

# *Self and Society*: an unfolding, ongoing story for Humanistic Psychology in Britain

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## Summary

*Self & Society* has gone through a number of evolutionary transformations since it first appeared in 1973, and is about to enter another new incarnation as a new decade approaches. Here, former editor and magazine online editor Richard House offers a personal retrospective of the journal's auspicious history, looking at some of its previous incarnations, and giving a flavour of the richness and diversity of writing that it has showcased in its 47-year history.

Humanistic Psychology (hereafter, HP) in this country is in probably its seventh decade as I write – and the house journal of the Association for Humanistic Psychology, *Self & Society*, has been a key pillar in and for HP and the humanistic therapies since volume 1 issue 1 appeared in the early 1970s.

I first started reading *Self & Society* when it was a much smaller format magazine back in the late 1980s, when I was first embarking on counselling training – and with the humanistic ethos seeming to be by far the best 'fit' for me and who I was in those early days. Being on the political left and having had ecological interests from the 1980s too, anything counter-cultural and not scared to be overtly 'political' was bound to attract me – and in Psychology as a discipline, there are few if any other approaches that don't try to be non- or a-political. But as we lefties were often wont to say, being apolitical is, paradoxically, a political act! – and there's just no way of getting away from that. And little did I know in those early days that a quarter century later, I'd be editing this great publication myself. And what an honour it has been. But more of that later.

In those early days (and I know many of our current AHP members and subscribers go back that far, and

earlier, in their association with HP), the magazine was a wonderfully diverse mixture of articles, notices, poetry, reviews – of varying depth and quality, with the emphasis far more on the personal and experiential than on the academic and the cerebral. I have the whole library of back issues, and I feel proud and moved that the humanistic movement, and the AHP in particular, has kept the magazine-journal going for all these years (I don't think there are many other psychology publications that have been going for nearly 50 years).

I almost wrote then '...and all due to our own "home-grown" efforts, and not in hock to any of the major publishing houses' – but this isn't quite true, of course. What happened when the international publisher Routledge (Taylor & Francis) bought and started publishing the journal in 2011–12 is instructive and revealing. A condition of the purchase was that the journal move in a more academic direction, with some peer-reviewed papers, yet at the same time endeavouring to retain its founding, less formalised humanistic ethos. That was quite a challenging tension to hold! – and perhaps mirrored the wider historical tensions in HP, between the informal and the formal, the unregulated and the professionalized. For many if not most of us in

HP, there is a deep attachment to freedom, creativity and spontaneity, and a reluctance to be regulated, controlled and professionalized (and there's an interesting article to be written there by someone!). This dynamic certainly played out in 'the Routledge period', when many members made it known that they didn't like the 'academic' direction the journal was moving in.

Having said all this, I want to put on record that Routledge were a brilliant partner to work with when we were experimenting with a more academic-style journal.

Several years ago I had the pleasure, with former editor David Kalisch, of putting together a commemorative *Festschrift* to celebrate the late, great John Rowan's 90th birthday. John is often referred to as The Father of Humanistic Psychology in Britain – and assembling this special issue of the journal certainly confirmed that well-deserved status. One thing we decided to do in the course of that process was to compile a list of the journal's editors since its first appearance in 1973 – a list (updated) that I reproduce below. It's so important to remember our roots, and the shoulders of the giants on which we stand – and I sometimes wish we could all get together in one room for a day or weekend, and share all our many and diverse thoughts and feelings about HP – where it came from, how it got to where it is now, and what the future might hold as it approaches us. And I think the extraordinary Vivian Milroy would have to chair and facilitate the conversations!

## The Editors of *Self & Society*, 1973 to the present

1973–1992: **Vivian Milroy**

1992–1993: **David Jones**

1993–1994: **John Button and Fran Mosley**

1994–1998: **Fran Mosley and David Jones**

1998: **Fran Mosley**

1998–1999: **Maxine Linnell and Fran Mosley**

1999–2005: **Alexandra Chalfont and Maxine Linnell**

2006–2008: **Maxine Linnell**

2008–2009: **Neill Thew**

2009–2010: **Alexandra Chalfont**

2010–2012: **David Murphy and Stephen Joseph**

2012–2014: **Richard House, David Kalisch and Jennifer Maidman**

2014–2017: **Richard House and David Kalisch**

2017–2018: **David Kalisch and Gillian Proctor**

2018–2019: **Gillian Proctor**

2020– : **Richard House**

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Gillian (Proctor) for

the great work she's done these past few years in a time of significant change for the journal, as we've returned to self-publishing, and the finances of AHP have constrained what we've been able to do with the journal. In those circumstances in particular, Gillian has done a brilliant job of continuing this journal's tradition of excellence.

