



LETTERS

Letters should be marked clearly 'Letter for publication in *The Psychologist*' and addressed to the editor at the Society office in Leicester. Please send by e-mail if possible: psychologist@bps.org.uk (include a postal address). Letters over 500 words are less likely to be published. The editor reserves the right to edit, shorten or publish extracts from letters. If major editing is necessary, this will be indicated. Letters to the editor are not normally acknowledged, and space does not permit the publication of every letter received. However, see www.thepsychologist.org.uk to contribute to our discussion forum.

Less consideration than animals?

WE were appalled to read (News, October 2006) that the British Psychological Society's Ethics Committee holds that it is up to psychologists themselves to decide whether it is ethically acceptable to participate in interrogations of suspects held under emergency provisions.

This is to ignore what national and international professional medical bodies have learned over decades, resulting in their issuing specific ethical guidelines against taking part in interrogations and other situations where people may become complicit violating another's human rights. It is hard to understand why the Society's Ethics Committee believes that psychologists will not face similar difficulties and dilemmas.

The Code of Conduct and Ethics gives general guidance on conflicts of rights and responsibilities, on integrity in

PAVE/MPICS

practice, and on respect for other people. These 'others' include suspects who are eventually released without charge, not convicted criminals subject to law enforcement, as implied by Dr Crawshaw's comments. Psychologists have been used in Guantanamo Bay to extract information and to devise control systems, exploiting psychological knowledge and skills, and misusing personal information

on prisoners. Is it not anomalous that animals used in experiments are extended more consideration by our Code than are human detainees?

The grounds given for the Society's position are that the Code is sufficient without specific guidelines. However, this is not the position taken on sexual or romantic relationships with clients, nor on confidentiality. Trusting psychologists to ask, as Dr

Kwiatkowski suggests, 'Is what you are doing right?' does not prevent abuse.

Psychologists should be engaging actively in debates about professionals' behaviour towards detainees, using understanding of behaviour under such pressures as interrogation, privation, isolation, and harsh regimes. Instead we are standing on the sidelines. UK psychologists will increasingly be put in difficult ethical positions in detention centres and the like as military authorities and police use 'emergency powers' to detain suspects for long periods. We should be able to look to our professional body for specific guidance in such situations, not for generalities of the sort reported from the Ethics Committee.

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Sexual contact – A criminal offence?

BOTH *The Psychologist's* 'Disciplinary notices', and research (Garrett, 1998; see www.bps.org.uk/ddpw), confirm that sexual contact between psychologists and their clients continues to be an ethical problem for the body of psychologists and a disciplinary one for the Society. There is no reason to suppose that psychologists are any different from other professions in the mental health field, or that UK psychologists differ from those in other nations.

It is possibly less widely appreciated that, since the Sexual Offences Act 2003, such contact may also be a criminal

offence attracting a term of imprisonment under the law. Section 38 of the Act makes it an offence for a 'care worker' – someone 'involved in the care' of another – to have sexual contact with a 'person suffering from a mental disorder'. Section 42 defines a person (A) as involved in the care of another person (B)

if B is a patient for whom services are provided (a) by a National Health Service body or an independent medical agency, or (b) in an independent clinic or an independent hospital, and A has functions to perform

for the body or agency or in the clinic or hospital in the course of employment which have brought him or are likely to bring him into regular face to face contact with B.

A 'mental disorder' is defined as in the Mental Health Act 1983, namely 'mental illness, arrested or incomplete development of mind, psychopathic disorder and any other disorder or disability of mind'.

It is clear from the above that the relationship between a wide variety of applied psychologists (and indeed counsellors, psychotherapists,

etc.) and their clients, whether in the NHS or privately, 'qualifies' as a care worker relationship, and also that the vague term 'mental illness' might be seen to encompass a wide variety of clients.

It is also clear that the Society's disciplinary measures need to include the possibility of reporting what have become criminal offences to the authorities.

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Reference

Garrett, T. (1998). Sexual contact between patients and psychologists. *The Psychologist*, 11, 227–230.

