



BOOK REVIEWS

ASTROLOGY: A PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH by Eve Jackson.
Dyad Press, £5.95

This book describes a humanistic approach to Astrology. Eve Jackson explores various themes; time and space, symbols, science versus magic, psychology, fate and free will, as well as the meaning of planets and the mythology associated with their names. She explains the various uses of Astrology with the main focus being on the natal chart. She is clear that the Astrologer's awareness of their own personality blocks and their own commitment to personal growth is very important in natal chart interpretation, since it is common to attract clients on whom it is easy to project one's own neurosis. She emphasises the importance of dialogue between Astrologer and client so that the Astrologer's rich and universal language of symbols, which is capable of producing powerful associations, can connect the person "with the symbolic dimensions of his own life".

She subscribes to 'person centred' Astrology. The process of becoming conscious is seen as one step to responsibility and the opportunity to change patterns that block growth and wholeness. 'Event centred' Astrology sees people as passive victims of events beyond our control.

There is a good description of the significance of transits and progressions, as outer and inner impulses. These, together with life circles are related to psychological models, showing how they can be viewed in Astrological terms.

Modern Astrology is linked with Jung's psychology and his principle of synchronicity. This can be seen in the newly discovered planet Chiron which is prominent in the charts of healers and psychotherapists and links with the mythology of the wounded healer.

Eve Jackson also gives a convincing argument about Astrology being both a science and an intuitive art. At a time when the discovery of quantum physics has put under scrutiny the causal premise of science itself, there seems to be ground for feeling that Astrology might be of help in bridging the gap between rational and irrational, with the lunar intuitive side in equal partnership with the solar more objective attitude.

Laura Vasini- Ribbons

ORDINARY ECSTASY: HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY IN ACTION
by John Rowan, Routledge 1988 287p. £7.95

2nd Edition

This is an updated and completely rewritten edition of the book that first came out in 1976. The contents of each chapter have been reworked with important new additions. Like the earlier work it is well structured and covers the origins, applications and future of Humanistic Psychology. The main methods are described very well and the values and flavour of humanistic psychology are well represented in a readable and, as one would expect from John Rowan, well researched way.

Among the additions are new bits on people such as Alvin Mahrer, therapies such as Primal Integration and movements such as Paganism. The research appendix in the old edition is now a full chapter. Footnotes have been worked into the text and into a bibliography (which was lacking in the earlier edition.) About half the bibliography is post 1976 when the first edition appeared. The book is also much better printed. The only disappointment is the index which is now little more than an author index and does not allow you to look up things like sub-personalities, power or catharsis which was possible in the earlier work.

A chapter on education suggests that trying out the ideas of humanistic psychology and researching their outcome mainly occurred before 1976. Initially it was Carl Rogers who gave impetus in the USA to child centred teachers working in individual classrooms. Later on teacher centred head teachers had an effect on whole schools. The hope was that this would lead to a more person centred society.

The book does not mention however that during the last ten years all local education authorities in Britain expected primary schools to become child centred - and have largely succeeded (though if they acknowledge anyone it is Clegg not Humanistic Psychology or Rogers). Secondary schools have begun to follow suit in that they are increasingly committed to the comprehensive ideals of incorporating all children into one school, have worked out how to teach groups of mixed ability, show genuine respect for all language and culture groups, are actively working against sexism and racism and warmly expect children to be participant in, rather than the recipients of, education. Nor does the book comment on the fact that central and local government policies now stress the opposite: competition, impersonal assessment and rigid hierarchical power aimed at enriching individuals and schools which are high in exam passes and allowing the rest to perish. There is a problem here which humanistic psychologists have not properly identified about the linkage between the individual teacher, the school and government

The chapter on organizational psychology begins "Most of what is valuable in management theory today comes from humanistic psychology." The essence of this is concern with human relationships, personal development, encouragement of personal power and a sense of worth and belonging as being important in their own right as well as a means to greater task efficiency. The book does not discuss whether the market place climate which has increasingly dominated British organizations since 1978 has embodied anything at all of this theory. Again there is a problem about the linkage between the individual worker, the organisation, government and society.

