ideals into practice in a messy and ever-changing world.

A political evaluation of Obama's presidential campaign is beyond the scope and competence of this essay, but two points are worth making in conclusion. One, the acute sense of moral indebtedness Obama feels toward his ancestors should give comfort to political conservatives who worry about his alleged radicalism and un-American tendencies. Reading his memoir, and particularly his two dreams, gives a clear impression of how much fundamental respect Obama feels for family traditions and the wisdom of his elders (which of course is a key value of American conservatism). Two, it makes perfect sense that Obama has chosen to deliver his nomination acceptance speech at the Democratic national convention on the 40th anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. This felicitous historical confluence will offer him a unique opportunity to bring a new degree of experiential depth to that timeworn phrase "the American Dream." Unlike any other political figure in recent memory, Obama has shown a willingness to honestly discuss his personal process of psychospiritual development, and he is premising his presidential campaign on the need to generate similar developments in the nation as a whole. He is trying to evoke the dreamer in everyone, lest we become consumed by our collective nightmares.

Kelly Bulkeley, PhD*, is a Visiting Scholar at the Graduate Theological Union and teaches in the Dream Studies Program at John F. Kennedy University, both in the San Francisco Bay Area. He earned his doctorate in Religion and Psychological Studies from the University of Chicago Divinity School and is a former president of the International Association for the Study of Dreams. He has written and edited several books on dreaming, most recently* Dreaming in the World's Religions: A Comparative History *(NYU Press, 2008) and* American Dreamers: What Dreams Tell Us about the Political Psychology of Conservatives, Liberals, and Everyone Else *(Beacon Press, 2008). Professor Bulkeley may be contacted at kellybulkeley@earthlink.net.* ❑

<><><>CP<><><>

The Psychology of the 2008 Presidential Candidates (Part I) Special Issue was published in December 2007 with 15 articles by 20 authors on 49 pages

Obama's Dreams from and of His Father

Paul H. Elovitz
The Psychohistory Forum

Introduction

The leading Democratic contender to assume the role of America's next president is a man who forged his identity in the absence of his own father. As Barack Obama campaigns to be commander-in-chief—symbolic father of the U.S.A.—it is revealing to probe his conscious and unconscious feelings about his father. These are most clearly revealed in the autobiography, *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* (1995; unless otherwise stated all citations are from this book) containing two dreams I find to be quite revealing. After a brief biographical sketch of Obama in relationship to his father and then a discussion of methodology, I will provide the first dream, some of his associations to it as well as my interpretations, and then the shorter dream with associations and interpretations.

Barack H. Obama, the son of a white American mother and black African father, shed no tears at age twenty-one when he received a call from a Kenyan relative he had never met who told him that his father had died in an auto accident at age forty-six. By contrast, when by telephone he transmitted the news to his mother, he "heard her cry out over the distance" (127). At a conscious level the young man "felt no pain, only the vague sense of an opportunity lost" (128).

This unemotional reaction is understandable in a young man whose father had abandoned his mother and him when he was only two-years old and only reappeared on one occasion, disruptively when he was age ten. After a strained but positive start it was a tense month for Obama, his mother, his half-sister, and his mother's family. His father, the Kenyan economist Barack Hussein Obama, had come back to America for medical attention after a serious traffic accident that had put him in the hospital for almost a year (216). He

wanted the former wife he had abandoned when he left for Harvard to earn a graduate degree and the child he had never supported, to return with him to Kenya. That this did not happen was not simply because Ann was still married, although separated from her second husband with whom she had a one-year-old daughter, but because of the nature of her first husband's imperious, domineering, and intrusive behavior, to say nothing of his polygamous marital situation. That her ten-year-old son was eager for a relationship with his father is reflected in the large smile on the boy's face when they were pictured together with his father's arm around him and he tightly clasping it. Nevertheless, he carried distasteful memories of his namesake. These memories were mitigated, however, by being taught to dance by his father and the gift of a basketball.

