

CHAPTER 5

IMAGERY AND IMAGINATION IN AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGY

Our normal waking consciousness is but one special type of consciousness. Whilst all about it, parted from it by the flimsiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different.

We may go through life without suspecting their existence; but apply the requisite stimulus and at a touch they are there in all their completeness; definite types of mentality which probably have their field of applicability and adaptation. No account of the universe in its totality can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded. How to regard them is the question for they are so discontinuous with ordinary consciousness.

They may determine attitudes, though they cannot furnish formulas; and open a region though they fail to give a map. At any rate, they forbid our premature closing of accounts with reality.

William James, 1953

What man chooses to study and how he chooses or is able¹ to go about studying are intimately related. Often the desire to study a certain subject selects and/or generates methodologies seemingly appropriate to the subject matter. Such selection, however, is made narrow by the historical situation of the discipline the researcher belongs to. The methodology chosen

¹ There are, of course, certain natural restrictions on how he can study. For instance, how a person studied the stars before the telescope was invented was a matter of choice, but one limited by the available resources.

reveals certain aspects of the subject and conceals others. If one does not know much about the subject to begin with, methodologies may be chosen which are appropriate only to the aspects of the subject already known, and those as yet unseen may remain sadly unrevealed. Often we act as if the unrevealed aspects do not exist, could not exist, rather than acknowledging the excluding side, as well as the including side (the concealing as well as revealing nature) of methodology in general. More often than not, auxiliary hypotheses are glibly propagated to account for inconsistent data – forestalling the replacement of one set of theories and methodologies with another more adequate one.

Subject matter and methodology can be seen to trade off the leading role in the history and development of a science. In the early history of experimental psychology the chosen subject matter – the contents of mind and, especially, the primary elements of thinking – generated the methodology of introspection. When it became doubtful whether introspection was that useful or reliable, a new methodology – one consistent with the natural scientific approach – was invented. But with this change in approach a corresponding change in subject matter resulted. The behavioral approach dictated the subjects appropriate to itself. For a great many years it neglected others. Lately many of the exiled subjects have reared their heads in the corners of neighboring sciences, and within psychology itself. This has prompted a further modification of methodology which enables the science to encompass in its study a wider range of experience. Imagery and fantasy – whose fates reveal much about this dialogue between subject matter and method – were part of the banished areas of American psychology. Through their reappearance they join a crisis of modern psychology as a whole: whether psychology will continue to apply the methodologies of the natural sciences to issues of human existence or whether psychology will derive approaches that are more adequate and appropriate to their particular domain of study.

As yet a more phenomenological approach to researches concerning imaginal experience is still to be inaugurated. We are

left, therefore, with studies that do not clarify their own philosophical positions concerning imagery and imagination and which, for the most part, sever and segregate images from the daily human life of meaning they seem to us to be a part of.

THE DEATH OF INTROSPECTIONISM AND THE FALL OF THE IMAGE

Through the introspective observation of their own “stream of thought,” early psychologists noted—often quite surprisedly and excitedly—the appearance of visual imagery. As early as 1860 there was an attempt by Fechner to classify the kinds of imagery that had emerged up to then. For Titchener and his students it was of utmost importance that the psychologist be able to analyze the various complex states of mind into their most elementary units. The attempt to do this through introspection led to a later restatement (Titchener, 1915:73-79) of Fechner’s list of imagery (Holt, 1964:256).

The problems inherent in such research in imagery were signalled by Sir Francis Galton’s work, as well as by the Würzburg group. Galton (1889) surveyed through questionnaires, scientists and artists, schoolboys and statesmen, about their ability to see images. In this interesting work he found that most scientists (except for some mathematicians) did not see images, whereas the ability to visually imagine was common among the artists. Even more important, however, was his finding that each group had assumed for years that others thought and experienced as they did. When they were informed otherwise the artists thought the scientists strange, and vice versa.

To my astonishment I found that *the great majority of the men of science to whom I first applied protested that mental imagery was unknown to them, and they looked on me as fanciful and fantastic in supposing that the words “mental imagery” really expressed what I believed everyone supposed them to mean. They had no more*

notion of its truth than a color-blind man, who has not discerned his defect, has of the nature of color. They had a mental deficiency of which they were unaware, and naturally enough supposed that those who affirmed they possessed it were romancing. To illustrate their mental attitude it will be sufficient to quote a few lines from a letter of one of my correspondents, who writes:

“These questions presuppose assent to some sort of a proposition regarding the ‘mind’s eye,’ and the ‘images’ which it sees . . . This points to some initial fallacy ... It is only by a figure of speech that I can describe my recollection of a scene as a ‘mental image’ which I can ‘see’ with my ‘mind’s eye.’ ... I do not see it. . . any more than a man sees the thousand lines of Sophocles which under due pressure he is ready to repeat. The memory possesses it.”

Galton, 1880

From Galton’s findings it seemed probable that people could exclude imagery from their scientific pursuits by virtue of their own lack of relation to it. Moreover, this exclusion either would not be recognised or if acknowledged not mourned over. When certain kinds of experiences are not had, or if had not recognized focally and valued, one wastes no time studying them and does not bemoan or often even realize the fact.

The Würzberg school of psychology, through their studies which gave the subjects a task and asked them to report what went on in their minds while trying to solve it, threw doubt upon the method of introspection and the importance of the subject matter which it yielded, including imagery. They claimed that the subject’s introspective reports were insufficient to account for the operations, the actual problem-solving, of the mind (Holt, 1964:256). This latter was their interest. Introspection could seemingly reveal the conscious activities of the mind, but these, it was being found, were simply inadequate for a “full explanation of

mind and its accomplishments” (*ibid.*). A new methodology based on other than the exploration of conscious contents was needed. Both psychoanalysis and behaviorism answered this call. Holt points out, however, that it was the polemics of behaviorism that granted it the popular accord needed for full instatement into the mainstream of psychological research.

The study of behavior with objective operational methods banished the subject matter of states of consciousness, “thought, imagery, volition, attention and other such seditious notions” (Hebb, 1960:736). They were “anathematized as ‘mentalistic’ and cast into outer darkness” (Holt, 1964:257). In the 1920s “mental imagery began to fade as a serious subject for investigation and completely disappeared as a theoretical construct” (Richardson, 1969:ix). Psychology was no longer James’ “science of mental life” in which imagery and daydreams had played such an important role (Singer, 1966:xiv). The “subjective” studies which had revealed imagery and fantasy became confined to analytical circles – out of the mainstream of psychological thought and research. Even there, however, a prejudice often abounded against imagery and fantasy, which failed to recognize any positive aspects to them.

