

EDITORIAL

While there is no distinct theme that pulls the articles in this edition together, the issues covered do cohere around two broad central problems of concern to psychologists and social scientists in South Africa at the moment.

The one set of articles (Natalie Leon and Susan Lea; Tammy Shefer and Beatie Hofmeyr; Henk Eichhorn) raise some important issues related to black students' experiences and social struggles on the predominantly white university campuses in this country.

Leon and Lea's, and Shefer and Hofmeyr's arguments are based on empirical work done with students at UCT last year. Whether one agrees with their analyses/findings or not, one is forced to accept the importance of doing this kind of empirical work if we are to proceed beyond the statements of political sympathy about non-racialism. It seems that we need to research the interstices of the social psychology of 'race' as it affects black students on the predominantly white campuses, if we are to contribute meaningfully to understanding this social world. These two contributions from UCT take us some way along this road.

Eichhorn's article, while not related directly to students' experiences, raises some important considerations about the social psychology of crowds. Seeing as blacks - students or other social groups - are often amorphously 'seen' by the media as

'unruly mobs', 'angry crowd', 'rampaging youths', etc, his article is therefore a useful theoretical summary of the social psychological perspectives of crowds as a social phenomenon which can elucidate our thinking about social movements in a more complete and comprehensive way.

The other set of articles have to do with the restructuring of mental health practices, one in relation to Nicaragua (Vogelman), and the other South Africa (Perkel). Lloyd Vogelmann's summary of his discussion with Dr Sequeira - director of the psychiatric hospital in Managua (the capital city of Nicaragua and head of mental health training programme in that country) points to some potentially optimistic outcomes around the practice of mental health given a sympathetic government, and a government - unlike our present regime - that takes seriously social issues and practitioners involved in the social struggles around health. Vogelmann does not present his delightful discussion with Dr Sequeira as a utopian solution to our mental health problems in this country, but rather offers it as an important example of what can be achieved given different social relations and hence in this sense can become a basis for discussion for us in a different social formation. It is at this point that Adrian Perkel picks-up the argument in his rather provocative article. Perkel argues that for clinical psychology to be located in different social practices which address the central mental health problems of working class communities some fundamental changes, at a structural level, will have to be made. He poses this question as a challenge to a lot of what goes for radical interventions in clinical psychology in South Africa at the

moment. He asks clinicians and their theorists to address some thorny issues concerning the articulation of clinical practice and social transformation. It is hoped that he does this in a way which will stimulate debate and further contributions about the applications of psychology in times of major social upheaval and reconstruction.

This number ends with a selection of book reviews from a range of South African publishers. While the texts are all quite varied they do - with the exception of the theoretical collection from the HSRC - point to life experiences bearing on the effects of (the history of) apartheid on ordinary people.

PSYCHOLOGY IN SOCIETY will be producing a special issue on PSYCHOANALYSIS early next year and would like to call for contributions in this area (see advert elsewhere in this edition).

The editorial collective has undergone some changes. In Johannesburg Clive Fullagar, Cheryl Narunsky, and Mahommed Seedat have left the editorial. Sam Karani, and Ian Moll (one of the founding editors) have joined the Johannesburg editorial group. In Durban Catherine Campbell has joined the editorial group.

Grahame Hayes