

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.

Post-trauma counselling

I DON'T think that Professor Wessely's outright condemnation of counselling post-trauma clients should go unchallenged ('What's the worst idea on the mind?', September 2006). Unless he is prepared to dismiss all forms of counselling as useless (and such sentiments have in the past been voiced from his institution), the implication of his attack might be that people who would otherwise qualify as counselling clients should be refused it if and when they should be unfortunate enough to become victims of trauma.

It is certainly true that ill-judged and unskilled counselling proffered too soon after a traumatic event can make matters worse: I have seen a number of people some months post-incident whose previous experiences with the 'how-did-that-make-you feel' style of counselling have exacerbated their distress and inhibited recovery.

Despite Professor Wessely's exasperation with the routine addition of the word 'trained' in descriptions of

PA/EMPCS

Is post-trauma counselling vital for victims?

'counsellors', of course some degree of training is indeed necessary for those who undertake work with trauma victims. If counselling psychologists are persuaded by his arguments, this training could diminish or disappear, with sad results for the traumatised and for the profession.

Traumatic incidents are, for most people

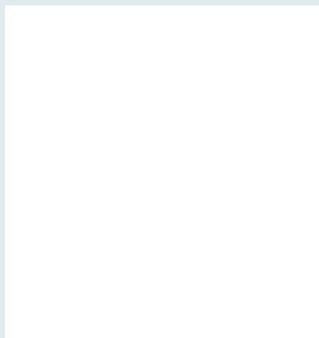
in the developed world, rare and unfamiliar events. They evoke changes of affect and behaviour that are often strange and frightening both to the victims and their close associates. Frequently, victims are treated (albeit kindly) in a way that seems to deprive them of their autonomy – as if they had suddenly become less effective in

SAVING THE PLANET

WHAT the remarkable study by Marks *et al.* (2006) referred to in the News section of the September issue ('The secret of happiness – No psychologists?') shows is (a) that, as a species, we are headed for a disaster of immense proportions due to our consumption of resources (quantified in that study on a country-by-country basis in terms of their 'ecological footprint'); but (b) that length of life and quality of life (of which happiness is only one component) do not depend on the material things we devote such enormous resources to producing and distributing. Specifically, it is possible for societies in the modern world to deliver high quality of life in a sustainable way. The question

then becomes: 'How are we, as a society, to quickly bring about radical change in the way we live?'

It appears from the President's column of the previous month that those psychologists who participated in the Society's parliamentary seminar on sustainability envisaged that the role of the psychologist in that process was restricted to such things as changing motivation and attitudes. Such a view is altogether too limited. Most people's values are already in the right place (see e.g. Nelson, 1986). The problem is to bring about the social changes that will enable us to collectively enact our values so as to enable us to live in a sustainable way.



This has centrally to do with evolving arrangements that will enable us to manage society in the long-term public interest. And that means not only asking why we daily engage in 100 behaviours we know to be wrong (which means rethinking our explanations of behaviour) but also developing new job

descriptions for those involved in the politico-bureaucratic public management processes, developing new staff appraisal systems, and developing new organisational arrangements for the management of society. These are not merely possible roles to be performed by organisational psychologists, they constitute the most important roles to be performed by them.

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References

- Marks, N., Simms, A., Thompson, S. & Abdallah, S. (2006). *The (Un)happy Planet Index*. London: New Economics Foundation. Downloadable from www.neweconomics.org and www.happyplanetindex.org
- Nelson, E.H. (1986). *New values and attitudes throughout Europe*. Epsom: Taylor-Nelson.

dealing with their world. 'Survivor guilt' takes many strange forms, and often comes as a surprise to those who do not understand it. Post-traumatic symptoms may persist for longer than a victim's family and associates 'reasonably' expect, and can lead to social isolation, depression, and even suicide.

For all of the above reasons, properly conducted counselling can be of considerable and perhaps vital help to trauma victims. I feel that an outright condemnation of all post-trauma counselling, based on illustrations of its misapplication, is morally wrong. It can

only worsen the plight of the sufferers, and delay the development of effective ways of helping them.