Unlike many European psychologists² who were culturally influenced to accept the creative aspects of an “unconscious,” Americans did not on the whole have a similarly kind view towards so-called “unconscious products and faculties.” “In America such phenomena as daydreaming and vivid imagery have too often been regarded as symptoms of neurotic dispositions [whereas] the intrinsic value of one’s image has been widely accepted in Europe” (Singer, 1971a: 169). If and when imagery was dealt with there was an associated bias against it (connected with the notion of mental illness) and a wish for its extinction rather than its cultivation. For instance, up until World War I clinical interest in imagery rested primarily in hallucinations. It dealt overwhelmingly with the “pathological” aspects of the types of

² See Chapter 4.

imagery occurring in hysteria, psychoses and organic diseases (Holt, 264:255).

Introspectionalism's methodological impasse was a justifiable excuse to many for pursuing the more "visible measurable behavioral pole of what a person experiences" (Jourard, 1968:102). Psychology devoted itself to primarily studying "1) individual differences following Galton, 2) the role that various aspects of mental life play in the efficient functioning of the organism, 3) the psychology of animals." All three neglected what had been subsumed under the heading of "inner experience" and focused instead on behavioral variables (Klinger, 1971:10-12). From 1920 to 1960, Klinger notes, there was a "moratorium" on inner experience in the United States of America. There was not one book published in the United States that devoted itself to a systematic examination of fantasy until 1966³ (*ibid.*). Psychology, in its attempt to become scientific, disowned its other historical origins: philosophy (except for the philosophy of science) and psychoanalysis (Jourard, 1968:103). It tried to fit itself within the framework of the natural sciences – participating as much as possible in its approach, methods, concepts, and frames of reference (Giorgi, 1970:55). Psychology became concerned not with modifying scientific methods and techniques to the study of the person, but with studying those aspects of behavior which could be quantified and dealt with by the pre-existing so-called "objective" methods.

In order for the study of "inner experience" to be once again included in the structure of psychology as a "science," a frame of reference had to be created for it which would enable it to be seen as a valuable and necessary subject to study; approaches would then have to be created with which to explore it.

³ *Daydreaming*, by Jerome Singer.

BEGINNING THE
"RETURN OF THE OSTRACIZED IMAGERY"⁴

By examining the relation of the subject matter of imagery to psychology during the period 1920-1965, it would appear that the resurgence of interest in imagination and imagery occurred at first almost in spite of experimental psychologists. Slowly implications of certain experiments and clinical practice, as well as philosophical and cultural changes, encouraged the reacceptance of the study of "inner experience" – that category under which imagination was generally understood. In general, however, the approaches of behaviorism and physiological psychology could comment on the occurrence of imagery but were inadequate to take up the issue of the lived significance of such imagery. Thus imagery became re-introduced as a subject matter for psychologists, but its re-introduction was at the same time a reduction of the phenomena of imagery to the grounds available to the experimental psychologist – grounds, as we shall see, that are wholly inadequate.

During the interim mentioned, imagery was not studied for its own sake but rather to avoid certain practical problems, and to accomplish certain tasks with greater utility. Researchers, in other words, did not begin with imagery as a subject of concern, but rather found it occurring, as it were, between themselves and the solutions that they sought. While they studied other things, imagery emerged as a reality to be coped with, controlled, and overcome. Its comeback, Holt (1964:257-265) notes, seems to have been brought about largely by developments outside theoretical, experimental or clinical psychology: from engineering psychology, sensory and perceptual deprivation studies, biochemistry, neurophysiological research, studies of cognition and memory, of sleep and creativity. All revealed imagery and held it up to psychologists' views as an honorable subject matter coming from "hard" science rather than metaphysics. But although it was

⁴ See Robert Holt's excellent history, "The return of the ostracized – imagery." 1964.

becoming respectable to study imagery, it was still not becoming laudable to have experiences of imagery. Psychology was still approaching such experiences as “being in the way of” average everydayness.

Engineering psychology was forced to face imagery as a practical problem. Radar operators, long distance truck drivers, jet-pilots and operators of polar snow-cats were all subject to the “emergence into consciousness of vivid imagery, largely visual but often kinaesthetic or auditory, which they may take momentarily as reality” (Holt, 1964: 257). Subsequently their perception of reality, which was necessary for their safety was impaired. Similarly scientists (Paloszi-Horvath, 1959) puzzled over the “cinema” of prisoners, the pseudo-hallucinatory imagery” reported by prisoners in concentration camps when subjected to prolonged isolation, sleep deprivation, and multiple regressive procedures (Holt, 1964:257). In sensory deprivation and perceptual isolation, subjects observed hypnagogic imagery and hallucinations. In all these studies “normal” people reported experiences of imagery usually felt in America to be pathological.

Neurology has turned its interest toward imagery in the last twenty-five years because of the findings from 1) electroencephalography, 2) direct stimulation of the brain, and 3) the work of Magoun on the reticular activating system of the brain (Holt, 1964:258). In the first, Short (1953) discovered that people with different behavior of alpha waves have different types of thought imagery. He claimed those with persistent alpha are verbal imagers; those with “normal” alpha have the usual predominance of visual imagery; whereas those who lack alpha waves experience vivid visualization. In the second set of findings it was discovered that photic stimulators,⁵ used for their influence on EEG patterns, produced experiences of “illusory colors” and “subjective” visual phenomena (*ibid.*, 258). In the third set of findings, dealing with the brain’s reticular activating system, it

⁵ Delivers a series of regular light flashes to the eye.

was proposed that the reticular substance of the brain stem is responsible for degrees of behavioral and subjective alertness (Moruzzi and Magoun) as well as for a critical role in the production of hallucinations because of the connection of the efferent fibers from the reticular formation with the retina (Polyak, Cajal). Such work re-introduced the notion of states of consciousness (Holt, 1964:258) and their corresponding physiological correlates.

Penfield and his colleagues, through their work on temporal-lobe epilepsy, “developed a technique of opening the skull under local anaesthesia and then directly stimulating the exposed cortex by electrodes” (*ibid.*, 259). They often found that the patient would experience an “hallucination” – defined as a perception without an object.

The hallucination thus produced may be auditory or visual or both, but is neither a single sound, nor a frozen picture . . . such hallucinations, or memories, or dreams continue to unfold slowly while the electrode is held in place. They are terminated suddenly when the electrode is withdrawn. This is a startling discovery. It brings psychical phenomena into the field of physiology.

