On Archetypal Psychology:
By Michael P. Sipiora, PhD

At the beginning of *A Brief Account* (2013), Hillman asserted that archetypal psychology is “deliberately affiliated with the arts, culture, and the history of ideas,... rather than with medical and empirical psychologies, which tend to confine psychology to the positivistic manifestations of the nineteenth-century” (p. 13). When he began his career in the mid twentieth-century, there was the hope that psychology would break out of such confines and re-vision itself as a *logos* of the soul. By the turn of the century when he wrote *The Force of Character* (1999), Hillman recognized that “positivistic science (geneticism and computerism), economics (bottom-line capitalism) and single-minded faith (fundamentalism)” (p. xxiv) had carried the day. Today, in the early twenty-first century, the American Psychological Association is deliberately severing the very connections Hillman affirmed and is explicitly defining psychology as a STEM—science, technology, engineering, mathematics—discipline. While the APA is unrelenting in its “hard” science ambition, archetypal psychology, as I have argued elsewhere (Sipiora, 2008), might well be imagined as an “insurrection,” an uprising from within our cultural heritage that seeks to retrieve and maintain psychology’s deep affiliation with traditions of imagination that have been excluded from the totalitarian perspective of STEM disciplines.

Continued on page 2

1 From presentation made at *Celebration of the Life and Work of James Hillman*, *Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture*, December, 2013.
The “valuative function of the adjective archetypal” (p. 23)—the “appellative move” that is the hallmark of Hillman’s archetypal psychology and its metaphorical perspective—both retrieves the intimate connection between psychology and culture, and affords a soulful alternative to the imperatives of a STEM based psychology. Not to STEM disciplines themselves, but to the literalism of the STEM disciplines that is antithetical to archetypal psychology and to which the archetypal move is antidote. Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are no less psychological than the arts and humanities. They too, as Hillman always contended and often demonstrated, need to be seen-though, imagined archetypally and thus returned to their own ground within history and culture. The “enemy” is not science or mathematics, but “the literal” (1976, p. 174). While Hillman lamented that he had not won a “decisive battle” in his “war” (1999, p. xxiv) against it, the enduring value of archetypal psychology resides not in victory but in inspiring continued resistance to reductive literalisms and promoting insurrection in the form of the “revaluation of psychology itself as an archetypal activity” (p. 64).

—By Michael P. Sipiora, PhD, Clinical Psychology Core Faculty and Clinical Director of Research

References

Dissertation Wall
By Linda K. O’Dell, PhD, PGI Graduate

I began my dissertation journey through the creative process of art. During that time I painted a wall in my office with magnetic paint, then covered it with black chalkboard paint. This was to be my dissertation wall. Collecting a box of bright colored chalk, magnets, and card stock, I waited for inspiration that might lead me to my dissertation topic. In moments of delightful reverie, I began to create what appeared to be a process map. Images were copied, magnetized, and placed on the wall as symbolically encoded markers, holding ideas to be unlocked at an undisclosed time.

Six months passed with very little change made to the dissertation wall. I added a few pictures. The alchemical solutio stage of the work had begun. There was no discomfort in this waiting process. It felt right. The dissertation work was continuing, but the process was moving outside of my conscious understanding. By simply allowing the images to steep, the
solutio stage afforded me an opportunity to distance myself from the work. From time to time I’d check to see if changes needed to be made. No, all was in place. Everything was steeping and coalescing within the silence and stillness.

I placed some large felt stones at the foot of the wall. They served as a place to rest as I contemplated the meaning of what lay before me. What was here, hidden in these markings on the wall? As I sat searching for meaning, I realized that it was a diagram of sorts, and in some unknown form had all the ingredients of my dissertation. I smiled as I looked around the room and remembered the old folk tale Stone Soup. The tale is about someone who is very hungry and places a stone in the bottom of a pot of water. She entices strangers to add to her stone soup. I too was making stone soup; in fact I was sitting on one of the stones—in the pot. The ingredients I was waiting for needed to come from the strangers who were called to the imaginal space, called to add the necessary ingredients needed to complete my dissertation. This was to be a collaborative effort, one that was created in the imaginal transference space.

—Linda K. O’Dell, Ph.D., is a Clinical Psychologist with a private practice in Beverly Hills, CA. She is a dissertation coach, working with students to assist in the process of writing and completing their dissertations.

6 Tips for Completing Your Dissertation

Rudestestam and Newton (2001) provide six tips for arranging your life to conform to the task of completing the dissertation:

1. Give yourself privacy and quiet. Arrange a space or area of your house or office that is identified with studying and only studying. . . .

2. Taken as a whole, a dissertation can seem like a forbidding and overwhelming challenge. Use the principle of successive approximations to divide it into manageable slices. Tackle one step at a time. . . .

3. Get your thoughts on paper . . . seeing words on a paper or on a computer screen has a way of generating momentum. Don’t worry if your words aren’t polished. The important thing is to develop a pattern of producing some output on a regular basis.

Continue on page 4
6 Tips for Completing Your Dissertation, Continue from page 3

4. Talk your ideas over with others. Some people, especially extroverted individuals, seem to do their best thinking through discussing ideas . . . [others] can help you view your work from a fresh perspective and keep you motivated.

5. Establish a regular weekly schedule that allows for several hours of concentrated dissertation time. Many of our students recommend reserving some time each day . . . the important thing is the structure and regularity. A firm schedule will help guide you through the inevitable stages when ideas are not forthcoming, when obstacles arise, or when temptations lure you to greener pastures.

6. Recognize that even the most productive plow horse needs a break now and then. Give yourself some time off for enjoyable distractions and do so in a way that reinforces progress.


Summer Quarter Dissertation Publications


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


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

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

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


Lisa Weiner, Clinical Psychology, *Creative Diaries of the Holocaust: A Phenomenological Exploration of the Engagement with Creativity During a Time of Trauma.*

These dissertations are now available on ProQuest and in the Pacifica Research Library.