

EDITORIAL

The organisation of psychology has been a very vexed issue in South Africa. It has mostly been contained within the politics surrounding professional organisations. The history of the politics of association in psychology has been dominated by the conflict and debate between SIRSA, SAPA, and PASA. In other words, the history of the organisation of psychology in South Africa has been inextricably linked to apartheid ideology and discourse. This had made it difficult for other organisations and groups to penetrate this reactionary hegemony. OASSSA (Organisation for Appropriate Social Services in South Africa), the predominantly black constituency of the "Psychology and apartheid" group, and even this journal **PINS** have been "outside" of the mainstream of defining the nature and practice of psychology.

The central problem for mainstream psychology in South Africa is a crisis of legitimacy, what Johann Louw in this issue calls "cultural legitimacy". Over the past ten years or so of ever heightened political struggle, many psychologists (not only professional psychologist, but many others working on what may be termed the psychological terrain) have become estranged from the officially recognised organisation of psychologists - PASA. Broadly speaking, but not necessarily inaccurately, PASA has tended to side with the status quo of apartheid South Africa, and has not seriously challenged the imbalances of power and privilege in this society.

The crisis facing the organisation and future of psychology has never been more evident and urgent than it is at the moment. The current social and political, not to mention economic, crisis facing this country is so fundamental that it affects many other sectors of the society. There are serious discussions going on about negotiating the resolution of the crisis in the country. Discussions and debates about the necessary restructuring and reconstruction of the social fabric. This crisis in the cement of the society where there is clearly a crisis of hegemony with the (old) ruling class no longer able to rule (legitimately), and the opposition not able to offer a convincing enough alternative, also has effects on psychology.

PINS is keen to stimulate debate and discussion on the issues affecting psychology, both in a substantive sense as well as in organisational terms, with regard to the broader restructuring of society. We are concerned to ask what the organisation of psychology means to different constituencies? There is more to the organisation of psychology than restricting the terms of debate to PASA and the professional board. We don't have much time, but we have the opportunity now in ways in which we might not have it a few years down the road to question the social articulation of psychology. In its ten years of existence it has been rare that **Psychology in society (PINS)** has formally taken up the matter of the organisation of psychology in South Africa. It is true that we have carried many articles about the possibilities of a progressive clinical psychology, and more often a progressive mental health practice. This is not because the editors of **PINS** thought that this was the only issue worth discussing in the organisation of psychology, but rather that this reflected the debates in the country - mostly around the formation of OASSSA and its concern to engage with the politics of the mass democratic movement - and who was prepared to write about these issues.

We are therefore especially pleased to be able to focus the debate about the organisation of psychology in a more open way. We publish two articles on the problems of the organisation and reinvigoration of psychology. The first is by Johann Louw (of the University of Cape Town), and the other is by Gabriel Louw* (of the University of Potchefstroom). It might be said that Johann Louw's is a critique from "inside" PASA. Johann Louw challenges PASA to face their crisis of cultural legitimacy, and he presents some detailed suggestions about how PASA might restructure itself in view of the political realities facing South Africa. Gabriel Louw's argument on the other hand could be said to be much more radical. While much of his focus is on mental health practitioners, what he says about the profession of psychology would largely apply to the other areas of psychology as well. He makes an argument for the democratic participation of all parties involved in the terrain which is encompassed by psychology: consumers, practitioners, training agencies, and the state). It is not too often that psychologists in this country have championed the cause of democracy at this level, nor thought it essential to include the state in its analyses.

The article by Haysom, Strous, and Vogelmann** on involuntary confinement is a useful critique of the Mental Health Act and "evaluates whether it [the Act] provides sufficient protection against deprivation of the rights of persons alleged to be mentally ill, and to examine the claim that confinement is justified by its therapeutic value". Their argument suggests that the Mental Health Act needs to be written, as much as other aspects of the law, in

ensuring that it is consistent with the democratic ideals of a non-racial and egalitarian future government. The Law, and the state as Gabriel Louw suggests, have to be incorporated into the discussions involving the restructuring and reconstruction of South African society and its implications for (the organisation of) psychology. So while Haysom et al are discussing a different issue, important in and of itself, their analysis complements the debates about the organisation of psychology.

