

## Hidden Histories

Which Influence Our Lives



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SMN Continental Meeting Poland  
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- Unsolicited Ancient Memories
- Anomalous Experiences & Wellbeing
- Academic Silos re. Psychosis
- Cultural U-Turns
  - Mental Health



## Why am I interested ?

in hidden histories



### Personal history: Who Am I?

- I felt like I had no history
- I am told I am English. English
- My grandfather came to UK - a baby 1yr old
- With his parents from Krakow



Hamh. 17955



2557

## The London Gazette

Published by Authority

Registered as a newspaper "s" For Table of Contents see last page

TUESDAY, 24 JUNE, 1947

LIST of ALIENS to whom Certificates of Naturalization have been granted by the Secretary of State, and whose Oaths of Allegiance have been registered in the Home Office during the month of May, 1947.

The date shown in each case is the date on which the Oath of Allegiance was taken.

Taubert, Mendel (known as Manuel or Manny Tobert); Poland; Buyer of Antiques; 64, Devonshire Road, Harrow, Middlesex. 25 April, 1947.



- My grandfather was born in Zaczoczym
- He came as a baby to UK
- He was naturalised British when he was 46 years old

## Hidden Histories ?



- While preparing this talk, for the first time in my life, I felt as if I had Polish roots.
  - My sister found town where our grandfather was born
  - Our family had remained silent on history of our origins
  - Completely

### But so what? Was anything else hidden?

- This week I asked friends if they ever visited Poland
- They said No... But explained their relatives were from Lodz, Konin, Warsaw, Wroclaw and Moldova....
  - And I was shocked into awareness of the invisible silences and web of hidden towns. Pogroms decades before the Nazis

## Another level... hidden histories



### My Unsolicited Dream Memories

- I died in 1945
- In the gas chambers
- Dachau Concentration camp

### Technicolour visions

- Betrayal, forests, fear, capture
- Medical experimentation

## Dream Memories ?

Am I the only one to have them?



## Other Peoples' Holocaust Memories

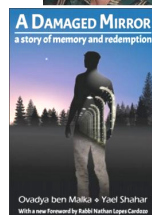
- Yael Shahah
- Elise Wardle
- Sue Randall
- Rabbi Gershom
- Alison Pick



## Yael Shahah

### Israel, Author and Teacher

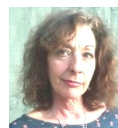
- As a child she had dreams and nightly terrors, which she knew went beyond imagination
- She had two realities: her actual daily life and the reality of her 'dreams'. She remembered a life as a special worker at Birkenau camp



### Question:

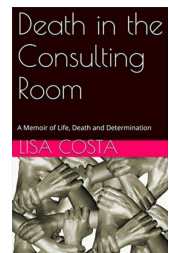
- What are our beliefs today about survival beyond death?

## Elise Wardle



### UK Psychotherapist

- Recurrent dreams as a child. Her memories resurfaced when she had to use communal showers in secondary school
- She highlights areas within psychology which are not ubiquitously taught
- She noted trauma appeared to live on in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation
- "we may all have access to a far greater memory than that inherited genetically"
- Wardle (2015) Memories of the Holocaust and Questions of Past Lives . J Psychiatry 18:220



## Sue Randall



### South Africa, research psychologist

- Holocaust memories since a child. Flashbacks
- Identity problems, couldn't tell what was real
- Terrifying images startled her awake
- She believed she had psychiatric problems: and wrote that her "body's symptoms matched the repressed past-life traumas exactly"
- She says: "healing is inextricably bound up with coming to terms with our memories"

• <http://theconversation.org/a-mindblowing-look-into-reincarnation/>

## Sue Randall

- She felt she could talk to no-one, and remained silent
- Her parents were accused of brainwashing her as a child
- She felt she was: *a Jewish soul, which... arrived deeply traumatised even before birth*
- Her rabbi and therapists thought her problems were with 'internal dialogue'

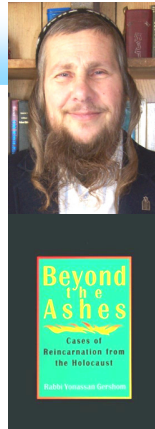


## Rabbi Gershom

### Germany, Peace activist

- Wrote on Nazi Holocaust & reincarnation
- His books offered practitioners a deeper understanding of their clients
- He spoke to 250 people who claimed they reincarnated, and 78 offered written records.
- Some claim he and his clients (who experienced asthma and bronchitis) constructed these beliefs together - in order to promote healing
- Only a few of his clients with memories were Jewish, the majority were not Jewish

• *From Ashes to Healing: Mystical Encounters with the Holocaust*, A.R.E. Press, 1996.



