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## Reaction to: The Postdoctoral Plan

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My first reaction is to acknowledge that the authors of this proposal have made an extremely important distinction, in my opinion, by clearly stating that "... psychotherapy is best understood as a specialty within and across the various psychotherapy-related professions and disciplines" I find myself quite able to support this assertion, provided that the range of foundational professions and disciplines is sufficiently broad to include at least psychology, education, medicine, social work, nursing, sociology, anthropology and even philosophy and pastoral studies.

I think that the establishment of postgraduate centres for training and education in psychotherapy has these potential merits:

1. Encouragement of better and more deeply educated candidates for training in the practice of psychotherapy,
2. Removal of some of the ammunition from "turf" guarders in psychology, psychiatry and counselling psychology who are bent on "claiming" psychotherapy to be the possession of a particular discipline,

3. Provision of a legitimizing framework for quality control and (possibly) certification for the practice of psychotherapy. At present, virtually anyone can make self-representation as a "psychotherapist" — a condition which is both ludicrous and appalling.

One difference I hold with the authors is that I don't believe the establishment of postgraduate training programs in psychotherapy would necessarily have as much impact on masters level programs as the authors predict. (Personally, I would welcome postgraduate training programs in counselling as well). The function of the masters level is to produce competent counsellors. There is a large and growing demand for individuals competent in the *practice of counselling*. I happen to believe that there is both a practice of psychotherapy and a practice of counselling.

I certainly agree that for those students whose eyes are on postdoctoral training in psychotherapy, graduate programs should be more devoted to generic and foundational study than to practical "counselling" competency development. However, it is doubtful if a majority of students moving into the "helping" professions have their eyes on postdoctoral studies, or even doctoral studies. Instead, they plan to "practice" social work, youth-child care, or counselling and will continue to get their training through masters' programs.

I will conclude my comment by congratulating Mahrer and Boulet for initiating discussion of the very important issues raised in their paper. I look forward to further discussion and an opportunity to argue that we need not only to move forward in the "practice" of psychotherapy along the lines outlined by the authors, but that at the same time we need to move forward in improving the "practice" of counselling, since the two practices are arguably different in purpose and in extent and type of training required.

#### *About the Author*

Dr. R. Vance Peavy is a Professor in the Department of Psychological Foundations at the University of Victoria. Formerly Editor of the *Canadian Journal of Counselling*, Dr. Peavy is well known in Canada for his research and scholarly efforts to establish guidelines for counsellor training and for his other contributions to the profession of counselling including a leadership role in the development of a national training program for employment counsellors in Canada.

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