

The gradual hijack of humanistic psychology for other purposes

Guy Gladstone

The manifest identity crisis

A significant proportion of members of the Association of Humanistic Psychology Practitioners (AHPP) are likely to be in deep doublethink if not deep doodoo. The position I am taking here is that state regulation and humanistic psychology are totally incompatible. Before spelling out the incompatibilities, some explanation of how this doublethink has been obscured for the last fifteen years would be in order. That this incompatibility should not be more immediately and widely apparent needs some explaining.

The master plan

To start with, some context. The inevitability trance induction (state regulation is inevitable) has been assiduously cultivated over the last fifteen years by the UK Council for Psychotherapy hierarchy, and remains embedded in its mission statement. This must be highlighted. Also it should never be forgotten that the UKCP is first and foremost a trainers' club representing training interests. For a Private Eye view of the trainers club in action take a look at Wesley Tantrum's 'Troubled Times In A Paperweight Palatinate' available on <http://ipnosis.postle.net>. For years the UKCP has quashed lines of thought contrary to state regulation by ignoring them to death. Psychotherapists who didn't subscribe to state regulation became the pariahs who were letting the side down. I am proud to be a pariah. Apart from the occasional expression of disgruntlement, the AHPP has gone along obediently with the master plan.

The first adjustment

First, note the excision of the noun 'psychologist' leaving the free-floating adjectival 'humanistic'. It's just a philosophy, it doesn't necessarily have too much to do with one's person or work. This act of removing the ground from under one's feet, leaving the -ology without the -ist, may be partly a response to fear of fulminations from the British Psychological Society (BPS) who would have everyone believe they are the only psychologists in town, leaving humanistic practitioners with the

castrated descriptor 'humanistic'. The government decided the highly organised and relatively powerful BPS should be first in line for Health Professions Council regulation and the BPS saw advantage in being first to oblige by entering the coop.

The second adjustment

Secondly, note a further UKCP appellation for psychotherapists, the device that perhaps more than anything allowed the Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy Section to become the largest section of the UKCP, the now widespread conjunction of 'humanistic and integrative'. The strictly humanistic practitioner now gets a boost or a blur according to taste. It's almost as if the addition of a second adjectival descriptor offsets the loss of 'psychologist' where psychotherapists are concerned.

The third adjustment

Thirdly, a tacit, essentially political accommodation can now be identified. As humanistic practitioners over the last thirty years have sought posts in mainstream organisations, they have been careful to mask their counter-cultural roots, if indeed they felt any connection with them. Psychotherapy integration on the level of theory tends to refer to a psychotherapist either integrating two or more humanistic modalities in their work (e.g. gestalt and transactional analysis) or a humanistic modality and a non-humanistic modality (e.g. bioenergetics and psychoanalysis or psychosynthesis and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

These integrations suggest sophistication, versatility and advanced practitionership, and take a good few years beyond training to bring into being. However on the not really named as such socio-political level, 'integrative' carries a different association: integration into dominant cultural forms, i.e. the mainstream. It is curious how often humanistic practitioners can be read or heard crowing in self-congratulatory tones about this form of integration as if they need to assure themselves that they have truly escaped from a previous inferiority complex. In the case of AHPP psychotherapists, this has meant swinging firmly in under the professionalising drive of the UKCP, and for the purposes of this article, state regulation version one from the mid-nineties, 'statutory registration' (of an independent profession by a free standing Act of Parliament) now morphed into state regulation version two, 'state regulation' (of a controlled profession by an Order in Council).

The ideology of professionalisation

Sociologists studying the discourse of professionalising have identified a very contemporary ideology (i.e. an unexamined belief system) that is playing a key role in managerialist and governmental strategies for convincing, cajoling and persuading employees and practitioners in service occupations to perform and behave in ways in which the corporations or the state (and the first are in process of

capturing the second) deem to be appropriate, effective and efficient. What might once have seemed to hold out a promise of both status and autonomy (producing a seductive pressure to become a recognised profession) has during the current decade been turned into an instrument of control (for other purposes beyond the core activity itself e.g. Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)).

