Article

Group Analytic Training and the Social Context: Who is influencing Whom?

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This article inquires into the group analyst's capacity to influence the social sphere. To this end, I begin by introducing the principles of 'managerialism', or 'New Public Management', as this is the norm that currently prevails in the social sphere. This is followed by a critical excursion into the values of classical psychoanalysis, which I argue continues to prevail within group analysis. Next, I critically reflect on contemporary group analytic trainings in the light of these two ways of thinking, managerialism and the analytic orthodoxy. I conclude that there is a real danger that group analytic trainings concede to and imbibe bureaucratic managerialist norms, producing group analysts who are more likely to be deferential to established authorities rather than being able to question and challenge them.

Key words: New Public Management (NPM), managerialism, group analysis, training, psychoanalysis, Foulkes, ethics

There is no such thing as a neutral education process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of generations into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes the 'practice of freedom', the means by which men and women deal critically with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world (Shaull, 2000).

Introduction

This article is a version of the lecture given to the EGATIN conference in Bristol in 2015. The agenda for the conference was for the international group analytic training community to think about the factors in group analytic training institutions that might inhibit or enable the capacity of group analysis to contribute to, and prosper in, wider social contexts.

To set the discussion I will first describe what I think is taking place in the wider social context. I follow this with a critical take on the psychoanalytic and group analytic orthodoxy. I will then engage in a discussion regarding our trainings (national and international) in relation to the ways of thinking that prevail in the wider social context as well as the analytic orthodoxy.

Values of Contemporary Organizations

Today, the wider social context that most group analysts are likely to find themselves working within is the bureaucratic regime called 'New Public Management' (NPM).

The Market

Since the 1980s the values of neo-liberalism have been in the ascendency and come to dominate the planet; the values of 'free trade, open markets, privatization, deregulation and a decrease in the welfare role played by state' (Bessant 2015: 3). All human interaction is construed of as exchanges within a market place. According to them when the market place is unregulated and left to its own devices, it is in its 'natural' state, and Social–Darwinist principles will ensure that it will be at its most efficient.

Neo-liberalism and its comrade in arms, Managerialism or New Public Management (NPM) promoted the view that private for-profit organizations are necessarily efficient, because if they were not, then they would fail. Meanwhile public service organizations are said to be inefficient because they are subsidized. Therefore, they say, public service institutions should either be privatized or be run along the same lines as for-profit institutions; this would ensure that they would operate as efficiently as possible. By 'efficiently', mostly what is meant is 'as cheaply as possible'.

So public, charity and other not-for-profit institutions have come to be run as though they are businesses. The rationale for a business is to make profits, to 'do well'. Meanwhile, mostly the rationale for not-for-profit institutions is to 'do good' in some way—to educate, to

care, and so on. NPM not only claims that both are possible, but that business principles will ensure that for a given amount of money, the amount of good will be maximized (Frederickson, 1999).

In the tension between doing good and doing well, money is given the final say. The final arbiter becomes not whether something is worth doing, but whether it will make money, or at the very least, not lose money. The phrase 'business model' has become ubiquitous.

In the publishing industry for example, (as I know to my cost) although the senior editor of a book publisher might like a book sufficiently to wish to publish it, the ultimate decision as to whether or not to publish is taken by the accountancy department—the people who hold the purse strings.

A similar thing is taking place in our universities. Courses that make profit and draw in high fee-paying foreign students are fostered, whilst other courses, even though they might be worthwhile and prestigious in their own right, are closed down because they are deemed 'inefficient' (Times Higher Education, 2001). Good researchers are regularly sacked because of not bringing in sufficient funding. Most telling is the fact that the in the UK, the last Labour government shifted responsibility for higher education to *The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills* (Bessant et al., 2015: 7). What is most noteworthy about this change is the fact that the name of this department makes no reference whatsoever to 'university' or even 'education' for that matter. The primary function of the university then has become to make money rather than educate, and the function of the education is to serve business.

At a smaller level, the equivalent shift in the voluntary and charity sector is that it is 'the treasurer' who very often ends up having the final say on whether or not a project will be pursued. Money trumps all.

A further characteristic of this way of thinking, is a preoccupation with *appearance*—marketing to the market. Often much more money and energy is spent developing and promoting an appealing image of company (the 'brand'), rather than on the work itself. For example, 'A quarter of the pharmaceutical industry's revenue is spent on marketing, twice as much as it does on research and development' (Goldacre, 2012: Kindle Loc. 4691).

