

# **The Shadow of Psychotherapy in Aotearoa New Zealand: “The Violence of Kindness”**

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*“Everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad” (Foucault, 1983),*

This paper utilises the unlikely bed companions of Jung, Ogden, and Bion’s capacity for psychoanalytic thinking under emotional pressure, alongside the rigour of Foucault’s analysis of the “main danger”, to interrogate the systems of thought that produce psychotherapy in this country, from missionary discourse, to medical model insanity, to psychoanalysis, to indigenous Māori challenges to psychotherapy’s Eurocentric ways. With clinical vignettes to illuminate my exploration, I consider the main danger of these manifestations, specifically psychotherapy’s implication in the fabrication of us all as individualised, competitive, politically docile, consuming selves, that serve the needs of the neoliberal marketplace. I will suggest that with the increasing ubiquity of psychotherapeutic discourse we have collectively engaged in a refusal of thought, as we fail to recognise how psychotherapy is implicated in the violence of economic “productivity”, and ultimately, of ecological destruction.

## **Biography**

John O’Connor (PhD), accredited Jungian Analyst and registered Psychotherapist. John has held numerous psychotherapy leadership roles and is the current President of APANZ. With over 37 years of clinical experience, he has worked extensively cross culturally and with patients with complex relational histories, in group psychotherapy, supervision, and in education.