Humanistic psychology does not have a way of linking the world of the individual with the world of the large group. It is strong on individual identity without any notion of social identity. It is not surprising that John Rowan ignores this issue. Fortunately he does not waste space on the anti-organisation position which used to be adopted by some psychologists. It amounted to the idea that relationships without structure (*communitas*) are humanistic and good and that structured relationships (*society*) are the product of fear and are unhumanistic and bad. It views society as something which would not really exist or be a problem if we had all grown healthy and integrated through the disciplines and practices of the human potential movement. This sort of thing leads to guruism and creeping authoritarianism of which the Rajneeshis were an embarrassing example for humanistic psychology.

Ordinary Ecstasy is better for not going into crass views about society. But what it does say about the link between the individual and society seems to me to be a bit overoptimistic. Page 46 states "This makes it possible to believe that our present time of troubles is actually a transition period to a person-centred society, where the industrial system would be subservient to, and responsible to, the larger purposes of *the society*" (my italics). I am not persuaded by this even though John Rowan names three other distinguished optimists who agree with him. German Jews after the First World War were more integrated into society than in any other European country and were optimistic that they would never suffer the oppressed fate of Polish Jews who had to sit on yellow seats at the back of buses and at the back of classrooms. Yet they perished. To integrate humanistic psychology into society we need a good theory of how society works and how the transition to a person centred society can be developed and maintained.

The subtitle of the book is Humanistic Psychology in Action yet it does not give us any information about ourselves in action either as individual or as organised psychologists. This is a pity as it might offer some clues about the problem of linkage between individuals, small groups and society.

I suspect that our own social identity is mainly in the lower status end of the helping and caring professions: nurses but not psychiatrists: social workers and school teachers but not social policy makers: psychotherapists in the suburbs but not psychoanalysts in Harley Street and Hampstead. Our interests are the interests of the junior professions.

As individuals we are decent helpers and carers. Our behaviour in groups seems to be of two kinds. As individual practitioners we are entrepreneurial capitalists. We contract with clients to provide a service for a fee. This may be means tested but it relates to what the market will bear. Practices are mainly individual. Growth centres are set up and run as small businesses. But as professionals we are also evolving groups to control standards of training and practice. These groups, such as the AHPP and BAC institutionalise the concerns of practitioners to protect themselves by giving a demonstrably good service and by excluding risky practices and practitioners. Psychiatric cover is sought to protect practitioners from 'boarderline clients' and protection is sought against being sued for malpractice.

Structures for influencing government and public opinion are also taking shape. These organisations are beginning to deemphasize

catharsis, altered states of consciousness (such as hypnosis), transpersonal practice, spontaneity and interpersonal conflict resolution partly in order to get through crowded agendas and partly to appear credible to established groups in society, such as government departments and doctors. A close look at all of this might suggest that we are following the path mapped out by Ioan Lewis in his book *Ecstatic Religion*. Once a movement such as humanistic psychology becomes an established part of society it sheds its ecstatic roots in celebration and awareness and becomes an institution linking the individual to the established structures of society. Clearly John Rowan is aware of these problems. He points out for example that humanistic psychotherapy might become "absorbed into the medical system and treated as some kind of medical aid." p103. It would be good to read his views on how humanistic psychology, which is very well described in this book, is developing as a part of our larger society.

David Jones

A HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY: MAIN CURRENTS IN
PSYCHOLOGICAL THOUGHT Thomas Hardy Leahey: Prentice Hall
International. 2nd Ed. 1987

This book aims at being a set text on the science and history of psychology for degree students. The author's perspective lies firmly in the cognitive field, but he certainly has an open mind. Although he professes to be a rationalist who came to psychology through Freud via the cognitive field, he is open to any new good ideas.

The first chapter is a clear and concise look at the philosophy and history of science. Except perhaps for an over-emphasis on Thomas Kuhn, it gives a good precis of most of the information a psychology graduate is likely to need. I personally waded through all Popper's mighty tomes: this book would have saved me three month's work. There is also a very readable resume of most of the key philosophers who have given any thought to the human condition, beginning with Thales of Miletus and ending with Hermann von Helmscholtz and spanning from 585 BC to 1894 AD. For someone who didn't know the Renaissance from the Reformation, never mind the Enlightenment, this section of the book was excellent. His comments on Descartes and Rousseau are particularly fascinating. This section includes all the major philosophers from Aristotle to St. Thomas Aquinas and beyond, and leads on nicely to the next section.

