

## Integrating the shadow: A Jungian approach to professional ethics in public relations

*The paper suggests that professional ethics might benefit from consideration of the ideas of Carl Jung (1875–1961) regarding wholeness instead of goodness as the goal of the integrated psyche. The whole self then becomes the basis for ethics in contrast to the ideal-typical self at the heart of many approaches to professional ethics. It looks briefly at current debates into the legitimacy of professions and suggests that professional ethics have acquired increased importance in a time of diminishing deference to professionals. Contemporary approaches to professional ethics suggest a search for deeper common values, looking to intrinsic rather than external guidance for ethical behaviour. This is the context for suggesting Jung's focus on inward dialogue and integration offers a new basis for ethical development. It combines a philosophical and psychological approach to the self and highlights the ethical effects of moving away from the ego-defensive split between persona and shadow, ideas which are explored in the paper. Finally, questions raised by taking a Jungian approach to professional ethics in the field of public relations – in which the author has practised and taught for 30 years – are briefly explored.*

Key words: Carl Jung, professional ethics, integration, shadow work, public relations

### Introduction

This paper is the first of three summarising the main planks of my PhD thesis that Jung's concept of integration, through working with the shadow, suggests a new approach to

professional ethics that could be applied to public relations as an example and by extension to other professional groups. This paper concentrates on the area of professional ethics and the narrowness of the 'ideal-typical' approach which underpins many ethical approaches and is strongly evident in public relations writing. The second (Fawkes 2009a) considers Jungian approaches to ethics at a philosophical level; the third (Fawkes 2009b) delves more deeply into the potential impact of these ideas on public relations' ethics.

The research approach is fundamentally hermeneutic, or interpretive, drawing on the ideas developed in the past few decades primarily by Ricoeur and Gadamer. Schweiker (2004) outlines the main hermeneutical approaches from the pre-critical (literal interpretations of the Bible, for example), through historical-critical hermeneutics (which contextualise interpretation) to post-critical hermeneutics which examine the assumptions underpinning texts, as in critical approaches, but then move on to construct new meanings or interpretations: 'The point of interpretation for any post-critical theory is to show the contemporary meaning and truth of the work. It is to open the text or symbol of event for renewed engagement within the dynamics of current life' (p. xx). Hermeneutics seems suited as a means of discussing Jung's complex and shifting ideas and insights: firstly because so much of Jung's writing is deeply interpretive, seeking meaning in patient experience and finding resonances in vast reading across centuries and cultures; secondly, hermeneutics has been used as an approach to ethical thinking by scholars (Schweiker 1990, 2004; N.H. Smith, 1997; P.C. Smith, 1991) exploring similar issues to those in this paper, but without considering Jung's work.

This paper sets out the current crisis in professional confidence, the centrality of ethics to the professional 'project' and the dependence on idealised self-images as the benchmarks for ethical standards. It then explores Jung's core concepts, particularly of individuation and working with the shadow, as an alternative approach to the dualistic good/bad basis of most Western ethics. Finally, these ideas are briefly related to the field of public relations to illustrate the impact such an approach might have on the field.

### Background

The status and legitimacy of professions is challenged at the start of the twenty-first century by technological changes to the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge and by structural

changes in society (Broadbent, Deitrich and Roberts 1997; Dent and Whitehead 2002; Watson 2002; Cooper 2004). Moral philosophy, meanwhile, is grappling with unease at the post-Enlightenment – and post-modern – compartmentalising of the totality of human experience to focus on rationality and textual analysis, respectively (MacIntyre 1984; Oakley and Cocking 2001; Cooper 2004; Jones 2007). Issues of character, self and identity in a fragmented culture are the subject of urgent discussion leading to, inter alia, the re-emergence of Aristotelian virtue ethics in the late twentieth century (MacIntyre op cit; Oakley and Cocking op cit) and a renewed interest in hermeneutics and moral identity (Smith 1997; Seidler 1994; Schweiker 2004). These authors express common concerns regarding lost moral anchors, over-reliance on inadequate rules and codes and the predominance of emotivist and relativist individualism in ethical decision-making.