Wake up humanistic turkeys, there is still time to decline the Health Professions Council (HPC) coop; even if your trainers still hold the notion that this is your destiny and destination, for want of a better idea and for the sake of obedience to their economic imperatives.

Rhetoric and the sting

The shock horror panic response of these same trainers to the recent non-recognition of the entire Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy Section of the UKCP by Skills For Health, the body charged by the Department of Health with advising on the competencies grid by means of which practitioners are to be located, standardised and prepared for regulation within the HPC coop is really most revealing. As Nick Totton has observed, here are the turkeys voting for Christmas. Some older trainer turkeys of course are fatter than others, and will be making arrangements to ensure placements for trainee turkeys at the NHS commissioners' tables, very necessary in view of a contracting voluntary sector and a saturated field of private

practice; even if these same trainee turkeys have little to look forward to besides getting stuffed. The response to their eclipse suggests that for some years HIPS has been mesmerised by its own rhetoric and quest for respectability, and, irony of ironies, has forgotten that its basic premises are too countercultural for its identity (or more accurately its identities) to achieve mainstream acceptance at governmental level. Behind the indignation and sense of flouted entitlement are some hurt feelings. For no-one nice and humanistic would ever hurt another person's feelings, so the hurt ones appear to have difficulty grasping the nettle that there are other players in the psy field turf wars who may have a part in this rebuff and behind the scenes may even be laughing. Turkeys duffed by turnkeys.

The fourth adjustment

Just how desperate the UKCP HIPS trainers' club are to get their trainings into the HPC as a both kosher and distinct brand is evident in a further very recent morphing of identities. In March this year, in an attempt to suggest the unity of humanistic modalities, they sent a 'Modality Statement' to Skills for Health (determining National Occupational Standards for the psy field) that bundles the full diversity of humanistic modalities into a new and never previously visible entity, 'Integrative Humanistic Psychotherapy'. Did you know you had all been rebranded? If not why not? Again note how 'integrative' now moves into first place as lead descriptor. Note also that the next step, if some of these truly mental

architects of New Order Psychotherapy have their way, is to disappear the word 'humanistic' altogether, which for some it would seem is a dirty word from the sixties. Who are they trying to kid? Perhaps practitioners who care for the identity of what they do would like to alert representatives of the state that this is a fudge, a PR job.

It gets worse. A further twist is evident in this same document's naïve resurrection of 'the humanistic psychology movement in the US' (page 4) as if to imply that something happened, but it was over there and back then. If the civil servants within the HPC are paid up New Labourites, they are hardly likely to miss the whiff of sixties counterculture. Will they then swallow the subsequent attempt in this IHP document to position today's practitioners as the rightful heirs of such philosophical heavyweights as Kant and Hegel? Claims of this order will be a red rag to the New Labour bull.

In Europe the humanistic challenge to positivistic psychology was supported by the philosophical developments through Kant, Hegel and 19th century writers within the European phenomenological and existentialist traditions. Can you blind a bureaucrat with science, and again, what if s/he picks up a whiff of Marx amongst those '19th century writers'? A high risk game. Probably better off pulling strings, not what you know but who you know. Adam Curtis's panoramic BBC TV series 'Century of the Self' charts how beginning in the seventies the

counter-culture was recuperated by the neo-liberal bureaucratic state that New Labour has constructed out of Mrs Thatcher's legacy.