Penfield and Jaspers, 1954:242ff

Penfield, Robert, and Jaspers’ work show that stimulation of the exposed temporal cortex often produces visual imagery. Although not always, this imagery is related to memory – a link now pursued by psychologists. The phenomenon of photographic memories, and the visual images experienced in hypnotic regression also are used to support the case that imagery is a vehicle of memory (Holt, 1964: 262).⁶

⁶ Julian Jaynes in his history of “bicameral consciousness” has pointed out the similarity between the reports of Penfield’s patients who heard voices upon the

Dement and Kleitman's (1957) discovery that everyone dreams several times each night and that such periods of dreaming can be recognized by rapid eye movements, and thereby studied in the laboratory, opened up the whole field of dreaming to the objective methodologies of the new scientific psychology. Dreams were everyone's. Images were becoming seen as simply part of the mental processes of thinking and memory. The mystery of the image as a product of only mad men or artists was being dispelled by scientific investigation. In making the image scientifically respectable, the *numina* that others had seen within it was scrubbed away. One was caught up in asking, "When and what fiber, with which electrode?" "After how many flashes of the photic stimulator?" "With which dosage of drugs?" "In which type of sensory deprivation environment?" It was the matter behind the image they concentrated on. The metaphorical and signficatory nature of the image were not bothered with. Technology at times did not aid the study of the image, but overwhelmed it.

Experimental psychology, in splitting man into various systems (such as perception, cognition, memory, sensation) has failed to approach imagery in a structural fashion — giving attention to the situation in which it arises spontaneously. By studying imagery through various methods of stimulation the experimental psychologist removes the subject from meaningful everyday experience. By reducing the understanding of imagery to a situation in which one is laying on a table with one's brain exposed, one creates man in the image of animal behavior as well as physical studies in general. Merleau-Ponty in *The Structure of Behavior* has criticized this manner of researching on the grounds that it gives us access not to the true living of an organism but to the pathological.

This critique, however, is not meant to underestimate the

incidence of brain stimulation and the voices heard by the early Greeks which they attributed to the gods. In both cases the auditory image has an "otherness" to it causing the experiencer to conceptualize it as outside of himself. This is, of course, also the case in hallucinations.

difficulty of understanding imagery in either a non-physiological way or through a situated approach. Experimental psychology studied instances of imagery in situations where the individual was removed from his everyday surroundings and was made to suffer marked minimization of sensory experience. These situations do parallel the more common situation of pre-sleep withdrawal from external stimulation, in which hypnagogic imagery occurs. But how is one to understand the significance of imagery in these situations? Imagery poses a difficult problem of understanding because unlike most behavior that can be at least partially elucidated through the behavioral context, people who are experiencing imagery are participating in a context that deviates from the shared and the behaviorally observable. In not having anything obvious to do with the shared context, it is easy for the experimenter to ignore the image itself and the person's experience of it. One does not ask why the subject hears their aunt speaking to them about the next door neighbors rather than see a man with a sharp instrument or feel oneself covered with bugs of a particular variety.

To delve into the significance of the image one must not remain as the external observer of manifesting behavior. The context of the subject is no longer simply externally observable and merely physiologically measurable. The imagery itself provides a new context for the subject and at first this context is not public but private. Behaviorism fails here. Its approach cannot reach the full situation of the subject. One is left with gross observations of brain waves, eye movements, and the simple appearance or disappearance of imagery.

Before the mid-1960's fantasy and imagery were neglected in American psychotherapy, except in those areas where it could scarcely be avoided. People dealing with child psychology encountered it daily in their work and derived a technique dependent on it – play therapy. Some continued to try to unravel and understand “fantastic” imagery and ideation in their studies

of psychotic language and hallucinations (Klinger, 1971:13). One of the most interesting integrations of fantasy with personality theory and psychodiagnostics was the formulation and sophistication of two major “projective” tests: the Rorschach Inkblot Test and the Thematic Apperception Test. In the latter projective technique, the subject is asked to tell a story about various pictures of situations. The personality, through the story making, through fantasy, is externalized, is “projected.” The ease with which many people are able to produce such stories and the findings of studies using free or induced imagination in children’s play showed how intimate, how revealing and expressive a part, the imaginary is to human being. It became evident to these workers that a “mere fantasy” has the ability to express the situation of the person often more aptly than the one’s verbal attempts.

Imagery also found its use in behavior modification and in psychosomatic control. In the former the image is not used for its own intrinsic sake, but for its pragmatic use in symptom control. Its power is recognized but not its own purpose. The techniques of using aversive imagery and of positive image substitution enable the patient to discourage or encourage internal response patterns. The emphasis is not on allowing the imagery or waking dream to occur naturally, and for the patient to **GROW** according to its development. Rather the patient and the therapist have an endpoint of development in mind and the image is used to facilitate the achievement of this desired state. Similarly in the use of imagery for psychosomatic control the image is used to aid in the attainment of a predetermined desirable state. In one study, for instance, Chappell and Stevenson had the patient imagine a pleasant experience each time anxiety was experienced. This enabled the patient to wilfully reduce his anxiety, and his formerly resultant ulcer symptomatology.

In the psychoanalytic movement the usual concern with the latent aspects of a dream were increasingly balanced by a study of the dream’s manifest content (French and Fromm, Erikson, Fisher, Saul and Sheppard). This helped to turn more attention to

imagery, because in studying the manifest content of the dream the observation of the imagery in and of itself is all important. One begins to trust that the story the image is telling is its own autobiography, not a mere farce covering up for the latent content. The seemingly malevolent aspects of imagery that had formed common prejudices were slowly being dispelled and supplanted with the notion that people able to introvert and to daydream were in fact less prone to mental disturbance. Introverted children were shown to be, in contrast to former speculation, the least likely to be labeled later as “schizophrenic” (Silvan and Tompkins). It was also shown that people diagnosed as adult schizophrenics had more often been hyperactive and antisocial children rather than the usually indicted shy and introverted type, to whom a more active fantasy life was attributed. Research began to show also that people who reported hallucinations showed less ability to daydream than non-hallucinators (Singer, 1966:xii). Cross-cultural studies showed that hallucinations in and of themselves are no particular indicator or negator of psychic health. Rather it depends on the culture in which the hallucinator is living. In Erik Erikson’s terms, “when an individual potentiality (such as the capacity for intense imagery of some kind) meshes with a social modality and thus becomes an intelligible and useful part of a shared reality, it will readily appear in behavior and not necessarily have any pathological significance” (Holt, 1964:262). Contrary to former prejudices, the ability to experience dreamlike hypnagogic imagery was correlated by Foulkes (Spear and Symonds, 1966) with greater psychological health, social poise, less rigid conformism, more self-acceptance and greater creative achievement. The non-hypnagogic imagers as measured by the Thematic Apperception Test and the California Personality Inventory were shown to have a “typical authoritarian syndrome and emerged as rigid, conventional, intolerant, and anti-introspective.”