The two fields meet in professional ethics. A central element of the professional narrative is the responsibility of the professional to society at large, as well as to the particular client or patient. Professionals are perceived as ‘possessing some of the characteristics of community’ (Larson 1977: x). In order to justify the social credit enjoyed by professions, they appeal to general ideological rationales, according to Larson (ibid), as promoters of social values, rather than simple monetary reward, for example. But Cooper (op cit: viii) argues that professional ethics are failing to respond adequately to societal changes, and that professions tend to claim either that there are no moral frameworks any more or create situation-specific codes lacking an underlying philosophy, leading to ‘moral drift and banal choices’.

### Professionalism

One reason for the confusion is the changing nature of the professional and the idea of professionalism in the early twenty-first century. The claim to be a professional traditionally rests on certain precepts: esoteric knowledge – theoretical or technical – not available to the general population; commitment to social values, such as health or justice; national organisation to set standards, control membership, liaise with wider society; extra-strong moral commitment to support professional values (Cooper op cit). The sociology of the professions encourages analysis of the role of professions in society, their historical development and their view of themselves (Larson op cit; Abbott and Meerabeau 1998). There is agreement that

professions embody ideological attitudes and contain preferred readings or constructed meanings which are intended to promote the profession and its institutions. It would seem reasonable to suppose that all professions embody some persuasive or promotional role (Wernick 1991).

However, as Sommerlad (2007: 191) points out the ‘aura of mystery’ enjoyed by the perceived or claimed superiority of technical and theoretical knowledge referred to earlier has been eroded by the decline in deference traditionally offered to professions by the general public. What Larson (1977) calls the ‘professional project’ is under threat, as is the idea of a professional identity which many see as experiencing a crisis in the twenty-first century (Broadbent, Deitrich and Roberts 1997; Dent and Whitehead 2002; Watson 2002). Given the range and source of these threats it is not surprising that many professional bodies are looking to ethics for validation.

### Professional ethics

The traditional approach to professional ethics was – and in many cases, still is – based on what Larson (1977) calls the ideal-typical practitioner, usually involving codes and other embodiments of best practice. She is concerned that these display elements of the ideal-typical constructions ‘do not tell us what a profession is, only what it pretends to be...’ (1977: xii). Fligstein (2001) and Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) show how professional institutions act as entrepreneurs using discourse and rhetoric to influence the social construction of legitimacy (cited in Bartlett et al 2007). Codes are the primary choice for establishing this legitimacy in most professions, particularly where the professional body does not control the licence to practice. The rhetorical role of codes of conduct is outside the scope of this paper but one analysis of public relations codes (Parkinson 2001) suggests that the main function of codes of practice is (still) to improve the reputation of the professional organisation rather than change the behaviour of members.

Traditionally, codes – like much other discussion of ethics – have relied on a combination of utilitarian and deontological approaches, as developed by Bentham and Kant respectively. However, their main thrust is normative rather than philosophical or reflective. In recent years virtue ethics, as described by MacIntyre (1984) and others, has had an impact on the field of professional ethics, shifting the discussion from behaviour to character.

The virtue approach is particularly useful in its lack of reliance on external codes' rules to prescribe acceptable ethical behaviour, relying instead on character and reflection. The central precepts of virtue ethics are summarised as: (a) an action is right if and only if it is what an agent with a virtuous character would do in the circumstances; (b) goodness is prior to rightness; (c) the virtues are irreducibly plural intrinsic goods; (d) the virtues are objectively good; (e) some intrinsic goods are agent-relative; (f) acting rightly does not require that we maximise the good (Oakley and Cocking 2001: 9).

Harrison and Galloway (2005) have sought to apply virtue ethics to public relations practice but highlight problems in finding agreement about the nature of the internal and external goods of the profession. Others have looked to questions of personal and social identity as a source of ethical guidance (Mount 1990). This approach allows deeper discussion of the character of the professional and raises the possibility of investigating the less-than-ideal aspects of the individual professional and, by extension, their organisations. The focus on professional character offered by virtue ethics and social identity theory may be contrasted with discourse ethics with their emphasis on texts rather than persons. Post-modern approaches have usefully revealed the power structures operating within and beneath professions (e.g. Sommerlad 2007) building on Weberian analyses of the professional role in supporting the dominant ideology.