Though his *actual father* was barely a presence in his childhood, his *idealized father* was an enormous force within it (Paul Elovitz, "A Comparative Psychohistory of McCain and Obama," *Journal of Psychohistory* [fall 2008] vol. 36, no. 2, hereafter referred to as "Elovitz"). His mother Ann ceaselessly praised and justified the behavior of her ex-husband to their son, maintained a correspondence with him, and encouraged Barry to do the same. (Note that Barry was the same name his father used in America which the junior Obama had people call him until sometime during his second year at Occidental College in Los Angeles.) Most importantly, she consistently trained and urged her only son to follow his father's example of outstanding academic achievement. One might argue that the encouragement of young Barrack's social conscience and leadership abilities was based upon his mother's idealized fantasy of her ex-husband rather than his reality. In Indonesia at 4:00 A.M. every morning she awakened the sleepy six to nine year-old Barry to force-feed him three hours of an English language correspondence course as well as breakfast before he went to school. The first dream occurred when Obama was living in New York City where he had gone to complete his college education at Columbia University in political science, with a specialization in international relations, before spending most of the next two years in Manhattan at the Business International Corporation and the New York Public Interest Research Group.

Methodological Considerations

Recently a psychiatrist asked me how I could write about Obama's dreams when I did not have him present to associate to them and work on their interpretation. A psychological historian joined the conversation, stating that we historians do not have the luxury of having our subjects associate to dreams or verify our interpretations generally. "Any and all productions of our subjects," he declared, "are grist for our historical and psychobiographical mills." I could not have said it better.

In preparing to write this article I read and reread the dreams for several weeks, letting them wash over me. Then I wrote out their images separately before rereading Obama's books specifically looking for the associations to the images of the dreams. In addition, I recorded my own dreams connecting to Obama in the search for the best possible understanding of my own countertransference regarding him. This process has sensitized me to my own thoughts and feelings regarding him, especially my own inclinations to project onto him, as people do in dealing with those who would be our leaders.

The reader should note that the names I have given to the dreams are mine, rather than those of the dreamer. He gives no specific dates for his dreams so I have I have used Obama's approximate age at the time of each dream.

A question that must be asked is, "Are these two dreams mere literary devices, fabrications to make his book more dramatic or to associate himself with Martin Luther King's dream rhetoric?" Although I doubt that this is the case, even if they are fabrications, they would still have value as his literary productions. They reveal much about his concerns, coping mechanisms, emotions, identity conflicts, motivations in going to Africa, personality, and search for his father. On the other hand, if they are the exact dreams he had and upon awakening recorded in the journal he makes references to keeping in his twenties prior to putting in his book verbatim, then we do not have the usual problem of the dreams being recreated from memory. As is usually the case, the biographer, dream worker, and historian are left in the dark as to the answers to these questions.

A central question for this and all biographical studies of the Senator from Illinois is his

reliability as an autobiographer. He describes his book, as "a record of a personal, interior journey," despite "a stubborn desire to protect myself from scrutiny." It is the book of a young man who had not yet gone into politics, so there is less self-censorship than is usually the case in political autobiographies. Major concerns and conflicts he reports having about identity and race in growing up were not usually apparent to those friends closest to him at the time.

As a psychobiographer, a difficulty I find in the autobiography is the extent to which Obama takes literary license in describing events of decades before and in recounting conversations with great specificity prior to the period in which he refers to keeping a journal. Intensive investigations by reporters and interviews with people from his past mentioned by him (although using fictitious names to protect the privacy of others) have demonstrated that his memory is less than perfect and that some do not see the events of the past in quite the same way he does. It would have been much better had he given specific dates and more associations for his dreams.

Though it is my conviction that Obama's dreams and their interpretation deepens and enlarges my knowledge of the man, I am well aware of the limits of the process. It is not a substitute for his associating to and interpreting his own dreams more extensively. For the reader to consider, I provide associations to some of the images in Obama's dream that may be found in his autobiography, but do not make claims for these as Obama's dream associations unless I see a close connection. They are simply possibilities.