Donald H. Taylor
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Hampshire

Parenting, the CPD way

I HAVE fairly recently become a Chartered Forensic Psychologist and I am currently on maternity leave, so I have little opportunity to access information regarding the world of psychology. I look forward to reading *The Psychologist* as it gives me an opportunity to catch up on some developments in psychology and keep up to date on current issues. I was pleased to see the article regarding continuing professional development (CPD) in September's edition, as this is something that I know that I need to do successfully if I am to maintain my hard-earned chartered status.

However, this article contained information contradictory to that given to me by the Society's CPD helpline. I read the CPD information enclosed with my practising certificate and was unsure as to what the rules were regarding maternity leave. I then spoke to some colleagues, one of whom suggested that I phone the CPD helpline. The helpful member of staff to whom I spoke, informed me that I would not be required to submit a CPD log as I was on maternity leave and that I would have my practising certificate renewed when the current one expired. This was a big relief to me as I felt that learning to be a parent was about as much challenge as I could handle at that point in time.

I gave the matter little further thought, until I received a letter informing me that I should have submitted my CPD log. I then wrote to the CPD team explaining that I had been told that I was not required to submit a CPD log as I was on maternity leave. I also requested that they confirm this in writing, which they did. I was, therefore, very concerned to read in the article by Laura Golding and Ian Gray in *The Psychologist*: 'This statute [regarding CPD] applies to all chartered psychologists holding a practising certificate, irrespective of the number of hours worked or degree of experience or time taken out of the profession for specific reasons such as maternity leave or long-term sick leave.'

I will make it my priority to ensure that I am up to date regarding developments in my field upon my return to work as I see this as my professional responsibility. However, as a new parent I fail to see that it is realistic to expect people on maternity leave to have the opportunity and ability to undertake effective CPD. It would appear that this rule was written by someone with no intimate knowledge of new parenthood.

Elizabeth Halsey
Preston

MARTIN Seager (Letters, October 2006) should note that is most unwise to poke fun at an authoritarian parent – but only if that parent is prepared to carry out its

threats. He says that 'With new CPD procedures, even our most senior members are now... subject to an attitude of "you will lose your accreditation unless you continually prove to us why you should keep it".' In fact, the Privy Council has not yet approved any such sanctions and practising certificates will not be withheld from people who do not submit a CPD log 'until further notice'. This was the case last year also.

So, a parent that threatens all manner of dire punishments but then doesn't carry them out – a guaranteed recipe for delinquency I would have thought.

Russell Drakeley
The Coach House
Didsbury
Manchester

Mike Carpenter, the Society's head of Membership and Qualifications, replies:

Members are not required to make a CPD submission whilst they are on maternity leave or long-term sick leave. The expectation is that they will maintain a record of their CPD up until the time of going on maternity leave, and continue once they return to work with a view to making a CPD submission when it is due.

Our experience suggests that members on maternity leave are a diverse group in terms of both the amount of time taken on maternity leave and their preferences regarding their own CPD during this time. Some members wish to

submit their log early before starting their maternity leave, some do not wish to think about CPD at all whilst on maternity leave, whilst others wish to continue undertaking and recording a limited amount of CPD during that time. It was therefore felt appropriate to set quite a general guideline relating to maternity leave and to ask members to contact the office to discuss the particular arrangements that would best suit their individual needs.

It is unfortunate that the wording in the Golding and Gray article might be construed as contradictory to this. I hope that this response will help to reassure members.

On the issue of 'sanctions', it had originally been planned that they would be introduced in some form during the second year of the scheme. However, the Statute changes required to help facilitate this have only just been approved by the Privy Council. The Board of Trustees will now need to decide the procedures for implementing sanctions, and we will advise members on this as soon as possible. In the meantime, because we believe that it is good practice, we are encouraging all members to continue to prepare and submit their CPD records as normal.

DEADLINE

Deadline for letters for the December issue is **13 November**

Volunteering their view

WE read with interest the debate sparked following the advertisement of an 'honorary assistant psychologist' and thought that its readers might like a perspective on this from the horse's mouth. We are a group of four voluntary assistant psychologists, currently working one day per week in adult psychological services for Pennine Care NHS Trust, a specialist mental health service. Whilst our experience

is only one day per week and thus permits us to also hold down regular full-time paid work, in contrast to the six months of unpaid full-time work offered in the honorary advert, we feel that our direct experience of voluntary assistant psychologist work permits a valid side to the argument.