Founding Psychology is split into three chapters - The Psychology of Consciousness, The Unconscious Mind, and Adaptation. The three main psychologists looked at are Wundt, Freud and Darwin. The chapter on Freud contains the clearest exposition of his theories in a general text book that I have come across. For a start it doesn't just trot out his theory of the tri-partite unconscious and psychosexual stage development. After a brief resume, Leahkey centres on what he considers the

important texts: Studies in Hysteria, Project for a Scientific Psychology, The Interpretation of Dreams, Three Essays on Sexuality, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Failure of an Illusion and Civilization and its Discontents. He points out that Freud measured the validity of his work by its degree of rejection; if it was rejected, it must be correct, i.e. he wanted to be a radical. Unfortunately for Freud, his work was generally accepted by the then establishment.

The rest of the book covers the rise and rise of behaviourism and cognitive psychology. There are some dull spots, but it soon takes off - mainly from Pavlov onwards.

The account of Skinner's work is exceptionally good. Love him or hate him, his ideas are fascinating, and well portrayed here. Also, one rather revolutionary judgement is made that I suspect most humanistic psychologists will resist, namely that Skinner is the ultimate humanist. Beyond Freedom and Dignity shows that Skinner sees in human beings an unlimited potential for growth that is only restrained by their environment, and also that the concept of freedom has served its purpose in freeing human beings from religious dogma, but has now become dogma itself. Something to think about.

Leahey also has some interesting points about cognitive psychology.

The Clausewitz misquotation that 'cognitive psychology is the continuation of behaviourism by other means.' sums up this argument. He has seen the work of Mediation theorists assume the jargon of Artificial Intelligence and making a bid to turn into a new science. However, when the founding father of a discipline, in this case Neisser, claims this science is going nowhere, something must be wrong.

So far, so good, but there are lapses. For a start, out of 480 pages, less than 10 are concerned with humanistic psychology. A brief resume of Maslow and Rogers, and that is it. On the other hand Szas and the anti-psychiatrists are well represented.

One point that is raised about humanistic psychology is that perhaps its founders weren't brave enough. They cut the thread with mainstream psychology but they still wouldn't let go of the trappings of 'science'. Leahey also suggests that mainstream psychology is in danger of being swallowed up by biology or socio-biology, or by the pseudosciences. Parapsychology in particular poses a problem. Its methodology is scientific but its topic and potential findings would reveal the rationist view of science as totally wrong..

The book is well written, easy to read and fulfills its purpose admirably. It will be good for students, but I also think that anyone with a general interest in psychology would enjoy it.

Adrian Tomkinson

CONFESSIONS OF A JANUS-BRAIN: A PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF LIVING IN TWO WORLDS by John Heron Endymion Press 1987 179p £7.50

This is a daft book: supremely elegant, charming and readable, but daft. John Heron got Co-Counselling going in this country as a break-away from Re-evaluation Counselling (RC). The bone of contention was the authority of Harvey Jackins, RC's leader, who has tight rules about what you may or may not do if you call yourself an RC counsellor. John Heron believes that rules should be negotiable between the people concerned. This lies at the heart of his vision of Humanistic Psychology.

Round about 1970 John was a prime mover in setting up various organisations to promote Humanistic Psychology. The HPRP, now the Human Potential Resources Group, runs courses at the University of Surrey. The IDHP runs two year training courses. John also got the AHP going. His organisational ability was matched by clarity as a facilitator and as an author of HPRP booklets. Cooperative autonomy, empowerment of people, catharsis, celebration, openness and other humanistic values are central to his work. Most of the humanistic psychologists who were around in the 70's and early 80's owe something to him.

The thesis of this book is that the reality we all know is but one rendering of the universe. Another one, subtle in nature, is possible if we do the right exercises and fan up the ambiguities of our experience. He calls it 'ka'. Some of the exercises are bizarre if we go by John's own account: living in Paris on a low calorie diet; living in Kings Cross as a painter occasionally gorging himself on bread and strawberry jam; driving round France taking every sixth turn, and so on. Fun perhaps but not a spiritual discipline.

