Editorial

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This issue of *Psychotherapy and Politics* International, and the last one of 2013, is a generic issue, although there are, in effect, some sub-themes which emerge in the articles: on health, the social world, and gender.

The first two articles on health are from different hemispheres but share an interest in health and wellbeing, and in alternative approaches to traditional definitions of health and illness. In the first, and against the background of the Australian government's policy, *Closing the Gap* (Australian Government Department of Social Services, 2013), which seeks to decrease the health and social inequalities between indigenous and non indigenous Australians, Tim Carey reports on a review of different understandings of indigenous wellbeing. In the article, Tim articulates the importance of self-determination and the centrality of control for health and wellbeing. He questions whether indices of health which are framed and measured in terms of Western – and, in effect, Northern – thinking are appropriate to indigenous Australians, and, more fundamentally, given the findings, whether the Australian government and, perhaps, non indigenous Australians really want the answer to the questions posed by this review. In some ways, the second article, on alternative health-related practices by John Lees and Richard Cleminson from the UK, takes Carey's forward by examining the political potential of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) which, as they point out, have for the most part stood outside centralised political power structures. They argue that the growth and popularity of CAM and, indeed, of psychotherapy, "suggests a changing understanding of what is implied by health and illness" (p. 195). The article encompasses both the past and the future of psychotherapy and does so by means of some reflections on our fascinating history, including: psychotherapy in action in Germany and Austria in the 1930s; concepts of the body and political praxis in the UK, Germany and Spain, also in the 1930s; and body culture in Portugal in the 1930s and 1940s. The authors' historical scope inspires me to encourage submissions of papers on aspects of the history of psychotherapy and its interface with politics. I am particularly delighted to see these two articles in print as I have a personal interest in positive (mental) health (see Tudor, 1996, 2010), and, for some years (2000–2006), with my partner, ran a (CAM) natural health centre in Sheffield, UK.

The next two articles focus on different aspects of the interface of psychotherapy, and the psychosocial analysis it offers, with the social/political world. In the first, drawing on ideas from political philosophy and economics, and depth psychology, Lawrence Alschuler, from Switzerland, via Canada, presents his analysis of what he refers to as a "backlash" to

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globalisation. He identifies this as including attempts to restore the welfare state (as distinct from the neo-liberal state); to increase social equality (as distinct from equity); and to resist the negative influence of narcissism (by means of a nurturing mother figure). His article also stands as a tribute to the Jungian analyst, Mario Jacoby (1925–2011), on whose ideas Lawrence draws. In the second of these two articles, Florentina Andreescu, from the USA, via Romania, discusses the significance of phantasy formations as a key social element that keeps or holds a community – and society – together. Drawing on a Lacanian framework, she suggests that the trauma associated with radical social change has the potential to transform such phantasy formations, and gives a wide range of examples to support her thesis: from the genocide of First Nations peoples in North America, through the 1989 Romanian revolution and Bosnian films, to American football's Super Bowl. This is a most interesting paper, due both to its conceptual approach to trauma, and to Florentina's astute application of her analysis to contemporary culture.

The last three contributions to this issue focus on gender. First, Konoyu Nakamura, from Japan, discusses Goddess politics in Japan. Drawing on analytical psychology, she examines the myth of Amaterasu-oh-kami (Heaven-Shining-Great-August-Deity), and how it has been used by different authors for differing political purposes. Encompassing commentary on Shintoism, state Shintoism and gender politics over several centuries of Japanese culture, Konoyu's paper provides us with both the broad brush as well as the subtle detail reminiscent of Sumi-e, the art form of Japanese brush painting. Konoyu has contributed before to *PPI*, also on the subject of gender, that is, on conservative gender roles and "ideal" feminine images (Nakamura, 2006), and, to date, is the only Japanese contributor to *PPI*; I appreciate her contributions and welcome other Japanese therapists and writers to contribute to the journal. The final article in the issue, by Philip Carter, is on men, specifically on a group training workshop called The Crucible, run by Philip and another colleague, Rex McCann, within a broader organisation, Essentially Men, in Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. The Crucible was set up as a workshop for men in which they could – and can – practise leadership in the context of cooperative relationships and, more broadly, a cooperative learning community. Drawing on his own background in psychodrama and sociodrama, Philip comments on this sociotherapeutic work as a political activity in challenging traditional forms of male leadership (represented by the image of the King and Kingdom), in favour of leadership based on "reciprocity, mutual respect and co-creation" (p. 252) (and a movement towards community). I have only recently met Philip and already appreciate his enthusiasm not only for his work but also for writing – and very much appreciate his speed in producing this article for this issue. The final contribution to this issue is a review by Previn Karian of a book on gender and sexuality by Christina Richards and Meg Barker.

As this is the last issue of the year, the final pages include, first, a note of the peer reviewers who have reviewed articles which have appeared in this year's issue – to all of whom, a sincere thanks as without their work the journal would not maintain the high standards it seeks to achieve; and second, author and subject indexes.

Before closing, I want to note an erratum in the previous issue. In Jocelyn Chaplin's review of Manu Bazzano's book *Spectre of the Stranger*, the subtitle was noted as "*Towards a Phenomenology of the Stranger*" when, in fact, it is and should have read: "*Towards a Phenomenology of Hospitality*"; my apologies to Manu for this error.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that *PPI* is going electronic – or, rather, going more electronic – in that, from the second issue of next year, the journal is moving to a system of receiving and processing submissions online through the ScholarOne software program. I am expecting that this will streamline the process of submissions and smooth the overall production of the journal – and, of course, encourage readers and authors of submissions to try it! Also, please note the forthcoming special issues on: "Psychotherapy is Political or it is Not Psychotherapy" (2014), "Psychotherapy and Marxism" (2014), "Groups and Crowds", and "Transactional Analysis and Politics"; as ever, all contributions – in the form of articles, reviews, and notes from any frontlines in psychotherapy and politics – are welcome. Happy reading, and may 2014 be more psychotherapeutic, more political, and more international!

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