

GUEST EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION



## Mini-symposium

### Dissent in the sixties: Leon Redler and Joseph Berke

Anyone who spends a lot of time thinking about R.D. Laing inevitably ends up thinking a lot about Joe Berke and Leon Redler. Not only were the two close associates of Laing – I think I can say that without giving any hostages to fortune – but both were profoundly influenced by him. Both moved from America to work with Laing in 1965, both after studying at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Yeshiva University. Indeed, I don't know how often this has been pointed out, but the Einstein provided Laing with four of his associates. Not just Joe and Leon, but also Morton Schatzman and Jerome Liss. Einstein must be turning in his grave!

There are three parts to this mini-symposium. The first an article about Leon by Jacky Ivimy, the second is an interview with Joe by me, the third a selection of poems by Geoff Bamford. At first glance, Geoff must seem an odd body for the present context. But I wanted to include him because of his deep involvement with the 1967 London Congress on the Dialectics of Liberation, which Joe and Leon co-organized with Laing and David Cooper, and which this year celebrates its fiftieth anniversary.

The year 2017, therefore, is not just an important year for Joe and Leon; it is also an important year for Geoff. Fifty years – time enough to have kicked over the traces. Geoff wrote his poems in response to a request from me for 'a longish poem about your experience of the Congress on the Dialectics of Liberation and the summer of 1967'. I chose the following excerpts as some of the highlights.


As for Jacky, I owe her a great debt of gratitude not only for agreeing to write her article at such short notice, but also for her unstinting support and friendship.

#### Notes on contributor



*Martin Levy* currently researches a number of subjects, including early twentieth-century counterculture and Jewish identities. He is the author of a small number of publications including books on eighteenth-century social history and articles on universities and anti-psychiatry. He holds a Master's degree in librarianship and information management from the University of Northumbria, and works at the University of Bradford as special collections assistant.

Martin Levy  
*Independent Scholar, Halifax, UK; Special Collections Department,  
University of Bradford, Bradford, UK*

 [mlevy@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:mlevy@bradford.ac.uk)



Joseph Berke. Photo used by permission of Peter Davies.