, the latter a pensive critic somewhere in the stalls?

Between each position in the quadrant is a 'line of force and meaning'.

The movement from conception to expression by which Author and Plot are both joined and separated is intentional. The author intends the plot to be. The plot is intended by the author.

Here the analogy poses the question, who is the author in real life? If we exclude a *deus ex machina*, three possibilities occur to me. The author as parent whose right to prescribe the life of their offspring is assumed. One thinks here of the task of individuation as a gradual outgrowing of parental injunctions (how profound they can be!). The enactment of this drama can be traced in the political sphere in the struggle between democracy and despotism. Alternatively, the author might be pictured as the self, devising a plot in which he/she subsequently becomes ensnared: for example the matrix of anxiety first engendered and then suffered by a split personality. Or thirdly, one can think of authorship as arising out of the process that one is engaged in: the therapeutic task, like the creative task, sometimes seems to dictate what happens next.

The plot is intended by the author. But that intention is expressed in a text. If we want to understand the author's intention, we must study his text.

It is a comforting axiom of psychotherapy that a text exists somewhere – that pathogenic factors leave their traces and the story can be reconstructed. However, the text is often problematic – David was deeply interested in the debate about False Memory Syndrome and sought out the founder of the British association. Often too, he saw the text becoming indistinguishable from its con-text – a story, once pursued, opening up into history (he had been a student at Oxford of R.G.Collingwood), its authors too many and various for anything more than conjecture as to causes to be attempted. As a result, he was exercised by what he felt to be a too narrow focus upon parental introjects in some psychoanalytic approaches, believing that reducing everything to the transference made an unreal omission of the context. A late arrival at a session had potentially as much to reveal to him about the madness of our love affair with motor cars as it did about unconscious defences.

Now the horizontal ... The exchange between actor and audience, that which passes between them, is reflective. In trying to inhabit this model, that reflection is in words like conscious and con-science.

In hyphenating these words he is, I believe, wishing to emphasize that thinking, feeling and knowing is done *together* in the encounter. Just as an actor's performance depends to some extent upon the engagement or otherwise of the audience's response, so an emphasis upon the quality of the therapeutic relationship – its empathy, its attunement, its congruence – is revealed by recent research to be crucial to outcome.

But there is also an activity of a more original kind going on across here...I call this interpretation ... Actors interpret their parts. Conductors interpret musical scores. But also, judges interpret law, and in some countries which are perhaps freer than others, they make this interpretation with the assistance of a jury.

What does the analogy posed between stage, concert platform or law court and therapy have to say here? An interpretation makes manifest some new aspect of the latent meaning in each of these texts. A good interpreter is a servant of the text: the inevitable intrusion of the meta-text supplied by his/her own ego-needs has to be tolerated and circumscribed. In therapy however, interpretation often accompanies the emergence of a text. It can be important to withdraw an interpretation if it turns out to have been going in the wrong direction.

It is altogether easier if the text is supposed to be well known because the meta-text is then obvious and often scandalous. The therapist's memory of past sessions may be tested by an unforgiving patient. Sometimes however, a fresh interpretation is accepted as fashioning the text anew. We talk of Olivier's Hamlet or Brendel's Beethoven. The fierce theoretical battles within the history of psychoanalysis are about these moments of re-fashioning. The recognition of transitional objects for example requires a particular framework of understanding which some people inhabit and others don't. An interpretation establishes its own fashion and adherents and passes by way of these into the larger culture. We should not be surprised to note that a dream may conform nowadays to Freudian, Jungian or Kleinian notions of imagery.

But if we turn to the third analogy, between therapy and the law, we find, in interpretation by a jury of one's peers, a much larger claim and one David was fond of championing. Psychotherapy trainings, he believed, must learn to grow beyond their origins and listen to what patients are telling them: and not just patients, but former patients who have gone on doing work on themselves, and the parents, partners, children and friends of patients who have watched them grow or fail to grow. We have arrived, he believed, at a stage in the development of our profession, where the patient may well know a lot about Freud, Jung and Klein. They are consequently able to be critical of practice: and the practice itself must adjust in cognisance of irony and the possibilities of reciprocity. (I'm thinking of Robert Hobson's Conversation approach to psychotherapy, in *Forms of Feeling* Tavistock publications 1985) The result is an opening up of the plot of psychotherapy to wide-ranging referentiality. We see this in the extension of its

concerns to feminism, (Susie Orbach) the sociology of religion (Julia Kristeva) politics (Andrew Samuels) or spirituality (Agneta Schreurs).