LINDA CRESSWELL (1950-2006)

LINDA Cresswell died on 10 October after a long hard battle with cancer. Linda died at home in the arms of her husband, Gareth Jones.

Linda died with the grace and dignity she showed throughout her personal and professional life. It was not an easy road she trod throughout her illness but she continued to travel, teach and be an educational psychologist, whenever she was well enough.

Linda graduated from University College Cardiff in 1971 with a BSc in psychology. She then worked for two years at Cardiff University as a tutorial assistant before joining Clwyd County Council as a trainee EP. In 1976 Linda obtained her MSc in educational psychology at UCL and returned to Clwyd to practise for two years.

Linda then worked across the country, latterly and importantly as Assistant Principal Educational Psychologist in Cambridgeshire. Since her retirement (due to ill health) she continued to work, when possible, part-time

as a locum EP and also as a tutor at Cambridge University.

Wherever Linda worked she left a very powerful professional and personal mark. Her colleagues describe her as one of the most dedicated, hard-working and caring colleagues; someone who brought freshness and innovation to professional practice with enthusiasm borne out of the heady days of the 70s training courses.

In her retirement Linda travelled far and wide, and several messages of condolence have been received from those Linda met on her travels.

Linda is still mentioned and talked of very fondly by people in schools and services that she worked with. She made a lasting impression on everyone because of her humility, sparking humanity and sheer professionalism.

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Hysterical dialogue

JENNIFER Poole writes (Letters, November 2006): 'And didn't Freud abandon his initial belief that his "hysterical" females had been sexually abused in favour of the wish-fulfilment myth so he could get published by the establishment?'

The short answer to that rhetorical question is 'No!' Freud had no trouble getting several articles published between the year he announced his repressed infantile sexual trauma theory (1896) and his first public intimation of his abandonment of the theory (1906). The notion that Freud was ostracised by the medical establishment after the publication of his 1896 papers is one of a number of widely held myths about the so-called 'seduction theory' (see my article at tinyurl.com/yhgzkw).

It is precisely because there are so many such myths in the received history of the work of Freud that Steven Kemp felt it necessary to write a counterbalancing letter (October 2006) in response to the largely pro-Freud articles by contributors described by Stephen Blumenthal as 'seven esteemed colleagues' (Letters, November 2006). Dr Blumenthal's description of Dr Kemp's letter citing information and authors providing a different viewpoint as 'illogical, partisan vitriol' is hardly an example of the 'mature dialogue' he recommends.

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DEADLINE

Deadline for letters for possible publication in the January issue is **4 December**

Getting down with the kids

SO Dorothy Rowe eschews the value of 'evidence' in favour of 'the enormous knowledge about human beings' we build up in the course of our professional activities (News, November). Surely all psychologists agree with the paramount value of 'strongly held opinion'.

Notwithstanding the fact that no evidence is needed, Dr Rowe supports the position through her assertions that children today have little to

look forward to, compared to previous generations, with unprecedented challenges such as global warming and the war on terror. Clearly a self-evident truth... with the possible

exception of the generation of children (my generation), who spent sleepless nights during the Cold War in dread of imminent Armageddon... or my parents who endured childhood during the Blitz... or their parents who faced childhood in the poverty of the Depression... or their fathers who left school for the trenches of the Somme... or their parents who, as children, fled disease and famine in 19th-century Ireland. So much for evidence, eh?

Let's face it, for as long as we have had childhood – and in terms of human culture it is not that long – childhood has been tough, despite which most kids come good in the end. But that's only my opinion.

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If you read an article in *The Psychologist* that you fundamentally disagree with, then the letters page is your first port of call: summarise your argument in under 500 words. But if you feel you have a substantial amount of conflicting evidence to cite and numerous points to make that simply cannot be contained within a letter, you can write a 'Counterpoint' article of up to 1500 words, within a month of the publication of the original article. However, it is best to contact the editor about your plans, on jonsut@bps.org.uk. We hope this format will build on the role of *The Psychologist* as a forum for discussion and debate.

Subscriptions – Value for money?

