

Letters to the Editor

Dear Richard

Black Lives Matter and White Privilege

Firstly congratulations to you and your team for getting the Summer 2020 edition of *Self & Society* out to us all. We like the A4 size, and it is nice to receive a printed version through the post in these digital times. Printed versions are much more likely to be read, and hence we can report a discussion on the content with another colleague on her allotment here in Brighton and Hove.

We like ‘Steiner and Winnicott in Dialogue’ and the reviews, and we note your comments of needing to get more women writers in the journal. To this plea for more diversity we would like to add the need to focus of what psychotherapy and psychology are going to do to address issues currently being raised by the movement ‘Black Lives Matter’.

We enjoyed ‘Stuart’s Political Diary’ with its interesting Scottish take on the current situation in which we all find ourselves. But we were rather staggered by the fact that George Floyd’s death was mentioned twice but with no subsequent reference to ‘Black Lives Matter’. Surely the time is now right for psychotherapists and psychologists, who would

describe themselves as white, to speak up and take some action, and not just leave that to our black colleagues.

This brings us on to the extraordinary first article written by Paul Barber. Has white privilege been a factor in the publication of a piece that even the author thinks is not publishable?

We particularly dislike his anecdotal approach at times: ‘I heard from a colleague that a friend...’; ‘Speaking to a postal courier’; ‘I knew of no one who has had the virus’ . Well we have lost two friends and know of a choir in Lewes, where many members caught the virus and two people died, and we consider ourselves to be lucky when speaking to other families who have had a much worse impact than us. The final straw for us with this article is the picture of himself submitted by the author.

We can see that *Self & Society* wants to be challenging and topical, but publishing such an article with no real counterbalance makes the journal seem very unprofessional to us, and we fear to others.

With best wishes

Frances and Thurstine Basset

Dear Editor,

Thank you so, so much for publishing Barber’s article on the costs of lockdown and fear-mongering, and putting it first in this issue. I felt so relieved to know I’m not the only one. It is quite extraordinary to me that on any social or political or even scientific issue, it is standard to question and welcome different viewpoints.

So I have been shocked, dismayed, and deeply troubled by the degree of compliance, that Hitler

would have been proud of, and the lack of realistic looks at statistics and the health costs of this muzzling – literally – of our social fabric, and everything that it means to be a human who uses facial cues for social engagement.

Thank you for having the courage to publish a dissenting voice.

Jen Turner