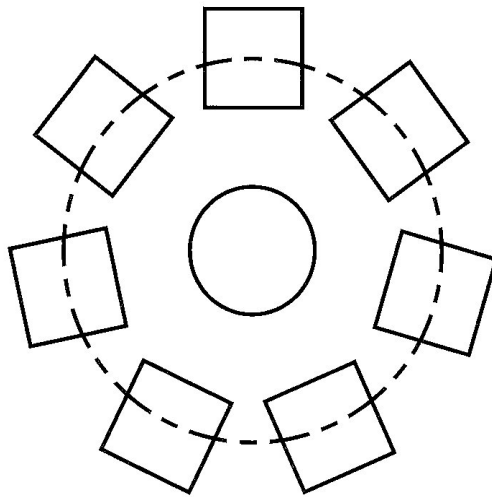


# Group-Analytic Contexts

June 2011

ISSUE NO 52



International Newsletter of

THE GROUP-ANALYTIC SOCIETY

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## **Editorial**

These are indeed times of change. We elect a new President of the Society at the AGM this year. I wonder who the candidates will be, who you will propose, and who you will vote into this position? Democratic rights, and fighting for these, as we all know, writing in early April, is very much in the news at this time and it is clear that an increasing number of people in the world feel that these rights are worth fighting for and even worth the loss of life. Having a voice is indeed important.

Hopefully, this “having a voice” is an important part of the mission that this Society has been established to support and to propagate. It can only do so with the active engagement and participation of members. We mostly, it seems, tell our patients that the more they participate in groups the more they will gain. The same may well be true of organisations: they need their members to “normalise” and democratise their functions. Where would we be without you? I hope to see you at the AGM that is, this year, embedded in the Symposium events.

Interdependence and learning in the group is the theme of our first paper “The Individual on the Border”. Another article on teaching focuses on group and team coaching techniques. Alfred Garwood provides a report from the AGPA Conference this year. There is also an article about the political context of change in health and other service industries over the past 40 years.

Please do write to us with responses to any of these pieces. We would love to hear more from you: your thoughts and responses to anything we publish, agreements and disagreements, and also, of course, offers to write for us.

**Terry Birchmore and Paula Carvalho**

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## President's Page

We are approaching the group analytic tri-annual symposium, "The 15th European Symposium in Group Analysis, Cultures, conflict and Creativity", taking place at Goldsmiths College, London, August 29th-2nd September. The preparations have been going on for a long time now and a very stimulating scientific programme is under preparation. The theme is indeed very pertinent to what is happening in the world in these years. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in which many countries are involved, the present uprising in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya and the insecurity of what comes out of it. We hope for the best, more democratic governments, but we don't know the result of these clashes between religious and political cultures. In the midst of all this we have the technical revolution in the form of the internet and related techniques that has totally changed the way we communicate and the speed with which we communicate. In the split of a second information can be spread to the whole world. All this calls for an adaptation to a new reality and to ways of conflict resolution in the wider world as well as in institutions and the personal lives of people. How can we understand all this and in what ways can Group Analysis help us to grasp something of what is going on? We will look at these areas at the coming symposium, where you will have the opportunity to meet colleagues from all over the world and from many different sorts of group work, clinical, educative, consultative and organisational, creating a rich sounding board for sharing and discussion. So tell everybody to make an appointment for London 2011 and to sign up on our website:

<http://www.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk>

In the recent satisfaction survey instigated by the Society our journal, Group Analysis, was found to be the most valued of our activities. There has long been a wish among members to have it indexed in MEDLINE. We have now tried twice to have the journal indexed but this has failed. We still need another 0.5 of a point. We can argue the case, but it is doubtful if we get anything out of it. By this recent trial however we had the opportunity to see where it did not live up to the criteria, which will be a guide for next time. There is a balance, of course, as we like the journal as it is, which the recent survey showed, and we do not want it dominated by tables, but we also need to live up to certain scientific criteria. It would heighten its status considerably if it was accepted by MEDLINE. The effect of this probably would be that more authors would consider publishing in Group Analysis, because that would count for the recognition of their work. Whether we like it or not there is a fierce competition out there for jobs and recognition.

The coming AGM that will take place during the Symposium will be important as we have to vote on the revision of the Constitution. The Working Party for the Revision of the Constitution, Bryan Boswood (UK), Werner Knauss (Germany), Anne Lindhardt (Denmark), Liz McLure (UK), Don Montgomery (UK), Zoe Voyatzaki (Greece) and myself (Denmark) has now finished its work and it has been approved by the Management Committee. The revised edition will be sent out in beforehand for all to study and to reflect on the proposed changes.

In another way too this AGM will mean a change as I am to step down as your president and you will elect a new president. I have been sitting for two periods of

three years as is allowed for in the Constitution. It has been 6 years filled with interesting and challenging projects and events. I will come back to this subject in my last “page” in the next issue of CONTEXTS .

**Gerda Winther**  
**President, GAS**

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## **Be a Contexts Writer!**

Contexts welcomes contributions from members on a variety of topics:

- Have you run or attended a group-analytic workshop?
- Are you involved in a group-analytic project that others might want to learn about?
- Would you like to share your ideas or professional concerns with a wide range of colleagues?

If so, send us an article for publication by post, e-mail, or fax. Articles submitted for publication should be between 500 and 2,500 words long, or between one and five pages.

Writing for Contexts is an ideal opportunity to begin your professional writing career with something that is informal, even witty or funny, a short piece that is a report of an event, a report about practice, a review of a book or film, or stray thoughts that you have managed to capture on paper. Give it a go!

The deadline for each issue of Contexts is about three months before the publication of a specific issue. The deadline for publication in the June issue, for example, will therefore be early March.

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Dr Daniel Neale	Student Member	Suffolk, UK
Prof. Kai Leitemo	Student Member	Oslo, Norway
Dr. Peter Potthoff	Full Member	Ratingen, Germany
Mr Peter Zelaskowski	Full Member	Barcelona, Spain

## **The individual on the border: a shared experience.**

*Sunyer, J.M.; Ayerra, J.M<sup>a</sup>.; De Miguel, S.; Hijosa, I.; Sallés, M.; Sánchez, B.; Arias, R.; Gutierrez, J.; Fernandez, R.*

### **Introduction.**

The group, a sample of a social network which we constitute in order to treat its members, is a structure defined by the binding interdependences that their members establish among themselves. They have either normogenic or pathogenic features. The first ones tend to favour group development and, consequently, its components, whereas the latter ones tend to paralyse it. Such paralyzation is related to the pathogenic components contributed by the group members since those components are part of their own make-up. The pathogenesis is a tendency related to isolation, impoverishment, or articulate around the two ends that Hopper marks as the fourth assumption, isolation or dissolution in others. The presence of an element that opens the structures that tend to close or dissolve in the social mass constitute a normogenic possibility that must be seized, and that is the Individual on the border.

### **The Group.**

This is not the right place to review the various conceptualizations of this term that appeared late in our language (17<sup>th</sup> century) (Corominas, J, 1974). Throughout the years that we have been focusing on the field of group analysis, we have moved from a concept of the group, which derives more from the sum of its individuals (perhaps with Slavson's support), to another more Bionian stance eventually to one more focused on the non-consideration of the division between the individual and the group (Foulkes, S.H., 2006, 2007b, 2005a). From this standpoint, the group is no more than a dynamic social constellation determined by a type of interdependences, setting it apart from other constellations with other interdependences.