THE results of the Society-wide ballot in which 53.6 per cent voted in favour of an increase in subscription fees were disappointing, although it was a relief to see that just under the requisite two thirds voted to allow the Trustees to make increases in the future without even bothering with further ballots.

The Society should be reducing subscription fees, not increasing them. The 2005 Annual Report shows that the Society has assets of £9.4m, including investments in a portfolio that returned 32.67 per cent in 2005 alone, and an annual turnover of £7.68m. Full graduate membership will now cost £92 per annum, and a leaflet from the Honorary General Secretary included with ballot papers stated that £92 'is still very inexpensive in comparison with many other professional bodies'. Well, let's ponder that.

I've just paid my APA annual subscription of £22.44 (\$39). This includes a subscription to *American Psychologist*, a magnificent journal with an impact factor of 6.46. For my BPS subscription, which costs more than four times as much, I get *The Psychologist*, with an impact factor of 0.19. Before 1988, BPS members used to get the *Bulletin of the BPS*, a serious academic publication more comparable to *American Psychologist*.

Closer to home, membership of the Experimental Psychology Society costs £12 per annum, and this includes the *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology* (impact factor 1.77). Attendance at EPS

scientific meetings is free, in contrast to BPS conferences, for which members have to pay a lot extra. The EPS provides funds for short-term vacation bursaries for undergraduates, for postgraduate student to make study visits to other institutions, and for research students to attend EPS and international conferences. As far as I know, the BPS doesn't spend a penny on anything comparable. With all the money it has, shouldn't it be funding postgraduate studentships?

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Society money – not too tight to mention

Ray Miller, Society President, replies: *We all have assets. Mine include my house, my car, and a range of household equipment. I could sell up and blow the lot on a world cruise but there would be the not inconsiderable problem of where and how I would live on my return.*

The Society is the same. Most of the assets represent the buildings and equipment that facilitate the work you, as members, expect done. They provide the bedrock stability that ensures we are here today and here tomorrow. Like any sensible family we save for a rainy day. It is raining now. The interest on our savings is currently covering a deficit income–expenditure balance.

Subscriptions are being subsidised. Without that prudence we would have to cut back significantly on the work you have prioritised or seek much higher fees. The bulk of our turnover is staff salaries. Membership subscriptions alone don't actually cover paying those whom we employ to work on our behalf. On top of that there is inflation in the costs of power, maintenance and essential supplies. We rely heavily on innovative income generation.

The comparison with the APA is misleading. The dues mentioned appear to be based on their International Affiliate membership. Full membership of the APA for 2007 will cost \$270 with another \$129 for professional licensing. Their International Affiliate fee is only available to psychologists who are members of their own national professional organisation and is thus actually a BPS member benefit. The Psychologist is not a journal and thus does not aim to have a significant impact factor. It provides a forum for news, discussion and debate, more akin to the APA Monitor. As for the comparison with the EPS, it does not claim nor attempt to offer the range of professional activities of the BPS.

Lastly, the BPS does in fact provide research assistantships and fellowships through the Research Board and Professional Practice Board. The Trustees recently voted funding for an increased number of these.

The evidence therefore supports the contention that the BPS membership subscription remains excellent value for money.

Synergy through difference

MAY I suggest there is possibly a logical flaw in Peter Farrell's argument about educational and clinical psychology training (Letters, November)? It may be true that there is a synergy to be found in the initial training routes. However, just because both educational and clinical psychologists undergo a three-year doctoral training programme, it does not

necessarily follow that there will be (or necessarily should be) 'very close similarities in the knowledge and skills of EPs and CPs'.

It might be to the advantage of children to have some applied psychologists who have well-developed skills and a sound knowledge base for work with individuals and groups of children. However, it might also be helpful for schools and

children to have applied psychologists who develop knowledge and skills in working in and with educational organisations and are perhaps better qualified to comment on educational processes (for example the work of teachers).

I doubt if in the space of three years it would be good to try to develop skills in both domains simultaneously.

