

# PSYCHOTHERAPY AND THE ARTS

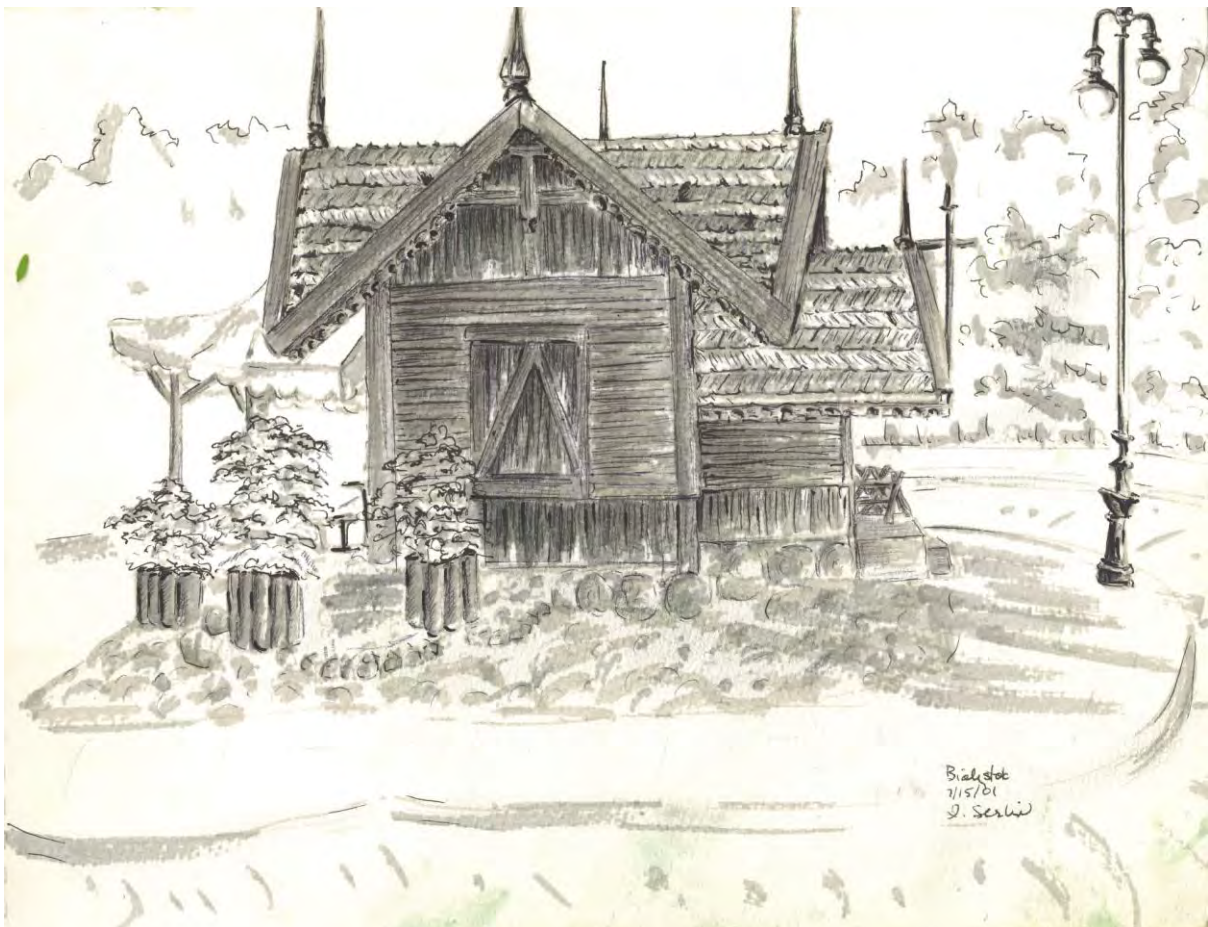


## DECEMBER 2011

**From Ilene:** Since this special interest was born out of Division 32, The Society for Humanistic Psychology, I wanted to let you know about some of the remarkable activities of our division, and encourage those of you to join as a full or affiliate member. Any membership questions can be addressed to Richard Barghill, [rbargdill@comcast.net](mailto:rbargdill@comcast.net), our artist-membership chair.

