

## Editorial

One of the advantages of this journal being online only is that the publishers have relaxed the word limit of articles, and this issue in particular benefits greatly from that. As a result, I'm delighted to introduce an issue which has fewer but longer articles, as well as two open letters, reviews, and poems.

The first article, *Borderlands*, by Gerri Mehra-Slavin, discusses the concept of borders and borderlands in relation to sectarianism and polarisation, with specific reference to political conflict in Northern Ireland (1968–1998). While the focus of the article is on Northern Ireland – or, from another frame of reference, the six counties – the thesis of the article is applicable to many other geographical areas in which borders represent disputed space. The article contains many treasures, including the author's reflections on the use of vignettes for both specific aspects of clinical expression, and as a fictional or non-fictional political storytelling device. In this case the (political) vignettes come from Mehra-Slavin's family, specifically, her siblings, which not only bring the personal/political voice(s) of that particular “collective organism”, but also, together with the clinical vignettes, bring a sense of a bigger and broader wholeness – and the seeking of wholeness and integration against and in the context of separation, sectarianism, and dis-integration. In what Marshall (2018) has referred to as “an age of walls”, it is imperative that we think about and understand our relationships with land, territory, and others, as well as the history of the borders on which so many walls, both literal and metaphoric, are built or proposed. This article is a tour de force and I thank both Mehra-Slavin for her skill in writing an article which, despite its length, sustains the reader's interest throughout, as well as Karen Begg, my editorial assistant, for her sterling work in bringing this particular piece to publication in these pages.

The second article, by Daniel Burston, examines the phenomenon of Jordan Peterson, a clinical psychologist and professor at the University of Toronto, Canada. As Burston notes, Peterson was catapulted to fame due to his fierce opposition to what is referred to as political correctness. Although this is a part of Peterson's critique, Burston examines the wider implications of Peterson's critique of contemporary trends in academia as well as in the culture at large, including the roots of what sustains such critiques and appeal, to the point that it has become “hip” to be “square”. For a while now, I have been interested in the role political correctness plays in people's minds and statements – on both sides, as it were – so I am particularly appreciative that Burston makes reference to this. I think there's room for further examination of this concept, especially given that psychotherapy is based on the idea of free (and unedited) association, so, if you, the reader, are interested to write something about this subject, do consider submitting it to *Psychotherapy and Politics International*.

Last year (2018) marked the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the National Health Service (NHS) in the United Kingdom (UK). For the first time, hospitals as well as doctors, nurses and other health workers were brought together under one organisation to provide services free at the point of delivery. While there is a lot to acknowledge and to be celebrated about this vision and major contribution to the health of the nation (see <https://www.nhs70.nhs.uk/about/nhs-history/>), there is also much to reflect upon with regard to national and public health and especially (and ironically) the growing inequalities in health in the UK. The next article, by Hannah Morgan and her colleagues, addresses one aspect of this, which is the impact of such challenges (as inequality, prejudice, austerity, etc.) on workers in the NHS, in this case, a specific group of clinical psychologists. In the face of the overwhelming nature of what clients and patients in the NHS face and bring, Morgan and her colleagues address what is evoked in the

professionals, specifically, despair, hopelessness, and the feeling or self-judgement of being ineffectual. This article presents how this group developed what they refer to as “counter-practices” to despair and hopelessness, that is, drawing on the concept of reasonable hope; engaging in small acts of everyday resistance; and the praxis (my word) that, as colleagues and workers, people are stronger together. Morgan and her colleagues offer this in the hope that such counter-practices may be helpful to other clinicians – and I think they will be. Whilst *PPI* is a journal with a specific focus on psychotherapy, it is open to all disciplines in what are broadly referred to as the “psy” professions, i.e., counselling, clinical and counselling psychology, and psychotherapy, as well as clinical nursing and social work and psychiatry. For those interested to compare the situation in which Morgan and her colleagues currently work with that of psychologists working in the NHS some 15 years ago, I recommend an article published in the second volume of *PPI* by Brennan and Hollanders (2004).

