



Boundaries of the Soul: The Practice of Jung's Psychology

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After thirteen printings and with nearly 100,000 copies in print since its publication twenty years ago, *Boundaries Of The Soul* has become recognized as THE classic introduction to Jung and the practice of Jung's psychology. The book has been described as "the clearest and most coherent exposition of Jung's total thought," by Robertson Davies, and Alan Watts has called Dr. Singer "one of the great masters of the art." Now, in a completely revised edition of *Boundaries Of The Soul*, Dr. Singer incorporates the latest developments in Jungian psychology over the last two decades, particularly in the areas of masculine/feminine relationships, the use of psychotherapeutic drugs, and the evolution of Jung's concept and personality types and its application both clinically and in the world of business and industry. In addition, the case histories, so central to understanding many of Jung's concepts, have been re-examined and revised where necessary to correspond to the spirit of today's world. The updated edition of *Boundaries Of The Soul* should reaffirm the book's long-standing reputation as the best introduction to Jung's thought available.

Boundaries of the Soul: The Practice of Jung's Psychology Details

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Chin Jian Xiong says

Good intro to Jungian concepts backed by interesting case studies. Main point I took away was that Jung's ultimate thrust is synergy and balance - as opposed to Freud's idea of constant repression and lack of control.

Gail says

I spent weeks with this book and still go back to it often. It's amazing how much of life and the world are packed into this book. Mostly it's about the process of analysis--the work and effort that goes into transformation by both an analyst and the person in analysis. There's so much to ponder here about how we relate to one another, to reality, to ourselves.

Although I was most interested to read this book to explore how Dr. Singer, a Jungian analyst, would interpret and explain some Jungian concepts--which I am always interested to read and explore--I found an interesting comment in her chapter on 'Individuation: The Process of Becoming Whole,' that describes what a person entering analysis ought to consider:

"If it appears that he is not able or willing to sustain the additional burdens of increasing consciousness, he ought not to subject himself to the rigors of the individuation process in analysis. That discipline is a personal discipline, and those who undertake it must do so on their own responsibility, and not expect to be made whole at the expense of their friends or wives or lovers."

This book is beautifully written by a wise woman, and it incorporates theory and much material that invokes thoughtful reflection. With regard to the passage quoted above, I've recently encountered this concept in a different context: in the Steven Covey 'Seven Habits of Highly Effective People' teaching series. Although Covey does NOT leave out the need for inner reflection, his program emphasizes DOING something: and the first three habits he presents as bedrock to what he calls 'the private victory' are analogous to Jung's term 'individuation.' Both center on intentionally accepting personal responsibility for making choices, gaining insight about oneself (without depending on others to develop your 'self'), having empathy (first for our own selves) and acknowledging that we each have a large stake in bringing purpose and meaning into our own lives. Dr. Singer's guidance through this book to understanding the process of personal development and the valuing of one's own life--which must be met and known in order to be more fully appreciated--is accessible and illuminating. And mostly, inspiring. It's a comfort and delight to encounter oneself as 'NOT ALONE' by sharing what she presents about fellow humans' experiences with encountering their best selves and shadow sides and embracing reality and integrating reality and imagination to build a better life.

Juan says

I taught psychology at a small-town rural high school in East Texas and as we took a look at C.G. Jung – known for theories that embraced spirituality, myth, and the imagination – I wanted to find something that would nicely compliment our textbook, something that would help my students better grasp the fascinating

life and works of one of the key figures in modern depth psychology.

Through donorschoose.org, I requested and received 30 copies of "Boundaries of the Soul: The Practice of Jung's Psychology," a book described as "the clearest and most coherent exposition of Jung's total thought." Getting high school juniors and seniors to be interested in exploring psychology wasn't as challenging as I initially thought it would be when I first started teaching the course.

But Jung is hard. Trying to fully grasp Carl Gustav Jung's life and work is no easy task – even for the brightest of students. Yet June Singer's "Boundaries of the Soul" proved to be as effective an introduction to Jung's basic concepts as I could have hoped for.

The case histories found throughout the book were especially helpful. The real-world examples of Jung's theories in action allowed my students to play the part of analyst, and this led to a better understanding of why we think the way we think and why we act the way we do.

This is an indispensable book for anyone wishing to understand Jung better and I am ever so grateful that I had the opportunity to be able to share it with my class.