It is my sense that he cites these particular dreams partly to foreshadow what he will be discussing later in the book. It is my hope that these caveats do not deter the reader from seeing the enormous value of the autobiography and the dreams within it as historical sources. If we contrast them with those of others, such as Bismarck, they stand out for their openness and probity. Ultimately, it is for the reader and subsequent biographers to determine the value of the analysis below. Now to the first dream Obama had about a year after his father's death when twenty-two-year-old Barack was living in New York City.

<u>The Dream of the Journey to Offer His Father Release from Jail</u>

I dreamed I was traveling by bus with friends whose names I've forgotten, men and women with different journeys to make. We rolled across deep fields of grass and hills that bucked against an orange sky.

An old white man, heavyset, sat beside me, and I read in a book that he held in his hands that our treatment of the old tested our souls. He told me he was a union man, off to meet his daughter.

We stopped at an old hotel, a grand hotel with chandeliers. There was a piano in the lobby and a lounge filled with cushions of soft satin, and I took one of the cushions and placed it on the piano bench, and the old white man sat down, retarded now, or senile, and when I looked again he was a small black girl, her feet barely reaching the pedals. She smiled and started to play, and then a waitress came in, a young Hispanic woman, and the waitress frowned at us, but under the frown was a laugh, and she raised a finger to her lips as if we were sharing a secret.

I dozed for the rest of the trip, and woke up to find everyone gone. The bus came to a halt and I got off and sat down and sat down on the curb. Inside a building made of rough stone, a lawyer spoke to a judge. The judge suggested that perhaps my father had spent enough time in his jail, that perhaps it was time to release him. But the lawyer objected vigorously, citing precedent and various statutes, the need to maintain order. The judge shrugged and got up from the bench.

I stood before the cell, opened the padlock, and set it carefully on a window ledge. My father was before me, with only a cloth wrapped around his waist; he was very thin, with his large head and slender frame, his hairless arms and chest. He looked pale, his black eyes luminous against an ashen face, but he smiled and gestured for the tall, mute guard to please stand aside.

"Look at you," he said. "So tall—and so thin. Gray hairs, even!" And I saw that it was true, and I walked up to him and we embraced. I began to weep, but I felt ashamed but could

not stop myself.

"Barack. I always wanted to tell you how much I love you," he said. He seemed small in my arms now, the size of a boy.

He sat at the corner of his cot and set his head on his clasped hands and stared away from me, into the wall. An implacable sadness spread across his face. I tried to joke with him; I told him that if I was thin it was only because I took after him. But he couldn't be budged, and when I whispered to him that we might leave together, he shook his head and told me it would be best if I left (128-29).

Obama's Stated Context, Associations Upon Awakening, and Interpretations

The dream is introduced by the sentence, "Another year would pass before I would meet him [my father] one night, in a cold cell, in a chamber of my dreams. Upon telling the dream Barack reports "I awoke still weeping, my first real tears for him—and for me, his jailor, his judge, his son. I turned on the light and dug out his old letters. I remembered his only visit—the basketball he had given me and how he had taught me to dance." Demonstrating psychological insight, he goes on to write, "And I realized, perhaps for the first time, how even in his absence his strong image had given me some bulwark on which to grow up, an image to live up to, or disappoint." Evoking images of a starting anew he then wrote in a new paragraph, "I stepped to the window and looked outside, listening to the first sounds of morning…. I needed to search for him, I thought to myself, and talk with him again" (129).

Interpreting and Associating to the Dream

This clearly is an important dream as indicated by a variety of factors. It is remembered for over a decade, it is rich in imagery, it deals with some central issues of Obama's life including his travels in search of identity and his relationship with his absent and deceased father, issues of childhood as reflected in two men becoming as children again, his embracing oppositional characters in it as parts of himself, and his crying in it for the first time for his dead father, and it becoming the springboard for his subsequent travel to Africa in search an understanding of his real, as opposed to his mythic, idealized father.