However, some writers on ethics (such as MacIntyre 1984; Baumann 1993; Cooper 2004) have expressed concern that post-modern approaches have led to anomie and moral drift, as suggested earlier. This concern is also articulated by the business ethicist Goodpaster (2007) who has coined the term 'teleopathy', to describe business's fixed, amoral drive for profit-related goals, and argues for the reintegration of moral purpose into the corporate agenda. The question of where to look for that purpose is deeply explored by Schweiker (2004) who argues that the contemporary culture or *Weltanschauung* is 'over-humanised', that is over-reliant on human powers, having lost contact with any sense of the sacred.

To summarise: professions are widely viewed as playing a key part in the maintenance of the general social order; they have common factors which distinguish them from non-professionals, though these boundaries are blurred and

under stress; the role of ethics is one of the platforms that makes a profession but there is wide disagreement about the underlying moral philosophy of professional ethics and confused responses to post-modern approaches to ethics. There is urgency in these debates. This paper argues that the ideal-typical concept provides an inadequate basis for professional ethics and is designed more to promote the profession and its leading organisations than actually engage with ethical dilemmas.

The continual emphasis on best practice, like that offered by the Excellence project in public relations, discussed below, leads to a dualistic separation from the 'darker' aspects of professional behaviour. While the virtue ethics approach offers a subtler, more inwards focus for debate, there is room for a deeper exploration of the role of the self – both individually and collectively in professions – in locating the inner source of ethics. For this, the paper turns to Jung and his ideas on the self, the shadow and integration as the foundation of ethics.

#### **A Jungian approach: Why Jung?**

Jung's potential contribution to the field of professional ethics stems from his commitment to integration as a moral journey, requiring courage and commitment to face and own the 'shadow' or denied aspects of the personality or group (Singer 1999). Storr (1998) calls this his greatest original contribution to analytic psychology. What is striking about Jung's approach is that it does not stress goodness but *wholeness* as the key to moral development and integrity and it is this insight I wish to pursue as the possible basis for a new approach to professional ethics.

It is worth stating here that Jung's extensive works (over 20 volumes) do not constitute an explicit theoretical foundation; there is repetition, contradiction, interpretation and reinterpretation throughout the writing. Jones (2007) suggests that Jung is hard to read and best explored by following a thread through his writing. The thread I propose to follow is that of individuation – the process by which an individual builds a relationship with the unconscious and comes to terms with the different, often conflicting elements of the psyche. Jung sees this as essentially a moral journey (CW 9ii /13-19). Arguments will be provided to support the extrapolation from the individual unit of study to the group level of the profession (Singer and Kimbles 2004).

Jungian concepts permeate the culture: we talk of introverts and extraverts, archetypes, collective unconscious, shadow dynamics, animus/ anima, Self and other terms taken from his extensive writings. Yet many consider his contribution to thought has been undervalued by academics in recent decades, leaving the 'cause' to proselytisers (Bishop 1999) or philosophers and literary scholars (especially in film and genre-studies) rather than psychologists (Storr 1999), though of course his work forms the basis of analytical psychology as practised throughout the world (Samuels 1985). The central idea to be investigated here is that of individuation, the process of integrating the shadow and developing a more transcendent, less ego-dominated view of the self and others. As Solomon (2000: 198) puts it, 'a Jungian approach to understanding how the self may achieve an ethical attitude can be located within the context of the unfolding of the self over the stages of an entire life'. To clarify the connections between the evolution of the self and professional ethics I need to explore Jung's architecture of the psyche a little further here.

#### **Integrating the shadow**

While there is some contradiction between different parts of Jung's writing (he revised some lectures and articles but left others to stand as testimony to his evolving ideas, and never wrote a definitive summary) he perceives the psyche as consisting of personal consciousness (with the ego at the centre), the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious (CW 8/317-21).