More than one public interest

In the light of the above, I am issuing a call to therapists within AHPP to publicly and unashamedly reconnect with the counter-cultural roots of humanistic psychology. Practitioners within alternative accountability networks such as the Independent Practitioners' Network (IPN), unencumbered by an agenda to gain establishment favour, will continue to reach out freely to an often alienated but also often educated therapy-seeking public, aware of its right to exercise the shibboleth of 'choice' - if they can pay for it. The 'power with' aspect of the therapeutic alliances which members of the public create with practitioners means that they will mostly continue to make their own minds up about who they work with, way beyond the compulsive ken of government bodies and their professionalised collaborators, both of whose claims to dictate the public interest are flimsy, ignorable and readily put in question. In the post-modern flux there are actually quite a number of publics rather than a unitary 'general public', so the question of whose values practitioners are responding to cannot be generalised. Connections remain opaque and even mysterious, resistant to audit and surveillance, notwithstanding so-called 'listening' and focus groups. Any notion that the 'general public' desires state regulation of psychotherapists

('statutory registration' was entirely profession driven) for their own protection, as opposed to an alternate view of it as a protection racket for the benefit of trainers, remains unproven and probably unprovable. I can say that in 24 years of my own practice, state regulation of therapists has never once been to referred to by a client. The two clients who threatened to complain about me asked me which professional association I belonged to, which of course I told them. I never heard any more, and my supervisor confirmed there was no case to answer. There are two points here: firstly I would not entirely trust the HPC not to cobble up a case (especially in view of my already public questioning of their authority, including directly to them in the HPO2001 Psychologists Consultation); secondly and I think more worryingly, whatever the perceived risk of professional collusion, my intuition tells me that many clients would be inhibited from complaining at all were they aware that the state or an organ of government would be involved in the proceedings, rather than other therapists who would be in a position to understand what had gone wrong or even a jury. I offer this merely anecdotal evidence to stimulate questioning of what in my view is a contestable and untestable assumption, namely that state regulation will protect the public. If this is not the case, then the sole rationale (HPC is at pains to confirm this) for state regulation collapses; which is not to say there are not other mechanisms

of accountability, that will have more to offer both practitioner and client.

Flushing out collaborators

If you could flush them out,- and getting psychotherapists to personally own to wanting the state to interpose itself between them and their clients is no easy task - it would be a pleasure to confront such authoritarians in liberal clothing. Plain speaking feedback is rendered difficult by the remote processes of decision-making that prevail in the psy field. While most therapists eschew political activity in favour of the private dyad, and humanistics often seem to be living out the 'politics is pigshit' portion of their counter-cultural inheritance, there is a structural problem. News is mediated, and within the UKCP rather obviously 'managed', by a political class, the apparatchniks; so that typically it trickles down to registrants in often vague and selective wafflings that invariably arrive months after the event, making it difficult to confront or exert influence within a meaningful time frame without having the gall to show up where one is not necessarily welcome. What does need to be said loud and clear to the officers and operators in committees is that they are currently collaborating in the creation of an occupied territory, for which they are asking to be held in contempt. That these collaborators represent themselves in journals and newsletters as engaged in acts of service, sacrificing their time and energy for an imaginary good (state regulation), is both sad and irritating.

How the trainers' club pulls it off

Practitioners with or without training interests need to recognise that for far too long the politics and future of the field have been almost totally determined by the trainers' club, who have cast themselves as the key stakeholders in relation to state regulation. This is a skewed representation of the psy field as a whole. To pull this off, they take advantage of the following: firstly trainings are already organised entities; secondly graduates and even trainees are often hoping to get teaching work, supervision and client referrals through association with a training (even if it is not their Alma Mater); thirdly trainees are usually locked into their original training through a range of friendships, identifications and unresolved transference dependencies. For evidence of how this powerbase is being intentionally consolidated, look no further than the UKCP's recently launched 'Candidates in Training Scheme' ('The scheme has been introduced to advance those people who have committed to a UKCP Member Organisation psychotherapy training').

The training-centred mode of structuring the psy field makes it difficult for practitioners to think outside the box; facilitates the thought paralysis around state regulation; and assists the dissemination of the inevitability trance injunction. On the one hand the training institutes produce the organisational structure that has a paramount interest in negotiating a regulation deal, while on the

other they are providing a ready-made structure and database through which the HPC can introduce the resulting regulation.

