A Process in Individuation

By Stacey Shelby, PhD, Recent PGI Graduate

I invited the Wild Woman archetype to work with me (well, at that time, I still believed I was the one doing the inviting)—my dissertation title is: Tracking the Wild Woman Archetype: A Process in Individuation. I had an early dream during my concept paper development. I am at my farmhouse tending animals and I see the bear with her cubs in the backfield; she and I have a long, respectful relationship. But, this day, she comes for me! I hide in my farmhouse kitchen in a little cupboard, which I peek out of. As she enters, she stands, and, staring at me, she transforms into a woman. I recognize this woman; she is me! After the initial waking shock, I understood this dream—the first of many—as a sign that my concept was on track and would be supported from psyche (and it was, my dissertation took one year).

If I am really honest, I probably wrote my dissertation to come to terms with an impossible love relationship I was enmeshed in during my three years of coursework. My research chapters included: The Wild Woman Archetype; Women’s Psychological Development at Midlife; Relationships; and Sexuality. What I did not realize while

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Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?
—Mary Oliver

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in the relationship was that I was in the throes of an intense period of individuation. Through writing my unintentionally personal and vulnerable dissertation, I understood that it was not about the relationship, but my individual process in sorting through the complications and questions it raised. Unraveling in the alchemical vessel of the dissertation helped me identify my feelings and values from those I had appropriated from culture. My research resulted in numerous questions, and the “answers” were often paradoxes. I learned to trust the Wild Woman’s way, which includes being responsive to each unpredictable moment, being passionately engaged in life, and valuing human love as equal to divine love. As I came to know this wild wisdom within myself, I finally realized that the Wild Woman was the one tracking me, with a whole entourage, all along.

—Dr. Stacey Shelby is a graduate of Pacifica with a PhD in Depth Psychology, with emphasis in Jungian and Archetypal Studies. She is presently working as a depth psychotherapist in private practice at the Chopra Center based in Squamish, BC, Canada. Dr. Shelby’s website is: www.DrStaceyShelby.com.

Mindfulness of Complexes in Research

Robert Romanyshyn’s book, The Wounded Researcher: Research with Soul in Mind, discusses the importance of being mindful of one’s own complexities during research:

No investigator, however unprejudiced and objective he is, can afford to disregard his own complexes, for they enjoy the same autonomy as those of other people. As a matter of fact, he cannot disregard them because they do not disregard him. Complexes are very much a part of the psychic constitution, which is the most absolutely prejudiced thing in every individual…. His constitution will therefore inexorably decide what psychological view a given observer will have. Herein lies the unavoidable limitation of psychological observation: Its validity is contingent upon the personal equation of the observer. (p. 111)

Pacifica Dissertations as Psychological Passion Projects

By Jennifer Selig, PhD

“As for me, I am doing fine, and working hard to complete this dissertation. Brother it really requires a lot of work.”

~Martin Luther King, Jr.

When I first came on board as the Depth Psychology Research Coordinator at Pacifica, I bought every book I could find on dissertation writing, scouring them for the best tips to help students through the “lot of work” it requires to finish a dissertation. I discovered a handful of titles, most of them fairly “cheesy”—full of the obvious, rife with redundancies, and tailored for more “traditional” schools where students often have little choice over their dissertation topics because they are advancing their advisors’ agenda. I found one with the intriguing title of Complete Your Dissertation or Thesis in Two Semesters or Less. The advice author Evelyn Hunt Ogden gives for how to achieve this feat? Pick a topic that is really boring, so boring you just want to hurry through it and be done with it.

I had to admit, it makes a certain amount of sense, but it is entirely nonsensical advice to give a Pacifica student. I’ve always said that the main reason why we have such a high dissertation completion rate at Pacifica is that students choose topics they are passionate about. Is it easier to give up on a dissertation topic that bores you to death, that numbs your mind, or easier to give up on a dissertation topic that fuels your life, that feeds your soul?

