

# AHP Co-chairs' Page

**Alexandra Chalfont** and **Brigitta Mowat**

## Alexandra Chalfont

### AHP Is Just about Broke! So, What? So What ...

What visceral / emotional / mental reaction did you have when you first received this news? Perhaps you heard about it in our newsletter. Spontaneous responses have come in from a number of members, spanning many attitudes: they varied in tone from the lovely one which thanked us for the energy and creativity we have committed to AHP in trying to save it, together with an exhortation to look after ourselves, to the less friendly one that admonished us for putting the date for the EGM on a Monday evening and the venue in London, adding cynically that a sceptical person might smell a rat about the whole affair. Many others expressed sadness and sympathy, and wished they could help.

So here we find ourselves, in a place of stopping, breathing, and receiving the energy and action directed towards us as the board, and watching the hustle and bustle of other energies seeking to carve out new routes to save and grow both journal and association.

Inexorably, the financial energy from subscriptions has finally shrivelled to a puddle, rather than growing to a wave which can carry our little boat on its adventure. Maybe the boat needs wheels and an engine to move through the sludge of the recession. Maybe it needs to grow wings to fly above it all and reconnoitre new directions.

And while it twists this way and that in the prevailing wind, struggling to find a new, transformational shape, we watch to notice what it needs and simultaneously resign from caretaking, surrendering the little boat to the currents of the time.

It is probable that AHP in the shapes of limited company and of charity will close. (Maybe, though, someone will come along to save one or both of these shapes, if they are sufficiently invested.)

But AHP has its third shape, the original one, as an association of folk with similar values and aspirations for the well-being of individuals, of societies, of souls. And there is no reason why lack of money should deter this shape from transforming into a new, fluid and flexible entity – if enough people wish to gather together again. If it does, no doubt it will need, as ever, to negotiate the storms of tribal strife and negativity that have also influenced our situation.

It is entirely possible that AHP and *Self & Society* will find separate homes. My own affiliation has been with S&S, so I wish it well and a fruitful future in safe hands. It doesn't matter whether it becomes more academic or not; that does not mean that a quirkier incarnation might not arise under another name. For myself, though, I would like S&S not to be attached to any particular grouping, but be freely available around the world at a really affordable price for all, with new audiences and novel contributions, representing people whom its readers aim to support under the inclusive sail of Humanistic Psychology. It's time for new vistas. **S**

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## Brigitta Mowat

My role as the new co-chair of AHP is likely to be short, and not as sweet as I'd hoped it would be. Rather than boring you with introducing myself and outlining what I had envisaged for AHP, I will use the co-chairs' page to reflect on the likely event of AHP being closed down, and what this might mean for our journal that is part of AHP. I am aware that by the time of reading these lines, a decision will have been made. A big 'thank you' for all the messages of support we have received and to those who were able to come to the EGM.

Going straight to the matter, the reality is that unless funds become available now, AHP as a charity and business will not longer be viable. I am writing this with a heavy heart. Coincidentally, I joined the Board when AHP was going through a similar crisis five years ago. In fact my current experience is not dissimilar to what I felt then. Perhaps the difference is that some of the optimism since then has become more modified. However, I can say that the board did their best to save AHP. An example of the dynamism was our recent conference. A lot of energy has gone into it to celebrate 50 years of Humanistic Psychology. It has been a joy to be part of the organising team. The board members hoped that through the conference we could renew friendships, find new collaborators, and most importantly attract new subscribers. We did achieve most of it but unfortunately only gained a handful of new subscribers.

The broad spectrum of speakers and presentations at the conference demonstrated just how important Humanistic Psychology has been over the last five decades. Humanistic values and core principles have influenced most walks of professional and personal life,

and continue to do so. *Self & Society* has been a crucial vehicle to document this impact in Britain and beyond. I trust that we will find a new home for *Self & Society* to ensure its continuity.

Plans to materialise our new vistas gathered pace. I believe that the world today needs Humanistic Psychology as an antidote to the fast pace of life, and to address the prevailing social justice issues that prevail in contemporary society.

I enjoyed my time as a board member and was looking forward to co-chairing AHP with Alexandra. To me, AHP represented a place where everyone's voice was listened to. This is something I treasure and take forward in to other fields. Board meetings were a pleasure and typically started with a 'check-in' over a shared lunch.

What does a possible closure of AHP as a charity and business mean for our much-valued journal? It is likely that *Self & Society* will carry on in a different setting, and hopefully retain its human values without compromising its new found rigor. **S**

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# News Interchange

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Edited by **Sissy Lykou**

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## **A feminist's thoughts on the cultural aversion to aging and the aged**

by **Lynne Segal**

1 November 2013

It is when we are young that we are most obviously busy with the project of trying to construct a self we hope the world will appreciate, monitoring and rearranging the impressions we make upon others. Yet as we age, most of us are still trying to hold on to some sense of who and what we are, however hard this may become for those who start to

feel increasingly invisible. Everywhere I look nowadays I see older people busily engaged with the world and eager, just as I am, to relate to others, while also struggling to shore up favored ways of seeing ourselves. However, the world in general is rarely sympathetic to these attempts, as though the time had come, or were long overdue, for the elderly to withdraw altogether from worrying about how they appear to others. <http://www.guernicamag.com/features/all-the-selves-we-have-been/>

## **DSM-5; a new dystopian novel**

by **Sam Kriss**

18 October 2013

It's also not exactly a conventional novel. Its full title is an unwieldy mouthful: *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition*. The author (or authors) writes under the ungainly nom de plume of The American Psychiatric Association – although a list of enjoyably silly pseudonyms is provided inside (including Maritza