## Alison Pick

### Canada, writer

- Alison was raised as a Christian: her father was not told he was Jewish, nor that his family perished in the Nazi Holocaust.

### Alison had a spiritual crisis:

- "I came to understand it on a bodily level, deep in my cells below my rational mind... The unfelt grief had been passed from my grandmother to my father to me, like an heirloom".
- "the depression I suffer from has always felt pre-formed, ancient, like it was given to me in its entirety at birth."



## Any Explanations..?

### How are unsolicited memories transmitted?

- False Memory Syndrome? Or Not?
- Do we tune into some morphogenetic field?
- Tuning into other people's memories?
- Personal memory from a previous lifetime?
- Memory plucked from akashic field?
- Ancestral memory? Epigenetics?
- Spirit attachment? Spiritual imagination?
- Psychic reality?
- Cryptomnesia – memory appears to be new, but is recalled from TV, books or radio



## Holocaust Experiences or not?



- Psychiatrist Victor Frankel personally survived a Nazi concentration camp
- He suggested "meaning in life" was more important for humans' survival than happiness.
- Frankel actually survived a concentration camp, whereas others (like myself) had holocaust memories, but were not there personally
- **Epigenetics** 'Genetic changes stemming from the trauma suffered by Holocaust survivors are capable of being passed on to their children' (Thomson 2015, Shulevitz, Yahuda)

## Holocaust Experiences, or not?

- Might our 'memories' influence our 'mental health' episodes? Or contribute to psychosis?
- Is it possible memories creep into us remotely from distant incarnations?
- Could some 'memories' stretch beyond childhood trauma in the present life, and beyond our parents' memories of trauma?
  - "Children who report memories of violent deaths in past lives may suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)" E. Haraldsson



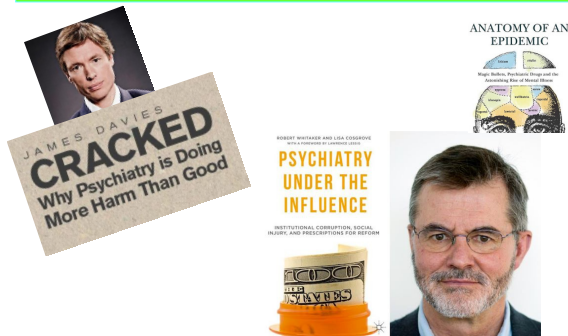
## Proposition re. mental health

### Why consider holocaust experiences?

- Often people who have extreme or psychotic experiences had trauma, either in childhood, or as a past life, or in their ancestral line
- Is it possible those who have mental distress or extreme experiences, are responding a) perhaps to trauma from current incarnation, b) possibly from a previous incarnation, or c) by tuning in to a remote scenario?
- **The data invites us to question:**
  - diagnostic labels of psychiatry
  - chemical imbalance
  - diseases of brain etc

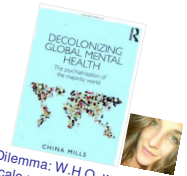
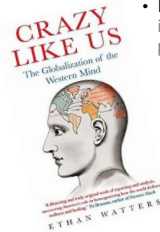


## Evidence: Questioning Data



## Globalisation of Western understandings

- Western concepts of experience
  - Psychiatrization: the process of treating an event or experience in psychiatric terms (1960's)
  - Psychologisation: The action of interpreting something in psychological terms (mid 19th C)



Dilemma: W.H.O. wants to scale up psychiatrization and psychologisation globally, while we in the 'north' are becoming more critical of its practices. 2013  
Educational psychologist

## Out with the Old

- Dutch psychiatrist Jim van Os suggests the term schizophrenia should be abolished. He says it does not exist
- Eminent British psychiatrist Sir Robin Murray describes how the term will be confined to history
- There are many different causes for the symptoms: suffering childhood trauma is a high cause, which is unlikely to be cured by medication
- Open Dialogue: promising approach to address suffering



Making Real Change Happen, ISPS conference last week in Liverpool Sept 2017

The concept of schizophrenia is coming to an end.  
Simon McCarthy-Jones Trinity College Dublin  
<https://theconversation.com/>

## Out with the Old: change in action



### Drop the Disorder!

- Facebook group for anyone wanting to challenge biomedical approaches to emotional distress
- Explores alternatives to language of disorder, diagnosis, drugs

We may be on the cusp of a major paradigm shift in our thinking about psychiatric disorders.