Giving the game away

In Jocelyn Samuels' article in the Spring 2008 issue of *Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility (PCSR)*'s journal 'Transformations', for the first time the missing link in the state regulation muddle is (perhaps inadvertently) publicly declared by a key member of the trainers' club:

'Perhaps this is the beginning of the first wave of dynamic issues that will get played out as each modality tries to position itself or gets positioned in relation to each other with implications for employment prospects, professional status and economic interest. Prospective students may be reluctant to undertake a training course with an organisation whose qualifications are not recognised by the Department of Health, and market force will inevitably play a significant role in determining which modalities can survive into the future.'

Through the already noted chimera, IHP, humanistic psychotherapy is being distanced from the countercultural associations of humanistic psychology. This parallels and extends AHPP's earlier act of separating itself from the Association for Humanistic Psychology in Britain (AHPB); see my analysis of attendance at the 2007 AHP Festival in *Self and Society* vol. 35 no. 3 for confirmation of how far this

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process has gone. But an identity can only be undermined and hacked about so far before it becomes so empty as to be unrecognisable. The claim to distinct historical underpinnings in the IHP Modality Statement is an attempt to have it both ways. That was then, but of course we are this now. Just like New Labour. Really, how much more slime can you swallow?

Will AHPP stand for anything?

AHPP presumably still stands for the diversity of modalities within itself, modalities in the plural, and within humanistic psychology at large. The 'Political Group for the Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy Section of the UKCP' (as currently described but be prepared for the whole section to shapeshift from HIPS to IHPS by decree from above), is busy monkeying with the facts in the hope that IHP will slip past the Skills for Health auditors as a) standardisable b) just one modality not 29 c) IAPT serviceable d) tame, and not in the least subversive.

AHPP also stands for an accreditation process that is independent of any training institute, though even this is under pressure from the assessors of the trainers' club in HIPS who are perturbed by its 'outside the box' quality. While AHPP includes individuals with trainers' club affiliations and people working in the NHS, and these people will tend to either seek or be pushed to take office, the organisation as a whole now faces an identity crisis, possibly terminal if the crucial distinctions I have outlined above are erased. Don't say nobody

warned you, even if, dear AHPP members, probably almost none of you these days reads this journal, because after all it is associated with humanistic psychology.

Incompatibilities

I have been on this case for a while. In the chapter I contributed to 'Implausible Professions' (1997), I quoted from AHPP's 1982 brochure for prospective members, the very brochure which attracted me to AHPP in the first place:

AHPP stands for:

- Professionalism based on self-direction and self-regulation.
- High standards of practice which are defined and monitored by practitioners individually and collectively.
- Inclusive professionalism – any route to professional competence is acceptable.
- Regular reassessment of competence.
- Creativity, spontaneity and experiment.

AHPP is against: Practice which tries to deny skills to those outside a closed circle.

- Professional boredom when practitioners fail to develop their skills.
- Professional conservatism which keeps out novel ideas and practices.
- Rigid categorising and labelling of persons and processes.

Principled non-compliance

A quarter century later those standards leap out of the page. For humanistic psychotherapists in 2008 these standards seem to say 'Where are you now, babe? Have you anything to say?' Personally I stand by every bit of the above, but to live it as opposed to pay lip service to it I need to inhabit an Independent Practitioners' Network group. This year I have not renewed my UKCP registration, as I will not accept grandparent transfer into the HPC, end of story, nor state regulation, period. Principled non-compliance is my way onward from here, even if all around me I see false compliance. Making this choice, I feel something similar to the sense of liberation Brian Thorne reports from not renewing his BACP accreditation. The umbrella organisations have become part of the problem, not the solution.

On one hand I recognise that there are probably many AHPP members who are simply unaware that the boat has come adrift from its moorings. But on the other hand I also suspect there are just as many, to continue the metaphor, who don't want anyone to rock the boat, are well aware they are adrift and do doublethink to escape from their dilemma. In this respect a particularly curious silence/absence of voice regarding state regulation is that of the transpersonal members of AHPP and HIPS. One might have thought here was a serious breach of their values. But then again, historically, fascists and

mystics have tended to co-exist, e.g. the Nazis and most German Jungians.

