

April 24, 1974

32 Cedar St
Somerville, Pa 02143

Dear Lanny,

How are you? How go the plans for BEDLAM? I sent you an article which I hope you got. The more I think of it, the more we need such a magazine. I liked your article on APA's gay number.

Things here are hot and cold. Most coldest coldspot is that I recently failed my written qualifying exams for NYU and will have to take them again in October - if I decide to continue. It's a real let-down, since it was 6 months of hard work which isolated me to a large extent, and certainly kept me in a funny emotional grunge.

It also means I won't be able to get to work on my thesis or on my orals, plus my orals will be 6 weeks after writtens next fall and I'll have hardly any time to prepare. I'm having a wonderful time teaching at Boston State College, although it's only one course a term @ \$550. I'm looking around for more work. Cambridge-Goddard pays only \$2000/year and it may not go above that.

Further, the Goddard Administration is

— hypostasized
cross-section
of inter-stellar
orgone energy
(Handle w/ care!)

down on us and the
cracking will not be the same as
school used to be. I haven't
it used been able to write
anything for a
while not, mainly
because of the
large amount of time

I spent in studying
for the history exams and now
because I'm bummed out and lazy.

Things with Ronny are really fine,
though her man is still here - leaving in
May sometime, for good. Can't tell what
will happen then.

Hope everything goes well with the new Drop-In. A propos,
I have never gotten any Western Voices, could you aks about that?
Take care, and hugs to Stan, Barb, and the others.

lovestruggle

Phil

grease

32 Cedar St
Somerville, Ma 02143

2.4.74

Dear Lanny,

Wow, good to hear from you - I miss you and Stan and Barb - hugs to all of you. I also miss not getting Nutshell, and I had asked Stan about getting Grape - can you ask?

I am glad that you are doing better and have that MPA job - it seems like the kind of thing you need, and lets you and Stan work together. I am getting over the RT business, but it's hard. I am pressed for money, depressed on and off, and recently my place was ripped off - typewriter and stereo, a real bummer since I'd thought this was a safe place to live, but am finding about how fucked up it is with the teenage hoodlums, etc. Cambridge-Goddard is going well, and I'm teaching a course at Noston State College, mostly mental health, social work, and teaching people. Also joined a political theory study group which I need for study and discipline which I've been lax in. Ronnie and I are having fine times, though it's hard while she still lives with her other lover and we can't go away for weekends or even her stay over here. Still, it's a wonderful relationship and looks to have a good future.

I liked the article and think that the J. Humanistic Psych. would be the best place, as they have a vested interest in opposing Malcolm. I can't think of where else, cause I don't know the journals. Psychology Today might be good, although they like catchy things. I wish I had other thoughts, but I draw a blank. I do hope that you can get that journal going - when will you really know if it will? I'd be glad to help in any way I can - from soliciting to writing to editing to publicity, etc.

I recently finished galley proofs, and Toward a Marxist Psychology should be out in April, around the time that I take my NYU exams which I'm always feverish about at this point.

Take care, and write soon, letting me know about what you do with the paper, etc. (I guess SPSSI is out of the question for you) and the journal. Let's be in closer touch.

love and struggle

Phil

THE RADICAL THERAPIST

23 HANCOCK

SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02144

5/19/72

Dear Lanny,

Good to hear from you and glad you liked the article in print and the intro. We will list you and send extra 2/6 and bundles of future RT's. Please tell us more about MPA's work - sounds like a lot more than other MPLF groups have got going. How did you get the centers started, and \$. etc.? We're sending a flier we did a while back which lists MPLF addresses and has the NY MPLF STATEMENT. If you need more, please let us know.

Also, let us know what you think of the changes of RT, especially title and goals, and usefulness to MPLF groups. Keep in touch.

in struggle,



Phil Brown/RT

2504 York Ave.
Vancouver 9, B.C.
Canada
July 2/72.

Phil Brown
RT
Box 89
West Somerville, Mass. 02144

Dear Phil,

I have been promising you an article on MPA for months now. I have been working on it quite hard for the past few weeks and have been having trouble with the writing. I suppose I want too much from it, like perfection. It is getting to be quite long; I want it to include everything, & if not more. To use an almost totally irrelevant analogy: Marx is supposed to have said, "I have no time to write short books." My problem is in formulating the material and disciplining myself to present it coherently. I have the time now (I'm taking a short break from MPA work) and I want you to know that I will get the stuff to you as soon as it's ready.

I am enclosing now two articles I have written for Vancouver's "underground" papers, the first written in December of 1970 when I was still a patient and the second in April of this year. The first, which appeared one month before MPA was founded, is kind of interesting as a personal and historical document. You'll notice in the last paragraph, I call for the formation of a mental patients liberation movement, but as my own state of mind was highly precarious at the time, I am fairly pessimistic about the movement ever coming into existence. Of course, the events of the past year and a half disconfirm any basis for the pessimism.

The idea I have in mind for the MPA article is as follows: first, the December, 1970 article, followed by a middle section which I am now writing and which describes MPA's development along with a theoretical and radical critique of the psychiatric industry and the need for independent democratic organizing among patients, ex-patients and other oppressed people, followed perhaps by the April 1972 article. The middle section will be the most important. I would be interested to hear your views on my idea for the article and would appreciate your not publishing any of the enclosed material until I have completed the middle section. I think it will be worthwhile to wait the extra ~~few~~ few weeks to get the whole ~~thing~~ thing as a package.

You ask in your letter about my thoughts about the RT and its changes. I think the publication is tremendously important. There is nothing else like it that I have found. There is no end to the need to challenge the mental health business, i.e., challenge it in radical terms. As I discuss in the article I'm now writing, the human potential movement represents only a specious challenge and by enshrining the values of idealism and individualism (in concepts such as the virtue of independence, self-actualization and self-reliance) it serves in many ways a more regressive than progressive function.