There is of course something uncomfortable about a democratic approach to doing therapy. A market-led philosophy such as we already have in the NHS, can subjugate clinical considerations to financial ones. A patient may not be right in their self-diagnosis and technical language often proves a blunt instrument. But the freedom of both protagonists in a therapy to move around the Dramatic Model, which David constantly encouraged in supervision, has seen my work on occasion move out of a stuck phase to find a renewal of intention and enrichment of text. He wrote later (in *Psyche and its operating theatres* 1992) of rescuing 'behaviour' from the behaviourists, and it was the therapist's behaviour he had in mind as much as the patient's.

Behaviour is not only about adapting to an environment. It makes scenes, and in doing so constitutes environment. Therapy in the service of behaviour is not only concerned with the healing of illness. It is also about drawing out (educating) our investment in our own scene-setting, so that characters can go critically in search of authors.

It was this thinking that led to his deep commitment to the quality of functioning of our society. His contribution will be missed but not, I hope, mislaid.

My life is not this steeply sloping hour,
in which you see me hurrying.
Much stands behind me; I stand before it like a
tree;
I am only one of my many mouths,
and at that, the one that will be still the soonest.

I am the rest between two notes,
which are somehow always in discord
because Death's note wants to climb over –
but in the dark interval, reconciled,
they stay there trembling.
And the song goes on, beautiful

From *Das Stundenbuch*, Rainer Maria Rilke
translated by Robert Bly

In *Selected Poems*, Harper & Row, New York
1981

David's Legacy

Stephanie Wilson

Working with David Holt for more than ten years was an unforgettable experience. It was unique and my process of 'seeing' him and acknowledging myself was so gradual, that, like the London Eye, time hardly moved. Yet slowly and surely, together we 'kept time'.

We would share, and listen and then one of us would catch a fragment, an echo, taut and resonant, moving backwards and forwards, the pendulum between us hovering until a stillness of time, a moment opened and held us there. Not of now, not of any day, and yet in its integrity it was both today and yesterday ... quite timeless, a truth, often painful and yet a salve.

'Keeping time' with David in that totally random broad sweep which was uniquely his, where words and breathing and sound and theatre could at any moment inspire an immediate, subtle or awesome response evoking older echoes and unexpected truths always opened unknown paths.

Keeping time didn't grow between us immediately. My first visits were tortuous and polite, and David's approaches economically dealt with. Having found my way to Moreton Road almost like the Messenger, I had been bidden to find a Therapist for my Diploma Course and I'd taken the one name offered me and then sat making the best of the time ahead of me.

The room felt empty. At one end David would sit in a larger armchair beyond a low wickedly sharp rectangular coffee table which took up a deal of space, with me tadpole-like perched the other side nearer the door. Thoughts flitted around my head, sometimes skittering around the room towards the large chair. David's head nodded and he remained impassive ... sitting diagonally across from me, I had no way of knowing what to say or how to proceed. The exercise, although not threatening, was an enigma in a world where I floated without anchor.

As time passed, the room at least became familiar but it wasn't until David moved to a smaller house and we sat in a room where I felt more contained that most of our work began or so I believed. Now with hindsight I know that the work with David really began to takeoff earlier when he was still at Moreton Road. Then, as very much 'my Therapist' and still slightly unreal, he suddenly suggested that I might like to join a group of people for a weekend's therapeutic drama workshop at Hawkwood House in the country.

Instinctively I wanted to go, though I could not understand why I should have been invited to join in the group. We were to read and discuss the relationships in 'Twelfth Night' and then act a scene. The idea was irresistible but as the time came to travel to Gloucestershire for the weekend, I became uneasy – and, by the time I arrived I was rigid with nerves. How would I manage the time with David, how would I communicate with someone I had only seen in one room in a whole space? David didn't feel quite real. If that was so, who should I be in my relationship and what would I say to the David I met at Hawkwood? I'd be there as his client and yet not only his client. I began to vacillate and feel strangely vulnerable and unprotected.

Looking back I can see how clearly and securely David guided us through that weekend not even overtly taking over the lead, acknowledging all our needs and bringing time and place together so that we marked the present as time imagined and time known, working and joining together to hold that as a group. We built around relationships within the play – emerging and creating our new selves through the weekend.