Hope to see you--or have you contribute to--some of our Div. 32 programs.

With warm wishes for light during this dark time, Ilene



**From Heather:**

In the last issue of the newsletter, I was talking about the key focus of my training work which is relationship....relationship....relationship (!) so it was good to discover a couple of blogs emphasising, in the context of healthcare, the centrality of relationship. These blogs in turn led me to a very moving TED talk from Abraham Verghese on touch and the ritual of the hands-on examination of patients. He bemoans the loss of this ritual through the substitution of technology and makes the wry comment that these days you could arrive at a hospital with one leg missing and they'd have to send you for tests to diagnose what's wrong! The other piece I found was an article from the Annals of Family Medicine - "Understanding Relationships in Primary Health Care". <http://www.annfammed.org/content/6/4/315.full> The abstract gives the results as follows:

*Three key processes emerged as fostering healing relationships: (1) valuing/creating a nonjudgmental emotional bond; (2) appreciating power/consciously managing clinician power in ways that would most benefit the patient; and (3) abiding/displaying a commitment to caring for patients over time. Three relational outcomes result from these processes: trust, hope, and a sense of being known. Clinician competencies that facilitate these processes are self-confidence, emotional self-management, mindfulness, and knowledge.*

For me, in my training work with staff, these conclusions suggest that I and others who are trying to change the culture of care in dementia are on the right track in emphasising that different skills and abilities need to be learned from those traditionally taught.



On a personal note, we have just picked the first bucket of plums – to save them from the voracious lorikeets – so the summer bottling and preserving will be starting very soon. But first, it's Christmas baking. We follow the German Christmas traditions which means baking hundreds of biscuits to give to friends. Of course, it's a tradition a little harder to follow in the heat of the Australian summer ! You can see here some of my baking endeavours from a previous year.

I've also included pictures from a dance and dementia workshop for carers working in country areas of New South Wales, and from my Dance Family group.



In a world where so many awful things happen, it's engagement with people and with dance that continues to offer me hope and joy.

I wish you all enjoyable holidays and time to pause and catch up with yourself and your families.  
Heather



## IN THE NEWS

Ilene sent out the following email to some on her mailing list. We reproduce it here for the interest of our newsletter readers:

Dear colleagues,

How excited I was to open today's San Francisco Chronicle and on the front page see the following headline: **Critics fault updates to key manual**, by Erin Allday, Chronicle staff writer!

It is a 2-section article, beginning with: "The 'bible' of American psychiatry - a manual of mental health used around the world by doctors, consumers and insurance providers - has come under fire from a growing group of psychologists who worry that proposed revisions will feed into a culture of overdiagnosing, and overtreating, otherwise healthy people."

The second section begins with the title: **Opposition grows to update of manual on mental illness**, and continues: "Last month a group of psychologists with the Society for Humanistic Psychology posted a petition against many of the suggested DSM revisions, citing what they see as a broadening of the definition of mental health disorders, which, in turn, would lead to overtreatment with drugs..."

They quote Brent as saying: "Grief after the death of a loved one, for example, may be included under the diagnosis of major depressive disorder. That means a person's grief could be labeled a pathological disorder, and not a normal human experience, said psychologist Brent Robbins, a professor at Point Park University in Pittsburgh and an author of the petition."

The insert says: "To read the petition in response to the DSM, go to [links.sfgate.com/ZLES](https://links.sfgate.com/ZLES)."

CONGRATULATIONS DAVE, BRENT, SARAH AND ALL WHO CONTRIBUTED AND SIGNED THIS GROUND-BREAKING PETITION! Ilene.

*Ilene also wrote a letter to the editor of the Chronicle:*

I was delighted read in the Chronicle of November 26 the article on "Critics fault updates to key manual" about the petition initiated by the Society for Humanistic Psychology that challenges the proposed revisions to the current diagnostic manual. The concerns expressed are that the new discoveries in neurology and neuropsychology might lead to a trend of using more medication and quick-fix models to ease anxiety and depression.

