

Editorial

Regular readers of this journal will notice its new style. This is the result of decisions within Wiley-Blackwell to streamline the number of its journal templates which includes, for example, a move to numbering sections and subsections of articles, and using eLocators instead of running pagination in issues, locators which will fully replace page numbers. It is fair to say that this change has been the subject of some robust discussion between myself and the publishers, and, while the final decision about the look of this (and other journals in the Wiley-Blackwell stable) rests with the publishers/owners, I wish to acknowledge its willingness to maintain and accommodate some more personal – and political – aspects of the house style and look of *Psychotherapy and Politics International*.

I have taken this opportunity to refresh other aspects of the journal, and introduced some new sections. In addition to the usual peer-reviewed articles, there will be a section for “Review Articles”, which offers practitioners and academics an opportunity to write a more detailed review of literature and/or practice. The second new section is titled “Talks”, which will provide a space for contributors to submit talks, speeches, and oral presentations, which, given their nature, would not necessarily be appropriate for peer review. The third new section on “Controversial Discussions” is, as its name suggests, an opportunity for contributors, usually two (and possibly more), to engage in a discussion, dialogue or debate which should certainly be controversial, and which may or may not be peer-reviewed. The title of the section is inspired by the original “controversial discussions” which comprised a protracted series of meetings of the British Psychoanalytic Society, which took place between October 1942 in February 1944 between psychoanalysts who identified with “the Viennese school”, represented by Anna Freud, and Melanie Klein and her supporters, which included Paula Heimann, Susan Isaacs, Roger Money-Kyrle, and Joan Riviere. I hope the discussions in this section will be as controversial as the original, ‘though, in this context, there is no obligation to come to a “Middle Group” position! The final new section, “Arts & Poetry”, will comprise creative contributions that might take a different form than that of the usual articles. The journal will still have sections devoted to “Notes from the Front Line”, and to “Reviews”, not only of books but also of other media.

I also wish to report some changes to the editorial line up. Professor Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, from the USA, and Dr Deborah Lee and Karen Minikin, from the UK, join an expanded group of Associate Editors. Maxine will be known to readers of the journal (see Sheets-Johnstone, 2008, 2010, 2012); Deborah and Karen are less known, so, as I have done before when I have appointed Associate Editors, I have asked them each to write something about their background and interests with regard to the subject of the journal, that is, psychotherapy, politics, and internationalism. Their introductory articles appear after this Editorial. Dr Jonathan Fay steps down as Reviews Editor but remains an Associate Editor; Deborah takes over as Reviews Co-Editor, supported by Dr Gottfried Heuer, who also becomes Arts & Poetry Editor. Professor David Pavón-Cuéllar takes up the editorship of the Controversial Discussions section. I will announce other Section editors in future issues of the journal. All of this is designed to rejuvenate the journal, and to ensure its continued relevance. I welcome and thank all these colleagues, and invite you, the reader, to keep them busy by submitting articles, review articles, talks, controversial discussions, art and poetry, notes, and reviews.

So to this issue. In the first article, Daniel Burston discusses Jacques Lacan’s Catholicism. Many people may not know that Lacan was Catholic, let alone about the influence of his religion – as well as his early atheism – on his writings. Daniel draws this out, taking issue both with Lacan’s piety towards Freud, as well as what he refers to as Lacan’s “crypto-revisionism” of Freud. Whilst Freud’s own appraisal of Christianity is well known – as is the impact that has had on the interface between psychoanalysis and psychotherapy and religion and spirituality – Daniel makes the point that Lacan’s own polemic against Freudian orthodoxy failed to grasp “the cultural-historical context in which Freud lived and worked” (p. 5).

The next article focuses on violence prevention and community-building. Arlene and Jean-Claude Audergon are well known for their work in promoting and facilitating community dialogue in some of the world's "hot spots" – on which Arlene has written before in *PPI* (Audergon, 2004; Audergon & Ayre, 2005). In this article Arlene and Jean-Claude focus on their work in Rwanda, facilitating community dialogue as a central strategy in transitional justice. Their work and the article illustrates their application of Arnold Mindell's (2002) methodology of "worldwork", that is, Process Oriented Psychology as applied to groups, especially in facilitating conflict resolution in polarised communities. Reflecting something of the work itself, the article is not an easy read. What I found most moving was the descriptions of people in conflict – survivors *and perpetrators* – coming and working together in dialogue.