When it came to the final workshop, I found I was without my protective shell. It was alright, the clock did stop and for those long moments I felt entirely real as both Maria the maid and as the self I was. David had faded into the background and there was freedom and lightness and he had led us out of the room and into another safe place where we were all allowing ourselves to let go and enjoy the search.

Not that the entire weekend felt so straightforward. I still had excruciating and frightening moments during the evenings when I had no idea who I was or where I could safely 'land'. There were times of feeling quite adrift from everyone but by the third day I had made some semblance of a landscape for myself before we all broke up.

In essence it was David's courage and caring persistence and his work both inside and outside the counselling room that most struck me. We would talk about the isolation of people around us, isolated not only because of their lives; people who had shrunk emotionally, and who due to social circumstances were often separated cruelly from the rest of the world. We discussed belonging and being socially excommunicated, the social dysfunction of the families and children I had worked with and of the place that therapists held and might also hold in future as legitimate and publicly accepted members within the caring professions. Alongside that David talked of the deeper isolation of therapists and counsellors who work from home and of the need to look openly and honestly at ourselves in this context.

It was around that time that David began to put together a group of people who might want to share in similar discussions at his home around Psyche and Society. A small group of us met and began the first of many Saturday workshops, each one to cover a topic, sharing thoughts and reflections, raised by the original speaker.

Most of us were hesitant at first, but gradually the mornings took shape, with David energetically enthusing us, writing up each meeting in between and sending them to us in his caring and positive way. I was aware of the same thread of intent running through the process, with David hoping to further and broaden thoughtful discussion from within the confines of the room and bring Psyche into Society and share that with colleagues and friends and long-term clients without prejudice or hindrance.

These meetings and the groups that followed later, often left a deep resonance. At the time having worked at the Mulberry Bush School, a special therapeutic residential school where extremely emotionally chaotic primary age children could be treated for 3 to 4 years, I became aware of the need to tell of the work and to spread the message about the specific therapeutic approach to these children, out into the wider world. Within the school I wanted to inform and share something of the unspeakable, of the pain around and for abused and vulnerable children and their carers, and to be open about their needs and also about their capacity to grow emotionally.

David encouraged me to take part in this particular session and to speak openly about my feelings; of the alienation felt by the families, by the children and also about the stress for those who cared for them. My hope was that, as times and feelings changed, the world would begin to listen and become less alien: that those responsible would deny the possibility of such children rejoining their families less, and see that there could be a place for them within society. As the message filtered through there was less denial, and more responses were positive, and a warmth came into the School along with offers of support and funding that enabled an impressive therapeutic and environmental change to take place as rebuilding and development continued over a 6–7 year period.

It was this change and the interface with treatment, this understanding that David had consistently shown me, that gave me confidence and unconsciously allowed me to begin to function and to work in a more positive way outside my own consulting room. I see that there are of course boundaries and these need to be maintained, but for me the legacy that David left was his understanding that boundaries whilst held, can be porous, allowing

so much that is understood and felt within that 'bracket of time' inside the room to spread and become acceptable in the outside world. I have begun to see that the kind of care that David offered me as his patient, with so much courage and conviction, is not only translatable but interchangeable and that for me he worked not only outside the room but through it. I believe that he encouraged us all as therapists to understand the endlessly fluid function of the psyche in all its forms and humours, to hold that awareness and take our skills and knowledge with us throughout our lives.

Black lake, black boat, two black, cut-paper
people.
Where do the black trees go that drink here?
Their shadows must cover Canada.

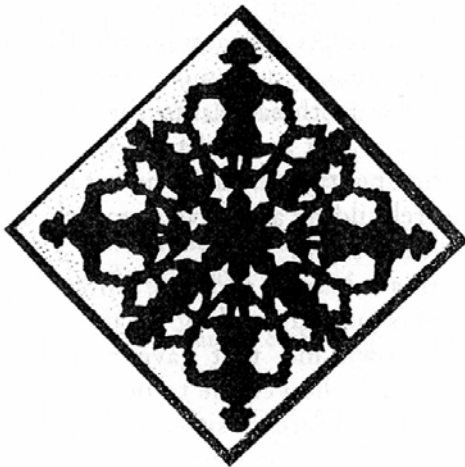
A little light is filtering from the water flowers.
Their leaves do not wish us to hurry:
They are round and flat and full of dark advice.

