

Letters to the Editor

Dear Vivian,

Like the author of 'About AHP', I was at the May day-event held at Bedford College. Some interesting and no doubt contributory reasons for the failure of the day event have been put forward, but I think, so help me, that a lot of the trouble was caused by myself and a colleague. Our trouble

was - we didn't know what it was all about, having been led by the advance publicity to expect something quite different.

Since I am not personally enamoured by the 'encounter group' idea I would have been unlikely to have laid out

£4.00 in fees plus time and travel from Wales had I thought that that was the form the day was to take. We went for specific information and some training in the art of running self-help groups, which as lay people we find it hard to come by. Only with some difficulty right at the end of the day were we able to elicit some of the practical information promised in the advance publicity.

What makes the day funny for me, in retrospect, is that my colleague and I were, in our innocence, desperately trying to be pleasant and sociable with what we felt were some rather prickly people. At one stage I was actually trying to advise one of the 'leaders?', - fortunately I didn't know she was one of I might have been more forthright.

I was amongst those who left the room, and I must here say that it was not because the 'tension was unbearable'. Together with at least one other who left I was sickened by the self-indulgent clap-trap which was being talked indoors, and like the lady who led the exodus I felt that 'the day outside was too lovely to waste on such meaningless rubbish'.

The day's failure was due to more than the inadequacies of not knowing who people were and what was supposed to be going on - in my view it was characterised from start to finish by simple lack of manners. I am disabled and cannot sit on the ground, as the others were already doing when I arrived, without acute discomfort. My inability to do so was received with the most chilling disapproval I have ever encountered in a long disabled life and astonishing in a society ostensibly dedicated to humanistic principles.

Though I look back now with something of a giggle to all the spanners we unwittingly threw into the works of that day, I have no excuse for my

failure to denounce those dreadful people who were smirking at the remarks made by my colleague, a good, conscientious woman, way out of her depth in the jargon of these affairs, who was doggedly trying to make a worthwhile contribution to the proceedings. To say that I held back out of respect for her feelings does not lessen my shame.

But my gentle, elderly little dog had a good day. It was so hot that I had to let her out of the car; the heat also persuaded people on the grass to take their shoes off. If there's one thing my little dog loves it's bare feet to lick. People don't usually mind the thorough ministrations of her tongue, and those on the grass were no exception. As she moved inexorably around, from foot to foot, I saw hands move out to stroke the soft fur of her head and loving looks cast upon her wise old face and marvellous eyes and I reckon that what happened between the dog and the people was not lost and that perhaps the day had not been a complete waste of time.

Yours sincerely,

Bobby Freeman (Ms)

Hi friends,

In "Self & Society", Vol 5 No. 4 Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi writes on page 98 that humanistic psychology, etc. potentially used to support South African Apartheid Policies.

I have lived in South Africa more than 15 years, am deeply involved in political philosophy, but cannot trace any evidence for the above mentioned suggestion.

Who could elaborate on it?

For "Power to the Person"
Dr. Jan De Roller Stiling
Cape Province
South Africa.