The remembering of a dream over a long period of time, as well as the decision to write about it, are reflections of it having importance in the emotional life of the dreamer. A dream is a communication to the self and Obama describes his book as being "a record of a personal, interior journey" (xvi). As a boy and young man he could dream about, rather than really know his father; he uses the word dream(s) in the titles of both of his books and sometimes within their pages. His dream is rich in imagery connecting to many issues of his life. In looking for associations from his autobiography to many elements in the dream, I jotted down over eighty images in it—some quite vivid. The journeying images connect to the travels (to Hawaii, Los Angeles, New York City, Boston, Chicago, Europe, Kenya, and once again Chicago) he describes in his book that might well have been entitled *Travels in Search of Identity and My Father* rather than *Dreams from My Father*. Central to the dream "is the boy's search for his father" (xvi). This search is not for a typical abandoning, absent father, but the father his mother held up to him as the paragon of behavior as she pushed him to achieve from an early age, using guilt (she liked to say she slipped guilt into his "baby food") as well as the shining example of his namesake.

Obama recognizes a central issue of dream interpretation when, upon awakening, he declares through his tears, that he is his father's "jailor, his judge, his son." As the creator of the dream, the sleeper is to some degree the different characters within it. What a host of characters there are in the 505 words of the dream: the male and female friends whose names he has forgotten; the heavyset old white man traveling to meet his daughter who is then transformed into a small, piano-playing black girl; the young Hispanic waitress laughing under her frown; the judge suggesting leniency; the prosecutorial lawyer; Barack Obama Jr.; the prisoner Barack Obama Sr.; the senior Obama shrunk to the size of a boy in his son's arms; and the mute guard accepting an order from the prisoner. It is the two Barack Obama's who are the central characters in this saga of the night.

His mother's idealized Barack Obama Sr.—the quintessence of intellectual brilliance, hard work, leadership, and social conscience—was

a figure that his son had to resist to grow up finding his own way in the world. In high school the boy was so obsessed with basketball that half a world away from Hawaii serving poor Third World women his mother Ann "despaired of him ever having a social conscience" (A friend of his mother quoted in Elovitz). "Jailing" his father, including cutting himself off from his sadness upon learning of his father's death, was a way of dealing with his anger at being abandoned as a child by his father. (This dream and article does not directly touch upon the issue of abandonment by his mother who sometimes spent years away, leaving her son with her loving parents while she did field work for her doctoral degree and good deeds for the poor.)

When the "lawyer objected vigorously [to his father's release from jail], citing precedent and various statutes, [and] the need to maintain order," it is psychic order to which he is referring. Allowing himself to feel sadness regarding his father, to empathize with him, threatened his own defenses against knowing about his real father, dealing with having been abandoned, and thus feeling closer to him. According to the depiction in his autobiography, Barack's mother had consistently defended and justified her former husband with patently erroneous statements like, "It wasn't your father's fault that he left, you know. I divorced him" (125). However, she had also revealed shortly before her son presented the dream that his father "was a stubborn bastard" who could have taken his new wife and son with him while he pursued graduate education at the New School for Social Research in New York City that offered a more generous stipend than had Harvard, but he had to have "the best education" (126).

When Barack rejected the prosecutorial impulse within himself; opening the padlock to his father's cell, he confronted his father's vulnerability (he is described as "very thin," "pale," "ashen face," "seemed small," and "sadness"), contrasting so sharply with his mythic father (129). Furthermore, he had to confront the ways he was like his father in his thinness, large head, and gray in his hair. The earlier reference to "our treatment of the old tested our souls" in the book held by the heavyset man helped prepare Obama to forgive and reconcile with his aging father. Yet, there was danger in this unprecedented action of acceptance, perhaps this is why the "window ledge"—with the sense of a precipice—rather than the "windowsill," was the remembered descriptor of where he placed the keys. After all, opening ourselves emotionally to someone who has caused hurt means taking a risk comparable to being by a precipice. (An important story he had been told as a boy about his father involved his namesake having precariously dangled another African student over the railing of the steep cliff of Hawaii's Pali Lookout after that student had accidentally dropped his pipe as he coughed upon trying it, 6-7). In any event, his father's imagined statement of love melted Obama's resistances to forgiveness and connection.