For the most part, dissertations done at Pacifica are passion projects. When they are abandoned, they are typically abandoned for two reasons: the passion has dried up or has moved elsewhere, or there’s some sort of psychological block that has created writer’s block. Much of the time, the latter leads to the former. So any dissertation book worth its salt must devote a chunk of its bandwidth to the psychology of writing a dissertation. I recommend the book Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day: A Guide to Starting, Revising, and Finishing Your Doctoral Dissertation by clinical psychologist Joan Bolker. It’s got a false promise in the title like Ogden’s book above, but at least Bolker acknowledges it! And, she does spend a significant amount of time discussing psychological blocks and how to work through them.

If you’re suffering at all from blockage (and who doesn’t, at some point in the process), I’d really recommend this book. If nothing else, it is comforting to read someone who acknowledges the difficulty of what you are doing. As King wrote, writing a dissertation “really requires a lot of work,” and much of that work is psychological.

—Jennifer Selig, PhD, Depth Psychology Core Faculty and Depth Psychology Research Coordinator

How to write good...

1. Avoid alliteration. Always.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. Avoid clichés like the plague. (They’re old hat.)
4. One should never generalize.
5. Comparisons are as bad as clichés.
6. Be more or less specific.
7. Sentence fragments? Eliminate.
8. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.
9. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are unnecessary.
10. Who needs rhetorical questions?

Ornamental mulberry tree on Lambert Campus. Photo by Robyn Cass.
Fall Quarter Dissertation Publications

Daniel Anderson, Clinical Psychology, *Giegerich’s Psychology of Soul: Psychotherapeutic Implications*

Deloris Anderson, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Through the Eyes of a Birdwatcher: An Exploration of Therapeutic Presence*

Lindsey Beaven, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Epiphanies of Soul: When the Bolts of the Universe Fly Open. A Depth Psychological Contemplation of Wonder*

Cheryl Bench, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Using Guided Imagery to Alleviate End-of-Life Suffering: A Phenomenological/Transpersonal Study*

James Blalock, Depth Psychology, *The Links at St Andrews, Scotland A Phenomenological Hermeneutic Exploration of Golf’s Primordial Place*

Alla Bolsheva, Clinical Psychology, *After-Death Communication Phenomenon: A Depth Perspective on the Lived Experience*


Ipek Burnett, Depth Psychology, *The Violence of Innocence: A Critical Archetypal Inquiry into the American Psyche*

Cerena Ceaser, Mythological Studies, *Authorship, Archetype and Zeitgeist: Methodologies for Interpreting Identity*

Karina Chace, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Fathers in the Sand: The Transformative Emergence of Archetypal Images through Sandplay*

Alexandra Cichon, Clinical Psychology, *Following Ariadne's Thread Through the Labyrinth: Eros, Androgyny, and the Individuation of the Feminine*

Kim Colvin, Depth Psychology, *The Dream Poet's Pen: A Matter of Archetypal Psychology*

Raymond Coppola, Clinical Psychology, *The Experience of Character Armor and its Gradual Softening*

Colleen Crowley, Clinical Psychology, *Negative Psychological Effects of Medicalized Birth*

Smadar De Lange, Clinical Psychology, *The Field of Silence and Contact Layers*

Andrea Deerheart, Mythological Studies, *Death Beyond Denial*

Jaclyn Deilgat, Clinical Psychology, *Involuntary Commitment: A Phenomenological Examination of Individuals Diagnosed with Schizophrenia*

John Demenkoff, Mythological Studies, *Evolution and Emergence of the Masculinities: Epiphanies and Epiphenomena of the Male Athlete and Dancer*

*These dissertations are now available on ProQuest and in the Pacifica Research Library.*
Fall Quarter Dissertation Publications


Amy Farhadzadeh, Clinical Psychology, *The Experience of the Numinous for Vipassana Meditators: A Phenomenological Study*

Deborah Ferera, Clinical Psychology, *Maternal Attachment and the Transfiguration of Sorrow into Acts of Self-Injury*

