

section entitled 'A Therapist's Journey' - very personal, very moving, often the most inspirational and thought provoking pages. To conclude, having read other of Bugental's books, I was not expecting the textbook style that I found in *The Art of the Psychotherapist*, but I think the book succeeds. It really does get inside the process and takes the reader from highly lucidly presented concepts right into the minutia and depth of the therapeutic encounter.

Harriett Goldenberg

***The Empathic Imagination* by Alfred Margulies.** New York. W.W. Norton & Co, £17.50.

How does one begin to approximate the inner experience of another? Thus begins Chapter 1 of this superior contribution to the psychotherapy literature. *The Empathic Imagination* certainly lives up to the advanced acclaim on its dust jacket by three distinguished American psychoanalysis and psychiatrists. It demonstrates an impressive integration of the practice of psychoanalytic therapy and the ideas of phenomenology using empathy as over-arching principle and bridge. The book's thesis is that through the empathic imagination in the practice of personal psychotherapy we can approximate and understand "the things themselves" - in our case the inner experience of another. The work certainly approximates that genuinely-held ambition. As such, it complements and even surpasses the comparatively earlier studies by such psychoanalytic scholars as Richard Chessick, Stanley Leavy, and Joseph H Smith, who have done much to enrich contemporary psychoanalysis with aspects of Continental philosophy. Moreover, Dr. Margulies' broad and deftly deployed knowledge of English literature has inspired him to articulate a felicitous text on the place of empathy in the adventure that is personal psychotherapy. There are numerous illuminating case examples throughout.

It should be pointed out that this is a sophisticated book by an erudite and accomplished practitioner. Consequently, pragmatically-minded therapists may struggle with the author's urbane, inconclusive style and his frequent recourse to the existential themes of literature and poetry. Indeed, the book can be read as a kind of celebration of negative capability and vital importance of wonder in human existence and, of course, psychotherapy.

Psychotherapists are aware, ironically and at times painfully, that the endeavour to recognise and to develop the empathic imagination in the practice of psychotherapy is as much arduous toil as a labour of love

for one's fellow human beings. For, in our practice and our reflection on it, we realise we are constantly pushing to the limit our capacity genuinely to be with and understand the Other - literally and imaginatively - within a carefully maintained therapeutic space that is bounded by time. This raises two persistent philosophical problems: our knowledge of other minds; and the subject/object dichotomy. In particular, Margulies addresses the latter throughout in order to challenge its continued hold on ourselves and our practice.

There are obvious as well as subtle dangers of entirely dissolving the subject - object dimension in close therapeutic work with another as-separate-person. Surely, empathy as the empathic imagination traverses the border of objectivity and subjectivity throughout the Psychotherapeutic endeavour. Unfortunately, ail-too enthusiastic readers could assume that Dr. Margulies is saying that there ought not to be a space between the subject - object relationship in psychotherapy. Fortunately, the book's end-notes are extremely important and instructive in that they serve to qualify and check the rich flow and fusion of intuitive or "poetic" ideas about Psychotherapeutic practice in the main text. Once again, we recognise that this is no mere introductory text book on the technique of psychotherapy but instead a Phenomenological reflection on the problematic nature of personal psychotherapy.

Surprisingly, in this otherwise wide-ranging exploration of the phenomenology of psychotherapy, there is no mention of the work and thought of Hans-Georg Gadamer whose intellectual roots are in classical hermeneutics and phenomenology but which he has transcended in a unique way. Gadamer's dialogical, appreciative, non-adversarial approach to the interpretation of texts would seem to have much to offer us in the psychotherapy field. For example, from a Gadamerian standpoint, the psychotherapy relationship may be viewed as a "dialogical region" wherein therapist and patient meet for purposes of a special kind of open and imaginative dialogue, guided by respect for the subject matter of offering and accepting help that is mediated by responsible care as carried by the therapist, always.

Throughout his fine book, Dr. Margulies indeed has respected the subject matter of the empathic imagination which, mysterious though it is, really does constitute the heart and the delicate art of personal psychotherapy. His Psychotherapeutic exploration in the spirit of Husserl's Phenomenological legacy* encourages us to begin our own perpetual quest to approximate the inner experience of another.

Neville Singh

*John Sallis *Phenomenology and the Return to Beginnings*. 1973. Pittsburgh. Duquesne University press 1973