Thus, a psychotherapy group is a constellation in which specific interdependences arise among its members and they are at the service of the normogenic progress, of the normogenic development of the individuals in that group. Likewise, a group of professionals in the training process is another constellation at the service of a normogenic development of these individuals so as to provide better understanding of the interpersonal processes that take place among themselves, as well as a conceptual training that enables such normogenic development to also be at the service of other groups of people in clinical contexts.

### **Interdependences.**



The concept of interdependence (Elias, N. 1987) means that each human being establishes a relationship with the other, which determines his/her behaviour, ways of thinking, feeling and acting, as well as s/he determines my own. That is to say, individuals (the smallest live social entity that is born, grows, reproduces and dies) establish among themselves bonds, which determine each and every one of the multiple circumstances that define our being, our feelings, our thinking, acting, ... ultimately, all the circumstances which characterize and define an individual

Certainly, at the time, Kurt Lewin (1947) already announced that behaviour depended not only on the characteristics of personality, but also on the circumstances of people's environment. That lead him to conceive our conduct as resulting from those desires or goals that we want to fulfil and the difficulties that the environment, the people around us, all that our environment constitutes. To a certain extent it is a mechanistic model typical of that period.

On the other hand, Norbert Elias describes the interdependences that take place not only among human beings within the same historical and social context, but the ones that take place throughout the evolution of the human species. These interdependences define fields of power that place each one of us in a relative position to the other, knowing that none of the parts lacks that power, but rather they are the ends of power lines. These lines, in the form of magnetic fields, give orientation and determine not only our actions, but also our ways of thinking and feeling. These conditioned responses trap each and every one of the individuals who establish a relationship among themselves, no matter how close or distant they seem to be, and in doing so a matrix of relationships arises, conditioning the behaviour of others and constituting us as subjects.

But, what are these power lines?

### **Defense mechanisms.**

Ever since Freud discovered and described the mental mechanisms that are used to reduce anxiety and to make it compatible with living, the concept of defence mechanism has been present in Freudian psychology. As far as we know, human beings have always, since the beginning of our existence as individuals, used various mechanisms to reduce anxiety. They are innate responses at first, which progressively acquire a value, a meaning, based on that experience of using them in the group context to which we belong. At the same time, when we used the defensive element in order to diminish the anxiety generated, we must also use the communicative element. That is to say, all defense mechanisms are also communication mechanisms.

These communication mechanisms transmit to the environment that the amount of anxiety that one perceives under a specific circumstance is strong enough for one to use that mechanism. Thus, insofar I dissociate, project, identify with, develop a projective identification over someone, I deny, rationalize, and so on, insofar I do any of these things, I also transmit to the other person the amount of anxiety that I am feeling. In this way, the other person gains some knowledge about my anxiety and through that intuitive knowledge a bond is developed between the two of us; or between the individuals in the group to which I belong and myself; and also between

those individuals, through my actions or omissions. All this interlacing is what determines the binding interdependences with others and of others with me.

### **Normogenic and pathogenic interdependences.**

If an interdependence is a bond of mutual dependence established through the communication that stems from the so-called defence mechanisms, the question is if all dependences contribute to growth and development or, to the contrary, they prevent them. In the first instance, we would call them normogenic, while in the second one, pathogenic. We will start with the second type.

The problem with defence mechanisms is not the mechanism itself, but rather the use of that mechanism. Indeed, if the human body develops a mechanism to alleviate its tension, its anxiety, it is because a real or fantasized danger appears, which triggers the development of such mechanism. The problem appears when the use of these mechanisms does not adjust to the dimensions of the danger, or it is used despite the non-existence of the danger. That is, if in order to go to the Pole I dress in a fur coat due to the temperature in that area, those mechanisms of protection are not maladjusted, but adaptive. However, if I dress like that and I go to the beach in the Canary Islands, for example, then I am risking my health: that is where the danger of using a defence mechanism lies.

When we use those mechanisms in a way that does not adjust to the needs of the moment, but in an anomalous way, in a maladjusted way, then their use becomes pathogenic, possibly ending up being pathological. Yet this is just as true at a communicative level. Obviously, if someone sees me buying winter clothes, they know that very probably I will be going to a very cold area. They may even ask me about it and I will indeed tell them that I am going to the North Pole. Surely, I will send out many more signals (buying maps, tickets, skin lotions, ...), all of which are manifestations of my existing that are not only going to protect me from getting lost, from losing travel time and sheltering me from the cold or the sun rays, but also they tell those people around me that I am going on a trip. However, if I wear all that on a beach in Lanzarote, for example, those people around me will not only know that I have been to the North Pole but they will also suspect that something strange is going on because *I am no longer at the Pole and I am behaving as if I were there*. In other words, I am letting them know something else about whether I took the trip or not, I am telling them that I am not aware that I am no longer there. The defence and communication mechanisms are pathogenic and they may even be pathological.

When we use the mechanisms in an adaptive way, they, together with the subsequent communication, may be understood as normogenic. That is to say, the mechanisms and their associated communication systems that we use to enable a sensitive and constant adaptation to the needs of others without necessarily giving up ours, the ones we use to better understand the world around us, the circumstances that condition us, those mechanisms are normogenic. The ones that take us closer to the reality of living, making it possible to harmonize with others and with the feelings that surface, the ones that allow us to confront the finiteness of our lives and the complex and delicate task of life creation. These are normogenic mechanisms.

All these mechanisms establish with our fellows bonds that link us in a way that they establish mutual dependences. Those binding dependences are the ones that constitute us as subjects at the same time that we construct the others, according to our needs. The individual, therefore, constructs his/her environment at the same time that such environment constructs him/her. And that is a dynamic process that never ends, although the consequences are greater at a younger age, when the mental structure of the individual is more tender.

### **The binding interdependences in the group analysis training course.**

When the new students start the course, beyond the bonds that they may have already established with the person or people they have contacted for information or to register in the course, they join in, they become part of a pre-existing group structure. Such structure, made up of the binding interdependences of students from previous years, the corps of teachers, the institution itself that shelters us, the structure that we have been building among ourselves, all that is the matrix in which the new members will begin work and interaction, thus modifying it and making it also theirs.

Within the matrix, there is the group of professionals of the training team. It is complex to describe here some of the characteristics of this “sub-matrix”, which is part of the group matrix of the Barcelona course (Sunyer, 2004, 2009a, 2009b; Guimón, J.2010) . Some of its characteristics have to do with the professional experience of those of us who constitute it, our backgrounds, our bonds, our interdependences that determine a matrix and not another one. Such matrix is questioned every year from the relationships that are established among the team members and the students in the various groups and subgroups. Yet this same professional matrix tends to become sclerotic, since the “uses and habits” turn the tacit and the explicit agreements that constitute our interdependences (normogenic and pathogenic) search for stability that may enhance the development of the pathogenic.

One of the reasons why at the time the idea of “the individual on the border” was instituted is precisely to open up a possibility for someone unrelated to our structures to come in, see, give their opinion, think, feel with us and involve the team in some of these issues that they have witnessed, thought, felt, ... and so on.

### **The individual on the border.**

Based on experience, we realized that structures tend to stiffen up, to generate binding interdependences that paralyse or slow down the sensitive and constant adaptation to the needs of the individuals that constitute them and, therefore, develop pathogenic traits. One of the alternatives was to have an institutional “supervision” in a way that through the contributions of that individual unrelated to the structure and unrelated in turn to the established interdependences could help us review some of our bonds; however, this figure also ends up getting impregnated with the relational characteristics of the group in which s/he intervenes, and so we opt for considering the occasional presence of unrelated individuals, who from a not consistent

commitment standpoint could blow us some fresh air. Thus the idea of the individual on the border is conceived.