Elizabeth says

bought dec 11 08 trade paperback good condition

preface: The first edition c1972 sold well enough to warrant reprinting in 1994. The publisher sent a letter which essentially arrived on JS's 75th birthday and so prompted JS to reconsider her original book. Much more of Jung is in English, much more of JS is in existence as a result of 20+ more years as a Jungian Psychologist in practice and much more modern thought as a result of feminism, and the independence movements of the so called minorities whom JS astutely observes may someday be the majority. A number of chapters have been revised, removed, replaced or added. This is a much different book by the same name.

Now that I have finished it I want it to go on. I didn't feel that it had a real ending.

I have to let it sink in more before I know what to write. BTW I was reading in parallel the Toffler book on Revolutionary Wealth.

Megan Wight says

June Singer did a great job of summarizing Jung's psychology. I enjoyed her book very much. I feel I have the gist of this strange fascinating psychology enough now, I can move on to new ideas and get inside new beautiful minds. She was talented enough to simplify the chaos of jungian psychology. I'm grateful to her.

Danielle Reyes says

Super dense (exhausting at times) but fascinating. Be prepared to wade through word vomit as the author often tends to go on multiple tangents when unfolding simple concepts or opinions. My favorite chapters were:

Chapter 8: Persona and Shadow, people often operate day to day with this 2 dimensional 'persona' heavily based on social expectations. Meanwhile suppressing our 'shadow' aspects which might not necessarily be negative traits but traits that don't fit whatever societal box one has put her/himself in. Embracing the shadow can be a source of renewal.

*Also understood as...just be yourself; love all parts of yourself and make the ego whole. It's a lovely reminder.

Chapter 14: We Were Born Dying, touched on the beauty of going from the unconscious maternal womb through youth and degeneration into the womb of earth and matrix of the unconscious. It touched on the ultimate release of ego similar to findings of those who've experimented with DMT. In any case, without forcing a near death experience to release your ego, it's a nice chapter to remind you of what's important in life. I've lost a few family members in the last couple years so this chapter was also quite healing.

Erik Graff says

Dad, knowing of my interest in analytical psychology and of my having gone to hear June Singer lecture at the Jung Center in Evanston during the previous winter break from college, gave me this book as a gift upon my graduation as a religious studies major from Grinnell College in Iowa. It was probably the first time he himself had actually bought me any kind of gift as previously such things had been Mom's job. Now, however, they had become separated and he had not only gotten me the book but had also come out with my little brother to Grinnell to drive me back to his home in Park Ridge, Illinois, where I spent the summer prior to heading out to New York City for further studies.

The book, a general overview of Jung's ideas and their applications in psychotherapy, wasn't particularly impressive. Nor, for that matter, had Singer's lecture made much of an impression. Still, intentions count and Dad's gesture was much appreciated.

Steve Woods says

This is an outstanding piece of work. After many years experience with therapy and readings around most theoretical constructs, Jung's is the only approach that holds any weight for me. In reading his work and the work of authors influenced by him I find a totality of approach that just is not there in anything else I have encountered, it is always "OK yes but.....what about?" Singer gives a precise and readily accessible account of the main thrust of Jungian practice and it sits well with the holistic approach that has come out of years of Buddhist practice for me. It has certainly been responsible for some major changes in behavior and personality for me. I am inclined to pursue it further but the limitation is the availability of a good Jungian

therapist. Living in a third world country, in a Buddhist culture not much call for it. This book though has been so helpful in helping me clarify and illuminate my own experience, really a life changer.

Kevin Fuller says

Having read Carl Jung now for the past twenty years, and having given his psychology much thought over this amount of time, it should come as no surprise I still turn to introductory material to help broaden and refresh my understanding of this analytical genius.

I read June Singer first back in the eighties. It was a little book called 'Seeing Through the Visible World' and was a nice rumination on Jung and his relationship to the gnostics.

In this great book, though, Singer proves to be expansive, well read and well experienced in Jungian philosophy and psychology.

Singer proves, chapter by chapter, her deep grasp of the material and provides wonderful clinical examples of this particular brand of psychology at work.

If nothing else, in seeking Wholeness, the crux of Jung's psychology, there is a dynamism and tension of opposites because Jung does not arrive at Platonic Forms that are static and good, but rather Archetypes, which are dynamic and therefore hold out the promise in polarity of both good and evil. His is an honest and sobering psychology and philosophy, a bareknuckled approach to the realities of life that sometimes borders on a Religion, what with Jung having become the prophet and harbinger of the modern subjective view to reality.

Singer begins in this work with complexes, continues on through archetypes, the persona, the shadow, individuation and culminates in the reality of death and dying. But she does so with an extreme intelligence on the subjects that makes the material available and most, relevant, for a new generation of discoverers.

While I have read other Jungian analysts such as Jaffe and Edinger, Singer takes the cake with this one, in my humble opinion!