It appears, then, that the hypnagogic dream might profitably be viewed as an ego-controlled excursion into inner thoughts and feelings followed by the ego's voluntary decathexis of sensory input from the external world. Subjects with rigid defenses against impulse life tend to resist any encroachment of such regressive mental content upon wakeful levels of ego-functioning, and thus experience little dream-like content at sleep onset. The nocturnal dream, on the other hand, may be viewed as the ego's involuntary response to unconscious impulses and anxieties which become active during REM sleep. Subjects with egos lacking adequate defenses against impulse life tend to be overwhelmed by it during REM sleep, hence experience especially vivid REM dreams.

Foulkes, et al., 1966

In the 1950's some attention was given to the problem-solving and creative aspects of imagery. Kris (1950) observed fantasy-like thought during the inspirational stage of creative problem solving. Creativity, he felt, was characterized by controlled ego regression from which imagery emerges. *The Creative Process* (1959) edited by Ghiselin, also emphasized the role that spontaneous and vivid imagery have in the illumination phase (after the preparation and incubation phase of the creative process) in symbolically representing the solution sought (Richardson, 1969:125). Philosophers and scientists (Descartes, Kekule), as well as artists and poets (Blake, Rilke) had acknowledged this. Studies showed that individuals differ markedly in their ability to focus on subliminal stimuli (Holt, 1964:260). This ability was demonstrated to be an important factor in creativity – for it is often on the edges of our consciousness where creativity flourishes. In 1953 insights from the study of the creative process were introduced to business in A. F. Osborne's *Applied Imagination: Principles and Procedures of Creative Thinking*, and later in J. J. Gordon's *Synecdics* (1961). This work meant the introduction of a pragmatic attitude toward

imagery to a previously ignoring, if not hostile, population. Osborne recommended that one pour out ideas and images without evaluation while the “brainstorming” was in process. He had found that criticism reduces the rate of ideas coming from the individual’s “preconscious.” Synectics (meaning the joining together of different and apparently irrelevant elements) aimed at stimulating the “rate and complexity of combinations [of ideas] through use of metaphor, symbol, and fantasy” (Barron, 1958:144). The image was becoming “popular” – with all the good and evil that such a development usually implies.

THE “SECOND PHASE” OF THE RETURN⁷

As we have seen the elements of waking dreams were encountered by scientists of all descriptions. Though their attitudes varied from neutral surprise to annoyance and hostility, they none the less recorded their findings. Meanwhile the “methodological approach of psychology had been slowly changing so that it became easier to conceptualize subjective phenomena as part of the inner workings of a theoretical model” (Holt, 1964:263). This change ushered in what D. O. Hebb called the “second phase of the American revolution in psychology”: whereby the objective operational methods, developed and refined by behaviorism could now be brought to bear on “discarded topics necessary to the understanding of man” (Hebb, 1960).

The subjective world of images and the like had progressed from being at first the total subject matter of psychology, then a marshy realm of uninteresting epiphenomena, and now a legitimate output of a theoretically constructed psychic apparatus.

Holt, 1964:263

⁷ D. O. Hebb termed the period from 1960 onwards in American experimental psychology as the second phase of the behavioristic revolution.

The types of experiments that were performed were no longer of the variety concerned with learning how to eliminate imagery, but rather in inquiring what produced it, how it could be stimulated, what is observed once it is evoked, and how it is correlated to personality factors. Imagery was studied in a variety of laboratory situations — for instance, pre-sleep, perceptual isolation, inducement by drugs, photic stimulation, sensory deprivation. Subjects' observations would range from perception of darkness, to dots, lines, geometrical patterns, "wallpaper" patterns, isolated objects without background, to integrated scenes (Hebb, 1954). The thing that became obvious in these experiments is that "most people remain unaware of their imagery, even of their after-imagery, because they have been trained to ignore it. It is a distraction if it is noticed for it [seemingly] has no positive value in most of the practical activities of life" (Richardson, 1969: 122-3). The ability to imagize varies amazingly among people, for instance, hypnagogic imagery occurs more frequently among children than adolescents or adults (Partridge). Subjects who have images in one modality are more likely to experience images in other modes (Zuckerman *et al.*, 1962), indicating perhaps that a general attitude of openness is involved. Because we have been socialized out of attending to imagery, when it does occur we are more likely to feel anxious. When imagery is stimulated in a person unfamiliar with his internal stimulus environment he will either report weak imagery or be sadly unable to distinguish between percepts and images (Seitz, 1947; Griffiths, 1924; Thale, 1950; Richardson, 1969). The images will be seen as autonomous and appear as hallucinations.

Richardson (1969:128-9) reported that 66% of the adult population in the U.S. claims to be unaware of ever having had a spontaneous hypnagogic image. Mr. B's lack of introspective awareness is prevalent. In Bertini's (*et al.*, 1969) dream lab

Mr. B, who was extremely sleepy, dozed and dreamed (so labelled by him) briefly that "this experiment was over and ... I was on a basement step with Mr. F (the

assistant) and he was saying “Don’t be discouraged . . .”
It is interesting that during this brief dream the EEC
showed a fully waking record.

Another subject reported “If you want me to fall asleep again, I’ll get another image.” It did not occur to these subjects that they could be awake and still experience dreamlike imagery.

Studies had shown imagery to be little of an ogre, and even a bit helpful – but the life of the image was still restricted in the experiments being done by (among other things) the subjects’ unfamiliarity with their own inner space and by experimenters who themselves had little idea of the full range of imagery experience. People were not accustomed to being aware of their imagery. It was “nonsense” or “crazy” or “non-existent.” When imagery is seen as a mere physiological response, to a stimulus where dots and geometrical patterns are given the same import as imaginal images, there is little reason to learn how to observe it. Under these conditions one learns more about the state of ignorance concerning the topic than about the topic itself. The subjects’ reports of imagery revealed in the end more about the

complex and interactive function of at least the following variables: the degree to which the experimenter is aware of, and looks for, the full spectrum of images; the range of phenomena the different subjects are capable of experiencing; their prior familiarity with these subjective phenomena; the expectations set up in them by the specific experimental instructions, by their general reading, rumor and other sources of notions about what to anticipate, and by the attitude towards imagery that prevails in their particular subculture.