This figure is a professional who is not necessarily related to clinical or psychological praxis (yet it is so much better if s/he has some knowledge in those fields), who is not particularly associated with us as far as training is concerned, who is not necessarily ascribed to the institutions we depend on, to whom we confer a certain degree of authority or knowledge, who is invited to come and visit with us as an observer involved in all activities, in all the groups that constitute the training experience. This means that s/he will get involved in all the team meetings, whether they are task-based or simply recesses; s/he will also participate in large and small therapy groups, and the theoretical ones and those of professional task revision. S/he can be merely an observer or get involved from whatever perspective s/he wishes. In other words, s/he has the freedom to perform at his/her discretion, as s/he wishes. Even if at a given moment s/he decides to distance themselves and have a break, s/he is free to do so as well, of course!

This figure enters the relationships that exist among the course participants, and for this the bonds, the interdependences need to be renegotiated in an unconscious manner, since his/her presence, whether active or passive, questions many aspects of the structure, of the work philosophy, of the relationships between the various subgroups, of some individual's attitudes ... as a matter of fact, the same happens when a member enters a group that is already formed. All this means that the individuals who constitute that group also react to his/her presence, displaying the whole range of possibilities: from the total and disinterested acceptance, to the persecutory reaction, from the assimilation and fusion with him/her to the crustacean reaction of complete rejection of his/her presence. And this, at all levels of the training structure: in the small and large groups, in staff meetings, in the theoretical and the professional task revision groups, in recesses, at meals, during breaks ...

### **The individual on the border and the team.**

#### *Previous moments*

Naturally, s/he is present before entering the course itself. In fact, s/he starts from the decision taken by the core team about whom should be invited this year and when. The debate about whom already determines many aspects of his/her role: if it is someone close because s/he has been a colleague of some of us in earlier times, or if it is someone we have a special consideration for due to his/her influence in the history and development of what we do, or if s/he is a member of some public, governmental Institution, who can further the development of group psychotherapy in the public health care field, if it is some well-known author, or a member of close Institutions such as EGATIN ...; all those aspects already pose an internal debate at the core of the team, which manifests likes and dislikes, personal or institutional interests, threats or assurances, or even wishes to gain a certain external recognition and even some interest to disseminate what we do. In other words, Narcissus is on the move.

Not only who but when. There are two moments in which we prefer not to count on that individual: the beginning and the end of the teaching experience. We believe that

both the beginning of the course as well as the end, or his/her presence in the first small group of each block or in the last, do not seem to be the best moments for him/her to get involved: the anxieties that arise are important enough so that we have to preserve and look after ourselves. The remaining training blocks are open to his/her presence. If throughout an academic year (from October until June) we were to invite two people to take on this role, we would rather not have them come two weekends in a row since we need to allow the structure to reorganize itself after the impact of their presences.

Then comes the entire process of inviting him/her, of connecting with him/her, of arranging the details (trip, stay, payment of some fees, ... etc.), checking the possibility of meeting on arrival in Barcelona and escorting to accommodation, explaining their role, and providing all the information needed concerning the training structure itself ... all this becomes more complex if his/her culture and language are not the same as ours. In general, these tasks are carried out by the program coordinator.

### *The entry into the experience.*

The actual incorporation takes place during the first meeting of the team. It is then when all the bonds that will come to determine his/her passing through the structure during that weekend will start. The negotiations among ourselves and that individual to see how each one of us places himself/herself in relation to him/her, to see the order that determines his/her attendance to one group or another, to be alert to what s/he says or keeps to himself/herself, and also the state of mind that s/he shows, since we are aware of the difficulty of the experience in which we have involved him/her, and all that is but a renegotiation of the interdependences that bind us and bind him/her with us. That is to say, in the set of aspects that his/her presence activates, not only the persecutory or the relocating ones in reference to him/her must be considered, but also those which are activated in him/her when realizing the power and the impact that the experience in itself generates.

Similarly to the team, his/her temporary incorporation to the small psychotherapy groups activates a range of emotions and feelings, and generates movements of relocation of each one of the members with respect to the others in the eyes of that guest. Even in the conductor himself/herself who occasionally perceives his/her presence in a persecutory fashion (Is he examining me? What's s/he going to tell me? What impression do I give him/her in this role? Will s/he accept my interventions? Are we going to accept him/her as one more member of the group?), far from taking it as a complement to his/her task. This experience becomes more complex if s/he decides to participate, if at some point s/he intervenes to indicate something or to give a somewhat different perspective from the one that has already set in within the group. Even the perception (real or fantasized) that whatever s/he says may have a greater impact than what the conductor says activates aspects of competition – let alone rivalry, jealousy and envy – that show how the conductor accepts and tolerates his/her presence, and how the other components use his/her presence to address taboo issues or punish with silence.

However, after s/he is gone, the reactions of the group components, those of the conductor (and observer, because there usually is one) are varied and mark a before

and an after in the life of the group. And the same goes for the conductor who, depending on the type of relationship that s/he has established personally with the individual on the border, s/he will integrate or refuse his/her participation.

The reactions occurring in the theoretical or reflective sessions are similar. And if his/her abilities to theorize or if his/her clinical experience have a certain recognition, his/her presence becomes more persecutory. Moreover, this can depend on the type of training that defines him/her (more or less orthodox; more clinical or organizational ...) since the contributions stemming from other paradigms or experiences are not always equally well received.

### *The sequels.*

Obviously the presence of an individual on the border is not harmless. Being difficult his/her participation and suitability in the training context, it is rather more complex to fit in the consequences of his/her presence. And that requires a significant strength at the core of the health care team, a strength that can assimilate and integrate the reordering of the binding interdependences that his/her presence has caused.

Indeed, as it could not be otherwise, all the affects of his/her character, his/her manners and the ways in which s/he has integrated and the degree of integration that s/he has had, the ease or difficulties of communication that s/he has shown, all this mobilizes and relocates the members of the team and their interdependences. Yet together with what comes from his/her personal style, one must consider all his/her professional background, the meanings that his/her presence entail, the open questions, the weight of his/her opinions and, of course, the silences. All that involves further work, both at the core of the team as well as in the various groups that benefit from the training structure, enhancing the concept we have of human beings as group constituents.

### **Conclusion.**

Throughout the repeated experience of the individuals on the border that in the last thirty-five years have been involved in this training experience, we can conclude that the training structures (and by extension those of health care, education, judiciary, the political and the administration ones), all which are in good health (although that does not mean that conflicts do not exist), when allowing the free entry and participation of professionals unrelated to our own structure and work subgroups at all levels contribute an enrichment that benefits not only the structure itself, but also the individuals that sustain, feed and constitute it.

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## **How “Group and team coaching” by Christine Thornton is really an essential guide for coaches working with groups**

The first book on coaching based on group analysis and systems concepts has been published recently. The book entitled "Group and team coaching: the essential guide" was written by Christine Thornton who has had an extensive experience conducting group therapy and group coaching and, the same way we do, believes there are similarities in how people learn and change in group, regardless the nature of the groups.

She begins her book by explaining what group coaching is and its advantages for the individuals learning processes and for the organizations.

