

Sexual repression is the trauma which both Freud and Reich focussed on particularly though this is not the only way in which parents can deny a child its identity. The liberal illusion that in pornography 'we have the answer' to repression is a deep way of preserving the splitting and confirming the false identities that contactless upbringings produce. The answer to pornography is not to be found in the censorship that the moralists call for, but in the therapeutic pathways which people can explore in helping each other to make true contact with their real feelings. A.S.Neill's paper also explores some of the distinctions between natural sexuality and its caricatures.

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Hans Lobstein

THE CALIFORNIAN SCENE

La Jolla, where Carl Rogers has his 'Centre for Studies of the Person' is a sunny, elegant, tropical, wealthy suburb of San Diego in Southern California - in sharp contrast to the cold, misty, rough wilderness of Big Sur in the north where Esalen has its rocky perch. There is an equal contrast between the smiling welcoming young man who runs the La Jolla Centre, and the surly, suspicious young woman who purposefully barred the entrance at Esalen. This is what publicity can do to you. Or is it? Perhaps this needs more serious consideration than in these random notes.

I had just spent a week at the University of Purdue in Indiana where there is a Ph.D. course in group work, and I was saddened by what I saw. It seemed to me that most of their studies were theoretical, writing long dissertations and producing the sort of material they assumed their professor expected of them. When they met in groups they gave me the distinct impression of being on their guard against each other, giving away as little as possible, making a good show, being clever. One woman had a problem with her husband who was also in the group and she brought this up and wanted to work on it. She started to attack her husband. He walked out. Other members of the group showed their disapproval of her attitude, and left her with that, going on to something else without further attention to her. In fact they carried this over into their feelings for her for the rest of the week and by Saturday she was weeping bitterly (Saturday evening when she talked to me privately, not at the group) that they were all giving her the cold shoulder because she had shown something of herself - or at least that was her view of it.

I discussed this with Carl Rogers and he confirmed that many psychology students treated the subject as something to be looked at and written about rather than experienced. Many of the professors who were brought up in the academic field are unhappy and suspicious about anything too personal. It reminded me very much of our own adult education departments who teach involvement learning methods - so long as the involvement doesn't go too far.

I had hoped to persuade Carl Rogers to come to England to conduct some seminars for group leaders here, but he feels that at his age (71) he does not want to travel a great deal. I told him that there are many people in this country vitally interested in his work and his books are popular here, particularly *On Becoming a Person* and *Encounter Groups*, the last probably the best book on this notoriously difficult subject to write about. His centre at La Jolla conducts groups mainly for professional people, such as medical men, to study the relationship between them and their clients.

At Esalen, when I did eventually manage to talk my way in, I spent some beautiful days lying in the hot sulphur baths and watching the Pacific beating itself against the rocks far below. Talking to Bill Schutz who had just finished his third book, I found that our experience of Rolfing has had very similar results. I have been practising a sort of deep tissue massage which started as Rolfing some 14 years ago. However I had modified this because it seemed to me that the great pain normally aroused with Rolfing was counter-productive. But I was never quite happy about this, I wasn't sure whether in fact I was perhaps doing my clients a disservice by not giving them the full treatment, but instead only going to within this side of their pain threshold. Bill Schutz confirmed that his experience was similar; he had stopped causing this heavy pain and found that he got far more feedback as a result, more fantasy pictures. He also found that following this modified Rolfing, a lot of dreams are remembered even by people who say they have not dreamed for years. By working on these dreams we get a lot of material coming to the surface. It was good to have my own experiences confirmed and I feel more confident now. Bill said that Ida Rolf was a tough old bird and did not feel any pain herself, so she expected the same from her clients.

I had heard that American groups are so much tougher and more aggressive than ours here in England. But the ones I attended, several of them in the Los Angeles area, were understanding, supportive and considerate. To my delight I seemed to be welcomed with open arms, even at Esalen eventually. This after all is really what it is all about. Wherever you go, if you can get close enough people are people.
