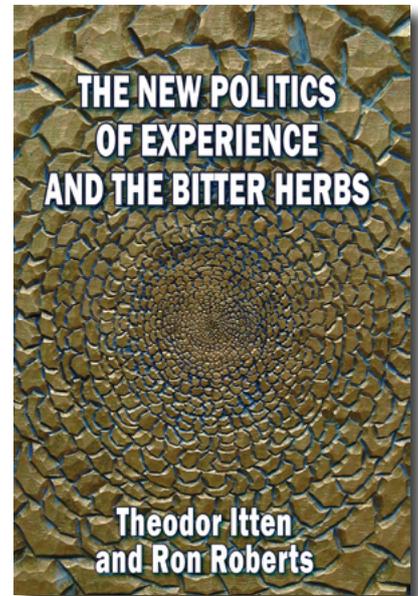


THE NEW POLITICS OF EXPERIENCE AND THE BITTER HERBS

Theodor Itten
and Ron Roberts

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A lot of what is done in the name of psychotherapy and psychology is driven by motives which are base, shallow and commercial. Theorising of the human condition too often follows the ideological fashions of the day, which can be described as biological/corporate fundamentalism. This toxic mixture not only mystifies the general public but also makes epistemological slaves of professional psychologists. As neo-liberal capitalism continues its forward march, this book considers its influence on the divide between academic psychology and the psychotherapeutic art of healing. Theodor Itten and Ron Roberts explore these issues from their respective positions on each side of the psychotherapy/academic psychology divide. Calling for a return to a new, authentic and vibrant Politics of Experience, their examination – elaborating the interplay of practice and theory with everyday experience – is both personal and critical and provides an unusual perspective on what it means to practise in the present day.

To have two such differing approaches to a subject that is much discussed these days struck me as clever, original, and totally intriguing. Itten and Roberts present their experience based on different perspectives, and their contrasting views are new and dynamic, insuring that something exciting is in store for readers in the fields of psychotherapy and psychology.

Deirdre Bair, author of Simone de Beauvoir's and C.G. Jung's biographies, winner of The National Book Award for *Samuel Beckett – A biography*

Itten and Roberts combine intriguing personal stories and incisive analysis to help us understand how psychology and psychotherapy have become largely disconnected from real life. The New Politics of Experience is distressing and illuminating in equal measure, but also, at times, extremely entertaining.

Professor John Read, Liverpool University, author/editor of *Models of Madness*

My compliments to Theodor Itten and Ron Roberts for their timely continuation of RD Laing's lifelong endeavour ... They enlarge upon Laing's work by including themselves in the picture, along with the many Big Brothers who control our behaviour, and of course the art of psychotherapy. Laing would be proud of them.

Francis Huxley, social anthropologist, author of *Affable Savages: An anthropologist among the Urubu Indians of Brazil*

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