



A New Therapy for Politics?

Andrew Samuels

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Andrew Samuels has established an international practice as a political consultant, working with senior politicians, political parties and activist groups. His lectures and workshops on the application of 'therapy thinking' to social and political issues attract wide interest. His previous books in this area, such as *The Political Psyche* and *Politics on the Couch*, have been widely appreciated. Now, in a long-anticipated tour-de-force that is both compassionate and intellectually stimulating, this book deepens in a new and innovative style his engagement with themes such as economics, ecopsychology, leadership, aggression and violence, the role of the individual in progressive politics, and sexuality and spirituality in political contexts. The reader is encouraged to move beyond conventional professional or academic discourse by the inclusion of experiential exercises in the text. In this way, activism and analysis, public and private, therapeutic and more-than-personal are all brought together in a satisfying yet challenging synthesis. Samuels is open about the problems with trying to apply therapy thinking to discussion about pressing political, social and economic questions, and to the loss of a sense of meaning and purpose in personal and collective life. Although there is a long history in the psychotherapies of aspiration to achieve this, and therapists invited the world into their consulting rooms, the 'client' did not show up for its first session. In the book, Samuels discuss why this has been the case, accepting that there is a very bad historical record to own, ranging from Jung's anti-semitism to psychoanalytic homophobia and heteronormativity. There is also the problem of therapists' uncontrollable desire to prove their theories correct.

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