

# Guest Editorial



**Richard House** (AHPb) and **Stuart Morgan-Ayrs** (UKAHPP)  
AHP Conference Co-Chairs\*

## Humanistic Psychology – its present and future

Some decades ago, the celebrated elder of British Humanistic Psychology (HP), John Rowan, was writing of HP events that commonly attracted many hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of participants. This was HP in its 1960s and 1970s heyday. Alas, it's very different today. Despite the world-in-crisis arguably needing HP and its inspirational vision more than ever before, it's difficult if not impossible to attract a small fraction of these heady numbers to HP events these days. This is not the place to go into seeking an explanation for this unhappy phenomenon – but we certainly experienced it at the Association for Humanistic Psychology conference held in London last October in association with our sister organization, the UKAHPP. Forty years ago, we suspect that a stellar list of Britain's most eminent HP elders, together with the launch of an exciting new book on HP (House et al., 2018), would have drawn many hundreds of eager participants. But our own well advertised event last year attracted barely 80.

But as all good humanistic folk know, quality is often far more important than size; and we're delighted to be guest-editing paper versions of most of last year's conference presentations. A roll-call of humanistic elders, graced the gathering, with Professor Maureen O'Hara from the USA, and Dina Glouberman, Jill Hall, Robin Shohet and David Wasdell from the UK. We were also delighted to welcome to the event our own John Rowan, and Professors Steve Pritzker (Saybrook, USA) and Mick Cooper (Roehampton), among many others.

We will leave our AHP chair Lucy Scurfield to provide a more detailed overview of the event. In this editorial introduction, we wish to highlight two issues. First and foremost, it's clear from the conference feedback we've received that *inspiration and vision* are alive and well in

the HP movement – qualities of human experience that a cynical 'post-truth' world is surely in desperate need of in these troubled times. A key question for us in HP, and for this excellent journal, is to figure out just how we can raise the public profile for our ideas and inspirations at a time when a troubled world is in desperate need of them.

Secondly, one important historical feature of the conference was the collaborative coming together of the Association for Humanistic Psychology and the Association for Humanistic Psychology Practitioners. The UKAHPP has been on a journey of its own, seeking Professional Standards Authority Accredited Register accreditation. This has also been in response to the struggling times that HP finds itself in, and is part of the UKAHPP's plans for future expansion and relevancy. With that in mind the UKAHPP was delighted to support this conference and remains equally enthusiastic about supporting future ventures as we come together to re-energize the HP field in the UK. UKAHPP members at the conference commented very positively, and such events are undoubtedly vital to the future of the AHP, UKAHPP and HP generally.

We commend these conference proceedings to our readers; and we look forward to more such collaborative events between AHP, AHPP and other humanistic-friendly organizations in the future. 📍

\* 'Expanding a Humanistic Vision for a 21st Century Psychology', AHP/AHPP conference, Holloway Road Resources Centre, London, October 2017.

### Reference

House, R., Kalisch, D., & Maidman, J. (Eds.) *The future of Humanistic Psychology: Current trends and future prospects*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.