The second part of the book picks up on key concepts of Group Analysis, shows how these occur in coaching groups and how the coach must be prepared to deal with certain group phenomena. It embraces the following three main areas that are the conceptual core of the book:

1. Explores the process of human learning and its application to the group and team coaching. Tells us about “implicit knowing”, “projection”, “transference”, “holding” and “exchange”. The author points out the two processes of "Holding" and "Exchange" as one of the important lines of group coaching. It is the balance between safety and risk that allows us to learn, says Thornton.
2. The author details on the nine fundamental processes that occur in groups as follows: “group matrix”, “communication”, “translation”, “mirroring”, “exchange”, “resonance”, “condenser phenomena”, “location” and “the reflection process”. The first eight processes are based on Foulkes concepts.
3. The author tells us also about the following eight factors affecting the way people learn in groups and summarizes the role of group and team coach: “connectedness and belonging”, “interpersonal learning”, “competition, envy and admiration”, “idealization and emulation”, “practising courage”, “witnessing and being witnessed”, “encouragement”, and “group performance coaching”

On our practice in group coaching and group therapy we have also experienced the same phenomena. We also feel that all these principles, processes and factors that constitute group analytic theory and technique are present in both kind of groups, therapeutic and coaching ones.

In the third and fourth parts of the book the author explains the two broad areas of group coaching: Team Coaching and Coaching Learning Groups. The last one is group's which members come together for the purpose of learning but they are not a real team. The author gives us some examples of learning groups:



sfz      Action Learning

sfz      Balint Groups

sfz      Group telephone coaching. We believe that this method of coaching is referred to underline the dangers and limitations of such intervention into the context of coaching unless this kind of coaching is complementary with face to face coaching.

sfz      Supervision Groups

One of the biggest differences between the two contexts, team coaching and group coaching, is that in Team Coaching there are, at least, three entities involved in a triangle: the coach, the organization and the team. If in the company our contact is not exclusively with the team leader but also with another part representing the whole company, then we will have more than three parts involved and the process becomes more complex. However, the team must set the goals and the company must be prepared to negotiate them. There is no long term coaching without team and individual's involvement and motivation. The coach must maintain dual loyalty to the team and its leader; otherwise the changes will not be long lasting.

In Learning Groups, most of them running in a non organizational context, the coaching agreement is done between the individuals and the coach. Each Executive is truly the customer, who sets objectives, although the group is a tool enabling individual insights and learning.

As stated above Coaching Learning Groups can also be developed in an Institutional context but not with teams. Coaching Learning Groups developed in an Institutional context can improve businesses performance. In learning groups, aspects of group formation are of utmost importance. Individuals in the same group can not know each other, work together or be competitors.

The author underlines that, to develop Team coaching, the coach needs to understand how systems theory helps him/her to understand the complexity of contemporary organizations.

Thornton also says that systems give us a roadmap to observe the reality of companies because without some simplification we would be paralysed by such complexity. Managing information within and outside the system is a critical factor for a healthy system.

Teams are social systems, or subsystems of a larger system. A team can be affected by changes in associated systems but are not affected by any change.

The group coach must pay attention to each individual and the team as a whole. Each member interacts horizontally with other teams within the organization and other contacts outside the company. Members also interact vertically with the team leader, which can also be part of another team.

The group coach needs also to define team boundaries.

Systems thinking in management have been influenced by new discovers and theories in physics, biology, ecology and anthropology, particularly increasing their ability to cope with complexity. All modern management is the management of change, and the author underlines that the coach needs to prepare their clients for the complexity of the XXI century. The theories of chaos and complexity have provided essential help in this understanding.

The author also speaks of the paradox in business context. Groups are good for building security to face the paradox. The role of group-coach is to help group members to recognize the paradoxical positions they hold and make them aware of the tension it generates, and help them to deal with both sides of the paradox so that the benefit for both sides can be obtained. By doing that the paradox does not disappear but it will be broken. For the group coach is a core competency to welcome the possibility that several apparently contradictory positions about a situation can coexist.

The author gives some guide-lines to manage complexity and shows that the coach is also part of the organizational system.

In chapters seven and eight, Thornton shares with us his working experience with learning groups such as action learning, Balint groups and supervision groups.

As presented in the book of Christine Thornton in learning groups, the learning opportunities are multiplied by the number of different individuals of the group, since each person brings a diversity of skills and problems to the group.

In chapters nine and ten Thornton presents some strategies for dealing with behaviour problems. When the group's work is marred by issues of group behaviour, it is an opportunity to analyse what is going on the process. A break during the work enables the group to review what happened, talk about emotions and analyse and understand what they felt. The aim is to explore possibilities, not solutions.

Also dealing with anger in the group is a technical challenge to the coach because he/she should be able to balance the benefit for the group members to learn to tolerate these states of mind while keeping a secure environment. The author explains in a very pedagogical and pragmatic way what to do in situations of anger.

Christine Thornton gives also some tips on how to cope when one of the group members is distressed. She also gives us tips on how to handle dominant group members. Dealing with people who are very dominant is also a challenge for the coach. People who talk too much need the active support of the coach and of the group in order to have a realistic view of the impact of their behaviour on others persons and therefore can modify their behaviour. The opposite behaviour may also be a problem in group: the silence, like other behaviour in the group, is communication. It means something. People are silent for several reasons. The group coach should be as connected as possible with the meaning of silence, which may vary over time. When someone does not know anything beyond logic or when someone is so self-centred that they can not accomplish the task, these are also issues addressed in the book.

The author tells us also how to deal with groups that did not work and about the basic assumptions of Bion.

In the chapter eleven she tells us how to manage beginnings, middles and endings. In our opinion this book is a very powerful toll to help group coaches to develop their work with ethical standards and to be aware of group, team and organization complexity and behaviour. It also helps to deeper understand the group processes, and therefore how to help individuals insight and learning.

### **Summary:**

The first book on coaching based on group analysis and systems concepts has been published recently. The book entitled "Group and team coaching: the essential guide" was written by Christine Thornton who has had an extensive experience conducting group therapy and group coaching and, the same way we do, believes there are similarities in how people learn and change in groups, regardless the nature of the groups. In our opinion this book is a very powerful toll to help group coaches to develop their work with ethical standards and to be aware of group, team and organization complexity and behaviour. It also helps to deeper understand the group processes, either in coaching or in psychotherapy.

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**Isaura Manso Neto, Psychiatric, Group Analyst, Didactic Member and group supervisor of SPG (Sociedade Portuguesa de Grupanálise) .**

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## **AGPA Conference 2011**

This was my first trip to the AGPA. I had been asked to teach on what they call their trauma track. The focus was therapeutic understanding of the effects and response to

disasters. There are fundamental differences between AGPA and GAS conferences. AGPA does not appear to have formal training institutes and thus professional members must attend formal events to progress along the professional hierarchy.

The effect on the dynamics of the event is that there is a wider range of experiences and dynamics than at GAS events. After two days of participating in the teaching I was obliged to rewrite my presentation so it was suitable for this audience.

The day's programme was overly busy with little time to reflect. However, there was a great range of events to choose from.

The experiential group I attended for two days was known as an institute. It was a median group of approximately twenty of us. There was a great range of ages, ethnic origins and experiences. There was a strong ethnic influence on the discussions. The mix in the melting pot made itself felt. Much of the work of the conductor was at the level of the here and now and I seemed to bring an unusual link to the there and then. It was a powerful experience which deserves long reflection and preparatory fitness training to survive the long and intensely packed days. I am still metabolising the experience and may well offer further reflections soon.

**Alfred Garwood**

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## **The Context of Public Service “Reforms” in Westernised Democracies. Part 1.**

“Compared with 20 – or even 10 – years ago the average professional's work is nowadays much more likely to be costed, audited, used as an input for performance indicators, subjected to explicit budgetary or workload ceilings...and/or included within the scope of patient satisfaction surveys...In these senses, then the previous

conception of individualistic professionalism has been progressively replaced...the contemporary ethos is much more one of the professional as a member of a team, and beyond that, of an employing organisation. The presumption is that the individual professional will be subject to the rules, plans and priorities of that organisation (as well, perhaps, as the increasingly codified guidelines of the profession itself).” (Harrison and Pollitt, 1994).

