

# 6 AT SCHOOL LACK ACCREDITED PH.D.'S

Director of Group-Therapy Center Here Among Them

By IVER PETERSON

One of the largest group-therapy training schools in the city is operating with a number of faculty and advisory council members who are listed as having advanced degrees from nonaccredited and, in at least one case, non-existent universities.

Group Relations Ongoing Workshop (GROW), 312 West 82d Street, lists at least five faculty members with Ph.D.'s from Philathea College, a former Bible school in London, Ontario, which is not accredited in Canada and is not recognized by any accredited American college or university.

GROW's founder and executive director, H. Edwin Smith, is listed as having a doctorate from an unaccredited college in Florida.

The group-therapy school, which has several faculty members holding advanced degrees in medicine and psychology from accredited universities, uses the group-discussion method to teach paying students how to conduct their own "behavioral sciences" programs dealing with the emotional and social problems of their clients.

GROW's catalogue states that its training is approved by five "academies" and associations — they are little-known—whose members and founders are connected in one way or another with GROW itself.

Mr. Smith, who uses the title "Dr.," agreed in an interview yesterday that several of his faculty members' doctorates—as well as his own—were not from accredited institutions.

But he said that this did not detract from the value of the courses his school offered.

His wife, Mildred Cason Smith, who is GROW's administrative director, said many of the school's 350 teachers, who work part-time, had no college or university degrees at all.

## 5 Categories of Training

"We hire people to teach here on the basis of their ability," said Mrs. Smith, who does not hold any degrees. The question of the faculty members' credentials, which are traditionally viewed as an important part of a conventional school's reputation, has "got absolutely nothing to do with the actions of the school and of the faculty," she added.

GROW is registered with the State Education Department as a privately owned trade school, and is licensed to conduct occupational training.

Graduates earn certificates in five categories, ranging from "group worker," for which the course fees are about \$1,800, to "training supervisor," which may cost about \$5,000 in course fees, GROW officials said.

Dr. Edward F. Carr, director of the State Division of Higher Education, has been dealing with efforts by GROW to affiliate its courses with other schools in the state.

GROW's advertisement of faculty members with unrecognized degrees on its literature is "one of the things that leads us to question their suitability," he said yesterday.

A state evaluation of GROW's program had reported praise for the school's encounter programs but criticism for other aspects of the courses and school facilities, he said.

## "Let the Chips Fall"

"It's pretty difficult to tell here where the charlatanism ends and the integrity begins," Dr. Carr said. "We're not trying to crucify anybody. If there are wrongs and if there is a fraudulent aspect here, we'll let the chips fall where they may. We don't want to stomp out anything that may be a very good idea."

The GROW catalogue lists the American Academy of Behavioral Science as having approved its training. The academy's address is the same as that of Thomas A. Edison College in Palm Beach, Fla., from which Dr. Smith said he earned a Ph.D. in 1970. A reporter on a Miami newspaper said the college was "an answering service and a letter drop."

GROW training was also listed as approved by the American Association of Clinic Physicians and Surgeons, whose Brooklyn address is given as care of Dr. Edward D. Berger, a member of the GROW advisory council.

The American Institute for Group Counseling is also given as having approved GROW training. Its address is listed as care of Joseph Wysong, who holds a Ph.D. from Philathea College and is also a member of the GROW Advisory Council.

Dr. and Mrs. Smith said that GROW was not making any profits, although it is a stock-issuing corporation, and that the school's "struggle is to break even."

Mrs. Smith said a "very dirty smear campaign" was being conducted against psychotherapy groups such as GROW by members of the established psychiatric and psychological community, who she said resented the group therapists' work in the mental health area.