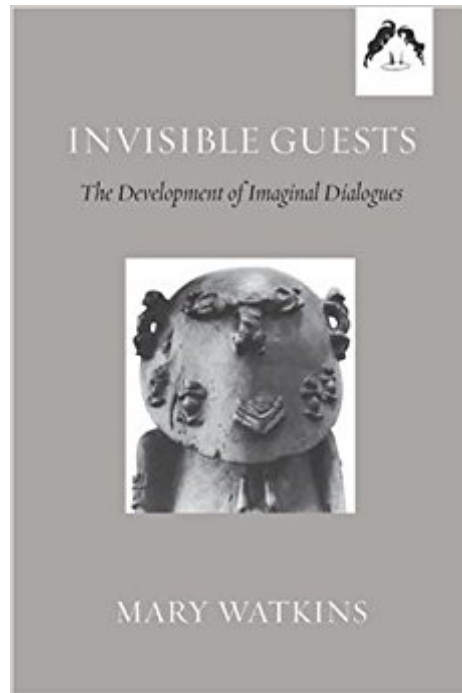




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Invisible Guests



Synopsis

An eloquent critique of developmental and clinical psychologies and their insistence on listening to only one voice per person. Dr. Mary Watkins is the only person now writing on imagination who knows the field completely, thinks beautifully, and can teach just how to proceed with interior dialogues with imaginal personages. The author is one of the original group who founded archetypal psychology in the 1970's, and this book is one of her most creative expressions.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an insightful and fascinating book, that goes beyond the models constructed by Freud and Jung, examining the ramifications of an alternative model of "personality" formation that expands on the ideas of these two precursors and takes their ideas in a new but very reasonable direction, and proposes an alternative way of examining and exploring the dynamics of identity. A practical guide to self-exploration, alone or with help, it recalls the equally mind-opening thought experiments of Perls and Goodman in "Gestalt Therapy." Clear, concise, provocative and ground-breaking.

....and the Western tendency to disparage fantasy and image as some kind of "only," this book invites the reader to imagine psychological health in terms of how autonomous and detailed we allow the imaginal beings of the "inner" world to become as they arise from their unconscious roots and dance on the psychological stage with the unafraid observer. As Dr. Watkins points out, developmental theories in psychology have tended to do just the opposite: to see internal dialogues with "imaginary" characters as primitive or childish or somehow preliminary to the adult goal of

rational discourse with our fellow human beings. Drawing examples from art and literature and the lives of those who create them, the author illustrates for us the potential richness and vitality to be gained--on both sides!--through a dialogical approach to these inner figures when they arise and display their astonishing aliveness. In theoretical terms, this approach supplements and expands our social and developmental notions. Operating "inwardly" or "outwardly," psyche is an exquisitely dialogical process. For clinicians and nonclinicians alike, the author's interpretation of what we fear from unbridled fantasy--psychotic states, hallucinations, multiple personality, and the like--as impoverished and dissociated disturbances rather than enlivened conversations with liberated faces and voices will encourage further exploration of the imaginal (as opposed to "imaginary," which for most means "unreal"). If anything, it is the repression and disavowal of the imaginal that supports various states of pathological possession. If the sudden guests who summon our attention subvert the rigidity of our well-developed ego atop the air-conditioned skyscraper of personality, they simultaneously enrich the flexible potentialities of a humbler and more dialogical kind of consciousness.

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