Cold worlds shake from the oar.
The spirit of blackness is in us, it is in the fishes.
A snag is lifting a valedictory, pale hand;

Stars open among the lilies.
Are you not blinded by such expressionless
sirens?
This is the silence of astounded souls.

Crossing the Water, Sylvia Plath

From *By Heart: 101 poems to remember*
Edited by Ted Hughes, Faber, London 1997



The Guiding Function of Dreams

Carmen Q. Reynal

Dreams are a natural phenomena of the psyche. It is a well established scientific fact that everybody dreams several times a night even though we may not recall them the next day. If we interfere with this natural process a person can develop psychic and/or somatic symptoms and disturbances. It appears that dreams have a biological as well as a psychologically restorative function.

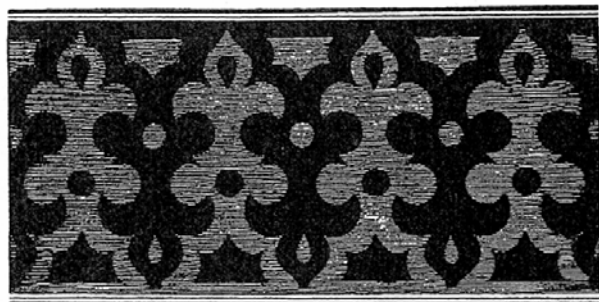
Dreams have an effect on us even if we do not understand them. We may wake up happy and in a good mood after having a nice dream, or troubled and disturbed after a nightmare. Yet if we attend to the dreams and we try to find their meaning we reinforce the healing function of the dream.

For Jung dreams were exceedingly valuable because he felt they were spontaneous 'impartial facts of nature....objective facts' stemming from the unconscious psyche. Dreams are independent of our conscious will. We do not make, invent or influence dreams; if we want to dream about a certain problem it is impossible. We are always astonished and surprised at the images of dreams, at their ingenuity. St. Augustine wrote: 'I thank Thee, Lord, that Thou didst not make me responsible for my dreams.' Even a saint could not help having unusual even terrible dreams.

Dreams are essentially irrational. We cannot look to them for logic or rational thinking. Dreams use the language of symbols, myths and images which, to our rationally trained minds, are difficult to understand; this language takes much work and a long time to master. Yet dreams can point and help guide us in a unique way towards new insights and self knowledge, and may help us deal with conflicts or problems we are wrestling with. They are like the wind, which 'blows where it will, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes'. (John: 3:8) They seem capricious and irrational but they are often highly meaningful.

Even though many people have heard of Freud and Jung and their theories about dreams, many remain sceptical or feel dreams are just nonsense. Some people are afraid of dreams and their meaning

because they might compel us to look at some unpleasant or surprising fact about ourselves. I remember the case of a person who came to see me because she wanted to train as a therapist. In one of the first dreams she brought, she dreamt she was trying to hide from somebody who was taking a photograph of her. The dream showed her conflict. Even though she expressed her willingness to look and work on herself through analysis, there were unconscious resistances (hiding from the photographer) to seeing herself objectively (in the photograph). Acknowledging the dream helped the ego come closer to the position of her unconscious psyche, thus easing tension and anxiety she need to proceed slowly in her analytic work.



At a deeper level I have seen how dreams can help an individual at times of crises, for example, when the person is confronting a serious life threatening illness. At such a juncture in life, archetypal figures sometimes appear in dreams which guide the dreamer through the period of crises. The dreamer feels supported by these previously unknown inner figures which are experienced as a power beyond the individual. Such dreams are felt as numinous, even magical. They are what Jung referred to as 'big' dreams and their powerful effects remain for a long time with the dreamer. Archetypal healing and guiding dreams have been experienced by all cultures throughout the ages, from those who seeked the help of Asklepios in ancient Greece, to Biblical times to the dreams of people today.

By paying attention to our dreams, whether big or normal, we can slowly connect and root ourselves to our inner landscape which not only guides but also enriches us in our conscious lives.

March 21 1953

I am involved with others in an attempt to create the world. We are in the confused inert matter of which the world is to be made, and are working desperately to grasp it, to seize by some sudden lightening gesture of hand or imagination, the order of coherence which could make an understandable world out of it all. Every now and then it is about to come, and we heave a sigh of relief, then it collapses and disintegrates again. So we have to start again.