Indeed, to do so would rather defeat the purpose of the training committees' argument that there had been insufficient time in the courses to do that. Perhaps one way of maintaining synergy is to sustain some differences.

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ANTHONY GALE (1937–2006)

PROFESSOR Maurice Anthony Gale died on 22 August. Uniquely in the history of the British Psychological Society, Tony was both an Honorary Fellow (2001) and a Life Member (1980). He also received the Award for Distinguished Contributions to Teaching of Psychology (2002).

Underpinning those Society honours was an extraordinary wealth of intellect, talent and drive, coupled with a willingness to invest vast amounts of time and energy in helping to shape others in their professional development. It was as though Tony's underlying mission was to help others believe in themselves and realise their potential; and almost nothing was too much for him in that quest. Never afraid of controversy, he fought hard for those he believed were disadvantaged, sometimes at professional cost to himself.

The Honorary Fellowship gave recognition to Tony's outstanding contributions to the advancement of psychology, achieved several ways: through academic research, books and other publications; through his undergraduate teaching; and through the support given to some 30 PhD students plus many staff starting their careers. The Life Membership honoured Tony's distinguished history in the organisational development and life of the Society over several decades.

Tony was also an AcSS (an Academician in the Learned Societies for the Social Sciences), elected in 2003 for the quality of his contributions in work that spanned practising and academic communities of psychologists, for his representation of psychology in the broader UK social-science community, and for the major role he played in maintaining standards and quality within psychology and within wider academic and practitioner fields.

Tony's principal research contribution was in using the EEG to measure brain activity during information processing and during social interaction, and his international reputation extended to his exploration of personality correlates of brain function. In mid-career his ground-

breaking qualitative research with families received much acclaim. For 40 years Tony combined publication of research in prestigious journals with a passion for undergraduate teaching and postgraduate



supervision. He was in constant demand as external examiner for undergraduate and higher degrees, and for six years he was Chief Examiner (Psychology) for the International Baccalaureate, ending his IB work a few years following a term as Vice-Chair of the Board of Chief Examiners.

He helped develop the profile of psychology through work on ESRC committees, and as Secretary/Treasurer in the Association of Learned Societies in the Social Sciences (ALSISS) during a critical time of re-structuring. From the early 1990s he was a part-time auditor, at home and abroad, for the Higher Education Quality Council and its successor body, the Quality Assurance Agency.

Tony had begun studying psychology as a mature student in the University of Exeter as a 26-year-old, and he quickly acquired a national and then international reputation, being promoted in his late-thirties to a Chair in Southampton's Psychology Department, via a senior lectureship in UWIST (Cardiff) after lectureships in Exeter and Swansea. It was

eight years subsequent to his appointment as Professor that he was awarded his PhD, by publication. After twice being a highly influential Dean of Social Sciences in Southampton University, Tony's next move was to be Director of Research and Development in Portsmouth's Psychology Department. He retired from Portsmouth University in 2002, before which time he had switched post to part-time professor. Meanwhile he had been appointed to visiting professorships elsewhere and he had received an honorary doctorate.

From almost the beginning of his career as a psychologist, when he took on the duties of local organiser for the BPS Annual Conference in Exeter, Tony became a known character in British psychology. In due course, in 1989/90, he became BPS President and, between times, he was Honorary General Secretary, Chair of the Scientific Affairs Board, Chair of the Qualifying Examination Board, and much else. In all these roles, and, indeed, in virtually everything he undertook, Tony Gale made a difference, because he had a sharp, insightful mind, he was a good listener and team-player, incredibly well organised, always affable and considerate, and a superb communicator.

It was rare to find that Tony Gale was not in high spirits. He was tremendously invigorating company, invariably displaying a wicked sense of humour and, when on very best form, his powers of mimicry and observation could have his 'audience' in stitches.

Tony Gale is survived by his wife, Liz, and their son and daughter. He will be greatly missed by many, and his contributions to psychology will continue to have impact for many years to come.