This paper will attempt to outline and explain the history, drivers, assumptions, and ideologies underlying the public service reforms that have occurred in most Westernised countries over the past forty years. My analysis of the engines of change will seek to locate as important drivers of these processes the technologies of control of production that were evolved and developed in the early years of the last century; the rise of commercialisation and neo-liberal policies in public services; and the rise of New Managerialist solutions in health prioritising measurement, league tables, ranking, performance management and market solutions. I will suggest that these changes in the dynamic matrix (Foulkes, 1984) of public service organisations have created profound changes in the psychology and relationships of actors within these organisations and these arguments will be developed in a later paper.

Group Analysts have traditionally avoided engagement with the specifics of politics, the domain of state or global political ideas and influences. Yet, if we define politics as "social relations involving intrigue to gain authority or power, or a process by which groups of people make collective decisions", it is clear that the subject matter of politics should be of significant interest to Group Analysts, especially since the social arena of "Politics" is the most significant determinant of the background, and historical, matrix within all societies. This paper has been written as an attempt to outline some of the most significant political developments, over the course of the past 100 years, that have influenced "service organisations", including the professional practices of psychotherapists and their organisations.

### **A Brief History of these Changes**

Since the early 1990s the focus, increasingly, of state economic management has been on reducing the costs of state expenditure and therefore reducing taxation. The consequences of these policies have included reduced funding for public services, and emphasis on efficiency and cost savings, and associated changes in the organisation and management of professional work. Some important influences and ideas that have driven these changes are briefly described below.

## **Benthamism**

I will begin with the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham who wrote about the ethical principle "the greatest happiness of the greatest number". Bentham was interested in what he called an "architecture of choice": arranging options so that individuals had the illusion of autonomy but ended up making choices "the authorities" wanted them to make. Bentham believed this was a "new mode of obtaining power of mind over mind". He applied his ideas to Panopticon architecture which could be used in schools, workhouses and prisons; the principle was that the supervisor sees everyone without being seen and makes sure that everyone is making the right choices. If a prisoner doesn't he "languishes on bad bread and drinks his water without a soul to speak to". Bentham was anxious to ensure that in the panopticon everyone was isolated, to prevent a "concert among minds" in which a possible challenge to the system might emerge. The "anti-group" dynamic is clearly apparent.

Bentham also, in a period of great social hope, encouraged his followers to rush across the country in stage coaches, armed with great bundles of tabular data, measuring everything they thought was important. They measured the number of cess-pits (which they saw as an indicator of ill-health), or pubs (an indicator of immorality), or (to find out how religious children were) they tested the number of hymns they could recite from memory. This may indeed have been the beginning of the tyranny of numbers and measurement that has increasingly infected the public services in modern times - we might usefully think about how similar our measurements of emotional health, therapeutic change, etc., are from the measurement of hymn memory, and the concurrent problems in the validity and

reliability of these measurement techniques. I'm reminded, here of a joke about Tony Blair, the former UK Prime Minister:

Tony Blair to Priest after Confession: "Have you saved many souls"?

Priest: "I hope so, but I don't know"

Blair: "Don't you have targets"?

Well, the point is that some things just can't be measured.

## **Fordism**

Fordism, named after Henry Ford, refers to various social theories about production and related socio-economic phenomena. It is a term used to describe manufacturing systems designed to produce standardized, low-cost goods and also, originally, afford its workers decent enough wages to buy them. It consists of the manufacture of standardized products in huge volumes using special purpose machinery and unskilled labour in the factory, production line system that also standardizes work and production processes. Although Fordism was a method used to improve productivity in the automotive industry, this principle has been applied generally within manufacturing and increasingly, in recent times, in service areas. The success of these methods of production rested on three main principles: the standardization of the product; the use of special purpose tools on the production line; and the elimination of skilled labour. Cutting down manpower and a deskilling of the workforce are inevitable aspects of Fordist methods of production.

## **Taylorism**

F W Taylor was one of the earliest manager-theorists and his research was conducted in the American steel industry. This research established the field of "scientific management" that focused on the strict control, regulation and supervision of work processes by managers. These practices rest on the assumption that employees are



essentially unreliable and productivity improvements can only be achieved by constant management control.

Taylor's Principles of Scientific Management (1911) described the then new technique of time-and-motion studies, and an approach that argued for a reduction in worker decision latitude and work variety, so restricting the freedoms and autonomy of workers. Taylor argued that his approach resulted in increased efficiency. The philosophy was based on the idea that the role of managers is to understand the most efficient method (best practice – sounds familiar?) of achieving a task, and to then to exercise control over the workers to ensure that the task is performed in exactly this way. The control, inspection and correction of staff who are organised in a rigid hierarchy is an important aspect of Taylorism. Taylorist principles of organisational management inevitably leads to a transfer of knowledge to cheaper workers and from workers into tools (e.g. the current fetish, in mental health settings, of relying on check-lists, questionnaires, and other measures to determine a specific, time limited, response).

There are many criticisms of Taylorism. Staff satisfaction, innovation and receptivity to change are badly affected. It has also been suggested that in circumstances where there is much upheaval in the organisational context, or where staff have greater knowledge than managers, performance may suffer.

Fordist and Taylorist principles, having been applied in industrial settings for many decades previously, began to be seriously applied as models of organisational functioning in service industries, including health, from the early 1980's. These principles and the technologies of control associated with them are important tools in the New Managerialist movement (see below).

## **Neo Liberalism**

"Neo-liberalism" is a set of economic policies that have become widespread during the last 30 years or so. "Neo" means "new liberalism".

The main points of neo-liberalism include:

- The Rule of the Market. Liberating "free" enterprise or private enterprise from any restrictions imposed by government. A greater openness to international trade and investment, as in GATS (The General Agreement on Trade in Services).
- Reducing wages by de-unionising workers and eliminating workers' rights. Price controls are abandoned. A complete movement of capital, goods and services becomes possible, so that money, goods, and complete industries can be bought and sold across national boundaries.
- Cutting public expenditure for social services like education and health care but at the same time supporting government subsidies and tax benefits for business.
- Deregulation involving reducing government regulation of everything that might diminish profits.
- Privatisation, selling state-owned enterprises, goods and services to private investors. This includes banks, key industries, railways, electricity, schools, hospitals and even fresh water. Although usually done in the name of greater efficiency, privatisation has primarily had the effect of concentrating wealth in fewer and fewer hands and making the public pay even more for its needs.

One important, and recent, effect of neo-liberalism is that "knowledge work", the traditional niche of the middle class professional, has started to be exported as has for long been the case in relation to unskilled labour. As the world supply of this knowledge increases employers inevitably go for the cheapest source and Asia now produces more engineers and scientists than the USA and the EU combined. As we shall see below, professional work is becoming increasingly routinised and this, together with other changes sets us on course for a future in which professionals will perform routine and controlled work for lower wages.

### **The General Agreement of Trade and Services (GATS)**

These largely secret negotiations have concerned themselves with the introduction of market forces in health, social services, and public utilities such as water and health.

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is an international institution created by multilateral treaty in 1995 for the purpose of liberalizing trade. One of the main agreements was the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). This agreement allowed service sectors to be traded, just as in the case of goods, favouring markets and privatization into areas such as education, social security, libraries, the mail service, police and fire protection, prison systems, water, energy, telecommunications, transportation, and health care. There are therefore international pressures to make public services a tradeable service rather than a public service. The aim of the GATS is to gradually remove all barriers to trade in services. The agreement covers services as diverse as banking, education, healthcare, rubbish collection, tourism or transport.