March 22 1960

The most confusing thing, which explains much of my present exhaustion and skin disease, is that in some people, in a part of me, hunger expresses itself as a desire to be ingested yourself, to *be* eaten, rather than to eat. Connected with this vision is the struggle between two opposed ways of understanding and controlling life: one is by trying to grasp, take a bite of, hold onto things: the other, to be part of a stream and to try and guide the stream by being part of the stream to the fullest extent.

August 29 1982

1. Discontinuity between heights, on a vertical. Breathless: episodic, jerking, breathlessness, seeming to be all about the breathing element of my speech.
2. Without any reason, completely inconsequentially, I have walked out on a patient in the middle of a session, just left. (It was a child, about four, with its/his mother, and the woman friend who had given her my name; so, three of them.) I am in Bristol, haven't a chance of getting back to session in time, before its ending. What can have got into me? Must realize that I am far iller than I had ever imagined. Banging my head on the ground: how could I have done anything so irresponsible, thoughtless, dissociated?

October 14, 1997

Some situation of teaching what 'psychoanalysis' is about. It involves showing people, teaching, how there is a range of foodstuffs, cooking, which goes from nice food into stuff that one would assume to be simply too disgusting to be eatable.

from *Eventful Responsibility* (sic) – *fifty years of dreaming remembered* by David Holt, with a preface by Sonu Shamdasani, published by Validthod Press Oxford 1999

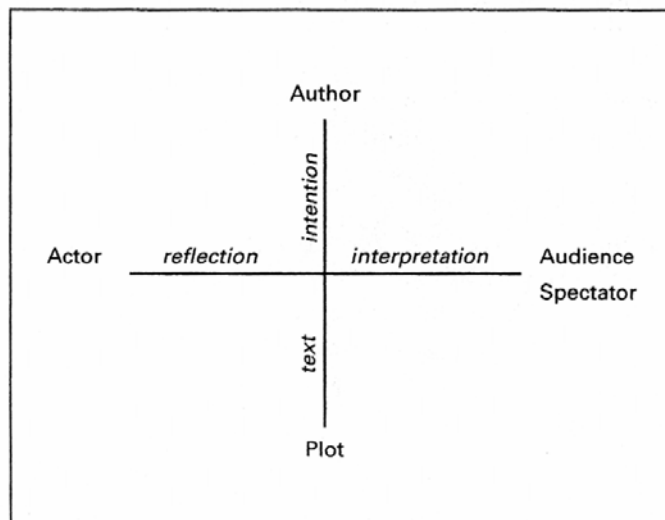
David Holt – in Celebration

Patricia Watts

David died on Easter Sunday this year. I feel the loss of a true and genuine friend. I am aware of the great loss it must be for Edith. As husband and wife they seemed to support each other in their separate interests and together offered a warm hospitality. Our Society has lost a committed and involved member of many years. David's openness and willingness to communicate were always apparent: how often after a talk, he asked the first question! His interest in therapy was wide and deep, always more concerned with extending and integrating rather than narrowing and reducing: his abiding question, what do we *make* of life in contrast to the raw material made available to us. Central to his thinking and feeling was the emphasis on the complexity of understanding time.

'Time is given into our keeping. We meet together to keep time. Life is for timing, just as time is for living.' In Shakespeare's 'The Winter's Tale' time is personified. David was drawn imaginatively to the notion of 'Time' holding an hourglass from which time flows like a river with beginning and end, separated by the flow. Or seeing it as a flowing in a circle in which beginning and end join in the flowing. The image of the hourglass contains both possibilities.

David's own container, the 'dramatic model' offers possibilities which are both pragmatic and spacious.



In the position of Author, my life is what I make it. In the position of Actor, my life is a doing rather than a making. I am concerned with the 'how' rather than the 'what'. In the position of Audience my life is a reflecting, an observing, a judging. There is a concern with 'why'. And in the position of plot my life is determined. I can't pick and choose. I can only get stuck into it – this can, of course, be a beginning.

Rather than getting fixed in one of these positions the aim is to move between the four possibilities suggested by the model.

David was greatly interested in theatre and drama. For many years he led a weekend at Hawkwood College in Gloucestershire in which we worked on powerful narratives: Myths – Amor and Psyche; The Odyssey; the series of Jacob stories from the Old Testament and texts of Shakespeare's plays. We worked in silence, some sounds but no words. The culmination was a shared enactment. He saw enactment as a way of opening up an exchange between psychoanalytical, behavioural and ontological approaches to therapy.

