

So far so good. Having worked both within the NHS and the third sector, I would concur with all the findings that have been presented. However, my main concern is the way in which the report is presented. It is presented as if it is a 'scientific' survey, with charts and percentages. While this is an extremely interesting and informative report, it is not a scientific survey. This gives critics an opportunity to focus on the methodological weaknesses of the report and lose sight of the underlying message which I think is fundamental to the provision of psychotherapy services within the NHS. These weaknesses are many, and include:

- Some of the figures are presented as facts and compared with a survey completed in 2012. Responses from 2014 are compared with those from 2012, which could have been a completely different cohort.
- Only 20 per cent of members replied, which makes it a self-selecting sample.
- We don't know if this 20 per cent is representative because we have no information on the 80 per cent that did not reply.
- Some of the graphics are misleading.
- When statements like 'further cuts and closures have taken place' are made, these could be relatively easily confirmed through NHS audits; this has not been done.

I would rather this report be presented in a more qualitative way where the authors could examine and discuss some of the comments that have been made, and offer more thought on how problems could be rectified. There are some interesting ideas, such as offering a much broader, more 'time-sensitive' approach rather than the 'one size fits all' approach that seems so prevalent at the moment. I thought that the suggestion that working further upstream by introducing Parent Infant Psychotherapy (PIP) services was an intriguing one that could be expanded – a true cradle-to-grave approach. I think more ideas on how the independent sector might be integrated into the public sector could have been explored with a reference to developing the Any Qualified Provider (AQP) initiative that has currently fallen on stony ground.

In spite of my criticisms I think that this is an interesting and thought-provoking report that should be followed up by another report with recommendations on how to rectify some of the problems that have been identified. A copy of both reports should be sitting on every mental health commissioner's desk.

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The devil you know

The God of the left hemisphere: Blake, Bolte Taylor and the myth of Creation, by Roderick Tweedy, London, Karnac Books, 2013, 352 pp., ISBN 978-1780491011

Reviewed by Zac Hassan

Roderick Tweedy completed his Ph.D. at Oxford University in 1997, and has authored several articles and reviews on Romanticism. He is currently an editor for

Karnac Books. In *The God of the Left Hemisphere*, the author explores the relationship between the work of poet William Blake, the subjective experience of Harvard neuro-anatomist Jill Bolte Taylor, the early Creation texts, and modern neuroscience. The author's analyses of the profound connections between Blake's figure of 'Urizen' and the complex of left-hemisphere activities, of Jill Bolte Taylor's case of brain lateralization due to a hemorrhage in the left brain, as well as of compelling new discoveries in modern neuroscience, all converge into a discussion that suggests a rather radical reinterpretation of the 'God' of Creation texts. Parallel to his analysis of the relationship between brain lateralization and the psychological basis for the God referred to in these early texts, the author pursues a line of inquiry into the relationship between Reason, or the complex of rationalizing and ordering processes identified as the left hemisphere, Morality, and psychopathology. The author explains how religion and science have developed as a result of the emerging dominance of the left brain over the right brain, and how the historical discrimination against the right brain has resulted in the cultivation of psychopathology, which is ubiquitous in modern society. However, the author, as Blake did, argues that this insanity is not due to loss of reason but to an *excess* of reason. He substantiates this claim by revealing the many common psychological features between post-enlightenment philosophy and schizophrenia.

The structure of the book reflects the structure of the brain: Part 1, like the left hemisphere, is concerned with focusing, while Part 2, like the right hemisphere, is concerned with contextualizing. The author wants to avoid encouraging the dichotomy of the left hemisphere as bad and the right hemisphere as good. Instead, the aim of the book is to encourage a dialogue between the left and the right hemisphere, and the author wants the information that is communicated in the first part of the book to be contextualized, which he does by putting it in the context of religion, science, politics, and economics. Throughout the book, the author discusses the differences in perceptual experiences of the left and right hemispheres. He explains that the right hemisphere has ontological and cognitive primacy, and is characterized by the experience of oneness – of the indivisible, unrepresentable, and unpredictable flow of Energy. In contrast, the left hemisphere is a conceptual version of embodied experience or an abstracted representation of reality, derived by means of detachment, division, and abstraction. The author therefore highlights the self-enclosed and self-deifying nature of Reason, and explains how its version of reality is nothing but a narcissistic and virtual matrix. The author, as Blake, refers to it as 'divided' Reason because it is dissociated from the right brain.

The main argument of the book is that Urizen is the left brain, and that Blake is unique because he recognized the God of The Book of Genesis to be Reason personified, and hence referred to it as 'Urizen' or the 'Holy Reasoning Power'. This God is a creator by division and abstraction, which are employed in order to impose order on reality. The author shows throughout the book just how this brain function on the one hand, and daemonic power or personality on the other, manifest in human nature. The basic drive of the God of the left hemisphere – or Urizen, the left brain – is a need for control and dominance, which stems from existential angst: a fear of emotion, and indeed of being alive. The promise in worshipping Reason, by obeying laws and moral codes, is to assuage the fear of uncertainty and to achieve a semblance of predictability. Thus, Reason creates a world where the human is a physical machine on one end and a statistical unit on

the other, where man becomes regular either way. In the former he is a predictable material object and in the latter a predictable mathematical concept. This is post-enlightenment philosophy in a nutshell, and schizophrenia is the embodiment of such a phenomenological state.

The emergence of left-hemisphere dominance has been a process of increasing doubt in immediate and embodied subjective reality, which, according to Blake, has subsequently led to a separation of the human from the divine. It is important to note here that Blake thought of divinity as an empathic mode of attention in relation to another, which, the author adds, can be accessed through the right hemisphere. This severance from what Blake referred to as Energy, or the bodily and imaginative (the right brain), is responsible for the loss of emotion, spontaneity, and vitality, and the consequent enslavement to a state of rationalizing and egoic compulsion. Blake identified the traditional 'Satan' as a personification of this state. The controversial assertion is that the devil resides not in hell but in the human brain, and more specifically in the left hemisphere. Blake exposed the concealed moralistic dimension of rationality: that Reason is evaluative and ego-centric and not neutral or objective. The author empirically corroborates this by demonstrating that Reason and Morality have a common neurological source rooted in left-hemisphere networks, where the complex of processes that are commonly referred to as 'ego' are located. Therefore, there is no actual opposition between Science and Religion, because these two systems are two versions of the same thing 'battling for supremacy over the left hemisphere' (p. 93). Instead, 'the real clash [is] ... between rationality and imagination' (*ibid.*), which is to say between the left and the right hemisphere.

To summarize, the greatest trick the devil pulled was not only to convince human kind that he does not exist, but to be worshiped under the guise of Morality by the theistic adherents of religion and under the guise of Reason by the atheistic adherents of Science. Needless to say, this thesis is challenging to both parties. Nevertheless, there is hope, the author reassures the reader. Salvation lies in repentance: by returning to the God of the right hemisphere, and thereby silencing the left hemisphere. But be not alarmed, for this kind of repentance does not depend on supernatural grace but on neuroplasticity. The author is calling for an end to the discrimination against the right hemisphere, and recommends the educational system as a good place from which to start.

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The divided female

I love Dick, by Chris Kraus, Los Angeles, CA, Semiotext(e), 2006, 244 pp., £10.95 (pbk), ISBN 978-1584350347

Reviewed by Amy Croft, artist

The book begins with the simple scenario of husband and wife meeting up with a friendly acquaintance. The character 'Chris Kraus' and the homonymous author