Ilana Korber makes an important contribution to the understanding of the processes of (the socialisation of) violence. She says that her research was "motivated by the desire to understand how ordinary people become participants in legalised killings". Military violence cannot be separated from the general political violence sweeping the country, and so through Korber's analysis we are able to get a glimpse of one of the many contributory factors in the maintenance of a "culture of violence". It is well worth remembering the words of Ronald Aronson when he said that we cannot begin to hope about a decent society in the future unless we are prepared to understand the "dialectics of disaster" of our past and present. The role and impact of the military in the support of apartheid is surely one of the major disasters which we have to try to dialectically understand. Ilana Korber continues this process.

We conclude this (late) issue of **PINS** with four book reviews. The books are all quite different, and yet many have links with the articles in this issue - **PINS 16**. Yogan Pillay's review of the **Psychology and apartheid** collection brings our attention to a constituency of disaffected psychologists who are critical of PASA, OASSSA, and **PINS**. The debate on psychology and its organisation - theoretically as part of social studies and practically as a profession - will need to incorporate all perspectives on the issue if there is going to be any possibility of cooperating and working together. Etienne Marais's review of the Manganyi and du Toit edited collection on political violence and the struggle in South Africa focuses to a large extent on how psychology intellectuals have tried to engage with the political issues of the day from a "professional" psychology vantage point. He questions, in his review of this important book, what it means to talk of a progressive psychology. Although "progressive" had a particular political meaning during much of the 1980s, the issue of a transformed, democratic, liberatory, or in Bhaskar's language, emancipatory psychology awaits critical discussion. The "political violence" text also has many overlaps with the concerns raised by Ilana Korber about military violence. The discussion about "psychology in society" is certainly going to hinge on how narrowly or how broadly one defines psychology. Bless and Solomon's review of **Developing people** raises an issue which always debilitated OASSSA discussions, and is also present in

current discussion about mental health policy, and that is the whole question of development. Can we seriously discuss the future of psychology in a country like South Africa, with its chronic history of uneven development and resultant poverty, without engaging the problems of social development. It seems that Bless and Solomon think not in their critical review of **Developing people**. The final book review is by Cathy Campbell who discusses a book on the "new" area of "men's studies". While there are some fascinating articles in this collection from a conference on "men's studies", Campbell suggests that feminists found much wanting in this work on social theory and gender. We hope that the debates in the organisation of psychology are aware of gender issues, and do not merely assume that the reconstitution of psychology is a "male thing", or that we don't have to say anything about gender because it doesn't operate in this sphere of social life.

Psychology in society (PINS) has restructured its editorial board in the interests of greater efficiency, and a more frequent publication of numbers of the journal. **PINS 17** will be the other issue for this year, and we hope to publish three numbers in 1993 - the 10th anniversary of the journal. The first issue of **Psychology in society** was published in September 1983.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND SUBSCRIBERS. With the continual rise in printing and postage costs, independent journals are particularly hard-hit to keep the price of their copy down. Our rates will be changing from **PINS 17**, and in **PINS 17** we shall be asking for people to become **DONOUR SUBSCRIBERS** by contributing as much as they would like to afford beyond the regular subscription rates so as to support the continued publication of what we consider to be an important contribution to psychology and related discussions.

*Gabriel Louw's paper has been published in Afrikaans. This is not because **PINS** has decided to become a bilingual journal. We shall continue to remain an English language journal. This is not meant as a statement of linguistic and political arrogance, as we are quite aware of the complexities of the language issue in South Africa at the moment. Our decision is more pragmatic, as we do not have the editorial resources, as an independent journal, to publish in two languages. We assume that many of our readers and subscribers are conversant enough with Afrikaans to be able to engage with Louw's article. We consider it important to promote debate about the organisation of

psychology, and hence were prepared to publish this article in Afrikaans. Neither Gabriel Louw nor the editors of **PINS** have the resources to translate the article, and in any case this would have delayed the publication of the article quite considerably.

****We would like to thank the South African Journal of Human Rights for allowing us to reprint the article by Haysom, Strous and Vogelmann. "The mad Mrs Rochester revisited" was first published in the South African Journal of Human Rights, 6(3), 341-362, 1990. We believe that this issue warrants greater exposure among psychologists, and hence the decision to republish this article.**