The trend toward quick fixes pathologizes normal human conditions like grief, which might be treated with medication Both adults and children are increasingly dependent on drugs.

I think this is a landmark moment in the evolution of psychology. Humanistic Psychology, the originators of the petition, is making a renaissance in psychology and psychotherapy. Evidence abounds in the sprouting of movements like positive psychology, coaching, wellness, and resiliency. Humanistic psychology is rooted in a deep stream that included existential and humanistic psychology. This "Third Stream" of psychology, popularized by Abraham Maslow, an ex-President of the American Psychological Association, began to study creativity, consciousness, authenticity, autonomy, courage and hardiness.

In today's world of mood altering substances, genetic engineering, designer babies, body-sculpting, mind-altering, high-tech communication, human jobs being replaced by robots, corporations being granted the rights of individuals, the inevitable question is: "What does it mean to be human?"

Humanistic psychology has also always emphasized values of living a life of meaning and purpose, authenticity, and self-reliance. In addition to the positive values it promotes like joy and wellness, it also acknowledges the darker sides of human existence like grief and anxiety. It helps us deal with our inevitable confrontations with mortality, adds depth to the soul searching, and emphasizes the human relationship as key to healing. We need a place these days to explore our own relationship to how we lead a human life of meaning and purpose in extremely challenging times, and humanistic psychologists can provide that.

Groups need a place to explore these issues as well. Corporations have lost their moral bearings. Humanistic psychologists can make a valuable contribution to politicians, educators and other decision-makers. Today's zeitgeist calls for a psychology that can help people cope with creative resiliency.

To find out more information about Humanistic Psychology, the website is:

["http://www.apadivisions.org/division-32/"](http://www.apadivisions.org/division-32/)

Sincerely,

Ilene A. Serlin, Ph.D, BC-DMT  
Past-President San Francisco Psychological Association  
Past-President Society for Humanistic Psychology  
<http://union-street-health-associates.com>



*Sorry we couldn't get this out in time for the submission of papers, but the conference may still be of interest.*

**CALL FOR PAPERS/WORKSHOPS/POSTERS (Deadline: 12<sup>th</sup> December 2011)**

**COLOUR MY WELL-BEING: APPLIED ARTS & HEALTH CONFERENCE  
19 -20 April 2012**

(In association with the Journal of Applied Arts & Health and The University of Northampton.)

Over two days (with an optional third day workshop class) artists, health professionals and academics from around the world will gather at The University of Northampton to explore developments in the way colour is used for health and well-being.

Event dates: Thursday, 19 & Friday 20 April; optional extra workshop class Saturday 21 April (see website details for workshop class by MARK WENTWORTH 'Colour for Life: The Art of Living in Colour'.)

Keynote speakers so far include:

**Neil Harbisson** – Cyborg artist, musician and performer best known for his self-extended ability to hear colours. In 2004 he became the first person in the world to be fitted with an eyeborg and to be officially recognized as a cyborg by a government. Colour and the use of technology as an extension of the performer's body and senses are the central themes in Harbisson's work.

**Helen Carruthers** - 'The Manchester Colour Wheel', was developed for allowing individuals to identify colours in response to particular questions and in the case of this study relating it to mood. On Wednesday September 14, 2011, a world-first took place in Manchester, an experiment to reflect the mood of the city's population. Members of the public and local schools took part in the experiment, selecting a mood from the colour wheel. Dr Helen Carruthers began working at the University Hospital of South Manchester (UHSM) in 1989 as a medical artist where she remains to date. Dr Carruthers' achievements were recently acknowledged by the UHSM when she was awarded 'Researcher of the Year 2011'.

Host department/organizer: School of The Arts and School of Health  
For more information: [www.northampton.ac.uk/artsandhealth](http://www.northampton.ac.uk/artsandhealth)



## **NEW BOOK:**

From:

Dr. Sandra Reeve

Honorary Fellow, University of Exeter

[sandra@moveintolife.co.uk](mailto:sandra@moveintolife.co.uk)

[www.moveintolife.co.uk](http://www.moveintolife.co.uk)

(via Interdisciplinary Discussion on Human Embodiment Listserve)

**Nine Ways of Seeing a Body** by Sandra Reeve (Triarchy Press)

[www.triarchypress.com](http://www.triarchypress.com)

The nine lenses presented are : the body as object, the body as subject, the phenomenological, somatic and contextual bodies, the interdependent, environmental and cultural bodies and (my own contribution) the ecological body. To bring the ideas to life, the analysis is punctuated with a hypothetical case study.