Nowhere is the father's vulnerability more clear-cut than in the tearful scene of the embrace, when "he seemed small in my arms now, the size of a boy." Of course the father Obama had heard about and briefly known was a man rather than a vulnerable boy. In speculating as to who is the vulnerable one, the young, fatherless Obama comes to mind. Also, the realization that he had expressed on the page before the dream that his sixteen-year-old mother, who had just seen *Black Orpheus* in Chicago, was "that girl with the movie with beautiful black people in her head" which led to her marrying his father and holding him up throughout her life as "a love that will survive disappointment (127).

Similarly to the man becoming the size of a boy, is the heavyset man becoming the black, piano playing girl. Since in his book Barack shows a great appreciation of the child within the adult, this may be a reference to it. During his later African travels he would discover that the "Old Man" would be the term his children called his father. Though no specifically heavyset old man comes to mind in the autobiography, two of the older men he mentions in it are the grandfather who did so much to raise him and who had a daughter, and an old man who lived next door to him in New York City. He would help this unspeaking neighbor, as mute as the prison guard, by silently carrying his groceries, just as he helped by laying out the satin pillow on the bench in the dream. That one day this man simply died in his apartment was a shock to him (4-5). Muteness shows up elsewhere in his book, a regret that Barack has is that as a ten-year-old he

was often mute with his father—his wife suggests that this was due to the lack of trust of the father who suddenly reemerged in his life. His references to "union men" in his book are from the later Chicago period and they represent men living in the past, so they are probably not relevant (168-70).

The music of the piano playing girl brings to mind that the son reports being still able to hear the sound of the old stereo by which his father taught him to dance.

No specific references to the young Hispanic waitress is apparent, although there were reference to Mexican women cleaning up after the students at Occidental College and his living on the border of Spanish Harlem obviously meant that he had contact with other Hispanic women. Humor clearly shows up twice, once beneath the frown of the waitress and in Barack's vain attempt to cheer up his father.

His father's choice to remain in the "cold cell, in a chamber of my dreams" would seem to relate to his incomplete knowledge and forgiveness of him. It may also connect to Barack's own solitude since a recurrent theme in his autobiography is that he fears he likes his own company too much as reflected by the following: his New York City roommate found him a "bore" because he had stopped socializing, he "spent a year walking from one end of Manhattan to the other," and he found people avoiding him as "I was talking to myself in the middle of the street" (4,119,122,140).

Another element in the dream connecting to Obama's life is his memory, as a young boy, of his shirtless father, though in that case with his mother alone with him looking like she had been crying (68). Regarding prison, his father had been incarcerated as a young man for attending a banned meeting during the Mau Mau Rebellion against British rule. In that instance Hussein Onyango had refused to bail out his son since he thought he needed to be taught a lesson (419-20).

Obama's association to digging out the "old letters" from his father leads to the one letter he includes in his autobiography. It makes reference to Obama's plan to travel to Africa after he finishes college in two years, which his father described as to "come home after graduation" since "the important thing is that you know your people, and also that you know where you belong" (114). The presumption that the African American son had never seen the "home" where he belonged was something the young man, in search of identity, appears to have considered and perhaps accepted. The discussion of the dream and the chapter ends with the words, "I need to search for him, I thought to myself, and talk with him again." Though this is a search that will take place primarily in Africa and within himself, it is put on hold since in fact he will spend the next three years in Chicago as a community organizer, deepening his sense of his black self as an African American. Could this be why the father in his dream does not come out of his solitary cell to go with his son? At that point in his life the search for the truth about the father he needed to "talk to" was confined to dreams and musings without the benefit of information he would get from various family members encountered five years later in Kenya.

"The Terrifying Leopard" and "It Is Time" Nightmare

Barack Obama's second reported dream occurred in Kenya when he was twenty-seven years old, after a discussion of the impact of Barack's African grandfather, Hussein Onyango (1895-1979) on his father and the family. At the time he was traveling by train with African relatives (his half-sister, two half-brothers, an aunt, and his father's first wife) to the family's ancestral home (Home Squared).

