

## Editorial

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With the previous issue of the journal, *Psychotherapy and Politics International (PPI)* completed its first decade (2003–2012). That it exists, has developed, and has become as influential as it has is almost entirely to do with the vision and good offices of the journal's editor for the first nine years of its existence, Nick Totton. Nick is both a visionary and an activist and, in his breadth and depth of knowledge of a number of fields – literature, psychotherapy, politics, and ecology, as well as cuisine and horticulture (Nick enjoys both cooking and gardening) – is something of a Renaissance man. To this journal he has brought his vision; the astonishing breadth and depth of his knowledge of psychotherapy; a fine appreciation of the interplay between psychotherapy and politics; and a sense of renaissance, rebirth or renewal – which often involves a critique of the old, the conservative, and the reactionary. In addition to these qualities, Nick also has an enormous capacity for work and considerable stamina. Having taken over as editor and seen three issues, comprising 20 articles and eight other contributions, through to production, I am particularly appreciative of the work Nick has put into this journal over nine years, 26 issues, and nearly 200 contributions. Of course, no man is an island – or as the Māori proverb puts it: “Ehara taki toa i te taki tahi, engari he toa taki tini” [“I am not a lone warrior, but warrior amongst many”] – and Nick, whom many of us consider something of a warrior, has been supported in this endeavour over these years not only personally by his partner, Hélène Fletcher, and his friends and colleagues, but also, in this context, by members of the Editorial Boards and, notably, by Andrew Samuels, the journal's Consulting Editor.

Shortly after taking up this role I decided that that it would be appropriate to dedicate an issue to celebrating Nick's work in and contribution to psychotherapy and politics, and that this first issue of the journal's second decade seemed an appropriate time of transition to honour Nick, as Janus-like, we review the past and consider the future. This issue then is offered as a *festschrift*, a publication that honours a respected person, or as a *liber*, a book, or, more accurately, a *commentarium amoricum*, a journal of friends, one which discusses and celebrates the work of a significant, influential, inspiring – and challenging, provocative and controversial – figure in our field. With this in mind, and having consulted with and included Andrew Samuels in the plan, I approached a number of people involved in the different areas of interest and activity in which Nick has been engaged, and asked them to write an article on that particular area. The result is this *festschrift/commentarium* issue of *PPI* which encompasses a variety of articles – *festschrift*, review and

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personal/reflective – in appreciation of work for which Nick is well known, such as body psychotherapy (Asaf Rolef Ben-Shahar), alternative organising (Richard House, with Jennifer Maidman and Lucy Scurfield), the critique of professionalisation (Jonathan Fay), psychotherapy and politics (myself) and ecopsychology (Chris Robertson), as well as work for which he is less known such as on the paranormal (Rose Cameron) and his work as a trainer (Allison Priestman). The articles are arranged in a way that reflects the broad chronological development of Nick's interests, ideas and praxis.

In the first article Asaf Rolef Ben-Shahar writes specifically about Nick's contribution to body psychotherapy and, drawing on the image of bonfires, discusses three "hot potatoes" that Asaf sees in Nick's writing that have "inconvenienced" psychotherapy. He focuses particularly on the hot potato that is the body in psychotherapy. The second article, written by one of Nick's long-time colleagues, Richard House, with input from Jennifer Maidman and Lucy Scurfield, considers Nick's involvement in and contribution to the UK Independent Practitioners' Network (IPN). The article tells the story of the founding of the IPN and, with others, Nick's pivotal leadership role in the founding and development of what House (2013) refers to as "this radical counter-cultural approach to the 'psy' accountability in Britain" (p. 18). I am particularly appreciative of Richard's contribution to this issue as his and Nick's book *Implausible Professions* (House & Totton, 1997, a second, extended edition of which was published in 2011) was certainly pivotal in my own and, I know, many other people's thinking about issues of professionalisation, and autonomy and pluralism in the organisation/s of the profession. The next contribution focuses on this aspect of Nick's work, in particular his seminal article: "The baby and the bathwater" (Totton, 1999). The author, Jonathan Fay, who, like Richard, is an Associate Editor of this journal and a leading campaigner for free association and pluralistic organisation in psychotherapy, reflects on Nick's article and links it not only to the debates and struggles around professionalisation in Aotearoa New Zealand (see Dillon, 2011; Fay, 2011; Tudor, 2011), but also to his father-in-law's husbandry of a small farm in the Hawke's Bay of this country. Jonathan draws the analogy between the business model of agriculture and of psychotherapy and suggests that: "The hegemonic demands of efficient, effective 'clini-business' parallel the hegemonic demands of modern agribusiness" (p. 30). The article – and Jonathan's writing – is both poetic and evocative, and I am appreciative of his writing, and his support of the journal, as well as of his and his family's friendship and welcome of me and my family to my new homeland, which has included meeting his father-in-law Les, and seeing how he husbands Hinerua Farm. In the next article, which focuses on Nick's writings (from 2003 and 2007) on the paranormal, Rose Cameron, who herself has written about "subtle energy" (Cameron, 2000, 2002a, 2002b), takes up and elaborates Nick's claim that, conceptually, the existence of such energy questions and disrupts the view that we are separate bodies. Following this, in my own contribution to this issue and appreciation of Nick's work, I review his writings specifically on politics and psychotherapy and draw out a number of themes from them. Nick is probably as well known for his writing on ecopsychology as on politics and, of course, the two are inextricably linked. It is no coincidence that, as Nick stepped down from the editorship of this journal, he stepped into a new role as Chair of Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility (<http://pcsr.uk.ning.com/>), an organisation which, in many ways, brings together both these interests and imperatives. In his article, Chris Robertson, with reference to some of Nick's work on the "wild" and, specifically, "wild mind", re-examines the tension between domestication and wildness, and argues that the archetype of the Trickster is "a vital source of