Personal consciousness includes everything of which the individual is aware, with the ego acting as the main organiser for managing external and internal stimuli; the personal unconscious includes forgotten and repressed material and peripheral, low interest contents; and the collective unconscious includes the possibilities of representations common to all people (archetypes) which may constellate differently according to the particular cultures and epoch and which form the basic structure underpinning the individual psyche. These elements are seen as compensatory; that is, the more the personal conscious refuses to deal with unwelcome thoughts or insights, the more powerful the unconscious becomes. The relationship between these elements can be antagonistic but resolving the opposing forces in the psyche can also be a source of joy and fulfilment. Jung saw the unconscious, both personal and collective, as a more benign presence than did his one-time mentor, Freud: 'The unconscious

is immensely old and capable of continuing to grow indefinitely' (CW 9i/489-524).

Jung described the public face of the individual as the 'persona', drawing on the Greek masks of ancient drama. Persona is a complicated system of relations between individual consciousness and society, a kind of mask designed to 'impress and conceal', and to meet societal demands (CW 7/305-9). As the ego gravitates to the public 'approved' view, unconscious activity starts to compensate. The personal unconscious is 'organised' around a series of archetypal images, the templates of which are located in the collective unconscious. The most powerful archetypes are those of Shadow and Animus/anima. Solomon describes the concept of the shadow as 'central to Jung's understanding of the self as an ethical entity' (2000: 199), and I will concentrate on the shadow dynamics rather than other archetypal struggles. The shadow comprises those elements of the personal unconscious which are not considered acceptable to the conscious self (CW 11/130-4). They are not necessarily 'bad', simply rejected, as a workaholic might reject relaxation, for example. However, part of this rejection can be *projected* on to others, making them 'carry' the un-lived elements (Storr 1999: xv). To continue the example, the compulsive worker may perceive his/her colleagues as skivers and lightweights whom he/she both despises and envies.

This characterisation is particularly germane to public relations both in its professional identity (the emphasis on excellence as Persona) and in the content of practice, which often engages with issues of blaming others and polishing one's own image.

#### **Jung and ethics**

The result of this journey is the development of the Self, an undertaking in which the shadow is confronted, acknowledged as one's own material (so no longer projected onto others) and the ego shifts from the centre of the personality to make room for the presence of the mysterious, the unknown and still unconscious. In recognising and accepting the limits of consciousness, the individual can conduct internal dialogue with his or her own shadows and archetypes before taking action. As Samuels (1985: 65) says, 'There is a compelling moral aspect to integration of the shadow: to unblock personal and communal relationship and also to admit the inadmissible, yet human.' I suggest that this dialogue is a precondition to ethical behaviour: in its absence the individual

or group is likely to respond defensively to any threat to the dominance of the ego or persona; others are likely to be blamed for the unexamined assumptions or consequences and the individual or group will remain stuck in immature responses to the world.

Solomon (2000) is also surprised at how little is written about Jung and ethics, given his emphasis on the moral importance of the development of the self, as outlined above. There is of course material on the ethics of the analytical relationship but less which extends these ideas out of the consulting room. The following observations are based on a variety of commentaries on Jung as a psychologist and philosopher and seek to construct the core elements of a Jungian approach to ethics.

Jung thought that ethics and morality are innate but that the individual has to free himself from the collective norms to experience this (Samuels 1985: 61). Like Nietzsche, Jung rejects the 'performance' of morals and refers back to classical ethics and Gnosticism in which morality was intrinsic rather than extrinsic (CW 11/130-4). Solomon (2000) cites Jung's distinction between morality and ethics, suggesting that the former relies on rules and codes, while the latter is 'reflective ... subject to conscious scrutiny...' and is engaged when 'a fundamental conflict arises between two possible modes of moral behaviour' (CW 10/855). While Jung's definitions are not always consistent, it is clear that he locates ethics as an inward, esoteric journey, rather than the application of externally generated rules: the ethical is linked to the integral, in that the whole person is less conflicted or ego driven and has greater access to their own 'moral channels in the psyche' (CW 10/825-57).

Indeed, Jung contrasts the Eastern philosophy of going inwards for ethical guidance with the Christian tradition of reliance on externals, such as rules, law and texts. (1957: 75), though he doubts the ability of the post-Enlightenment European ego to embrace an Eastern approach and instead urges acceptance of both the order of the rational mind and the chaos of the unconscious (CW 9i/489-524).

