

REGULATION OF PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

There is considerable overlap between this section on accreditation and the following section on conference reports. In this section we have an article by Michael Pokorny on what is going on at UKSCP. That is followed by an article by Cal Cannon and Sue Hatfield on their experience of running the Cambridge conference on accreditation. Under Conference Reports we have more on the Cambridge conference, plus reports of other conferences.

A Recent History

by David Jones

The emergence of the human potential movement in the 1960s and '70s caused some anxiety about the effects of the new therapies such as Gestalt and the organisations associated with them such as the Esalen Institute, Quaesitor, the Institute for the Development of Human Potential (IDHP) and what became known as the cults of the Scientologists and the Rajneeshis. A few incidents of injurious violence and violation, well documented by David Boadella, marred the overall benefits of the movement as a whole. Landmarks in the public concern about therapy were the attempts by the MP David Bright to bring in a private member's bill to regulate it and the publication of the government enquiry into the Scientologists (the Foster Report, 1971).

The response among therapists was varied. The British Psychological Society (BPS) has set up a system of chartering so that practitioners can obtain certificates of competence to practice as a counsellor, teacher or psychotherapist analogous to being a chartered accountant. The British Association of Counselling (BAC) set up a standing conference to develop a regulated profession of psychotherapists. Interested parties are represented on this conference, the United Kingdom Standing Conference for Psychotherapy (UKSCP), which has its own professional bodies and structures for recognising trainings and for the accreditation of practitioners as psychotherapists. It is also linking these with other countries, especially in Europe. The AHP Practitioners Section have played and still are playing a key role in UKSCP through the work of John Rowan, Shirley Wade, Courtenay Young, Judith Dell, Mary Parker and others. Organisations such as the IDHP have ruggedly opposed the whole enterprise in the belief that professionalisation is a cause of misery, and that the regulation of psychotherapists will kill off the fine spirit which flowered with the coming of the human potential movement a generation ago.