

When our cords were cut we were not severed from our mothers but from our own organs - our own placenta, which were appropriate to our old environment but unnecessary in our new one. We do not regard the foetal circulatory system, different as it is from the child's or adults, as one big heap of congenital defects but as a system superbly adapted to his circumstances. We no longer regard foetal and neonatal renal function, assymetric as it is by adult standards, as inferior but rather entirely appropriate to the osmometric conditions in which it has to work. Is it too much to ask therefore that perhaps we should accord also to foetal personality and behaviour, rudimentary as they may appear by adult standards, the same consideration and respect.

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## Jenny James

*Interviewed by James Crippledini*

*Do you have the 3-week intensive?*

No, we have a 3-month intensive, or a 3-year intensive. All living together on the same spot is so intense that there is no artificiality in the therapy, no organization or special intensives: the encouragement is towards total involvement with one another, and there's nothing like getting close to another human being for bringing up deep feelings. Sometimes intensives *do* happen as a result of this: anyone who stays here for a few months will go through times when they are having more than one session a day every day for a period, and there are often mini-group intensives when 4 or 5 or half a dozen people get deeply involved and their wires cross in good and bad ways and they work together day in, day out. There is also an organic pattern whereby whole-house groups will take 3 days to come to a closure - with gaps for sleeping, eating and milking the cows, but each group running to 12 and more hours. We've noticed a 'wave' effect in therapy through letting things take their own course.

*Is your 3 weeks as programmed as Janov's seem to be?*

Janov's programming makes us sick! You can't programme real growth. Obviously, if you have a clinical set-up, basically a reflection of his own psychiatric, professional, elitist, hierarchical background, then all kinds of unnatural growths occur: like people popping in for daily sessions, crying and yelling in front of a stranger, who is bound to be affected in one way or another; the stranger doesn't show how he is affected, is not 'real' with the 'patient', and 'patient' is expected to become real.

*If, in fact, Janov's therapy is nothing like as streamlined and cold and professional as he makes out in his writing - which I suspect, given that even therapists trying to be scientific get the hiccups and need to piss - then he shouldn't pretend it is. A lot of my time with new people coming for therapy or writing in is wasted 'demystifying' Janov's edition of primal therapy, and I get a lot of shit coming my way for being*

human with the people who come to me wanting white coats and hermetized therapy as a result of reading 'The Primal Scream'.

*How far back do you think the foetus is conscious? Implications for abortion?*

Difficult. I've had two abortions myself. Once I found myself 'going into' (our jargon - is it commonly used?) firstly my elder sister who died at birth from the forceps digging into her brain - feeling how the cold, tight, uptight passage of my mother had crushed the life out of her, and then I was the next child to try to cut the path - then I got the horrors as I 'went into' my own first child, Becky's twin, who died at 3 weeks, hydrocephalic - her head got stuck, we both nearly died, and presumably Becky too, I nearly killed the lot of us through my own dead pelvic region, my own mother-fed taboos and fears and hatred. I remember sobbing, 'Oh no, oh no, I don't want to think about that now', because suddenly like a flash I realized I'd killed two more babies - abortions, and I'd been into so much at that stage it just seemed too much to face the whole question of abortion 'from within'. That was a couple of years ago and hasn't cropped up since - I'll let you know if ever it happens that I become my aborted babies, and then I'll have firmer feelings about the question.

There is absolutely no doubt that I myself, and many others I've helped, have gone deeply into being a foetus, but I couldn't tell you at what age and stage the foetus is - in 'Room to Breathe', I describe how I felt myself (on acid) as a throbbing alive blob budding arms and legs which at first were just an energetic 'impulse' in me and then started to grow and reach out - that must be very early indeed, though I don't know enough biology to know when the limbs start budding. I have helped friends who have felt clearly the two energy systems of their parents meeting - usually in a disgusting and deathly or violent way - to create them, and I have myself 'become' my mother and father before I was conceived or thought of. A friend of mine, a primal therapist in the US called Steve Lett, has written at length about 'preconception experiences' - you can contact him at 22 Union Square, Milford, N.H. 03055 USA if you'd like to get his articles - I think they're well worth looking at and maybe reprinting, especially as he was sceptical at first himself about what he was experiencing and looked for a more 'ordinary' explanation of what he was feeling.

*What are the implications of your work for childbirth and bringing up children?*

Um. Well, firstly we intend to have all our projected babies born out here on the island of Inishfree without doctors, interference, fuss, bother or worry. We'll squat and have them, and they'll be referred to, not done to. The only concession we'll make to society is registering them, as it's too inconvenient to go against the law in this respect. Until our first baby is born out here, I can't tell you more, except that we have had lots of already-born babies live with us, and the most important thing of all is that the mother (or father) *has sessions about how she wants to kill the child*, because every mother who has herself been ill-fed (and that's all of us) wants at some time - and often - to kill her baby. If she doesn't get into it in the context of a session and face all her own emptiness, she'll be passing on the killing in other ways - through her 'cuddles' perhaps? - to cover it over.

