

John's wide medical experience undoubtedly led to his eclectic and pragmatic approach to child psychiatry. Although at some time during his period at the Maudsley he underwent a period of Jungian training, this did not seem to have biased his thinking or practice in any other particular direction.

John Varley was a very modest man who undoubtedly under-rated his abilities. His major contribution to his specialty was as a teacher and the conscientious care he devoted towards his patients. Some of these were nothing if not difficult to deal with. Many presented very special problems. Thus, a number of his colleagues and other non-medical members of university staff have ample cause to be grateful for the care and attention he gave to their children's and their own attendant problems.

The other side of his professional life was as a teacher in which vocation he was particularly successful. Thus, in addition to his consultant appointment he was appointed senior lecturer in child psychiatry in the University of Birmingham and was also chairman of the Sub-Committee for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry from June 1977 to March 1987. In all, 34 senior registrars in psychiatry in the Birmingham region trained with him during these years, many of whom became consultants in child psychiatry in the West Midlands and elsewhere. This, perhaps, was the principal advancement of his specialty that John Varley achieved.

Whereas I knew him well both as a friend and colleague I always found him a very private person, not given to talking about himself or his background. Thus, when asked to say a few words on the occasion of his retirement, I found myself at something of a loss. In public, and at clinical meetings he seldom spoke but when he did so it was always to the point. Some sometimes regarded him as being a trifle cynical – indeed his sense of humour often had a sardonic quality which was, however, never malicious.

He was a keen but not very successful fisherman. Trout, yes – but after much perseverance the one salmon he nearly landed on the Wye was botched by the interference of a well-meaning fellow angler who misguidedly grasped the line in an effort to help him land the fish, which interference, however, led to its escape. Characteristically John seems to have felt no rancour at this unfortunate incident; if he did so, he kept it to himself. He and his wife, Georgina, who outlives him, were delightful hosts. They had no children of their own which may go some way to explaining John's attitude to those others to whom he gave so much professional and loving care.

W. H. TRETOWAN

Louis Zinkin, formerly Consultant Psychotherapist at St George's Hospital, London

Louis was brought up in London and educated at City of London School, proceeding to Lincoln College Oxford and then to the West London Hospital. He qualified MRCS Eng LRCP Lond in 1952. Those of us who knew him later in his life were not surprised to learn that he stepped off the career ladder to pursue an idiosyncratic interest and had spent sometime as a ship's surgeon in the Far East. He returned to London to train, first as a psychiatrist at Napsbury Hospital, and later as an analyst with the Society of Analytical Psychologists. He obtained the MRCPsych in 1973 and was elected FRCPsych in 1987. In his late 40s, and already a training analyst with the Society of Analytical Psychologists, he once again demonstrated his capacity to think and do the unexpected, when he began a further training and a further analysis, this time with the Institute of Group Analysis. In the mid-'70s he was chairman of the Medical Committee of the British Psychological Society and in the '80s was Treasurer of the Society of Analytic Psychologists. In 1979 he came to St George's as Consultant in Psychotherapy and was a much admired and valued colleague for nearly ten years until his retirement in 1988.

Louis was a person with a truly original mind and a most engaging curiosity about not only psychoanalytic ideas, but also unfashionable areas of intellectual exploration which some of his more academically conventional colleagues found disconcerting. His interest in Gnosticism and the Holy Grail, for example, could not be regarded as close to mainstream NHS psychotherapy or psychiatry. Despite this taste for the unusual, or perhaps enhanced by it, he wrote papers which were indeed original but also extremely accessible, even for less experienced psychotherapists and those who did not share his Jungian training.

Even after his retirement from the NHS, Louis led a very active professional life both as a clinician and a writer. Despite severe visual impairment he was determined to continue with his work. He remained an enthusiastic teacher in both the Institute of Group Analysis and the Society of Analytic Psychology, giving papers, conducting workshops, and supervising students right up until the day of his death. He was greatly helped in this by his wife Hindle, herself a psychotherapist, and he sometimes spoke in these last few years when he was no longer able to read, of rediscovering the pleasure of having someone read aloud to him. The evident happiness of their marriage was one of the things which made them most agreeable friends. He died suddenly on 13 March 1993. Hindle survives him with their two children Ben and Joanna.

PATRICIA HUGHES