Locating the disjunctions

The dilemma could be expressed in the form of a series of questions: where are the disjunctions between the Core Beliefs Statement of the AHPP and the declared and undeclared assumptions of the state regulators, - they of course don't declare core beliefs in the office, because servants of the state are not expected to articulate their private beliefs at or through their work, they are supposedly only guided by received briefs. Once inside the HPC coop you too can be guided by briefs. How can the therapist who is state regulated support the self-regulation of their clients when they themselves are no longer self-regulating? This beats me, does it trouble you? To quote from AHPP's current paragraph on the 'Purpose of Therapy and Counselling' there is a reference to 'seeking to help the client regain sovereignty over their lives'. Indeed a marvellous opportunity here for psychotherapeutic displacement; having surrendered sovereignty over your practice to the state, you can redeem your loss vicariously, busying yourself preserving the client's sovereignty. Try regaining your own sovereignty once you are inside the HPC coop. Once you start looking you will find many more such disjunctions. To hark back to the beginning you will discover you are in deep doodoo. Some would call it hypocrisy.

Regulating the deregulated

If the disjunctions suggest the presence of something self-evidently untrustworthy, then so can poetry.

The following haiku by David Russel appeared in the Spring edition of *Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility's* journal, 'Transformations':

Regulation

is the gauge
by which
we calibrate our isolation
and the poverty of trust

Perhaps most noxious for humanistic practitioners is the institutional extension of implicit mistrust of one's fellow human beings that state regulation both implies and forwards. It is no coincidence that the imposition of state regulation is concurrent with a time in which a Hobbesian market-based ideology of man as wolf to wolf increasingly reigns over everyday life. Everyone is a profit sector, everyone is a means to this end. What are the implications of this ethic for psychotherapy? As market deregulation proceeds apace, as more and more public services are privatised, so a corresponding movement towards intensifying the administration of private and subjective life also gathers pace, which includes the workspace of psychotherapists. 'The Times' today as I write (May 20) announces as headlines that a massive government database holding details of every phone call, e-mail and time spent on the internet by the public is being planned. The same ethic of mistrust is embedded in the

extension of mechanisms of audit, performance management and general surveillance into the psy field by means of the HPC. There is no denying the extraordinary levels of anxiety and depression that these two macro level movements of simultaneous regulation and deregulation are injecting into the adult population. Consider IAPT in this context. Don't make me laugh! It will take positive exemplars of alternatives to hold up and eventually reverse these damaging and alienating trends, rather than the current witless collusion with them that seems to characterise much of the psy field. If state regulation and market deregulation are so closely linked through the axes of mistrust that both generate, then it follows there is no apolitical space in which a psychotherapist can hover or hide.

Wake up call

To close this section of my text I reproduce two key sentences from Maureen O'Hara's 'Wake Up Call For Humanistic Warriors'. This was published thirteen years ago in 'Perspective', a journal of The Association For Humanistic Psychology in the USA:

'Whether we like it or not, if humanistic practice is to survive, we must once more engage in the paradigm wars that forged our discipline and revisit questions of our world views, methodologies, ethics, and ultimate aims.'

and

'If humanistic professionals are to survive and their practice remain a viable and respectable

movement, the humanistic psychology community has no choice but to reengage with the struggle which brought it into existence in the 1960s.

The third and final section of this article is part of my own contribution to this wake up call and takes the form of a manifesto of arguments that state regulation is illusory, unethical and hazardous.

Eleven good reasons to oppose state regulation

1) Surveillance privacy neutrality

State regulation undermines civil liberties. The subjection of the psy field to state-managed processes of audit and surveillance jeopardises practitioner neutrality, and erodes the client's psychic space. Foucault identified how the panopticon effect operates as a disciplinary instrument because subjects (in this instance therapists as much as clients) never know when they are objects of its observatory or not, and so eventually internalise the panopticon and act as if always under observation. Boal's political theatre for exorcising the cop in the head is becoming especially relevant for the psy field and provides a praxis for undoing the panopticon.