This book is a guide and stimulus for teachers, students and practitioners of dance, performance, movement, somatics and the arts therapies – in fact, for anyone troubled by the idea of a brain on legs!

I am editing a second collection of body 'lenses', due out in June 2012, so if your preferred lens has not been included here and you would enjoy writing for this kind of format, please send me your suggestion by November 1st 2011, with a brief synopsis.



*We found the following workshop advertised in the November newsletter from the Society and the Arts in Healthcare.*

## **INTRODUCTION TO ART THERAPY WORKSHOP**

**Dates:** 1/27/2012 - 1/28/2012

**Time:** 9am - 5pm

**Location:** Marylhurst University  
17600 Pacific Highway (Hwy 43)  
Marylhurst, OR  
97036  
United States

**Details:** This workshop combines an enjoyable hands-on approach with class discussions and art examples to introduce students to art therapy. History and development of the profession are discussed. Recommended for persons exploring art therapy as a career option and for human services practitioners who wish to acquire basic understanding of art therapy in theory and practice. Instructor: TBA

**Contact:** Rachell Mclaughlin, 503-699-6244 [Send Email](#)



## **EAST SIDE INSTITUTE: ONLINE COURSE**

### **Introducing Social Therapeutics:**

#### **A Performatory Approach to Human Development and Learning**

A five-week online course with Carrie Lobman

January 27-March 2\*\*

An opportunity to explore the social therapeutic approach at work in key human environments: psychotherapy, classrooms, out-of-school youth programs, and the workplace.

\*\*This online conversation is asynchronous - participants are on different time zones, and read/post messages according to their own schedule.

**Fee: \$85.00**



**And finally**, a story about the power of the arts.....

*This is from Mandela's book "Long Walk to Freedom", about the time the government swooped on the key dissidents during the night and imprisoned them – around 150 people – Africans, Indians and "Coloureds". To keep their spirits up they organised a program of activities – lectures, etc. Mandela describes here a moment of inspiration, a moment of dance:*

“One time, Masabalala Yengwa (better known as M.B. Yengwa), the son of a Zulu labourer and the provincial secretary of the Natal ANC, contributed to a lecture on music by reciting a praise song in honour of Shaka, the legendary Zulu warrior and king. Yengwa draped himself with a blanket, rolled up a newspaper to imitate a sword, and began to stride back and forth reciting the lines from the praise song. All of us, even those who did not understand Zulu, were entranced. Then he paused dramatically and called out the lines “*inyoni edlezinya! Yathi isadlezinye, yadlezinya!*” The lines liken Shaka to a great bird of prey that relentlessly slays its enemies. At the conclusion of these words, pandemonium broke out. Chief Luthuli, who until then had remained quiet, sprang to his feet and bellowed “*Ngu Shaka Iowo!*” (That is Shaka!), and then began to dance and chant. His movements electrified us, and we all took to our feet. Accomplished ballroom dancers, sluggards who knew neither traditional nor Western dancing, all joined in the *indlamu*, the traditional Zulu war dance. Some moved gracefully, others resembled frozen mountaineers trying to shake off the cold, but all danced with enthusiasm and emotion. Suddenly, there were no Xhosas or Zulus, no Indians or Africans, no rightists or leftists, no religious or political leaders; we were all nationalists and patriots bound together by a love of our common history, our culture, our country and our people. In that moment, something stirred deep inside all of us, something strong and intimate, that bound us to one another. In that moment we felt the hand of the great past that made us what we were and the power of the great cause that linked us all together.”

(Pps 187-188, Long Walk to Freedom. Pub. Little, Brown & Co.)



*Our very best wishes for 2012!!*

*Ilene & Heather*