

EDITORIAL

Unfortunately, we start this issue of PINS with a comment about the irrational. Not the irrational as that uncanny object of psychoanalytic discourse, but the irrational as seemingly rational public discourse. The public discourse of educational policy and the control of knowledge as embodied in the SAPSE system is what is being referred to. In the editorial of PINS 17 (1993), we mentioned that PINS was first turned down for SAPSE accreditation during 1992 for the following reason: "Not a research journal. Articles are mostly for the practitioner eg case studies, general review on a specific field of knowledge, etc". The procedure for accreditation is that academics, or university research offices on academics behalf, make submissions to the State Department of Education for the inclusion of any journal/s onto the SAPSE subsidy list. Journals themselves may *not* apply directly. The success or failure of accreditation is communicated to the universities, and again, *not* to the journal/s.

Many submissions were made during 1993 and 1994 for PINS's inclusion in the SAPSE listing, again to be refused on the same grounds as stated above!! Besides the inadequacy of a one-liner (ir)rational for rejection, one wonders whether the reviewers even bothered to read PINS. The whole process of seeking accreditation is incredibly cumbersome, and devoid of that now common South African practice of "transparency". Who reviews the journal/s?; How are the reviewers selected?; What criteria are used in the evaluation of journals?; Why is there no recourse to the committee or persons responsible for administering the SAPSE accreditation system?; How effective is the publication accreditation system as a funding mechanism for tertiary education institutions? These are just some of the questions that need to be put to the education authorities, and in particular the National Commission on Higher Education.

Baudrillard wrote an essay entitled "Forget Foucault", only to have Michael Billig entitle a 1994 article of his, "Sod Baudrillard". If only PINS, and any other journals on or off the accreditation list, could deal with SAPSE by "forgetting" or "sodding" it, some progress might be made. But the irrationality, opacity and *reality* of SAPSE precludes the convenience of such responses. With the increasing financial squeeze that universities are experiencing, academics cannot but be drawn into the economic imperatives of the SAPSE system. When most universities judge the worth of their academic staff by how many SAPSE publications they produce each year, it is not surprising that a more thoroughgoing debate and criticism of the SAPSE is nowhere to be found. The problems of the power/knowledge nexus that operates through SAPSE is all too evident in the many comments that PINS has received from "potential authors", saying that they *can't* publish in PINS, because

we aren't SAPSE accredited! It would seem that some contestation of the SAPSE system of accreditation of publications is in order, if only to get clarity about how the system is meant to function. It is difficult to see how SAPSE, in its present form, functions in the interests of writing, publishing and critical scholarship.

Anyway, back to the real world!! The articles in this issue of **Psychology in society** all have something to say about the way in which human identity is constituted, and the impact this has on how people live, and at the same time try to make sense of, their social lives. The acknowledgement of the multiple and inconsistent development of identity allows for the emergence of a less passive conception of the role of the individual in "shaping" identity. In the most theoretical of the three "identity" articles published here, Johan van Wyk forces us to return to the neglected work of Volosinov, to reclaim a social reading of identity. The implication of Volosinov's work is that it locates identity within the differentiation of signs in the social world. For example, as van Wyk writes: "Individual identity depends on identification with others outside of itself in the social domain. This means that the identity of an individual is essentially non-coincidental with itself."

The theoretical import of these processes of signification are given empirical and practical meaning in the article by Ann Levett on stigmatisation, and in the fascinating analysis of students' sexual practices in Wood and Foster's article. Levett challenges the hegemony of a conception of psychological trauma following sexual abuse: "... the very notion of psychological trauma (or damage) as the *only, major and universal* consequence of sexual abuse is a text of stigmatization which in itself constitutes a violence of representation." She weaves a subtle argument about the necessity of deconstructing the broader social implications of stigma, and especially the intersections with social power.

The gendered basis of social power is one of the foci of Wood and Foster's study of students' sexual practices regarding condom use, and often non-use. Given the "subject positions" of men and women, they suggest that a more sensitive and complex understanding of instilling safe sexual practices and habits, is required. The dialectics of desire are such that any AIDS educational programme that mainly deals with the transmission of information, and omits the irrationality of emotion and human passion is doomed, or at least severely limited. For example, in the words of Peter, from whom the title of Wood and Foster's article comes: "... being the type of lover who will assume several positions ... and who moves around ... they (condoms) become problematic ..."

Martin Terre Blanche offers PINS readers a useful guide to psychology and related matters currently available on the Internet. PINS will continue to update this information and help readers (called "browsers" in cyberspeak!) make sense of the avalanche of information which daily becomes available through the electronic media. PINS is currently investigating the logistics of being available in electronic form for subscribers who would prefer this mode of access.

This edition of PINS also contains an extended review article of two texts on the early history of psychoanalysis, and the (often forgotten) part played by women in this history. Susan van Zyl lauds the scholarship of **Freud's women**, and is disappointed by Janet Sayers' **Mothering psychoanalysis**.

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. We would, therefore, like to encourage our readers to subscribe, and appeal to our current subscribers to become **DONOR 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. We thank those subscribers who have generously responded to our call for "donor subscriptions".

BACK ISSUES. We are able to supply the following back numbers:
PINS 3, PINS 5, PINS 8 to PINS 19.

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