So over the 47 years of its existence, the evolutionary journey of S&S has looked something like this: 'home-made' magazine >> magazine >> proto-journal >> quasi-academic journal >> journal & online magazine >> magazine, print and online. And over that period, it has contained a veritable cornucopia of wonders... – to such an extent that some years back, former co-editors David Kalisch, Jennifer Maidman and myself were looking to publish a 'Best of S&S' anthology. A major publisher was very interested in publishing this collection – possibly in several volumes. This was made all the more possible by Routledge's digitization of the whole back catalogue – and it's still an idea that has great potential, and which could be resuscitated if someone had the time and energy for such a project.

At the time (in 2013), we each went through the whole back catalogue, choosing our favourite pieces from the-then 42-year history of the journal. I thought it would be interesting for readers to reproduce here what we came up with, not least because it shows the incredible range and depth of material that this wonderful journal has showcased over the years. Some readers may even experience waves of nostalgia as they're reminded of old favourites that they've long since forgotten! And what a joy it is to know that all this material has been faithfully digitized for posterity, and as a testament to our wonderful history (see <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rse/20/current>).

First, then, **Jennifer's choices** for an S&S anthology were as follows. Please bear in mind that these choices were made in 2013 – so there are a full five years of S&S 'goodies' which weren't considered when these 'best of' lists were compiled. It's also worth emphasizing that these are far from random lists; rather, they showcase what the then editors' viewed to be the very best pieces from the many hundreds we've published over more than four decades.

Vol. 2 (2), 1974: **John Horder**, 'The Indian mystic and the jazz musician', p. 24

Vol. 4 (5), 1976: **Ronnie Felton**, 'A drumming day keeps the doctor away', pp. 1–5

Vol. 4 (5), 1976: **James Crippledini**, 'Taboo on

tenderness', pp. 22–7

Vol. 5 (4), 1977: **Beit Hallahmi**, 'Humanistic Psychology: progressive or reactionary?', pp. 97–103

Vol. 6 (4), 1978: **Antonia Boll**, 'A woman is a person too', pp. 101–6

Vol. 6 (7), 1978: **R.D. Laing**, 'Existential topology', pp. 221–3

Vol. 6 (10), 1978: **John Enright and George Pransky** 'The velvet steamroller: Gestalt therapy through validation re-framing', pp. 349–51

Vol. 8 (7), 1980: **Ann Sparks and Wendy Roberts**, 'The double bind of women's mental health', pp. 212–15

Vol. 8 (7), 1980: **Denise**, 'Some reflections upon a human condition: the male/female transsexual', pp. 226–8

Vol. 14 (1), 1986: **Jerome Liss**, 'The Janov syndrome: "Don't 'Janov' your colleagues, my friend"', pp. 31–3

Vol. 15 (4), 1987: **Tony Merry**, 'Carl Rogers, 1902–1987', pp. 183–5

Vol. 18 (1), 1990: **Denis Postle and Jill Anderson**, 'Stealing the flame', pp. 13–15

Vol. 20 (3), 1992: **Margaret Wertheim**, 'The Senoi dreamers', pp. 16–21

Vol. 23 (6), 1996: **Guy Gladstone and Tom Chamberlain**, 'On NVGs and psychotherapy within the Spectacle', pp. 11–13

Vol. 24 (5), 1996: **Windy Dryden**, 'A rose by any other name: a personal view on the differences among professional titles', pp. 15–17

Vol. 27 (2), 1999: **Andrew Samuels**, 'The erotic leader', pp. 3–5

Vol. 32 (1), 2004: **Richard House**, 'An unqualified good: IPN as path through and beyond professionalisation', pp. 14–22

Vol. 33 (3), 2005: **Dermod Moore**, 'Queer spirit', pp. 24–31

Vol. 34 (3), 2006: **Pete Sanders**, 'Why person-centred therapists must reject the medicalisation of distress', pp. 32–9

Vol. 34 (5), 2007: **Anton Smith**, 'Alcoholics Anonymous and addiction – a potted history, some personal observations. The Twelve Steps and some myths: a member's experience', pp. 16–22

Vol. 38 (1), 2010: **Andy Rogers**, 'Guerilla gardening in a post-HPC landscape: therapy as principled cultural practice', pp. 32–7

David's choices for a possible Person-Centred anthology were as follows. As you'll see, there's a bit of overlap with Jennifer's choices.