(over)

I enjoy reading the RT, which I do every issue from beginning to end. I like the undoctrinaire, open and self-critical (often too self-critical, as a recent letter stated) qualities. I like the way it avoids (usually) arid academicism on the one hand and empty sloganeering on the other. I think it should remain "non-professional" in its format and content, and should serve the development of political organizing and action through the publication of the accomplishments and setbacks of progressive groups. I would like to see you continue to publish articles of widely diverse types, e.g., accounts of patients' experiences--usually presented in narrative form--, informational articles about the location and principles of existing groups and about groups wanting to get started, theoretical articles clarifying the political nature of the whole field of mental health, agitational articles encouraging concrete organizing and news about repressive developments in mainstream psychiatry, social work etc. As an aside, I would say that I think the most important thing is to continue to publish and not to fold until the movement recognizes that it is as crucial to organize among patients as it is among blacks, women, gay people etc. Very few radicals are conscious of this now.

I disagree with the change in name because Rough Times does not focus attention on the field of therapy (in all its ramifications), it makes the paper appear to those not already familiar with it as just another oppositional paper. I have conflicts myself over the ~~the~~ issue of single-issue organizing. Of course, there are no "single-issues"; all are politically interconnected. However, the fragmentary consciousness promoted in bourgeois society conditions us all to divide the world into insular categories (cf., the department store-like nature of universities) and liberal readers will be most receptive to a publication which begins with the single issue, in this case "mental health" and through education locates it in a general political context. The paper must continue to expand its readership, and to do so, its name should designate its concern and content. Your objection to the middle-class co-optation of the words "radical" and "therapist" are minor relative to the more accurate denotation they carry. The name Radical Therapist will more easily attract an enlarged audience (mental patients, social science students and faculty, psychiatric residents etc.) and hence will require less word of mouth publicity. In terms of concrete factors--readership, distribution and influence--the drawbacks of the connotations of Radical Therapist are secondary to the advantages related to its denotations. I would like to see you return to the name Radical Therapist, however, I realize this may incur major mechanical problems and in fact the issue of a name, while important, is subsidiary to the goal of continuing to publish and of increasing the political and educational effectiveness of the paper's content.

Finally, I like the occasional instances of lightness and humour in the RT. While I don't think these styles should dominate the tone of the paper, I think they contribute much to its readability.

I am interested in your reactions to any of this, particularly my proposal about the article, which I will send to you as soon as possible.

in struggle,

James Beckman

2504 York Ave.
Vancouver 9, B.C.
Canada
July 3, 1972.

RT Book Permissions
P.O. Box 89
W. Somerville, Mass. 02144
USA

Dear RT Staff,

I'm enclosing the form granting permission to use my article in the Radical Therapist II. I'm sorry abt the delay in returning the form, but I have been taking a short vacation and just received it today. I do hope it's not too late to be included.

As for the \$25 fee, I would like to donate it to the RT.

Finally, I have tried to obtain your phone number from information but it isn't listed. If you have one, would you let me know what it is.

Finally, finally, I would appreciate your letting me know whether the form is in in time to have the article included in the book.
Thanks.

In struggle,

Lanny Beckman

2504 York Ave.
Vancouver 9, BC
Canada
July 13/72

Dear Phil,

I'm enclosing an article I've just completed on the Human Potential Movement. Please note that this article does not form a part of the idea mentioned in my last letter about an extended article on MPA, which I'm still working on (& having difficulty with--I seem to be too close to it to get it down succinctly and coherently. Anyway I'll continue on that one and get it to you when it's done.)

The enclosed article contains an extended political critique of "liberal therapy" with proposals at the end for an alternative. It is this alternative, by the way, which characterizes the objectives of MPA.

I have received some criticism of the article from friends here who work on the "underground" paper. They felt the style was too "academic" and "dry" which it probably is for the type of paper they work on. I feel, however, that the piece would be appropriate for the RT which is more concerned with depth analysis of precisely these kinds of issues. I agree that there are stylistic deficiencies, but I think the ideas are important enough to deserve publication as they are presented. Of course, I am very interested in your views on the article, ~~and~~ and changes can be made if you feel they are necessary.

I'll propose at the next MPA meeting that we send you \$ to cover mailing expenses and will send you a check soon.

in struggle

Lanny Beckman

THE RADICAL THERAPIST

23 HANCOCK

SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS 02144

7/7

Dear Lanny,

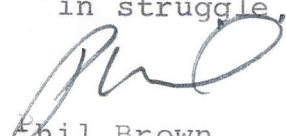
Don't worry about rushing. The issue following the one next week will be a women's issue, and the MP issue won't be until late Sept. Still, the earlier the better as we want to plan way ahead always. I like the two articles, but the '72 is incredibly better. Your writing style is really easy to read, fluid, and personalized, as well as utilizing devices to keep interest. The use of that one particularly would be good in creating a new one.

Of course, we will also need news of MPA in general, which could be separate, as we want news pieces from each group as well as special articles. So try to separate the two. After spending 10 hours last PM with an attempted suicide, I am convinced that only residential houses are useful, and we must know more about MPA's, even a little info now before the article.

We have many more MPLP listings now, and the movement is growing beautifully. Coming issue will have a special section on psychology and Vietnam. We're in a little \$ trouble and need to ask for a little bread from people who get freebies or bulks, at least to cover postage which just doubled for bulk.

Hope to hear from you soon. Our book MS is in, and I'm real glad your piece is in it.

in struggle,



Phil Brown