

Seán Gaffney, Malcolm Parlett, Giovanni Salonia

## **Psychotherapy and Social Change: Gestalt Therapists Reply to Questions From the Editors and From Zygmunt Bauman**

Three gestalt therapists engage in a dialogue in response to questions from the editors and Zygmunt Bauman on the theme of “psychotherapy and social change.” The discussion addresses many areas of clinical practice, the perspectives on the wider social field, and the role of psychotherapy.

*Key words:* gestalt therapy, sociopolitical change, social field, contact-boundary, psychotherapy, group therapy, group process, feminism, contact, creative-adjusting

### *Editors' Note*

No person can be understood apart from his or her situation or social surround, the phenomenal field. This leads us to consider psychotherapy and social change. We say “social change,” rather than “society” because it is clear that the world changes before our eyes; there is nothing constant but the constancy of change.

We have invited three distinguished gestalt therapists to respond to questions on this theme from the editors and from Zygmunt Bauman. Dr. Bauman is an Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of Leeds, the author of many influential scholarly works, and the recipient of a number of academic honors. We are pleased to have him join our dialogue.

Our respondents are Seán Gaffney, Malcolm Parlett, and Giovanni Salonia.

### *Question 1*

A psychotherapeutic situation and a social/political situation differ in many respects. Hence some theorists hold that psychological and/or psychotherapeutic concepts in principle cannot be applied to social and political systems. What is your opinion?