The process of developing an integrated self involves bringing opposing elements together in consciousness so that they become creative sources of energy, rather than generators of distress, denial and neurosis. The uniting of opposites is a central theme of Jung's work — though he was a devout Christian, Jung

rejected the either/or, good/bad morality of the Church. 'The criterion of ethical action can no longer consist in the simple view that good has the force of a categorical imperative, while so-called evil can resolutely be shunned. Recognition of the reality of evil necessarily relativises the good, and the evil likewise, converting both into halves of the paradoxical whole' (1983: 361). Indeed, he is clear that neglecting one's capacity for evil, creates the conditions for it (1957: 95). However, this does not lead to moral relativism as Jung is clear that the purpose or teleology of understanding one's own shadow is not to treat all actions as morally equal but to step outside the narrow considerations of ego and persona to envision the greater potential for behaving according to higher principles.

Here, Solomon (2000: 204) is describing the gestation of ethics in the consulting room but it has wider implications: 'The ethical attitude develops, personally and professionally, through the self progressing from a narcissistic mode of relating.' Schweiker (2004: 37) does not refer to Jung but does endorse the importance of integrity of life as central to 'the moral meaning of creation'. This integrity is described as 'characterised by richness and yet also coherence or wholeness' and Schweiker's exploration of the core and uniting values which might underpin twenty-first-century pluralist approaches to ethics seems, to me, to belong to the same debate that Jung was engaged with a century ago. The next question is can the psychology of the individual be applied to groups and, by extension, professions?

#### Jungian approaches to the professions

The leap from the individual to the group is well established in organisational psychology, which looks at both the psychology of the individual and groups in workplaces and at organisational characteristics or personality as a whole (Haslam 2004; de Vries 1991, for example). Some scholars have looked specifically at the application of Jungian psychology to groups and organisations, (e.g. Henderson 1990, Feldman 2004, Abramson 2007, Matthews 2002), Singer and Kimbles (2004: 2) developed the idea of the cultural complex, and comment that: 'Although Jung included the cultural level in his schema of the psyche, his theory of complexes has never been systematically applied to the life of groups and to ... the "collective".'

Jungian analyst Guggenbuhl-Craig (1972) comes the closest to my intentions in his analysis of the shadow side of healing professions,

particularly physicians, priests and, of course, analysts. He describes how infatuation with images of healing or saving others can fuel darker figures of quack and false prophet, before discussing the shadow dynamics of the consulting room. There is scope for a wider discussion about how this dynamic might have played out in the cases of serial killer GP Harold Shipman or the many child abuse scandals emerging in the priesthood.

It therefore seems reasonable to extrapolate from the organisational or group level to the profession as a unit of study. There are many discussions of what determines a profession: I am here using a wide definition, which includes theoretical discussion of the field, and is best described as 'community of practice' (Brown and Duguid 2001, cited in Bartlett et al 2007). I have also chosen to consider the internal working of the professional identity and ethics rather than corporate or organisational ethics because the former is a longer lasting aspect of a practitioner's career, which may involve several employers but one profession.

I am hypothesising that professional ethics have been founded on the ideal-typical model and that this acts as a 'persona' for the professional group. According to Jung's ideas of compensation, the more a group insists on its probity (and blames others for misrepresentation or, if pushed, 'bad apples' in its own ranks), the more obscure – and *potent* – its own shadow becomes. The emphasis on promotion rather than self-examination, common to most professions, illustrates this trait. As Larson (1977) and others claim that professional identity depends on the 'other' to determine its own boundaries, Jungian integration might challenge the notion of the profession. Jung suggests that ethical capacity is stimulated by the experience of struggling with the shadow elements of one's own personal or group identity; I suggest this offers a new direction for thinking in professional ethics. As Pieczka and L'Etang (2001) demonstrate, public relations faces all these challenges to its jurisdiction and identity, whether one considers it a profession or, as they do, an occupational group. So, can a Jungian approach address these issues?

#### Case study – public relations

Jacque L'Etang summarises the current debates in the field of public relations elsewhere in this volume; it does not need repeating. The key point I wish to emphasise is the tension between self-images of public relations as

portrayed in core texts (Cutlip et al 1985; Grunig et al 1992) and those images held by critics like Stauber and Rampton (2004), Miller (2008) and others. The following section outlines some of the possibilities for applying Jungian ethics to public relations: a fuller exploration is contained in a recent paper (Fawkes 2009).