> I finally fell asleep, and dreamed I was walking along a village road. Children, dressed only in strings of beads, played in front of round huts, and several old men waved to me as I passed. But as I went further along, I noticed that people were looking behind me fearfully, rushing into their huts as I passed. I heard the growl of a leopard and started to run into the forest, tripping over roots and stumps and vines, until at last I couldn't run any longer and fell to my knees in the middle of a bright clearing. Panting for breath, I turned around to see the day turned to night, and a giant figure looming as tall as the trees, wearing only a loin cloth and a ghostly mask. The lifeless eyes bored into me, and I heard only a thunderous voice saying that it was time, and my entire body began to shake violently with the sound,

as if I were breaking apart… (372).

Upon awakening from the dream, he reported, "I jerked up in a sweat, hitting my head against the wall lamp, that stuck out above the bunk. In the darkness, my heart slowly evened itself, but I could not get back to sleep again." He then wrote about the next stage of the trip to the family homestead, without providing any specific associations or interpretation to his terrifying vision of the night.

Barack's horrifying, bigger than life ("as tall as the trees") humanoid figure that wore only a mask and loincloth, would appear to be his grandfather Hussein Onyango Obama, known to his grandchildren as "the Terror." The two pages prior to the nightmare are devoted to this powerful individual who built the family's homestead ("Home Squared") with the emphasis *not* on his accomplishments as an energetic, innovative farmer and modernizer, but rather on his meanness to everyone within and outside of the family.

As in his actual life and the first dream, Obama is a journeyer. He sees naked women, children, and old men outside of the huts (made of mud and dung) as he would have seen in his train ride prior to the dream. The aunt telling him stories prior to the dream spoke about the time when she was a child. Though it is tempting to suggest that the children also represented innocence, a reference to his having been warned not to stick his head out of the window of the train lest it be hit by stones thrown by boys, does not fit this image.

The journey's destination of the ancestral familial home represented what the African American had come to Kenya to find because that is where his father grew up and formed his personality. He had already suffered disappointment, for he reported, that upon his arrival in Nairobi, "the homecoming I had once imagined for myself. [stet] clouds lifting, old demons fleeing, the earth trembling as ancestors rose in celebration" had been replaced with feeling "tired and abandoned" as his luggage was lost (for days) and his sister was nowhere to be seen (305). Rather than the earth trembling in celebration, "the thunderous voice" in his dream threatened to shake his body apart (372).

Fear is the major emotion in the dream and immediately afterwards as he sweated with a racing heart, hitting his head on the lamp, and "couldn't get back to sleep again." The people in the dream fled into their houses in fear while Barack fled into the forest—tripping, falling, panting for breath—in short, terrorized. The power of what he faced was enormous as "day turned night." The growl of the leopard brings to mind "the night runners," like warlocks," who "took the shape of leopards" and hexed people with their magical powers (377-78). When he falls to his knees in the "bright clearing," he is rather like a suppliant at the mercy of the great force in the mask. The mask in his autobiography is a wooden Indonesian one he wore as a ten-year-old, when all alone, he got off the plane from Indonesia to Hawaii to live with the grandparents he had not seen in four years and who consequently seemed like strangers (53).

At first glance it would seem that the monstrous, frightening personage in the nightmare is "the Terror"—Hussein Onyango Obama—who so dominated and frightened his children, wives, and neighbors. After viewing him, in contrast to other men in the family he was meeting, as a strong, energetic, independent African, he then came to wonder if his grandfather was not simply an "Uncle Tom" (p.406).

