

Memory as Anamnesis. The Role of Patient Preferences in the Arts Therapies

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In *The Republic* Orpheus is the type of poet whom Plato allows back into the polis. Unlike the mimetic poets, whom he bans from the polis because they keep their audience in a state of imitative identification with the themes and characters in their tales, Orpheus is a poet of anamnesis who awakens humankind to their lost and forgotten ties, the 'gods' and the values of Beauty, Truth, Justice and Destiny.

The difference between identification and anamnesis is a seed planted 2500 years ago for a new style of education. My paper explores the following three issues:

First, I propose that anamnesis is a way of re-imagining memory as unforgetting, as a work of awakening collective consciousness from its condition of amnesia and its continuous repetition of the values of the inherited conglomerate.

Second, I describe how anamnesis recovers memory as a transformative task of *re-membering*, which requires a *dis-membering* of one's consciousness that opens imagination to other possibilities.

Third, I emphasize that this work of unforgetting makes arts education not only therapeutic but also essentially disturbing and dangerous to the powers that be.

To illustrate these themes, I will use examples from my therapeutic practice that show how the use of art, drama, film, photos, novels, dreams and movement **re-mind** individuals to take up again forgotten impossible dreams of who they might be and what the world as it is might be.

I conclude my paper with a plea to recover a type of education that values the arts as a collective therapeutic anamnesis.

Biography

Robert D. Romanyshyn is an Affiliate Member of The Inter-Regional Society of Jungian Analysts, a Fellow of the Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture, and an Emeritus Professor of Clinical Psychology at Pacifica Graduate Institute

He has published eight books including *Victor Frankenstein, the Monster and the Shadows of Technology: The Frankenstein Prophecies*, *Leaning Toward the Poet: Eavesdropping on the Poetry of Everyday Life*, *The Wounded Researcher*, *Ways of the Heart*, *The Soul in Grief: Love, Death, and Transformation*, and *Technology as Symptom & Dream*. He has also published poems, numerous articles in psychology, philosophy, education and literary journals, written a one act play about Frankenstein, and in 2009 he created a multi-media DVD entitled *Antarctica: Inner journeys in the Outer World*.

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