We have nothing but praise for the experience we have had with Pennine Care, whose team has welcomed us with

enthusiasm and a hearty willingness to share their knowledge and experience with us. The relationship we have developed with the team has been beneficial on both sides – we get experience of working within a multidisciplinary team, regular supervision with a clinical psychologist, opportunities to undertake specific CBT interventions with clients and the opportunity to learn and be confident with administering

neuropsychological assessments – all invaluable foundations for a professional career within the field. For the team, they get a willing workforce who are able to provide an increased presence and input to an overstretched and underfunded service, something we are sure every NHS trust could do with at this time. Initial costs of time spent in training and management of us will soon pay dividends as we are able to undertake

TOM CARRUTHERS (1928–2006)

TOM Carruthers died in August at the age of 77. He was a Glasgow man through and through and his loss will be noted with sadness by many generations of Glasgow psychology graduates.

With a first degree in English and History he came to psychology via education, having trained as a teacher and served in the RAF as an education officer in Germany. His first job at Glasgow University was as an appointments officer, starting his lifelong interest in vocational guidance; after a BEd degree his interest spread out to all the applications of psychology in the world of work, the core of his teaching in Glasgow University.

When in the late 1960s the Church of Scotland sought to make its selection of ministers more effective, the initial contact came through Tom, and he became and remained a core member of the team of Scottish psychologists who helped to bring a professional and objective view to that process; as it evolved, Tom was always at the centre.

Tom had very early on become an active member of the Society; I recall him in his stint as Chairman of the Scottish Branch, floating the idea of a generic applied psychology, a notion that the Divisions were not yet ready to contemplate.

He became a strong supporter of the fledgling Division of Occupational Psychology (DOP), and spent many years on that committee, including a good spell as treasurer. He went on to represent the Division on the Admissions Committee and served for many years on the DOP Board of Examiners. Meantime his international interest had led him to volunteer to be the BPS representative on a task force of EAWOP – the European Association of Work and Organizational Psychology. He did not merely attend, but took a key role in mediating and integrating contributions to enable that group to produce an influential report on the various routes by which people qualified as work/organisational psychologists and how they bridged the gap between training and practice.

He continued active in EAWOP for eight years, always standing out for his gentle, non-judgmental, listening and integrating skills – those of a counsellor; indeed, and it can be no surprise that he

had moved firmly toward that field. (His wife Barbara is herself a well-regarded counselling psychologist.)

Everyone who has written to me about Tom has mentioned his talent for bringing people in, for making them feel valued, his ability to draw together disparate views on contentious issues and to act as peacemaker and developer of compromises. To see Tom chair a committee was an object lesson in conciliation.

Not surprisingly perhaps, Tom did not adapt readily to the shifting goalposts of academic life; he did not do much research, nor publish much – his contribution was with his students and in applying his fine brand of psychology in work situations, and very many people are the better for it. Yet, building on his EAWOP work, he did contribute a chapter on 'Roles and Methods' to Nik Chmiel's *Introduction to Work and Organizational Psychology: A European Perspective* (2000).

Tom was all heart, but it was his heart that finally failed him. He will be greatly missed by all his many friends and colleagues and, of course by Barbara and their five children, and the six grandchildren. How typical of Tom to build a strong structure!

David M. Nelson

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Charlestown
Dunfermline

specific interventions with clients deemed to be within our capability, as well as help in some of the more administrative tasks that can often be waylaid; for example, conducting departmental audits and literature searches.