Vol. 6 (2), 1978: **Carl Rogers**, 'Evolving aspects of person-

centered workshop' pp. 43–9

Vol. 6 (10), 1978: **Charles Elliott**, 'Carl Rogers encounters R.D. Laing', pp. 360–2

Vol. 10 (5), 1982: **Carl R. Rogers**, 'A psychologist looks at nuclear war: its threat, its possible prevention', pp. 213–23

Vol. 14 (4), 1986: **Natalie Rogers**, 'Express yourself', pp. 171–4

Vol. 15 (4), 1987: **Tony Merry**, 'Carl Rogers, 1902–1987', pp. 183–5

Vol. 15 (4), 1987: **Alan Coulson**, 'Carl Rogers is dead', pp. 186–8

Vol. 15 (6), 1987: **Lynne Watton**, 'Carl Rogers: a remarkable man', pp. 267–9

Vol. 16 (5), 1988: **Brian Thorne**, 'Psychotherapy and original sin', pp. 207–14

Vol. 16 (4), 1988: **Tony Merry and John Rowan**, 'New right – new resistance', pp. 154–60

Vol. 17 (3), 1989: **Natalie Rogers**, 'Carl's 87th birthday', pp. 120–1

Vol. 18 (1), 1990: **John Heron**, 'The politics of transference', pp. 17–23

Vol. 18 (1), 1990: **Tony Merry**, 'PCA – person-centred anything', pp. 35–7

Vol. 34 (3), 2006: **Paul Wilkins**, 'Being person-centred', pp. 6–14

Vol. 34 (3), 2006: **Clare Raido**, 'Non-directivity: a quality of relationship', pp. 15–22

Vol. 34 (3), 2006: **Seamas Nash**, 'What does it mean to be person-centred? Researching practitioners' understandings', pp. 23–31

Vol. 34 (3), 2006: **Pete Sanders**, 'Why person-centred therapists must reject the medicalisation of distress', pp. 32–9

Vol. 36 (5), 2009: **Clive Perraton Mountford**, 'Dr Rogers and lego spaceship: towards a teachable focusing-oriented person-centred theory', pp. 7–17

Vol. 38 (2), 2010: **Gill Wyatt**, 'Relational depth: a window into an interconnected world', pp. 5–24

Vol. 38 (4), 2001: **Clive Perraton Mountford**, 'Unpacking the congruence box', pp. 5–17

When Jennifer left the co-editorship of the journal, David (Kalisch) and I took the project on, and came up with the contents of three possible volumes – the contents of which are listed below (with the initials connoting who chose what):

