Editorial

From this issue, the journal's twenty-sixth and the end of its ninth year, I will be retiring as Editor of *Psychotherapy and Politics International*, and will become a Consulting Editor alongside Andrew Samuels. I am handing over to Keith Tudor, who will be known to many in the UK as former Director of the Temenos Institute in Sheffield, author and editor of many publications, and a luminary of person-centred therapy and transactional analysis. Keith is now an Associate Professor at AUT University in New Zealand, and among other things his editorship will hopefully bring a much stronger Pacific presence to the journal. Keith has for the last few issues been PPI's Reviews Editor, and intends to continue in that role for the time being.

I want to take this opportunity to consider the developing history of PPI and its role. When the idea of the journal came to me in about 1999, my first move was to consult Andrew Samuels: as the major figure in – indeed, creator of the concept of – the modern field of psychotherapy and politics, his involvement was clearly indispensable. Together we did the rounds of appropriate publishers, meeting with little positive response until we approached Colin Whurr of Whurr Books. Colin was keen on developing his stable of journals, up to that point focused mainly on aspects of medicine; beyond that, though, he was enthusiastic about the concept of PPI (in fact he added the 'International') and was consistently supportive of the project.

PPI quickly gathered a large Editorial Board from around the world, and a group of Associate Editors primarily (for convenience of communication) from the UK, most of whom are still with us, and who especially in the earlier stages contributed crucial vision and energy. I well remember our first meeting in the enormous library of Petruska Clarkson's Harley Street consulting rooms, on oriental cushions under the wall-mounted aquarium. James Taylor became our first Reviews Editor, and over several years facilitated a series of quirky, often humorous, unconventional review pieces.

Crucially important was the practical support of a number of prominent figures whose work in one way or another explored connections between psychotherapy and politics. What every journal needs is submissions; and Susie Orbach, Luise Eichenbaum, Arnold Mindell, Emanuel Berman, Janine Puget, Neil Altman, Polly Young-Eisendrath, Petruska Clarkson, Muriel Dimen, Hal and Sidra Stone, Carol Gilligan, Gabrielle Rifkind, Nancy Caro Hollander – all these, among others, generously contributed work to the first few issues of a fledgling journal with a very small readership; and, of course, their presence helped that readership to grow. It is also noticeable how these authors are drawn from a remarkably wide range in the field of psychotherapy and counselling; and this has been a crucial feature of the journal right from the beginning, that it presents material as equally as possible from the psychodynamic, the humanistic and (to a lesser degree, though not by our choice) the behavioural approaches. This even-handedness is now very rare in the field, and itself represents a

political position of support for a communicative pluralism, when modalities are on the one hand disappearing into laagers, and on the other blanding out into genericism.

After the first few years, Colin Whurr sold his business and titles to John Wiley & Sons; and after a few more years, Wiley amalgamated with Blackwell to form Wiley-Blackwell. As part of a much larger organization, for some time PPI understandably received less attention, and its commercial viability was uncertain. What assured our survival was the decision of Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility to adopt PPI as their house journal, thus guaranteeing a substantial number of annual subscriptions. This also meant that as editor I became a *de facto* member of the PCSR steering group, bringing me into an organization which has since become very important to me, and which I think is unique in its exploration of the political implications of therapy.

Two other factors have helped PPI not only to survive but to flourish. One was the general shift to electronic publication as the primary source of income for academic journals; this meant that we were not dependent to the same degree on selling paper copies, and also that our content, some of it quite specialized, could be found by those interested through Internet search. The other was the appointment of Rachel O'Kane as our Wiley-Blackwell Publishing Manager: Rachel's energy, care and new broom gave PPI a huge boost, as well as a fresh cover and general format. Rachel has long ago moved on to higher things, but our relationship with Wiley-Blackwell, and with our current publishing assistant Claire Shuttleworth, continues to be very positive.

After nine years of publication, then, PPI feels stable and healthy. Like other editors of new journals, for the early years I had to put a good deal of energy into soliciting manuscripts in order to fill each issue! That has very much changed, and now the journal more or less fills itself, although I have of course continued to seek out relevant and interesting possibilities, including special features of papers from relevant conferences.