We don't bring our children up. The hugely important issue here again is violence, aggression, power: we abhor as much the parent who in a kind of false enlightenment lets the child run over her/him, as the parent who wants to control. The former is *far* more common in therapy circles and 'progressive' circles in general: facing a child with your own aggression in a non-controlling way is something I've *never* seen except in our tribes, which is alarming. I hope it is happening somewhere! otherwise the child will grow up boundary-less, irritated, indolent, not knowing exactly what's wrong, just grumpy and totally unlovable, moaning and definitely the sort of person that other people will want to hit!

*To what extent are sex roles phoney?*

We have during the last year at Atlantis had this horrid syndrome whereby *men* who come to us are in the main a load of weak shits wanting their nappies changed, and the women who come are bouncy, colourful, sexual, brave, outspoken and thoroughly wanting to know themselves. There have been one or two exceptions: a couple of females (definitely not women) who have come in, totally violent in their passivity, having learnt to perfection the 'I'll sit down and whimper and look unhappy and you'll pick me up' role. They lasted about 24 hours each as they were met with a holocaust of anger for which I offer no apologies. They can get their therapy in caged therapy where the Christian-minded therapist gets paid for eating shit.

We've also had memorable, admirable exceptions to the floppy-men syndrome: blokes who've got their lives together in the 'great outside' and who come into therapy 'by accident' - usually by sleeping with one of our ladies, or because they're hitching past and drop in, or just because they get to know us and find our way of life delightful. These people need therapy really badly - they are living at only a fraction of their capacity; the men who come thinking they need therapy often only need a kick in the arse and to do something solid for themselves in the 'outside' - like leaving home, mummy, hospital, virginity or drugs.

With regard to sex roles at a deep level, it is my own belief that there *is* a difference, believe it or not! between men and women: I have felt it in myself, but not nearly enough to write at length about it, I am still exploring: it seems to me that to be a woman *is* to open up and receive, and to be a man is to push outwards and into, and that although of course women have to be as aggressive as a mare on heat to get what we want in the world, and although of course men need on occasion to lie back and sink and be-done-to, be loved and nourished and stroked and cuddled and cared-for, *still* in a thoroughly adult, non-aggressive mood, there will be a basically different experience of cosmic energy in the male and in the female. Joined together, a healthy couple *will* become as one - orgasm will be experiencing wholeness, will be to experience the primeval winds of energy that are neither acting-upon, nor acted-upon but just *are*; then you'll know what it is to be both male and female. But I feel that the pseudo-enlightened progressive middle-class male who tries 'not to be sexist', or to see 'the woman's point of view' is just a feeble self-castrator, and I think he's lost himself completely. One of the hugest difficulties we have at Atlantis and Villa Road is getting

men to dare to be totally male, to show their strength completely. And with women (oh how popular I'm going to be!) women-libbers denying their womanhood, which has nothing to do of course with flapping eye-lashes and passively waiting to be got. To be openly gorgeously aggressively flaunting of our sexuality without games, with a huge grin, with joy and pleasure in our bodies is so threatening - as we have seen - to any man who is only being half of himself and brings up the most amazing rage in women who are only being half of themselves - and causes such joy of life to surge up in men and women in tune with themselves that I am convinced there *is* as much a difference in the basic sexual behaviour of men and women as there is in my billy-goat and his harem.

*What do you think about homosexuality? Can it be OK?*

Sexuality is OK. Truncated sexuality isn't. Specified, limited, inhibited choice of sex-partners isn't OK. Free-flowing life energy that is attracted towards warmth and love of life in another doesn't stop to look between the legs to see if proposed partner is the right shape. *But* it just so happens that there is usually a far higher degree of spontaneous turn-on between people of opposite biologies, and it just so happens that the 'confirmed homosexuals' I've met are flabby and lacking in strong sexual energy: they seem to need some specific *tension* to make themselves feel erect and large in the world. One 'homosexual' I've known for several years worked through his pattern and it was quite obvious in him what had happened to totally divert him from women: he was a 'good Catholic', had dutifully kept away from girls; their father had terrified him, and he found that if he acted the chirpy little sycophant around strong men, he wasn't frightened - in fact the pleasure of not being terrified out of his wits started expressing itself in erections.

The thing about sexuality is that it has to be sexual; if it is anything else, it needs sorting out: and the thing about restrictions - whether hetero - or homo-sexual ones, is that they contain a wealth of fear and anger and hurt to be explored. Rigid heterosexuality is as much held up to the light as is the opposite in our communes. Then beautiful things happen.

*Do you see any political implications?*

Oh wow! We'd have to be blind not to. You try being alive and sexual and non-religious and not sending your children to school, and not spending your life in the local pub in an Irish fishing village. No better environment to convince any doubters that deep primal therapy is totally revolutionary. If it isn't, it isn't primal therapy. The second you start to become yourself, someone will try and stop you. If we dance in bare feet and dance freely and sexually, we get lighted cigarettes thrown under our feet and our people - men and women alike, have been beaten up at local dances. If an Irish woman, like Marietta Vallely, tells the truth of what she feels to her husband, a week later we are threatened by his IRA comrades with being kneecapped, and with having the house blown up; the local police stand by protectively while his mates smash our windows in; the local priest warns parents not to let their children

play with ours; the local county council tries to force me to paint over my amazing colourful zodiac-signed house in black and white; questions are asked about us in the Irish Parliament, the rag Sunday papers try to get us out. Everyone is threatened.