The Symmetric/Excellence Theory is accorded the status of a paradigm by Botan and Hazleton (2006) and while it has the laudable aim of improving public relations practice by quantifying and codifying best practice and demonstrating how others can improve, it has distanced itself from the darker aspects of public relations practice. In a kind of mirror image, the critics look only at the abuse, distortion and outright lying by PR people and organisations. They tend to take a very narrow view of the field, concentrating on corporate communications which involve corruption and distortion.

While many practitioners might like to see themselves as: 'public relations professionals [who] promote mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence among individuals and institutions' (Seib and Fitzpatrick 1995 :1), they may suspect they are often engaged to 'spin the news, organise phoney "grassroots" front groups, spy on citizens, and conspire with lobbyists and politicians to thwart democracy' (Spinwatch.com).

The most powerful locus of contradiction and confusion is persuasion, about which the author has written elsewhere (Fawkes 2006a, 2006b and 2007), as have others, notably Moloney (2006), L'Etang (2006), Pfau and Wan (2006). The supporters of PR have tended to marginalise persuasion, despite Grunig's (2001) revision of the mixed-motives model, and – interestingly – seem to share the critics' conflation of persuasion and propaganda, with neither able to envisage persuasion as a legitimate communication tool.

It is also notable that many approaches to public relations ethics, apart from the rhetorical approach, lack real depth, often assuming either that market forces will iron out ethical problems or that the symmetry of the system and the distance from persuasion will act as ethical guarantors. Given that PR has been known to claim a role as 'ethical guardian' of the organisation (a claim that is fiercely disputed by L'Etang 2003), one might expect more rigorous analysis of ethical theory

and practice. Public relations might even seek to become the natural promoter of the corporate conscience suggested by Goodpaster (2007), though it would need to engage more deeply with philosophical issues to qualify for this role. Bowen (2007) explores Excellent ethics from a Kantian perspective but current, post-Kantian, debates in professional ethics are not widely reflected in PR literature. One exception is Harrison and Galloway's (2005) application of virtue ethics to the various versions of the public relations practitioner, noted earlier.

#### Discussion

If the above characterisation of public relations as a field is accurate then the notion of 'excellence' constellates as a *persona* archetype, emphasising the best in practice and theory and promoting public relations. Sample quotes include: 'Public relations has a moral purpose, which is social harmony' (Seib and Fitzpatrick 1995: 1); or more recently, 'Public relations is the champion of democracy and the guardian of common sense' (Vercic 2005). Core text books, the professional organisations and trade magazines are notably lacking in self-criticism (McKie 2001; Moloney 2006).

Jung is clear that a persona is necessary to conduct business in the world, to behave in ways acceptable to society and that elements of the individual (or group) are selected for presentation and others kept back as private. The danger is in over-identifying with this public face and forgetting it is not the whole story. That diagnosis would be supported by Pfau and Wan (2006:102), who argue that 'controversy over optimal approach has stunted public relations scholarship', a view shared by other authors (McKie 2001; Holtzhausen 2000, for example) who have commented on the normative, prescriptive weight of the excellence theory, and it may be that this paradigm for public relations research has become monolithic, stifling other ideas.

One might also read the insistence on propaganda as belonging to historical rather than contemporary public relations as rejection of 'unacceptable' personal characteristics or shadow material. It is also symptomatic in the individual of a weak ego (Stein 1998) which must deny and defend itself against what threatens its fragile identity. The enormous difficulties in defining the field may also be evidence of this immaturity.

The applicability of Jung's approach is further evidenced by the gusto with which the critics

pick up the rejected, shadow material and fling it back at PR. The latest of these, Miller and Dinan's (2008) *A century of spin*, provides copious illustrations of PR deployment of deception and misrepresentation in government and corporate communications. It is also worth noting that they are unable to come up with any defence of PR – there is no discussion of the communication tactics used by voluntary organisations, trade unions or environmental campaigners, for example. This is also characteristic of shadow dynamics – the emphasis on the Otherness of the other precludes connection, shared ownership or recognition of the self in the other.