Brent Fladmo, Clinical Psychology, *Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Students in Graduate Marriage and Family Therapy Programs*

Judith Hall, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *From Lost Twin to Found Self: A Journey of Individuation*

Nozomi Hayase, Depth Psychology, *Liberation from Corporate Psychic Colonization: New Subjectivity Awakening in Conscience*

Todd Hayen, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Ancient Egyptian Sacred Science and the Loss of Soul in Modern Materialism*

Nancy Hinman, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Toward the Heart of Cleopatra: Shakespeare's Contribution to Female Consciousness*

Kimberly Howell, Depth Psychology, *Peek-A-Boo! I See You: Capturing the Story and Image of Invisible Beauty in Los Angeles*

Marie Keller, Mythological Studies, *Salmacis’ Alchemical Pool: Gender Diversity and the Transformation of Culture*

Anna Kumor, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *The Symbolic Significance of Violence: A Depth Psychological Perspective*

Patricia Kwok, Depth Psychology, *Oncologists and Death: From a Heroic Angle of Repose*


Tony Martinez, Clinical Psychology, *Stigma and Military Mental Health Care: A Phenomenological Study*

Bryce McDavitt, Clinical Psychology, *Partnering the Felt Self: A Contemporary Uranian Psychoanalytic Approach to Active Imagination for Gay Men*

Bryan McNutt, Clinical Psychology, *Disenfranchised Grief and Resilience Among Gay Widowers: A Phenomenological Exploration*

Ifat Peled, Clinical Psychology, *Transformations in the Therapist's Psyche Through Working With Borderline Patients*

These dissertations are now available on ProQuest and in the Pacifica Research Library.
Fall Quarter Dissertation Publications

Anne Perkins, Clinical Psychology, *Experiences of Addiction: From Onset to Recovery a Phenomenological Investigation of Six Adult Men in Substance Abuse Treatment Programs Concerning their Experiences with Addiction*

Judy Radiloff, Clinical Psychology, *Affect and Archetype in Early Infancy*

Jeffrey Riffle, Clinical Psychology, *Corpsman Up: The Lived Experience of PTSD in Navy Hospital Corpsmen Who Have Served in Combat with Marine Corps Units in Iraq and/or Afghanistan*

Richard Ryan, Clinical Psychology, *The Father of All: Friction, Splitting, and the Philosophical Assumptions of Depth Psychology*

Edward Santana, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Jung and Sex: Re-Visioning the Treatment of Sexual Issues in Psychotherapy Through an Exploration and Analysis of Jung's Writings on Sexual Phenomena*

Joan Scott, Clinical Psychology, *Black Children Seeking the Voice of White Biological Mothers of Biracial Black-White Children*

Victoria Shackelford, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Mary's Mandala Story: Images of Chaos in Mandala Psychology*

Stacey Shelby, Depth Psychology with emphasis in Jungian Archetypal Studies, *Tracking the Wild Woman Archetype: A Process in Individuation*

Erica Smith, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Lost Moon: A Depth Psychological and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Adolescent Heartbreak*

Laura Smith, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Breaker of the Trance: The Warrior as a Means to Heal from Trauma*

Raymond Sullivan, Depth Psychology, *Towards Depth Visioning: A Depth Psychological Investigation of Group Visioning Methods*


Lisa Weiner, Clinical Psychology, *Creative Diaries of the Holocaust: A Phenomenological Exploration of the Engagement with Creativity*

Deborah Wilday, Mythological Studies, *Soulmaking within the Destructive Side of God Seeing Through Monotheism's Holy Warrior 9/11 to Prehistory*

Natalia Zhikhareva, Clinical Psychology, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Projective Drawings of Pre-Operative Male-to-Female Transgender Individuals Perception of Their Genitalia*

Ary Ziv, Clinical Psychology, *Dynamics in Interactions with Digital Technology: A Depth Psychological/Theoretical Exploration of the Evolutionary-Biological, Symbolic, and Emotional Psyche in the Digital Age*

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