Holt, 1964:261

If we measure what we know, in the end we know what we already knew a bit better. At best we observe what we now see to

exist. What happens to the other aspects of a phenomenon though? What happens to modes of perceiving, experiencing and understanding that our culture has forgotten? What enables us to learn of these aspects and ways of perceiving using the instruments of our modern science?



As in psychology, American philosophy had experienced a corresponding turn away from “metaphysics” and its subject matter towards a logical positivism and the pragmatism of Pierce and Dewey. Suzanne Langer’s work shows, however, the development of a trend back to old subjects also, but in a new way — “without being metaphysical” (Langer, 1942). She argues that by studying man’s magical and ritual practices, art and dreaming — all dependent she claims on processes of symbolic transformation — it becomes evident that we must “reconsider the inventory of human needs.” If, as in other animals, “preservation and increase of life” were the only things important to man, the impractical and ineffectual processes of dreaming, ritual and art would surely be abandoned. As this is not the case, Langer argues that we can still conceive of the mind as an organ of primary needs but that

instead of assuming that the human mind tries to do the same things as a cat’s mind, but by the use of a special talent which miscarries four times out of five, I shall assume that the human mind is trying to do something else; and that the cat does not act humanly because he does not need to. This difference in fundamental needs, I believe, determines the difference of functions which sets man so far apart from all his zoological brethren; and the recognition of it is the key to those paradoxes in the philosophy of mind which our too consistently zoological model of human intelligence has engendered.

Langer, 1942:43-4.

This “something else” would appear, she argues, to be a primary need, but a characteristically human one. It is the need of symbolization, which she describes as “the fundamental process of the mind and goes on all the time.” Sometimes we are aware of it, sometimes we merely find its results (*ibid.*, 45). Langer says, “the brain is following its own laws; it is actively translating experiences into symbols, in fulfilling a basic need to do so” (*ibid.*, 46). One might say not that one is translating, but that experience for humans is already symbolic.

Langer tries to make it clear that one need not be metaphysical to study something that is a basic part of man. But what one does need is a science that can be careful that the description of the nature of the phenomenon to be studied is not solely a function of the systems of measurement used. If man is measured just as the lower animals, then his characteristically human traits will be ignored.

People who had sensitivities towards the excluded or poorly included subject matters of psychology were able to gain energy for their critiques of psychology from the growing philosophy of science. The critiques, which began to arise in the early 1960’s (Koch, 1964; Zangwill, 1956), had an impact on our rather extraverted, selfconsciously scientific psychology. The attacks on the “objective” nature of science produced a warning to the researcher that he must become self-conscious. It is he who decides what is to be studied and how. In this decision making an image of man is first projected and then sustained through the subsequent findings. Sigmund Koch lamented in 1964 “that modern psychology has projected an image of man which is as demeaning as it is simplistic, few intelligent and sensitive non-psychologists would deny.” He claimed there “is a mass dehumanization process which characterizes our time — the simplification of sensibility, the homogenization of taste, attenuation of the capacity for experience — continues apace. In all fields in the community of scholarship it should be psychology which combats this trend. Instead, we have played no small role in augmenting and supporting it.” This was achieved partially

because it is so simple to reduce people “to the forms of evidence about them we find it easiest to collect” (Hudson, 1972:155). This certainly seems to be the case in the study of imagery.

When one approaches an experimenter and inquires into their topic of study, one often gets an answer that leaves one with the feeling that the other is dealing with an aspect, a particular, of a larger subject. One’s curiosity is wetted and you try to understand who the father is, where the magic is that gets someone involved in trying to find out about something. Frequently, the other knows what he is doing (in quite a convincing way), but the why is lost. There is no larger scheme with which his work communicates, except that of the tradition itself.

It is bad not to see the wood for the trees, but worse not even to get to see a real tree because you’re lost in the bushes, the undergrowth of insignificant detail and so-called replications, the trivial, the transient, the papers that haven’t any idea anywhere about them. This, one must find his way through also. There is a useful maxim that I owe to my colleague Reg Bromiley: What’s not worth doing is not worth doing well. The journals are full of papers that are very well done and will not be heard of again.

D. O. Hebb, 1974:71

One remembers the story of the three blind men and the elephant — each of whom are convinced that they know the elephant and that the other is wrong. Each do in fact know an aspect of him. Their flaw lies in the fact that they take characteristics of the part they know to be those of the whole elephant. No one would dispute that the elephant is his trunk and legs and rear end and that through studying these things one learns about the elephant. But if one forgets or does not recognize that he is working with an elephant, he learns nothing about *the elephant*. He also is unable to learn from his colleagues’ studies. He becomes embroiled in fights — thinking others are wrong and are

dealing with something other than he is.

In respect to the study of the image, this situation produces several ramifications. The immensity of the topic and the subtlety of all of its parts is lost. In this loss is a reduction of “the image” to whatever particular image one is involved in. Imagery becomes what is happening in the retina or the result of an electrode stimulation. It becomes after-images or hallucinations or psychedelic paraphernalia. The imaginal image is subsumed by other topics and one disproves or limits it by guilt of association or lack of discrimination.

THE APPEARANCE OF THIRD FORCES

The general cultural attitude in the United States has been changing to recognize experientially fantasy and imagery. Within psychology this has been particularly enhanced by the advent of a “Third Force,” which has emphasized the recognition of and breaking out of habits that have given us limited access to experience and its possibilities. The interest and participation in various states of consciousness has in recent years provided the experimenter with subjects who are more familiar and respectful of their imagery and thereby who are more likely to be able to report a wider span of experience. Little attention has been given so far to the effects of pretraining subjects (as part of the methodology) to be aware of their own inner space and imagery.

Presumably investigators fear that they may be unwarrantably influencing their subjects, but some study of the advantages and disadvantages of using experienced subjects should be undertaken. Failure to see what is there may be due to inexperience with what to look for. This problem was noted when discussing the observation of after-images. Failure to report what is seen or heard may be due also to a fear of seeming to be abnormal or odd.