The idea is to open up these services to international competition, allowing the way for huge, for-profit, multinational firms. The objective is the 'liberalisation' of trade in services – to reduce state investment and put lucrative areas of public services on the market. "The GATS is not just something that exists between Governments. It is first and foremost an instrument for the benefit of business" European Commission, 1999.

This agreement will enable the privatisation or marketisation of large parts, and possibly all, of what today are considered public services. This process is currently well advanced in most countries, usually without properly informing or consulting the public as to whether or not this is what they want.

## **The European Union**

At the European Union level, in Services Directive 2006, EU Member states were required to implement the Directive by 28 December 2009, aiming at establishing a single market for services within the European Union. It enables service businesses to set up or sell their services anywhere in Europe aiming to reduce the barriers to cross-

border trade, principally by doing away with the service industry regulations of individual EU Member States. The "freedom of establishment" rule meant that if a company, or individual, is able to provide a service in one EU country, there should be no restrictions on them doing so.

Writing in The Guardian newspaper, David Rowland argued that the Directive posed a threat to the British health care system:

"The directive is controversial because it applies the same rules to healthcare and social services as it does to estate agents, fairground providers, advertising companies and private security firms. The commission no longer sees the services provided by doctors to patients as a special public good to be enjoyed by all citizens, but as an "economic activity", a commodity to be traded across the EU much like any other".

Another critic of the Directive, Graham Copp, commented in Red Pepper:

"any company in any services industry (be it health, building, advertising or whatever) that was set up in one of the EU's less regulated economies — perhaps in one of the new eastern European member states — could also set up in the UK; and the laws that would govern wages, standards, contracts, etc., for that business in Britain would be those of the eastern European country, for example, not the UK".

One aim of this directive was to limit public spending. Alongside this is pressure to open public services, initially to private contractors from across the EU, but later to world markets at the WTO, thus putting profit at centre stage.

### **New Managerialism in Health Care: The Application of Neo-Liberalism in the Service Sectors**

The term New Managerialism (NM) describes the introduction of private-sector techniques to public sector management in the name of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (Adcroft and Willis, 2005). Progress is seen to lie in achieving continual

increases in 'productivity' and performance, cost, efficiency, and audit are prioritised as aspects of institutional and managerial goals (Deem and Brehony 2005). This movement has become an increasingly global phenomenon (Kirkpatrick et al. 2005).

New managerialism has been seen as a hegemonic project that downgrades the importance of ethical values such as autonomy, criticality, care, fairness, dignity, justice, equality, respect and trust, in favour of economic priorities (Bottery 2000). "Hegemonic" equals the political, economic, ideological or cultural power exerted by a dominant group over other groups, regardless of the explicit consent of the latter. Thus, the ethical principle of access and fairness gives way to the need to be competitive; the principle of equity is over-ridden by the need to be efficient; the principle of meeting the needs of the population is undermined by the concern to prioritise consumer choice; and the principle of universalism turns into a concern about value for money.

It has also been criticised as downgrading and neglecting important aspects of proper institutional functioning such as important human capital in the form of skills and knowledge, forms of co-operation, knowledge sharing and development, innovation and creativity. All of these have been seen to be seriously threatened by New Managerialism and may, in the view of some writers, have been damaged dramatically (Pollitt 2000).

There are three main aspects of NM:

- Success is judged by measurable performances (Performance Management)
- Standardisation of work processes is emphasised, involving simplification, routinisation and packaging of aspects of work.
- Efficiency is prioritised over equality of access, participation and outcome

New Managerialist ideas were pioneered in the UK, the Antipodes, and the USA & Canada in the early 1980's, and the introduction of managerialism within the public sector became a central strategy. 'Arrogant' professionals were accused who had prevented efficient, effective and economic public services. The power of markets

and management was the answer. Since then New Managerialist solutions have been rolled out across the first world economies.

The New Managerialist agenda has several further characteristics: the enforcement of a powerful management body that overrides professional skills and knowledge; the standardisation of work processes through the use of targets and performance management techniques; demanding organizational performance; fostering greater accountability and transparency from providers; looking for savings; and using contracting-out. From the early 1990's competition was made a chief component of the system. A common feature of NM is an emphasis on performance measurement.

There have now been many empirical studies of New Managerialist systems of control of organisations and their workforces that expose the serious damage that can be caused to these organisations and the services they provide (Diefenbach 2009).

A striking feature of the field of academic literature on NM is the stress often placed on the limitations of the evidence for the effectiveness of such techniques. In what is arguably the leading international survey in the field Pollitt and Bouckaert (2004) state, 'At the level of broad programmes of management reform we know of not a single study from our twelve countries that convincingly links the actions taken with a set of positively and safely attributable final outcomes'. There are also uncertainties regarding whether 'improvements' in performance are genuine; how far they reflect 'manipulation' by professionals and managers; whether comparisons of performance reflect the range of differences between providers; and whether 'perverse', unintended consequences are considered in any evaluation.

There have, however, been many criticisms of these changes and the spread of bureaucratic systems that are needed to support them. Hogget (1996), to give one example, writes, "...excessive formalization has proved to be organizationally dysfunctional, creating new layers of bureaucracy engaged in contract specification and monitoring, quality control, inspection, audit and review and diverting the energies of professional staff away from service and program delivery into a regime of form filling, report writing and procedure following which is arguably even more extensive than that which existed during the former bureaucratic era".

## **Performance Management**

New Managerialism may seem a solution to drives for greater efficiency and public accountability and has led to the increased use of performance management as a tool for setting and monitoring goals in the interests of efficiency and accountability, control, regulation, assessment, inspection and evaluation. Some, however, have described a kind of "measurement fever" in public service organisations. Hoggett (1996) concluded that "the majority of public sector organisations in the UK today appear to be overwhelmed by forms of performance monitoring". Rothschild and Ollilainen (1999) described electronic performance management systems as forming an "electronic panopticon" - see Benthamism above. There is a kind of fetish of the fact in which information is sought and collected with little thought to the value of this information or any consideration about the benefits obtained as opposed to the effort needed to collect and make sense of it. There are arguments that many measures are superficial and over-simplistic since the choice of measures to be employed is often made by management in the interests of simplicity and time efficiency. This has left many clinical workers feeling that the most important elements of their work is neglected in order to demonstrate that less important but more visible measures have been met.

Performance indicators provide management with a technology and also means of exerting increased bureaucratic control over work and the workforce. There is no doubt that managerial power to define the content and operational goals of professional work has been increased (Hoggett 1996). This has produced a greater formalisation of tasks and routines; the specialisation of roles and increasing hierarchy; increased conformity in order to establish common standards; more standardisation and simplification of tasks; and more objective target setting.

A significant power shift has come about with these changes. The conventional role of the professional as an authoritative source of knowledge has been eroded. This has led to the dis-empowerment of professionals and the ascendancy of managerial power and

control. Power, and control, has been centralised in the interests of conformity in order to establish common standards.

There has been an increased standardisation of work in line with Taylorist principles: breaking tasks into component parts, and routinising processes and tasks. In the mental health field this has led to an increasing reliance on medical model conceptualizations and definitions of "illness"; the reliance on NICE guidelines; and the formulation of standardised packages of treatment for specific "illnesses".

