

Letters

Dear S&S,

In his article 'The Racism of Jung' Farhad Dalal quotes liberally from an essay by Jung entitled 'The Complications of American Psychology'. In focussing on Jung's remarks on Afro-Americans, Farhad overlooks the truly radical perspective Jung offers on the influence of the Native Americans on the US American national psyche. Jung speaks of 'an x or a y in the air and the soil of a country, which slowly permeates and assimilates' a person to 'the type of the aboriginal inhabitant even to the point of remodelling his physical features'. Jung speaks of a *spiritus loci* — a spirit of the land which has an 'intense influence on the mind'. Jung suggests here that one's biological inheritance is secondary to the influence of the spirit of the place of birth. Jung acknowledges that this view accords with primitive animistic thinking. Although Jung's essay is nearly seventy years old, this view seems startlingly original and timely in the context of modern psychotherapy. Jung views the psyche in a dynamic relationship with the planet. His premise that psychology precedes biology must surely put the issue of racism into a new perspective. Perhaps even more importantly, he opens a window through which we can begin to look beyond the sometimes narrow individualism of one-to-one psychotherapy, and relate our work to the far broader and urgent issue of healing our relationship to a living planet.

Guy Dargert

Dear S&S,

May I draw your readers' attention to G.O.R.I.L.L.A., a new world wide web site? G.O.R.I.L.L.A. is an initiative from the Independent Practitioners Network, and is devoted to creating a forum for resistance to professionalisation and providing a space for the alternatives to make themselves heard. It currently has two sections:

'Confronting UK Professionalisation' contains an archive of argument and polemic that widens the debate about professionalisation to include the many practitioners who oppose it. It currently includes critiques of psychopractice professionalisation by John Heron, David Wasdell, Denis Postle, Richard House, David Kalisch, and Richard Mowbray.

'Human Potential Voices' includes material about current developments in the Independent Practitioners Network and other associated groups such as Facilitator Development Associates [incorporating IDHP]. There are articles on self and peer assessment, a client's guide to psychotherapy, emotional competence, bringing about change, a rewrite of co-counselling from a transpersonal perspective, and a critique of Ken Wilber's work.

I am actively interested in receiving material for inclusion that matches either of these sections. I am equally interested in informative, 'factual', insider, 'whistle-blowing', information about developments in the trade associations, and news of alternative formations, accreditations, or non-mainstream ways of taking

responsibility for psycho-practice. You can access G.O.R.I.L.L.A. at <http://www.lpiper.demon.co.uk/>.

Denis Postle

Dear *S&S*,

I read the reported response from the AHPP Board to my letter on the subject of statutory registration (*S&S*, March 1997) with considerable interest. I welcome the fact that the AHPP Board is now apparently opposed to statutory registration and look forward to a more public elaboration of their position on this matter.

However, the so-to-speak backdating of this position takes some believing. I find it hard to recall any statements or actions by the AHPP Board which might counter my incredulity in the face of the claim that the Board's opposition to statutory registration has 'remained unchanged for years'. The only action that I can recall in six years of AHPP membership which might on the face of it support this claim is that on one occasion AHPP voted to bring to an end UKCP's participation in something called 'The Statutory Recognition Working Group' — an alliance of UKCP and other organisations. However this was a vote with the majority of UKCP to withdraw from this alliance for tactical reasons, not because of any change of heart over statutory registration by either the hierarchy or the membership. It simply reflected a disagreement about the best way to pursue the goal of statutory registration, not about the goal itself. This can therefore hardly be cited in support of the Board's claim to the long-standing nature of its position of opposition to statutory registration.

By contrast, on two occasions within the last eighteen months the AHPP Board

has categorically and unequivocally opposed proposals put to two separate General Meetings urging the AHPP either to distance itself from UKCP's official position on statutory registration or at least to debate the issue. On both occasions the membership was clearly led to believe that the Board opposed these proposals and voted against the proposals — in one case by a narrow margin in which casting votes from the Board tipped the balance.

The only evidence available to me seems to indicate that AHPP has gone along with the pursuit of statutory registration to the extent that even its own members have until now believed the support of statutory registration to be official policy! I would welcome being proved wrong, and challenge the AHPP Board to produce evidence of both the assertions contained in their reported response. Unsupported assertions that seem to fly in the face of the facts will not do.

David Kalisch

Dear *S&S*,

I want to write to you to thank you for the lovely work you did laying out my article 'Wisdom from the Dragon's Nest' in the last issue of *S&S*. I have done some layout myself from time to time and I know what a lot of work is involved in getting it right. And you did. Thank you.

Rosamund Oliver

Dear *S&S*,

I was surprised to read Mandy Bowden's comments on Earwig in the March 1997 issue. What is the 'elect few'? My impression of *S&S* is that it is completely open on every level to everyone.

In 1996 I discovered *S&S*, found the address with difficulty, got hold of some

copies. I thought the magazine was provocative, genuine, stimulating and focused. I liked the broad spectrum of views and the enthusiastic (sometimes passionate) book reviews, and thought that Earwig with its wry wit and deconstructing of pretentiousness and hypocrisy, was a welcome addition. Please, Mandy, let me have some fun.

I enjoyed *S&S* so much that I wrote an article (uncommissioned), and to my joy it was published. Another article will be published in *S&S* this year. I did not know anyone on the magazine or even remotely connected to it, although I am hoping to meet some of these fantasy figures at the AGM. I'll have a look around for Mandy, too.

What I feel from Mandy's letter is that sad feeling of exclusion that I know so well. Now that Mandy's letter is published I hope she feels included. It's not a matter of the 'elect few' but the unelected many.

Patricia Welles

Dear *S&S*,

I enjoyed the Earwig column when it started. It made gentle fun of various aspects of AHP, and I thought it was healthy. However there is a limit to the number of amusing things that can be said about an organisation, and after a time it started to poke fun at people in a way that made me, like Mandy Bowden, feel uneasy. I don't consider that it is right to criticise from behind the safety of a cloak of anonymity. I therefore feel strongly that if the Earwig column is to continue it should be published under the author's real name.

Shirley Wade

Dear *S&S*,

I was interested to read the letter by Mandy

Bowden regarding her unease over the Earwig column. For some time I have been struggling with my confusion around this feature.

S&S articles are generally written in a clear and interesting way — a breath of fresh air after the complex jargon of the psychotherapy journal to which I had previously subscribed. In seeking to explore rather than dictate, the journal reflects my humanistic model of counselling. There have been a few occasions when I have felt there is an assumption the reader will agree with the basic tenet of the article to a degree that seems patronising; however, in the main writers have been clear that the views they expound are theirs, put forward for exploration and challenge by the general reader.

The one exception to this openness has been the Earwig column. I 'assumed' that my inability to understand it was somehow linked to being a more recent subscriber or perhaps not attending regular events where somehow its purpose was made clear. However, even if this is the case it leaves me feeling an outsider and that is a feeling I dislike. Indeed, through personal development and training I have spent many years challenging that feeling both for myself and with clients.

I feel angry at its lack of clarity, and disappointed at the way Earwig contrasts with the overall air of openness which *S&S* presents. It is this cloak of secrecy that conflicts with my interpretation of humanistic values.

Angela Cooper

The editors write: In response to our request for your thoughts about Earwig, then, we have one letter pro, one anti and one iffy. Any further thoughts?