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There will be a Memorial Event in celebration of the life and work of Tony Gale, in London on Sunday 9 December at 2.15–5.00. Please contact Liz Gale for more details on 023 9263 2686 or e-mail lizgale@interalpha.co.uk.

Appreciating early women psychologists

It is difficult to research the histories of academic disciplines in British universities for a number of reasons; for example, staff statistics were not collected nationally until the Universities Grants Committee published them in 1923, and then they were not classified by gender. Thus the role played by women in the early days of British psychology has been seriously understated. The appearance of a major book on Professor Beatrice Edgell (reviewed by Jennifer Poole, November 2006) by Elizabeth Valentine is to be welcomed.

Dr Valentine has written papers previously on Edgell which have informed a valuable short appreciation in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Lovie & Lovie,

2004). This entry gives prominence to her influential theories of memory of 1924, to her presidency of the BPS 1929–1932, her writing of a short history of the BPS and to her teaching of psychology to nurses and social workers.

I have not yet read Valentine, but Lovie and Lovie in their evaluation omit to mention the importance of Beatrice Edgell in the development of psychology of education. She pioneered the experimental teaching of psychology in the department of education at Bedford College, encouraging her lady student teachers to use a psychological laboratory, to master statistical techniques and to produce child studies in their school observations. The minutes of the Senate of

London University record that the students valued these innovations and the rare teaching skills of a 'lady of very high distinction'. In retirement Professor Edgell worked in child guidance clinics.

It can be argued that the staffs of the first education departments in universities were a major influence in the growth of psychology as an academic discipline (Thomas, 1996).

Women in these departments were major contributors to this growth and need to be better known and appreciated: women like Frances Collie of Birmingham (later at Bangor and Liverpool) who published psychological papers in the *Journal of Experimental Pedagogy* (now the *British Journal of Educational Psychology*), Catherine Dodd at Manchester who wrote on child ideals and early learning, and Dr Ida Saxby of Cardiff who in *The Education Behaviour*

(1921) brought psychological findings to bear on the emotional and behavioural problems of children and argued for increased co-education and sex education (Thomas, 1997).

Hopefully, greater knowledge of Professor Edgell will encourage further studies researching the contribution of early women psychologists to the development of teaching and research in psychology.

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Unequal opportunities

READING the article 'Clinical psychology – is it for you?' (Students, November), I answer 'yes'. But having completed my undergraduate degree and enrolled on a master's course in research in clinical psychology, I still cannot make the holy application for the clinical course. All because I am not a British citizen.

You name the required experience and I have it on my CV. I aim to remain and work in the UK for the NHS for the rest of my life, but that is not taken into account – rules are rules. After all, I could do my training for free and then run off and practise in India (where I will probably have to work on a voluntary basis for the rest of my life due to limited scope).

Aren't there ways around this problem, such as making people sign bonds to work in the UK for specific number of years? I can't even get an assistant psychologist job – not because of the fierce competition but due to work permit issues. One NHS trust wrote 'We apologise but your application cannot be taken further as you require a work permit to work in the UK.'

If you look at the UK itself, in all spheres of life there is a rich ethnic diversity, all include citizens and foreigners. So why this rigid rule that non-British citizens cannot apply for the clinical training course?

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A closed-shop Society?

I WAS relieved to read Martin Seager's letter (October 2006) regarding the parental style of the BPS. That it was unanimously and spontaneously described as 'authoritarian' does not surprise me – I just wish I had been there to share the moment.

Having spent several years working towards the Qualification in Counselling Psychology, I have had to cope with significant changes to the Regulations and Syllabus, poor communications and late notification of deadlines. After committing so much to the qualification, both financially and personally, I have felt bound to continue. But I have become increasingly disillusioned in my perception of the Society. My experiences

have led to the realisation that the organisation operates from the perspective of 'do as I say, not as I do'. I would particularly call into question its active commitment to some of the fundamental principles it espouses. I believe that the BPS has developed a closed and non-reflective organisational culture that is not easily challenged and does not truly reflect the values and interests of its individual members.

Perhaps the collective exploration of individual perceptions will initiate a more equal and adult relationship between the Society and its members.

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