We should note that private enterprises work on the principle of predictability: of costs, inputs, and outputs. Such standardisation is necessary in order for services to be privatised successfully. In the UK, NICE is an important part of the move to standardise services, as previously discussed. Therapies have been re-conceptualised as packaged products, standardised sets of techniques, a conceptualisation that has little room for an understanding of the importance of relationships as a key component in any psychotherapy. People, professionals as well as patients, are assumed to be interchangeable units. In professional practice there is an increasing tendency for services to deny the differences between professionals and therefore to substitute cheap and poorly qualified staff for experienced, knowledgeable, and trained professionals, and then to assert that there will be no detriment to the services provided. This smacks of denial and magical thinking.

Similarly, patients are reduced to diagnoses, each diagnosis of which can be treated with the same, packaged therapy, reducing patients to a diagnostic classification.

## **Summary**

One predominant view of the New Managerialist revolution is that they have been motivated by political and managerial attempts to control the autonomy of professionals through the bureaucratisation and the routinisation, codification and consequent de-skilling of professional work.



In our more analytic understanding, the underlying model of organisations is simplistic and ignores the importance of irrational processes and unintended consequences. Shrivastava (1986), for example, writes:

"The limitations and biases of strategic management are traceable to the narrow instrumental conceptions of organization and strategy. Organizations are viewed as neutral, rational, technical, instrumental systems designed to convert inputs into outputs and strategy is conceived as the determination of ends and the means for achieving ends".

An important question concerns the psychological and emotional impact that these changes in the context and organisation of health services have had on clinicians who are often working with extremes of deprivation, severe emotional and relationship difficulties, and complex psycho-social problems. They now increasingly work under a "constant performance evaluation" (Karreman and Alvesson 2004) and in a managerial climate that increasingly restricts professional autonomy and creativity. What are the psychological consequences for individuals working within these systems and for their patients?

I will attempt to think further about this question in a later article.

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**Terry Birchmore**

## **EGATIN STUDY DAY**

### **EGATIN STUDY DAYS – VIENNA 2010**

The Egatin Meeting “Understanding Clinical Material in Group Analytic Training and Practise” in April 2010 was a special event in the beautiful, historic city of Vienna. The participants were received with true hospitality by the organizing committee in the Palais Kaiserhaus where they experienced a very friendly atmosphere.

The presented presentations were stimulating and important opportunities for thinking and learning which could be extended and intensified by the following discussion that took place in the small groups. This permitted dialogue and exchange of the various raised aspects in a more personal setting that was very enriching.

The large groups were influenced by the incidence of the ash cloud above central Europe at that exact time, which limited the attendance of some participants and affected the return of many others. The feeling of being stuck without knowing the future influenced the sense of security and gave rise to the expression of passed menacing and destructive experiences and emotions.

Being at the time in my first year as a trainee, I had the opportunity to learn about other European Institutes and the interesting work of their group analysts as well as meet and exchange experiences with all the other participating trainees. In the meeting of the Egatin Committee with the trainees we had the opportunity to know each other, compare the differences between the training in the different countries as well as to express our needs, in particular the one shared by all the trainees of establishing an easy connection through a possible common electronic platform.

On a more personal level, the Egatin Study Days stimulated the remembering of the time, over 25 years ago, when I studied Psychology in Vienna, which contrasted with this new, more mature group analytical context.

In conclusion: As important as the scientific content of the Egatin Meeting, was the personal significance of its attendance as well as the rich interactions with several participants, one of whom became a good friend.

**Patrícia Poppe**

**Portugal**

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## **GAS Website**

First some statistical information about visits to the GAS Website for the 30 days before 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2011:

### *Site Usage*

<b>1,292</b>	Visits	<b>5.11%</b>	Bounce Rate
<b>5,348</b>	Pageviews	<b>00:02:16</b>	Avg. Time on Site
<b>4.14</b>	Pages/Visit	<b>51.32%</b>	% New Visits

### *Top Pages*

1. [Events/Services | Group Analytic Society \(London\)](#) - 394 Views
2. [Group Analytic Society \(London\) | Group Analytic Society \(London\)](#) - 264 Views
3. [Membership Information | Group Analytic Society \(London\)](#) - 253 Views
4. [Group Therapy | Group Analytic Society \(London\)](#) - 178 Views
5. [Group Analysis the Journal | Group Analytic Society \(London\)](#) - 154 Views

### *Top Referrers*

1. **confer.uk.com** - 76 Visits

### *Top Searches*

1. **group analytic society** - 215 Visits

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 2. <b>group-psychotherapy.com</b> - 35 Visits | 2. <b>group analytic society london</b> - 56 Visits  |
| 3. <b>gaq.sagepub.com</b> - 10 Visits         | 3. <b>group analytic soccity</b> - 21 Visits         |
| 4. <b>groupanalysis.org</b> - 9 Visits        | 4. <b>gas london</b> - 20 Visits                     |
| 5. <b>google.co.uk</b> - 8 Visits             | 5. <b>www.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk</b> - 16 Visits |

Please do take some time to visit the GAS website and to familiarise yourself with the layout and content of the site. Try clicking on anything that turns your mouse pointer into a hand. Thoroughly familiarise yourselves with the site, and then please let me know your thoughts on how it might be improved for the visitor.

In this, and forthcoming, pieces, I will try to guide you through the website, step by step.

First, let us look at the Index page, the page that most visitors will land on first:

<http://groupanalyticsociety.co.uk/>

Click on the “Group Analytic Society” logo at the top left of the page and it will return you to this page from any other page on the site.

Next, look at the top menus. As you travel along them with your mouse pointer you will open cascading and clickable links to other pages. So, for example, “The Society”. Clicking on “The Society” will take you to that page. You can also click on the cascaded Membership Information and the sub-page, Membership Renewal. Also available on your opened Menu are the Contact Us, Research, Obituaries, and Donations Pages. Just click on the name to go to the relevant page.

Similarly, other menu items can be cascaded from the menu bar by placing your mouse pointer over the menu bar titles at the top of the page.

Next, examine the scrolling banner immediately underneath the menu bar. This scrolls between a number of different pages on the site. Think of it as an advertising banner and clicking on an “advert” will take you directly to the page in question. Simply click on the advert picture or the “Read More” button to go to the page.

Next, look at the small pictures underneath the scrolling banner area. Hover your mouse over a picture and descriptive text will appear. Click on the picture to go to the page.

The Event calendar on the right of the page contains information about Society Events. Hover your mouse pointer over the darkened boxes on certain dates for information on events. Click on the darkened box for further information and also to subscribe to an rss feed that will automatically inform you of further updates to the events calendar if you subscribe to an RSS feed reader. This calendar is displayed on all pages of the website.

Below this is an Announcements box that displays information about events, etc., in a different format, with links to relevant pages. This is also displayed on all pages of the website.

The Pages box, below this, displays links to all pages on the website, and clicking on a page link will take you to that page. This information is also displayed on all pages of the website.

Now visit the Contact Us Page. Easy! You now know how to get there and you also know that there are a number of ways of doing so. This page displays our address, phone and fax number, an email link, and a Google Map, centred on our London address, and this can be manipulated, just as on the Google Maps site.

I hope this is all helpful and comprehensible. Please do contact me if you have any suggestions or if you would like to put content on the website, such as an article.

**Terry Birchmore**

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## **IGA/GAS Library Report**

There has been little to report from the Library recently – so – I have not reported, despite the tantalising heading for a library report which was not there .. in issue 49. [NB the ‘King’s Fund Library database guidance’, there cited, appeared in the June 2010 issue].

However, the library database continues to be ‘enhanced’ so that more data, more detail, more abstracts of content of material are being added all the time.