It is interesting to look back at the last nine years and to get an overview of the topics covered. I think the most frequent and consistent themes have been war and conflict, and societal trauma. There is of course a large overlap between the two. We have also had papers about trauma in a wider sense, and about the interplay of individual and social traumatization, and how powerfully this tangled, matted carpet of suffering suppresses the potential for creative change (Audergon, 2004; Wasdell, 2003; Bloom, 2004a,b, 2005). We have looked at the inherited traumatic effects of violent conflict, and specific efforts at practical conflict resolution and dealing with the after-effects of conflict, in Ireland (Elliot et al., 2004; Elliot, 2005; Kapur, 2005, 2008), Croatia (Audergon and Arye, 2005), Venezuela (Llorens, 2009a,b) and, especially, Palestine/ Israel (Berman, 2003; Rifkind, 2004; Singer, 2006; Avissar, 2009; Katz, 2010; Hadar, 2011).

Throughout PPI's history we have received and published a large number of submissions on Palestine/Israel. This includes two very interesting pieces (Berman, 2003; Avissar, 2009) focused specifically on how Israeli therapy practitioners respond to the conflict. Where we have failed, however, is in obtaining any writing from Palestinians themselves. And this is not for lack of trying: I made several attempts to get submissions, by contacting people in the UK whom I knew were in touch with Palestinian therapy organizations, or by directly approaching bodies like the Palestine Trauma Centre in Gaza. Nothing ever came back, and it is hard to know why – except that people directly in the line of fire obviously have less time available to write about it.

PPI has consistently published papers on ecopsychology and on climate change, issues which have steadily worked their way into the mainstream of psychotherapy and counselling

(Prentice, 2003; Rust, 2004, 2008; Randall, 2005; Evans, 2006; Chatalos, 2006; Heuer, 2011; Robertson, 2011). This may seem a lot, but I would have liked to publish more, and hope to contribute papers of my own on this subject to PPI in future. There are other topics on which I would like to have had more contributions. Some of these I have actively tried to seek out; with others, it is only at this point of retrospection that I notice their absence. Although we have published quite a lot, especially in the earlier years, on gender politics – masculine as well as feminine – and psychotherapy (e.g., Eichenbaum and Orbach, 2003; Dimen, 2004; Eichenbaum, 2004; Gilligan, 2004; Emery, 2005; Nakamura, 2006; Rowan, 2008; Spong, 2008; Ben-Shahar, 2010a; Rajan, 2011; Zentner, 2011), we have done much less well with class (I can only identify two papers focused squarely on this: Walkerdine, 2007, and Mitchison, 2009) and with ethnicity and racism (Altman, 2003; Clarkson, 2004; Lago, 2010) – in fact there was an embarrassingly complete absence, until Eugene Ellis's paper in this issue, of contributions on the theme of therapists of colour. I am also rather surprised, given my own therapeutic background, to find that PPI has only really published two pieces from a body psychotherapy perspective (Ben-Shahar, 2010a,b).

Among the other topics covered over these nine years – and I am sorry to be unable to acknowledge every contribution – are narcissism as a politically inflected concept (Cowan-Jenssen and Goodison, 2009); radical therapy initiatives specific to locality (e.g., Chaplin, 2005) or to theme (e.g., Heuer, 2007); politics and spirituality (e.g., Samuels, 2004; Collins, 2008); and fundamentalism (e.g., Haaken et al., 2007; Emery, 2009; Alschuler, 2011). One topic close to my own heart has been the politics of the regulation and accreditation of therapists (e.g., Postle, 2003, 2010; Gladstone, 2007).This theme, together with ecological issues, has featured frequently in my own editorials, along with ecopsychology and climate change.

Some of the material on regulation has appeared in a category of which I am rather proud entitled 'Documents from the Front Line', an opportunity to publish non-academic productions of all kinds, ephemera, manifestos and round-robins. We have an example in this current issue via Keith Tudor. Another particularly pleasing feature has been the creative ongoing relationships that we have established with some individual authors. I am thinking especially of Sandra Bloom, who has written extensively for us on societal trauma (an epic four-part paper, Bloom, 2004a,b, 2005, 2006; and also Bloom, 2010, 2011); Hilde Rapp, who has contributed almost as extensively on change facilitation in the developing and the developed worlds (Rapp, 2003, 2006, 2007); the African therapist and academic, Augustine Nwoye, who has contributed on a variety of themes (Nwoye, 2009, 2010, 2011); and Victor Jeleniewski Seidler, who has also written from a position of deep knowledge about a number of different themes which all connect through his own political and cultural background (Seidler, 2009, 2010, 2011, this issue).

