



Letter to the Editor

From **Paul Barber**

Editor's Note: this letter was received when news of my retirement as editor was made known, but before the vote to close the Association.

Dear Richard,

So sorry to hear of you leaving *S&S*: it is a great loss for humanism in general as well as for myself and the readership. Your editorship brought me back to *S&S* after a break of many years.

I personally believe our controversial articles on Covid would not have seen light of day without your editorship of the journal. Certainly, other publications were unwilling to challenge the party line, even when the side-effects and ineffectiveness of vaccination were even being broadcast by the official medical journals such as the *British Medical Journal*, so tight was the buy-in to governmental and press propaganda and fear of rocking the boat.

Being raised and employed by the Human Potential Research Group, John Heron's old stamping-ground and no stranger to John Rowan, Robin Shohet and Peter Reason – to name but a few, politically active Humanism runs strong in my blood. Because of this I've been abhorred that so many of my humanistic colleagues have sleep-walked through the severest attack on personal freedom and civil rights in recent times. I believe, like myself, you also feel a moral duty to speak out against civil wrongs – as is evident in your controversial stance and choice of articles as editor. I hope with your leaving, *S&S* will not slide back to being an over-respectable

neutered rag for Sunday afternoon humanists, a club magazine to keep the more sedate members of our calling happy.

Editorial committees, from my personal editorial experience, play safe and challenge little. So, I can appreciate a little of your plight. Hopefully *S&S* will not appoint a sheep for its future editor but remain with the goats! Ones who jump over fences rather than are corralled and silenced by the uninformed mass!

Thanks for keeping the activist flame of humanism alive for the reformers and questioners of society.

So, a massive thanks.

Paul Barber

Editor Richard House replies: Thanks for those kind comments, Paul. Of course since you wrote this 'letter to the editor', the fateful decision has been made to close the Association and, therefore, the journal. I realise all too well how divisive and polarising the Covid era and its associated medical treatments have been. All the humanistic folk I know strongly believe in speaking and authentically living their truth. I've been highly sceptical about mass vaccination as a public-health intervention for some decades,¹ and everything that has happened during Covid has merely confirmed and reinforced my

informed scepticism. A recently published game-changing book also promises to radically transform society's accepted wisdom on vaccination,² and I warmly welcome this. For me, your monumental *S&S* articles on Covid boldly challenged the conventional narratives which the global mainstream media, politicians, Big Pharma and Big Tech were propagating in lockstep; and for me, such questioning should be what a genuinely critical Humanistic Psychology should be all about.

When the true history of Covid is written, we'll see who was on the right side of history; but as of now, I am more convinced than I ever have been that it will be us. But equally, I remain open to be proven wrong, if the evidence convinces me of my wrongness. That's how true science should always work, and for me it's the kind of science that Humanistic Psychology should always support and champion.

References

- 1 Richard House, 'Vaccination: a non-"expert" holistic perspective', *The Mother* magazine, 3 (Autumn), 2002, pp. 48–9 (available from me on request).
- 2 Robert F. Kennedy Jr and Brian Hooker, *Vax–Unvax: Let the Science Speak*, Skyhorse Publications, New York, 2023.