Did you know that when you have searched the database for a set of records, you can email a list of items that you would like to borrow/visit the library to consult to me? In the OPAC, once you have done a search, created a set of records, and selected your chosen records [by ticking the tick box alongside the record], you can then click on the ‘Email’ button to right of the screen, and this will bring up a dialogue screen where you can direct the email to me [my email address is on the Library home page].

Please note that currently all records will appear as ‘available’, but I can check loan status of items for you, and in due course, this functionality will be fully available in the system, and you will be able to see whether copies of items are available for loan, held in the ‘QCRref’ collection, or are on loan.

Given that the library database has been available to all IGA and GAS members, and to students, for nearly a year now, I was disappointed to see that the Library did not appear to figure at all in the ‘Survey of GAS membership satisfaction’ as reported in

issue 51. Do you not value the library? If not, why not? Answers to me on a post-card, please – well, no, by email, please ... Seriously, if you have issues relating to the Library, please let me know, so that they can be addressed. GAS contributes financially to the Library, which is for all GAS members, as well as IGA members, so please do use it !

**Elizabeth Nokes**  
**Librarian**  
**IGA/GAS Library**  
**1 Daleham Gardens**  
**London NW3 5BY**  
**Tel 020 7431 2693**  
**Fax 020 7431 7246**  
**Email: [elizabeth@igalondon.org.uk](mailto:elizabeth@igalondon.org.uk)**

**Available at the following times:**  
**Tuesday and Wednesday: 10.45a.m. to 17.15 p.m.**

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## **Request for Foulkes Letters and Documents for Society Archives**

We are appealing for letters, notes, and correspondence from Foulkes that Society members may possess. This will add to our already valuable society archive that contains much interesting material, papers and minutes and that is a significant source of information on our history and development.

Please contact Julia in the GAS office if you would like to donate any original or copied documents:

Group\_Analytic Society  
102 Belsize Road  
London NW3 5BB

Tel: +44 (0)20 7435 6611  
Fax: +44 (0)20 7443 9576  
e-mail: [admin@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk](mailto:admin@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk)

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## **Events**

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**Announcing**

**THE FIFTEENTH G.A.S. TRIENNIAL EUROPEAN  
GROUP-ANALYTIC SYMPOSIUM**

**CULTURES, CONFLICT AND CREATIVITY...**

which will take place at

**GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE, in  
NEW CROSS, LONDON, UK**

**AUGUST 29TH – 2ND SEPTEMBER 2011**

The event is being organised by  
THE GROUP-ANALYTIC SOCIETY (LONDON).  
Symposium Sub-Committee Chairman: Kevin Power

Group-analysis seeks to understand the many facets of culture. An analytic group has a culture, and so does a family, an organisation, a community and a society. We live in a time when cultures are increasingly interconnected while also striving for separateness to preserve identity. Most cultures are anxious about the global economy, climate change, and how to live together in the context of continuing wars, genocide and terrorism. Not only must we work with our personal conflicts but also with those that arise in interpersonal relationships, in organisations, and within and between societies and nations. How can the creativity of group-analysis respond to and work with this complex matrix of cultures and conflict?

Further Information and Booking:

Please visit the GAS Website at <http://groupanalyticsociety.co.uk/>

And click on the Symposium 2011 link.



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## IGA/GAS Film Group

Screen Memories exists to engage actively with cinema; an attempt to challenge the fast food ethos of modern consumption, by giving time and thought to a series of films that potentially challenge us, offer a fresh perspective, disturb or confirm our certainties. At best they offer insight into our lives via the initially voyeuristic pleasure of spending time in the lives of others.

This season we begin with an invigorating, hugely entertaining documentary on the transformational power of groups, *Three Miles North of Molkom*, and hope that the film-makers can present their film at the IGA.

Then the little seen *Disgrace* from J.M. Coetzee's classic South African novel is followed by Paul Schulte's re-evaluation of the historic cold war classic, *Dr Strangelove* and our Christmas feel good factor is provided by Ken Loach's imaginative *Looking for Eric*.

2011 is welcomed by the ground breaking *Precious*, which sets the tone for Almodóvar's *Live Flesh* and the wonderful Israeli gem, *My Father My Lord*. This is followed by the surprise Oscar winner, *The Hurt Locker*, the riveting holocaust film, *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas*, the disturbingly thought provoking *Dogtooth* and the season ends with Haneke's acclaimed *The White Ribbon* (a 7pm start for this film due to its length).

All the films have knowledgeable speakers to kick off our discussions and we look forward to welcoming back our regulars as well as Screen Memory first timers. All films are shown at The Institute of Group Analysis, 1 Daleham Gardens, London NW3 5BY (020 7431 2693)

Friday evenings Monthly – 7.30pm – 10.30pm (except 15th July 2011, which has a 7pm start)

Everyone welcome.

**17th June 2011. *Dogtooth*.** Directed by Giorgos Lanthimos (Greece 2009). This disturbing film about a perversely dysfunctional family, which has echoes of the recent cases of family abuse documented in the press, won nine awards including Un Certain Regard at Cannes 2009. Discussion led by – Dr Kiriakos Xenitidis, group analyst and psychiatrist working with people who have a learning disorder.

**15th July 2011. *The White Ribbon*.** Directed by Michael Haneke (Germany 2008) Strange events happen in a small German village just before the start of the first world war, Haneke's latest acclaimed and thought provoking film won many awards. Dis-

cussion led by Dr David Wood , child and adolescent psychiatrist, group analyst and family therapist. Due to this film's length, the film will begin at 7pm.

Fee:

£15 for individual tickets

£100 for a season ticket (only available in advance of season and not transferable)

We advise booking in advance at the IGA: 020 7431 2693 or [iga@igalondon.org.uk](mailto:iga@igalondon.org.uk)

Tickets are usually available at the door. Reserved tickets without payment must be collected by 7.20pm to guarantee entry.

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## **16th Triennial European Symposium in Group Analysis 2014**

### **Invitation to Tender for this prestigious event in Group Analysis and central event in the Calendar of the Group Analytic Society (London)**

This is an invitation for Group Analytic Societies/ Institutes from all over Europe to tender for the 16th European Symposium in Group Analysis to take place in 2014.

Soon the 15th European Group Analytic Symposium will be held in London August 29th-September 2nd, 2011. It is the central event of the Group Analytic Society (London). The Dublin event in 2008 drew over 550 participants and London is planning for 600 group analysts and other professionals interested in group psychotherapy. It is intended to provide an extended period of time in order to meet and share theory, practice and experiential components, as well as to meet and socialise with old friends and colleagues, to make new acquaintances and to be inspired in one's work with groups.

The European Symposium has been held every third year since 1970, where the first took place in Estoril, Portugal. The tradition is to hold it in a different part of Europe each time. Among other places it has been held are Oxford (UK), Heidelberg (Germany), Copenhagen (Denmark), Budapest (Hungary), Bologna (Italy), Molde (Norway) and lately Dublin (Ireland). It is a joint venture between the local Society/Institute and the Group Analytic Society, London.

The application should give information about:

Responsible chairperson

Responsible local organisation  
Venue description  
Accommodation  
Travel information and access  
Preliminary working title  
Preliminary realistic budget

For further information and guidelines about the organisation, economics and responsibilities

Please contact the Society's e-mail address: [groupanalytic.society@virgin.net](mailto:groupanalytic.society@virgin.net)

Applications should be addressed to the President of GAS (London) either by post or e-mail  
and be at the Society Office by Thursday 17th March 2011

**Gerda Winther, President**

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## **Information About Conference Accommodation in London and Donations to the Society**

Please see the GAS Website at:

<http://www.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk/>