BMJ Journals

Evidence-Based Mental Health

Home / Archive / Volume 16, Issue 1

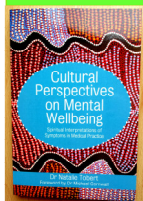
Expert review

Drop the language of disorder

Peter Kinderman<sup>1</sup>, John Read<sup>2</sup>, Joanna Moncrieff<sup>3</sup>, Richard P Bentall<sup>4</sup>

**INTRODUCTION**  
To move from the cusp of a major paradigm shift in our thinking about psychiatric disorders, we need to challenge the biomedical approach to emotional distress. The purpose of this paper is to explore the historical and contemporary context of the language of disorder, diagnosis, and drugs, and to propose alternatives to this language.

## Turning Point Anomalous Experiences and Mental Health



### Groundswell of public opinion

People want

Profound change within psychiatry  
Context of experience acknowledged  
Poverty and institutional racism addressed  
Experiences considered as spiritual awakening

**A TURNING-POINT HAS BEEN REACHED**  
We can no longer deny the evidence

## What is a silo?

- A tower on a farm to store grain
- An underground chamber to store missiles
- System that operates in isolation from others





## Silo mentality

- In business a *silo mentality* is: "a mindset when certain departments or sectors do not wish to share information with others in the same company"
- An *information silo* is "a management system incapable of reciprocal operation with other, related systems"



- Silos have a negative impact on social wellbeing
- Multiple silos effectively discourage different groups from sharing information freely with each other.

## TO SILO = means to isolate

### Academic silos

- Whereby departments study the same phenomena, but refrain from collaboration

### Very problematic re.

- psychosis, schizophrenia, visionary experiences, religious experience, spiritual awakening, shamanic visions, clairvoyance, mediumship, spirit possession, extreme experience
- OK for NDE, ELE, OBE

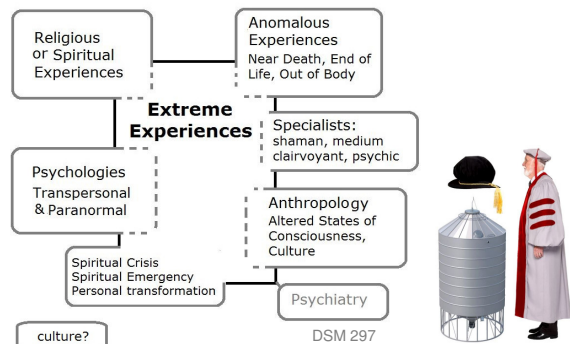


## Expanded consciousness

- spontaneous experiences
  - e.g. religious or mystical experience, visions, transcendence, presences, OBE's, NDE's
- specialists
  - e.g. traditional doctors, healers, shamans, psychics, mediums, seers, clairvoyants
- psychotic experiences (+distress)
  - People experiencing psychosis, voices, visions, with no on/off switch



## Academic Boxes



## Meanings of Words



- Vision
- Hallucination
- Apparition
- Delusion
- Mass delusion
- Veridical
- Meanings are dependent on beliefs of the observer

## Relevance of Clinician's Beliefs

### Yale University investigation

- Investigation into mental health clinicians' ontological beliefs about mental disorders.
- Clinicians' beliefs about biological, psychological, and environmental bases of disorders were examined
- They investigated consequences of beliefs for judging effectiveness of treatment
- Clinicians treated conditions differently: their beliefs had implications about effectiveness of psychotherapy or medication, and therefore their choice of treatment options for patients

Woo-Kyoung et al 2009  
 Journal of Clinical Psychopharmacology, 29(1), 1-10

## Hierarchies of knowledge

### Cultural Issues:

We face a dilemma today, where western opinions dominate cultural wisdoms.

This is a particular problem for those who have extreme or anomalous experiences.

There is an assumption that biomedical models of mental health are universal.



## Proposition

Relevance of cultural & spiritual perspectives

- **Some people with extreme experiences (psychosis) may be experiencing an NDE, OBE, ELE, or remote perception together with anxiety and distress.**



- Some people who spontaneously have religious experiences; near-death, out-of-body, and end of life experiences, may not have a framework for understanding them, and in association with other factors (like observers and distress) may attract psychiatric attention.

## Proposition

- Specialists like *shamans*, psychics, and remote viewers deliberately invite experiences and turn them on and off at will.
- Is it normal for the human self to be porous and, like a radio transmitter change frequency, tune into different time and space frameworks?
- **If consciousness exists beyond bodily death, and other realms can be 'tuned into', perhaps it is time to re-evaluate our own culture-bound explanations for mental suffering?**



## Education & Training



- It is time for medical educators to address their teaching about extreme human experiences, altered states of consciousness, and spiritual awakening, to incorporate the new knowledge.
- It is time for politicians to abolish legislation which discriminates against people with mental distress
- It is time for us to shift from control of people with distress, towards compassionate care

**What practical steps can we take  
To question old assumptions  
around mental health?**

Thank you



<http://www.aethos.org.uk/>