The discipline he describes in chapter 9 is a parody of the subtle disciplines of transpersonal psychology. Entering your 'ka' body by being aware of your physical body (no bad thing) seems to be the main method. Then he says things like "Let us suppose that the ka body, with the ka matrix of the physical body, is not only in matrix space but also in matrix time. I shall say more about matrix time later in this chapter." p116. He often makes this promise. Ten pages later he says you do things in matrix time if you grasp them as a whole, like a tune for example, not just a sequence of disconnected notes. (Don't we do this all the time?) Then he refers back to the earlier discussion. He does a lot of that too.

What this book lacks is grounding in any of the subtle systems of transpersonal and holistic psychology which abound among scholars and mystics. He drops an impressive array of their names though. By the time you get to the bottom of page two you have read "I refer to the akashic realm - from the Samkhya system of ancient India..." Aristotle, Descarte, Boyle, Gilbert, Newton and Einstein have all appeared. But there is no trace of these systems and authors in what John writes. There are precedents for this sort of thing. Newton finished his important work early and spent the rest of his life pursuing rubbish and Einstein, having changed the nature of physics, rejected the quantum mechanics which other physicists still find necessary. I wish John would get on with promoting Co-counselling and other humanistic systems, which he used to do so well, and keep his ka space as a side-line.

David Jones

THE PSYCHOTHERAPY HANDBOOK New American Library 1980 \$9.95

This is the single most useful therapy book I have read. It is a massive volume covering more than 250 different therapies, each one described by a key practitioner, and each with sections on that therapy's definition, history, techniques, applications, and further suggested reading. I used to read it every day before seeing clients, to get in the mood and to astonish myself at the range of possibilities. My perfect therapy training course would use this as its main pre-course handbook. Students would be obliged to study a core curriculum of psychodynamic and humanistic therapies - all the classics - but each term they would also have to pick one therapy from this handbook that appealed to them, which they would research in depth to present at a seminar to their colleagues. This would be a way to inculcate a curiosity and openness to new therapeutic approaches, so as to be rid of the straightjacket of rigid orthodoxy.

Here are a few extracts to convey something of the book's fascinating diversity:

"The mirror is anti-hallucinogenic. Ambulatory schizophrenia patients are taught to carry pocket mirrors with them so that they can control the 'voices' anytime they wish" (Mirror Image Therapy)

"I urged her to scream louder. My own voice, crackling with anger, suggested the staccato quality she was striving towards" (Bio Scream Therapy)

"Whenever patient-computer interactions have been evaluated by patients, the reaction has been strongly positive, often to the point of preferring the computer as an interviewer over the doctor, especially when sensitive subject matter is being discussed" (Computer Therapy)

"The clients were 5th grade and 6th grade boys; the counsellors were male Berkeley undergraduates, recruited through newspaper advertisements" (The Companionship Therapy Model)

"Some persons with the loss of an arm or with a heart condition learn to live within the limitations of their handicap; they do not waste time and exhaust themselves vainly combatting their problem. Is it not possible for you also to do something comparable?" (Philosophical Psychotherapy)

"After four doubleblind controlled experiments and after clinical experience of over fifty thousand patients, my orthomolecular colleagues and I have concluded that vitamin B3 doses of three grams a day is an important ingredient of proper treatment for most schizophrenic patients" (Megavitamin Therapy)

"the legal profession discovered centuries ago that a commitment, a contract, helps a wavering client stick to his resolution" (Reality Therapy)

"If opposing methods can lead to positive results, it may well be that it is the client's belief in the therapist's role as a healer and in the efficacy of his methods, rather than their actual effectiveness, which is the common ingredient of their success" (Placebo Therapy)

"Within the dream make love with whomever you choose. In waking life if the dream lover is available to you, court him or her" (Senoi Dream Group Therapy)

A book like this inevitably throws up much that will be stimulatingly unacceptable to the reader. But for therapists not to learn at least the basics about these therapies would be like a carpenter knowing only a couple of tools or a swimming instructor who can only do dog paddle or a priest who refuses to read the bible.

Nicholas Albery

Capital Love

The currency of love
Has been debased.
Like assignats of France
Temptation has ruled,
Too often these words spoken.
Keynesian economics
For love has failed,
A million notes
Where one would have done
To prove sincerity,
A wheelbarrow of kisses
Just to seduce.
A return to gold standard
Will ruin many
But make words strong.
So unlike money
Love cannot be borrowed
With interest paid.

Adrian Tomkinson