

Letters

Dear S&S,

Concerning the question of Jung and anti-semitism, (Eileen Conn, Letters, May 1995) it would be impossible to summarise the huge debate within and outside analytical psychology that is going on about this. Suffice it to say that, thank goodness, it is no longer possible for those fanatical, cultic Jungians (who have got the rest of us a bad name) to proclaim in an unproblematic way that he definitely was not anti-semitic.

The three main defences of Jung that have been mounted, together with my observations on them, are as follows:

1. He was never guilty of personal anti-semitism. This can be shown to be wrong, and in my book *The Political Psyche* I draw together all that I can find about Jung's personal anti-semitic statements and attitudes.
2. His writings are very sympathetic to Jewish philosophical and religious attitudes. I think some are and some are not, but there is always this uncomfortable tendency on Jung's part to generalise about Jews. For example, he counterposes the Talmudic and the Hassidic traditions in a way that many scholars find somewhat amateurish.
3. Even if Jung was anti-semitic, he was only a typical Swiss anti-semitic of his time and class. This is demonstrably not the case because, even at the time, there was widespread dismay, both among Jung's followers and in intellectual circles generally, that he wrote and said the

things he did. I unearthed remarkable material showing Jung to have been a rather 'brown' anti-semitic, to use the code word for having some similarities with Nazi, 'scientific' anti-semitism. As well as in the relevant chapters of my book, published in 1993 by Routledge, much of the material has been published over several issues of the *Journal of Analytical Psychology*. A good source book is *Lingering Shadows: Jungians, Freudians and Anti-Semitism*, edited by my colleagues Aryeh Maidenbaum and Steve Martin and published in 1991 by Shambhala.

For me, the main thing has been to respond to what many experience as a serious stumbling block in engaging fully with Jungian psychology. It was our inability to respond to the deep concerns over Jung's anti-semitism, rather than getting into a knee-jerk denial that there was anything to worry about, that (not to put too fine a word on it) repelled many serious scholars, therapists, intellectuals, artists — not to mention ordinary seekers after illumination, Jewish or non-Jewish.

It has been wearing for me, as a Jewish Jungian analyst, to undertake this work and I alienated a lot of colleagues by doing it, especially by publishing what I dug up in the Jung Archives.

I have been dismayed to find that many, including Jungian analysts, have told their students and clients not to pay any attention to what I, and others, have been publishing. We must not suppress the truth, even if what the truth is can still be disputed, on grounds of preserving Jung's mystique. If we do, then the more

recent source of criticism —Richard Noll's thesis that he was the leader of a religious cult — is going to find fertile ground in which to grow. It is wrong that supposedly authoritative accounts of Jung's life and work just dismiss the issue of anti-semitism as old-hat, irrelevant, or part of a Freudian plot.

Andrew Samuels

Dear S&S,

I note in the letter (March 1995) from Tim Bond, the new chairperson of the British Association for Counselling (BAC), that he wishes to refute any suggestion that a BAC-affiliated organisation may not receive a fair hearing if accused of unprofessional practice. My experience suggests that parts of the BAC's complaints procedure are not just, and are seriously flawed.

The principal matter which needs to be changed is the BAC's espousal of administrative law in dealing with complaints. Unlike normal legal procedure, where investigation would be restricted to specific complaints, the BAC see it as their right to look at the accused in general and to investigate other, unconnected matters. This process they justify by saying they are the professionals.

A start is even made at the reconciliation/investigation stage, and without (to cap it all) the person/body complained against being informed. This means that whilst the person/body is busy defending themselves in relation to the actual complaints there is a hidden agenda which is tantamount to a hunt by the BAC to find some breach or other of their code or to latch onto anything that appears to be

such a breach. It is a kind of kangaroo court with the BAC acting as complainant, prosecutor and judge all at the same time.

This process is at least cavalier and at worst tyrannical. This last word is used very carefully in the sense of someone using power arbitrarily and oppressively.

First, suddenly receiving an adjudication on complaints which have not been officially put will feel arbitrary.

Second, if an announcement is placed in the BAC journal which can be read as though usual legal processes have been followed, when in fact the evidence of the outside complainant has not been sustained, this will be felt as oppressive.

Third, if the results of the BAC's actions are loss of membership, penalisation of associated people, disparagement from other counsellors and professionals and restriction of access to grants, facilities and other privileges, this too will be felt as oppressive.

Fourth, if a sensational press uses the material from the process to discredit the party complained against and to hound the client, and no public statement is made by the BAC, the oppressive qualities are multiplied.

One sad feature of the BAC's stand is their reiteration that 13,000 members and many hundreds of organisations accept their process. In fact we doubt it. Members and others are much more likely to think that the BAC follows usual legal procedure, where there is fair and open adjudication solely on the actual complaint.

Eric Wall