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THEORY IN PRACTICE

Psychology in society (PINS) is a journal which aims to critically evaluate present ideas on the nature of psychology in apartheid. It is intended to be a forum for the exchange of ideas and for the development of a critical perspective on the theory and practice of psychology in South Africa.

EDITORIAL

Editorial material should be sent to the editor, Mark Tomlinson.

In this issue we continue some of the psychoanalytic discussion which we started in our focus on psychoanalysis in *Psychology in society 14* (1990). Leonard Bloom presents a challenging re-assertion of what he considers to be the four main basic insights of Freud. These are (1) the unconscious, (2) sexuality and the libido, (3) repression, and (4) transference processes. Readers might want to take issue with what exactly constitutes the "basic insights" of Freud's work, but what seems incontrovertible is Bloom's argument about the revisionism of much of contemporary psychoanalysis. Bloom also criticises the dampening of Freud's radicality by neo-behavioural perspectives in psychology. He tries to reclaim Freud's centrality as a thinker about human experience and the value of human life in his application of Freud's work to a consideration of questions of racism and freedom. Bloom presents us with an account of Freud as a humanist thinker concerned with social dilemmas.

Robert Young presents a very accessible account of "all-you-ever-wanted-to-know-about-British-psychoanalysis-and-politics-but-didn't-know-who-to-ask". In his illuminating survey of British psychoanalysis, Robert Young outlines some of the recent developments between left politics and psychoanalysis. While the centrist position of British psychoanalysis is probably still dominant, Young points to quite a few interesting and established forums where politics and psychoanalysis are seriously discussed. He concludes his article with a remark that should hopefully/certainly find a lot of support within the left in South Africa. Young says "... that no political movement which does not take full account of the lights and shadows of human nature - in their full complexity and including their shameful and distressing aspects - has any hope of enduring".

Some of the "light and shadows of human nature" are investigated in the provocative article by Eric Harper and Mark Tomlinson on family murder

and violence in South Africa. They attempt to unravel the complexities of family murders by intersecting intrapsychic explanations with social explanations. Their intrapsychic explanations are predominantly Jungian, while at the same time incorporating Freudian and Lacanian thinking. It is a daunting task integrating the social and the individual, and one which many social thinkers shy away from, and yet is arguably one of the central problems of the "human sciences". Whether or not one agrees with Harper and Tomlinson's approach to this problem is less important than the fact that they have at least addressed the problem head-on.

While much progressive psychology has focussed on social and community issues, and less so on intrapsychic issues, this has not been the only omission. Linda Chisholm opens her article on the history of welfare and juvenile crime with the comment that "recent writing by psychologists and social workers is curiously ahistorical". It is hoped that by publishing Chisholm's fascinating work on "state policy and juvenile crime" in South Africa during 1911-1939, that we shall encourage further historical work. A misinformed view about historical research is that it is about the past, and so tells us very little about the present. Chisholm's article certainly upsets that view as it raises many pertinent issues of current concern. For example, South Africa of the 1920s and 1930s is clearly not the South Africa of the 1990s, but the progressive welfare sector would do well to consider the historical trajectory of the racial and class character of welfare provision (of juvenile offenders). With rampant privatisation as part of current State policy how are young, black, working class "offenders" going to be properly cared for? Will a non-racial government be able to escape the history of social policies structured around race and class conceptions, where most of the poor and young "criminals" are going to be black? These and many other interesting questions come to mind when reading Linda Chisholm's article.

Our plea to readers to respond to some of the discussions and debates that appear in PINS sometimes pays off. Victor Nell takes issue with many of the authors that appeared in *Psychology in society* 12 (1989). His criticisms are not only directed at Ronnie Miller, Kevin Solomons and Kedibone Letlaka-Rennert, but also at the PINS editors. He castigates the above authors and the editors for not drawing the line between sound intellectual criticism and personalistic attacks.

This issue ends with three book reviews. Ray Lazarus reviews a local publication on mental handicap, while Ann Levett takes a critical look at

another local text - Lloyd Vogelman's study of rapists. Psychotherapy comes under the spotlight in Jennifer McCaul's review of Nini Herman's *Why psychotherapy?*

As this number - **Psychology in society (PINS) 15** - comes out a long time after **PINS 14** (1990) we would just like to assure our subscribers and readers of the journal's future. We apologise for the inconvenience of these "irregular production intervals". **PINS 16** (1991) will be out soon.

Grahame Hayes