In London, in a 'leftwing' street of squats, we are frowned upon, sometimes beaten up, threatened, ostracized, criticized (not directly of course), asked to leave - the revolutionaries can't take us, the conservatives can't take us. Because what we are doing isn't scratching at the surface. We really are changing ourselves and everyone who comes into contact with us is changed - or rather returned to how they once were, before their parents and teachers altered *them*.

In Ireland who we are and what we are doing shows up in far starker contrast: and our effect will become clearer as the years go by. My own prediction is that because we don't fit in at all (when I was told to 'apply for permission to maintain the changes in house-decoration', I wrote back and said: If you want to agress on me, you'll have to do it for yourselves, I'm not applying to you for permission to do anything, I don't need it' - that was 15 months ago. I've not heard a bleep since), they simply don't know how to cope with us - here we are innocently leading our own lives, and yet lo and behold, we are corrupting their young, leading people away from the straight and narrow of the Catholic Church, providing a focus for the immense unhappiness and dissatisfaction rampant in Ireland, showing it is possible to be joyful and to look after yourselves, showing there is an alternative to television, masturbation and alcoholism. Strange things are happening: hitherto obedient sons and daughters are telling their parents where to get off, the courts are being dragged in to help cope (my own boyfriend has an injunction against him restricting him from entering or *writing to* the parental home in Galway where his father is a University professor), the priests and nuns are calling on the wayward Irish children at our London commune, the police are called in to stop young sons telling their parents what a rotten, miserable childhood they had - and all to no avail. We don't stop. We gather momentum, we *like* it! We laugh, we cope with it all, we turn it to joy - the papers and the TV start to say really favourable things about us, and here we still are. we're not doing anything illegal - it's not yet a written law that you can't be happy, that you can't have sex, that you can't cry and yell at one another, that you can't live in groups; they simply cannot control our everyday relating and *that* is what is revolutionary about us, and *that* is why the revolutionaries' of Villa Road and other places hate us so much, because they can't fathom why we are so *happy* with one another when 'all we do is shout and scream at one another like a load of loonies'.

Ask again in a year's time what the political implications are!

*What are your future plans?*

We don't have any. In the two years since Atlantis started, we have grown more than I could ever have imagined - and not through planning, simply through never turning down anyone who wants to come here, but instead just buying an extra caravan here, and extra cottage there, doing up an attic room, people moving to Glasgow, to

Sweden, starting up here, the London squat expanding to two, four, six houses to accommodate - organic growth is the only way. We know how to contract too, when that's necessary, we never carry 'dead weight' but tip people right out of the cradle if they're maggoting around and using us as a hospital instead of as an exciting adventure and journey into the unknown.

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Sue Todd

## Implantation

*My Experience: July 7 day Group:*

I had begun the group by knowing I had to work on sex foods and birth, and they were all tied up together. I had a secret - a terrible secret. I couldn't tell anyone. It was a strange group for me. I was up in the air, I didn't know which way to turn or what to do. In the past I always had some awareness of where I was at and no trouble getting into my feelings. This time I was confused, unable to get centered, with a feeling of not being grounded, suspended in space. Feeling of I am floating, not in touch, don't know what is happening, what is expected of me.

I wanted my forehead touched and stroked, a hand held over my forehead. I was angry when the hand was taken away. I kept putting the hand back where I wanted it. This happened a couple of times and then the hand was taken away for good. I felt trapped, pressure on shoulders and chest, I couldn't spread out. I laid down between N's legs and kept moving my head around - rooting (not like in birth, trying to get out) but trying to find the right spot to rest. I felt like if I found the right spot then all the good stuff can fill me up so that there are not empty spaces. N. said that when I found the right spot for me that she felt her inner core being drained (she said if my mother felt like that no wonder she was resentful of my implantation). One day I spent six hours in agony waiting to work with N. I felt I was in heavy stuff and I wanted all of her to be there when I went through it. I thought I was in touch with my adult and I wanted to do the right thing (set it up so that it would work). While waiting I went through feelings of anger, sadness, hurt, loneliness, longing - had a doll which represented both my mother and myself - altering roles and beating up both my mother and myself - left alone - scared - I wanted N. there - she wouldn't come and I went to her. She said she had no more time or energy for me. I thought it was the end of the world. What had I done wrong, why was this happening - strong urge to die, to self-destruct. I talked to Bill, wanted him to tie me up. for I was afraid of what I would do - can't figure it out, can't understand, don't know what to do - (only 8 days old at implantation, can't reason). I couldn't get out of Primal space, deepest I've ever been - wanted to stop, felt crazy and looked crazy - finally took Valium.