### **ANTHOLOGY I: 1973–1986**

**RAMAN KAPUR:** Krishnamurti and psychotherapy [13, 5 – 1985] [RH]

**DENNIS T. SIBLEY:** Alan Watts and the therapeutic process [1, 5 – 1979] [RH]

**AARON ESTERSON** interviewed: [1, 8 and 1, 9 – 1973] [RH]

**GEORGE DORIS:** Korzybski and general semantics [11, 3 – 1983] [RH]

**FRANK LAKE:** The significance of perinatal experience [6, 7 – 1978] [RH]

**JEAN LIEDLOFF:** The continuum concept in practice [14, 4 – 1986] [RH]

**JOHN SOUTHGATE:** The dialectics of the growth movement [1, 10 – 1973] [RH]

**DAVID SMITH:** On the psychoanalytic listening process [12, 4 – 1984] [RH]

**DAVID HOLBROOK:** The effects of violence and sex in culture [1, 3 – 1973] [DK]

**JOHN ROWAN:** Experiencing Mahler [9, 1 – 1983] [DK]

**JOSEPH BERKE:** The Arbours Association [1, 8 – 1973] [DK]

**JEROME LISS:** Emotions and the life energy [2, 4 – 1974] [DK]

**MARTY FROMM** talks to the editor [4, 11 – 1976] [DK]

**GAIE HOUSTON:** Knitting patterns for a bullet proof vest [9, 1 – 1981] [DK]

**BENJAMIN BEIT-HALLAHMI:** Humanistic Psychology: progressive or reactionary? [5, 4 – 1977] [DK]

**JOHN ROWAN:** The Marxist theory of personality [6, 12 – 1978] [DK]

### **ANTHOLOGY II: 1987–2000**

**'ANNA SANDS'** (pseudonym): Shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted [28, 3 – 2000] [RH]

**SUSIE ORBACH:** Politics and psychotherapy [22, 3 – 1994] [RH]

**PETRUSKA CLARKSON:** Becoming whole [21, 6 – 1994] [RH]

**JILL HALL:** Victims can never forgive [24, 2 – 1996] [RH]

**DAVID BOADELLA:** The use and abuse of power [21, 4 – 1993] [RH]

**DAVID BRAZIER:** Existence, essence and enlightenment [28, 5 – 2001] [RH]

**NICK TOTTON and HEWARD WILKINSON:** IPN, UKOP and statutory regulation [28, 4 – 2000] [RH]

**DAVID WASDELL:** The pre- and peri-natal ground of war and religion [20, 3 – 1992] [RH]

**FRANK LAKE:** Primal integration work [15, 4 – 1987] [DK]

**DAVID BOADELLA:** The fall of the light-bearer [15, 5 – 1987] [DK]

**JULIANA BROWN and RICHARD MOWBRAY:** Whither the human potential movement? [18, 4 – 1990] [DK]

**DAVID WASDELL:** In the shadow of accreditation [20, 1 – 1992] [DK]

**THEODORE ROSZAK:** Have we learnt anything important? [21, 5 – 1993] [DK]

**MORTON SCHATZMAN:** John Bowlby [18, 6 – 1990] [DK]

**THEODORE ROSZAK:** Exploring ecopsychology [21, 2 – 1993] [DK]

**JOHN HERON:** The politics of transference [18, 1 – 1990] [DK]

### **ANTHOLOGY III: 2000–2013**

**LAVINIA GOMEZ:** Humanistic or psychodynamic: what is the difference, and do we have to make a choice? [31, 6 – 2004] [RH]

**ANDREW SAMUELS:** Who owns the soul?: setting the renewed – and seemingly eternal – battle about regulation of counselling and psychotherapy against a wider backdrop [39, 4 – 2012]

**DENIS POSTLE:** Validity and the psychological therapies: why love provides a better benchmark than science [36, 1 – 2008] [RH]

**SUZANNE KEYS:** Climate, ethics, politics and economy of loving in therapy [39, 2 – 2011] [RH]

**ANDREW POWELL:** Consciousness that transcends spacetime: its significance for the therapeutic process [31, 4 – 2003] [RH]

**BRIAN THORNE:** Spiritual accompaniment and the legacy of Carl Rogers [35, 3 – 2007] [RH]

**SIMON CAMPBELL and JANET GRACE:** A qualitative study on the rewards and challenges of being an Independent Practitioners Network participant [40, 4 – 2013] [RH]

**PATTI OWENS:** The humanistic scientist: an appreciation of the work of Daniel N. Stern [40, 3 – 2013] [RH]

**PETER LOMAS:** Can there be a unified psychotherapy? [28, 3 – 2000] [DK]

**DAVID BRAZIER:** Existence, essence and enlightenment

[28, 5 – 2001] [DK]

**PAUL BARBER:** Self-development within experiential groups: a Gestalt perspective [30, 2 – 2002] [DK]

**ROGER HORROCKS:** The tyranny of object relations [30, 5 – 2002] [DK]

**DAVID HAMBLIN:** Place: the lost dimension in psychotherapy [34, 6 – 2007] [DK]

**ERNESTO SPINELLI:** On placebos, dodos and magic feathers: meaning and context in psychotherapy [40, 4 – 2013] [DK]

In perusing these compilations again in 2019, five years after we assembled them, I am frankly staggered by the range and quality of this journal's offerings over nearly five decades. We could also now put together a fourth volume covering the period 2014 to date, which would be another book of outstanding quality. One thing that should be clear from the above sampling of this journal's auspicious history is that *S&S* is not a periodical that includes articles *on* 'Humanistic Psychology'; rather, it has always contained a rich variety of material that its editors think will be of interest to those *who hold a broad humanistic ethos*. This is a crucial distinction: for us, HP is not 'a thing', a definable, coherent 'discipline' with definable boundaries that determine what is, and what is not, legitimate to include or study. Indeed, this is what sets us apart (thankfully!) from mainstream 'Psychology'. Rather, HP is *an orientation to life* (widely defined) and to our human-created culture; and our journal has always striven to nourish, satisfy and challenge our thinking and feeling in a very broad range of related and relevant fields, including the psychological therapies but by no means exclusively so.

As Gillian hands the *S&S* baton back to me, I intend both to honour the tradition of this journal, and also to be open to engaging with future possibility that is yet to make itself known. But above all, as we experiment (again) in moving closer towards the less academic, more engaging and experiential style of its earlier years, I'm determined that the magazine will continue to be a must-read for anyone with an open mind and an open heart for engaging with passion and commitment to our human condition. So, watch this evolving humanistic space!... – as we keep the flame alive for HP as the 50th birthday of *S&S* fast approaches. 🍷



**Richard House** has been writing for *Self & Society* since the early 1990s. He was co-editor from 2011 to 2016, has edited the new online AHP magazine since its inception last year (three issues to date – see [ahpb.org](http://ahpb.org)), and resumes the editorship of *Self & Society* in 2020. A former counsellor-therapist, university lecturer and Steiner Kindergarten teacher, he has written or edited many books on therapy and education, and is now a full-time left-political-climate 'activator' in Stroud, Gloucestershire. Contact: [richardahouse@hotmail.com](mailto:richardahouse@hotmail.com).