Richardson, 1969:108

At Princeton University a series of experiments were begun in 1971 in the dream laboratory under the direction of Henry Reed (1973). Subjects were trained in a variety of ways to attend to their inner space: through recalling and recording dreams, learning to observe hypnagogic imagery and to engage actively in fantasy, relaxing by means of autogenic training, meditating, and incubating dreams. In these ways a group of people were helped to increase their facility to observe what is considered as pre-conscious or pre-reflective phenomena. This aided the experimenters in finding more than the usual range of experiences, as well as enabling the experimental paradigm to be beneficial as a learning process for the subjects or co-participants. In my portion of the research I trained subjects to engage in waking dreams by first of all helping them to understand that this was even a possibility. Such an introduction helped the subject to recognize and value the experience of waking dreams which they were able to have after simple training in relaxation, awareness, and fantasy induction had been shared. In several sessions the subjects were able to learn how to observe their visual and auditory imagery at will and to enter into and move within imaginal space. With ten individuals this was accomplished solely in a group setting. Emphasis was placed on providing an experimental environment where imagination images could emerge in whatever form(s) was most natural to that person – movement, drawing, visual fantasy, auditory imagery, etc.

There is much individual difference in the kinds of imagery people have. Experiments with imagery need to leave the ends open on the ways that such fantasy can express itself; or they must be aware that they do not do so. A variety of media should be made available for the subject's use: room to move in, art materials, writing materials, tape recorder. The causal influence of expectations on the events being studied should always be noted. The range of freedom the subject has should be noted in detail so that the experiment is clearly the "occurrence of imagery in a certain population under these conditions." In this way the notion that "this is imagery" can be avoided. Oversimplification and

reduction of the possible phenomena can be guarded against, even if it is not able to be totally avoided. Research should be continued that further reveals the correlation between the type or quality of imagery an individual has and his general personality. There is a wide source of variance because of personality, as well as cultural and experimental biases. Hermann Witkin's studies (1965) of field dependency/independency reveal that there are different perceptual types that relate also to inner perception. The field dependent personality is less likely to produce imagery or to be aware of ongoing inner processes. Whereas the field independent person has a freedom from the stimulation of the environment and is more able to look inward (Singer, 1971b:85). It might be that "field dependent" individuals have imagery that is not conveyed visually or auditorily. Once these differences in perceptual style and their effect on the types and quality of imagery in particular and the way a person relates to his "inner life" in general are more fully explored, the effects of training in imagery on one's outer and inner modes of perception can be assessed more fully. It might be a useful paradigm for conceptualizing part of the therapeutic effect of imagery work.

"The interpenetration of observer and observed will then be seen not as an accident, peripheral to the social and behavioral sciences, but as a medium through which they work." This statement of Liam Hudson's (1972:137) can pertain to the interpenetration of the experimenter and the subject, as well as to the subject and his observed imagery. Through the careful delineations of these interpenetrations, imagery can be more revealed in all its intricate and various aspects. In these experiments scientific rigor must be, as Amedeo Giorgi defines it, "a coincidence between the intention of research and the method chosen," not a method applied regardless of the phenomenon under study. This allows for, in fact demands, the creation of new methodologies more adequate to the subject of fantasy and imagery. As well as studying what "is," psychology can improvise methodologies that allow for what might be (Tyler, 1973). In order to understand imagination imagery, and how limited our view of it

is, it will be useful to study how other cultures have used it and to develop an attitude which will enable us to experience that for which we perhaps have little conceptual understanding. New methodologies are being created and worked with.⁸ Controversy flies between camps (as between those blind men) concerning the validity of both old and new. It is possible that in this exchange the various aspects of a phenomenon which all the methodologies reveal will become well-heard and, with a bit of grace, we might find we are talking about the same thing in our different ways. None are singly sufficient to appreciate our subject, but each is useful if always seen in relation to the whole (as far as we can know it at any one moment, from the sums of our experience of it). This takes a lot of work. Most of all it requires a weeding out of what does not belong to the image itself – that which has fallen beside it, from our pockets, as we have been bent on seeing it from our particular stances.

Although fantasy and imagination had been utilized in analytical psychology, psychoanalysis, hypnotherapy, behavior therapy, and child psychology, it was not until the mid-1960's that the European work being done in the therapeutic uses of fantasy began to be popularly introduced in the United States – mostly through three psychological schools, themselves rooted in Europe: psychosynthesis, existential psychology, and psychodrama.

Psychosynthesis, developed by Roberto Assagioli of Florence, Italy, endeavors to make the goal of growth the creative synthesis of man's many psychic parts and functions. Imagery and visualization are two of the many techniques that psychosynthesis uses to assist the individual in the development and recognition of

⁸ “What happens to the philosophical foundations of scientific methodology if exploration of certain phenomena requires substituting a symbolic ritual for a technical method? What becomes of our traditional reliance on the ideal of the unbiased, controlled replicability of scientific knowledge if participating in such an experimental ritual further presupposes surrendering as if in faith to the operation of factors necessarily beyond our individual control?” (Reed. 1974).

his “functions,” his “will,” and the “higher self.” The Psychosynthesis Research Foundation in New York City has made available translations of much of the European work done on imagery as well as contributions of Americans and Canadians who have used imagery for the various goals of Psychosynthesis.⁹ The following table, created from an article by Robert Gerard (1964) is a classification of ways to use visual imagery in psychosynthesis. “Controlled symbolic visualization” and “symbolic visualization for spiritual psychosynthesis” can be likened to systems of meditation where a static image is used to train concentration, as well as often to evoke certain qualities. “Controlled visualization of symbolic scenes” were used by Mauz, Desoille, the behavior therapists and others (see Chapters 3 and 4). “Spontaneous symbolic visualization” is most akin to what has been discussed here as a waking dream. In psychotherapy it has been used, for instance, in Jung’s active imagination, Leuner’s guided affective imagery, Virel and Fretigny’s oneirotherapy (see Chapters 3 and 4). Only in spontaneous symbolic visualization is the “mythopoetic” allowed to express itself freely. Although images are used in controlled visualization they are introduced from the “conscious” with a particular aim in mind.



⁹ See Gerard, Crampton, Haronian, Swartley, Krojanker. Swartley introduced Leuner’s work in the United States, stressing its diagnostic use — “Initiated Symbol Projection.” Krojanker introduced its therapeutic aspect, “Guided Affective Imagery.”

 TABLE I *Symbolic Visualization: A Technique of Psychosynthesis*

A. Controlled Symbolic Visualization

“Although some of the details may be spontaneous, the basic pictorial content is specified in advance. A preparatory state consists of sitting in a comfortable chair, closing the eyes and achieving as relaxed a state as possible.”