Mr Morris (Letters, September 2006) certainly does raise an important point though with his suggestion of a formal code of regulation for voluntary assistant psychologist posts. With no formal regulation or even recognition from the BPS as to what a volunteer post entails, 'voluntary assistant psychologist' on our CVs portrays very little to potential employers or clinical training application boards about what we do or what we know. Just as employment as an assistant psychologist immediately portrays a number of things – knowledge on protocol-based psychological assessment, formulation/delivery of care plans, assistance in the design/implementation of audit and research etc – employment as a voluntary assistant psychologist needs to have a consistent understanding with potential employers as to the standard experience applicants like ourselves will have received. The danger we perceive is that people such as Mr Bywater may see our voluntary experience to be of little more than evidence of the 'affluent and the desperate, being exploited by an unethical Trust' (Letters, August 2006). In actual fact, voluntary work has proven to be a multi-beneficiary experience and we would thoroughly recommend the inclusion and standardisation of these posts within modern psychological services.

Suzanne Daniel with Kieran Beard, Helen Robinson and Kiera O'Dell
68a Oldham Road
Ancoats
Manchester

A gender challenge

HAVING seen an inevitably all-male top four psychologists in the June edition, I was even more sorry to see a woman defending Freud's dubious contribution in September's *Psychologist*. Whilst not surprised it was the only woman, I was astonished at how little the contributor's view had squared with my own perception of the great harm done by Freud's theories to women and homosexuals.

Have I been misunderstanding my culture, or is it not the woman's 'fault' if her son is a homosexual or a rapist? Isn't it really wish-fulfilment if a woman is raped?

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? Didn't Freud have to add on female equivalents to his male Greek perspective (most of his theories he stole from the Kathars anyway) because, like the Greeks, he had discounted women?

We are still living with the terrible sexist legacy of Freud. Some people still genuinely believe women secretly want to be raped. Sorry – but if *The Psychologist* is going to keep up this deifying of Freud, I'm

Deifying Freud

not sure I want my membership!

And just to dispel the myth that psychology is a male tradition, let's run a season of the many female psychologists who have really helped our society. I bet you can't name six!

Jennifer Poole
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Romsey
Hampshire

Counselling trainees – The poor relations?

HAVING followed the discussion concerning the potential exploitation of unpaid, 'volunteer', assistant psychologists in recent issues, I feel impelled to remind readers of the current situation faced by trainee counselling psychologists, of which I am one. There is currently no funded training for counselling psychologists. Whilst NHS trusts seem increasingly willing to offer posts interchangeably to either clinical or counselling psychologists (thus seemingly recognising the equally valuable contribution made by counselling psychologists) the bald fact remains that whilst clinical psychologists are financially supported throughout their training (currently receiving approximately £23,000 p.a.) counselling psychologists are wholly self funded.

Having to accept unpaid work so as to gain the necessary experience to be accepted on a course may be an unpalatable beginning for clinical trainees, but having to

work unpaid as a final-year, post-MSc trainee, in addition to meeting all the expenses of course fees and living costs is surely even more so. Given the strict requirements regarding number of client contact hours, in my experience counselling psychology trainees may well end up absorbing a significant proportion of an organisation's workload whilst on placement. In this respect, contrary to John Morris's suggested guidelines for volunteers (Letters, September 2006), we are almost always doing work 'which a paid person would normally be expected to perform'.

It is certainly not conducive to any sense of personal value or professional recognition that all such effort goes wholly unrewarded and especially so when working alongside well-paid clinical colleagues. It also leaves counselling psychology trainees in the nonsensical position of doing work seen as unworthy of remuneration one day, and competing for highly paid professional posts the next.

The Division of Counselling Psychology is currently debating the pros and cons of funded training, and there is certainly a sense that in order to preserve some professional independence from the demands of the NHS, it is necessary to resist simply replicating the clinical training model. Not all counselling psychologist wish to pursue an NHS career and the current flexibility and creative possibilities for training remain an important difference in counselling psychology for some. That said, if the NHS wishes to benefit from the experience and expertise of counselling psychologists as seems to be the case if the *Appointments Memorandum* is anything to go by, I believe that trainees should receive some financial reward for the many hours dedicated to client work whilst on placement. Have I felt exploited? I'm afraid to say I have.

Michelle Thatcher
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Kingswood
Bristol

Working together for children

LAST month's news item summarising the findings of the DfES review of the role of educational psychologists (EPs) rightly refers to the urgent need for the government to take action to secure the funding of training. Despite the fact that there is a substantial and growing demand for EP services, there is a complete absence of a funding route that would enable suitably qualified and experienced applicants to join a training programme.