I suggest that the tension between the ideal-typical characterisation of PR's professional bodies and leading academics and the propagandist accusations of its critics outlined earlier is reflected in a more muted way between the same ideal-typical versions embodied in codes of conduct and the easy use of advocacy as an ethical 'get-out clause' by many practitioners. A Jungian approach would encourage engagement rather than rejection of these elements of the whole: what do they have to tell PR about itself? What do these voices illustrate? What if they are not all wrong? How can one have a professional internal dialogue if there is no capacity to listen? And how can one have professional ethics if they are based on the denial of large swathes of practice?

The move towards integration of the field would surely involve the painful but honest appraisals of PR's involvement with propaganda, past *and* present (a proposal for an Institute for Propaganda Analysis is made in Fawkes and Moloney 2008). It would involve the acceptance that on the one hand excellence is a laudable goal and genuinely reflects the experience and aspirations of many practitioners throughout the field; and on the other hand that their colleagues (or themselves in different circumstances) are often actively involved in using questionable methods to promote their employer's views. It might lead to discussion of what really is legitimate in current PR – the debate that many of the critics ignore. Jung would encourage us to look for the similarities, the points of connection within the field, rather than to label some good and others bad. Instead of drawing up codes to tell the difference, public relations might re-discover the fallible, approval-seeking, boastful and dishonest aspects of our collective personality. How would this be done and do all practitioners need to participate? My current

conception of the role of a Jungian approach is one of starting a debate, opening a space for discussion which allows the light (or dark) in. I do not envisage mass therapy.

Public relations practitioners shape corporate, organisational and societal communications. There is a tendency to idealise the organisation, the profession and the practitioner, despite the hostility of critics. Guggenbuhl-Craig's (1972) suggestion that the shadow of a doctor is a quack or charlatan, the shadow of a priest a false prophet seems to me to resonate with public relations' fear of the flack, the propagandist, about which I have written elsewhere (most recently Fawkes and Moloney 2008).

As I understand it, a Jungian approach to public relations ethics would start by acknowledging the propaganda role in public relations, past and present, without condemnation or judgement. In order to change direction, if that was collectively desired (a big 'if') these behaviours would need to be set in a wider context to provide an equivalent to the transcendent function suggested by Jung. I do not expect public relations to 'get God' but it does seem salient that professions in general and public relations in particular seek to locate their authority in the concept of society, as discussed earlier. The frequent claims that public relations works for the benefit of society need to be scrutinised and challenged but this may prove to be a common goal to which different viewpoints could agree to aspire. The sociology of professions, touched on earlier, offers some aids to this discussion.

If the field were prepared to have such a debate with itself, it might be surprised by its potential for transformation: in abandoning the safe but hollow idealism of the ideal-typical or the cynical and under-examined defence of advocacy, the profession might begin a search for deeper guidance about ethical conduct. It is worth repeating Samuels' (1985: 65) comment: 'There is a compelling moral aspect to integration of the shadow: to unblock personal and communal relationship and also to admit the inadmissible, yet human.'

### Conclusion

This paper has sought to demonstrate that professional ethics is in a state of flux, reflecting changes in the status of the professions (and aspiring professions) and new ideas emerging from post-modernism. As the search for virtue or value highlights an inward journey, the work of Carl Jung is suggested as

a possible guide to such adventures. Jung's conceptualisation of the self and the journey, through accepting the shadow, to integration were then explored as a moral basis for ethical behaviour and insight. These ideas were applied to the emerging profession of public relations, by visualising the core debates within public relations about its function and role in society in terms of archetypal struggles between Persona and Shadow.

The paper is exploratory rather than exhaustive but I hope it has demonstrated that Jung's writing on moral development is germane to current debates on ethics and that his concept of integration offers a way forward for the development of a more coherent professional ethics, not only in public relations but for others grappling with issues of ethics in rapidly changing times.

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### Note on Contributor

Johanna Fawkes MA MCIPR was a Principal Lecturer at Leeds Metropolitan University until 2004, since when she has been an independent writer and researcher. At Leeds Met, she led the BA in Public Relations and taught across the portfolio, specialising in mass communications and the psychology of persuasion. She previously taught at the University of Central Lancashire and the London College of Printing, after fifteen years in public sector PR. She has written papers for a variety of journals, national and international conferences, and

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