imaginative power with which to face the demonic presence of collective destruction” (p. 52) Although Nick has been involved in training psychotherapists since the early 1980s, he has written hardly anything about training or education. I am therefore particularly delighted to include in this issue an article on this aspect of his work, written by Allison Priestman, a colleague of Nick’s and co-trainer with him and Stephen Tame of Embodied-Relational Therapy (<http://www.allisonpriestman.co.uk/page10.html>). Priestman describes Nick’s approach to training, his thoughts, values and meta-skills, and thereby provides us with a unique insight into Nick’s practice – or, better, praxis – of training. The *festschrift/commentarium* concludes with an appreciative afterword from Andrew Samuels, who offers his reflections on Nick through posing a number of questions about him. I have appreciated Andrew’s support for this issue, and I appreciate the honesty and playfulness with which he takes issue with some of Nick’s work and positions.

The first review in the Reviews section of this issue is, appropriately enough, a review of Nick Totton’s latest book *Not a Tame Lion* (Totton, 2012), the subtitle of which is *Writings on Therapy in its Social and Political Context*. The second review is a first for the journal in that it is a theatre review – of the play *Copenhagen* by Michael Frayn (1998), in the review of which Jennifer Re and Lazlo Nemes draw out some of the moral dilemmas portrayed in the play, and link the subjective setting of the play to Bion’s ideas about linking and thinking (Bion, 1959, 1962). Finally, Paul Solomon, who is becoming somewhat of a regular reviewer for *PPI*, reviews with his usual thoughtfulness and thoroughness another book on transgenerational trauma, this one by Gabriel Schwab (2010).

The “Notes from the Front Line” section of the journal continues to thrive, bringing a different kind or form of contribution: notes, reports, manifestos, etc. In this issue we have two very different contributions. The first is the write-up of a series of questions that the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) put to the candidates in last year’s election for the office of the Mayor of London. The UKCP put the same questions to all five candidates and had responses from three. Both questions and responses are reproduced here and I am grateful to the UKCP for its permission to publish this material. Apart from any interest in the content, I think the fact that an organisation such as the UKCP asked questions of politicians and, if you like, “political” questions is itself interesting. This feature also represents an interest that I have of engaging more with politicians about therapeutic matters and my hope is that the second decade of the journal will have more articles on psychotherapy written by politicians – so if you are one, or know one, or would like to recommend one to contribute, please contact me: keith.tudor@aut.ac.nz. The second contribution to this section is a report by Ian Parker of the International Conference on Marxism and Psychology, organised by the Psychology Faculty of the Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás de Hidalgo, with the support of a number of other organisations including *PPI*, and held in Morelia, Mexico in August 2012.

I hope that you, the reader, enjoy this issue, and join me in thanking Nick for all his work, his vision and commitment, his inspiration and perspiration, in developing and supporting the development of a number of areas in the field of psychotherapy and politics.

I enjoy surprises: both being surprised and organising surprises. Last year, with the help of my children and friends, I organised a surprise birthday party for my wife. I will never forget her face when she walked into what she thought was an empty house to be greeted by a huge cheer from a group of our closest friends. My only disappointment in offering this *festschrift/commentarium* to Nick is that, as we live on opposite sides of the world, I won’t

be able to see his face when he opens the envelope and sees this issue of *PPI*. Now there's a thought . . .

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