I. Controlled Visualization of Dynamic Symbols

- a. The “*self attempts to maintain the image in a pre-determined, form.*” This experience gradually brings to the patient a dramatic realization of his ineffective control. Unwanted thoughts and feelings intrude to disturb his concentration. The image itself tends to change or fade.” “This experience helps the patient to distinguish between the self or T that wills to concentrate on a certain image, and the changing contents of consciousness.” With practice one “acquires control over imaginative processes and his sense of self-identity as a directing agent of his inner and outer life becomes strengthened.¹⁰
 1. *Symbols of synthesis*, of integration and balance around an inner core, such as a sunflower. Mandalas, basic geometric forms.
 2. *Symbols of harmonious human relations*, such as two hands clasping each other.
 3. *Symbols of masculinity (sword) and of femininity (a receptacle, such as a cup or vase).*
 4. *Symbols of affective states.* Subjective color vision.
- b. The “*self attempts to change the image in a previously predetermined direction.*”

¹⁰ In one sense “control” is necessary to be able to actively imagine rather than to daydream. This “control” is one of awareness, however, and not necessarily of the ego over the imagination. Gerard seems to be implying both.

Table I (continued)

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1. Symbols of transformation (*transformation of a worm to a chrysalis to a butterfly*).
 2. Symbols of growth (a rose opening, a seed growing into a tree).
- II. Controlled Visualization of Symbolic Scenes
Symbolic scenes may be suggested by the therapist, depending upon the needs of the patient.
- a. *Controlled visualization of desired personality characteristics.*
 - b. *Symbolic representations of the process of reconstruction of the personality* (building a home or temple, restoring a garden and watching its growth).
 - c. *Symbolic sequences portraying the discovery and identification with a unifying center around which personality conflicts can be resolved.* Perhaps reaching the safety of a lighthouse after a dangerous swim, climbing to the top and surveying the scene “with the awareness that this sequence may represent the ability to stand firm in the midst of emotional turmoil, and to survey one’s conflicts with the attitude of the observer identified with the self, the “I,” the center of one’s consciousness.”
 - d. *Symbolic representations of inter-individual psycho-synthesis.* A couple helping each other along a path, etc.
- B. Spontaneous Symbolic Visualization
No attempt is made to “predetermine the form or sequence of symbolic representations, although a starting image may be given to induce the process. The spontaneity of symbolic formation is facilitated by relaxation on the couch.”¹¹

¹¹ Gerard warns here that whereas controlled symbolic visualization may be performed by an individual on his own, “spontaneous visualization is

Table I (continued)

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- I. Symbolic Visualization of Somatic States.
 - II. Symbolic Visualization of Emotional States.
 - a. *Technique of the door.*
 - b. *Technique of the heart.*
 - III. Symbolic Visualizations Derived from Projective Techniques.
The patient is asked to enter the scenes pictured in his projective drawings or Rorschach blots, etc.
 - IV. Symbolic Visualizations Derived from Dreams and Daydreams
 - V. Symbolic Visualization of Thought Contents.
“The patient is asked to associate a perceptual picture with certain thoughts, ideas and concepts. Metaphorical language lends itself particularly well to this substitution of verbal by non-verbal material.”
 - a. *Technique of the Reflected Self-Image.*
 - b. *Visualization of Abstract Ideas.*
- C. Symbolic Visualization for Spiritual Psychosynthesis
“Inasmuch as symbols can express not only infantile, but also unrealized potentialities for growth, symbolic visualization may serve to evoke inner wisdom and inspiration as well as ethical humanitarian and altruistic values.”
- I. *Guided Daydream Technique.*
 - II. *Technique of Light.*
 - III. *Technique of Inner Dialogue.*
-

best done in the presence of a trained psychotherapist” — a professional who has been trained in the technique and gone through it himself. This is in distinct opposition to Jung who felt active imagination should be done while alone.

Some existential therapists,¹² to whom “psychotherapy is essentially a free-making, a humanizing of the person who lost his freedom in some sector of his existence” (van Kaam, 1968:14), have also adopted the directed daydream. In existential therapy “the therapist invites his patient to face his world here and now, not to excuse himself but to return to his world in a new mode of being and to accept in a new way the tasks with which he is confronted in this world” (*ibid.*, 16). Van Kaam notes that there are several requirements that must be fulfilled by a technique in order to be viable for existential therapy (*ibid.*, 14).

- 1) “In order to make the patient free we have to place him in real life situations where he reacts with his whole human existence spontaneously and pre-reflexively.”
- 2) “The person is only knowable in his world, in the situation, in his concrete relation to people and things” not through conceptualization and introspection.
- 3) The “real life situation has to be induced during the therapeutic sessions.”
- 4) The “basic responses of the patient to the crucial aspects of everyday life” must be revealed — showing “how and when and to what degree anxiety is aroused in the patient.”
- 5) One must be able to gain insight out of these artificially induced concrete situations —not necessarily conceptual insight.
- 6) “The therapeutic model has to enable the clinician to start the reconditioning of the behavior of the patient to his new freely chosen evaluation of people and things.”

The imagination is believed to present the situation of the patient as well as his mode of responding to it. The directed daydream enables therapy to deal with a “consciousness that is involved” (Merleau- Ponty), a “being in a situation” (Gabriel

¹² Van den Berg (1953) was the first to integrate the guided daydream into an existential frame of reference.

Marcel), as well as providing an opportunity to move in new ways.

J. L. Moreno had found by spending time in the parks of Vienna that children would spontaneously play out their conflicts in a dramatic and imaginative form. He used this dramatic quality of the image (noted also by Jung and Janet) to create what he called psychodramas. Instead of experiencing imaginal images within, Moreno had the individual begin to be the image, to act the image. The person could allow other people in a psychodrama group to play different images from his imaginal scene among which he, as one of them, could interact. One could begin with a life situation, a memory, a fantasy, or a dream and through the acting, becoming the image, the myth of that image was played out. Moreno emphasized spontaneity, liberating the fantasies and memories of the person, as well as the cathartic value of the dramas.

Psycholytic therapy (therapy done with the aid of psychoactive drugs), now relatively banned in the United States, also contributed to the growing body of technique concerning the psychotherapeutic uses of imaginal images. The psychoactive drugs were observed to help individuals bypass many of the resistances that usually keep people from observing imagery. These induced waking dreams have been used with alcoholics (Hoffer & Osmond, 1967), terminal cancer patients (Pahnke, 1969), drug addicts, psychiatric patients and others. The effects are often dramatic and appear to enable some who are “locked in self-impairing behavior patterns,” to get outside of these inhibitors and find new meanings, and ways of self-acceptance and expression (Horowitz, 1972:299). The types of imagery that arise have begun to be sorted and related to different imaginal processes and themes (Grof).