2) Diversity or standardisation

The current diverse, local, voluntary and intuitively responsive ecology of the psy field is superior to, and should be valued above, the proposed compulsive and centralised control of standards

administered by a tickbox bureaucracy. Standardisation will paralyse creativity in developing new forms of practice and will artificially and arbitrarily restrict research. James Scott has contrasted the diverse local 'metis' with the standard centralised 'techne' and chronicled techne's dedication to extinguishing metis.

3) Medical model hegemony

State regulation can only establish effective hegemony by means of distorting psychotherapeutic practice/praxis through bundling it all in under the medical model of mental illness, in the future likely to be glossed or hybridised with a Well-Being ideology imported from the corporate world. This violates the public's right to choose and access practitioners working within other paradigms e.g. personal development, co-operative enquiry, authentic humanistic psychology and unrecuperated psychoanalysis.

4) Output regulation versus input regulation

For training institutes, state regulation is a lifebelt to save them from sinking in the sea of a deregulated market. Obtaining a monopoly on a protected title (even though the HPC won't guarantee this) is linked to exaggerating the role of *input* regulation (control of entry into practice) at the expense of *output* regulation which is of much less economic value to trainings. Prioritising the latter entails the active fostering of self-regulated integrity at the point of contact between therapist and client by means of

ongoing peer review (Independent Practitioners' Network), supervision, wider debating of ethics (which will bring the state's behaviour into view) and above all the education of the public in what to reasonably expect from therapists beyond the clichés. This last initiative will often run contrary to government prescription. It has been mostly dodged by the umbrella organisations (BPS, BPC, BABCP, UKCP and BACP perhaps less so) which prefer to focus on cultivating a more prestigious and self-serving culture of highly academised expertise.

5) Misallocation of risk and redress

There is no evidence that state regulation as a licensing procedure can achieve the elimination of risk and pre-emption of abuse that its controls and ideology suggest it can. A quick look at the HPC's publicly viewable stocks and gallows listings might be in order. The umbrella organisations are deeply complicitous with government agendas of 'being seen to be', as though it is fatal not to dance to a public relations tune. Overregging 'protection of the public' is linked to the spread of a professional false self.

The scale of risk is exaggerated (the transposed Shipman effect). There is insufficient evidence that therapists abuse clients on a scale that warrants the costs (financial, political, psychological and cultural) of state intervention in the form of the HPC. The HPC and Skills for Health are between them fostering a dangerous conflation of ethics and

competencies under the bundleword of standards. Very very few therapists act unethically, all therapists have issues of competency at one time or another. However, as Carl Rogers pointed out, there have always been at least as many licensed charlatans and exploiters as unlicensed, and the licensed ones are actually more dangerous because of their stronger credentials to be trusted.

If the position taken so far is too laissez faire, the Counselling Society has suggested there may be a case for creating a fallback instrument of legal deterrence, that is a new category of criminal offence which would require criminal standards of proof termed 'Professional Abuse'; this being applicable only in cases of financial or sexual abuse or physical assault by a professional acting in a trust-based caring capacity (this charge could apply to other professions beyond the psy field). Proposals like this have the virtue of stealing the HPC's thunder and locating redress in its proper place with the judiciary, instead of the executive and its HPC courtroom. Short of these extremes an expansion of independent mediation and resort to existing common law are surely the way forward for redress.

6) Core values erosion and toxification

State regulation, with the requirement to be registered directly with the HPC, will subvert the values and varied

forms of association that traditionally have held practitioners collectively in what is a consistently demanding work space; namely the values of responsibility, ownership, self-management and mutual care for the quality of colleague's work. The HPC will pull for STASI-style inducements to shop colleagues, with corresponding reactive collusions to cover genuine mistakes rather than admit and clear them. Together these components of false compliance will accelerate a spread of fear, shame, cynicism and internalised oppression towards toxic levels. The deal on offer is this: follow NICE guidelines and adhere to NOS stipulations and the government will protect practitioners from the public and the litigation industry. Refuse these, and regardless of your skill and experience the HPC will pillory you as a charlatan.

