WHO'S WHO

Dear Sir,

An important factor in the value, to me, of a journal like Self and Society is the extent to which it forms a continuously updated directory of people in the business - individual 'therapists' (I wish to avoid the suggestion that what I am writing about is in any way part of the practice of medicine) and teachers of things like Tai Chi and Akido and Arica exercises as well as group leaders and growth centres. This matter of spreading information about who does what where is quite separate from the question of accreditation, about which I do not know enough to have any opinion, except that I would hate to see the human potential movement becoming closed and authoritarian like the medical profession.

One way of doing this 'directory' would be something like the lists of yoga teachers and classes in 'Yoga and Heath', and another, not quite equivalent, but conveying a great deal of useful information, would be to give some biographical detail about your contributors (who is John Garrie, for instance, he sounds like a man I would like to learn from), particularly where they practise. This last point is very important to me, and is the basis of my (at the moment) obsessional dislike of the medical profession. A thing I am interested in, which is a part of medicine and not of humanistic psychology, is Masters and Johnson type treatment for impotence. I know there are some doctors and hospital departments in this country which do this, they write articles describing their work, but they have to do so under assumed names; biographical information is given, but everything of the slightest value, namely how to get in touch with them, has to be suppressed in the name of professional etiquette. This seems to mean that I am never allowed to know what I want and deal directly with the people who do it, but always have to be referred by someone who usually knows nothing whatever about either what I want or who is available to do it.

Humanistic psychology is, so far, mercifully free from middlemen and this sort of referral procedure, and a good way to keep it that way is to set up a tradition of what doctors call 'advertisement' but which is only public access to information on who does what and where they may be found.

Yours sincerely,

George Weedon

Edinburgh

JOHN ROWAN

NO, YOU CAN'T HAVE A BETTER WORLD

You are sitting in a U-shaped group of 14 people, and you have one red card and one green card. The man at the open end of the U says 'ready', and you decide to choose the green card this time. Then he says 'up', and everyone in the group raises their cards in front of them. You notice that there are seven red cards and seven green cards, including your own. The man says - 'Seven red - you each get 22 points; seven green - you each get 16 points.' For every 100 points you get, you earn one penny, and there are 50-odd rounds.

One the next round, you decide to hold up a red card, and so, it happens, does everyone else. Fourteen red cards. The man says - 'Fourteen red - you each get 8 points.' What's happening here? The score for a red card seems to have gone down a lot, from 22 to 8. That's funny.

On the next round, just to see what happens, you flash your green card again, and by some coincidence, so does everyone else in the group, except one. This time the man says - 'One red - you get 34 points. Thirteen green - you each get 28 points.' The pattern is becoming clearer to you. Those who choose red are always six points ahead of those who choose green. But the more people choose green, the more points go to each person.

So choosing red means that you are always ahead of those who choose green; but it also means that you depress everyone's scores, so that it takes a lot longer to reach lOO points. And choosing green means that you raise everyone's scores, including your own, but always leaves you behind the red-choosers.

It is all rather like real life. Motor traffic works like this: as long as everyone else goes by tube or bus, you can get there quicker by car; but if everyone tries to get there quicker by car, everyone gets there very slowly and uncomfortably. And so on with litter, pollution, tax evasion, maintenance of safety equipment, and so on.

Now the optimum strategy in the game is very simple: everybody chooses green every time, everybody gets 3O points every time, and everybody goes home with a good amount of the experimenter's money. But if just one or two people show red cards, they each get better than 30 points, at the same time depressing everyone else's score slightly but appreciably. And this temptation seems hard to resist - when the experiment was actually done, the all-green show never happened once.

The experiment was done with eleven groups of undergraduate psychology students at the University of California, Los Angeles. Sometimes the difference between red and green was 6 points, as in our example, and sometimes it was only 2 points; sometimes the top score was 3O for green (2-point jumps) and sometimes it was 23 (l-point jumps). But the principal was the same throughout.

The sad thing is that very little co-operative behaviour (showing green) took place at all. Why should this be? It seems that the more competitive people, by taking it for granted that competitive (red-showing) responses were normal, in fact dominated the behaviour of those who wanted to be more co-operative.

This is a reminder of some earlier work, using a different research method, which found that there seem to be two different orientations to the world - the competitive orientation and the co-operative one. Those with the

competitive orientation have very little insight into people or situations, but simply assume that all situations are competitive situations.

The co-operator, on the other hand, is much more sensitive to variability in people and situations, and is quite prepared to trust people and accept them as good. But he is also prepared to believe that some people are competitive, and resists being exploited or taken advantage of in such a situation.

So when a co-operator meets a co-operator, he is co-operative, but when he meets a competitor, he tends (at least in these experimental situations, when he cannot find any other way out) to be competitive in return. But when a competitor meets a co-operator he is competitive, just as when he meets another competitor he is competitive, because he is not open to the possibility of any difference.

These experiments do indeed look a lot like real life. In fact, the competitively-oriented people in these experiments also scored highly on the F-test, indicating that they favoured strong discipline, devalued Jews and Negroes and generally had a rigid and authoritarian view of life. They tend to project their own attitudes on to others. The researchers have an interesting explanation of this :

The authoritarian's narrow beliefs about others may be a perfectly accurate reflection of his experience. It is simply that his experience has been severely biased or limited by his tendencies to be aggressive, egoistic, exploitative and rivalistic in interpersonal relationships.

If this is the case, there is really no way that the co-operator can bring about any change in the competitive person's orientation. If that is like real life, what hope have we got of creating a better world?

The experiments referred to were : Harold H. Kelley & Janusz Grzelak, **Conflict between individual and common interest in an N-person relationship.** *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, February 1972.* Harold H. Kelley & Anthony J. Stahelski, **Social interaction basis of co-operators' and competitors' beliefs about others.** *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,September 1970.*