

# Introduction

When I undertook to compile material for this issue of *Self and Society* I had three objectives in mind. One, to cover the area between social and community work on the one hand and humanistic psychology on the other, an area that has many landmarks for both practitioners. Secondly I wanted to raise the level of writing in *Self and Society*, and being unwilling to criticise without doing anything about it, I landed myself with this task. Thirdly we hoped it might become a point of departure for the humanistic psychology movement and for *Self and Society* in particular, to find new readers among an expanding discipline. Working in both fields myself, I find we have a lot to give to each other.

I thought I would have problems finding contributors but found on the contrary that I had more material than we could use. I met with enthusiasm and co-operation from everyone in both these fields; so we obviously touched on a rich potential vein. Many people are now aware of the effect of the methods used in humanistic psychology in a very practical way, by affecting attitudes and choices open to formerly intractable human relationship problems. Little of this work has found its way into the literature as yet, and I hope this issue of *Self and Society* will be one small step in this direction. Some other journals read by social and community workers, regularly publish articles on various aspects the human potential movement concentrating on its more simple and altruistic myths, and not surprisingly these stories are mostly cynical and sarcastic. All I see in them is how easily misunderstood these new methods are and how much more work needs to go into them to refine some of the cruder enthusiasms which are inherent in many schools of thought when they are first practiced and taken up in all sorts of bizarre ways. But I see this only as understandably faltering first steps. We are certainly not treated with indifference but rather more with disguised envy.

I had the unenviable task of deciding on the most relevant articles to include in this issue and hope I have made the right choices. I like to concentrate on what is easily readable rather than obscure, but nevertheless authentic and erudite. This is not always easy amongst practitioners trained in the academic disciplines. I hope we have succeeded.

**Hans Lobstein**