Many who were involved in such work, among them Dan Brown, Jean Houston, Walter Clark, and Helen Bonny, have taken the insights derived about the mythmaking capacity in people and applied it to non-drug research and therapy. Jean Houston and Walter Clark (1972, 1973) speak of man’s *imaginal-symbolic processes*. They have found that these processes are activated when one is released from the inhibitors of time and space. In

order to accomplish this release they use certain mechanical devices (“witches cradle,” subtle sensory overload devices, etc.) and sophisticated trance inductions. The resulting imagistic thinking is found not to be inhibited by the mechanisms that do inhibit verbal thought. This enables many tasks to be performed much more quickly with the use of images. For example, people who have used such imagistically accelerated mental processes can practice some task and in a few hours attain the results of a much longer time span. Helen Bonny, who did music therapy with psychedelic subjects at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center, has developed a form of therapy using a combination of music and imagery without the facilitation of drugs. The music is chosen to provoke imagery, often of a particular quality, intensity or theme.

Eugene Gendlin has developed a method called *experiential focusing*. He has a client

sit quietly while attending to bodily sensations and permitting an upsurge of feeling. This method is different from others in that it minimizes verbal report and encourages genuine passive introspection. The patient usually becomes aware of the sharp intensification of a generalized emotion; gradually there follows a flow of images, associated memories, or fantasies, which seem to supplant the intense “pure” feeling. Here the effort is to help the patient become aware of the deep reservoir of emotion which is so often suppressed or denied.

Singer, 1971a:174

Gendlin notes that the feeling and the image usually remain the same until the subject comes to know the feeling. Then a “release” occurs, the image changes, and words may arise (Gendlin & Olsen, 1970). This sounds similar to the changes that occur in a frightening image when one steadily watches it. Weitzmann (1967) has also speculated that just staying with the anxious feeling or

image helps it to subside and gives one a sense of greater competence for dealing with it in the future (Singer, 1971a:174).

A number of new therapies have developed in recent years, designed particularly for what is envisioned as the expansion of man's use of his potentials. Many of them are based on or use fantasy. The group aspect of such therapies has enabled the ideas behind such uses of fantasy to be opened to a wide number of people. Ira Progoff, the founder of Dialogue House Associates in New York City, through his writings and workshops has been successful in introducing to thousands, techniques using the ability to fantasize, particularly in the form of dialoguing with interior parts of oneself through the use of an "intensive journal." Fritz Perls and his gestalt therapy co-workers used fantasy often in a psychodramatic type of way. The individual takes the role of the various parts and characters of his dreams, life situations, memories, fantasies. Through acting them himself he is supposed to see that they are truly parts of himself and that their energy, formerly often inhibiting growth, can be re-integrated into the conscious personality (Perls, 1969; Perls et al, 1951). Group leaders of all descriptions have integrated fantasy into their work in often unique and valuable ways. A proliferation of techniques and exercises abounds.¹³

ON THE CLOSING OF ACCOUNTS

Hopefully such exposure to fantasy will enable us to understand more of its world and our possible relations to it. Now, as so often happens when a realm is enthusiastically uncovered, the imagination when viewed in the light of its accomplishments (that others claim for it) would seem to be on the order of a general panacea—for phobias, impotence, recovery of memories, creativity, psychic integration, playing, working, praying, controlling moods, getting in touch with moods, relaxing,

¹³ See Assagioli (1965), Masters & Houston (1972), Huxley (1963), Stevens (1971).

improving planfulness, getting away from plans, maintaining alertness, for getting it together with the personal unconscious or the superconscious, or the polarities of the psyche, for regression or progression, or being-here-now. There has been little work done on why and how certain “fantasy techniques” work; what about them is valuable and what is superfluous; and what their functioning indicates about the structure of the imagination, or what we mean by “imagination” to begin with.

We know that if a person is relaxed and sees a tree growing toward the sky in his “mind’s eye” that he is effected. It is not simply a picture of a tree. Physiologically his brain waves, temperature, galvanic skin response, respiration and heart beat may change. He may experience an affect of awe, curiosity or fright. Depending on what frame of reference he is participating in he will be able to verbalize any experience of meaning in different ways. In general, however, psychology seems to be *using* the vision; converting it into something “useful” and “helpful” – to tell us about ourselves or to literally help us go about creating ourselves in various desirable images.

Too infrequently when we are participating in the psychotherapeutic process do we take the image and ask not what it shows us about our life, but what it shows us about the imagination. When we assume we know about the imagination and how it can be used, we set about using it. The black box remains so. Our “positive” assumptions on the one hand encourage people to enter into the experience, but on the other hand they make it increasingly difficult (the surer we become) to have the experience without viewing it in a pre-determined way, and taking it from its unique context into another.

Through reports of imagery in experimental situations the subject matter has been re-acknowledged within experimental psychology. There has been little attempt, however, to separate observations of geometrical patterns, dots, and after-images (where imagery is more related to physiological stimuli) from observations of seemingly exact memory imagery, and imagery of things and situations uncharacteristic of our experience of the

“day world.” Nor have there been sufficient research efforts with subjects trained to observe a variety of imagery. The visual image is only one possible form of imagination. All imagery is not imagination, and imagination is not all imagery. Although the study of particular types of imagery can illuminate the field of the imagination, it can never hope to encompass it. In experimental psychology the imagination is often discarded as a romantic concept not allowed for in the laboratory, and yet one has the feeling that it is implicitly identified with imagery. As long as the forms of imagery are not separated and the imagination is somehow on the one hand not acknowledged and on the other is identified with imagery, imagination can be tacitly conceptually reduced to whatever eye the experimenter sees his data through – memory, information processing, reticular activating system, one hemisphere or another. In concentrating on visual imagery research continues to isolate the imagination from daily life. How are images already being lived? And what is the relation of these to those the subject experiences under different situations of sensory deprivation and stimulation?

Now as there exist more and more subjects who can report their experiences of imagination, let us try to “forbid” our “premature closing of accounts” in terms of how to regard them, as William James suggested in the beginning of this history. Let us use what seems to flow from the imagination not only to reflect on our conscious lives, but let us ask what it reflects about the world of the imagination. Though we may come to feel that the idea of an imagination itself is an inadequate way to describe our subject, let us not in the process of discarding the name, discard from our consciousness and our explorations the aspects of it that we experience.