At that time I taught on the Sesame Course for the use of Movement and Drama in therapy: students on that course helped by leading small groups (about 60 people participated in these weekends). We always met with the group leaders several times before the 'weekend'. David enjoyed the students' ability to play, their freshness of ideas and imaginative approach which was mirrored in his talks over the weekend. He brought together the texts of these talks, also giving a flavour of some of the experiences of the weekends in a book called 'Theatre and Behaviour' (Hawkwood Papers 79 -86),

Maybe David's emphasis on time was due to his own perception of its ephemeral nature and the great sadness in this, which is so easy to deny. In not denying but endeavouring to come to terms with this he could make a space for himself which made it possible truly to give attention to another in which a real meeting could take place and healing be engendered. I am aware of my good fortune in having met him as a friend and colleague and experienced his generous spirit, imaginative invention and receptiveness.

I would like to leave the last word with David – from a reading he prepared for his own funeral.

There is never enough time. There is all the time we need. Sometimes (God only knows how) both are true, if only we can catch the beat. Which is why we are here. Now, Hereafter, like it was and like it will be, it is still 'once upon a time'.

David Holt

Rob Waygood

'Why are you banging your left heel on the ground like that?' I asked of David. I can't recall his reply but the experience had shaken me: my father who died 15 years before had an artificial left leg. When he had walked a long way he used to bang his heel on the carpet to stop the nerves twitching in what remained of his leg, (I recall that he wore holes in three lounge carpets when I was a kid). Years later the power of the counter-transference to move David's body like that staggered me. I had consulted him as a 50th birthday present to myself! I wanted to look at my fears of illness and death and at my sexuality. He told me that he had done the same at 50 ... I appreciated his sharing that.

Being with David was as much a body experience for me as an intellectual one. His size, his facial expressions, his grunts and growls and other wild noises both scared and enlivened me. He talked of both the overt and the hidden power in the father/son relationship, which included both the Long John Silver in my seemingly kind father, and in the son, the competitive killer aspect as well. As David said: 'Isn't it about the threesome of Father, Son and IT, where the IT can include sexuality/killing and generosity/spirit?' This 'IT' appeared in a dream of mine as a 'radioactive' me, as if I was dangerous for a non-radioactive world outside. David pointed out that the world outside is radioactive too with various psychoses. As he said, travelling at 70 or 80 miles an hour is pretty psychotic!

David's generosity was his honesty about himself. He was prepared to address difficult areas: he shared some of the 'IT' in himself, and palpable it was: his sense of limitation, his stammer, his concern that his highly individual intellectual ideas were partly defensive obfuscation. Ah! a wild man to scare me and then to meet me. This was edible stuff, it helped me toward my spontaneity. For some people he was more like nagual-man (c.f. Carlos Castaneda): alarming, blasphemous or Pan-like. Sometimes he seemed to play the edges of what was acceptable. For instance, he described his 'profound terror' of how the church and some others use the concept of love. Because of this he rarely used the word himself in my company. But love it was that I felt so often in his presence, in the form of his kindness and humility.

I was asked to write something about David for this Bulletin, and I have chosen to write from a personal angle of him both as my therapist, then as

my supervisor. He kept nudging against my resistance towards involvement in the OPS. It's not an easy organisation for a feeling-intuitive who prefers process to thesis. His answer to this might be: 'Use the thinking function in the service of the feeling function'.

His three word triangle that most rings true for me is: Author – Authority – Authenticity. If you are able to take full authorship for your life (and not blame out or up), then true authority emerges based on your own authenticity (being in your own skin). That's David for me.

I am aware that he seemed to die too soon for some. What can one say to address this absence of David?

My Sorrow, when she's here with me
Thinks these dark days of autumn rain
Are beautiful as days can be;
She loves the bare, the withered tree;
She walks the sodden pasture lane.

Her pleasure will not let me stay.
She talks and I am fain to list:
She's glad the birds are gone away,
She's glad her simple worsted gray
Is silver now with clinging mist.

The desolate, deserted trees,
The faded earth, the heavy sky,
The beauties she so truly sees,
She thinks I have no eyes for these,
And vexes me for reason why.

Not yesterday I learned to know
The love of bare November days
Before the coming of the snow,
But it were vain to tell her so,
And they are better for her praise.

My November Guest Robert Frost

From *Staying Alive: real poems for unreal times*
Edited by Neil Astley Bloodaxe Books 2002