Thus the psy field is to be reconfigured according to the gospel that the government and the Department of Health knows what is best for you and your clients. Actually you are damned if you do and damned if you don't so it makes good sense to reject the whole caboodle of state regulation. This deal is the next move in the government strategy of breaking in, to be followed by performance management of the next sector of the caring professions. After stuffing teachers and then doctors it will be psychological therapists' turn next.

7) Delivering government agendas

Some sections of the psy field have been seduced by

government interest (IAPT) in what they might contribute and don't appear to be overly concerned with the nature of the use government finds for their skills. There are obvious dangers, not least contagious loss of client trust, in being subpoenaed to serve government purposes. Opposition to state regulation supports the maintenance of a necessary distance from the state, even for those who have always been in NHS employment as the nature of the social contract is shifting. Compliance with state regulation will collapse the space for critiques that put the government's business in question, and this is no doubt intended. The current moves to block further judicial enquiry into BAE style corruption are the writing on the wall.

Closer to home for the psy field is the Layard formula. Crudely it runs so: you are out of work because of your individual pathology which is costing the state too much in unemployment/ disability benefit. Ergo CBT therapy prescribed. Structural changes in society? Global level economic factors? How dare you suggest these are contributing to social misery with associated anxieties and depression! It is just conceivable that beyond the PR value of demonstrating some care rather than boosting the profits for Big Pharma's recently exposed largely ineffectual drug treatments lies a further agenda for IAPT to screen off more troublesome social/ economic analysis of links between distress and deprivation.

8) Corporate appropriation

State regulation will install mechanisms of administration paralleling those in health and education which will enable and excite corporate designs upon the field (Virgin Asda and Tesco are already bidding for slices of the NHS), and a corresponding governmental receptivity to takeover. Here 'choice' and 'change' will be buzzwords that echo but actually bear no relation to what therapists might understand from these terms; instead these will be cheatwords that seem to be offering the public something, while actually functioning as government signposts for the deregulated corporate drive to incorporate in order to open up new profit sectors in a service 'industry'. Some already speak of the psy field in these terms.

Paternalistic government increasingly adopts the corporate spiel of 'Wellbeing' (translates as sellbeing) on the assumption that no-one would argue with someone promoting their wellbeing. State regulation is here knotted to appeasement of the fetish of the free market. A captured therapeutic service or training might itself be a loss leader but its transference potentials will not be lost by the new proprietor who will proceed to sell holidays, mortgages or supermarket loyalty cards off the back of it. Current networks of informal gratis and beneficent referral safeguard the public seeking therapy from such incentivised insults.

9) Bystander Trance

The message generated by the umbrella organisations that state

regulation is inevitable constitutes a powerful trance induction towards a kind of helpless assent to state regulation that is equivalent to bystander behaviour. This mantra of inevitability, frequently repeated by psychotherapists and counsellors, is pitched to simultaneously play on fear and relieve guilt and anxiety by legitimising apathy. For practitioners who purport to be in the business of reducing anxiety and helplessness, such a stance is massively incongruent with their core assignment.

10) Exhaustion, despair and the state as rescuer

Even with making allowance for the hypocrisy of those who, notwithstanding the above reasons for refusing state regulation, still see personal or institutional advantage in passively acquiescing to it, as indicated by the affecting of a noncommittal detachment or by adopting a position of reasonableness, pseudo amnesia or feigned ignorance as to what is going on, there remains a question about the root cause of the broader acquiescence, this regulationitis. One must ask why so many in the psy field seem to have turned their attention away from these issues, as though exhausted by something. One hypothesis is that after all the years of infighting between organisations much of the psy field is in some under-acknowledged despair over its capacity to live and let live, to live with difference and to tolerate diversity of theory and practice without trying to steal a march on the other. This political despair may be the Achilles heel, the reason no

organisation can trust the others not to cut a deal with the state to gain advantage and favours (the UKCP rationale for maintaining a so-called 'ringside view').

