

authority over another person, and wielding power over that person. That is what we are opposed to.

What we are not opposed to is one person having power *with* another person. We have no objection to following someone else's suggestions if some common endeavour needs that to happen. But this has to be a reciprocal thing - he has to be willing to follow our suggestions if they are better adapted to the real situation, or to listen to our suggestions in order to arrive at some solution which is superior to either of the original ideas. And in groups and organisations there has to be a real respect for the other person's praxis.

In this way we can solve our authority problem, and become real persons, interacting with other real people, to help the new society emerge. And where the rigidities of the existing system get in the way of this, we shall have to find ways of bypassing, undermining, seducing or overthrowing them. It depends how they react to us.

This article was written by a male and addressed primarily to male readers. Women have already been writing this kind of message to each other for some time.

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## Letter to the editor

Dear Sir

I don't know how many copies of *Self & Society* have been read by people who have had very little to do with humanistic psychology, or who have never been to an encounter group, but here are the thoughts of one such person.

Your ideas are interesting, but surely your magazine is not getting to the audience who would most benefit from it. What are you doing in fact to try to appeal to people who are not aware of what it is to be self aware?

You have only to walk about the streets of any town outside the trendy areas of London, either shopping, or to see people going about their business, and judging by the expressions on their faces, their minds appear to be a complete blank.

Have you ever watched women shop? Have you longed to know what enters their thoughts? Are they really just thinking about the price of food and its spiral? Are they really aware of the

relationships they are meant to be having with their nearest and dearest? Are they really fulfilled in themselves? Are they really happy as they *are*? I think not; surely these are the people you should reach, surely there are the people who the psycho-therapeutic methods would help.

These emotionally subdued people are the ones who would most benefit from encounter groups. Instead, as it seems to a mere outsider, you are encouraging the neurotic to be more neurotic. I read with interest 'Diary of a Marriage' by Leonard Romus. How fortunate the author is to feel that he is able to make and break relationships; he does not appear to feel inhibited about making deep relationships fairly quickly, he appears to feel no particular responsibility to the people he has formed relationships with. He seems to feel no responsibility for Althea, I presume his daughter, aged two. The majority of people worry so much about the future in such rigid terms that they do not feel free to let themselves go for more than a moment of their lives; not that they too have not had their brief moments of feeling fulfilled; not that they too have not fallen in and out of love; but they are more inhibited than 'Lennie'. They have followed their feelings to a logical conclusion, the roots of which were laid down in childhood and from which they have been unable to break away. When young, these couples found they were unable to live in or very near the mentally stimulating trendy parts of the metropolis; they were also driven by instinct to own a pocket handkerchief-size-piece of land and thus opted to live in the suburbs.

Surely the response to encounter groups would be enormous if you could compete with the local lectures on history of art and archaeology at a local library. I feel filled with compassion when I watch these dutiful people who are in a rut yet they still manage to cope as they feel they should; they suffer a dichotomy of feeling in that they are bored and want to break away, yet still shoulder their responsibilities. These people are aware of being in a rut, and know little about how to cope with it; they may even have never heard of encounter groups. Their faces appear to be blank, their looks don't mature, except for a collection of lines, which they probably dread; yet still they continue.

Again, I imagine the typical reader and contributor to your magazine is like Madeleine Francis in 'Entrance not for Everyone', who appears to be a member of one large amorphous family that goes to encounter groups, neurotic but happy in that they can express their emotions to one another. Patting one another on their backs with self satisfaction. This is not getting through to the people who would benefit from growth centres - people who outwardly may have little to offer but for whom with a smattering of encounter group ideas, would fulfil their own existence in a frame-work that they have set for themselves and in which they wish to continue to function. Encounter groups would help these people, whose lives maybe seem dull to some, to feel more alive and self-aware.

The impression your magazine gives is that you have a sophisticated matey group of people who are self-satisfied with their own self-knowledge. Your approach in helping people seems to be committed to helping those in a very microscopic manner. You seem very intent on making a few exhibitionist introverts even more exhibitionistically introverted. Surely it is better to help on a more macro scale? Your contributors don't seem to have suffered the monotony of a rigid timetable that exists in bringing up children with no help, and giving a supporting role to a tired breadwinner.

This, I realise, is obviously a very feminine point of view, because I am aware how easy it is for a woman who is tied to the house, to get into a rut. She feels, and probably is, doing the best for her children, yet it is frequently difficult to break the habit which she believes to be correct.

Can the Editor give much hope that humanistic psychology and his magazine 'Self and Society' will express themselves in the kind of terms that will be understood in suburbia and are they trying to devote themselves to this much wider audience? I hope so.

Yours,

Saily Hyams

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