Probing more deeply into the terrifying figure in the dream, there are indications that he is multi-dimensional, also encompassing Barack's father. Supporting this is the fact that his father's favorite outfit when a student in Hawaii included "an old-knit shirt with a leopard print pattern" (8), and later in the Kenya section the point would be made that his namesake could be as unreasonable as his grandfather in dealing with his children and others. The "real" father he confronted in Africa may have been generous to strangers and relatives, but he was also "an abusive, irresponsible father and husband and a bitter drunk: an arrogant, lonely, narcissistic, prideful, self-destructive, stubborn failed bureaucrat who felt entitled to special treatment" (Elovitz). He discovered that the "Old Man" was also, like his American son, an abandoned (in his case by his birth mother who fled her controlling husband) child who managed with all his failing to have a great impact on his children and former wives.

What "the lifeless eyes" boring into Obama represent are not clear, though eyes tend to be con-

nected to conscience. The "it was time," relates to the need for him to come home to Africa (379), as his father had wanted, connecting with his father and grandfather, accepting their fears, conflicts, and confusions, and forgiving them when he wept at their graves (429-30).

Conclusion

Barack Obama, whose wife worries that he is "something of a dreamer" (439), would have Americans dream of hope and change involving racial and political reconciliation to build a better country and world. He has lived a life of hope and change: change from Barry to Barack, from being raised "white" by whites to identifying as black, from community organizer to lawyer/politician/ legislator/presidential candidate. His geographic change took him from Honolulu to Jakarta to Honolulu to Los Angeles to New York City to Chicago to Boston to Europe to Nairobi to Home Squared and finally Chicago again. His psychological change took him from the "personal, interior journey" of his autobiography, *Dreams from My Father*, to the political policies and rhetoric of his campaign book, *The Audacity of Hope*.

His "change we can believe in" campaign slogan focuses on the people participating in the electoral process, on his being a beneficent leader who thinks of the well-being of others, and seeks to bring unity and cooperation across party and racial lines, much as he sought to bridge the worlds between his white and black families. He also presents himself as a man of sounder judgment than his opponents whom he talks of reconciling with much as he forgave his abandoning, self-centering father in the first dream.

Senator Obama's dreams, and the associations related to them from *Dreams from My Father,* cast some light not just on his unconscious, but also on the unique quality of his candidacy. His run for the presidency has prompted enormous enthusiasm and considerable, mostly unspoken, apprehension. This is partly because in an important sense he is both black and white, Christian with hints of a Muslim background, and American yet also exotic. His violation of traditional boundaries brings great hope to many who think he will bring us something new as well as together, while prompting terrifying confusion and paranoid fears in others.

The Democrat's first dream is about personal reconciliation and his second focuses on it being time, interpreted as "time" for understanding and forgiveness of his father and scary grandfather. Both involve travel by an individual whose life journey of self-discovery has taken him around the world. The two dreams, even in the unlikely case they are only literary devices, provide insight into the conflicts, mindset, and personality of the man whose search for his absent African father has led him to have conversations in his mind with him even into Obama's thirties (438). Barack Obama would like his current journey to end in the White House as our collective patriarch working to lead us to achieve the American dream.

Paul H. Elovitz, PhD, *editor of* Clio's Psyche*, has published on the dreams of historical personages such as Humphry Davy, Mary Wollstonecraft and her daughter Mary Shelly, and Robert Lewis Stevenson, as well as historical dream methodology. He studied dreams in psychoanalytic training and later with Montague Ullman (1916-2008, a pioneer in the field), ran dream workshops for years, devised a method of probing the dreams of historical and public personages, wrote various articles and chapters of books on dreams, and edited the dreams of others as a journal editor. Prior to working on Obama's dreams, he did an intense biographical and psychological portrait of the Illinois Senator, published in the fall 2008 issue of the Journal of Psychohistory. Professor Elovitz may be contacted at pelovitz@aol.com.* ❑

Montague Ullman

(Continued from p. 57)

uages, with his last volume, *Appreciating Dreams—A Group Approach* (1996), translated into Chinese in 2007. A recent release is Ingrid Blidberg's Swedish film, *Catch the Dream*, featuring Ullman and his dream process.

A fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Dr. Ullman was a charter fellow of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis, a life fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, and past president of the Society of Medical Psychoanalysts and the American Society for Psychical Research. He also served as president of the Parapsychological Association and