But it is important not to overlook other key messages that are contained in the report. As the recommendations indicate, there is a great deal that EPs can do for themselves to develop the profession and improve the quality of their work within the context of the new Children's Services and the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda. In particular, they can develop more explicit criteria that can be used to assess the impact of their work in relation to meeting the five ECM outcomes for children (be

healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution, achieve economic well-being). In addition they can build on the opportunities provided within the new children services structure to develop

EPs and clinical psychologists working with children – considerable overlap

more effective multi-agency work.

Finally they, and the professional associations representing all applied psychologists, should begin discussions as to ways in which EPs and clinical psychologists working with children can work more closely together, share CPD opportunities, combine elements of initial training and consider whether, in the long term, the two professions might merge. There are compelling reasons why these discussions should take place. Our report indicates there is a considerable degree of overlap in the work undertaken by both groups, particularly in the areas of pre-school work and child mental health. The new children services' structures have facilitated more joint working.

Some parents and other professional groups are confused about the respective roles of the two professions. There is also a synergy in the initial training route – potential EPs and CPs are required to have GBR and to complete a three-year doctoral training programme and potential EPs no longer need to be teachers. Hence there will be very close similarities in the knowledge and skills of EPs and CPs who wish to work with children once they complete their training.

Peter Farrell
School of Education
University of Manchester

Editor's note: See also an online only article by Farrell and colleagues on the Psychologist site, at www.bps.org.uk/dnmf.

PARTISAN ABOUT FREUD

LIKE Steven Kemp (Letters, October 2006), I thought it laudable to mark the 150th anniversary of Freud's birth by a special issue. But was I the only one to notice the glaring incongruity between the interesting contributions of seven esteemed colleagues and his illogical, partisan vitriol?

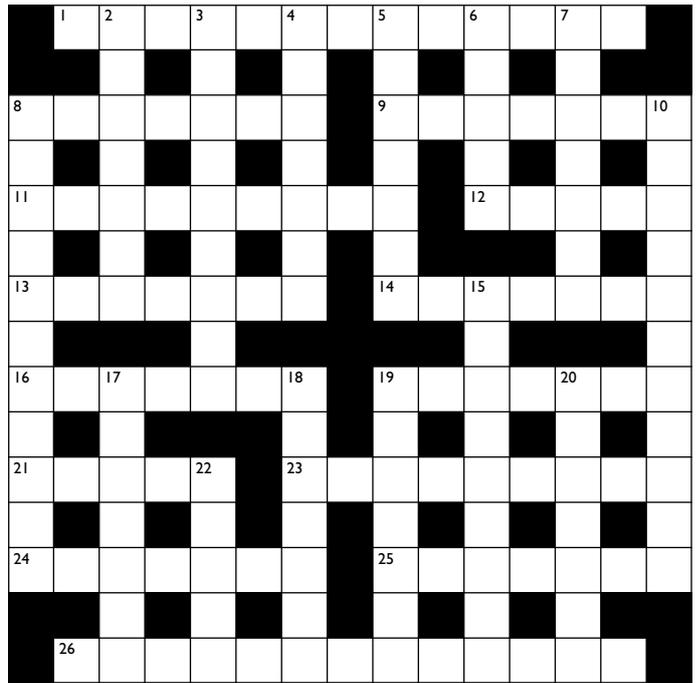
Those of us who put psychoanalytic ideas to good clinical use in our day-to-day work have long observed that assaults on psychoanalytic thinking have a character unlike criticisms of other psychological ideas in their vehemence and their venom.

The range and quality of the

contributions to the special issue (mostly not from psychoanalysts) suggested that finally we are having a much-needed mature dialogue in the pages of *The Psychologist*. There is a growing culture in psychology of constructive debate between people with different views of mental life. Hopefully Steven Kemp's hackneyed knee-jerk response is part of a predictable margin of opinion, rather than representing the mainstream view in our society.