The current issue is a fairly typical example of what PPI has published over the years. It includes a special feature of papers from a conference, something that we have done several times previously – on this occasion the PCSR conference in May 2011 entitled 'We're all in this together'? Power, Inequality and Diversity. The four papers included are Eugene Ellis on issues of ethnicity and racism in the UK therapeutic community; Lyndsey Moon on the 'symbolic violence' which she argues underlies the way in which sexuality and gender are negotiated in therapeutic training; Jocelyn Chaplin, a veteran of PPI, arguing that achieving political equality requires 'a spiritual narrative'; and Richard House, Previn Karian and Julia Young on 'Power, diversity and values-congruent accountability in the psychological

therapies'. An interesting feature of this last paper is that it walks its talk, being a collaboration between a workshop leader and two workshop participants. Renos Papadopoulos and Victor Seidler contribute two 'big hitter' papers, giving a deep philosophical context to, respectively, work with refugees and the aftermath of Auschwitz; and the issue is completed with a Document from the Front Line on therapy regulation in Aotearoa New Zealand, contributed by Keith Tudor.

What stands out very strongly from this survey of PPI – perhaps too obviously to even notice – is that the vast majority of the journal's material takes what could be considered one side of the political argument. With very few exceptions, our contributions come from what is still called 'the left'. They certainly don't all agree with each other; but almost all of them take a clearly radical line in criticizing the attitudes and behaviour of the mainstream, in and beyond the field of therapy, and in championing constructive change of one sort or another.

This was not our deliberate intention in founding the journal: its Mission Statement says that 'it will not limit the political orientation of its contents. It welcomes controversy as a vital element in the creative development of its field.' I think the situation has come about in several ways, however: firstly, the fact that all of us involved at the beginning were in fact on the left, and known to be so, inevitably made it likely that submissions would be at this end of the spectrum. Also, though, most of the explicitly political writing in the field comes from the left; and this is conditioned by the fact that conservatives tend not to see their own position as political, but as a statement of objective reality, of 'how things are'. The explicitly political is the territory of the extremes of left and right, rather than of the conservative centre; and interestingly, few therapists seem to take radical right-wing positions.

I would have been pleased as a matter of principle, though I'm sure it would also have stuck in my craw, to publish more material taking a right-wing position on psychotherapy and politics. I would also like more international material – to definitively break out of the Anglo-American ghetto: PPI has published papers from a number of countries including India, Japan, Tanzania, Argentina, Venezuela, Germany and Israel, but often only once or twice, and generally not in large numbers. Keith's Pacific-based editorship should help with that. I would also like to read more from the CBT wing; and more from new modalities.

The last nine years have seen a developing polarization of the therapy field. On the one hand, many practitioners, whether they realize it or not, have become more deeply integrated into the machinery of late capitalism, as technicians working to smooth out rebellion and distress and return people to their allotted role in the economic and ideological systems. On the other hand, and as a developing contradiction, many practitioners have become part of a more or less conscious protest against these systems and the psychological damage they can cause. This is both a reassertion of therapy's traditional role of championing individual subjectivity; and, perhaps, the beginnings of a new role for therapy in facilitating what Hardt and Negri (2006) call the 'Multitude' – the pluralistic expression of resistance to repressive power in all its many forms.

Hardt and Negri suggest that this resistance is truly spontaneous in both form and content: 'Instead of an external authority imposing order on society from above, the various elements present in society are able collaboratively to organize society themselves' (Hardt and Negri, 2006, 337). They maintain that

> Despite the constant threat of violence and war, despite the sickness of the planet and its political systems, never before has the restlessness for freedom and democracy been so widespread throughout the world. . . . This world of rage and love is the real foundation on which the constituent power of the multitude rests. (Hardt and Negri, 2006, 353)

To me, this sounds like a revolution for psychotherapists and counsellors! In the pages of this journal, and in my own writings, a position has developed that sees therapy as inherently the champion of spontaneity, democracy, 'rage and love'. Of course there are many practitioners who don't see it that way at all: many exciting arguments still to have. I wish Keith Tudor and everyone else involved great success and satisfaction in facilitating these arguments; and you, the readers – without whom, in the full truth of the cliché, none of this would be possible – great pleasure in exploring them yourselves.

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