Some years ago I met Doug Sellman at a national psychotherapy conference at which he was presenting a paper on the impact of alcohol and legislation concerning alcohol on the physical and mental well-being of New Zealanders. At the time I asked him if he would be interested to write something on the politics of alcohol and I am delighted that he has taken up my invitation. His paper, co-authored with Jennie Connor, Geoffrey Robinson, and Sam McBride, traces 30 years of alcohol reform in New Zealand, and offers a critical analysis of the New Zealand government's collusion with the alcohol industry. Whilst many readers and practicing psychotherapists will be well read in the psychology of addiction(s) and have strategies about working with addiction and addicts, I suspect that many of us are less familiar with the socio-political context of the alcohol industry, its influence and impact. Whilst this case study is specific to New Zealand, it is not unique in describing how governments compromise the physical and mental well-being of their citizens in favour of powerful vested, economic interests. Although the authors themselves do not make specific connections to psychotherapy or to personal experience of living with the consequences of excessive and/or inappropriate alcohol consumption, one of the peer reviewers of the article did, comments I reproduce with permission:

I am taking the unusual step of including a personal note of thanks. I read this submission with interest, and with growing dismay and anger. I am very pleased and moved that this work has been done. As well as being a psychotherapist, I am the parent of an adopted child with a traumatic early history, and a diagnosis of foetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD). Although we had previously had no confirmation of our daughter's birth mother's alcohol consumption while pregnant, when I began to suspect that this might be the situation, and it was confirmed, it took me over two years of jumping through hoops and lobbying to persuade anyone (from child and adolescent psychiatrists to social workers) to make a referral within the public system for an assessment for FASD. Even when I was finally successful, we had to agree to pay a proportion of the costs and this despite the fact that, as a result of my previous work in an NGO providing services for families, I was well-connected, knew the systems, and was able to strategise about how to use them. I also know that most families with children suspected of having alcohol-related disorders are far less resourced, and their children remain undiagnosed, and untreated. At time of writing, in this country, a diagnosis of FASD does not qualify a person for disability assistance. Thus I have a direct, painful, and ongoing experience of the social and political denial of alcohol-related damage and of the alliance between governments and the alcohol industry, and the consequent effects on services provided in our public health system.

It is rare for an author to contribute more than one substantive article to any one issue. However, we are blessed (or cursed) to live in such "interesting times" that have thrown up the election of Donald Trump to the presidency of the USA. In the previous issue of the journal, Anton Ashcroft wrote an article which addressed both Trump's pathology as well as the wider issue of post-truth politics (Ashcroft, 2015). Following the result of the election, I put out a call for papers on this event and phenomenon, to which Daniel Burston responded swiftly; as a result, I am grateful and delighted to include his article on this very topical subject. In it he reflects on the US presidential election with reference to discussions of authoritarianism, drawing on the work of Theodor Adorno et al. (1950), but also the earlier work of Wilhelm Reich (1933/1976). In doing so, Daniel re-examines the link between authoritarianism and the authoritarian personality and sadomasochism, and comments on its contemporary relevance.

Clearly *Psychotherapy and Politics International* represents a radical politics. As has been discussed, not least in the pages of this journal, both Brexit and the election of Donald Trump represent a triumph of prejudice over truth. Whilst, as Daniel argues, they represent the failure of neo-liberalism, they also represent a defeat for liberalism; thus, as I see it, one of the challenges that radicals face, certainly in the next four years, is how we position ourselves in and on a political ground that seems to be part of an old order that, to quote Bob Dylan (1964), "is rapidly fading". Indeed, part of the challenge of the movement against politics, political institutions, and institutionalised politics, is to understand what is represented by these votes and the prejudice and alienation behind them – and I hope that *PPI* will be a forum for such analysis and understanding. In the meantime, I take comfort from the hope that "the first one now will later be last", and that the times are – and will continue to be – "a-changing".

The next article is the first in a new "Talks" section, and I'm delighted – and honoured – that this is a contribution from Bob Hinshelwood, a highly respected elder in our community, a long-standing supporter of *PPI*, and a member of the Editorial Advisory Board. The article that appears here is based on Bob's talk in a series of "Political Mind" seminars, and was given at the Institute of Psychoanalysis in London, in June 2015. Under the title "reflection or action", Bob discusses the problem of – and offers some solutions to – bridging the different categories of influence represented by psychoanalysis (which represents unconscious and individual influence) and politics (which represents the conscious and external world and sphere of influence). The talk has only been lightly edited for publication and retains the liveliness of the original presentation – which is the purpose and, I hope, will continue to be a feature of this Section.

The next article is also the first in the new "Controversial Discussions" section, and came about as a result of a discussion between Gottfried Heuer and me about style. I am grateful to Gottfried for his engagement in this, and our decision to "go public" about some differences and disagreements. I hope the article will stimulate further thinking, and perhaps some correspondence about the politics of style in the journal and beyond.

One aspect of the political style of the journal has been the inclusion from time to time of a section "Notes From the Front Line" to encompass originally "material of a non-academic, practical and immediate nature, representing ongoing psycho-political process". The particular note in this issue, from Isaac Pizer, is from a different kind of front-line but one that, nonetheless, represents a poignant stimulus for a powerful description of some personal psychological processing about a significant political event, the Holocaust, which as we know, has led to significant and widespread intergenerational trauma. I am grateful to Isaac for submitting this personal reflection and to the UK magazine, *Transformations*, for permission to reproduce the article.

The final piece in this issue is another first in another new section on "Arts & Poetry", and is represented by a picture, in this instance of a sculpture designed by the Editor of this section, Gottfried Heuer. I know that Gottfried is keen to include more literary and visual material in the journal, so do send material for consideration to him at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ppi>.

I particularly hope you enjoy this issue of *Psychotherapy and Politics International*, and welcome any feedback on it as well as contributions.

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