The next article appears under the section of the journal “Controversial Discussions”, which is sub-edited or curated by David Pavón-Cuellar. This particular discussion was stimulated – one might say, fuelled – by an original article written by Paul Solomon and published in the journal last year about roadblocks to negotiation between Israel and Palestine (Solomon, 2018). In response, Sheri Oz, posted a number of blogs critiquing Paul's original article (I refer to him as Paul as I know him), as a result of which Paul wrote to Oz and they began to correspond. Paul told me about this, and I suggested that he invite Oz to publish their correspondence or, at least, the fruits of their exchanges. The article published is a result of this process and comprises: a) an introduction from David, b) a response to Paul's original article by Sheri Oz, and c) a rejoinder or response to this from Paul. *PPI* has a long track record of articles about Israel and Palestine, dating back to the first article in the first issue by Emanuel Berman (2003), and more than a dozen others since then. This article, however, has a particular liveliness and edge to it, principally, I think, due to its origins in a very real and controversial exchange between colleagues holding very different views, and credit must go to both Paul Solomon and Sheri Oz for being willing to do this.

Every so often, the journal publishes articles and fragments under the heading “Notes from the Front Line” and, in this issue, we have “notes” in the form of open letters, both of which have been published elsewhere and both of which are central to the focus of the journal. The first is an open letter on Jung and “Africans”, originally published in the *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, which was co-ordinated by Andrew Samuels, one of the consulting editors of this journal. The second is a letter about the climate emergency we are all facing, and first appeared in a number of major newspapers across the world on the same day, and was co-ordinated by Richard House, another close colleague and a friend of the journal.

The final pages of this issue comprise two book reviews – of *The Future of Psychological Therapies* by John Lees, reviewed by Katie Woodger, and one of one of my own recent books *Psychotherapy: A Critical Examination*, reviewed by Sarah Cadwallader – and three poems and a cartoon. The title of Gottfried Heuer's poem “Remember the Yucatán” is taken from the book *Sex and Dawn* (Ryan & Jethà, 2010, p. 19). As ever, I am grateful to both Deborah Lee and Gottfried Heuer for their respective curation of the Reviews and Arts sections of the journal. These sections are relatively new additions to journal and I think very much add to the range and scope of *PPI*. As ever, we welcome contributions – to all sections of the journal.

In terms of forthcoming issues we've had a couple of changes to our original schedule, and so I am including the line-up and deadlines for forthcoming issues.

Volume 17, Number 2 (publication date: May 2019), is another generic issue for which the submission deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> January this year, and the deadline for reviews is 28<sup>th</sup> February.

Volume 17, Number 3 (publication date: October 2019), is a special themed issue on Body Psychotherapy, edited by Nick Totton, for which the submission deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> May this year, and the deadline for reviews is 9<sup>th</sup> August.

Volume 18, Number 1 (publication date: February 2020), is another generic issue for which the submission deadline is 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019, and the deadline for reviews is 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Volume 18, Number 2 (publication date: May 2020), is a special themed issue on Therapists' Lived Experiences, edited by Deborah Lee, for which the submission deadline is 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020, and the deadline for reviews is 28<sup>th</sup> February that year.

Volume 18, Number 3 (publication date: October 2020), is another special themed issue on Transactional Analysis, edited by Bill Cornell and myself, for which the submission deadline is 29<sup>st</sup> May 2020, and the deadline for reviews is 7<sup>th</sup> August that year.

Please send submissions to the journal's website: <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ppi> and, if you are submitting an article for either of the special issues please note this.

If you are interested in reviewing books or other media, please contact Deborah Lee, the Reviews editor, e-mail: [deborah.lee@ntu.ac.uk](mailto:deborah.lee@ntu.ac.uk); and, if you are interested in contributing a poem or other form of art or expression, please contact Gottfried Heuer, the Arts & Poetry editor, e-mail: [gottfried.heuer@virgin.net](mailto:gottfried.heuer@virgin.net).

As ever I hope you enjoy this issue of the Journal and that you continue to send submissions – of whatever length!

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