

# Letters

Dear S&S,

In a relaunch issue progressive enough to make its lead feature 'Gays and the Therapeutic Community' (March 1993) I was dismayed that S&S was prepared to feature a piece entitled 'Thoughts for the New Age', though at least it was at the very back. Innocent enough? Surely quite appropriate? A closer reading of this piece reveals a particularly offensive kind of language running through it: 'the Western races . . . the race religion . . . the race . . . the Tradition . . . the national life . . . regeneration . . . service to the race . . . a high calibre is demanded . . . the keynote is action'. Just words? No! This is the language of the Hitler Youth, many of whose members were very taken up with 'the Western mysteries'. There is already enough reactionary rubbish written in the name of the so-called 'New Age' without S&S giving a platform to crypto-fascist burlblings like Shirley Flitton's piece.

*Guy Gladstone, London EC1*

Dear S&S

There have recently been a number of articles and comments in S&S that have caused me problems.

There was the account by a client in therapy of her being sexually assaulted while on holiday. I did not feel adequately prepared by the preceding text for the explicit nature of this account, and I do not understand how my reading the article can have helped the woman in her therapy. Then there was the very disturbing account by a therapist questioning whether sexual relationships between

therapists and clients were always wrong. Client abuse is a real problem and I expected some dialogue in the journal this article, but did not see any.

Most recently, I am concerned about the editorial comment by David Jones which says that AIDS in this country is a hype, and that abortions cause more misery. Is David suggesting that we remain inactive in regard to AIDS until it has spread to a large proportion of the population? Present information regarding AIDS suggests this is a real possibility. Finally, if David can state with confidence the origins of the AIDS virus I hope he will inform the World Health Organisation.

*Roger Merrick, Erdington, Birmingham*

*David Jones writes:*

The account of being raped and the healing effects of rewriting the story of it (S&S July 1991) was intended to show the power of story-writing for someone who has experienced damage to their soul. We made that perfectly clear in the preamble. The dialogue that Roger rightly expects in response to Shan Jayran's 'The Passion of Therapy' (S&S March 1992) begins in the letters column of the December issue and continues in 'Ethical Issues 1' (S&S March 1993 and this issue).

As far as AIDS is concerned, I would advise Roger to read the Chirimuutas' book, the second edition of which was reviewed in our March 1993 issue. The well-established facts are that AIDS first arose in humans in the USA, and that it developed from immunodeficiency viruses

in monkeys. I certainly don't believe that we should remain inactive in relation to AIDS, but I do think it is worth keeping all health risks in perspective.

*Do please keep your letters coming; on-going debate about the issues raised in the pages of S&S is crucial, and allows everyone to have their say.*

Dear S&S,

I felt hurt and offended at the enjoining of S&S with crude and abusive attacks on the monarchy. Whatever the deficiencies of this highly-exposed family, and I know they are manifold, I did not expect them to be treated in such an insensitive and sneering manner. I hope there are others who share my view.

*Alan Byron, Sheffield*

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## **Competition Result**

### *Therapy and the Royals*

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**I**n the March issue we asked readers to reply, in the words of a member of the royal family, to a letter in the *London Evening Standard* suggesting that the royals needed urgent therapy. Here is Roy Ridgway's winning letter, and thank you to all who submitted entries.

My dear psychotherapists!

To use your wretched psychological jargon, we are both our people's id and superego; their wooden leg and their tribal god; their right and wrong. If you didn't have a monarch, you would have to invent one or you would go stark raving mad.

We know we are telling a story, and we do it superbly well. We have spent centuries working out the perfect plot. We spend our whole lives living that plot,

which is the most magical story anyone could ever invent. It is the story of stories. Everybody loves it.

We are the life-blood of our people. We are their reason for living. We are, as Shakespeare knew so well, the very embodiment of this sceptred isle, this demiparadise, this earth of majesty, this seat of Mars. Remember this when your snivelling teams of psychotherapists invade our privacy. When you force us to conform to your sordid tabloid existence, you will be sorry. Your dreams will be shattered, your self-respect destroyed. You will have to spend the rest of your miserable lives wallowing in the gutter where, I'm afraid, you really belong. God help you all!

Yours in great sorrow,

*Elizabeth Regina*