Furthermore this scenario would suggest a corresponding unconscious fantasy in which the state is configured as the necessary authoritarian parent who restores order, enforces agreement and rescues the feuding children from destroying each other. That it won't and can't actually do this is beside the point. Such infantilism is actually an appalling indictment of a profession that makes extensive claims regarding its capacity to help clients yet can't help itself *as a whole field* when it comes to ordering internal and external relations at a political level.

The UKCP, faced with the exclusion of at least half its registrants, not to mention several thousand trainees, from the privilege of entering the HPC compound, on the grounds that Skills for Health can only recognise this remainder, - which includes the largest section of the UKCP (HIPS), as derivative variants of the psychoanalytic/psychodynamic, the cognitive behavioural and the family systemic, has a major identity crisis on its hands. In certain reactionary parts of the psy field this is a very gratifying scenario, one they have waited years for. It remains to be seen whether this late-in-the-day order from above that Sections organise their footsoldiers (sorry, registrants) to fire off letters of protest to their MP a) is sufficiently complied with to produce a significant volley and b) whether MPs in turn raise enough questions for the Department of Health to beat a retreat rather than simply ignore it on the principle that regulators

regulate, they don't negotiate, especially when policy has already been decided elsewhere.

11) Conjointly foreclosed debate

In the light of the above, the historical conjoint foreclosure of proper debate and full discussion of what is at stake by both the umbrella organisations and the state has to be named. Since both the state and most of the psy field associations are dominator organisations, structured hierarchically to promote power over as opposed to power with, this is hardly surprising. Proper debate would be extensive and lateral, decentralised, from the bottom up, practitioner and yes, client/user group driven, the discussion itself congruent with the activity it is all about, the results of this discussion pooled by delegates in the true meaning i.e. subject to right of recall by their constituencies should they start to represent other interests. To its credit, PCSR is attempting to launch a discussion that will meet some of these criteria.

In the last ten years three full-length books and numerous articles have been published that argue the case against state regulation of psychological therapies. No comparable 'case for' has ever been articulated, and if it has it has yet to be produced for public scrutiny. Apart from the active rubbishing of Richard Mowbray's seminal work 'The Case Against Psychotherapy Registration' by an early UKCP Chair and Fellow of The Royal College of Psychiatrists, Dr Michael Pokorny, who was clearly horrified by the detailed thoroughly researched deconstruction of the UKCP and state regulation, the case against has simply been ignored as if many wished it would just go away. It

hasn't, and if anything it has become more cogent than ever with recent developments in the government's agenda. The 'case for' doesn't appear to have got much further than 'state regulation is a good thing for the protection of the public so repeat that after me'.

This asymmetrical phenomenon should alert observers, from outside the psy field as well as those within it, to the fact that something has been avoided, debate has been refused because one side can't actually muster a sustainable argument or can't come clean, or some mixture of the two. Perhaps above all debate is foreclosed because values are at the heart of the matter and there is resistance to full spectrum declaration. Instead we get mystification, typified by the continuing both careless and deliberate muddling of *statutory registration* (the project of the fortunately failed 2002 Alderdice parliamentary bill) with *state regulation*, a very different beast.

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Conclusion

After round about 85 years in Britain of freedom from state interference it seems the largely bemused or even apathetic psy field in Britain won't know what it will lose until after it has gone, after which that freedom will be far harder to restore. The state and its collaborators from within the psy field lack the wisdom that pertains to knowing when to leave well alone. Those who confront and refuse state regulation can take heart: the body, the unconscious, the transpersonal, the awareness of power relations and indeed love and relationship itself, cannot be computed in Skills for Health's sorry calculus. In other words very large parts of the therapeutic process and its context will necessarily escape the annexation being attempted by the state and its collaborators, and this gives grounds for hope but not quietism.