A landmark!

Rebecca says

I've just read the first 2 chapters so far. Rather than a how-to-do-Jungian-Psychoanalysis book (which probably doesn't exist, anyway), it more illustrates what this type o' therapy looks like, and all the different things involved in it. It's a pretty good look at Jung's model o' the psyche, as well as some o' Jung's life history, as well as some interesting case examples that show Jungian analysis in motion, woo-hoo. I'm planning on gettin' training in how to do that type o' psychotherapy, so this book is relevant to my career interests. Cool, man, cool.

Christa Ladny says

A really good overview of a Jungian's approach to psychoanalysis. With all the ambiguity in any given theory from symptoms of a repressed animus to dream symbolism, the author gives case examples from her own practice and often cites Jung or refers to his biography. This helps to reveal the dangers of certain approaches and the necessity of allowing the patient and the subconscious lead the exploration. This is not a book for someone in search of tried and true methods or black and white answers. It's not a 'how-to', it's a 'for-example' with many insights that depend on a unique subject of analysis as would have to be applied differently to any individual. It was honest. It wasn't advertising.

Maya says

I'm not even sure how to write this review. The book is an amazing read from the beginning to the end. You learn a lot about yourself while you are reading the book. The only way to read this book and indeed all books that deal with Jung, as well as Jung's own writings is by applying these concepts yourself.

I think what interested me the most about the book and indeed Jung's writings is that it deals with psychological disorders from the spiritual point of view. The psychology itself is analytic and I feel takes into account the spiritual as well as the environmental elements to the disorder.

If you want to read Jung's work you need to read this book first!

Nairy Fstukh says

Dr. Singer does a fantastic job summarizing all the various aspects of Jungian analysis. She uses cases from her private practice and clearly shows the process of individuation. A great read.

Bob Nichols says

Singer gives a long overview of Jung's philosophy. Our unconscious is filled with various collective archetypes that manifest themselves in everyday life, for good and ill. In addition, we have innate dispositions and acquired experiences that make us individually unique. Together, these collective and individual elements form complexes, which are the typical ways we interact with the world. Our uniqueness puts us at odds with social norms. We hide ourselves. We put on masks. We play roles. We project our troublesome sides onto others.

Jung's task is to bring the unconscious into the light and to integrate it with our consciousness. The former, if left unrevealed, retains control. Until its role is brought to light we remain separate from ourselves and the world. With integration, through therapy, we become integrated and whole. Yet wholeness does not mean we submerge ourselves. We become self, true to our individual nature, yet an integral part of the whole. In a nutshell, we are born as wholes, we become individualized and separate as ego but, through therapy, we re-emerge as individuals and we are whole. The same process occurs at the collective level. Unless enlightened, the unconscious is in control and this results in violence and war.

Jung states we have a collective unconscious and collective archetypes. Though he does not account for their origin, his strong religious views might suggest that they have a mystical source. When viewed through the lens of biological evolution, Jung's general theory might be interpreted differently. For example, species energy related to the need for nurture and for protection might account for mother and father archetypes and projections of internal needs toward external objects that address those needs. An extension of that view may have a bearing on belief systems related to personalized deities. Anima and animus might be expressions of sexual energy, and our search for opposites that can satisfy internal need. Persona and shadow may be "survival" projections for the self, where the need to preserve our individuality while living within a collectivity is achieved through deception and the wearing of masks. It could be that war and collective insanity has less to do with unexamined egos and more to do with our tribalism for the tribe is the way the individual survives, and that demon figures are those who stand apart from our group ("not us") and, therefore, they are suspect.

In addition to this identification of collective phenomena within, Jung's emphasis on "individuation" is excellent. We have collective, species needs that at their core serve individual self-interest, but we also have inborn dispositions that reflect Darwinian variability which, along with the experience, creates uniqueness that often stands in conflict with the interest of the collectivity. To be "whole" and "integrated" and "healthy" – requires that we to a degree learn to be "true to ourselves." While Jung believes that such integration presumes an "inherent" goodness (and presumably deep therapy will achieve this for many), an intriguing question is whether self-fulfillment for some or many might be expressed as extreme individualism and the dominance of the ego in its negative, social sense. This too might be a reality that is out there.

Rosa says

Despite a few dated references to early 1970s "counterculture", this is an excellent overview of the theory and process of Jungian analysis. Perfect for those for whom other forms of therapy have come up short. Jungian analysis takes into account not only sexual instinct and the will to power and control, but also the innate spirituality of the individual, rather than dismissing it outright. Provides a potential means of weaving together each facet of personality into a coherent and reasonably well-functioning whole.
