

Editorial

This edition was compiled by the Cape Town editorial group. Its contents reflect papers which are attempts to respond to issues of recent and current concern in South Africa, as well as articles addressing particular theoretical and epistemological problems pertinent to the discipline itself. We feel that the journal should show a responsiveness to current issues in the country, as well as promoting debate on the restructuring of psychology at its various levels of operation. The latter should lead to a deeper consideration of how the discipline can move from its current decontextualised Anglo-American theoretical and practical base, towards an enterprise firmly rooted in the context of a changing South Africa and in the service of liberation.

In order to accomplish such an aim we need to educate ourselves. We need to be aware of past and recent South African social and political history. We need to examine and expose the many ways in which psychology

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aids in the maintenance of the current racial capitalist formation through a predominantly technicist mode of operation. We need to be aware of the role of the state and industrial monopolies in promoting research of particular kinds. Finally we need to understand how through uncritical and de-politicised instruction, university education of psychology students reproduces a status quo orientation. We welcome contributions which examine areas such as these.

Furthermore the business of reconstructing psychology in South Africa will not be an easy task. It will not come about through simplistic rejections of our established theoretical and research heritage. It requires in fact its re-examination informed by the work of critical scholars (see Ivey in this issue), such that ideological, epistemological and methodological elements may be laid bare so as to promote the advancement of the discipline through the re-theorisation of its subject matter and modes of inquiry. Such a process would also allow for a more incisive critique of current South African psychology as well as a more thorough consideration of the manner in which the discipline can or can not address the theoretical and practical questions posed by ongoing struggles for social transformation.

With respect to practice, we would welcome contributions which examine current modes of functioning in the applied field. While industrial psychology has had some coverage in recent issues, we would like to see contributions from clinical and educational psychology which have received limited treatment to date. We would also encourage debate on professional training programs which currently reflect a predominantly Anglo-American and technicist orientation and largely serve the interests of an elite sector of our society. In this regard there is the need to impart to trainees a social consciousness and to promote a rethinking of training which shifts the class position of

the points of reception of psychological services.

The current issue of this journal contains discussions of some alternatives for training and practice in clinical and counselling psychology which in part reflect a response to the political crisis of 1985. They provide useful starting points for debate and it is to be hoped that this stimulus will generate on-going discussion through the pages of this journal. A further article documents central aspects of the 1985 crisis and outlines certain responses possible from psychologists.

An important contemporary issue concerns military conscription and preliminary research on some psychological aspects of this element of state practice are addressed in this number. Clearly the dilemma faced by white conscriptees deserves further examination.

The question of the ways in which the relevance of psychology can be construed particularly in the light of policies of African pragmatism is considered in a paper which invites response as to how the education of psychologists can be transformed with such policies in mind. Finally policies of Africanisation in psychology can present problems some of which are addressed in an article which examines the position of N C Manganyi.

It is hoped that this issue reflects a range of contemporary and more long term issues which a progressive South African psychology should attempt to come to terms with. We are aware that much of the material emanates from within the editorial group which is perhaps reflective of their involvement with the issues discussed as well as the embryonic position of Psychology in Society in the Cape Region. We trust that our next issue will reflect a wider cross-section of authors.