Stephen Blumenthal
Tavistock Centre
120 Belsize Lane
London NW3

PRIZE CROSSWORD No.30



INFORMATION

■ I AM a BSc Hons psychology graduate, studying an Abnormal and Clinical Psychology MSc, and am currently seeking **work experience in both clinical and research psychology settings in the Swansea area.** I have previous work experience (both voluntarily and employed) of working with EDs in a therapeutic, multi-disciplinary, tertiary service.
Elina Telford
 0796 827 1890
 Lin_telf@hotmail.com

■ I HAVE a BSc Hons psychology degree and an MSc degree in the psychology of health and mental performance. I am looking for **voluntary experience in a clinical psychology setting in the Bristol/South Gloucestershire area.**
Marie Grinnell-Williams
 mpgrinnellwilliams@yahoo.com
 0787 604 6462

■ I HAVE just retired as an independent forensic and educational psychologist. I have many **psychological tests, ranging from intelligence and achievement tests to personality tests, tests of suggestibility, etc.,** which I no longer need. It occurs to me

that there may be people setting up as independent psychologists who might be in need of such tests. If anyone in that position is interested and would like to contact me, I would be pleased to hear from them. I would of course have to be sure that they are appropriately qualified to use the restricted tests.

Anne Court
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 annecourtbrown@yahoo.co.uk

■ CAN you **help our son Daniel, an eight-year-old autistic boy? We are looking for volunteers** who would like to learn a new skill and at the same time make a very real difference in the life of a very special little boy.

Son-rise aims to promote social and communication skills, including improving eye contact. A child-led programme which involves having lots of fun through creative play. Training will be given, and you will be part of a team. We are based in east London.

If this sounds like something that appeals to you, please give me a call.
Dawn Wedajo
 020 7247 0523

Solution to Prize Crossword No.29

Across: 1 Self-discipline, 9 Icing, 10 Expansive, 11 Nightspot, 12 Annul, 13 Root, 14 Referendum, 17 Generality, 19 AC/DC, 22 Ruing, 24 Mechanism, 26 Increases, 27 Offal, 28 In a state of flux.

Down: 1 Skinner, 2 Lying down, 3 Digits, 4 Sleep, 5 Inpatient, 6 Linkage, 7 Nairn, 8 Bedlam, 15 Eclampsia, 16 Deceitful, 17 Garcia, 18 Regress, 20 Complex, 21 Lay off, 23 Incan, 25 Caste.

Winner: Mark Taylor, Hailsham, East Sussex

Send entries (photocopies accepted) to: **Prize Crossword, The Psychologist, St Andrews House, 48 Princess Road East, Leicester LE1 7DR. Deadline for entries is 4 December 2006.**

A £25 book token goes to the winner, drawn at random from all correct entries.

Across

- 1 Work expands according to this neurological disorder as a rule? (10,3)
- 8 Journalist was returned tool (7)
- 9 Turn away from by-product (4,3)
- 11 More returned in call to counter Lee-Boot effect? (9)
- 12 One dispenses spirits to do with the eye (5)
- 13 Teeming with deliveries to manage (7)
- 14 The woman has been to liquor house (7)
- 16 Sailor visiting Millennium building north of corporation? (7)
- 19 Further dose of drug given in child's seat (7)
- 21 Plays around despite paralysis (5)
- 23 End visit after narrow escape? (5,4)
- 24 Twists around some galaxies (7)
- 25 Knocked to the floor by illness (4,3)
- 26 They produce dopamine from laden garlands (8,6)

Down

- 2 Grow together at current on Greek island (7)
- 3 Novelty message on broken skis has no weight (9)
- 4 Urban development in west covered by law man (3,4)
- 5 Morsels of meat from chicken and shellfish (7)
- 6 Crafty, it's said, to go to Irish county (5)
- 7 Disciple given a job by the French (7)
- 8 One wallowing on university grounds using only part of the brain (11)
- 10 Psychophysical generalisation concocted by Wechsler involving fan? (8,3)
- 15 Heather supports Eastern drunkard with specialist collection (9)
- 17 Loitered when every single one had died out (7)
- 18 A coin is circulated in divided city (7)
- 19 Kick over stage to make illicit drink (7)
- 20 Followed, but lagged behind (7)
- 22 Why cereal, we hear, in a test for rats? (1,4)

Name.....

Address.....

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