Rationalism, Universality, Individualism
Managerialism believes that the principles and skills of management are transferable from one sector to another, whatever its function, be it a hospital, supermarket, local authority, university, or even a group

analytic training. Increasingly it is the case that managers are unlikely to have worked in the sector that they manage. Increasingly not-for-profit institutions are following in the footsteps of for-profit companies and instating CEOs to lead and oversee their organizations.

The modern MBA and NPM conception of the CEO is that of the CEO-as-visionary, CEO-as-heroic-individual (Binney, Wilke and Williams, 2012). To this individualistic way of thinking, there are leaders and there are followers. In this way managerialist rationality fosters the split between mind and body. The higher-ups think, and the lower-downs do. The higher echelons formulate policy, and the lower echelons implement it— 'theirs is not to reason why'. If they do dare to reason why, then this mostly treated as an act of insubordination and they become subject to disciplinary action.

The belief systems of managerialism are technologist and rationalist. Decision-making is bureaucratized, as are relations between persons within the organization. Institutions try to control and fix the future by drawing up strategic plans, five year plans, and the like. On these matters Eisenhower is reputed to have said 'In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable'.

In other words, it is important to plan whilst looking five years ahead. But all this plan will do is to provide a rationale for the very next step. Because a moment later, the social context will have changed in some unpredictable way not anticipated by the creators of the strategic plan; therefore it is no longer possible to take the second step as previously envisaged *in the way that it was envisaged*. The future is emergent and so what it requires is continual improvisation (Burger, 2008).

HR: Communication and Control

We now come to a curious contradiction. When it comes to the 'market-place', the neo-liberals want it unfettered by regulations so that companies are free to trade in whatever way they choose to. But inside the companies themselves, the culture is the opposite: it is *highly* regulated and controlled. Why this should be so, makes total sense within managerialist reasoning.

Much of the focus of New Public Managers is to ensure that employees are doing what they have been told to do, in the way that they have been told to do it. To this end managers create reams of protocols and procedures to monitor and control their employees. In

pursuit of this end some end up micro-managing the workforce giving them targets, checking performance in relation to the targets, and adjusting rewards accordingly. Employees are required to spend more and more time accounting to their masters, leaving less and less time for the actual work, increasing the chances of stress related illness and consequent absenteeism. The NPM way of dealing with this is to require the employee to account for their illness too. Paradoxically, this way of trying to enhance efficiency, actually produces inefficiency. The situation will be familiar to many working in the UK today.

To this mentality, employees are means to ends, *resources* rather than persons. Resources are likely to be *managed* rather than *related to*. In its initial conception Human *Resource* (HR) Department acted in the interests of employees. But today the Head of HR sits in the boardroom as one of the Senior Management Team, which is where their allegiance has come to lie.

Communication protocols and procedures drawn up by HR departments are couched in the rhetoric of democracy, of inclusivity, consulting the 'stakeholders', etc. But as many will attest, the reality is that these protocols are a way of controlling communication, so that unwelcome contributions atrophy on the side lines. Clement Atlee is reputed to have said: 'Democracy means government by discussion, but it is only effective if you can stop people talking'.

In many institutions, this is exactly how communication protocols function: they are designed to *stop people talking*. Procedures decree that the first and only person an employee should communicate their concerns to is their line manager. To communicate via any other channel is to break the rules and be open to disciplinary action. In this chain of command, the CEO and other managers sit between the 'shop floor' and the trustees. In 2013, in one organization that is familiar to me, the CEO and other managers used this structure to filter out information and kept the trustees ignorant of the institutional difficulties, until they stumbled across it accidently.

All this has come about because of a seismic shift that has taken place in organizational life in the power-relations between bureaucrats and professionals. Bureaucrats, whose task it had previously been to support the professionals in their role, have become masters, dictating to the professionals what they should be doing and how they should be doing it (Weber, 2009). But as we have already noted, managers, policy makers and auditors often have little or no knowledge of the field that they are managing.

In these ways, it becomes apparent that within NPM discourse the phrase 'to manage' is in fact code for 'to control', 'to intimidate', and 'to police'.

Customer Services and Customer Control

In line with the market mentality of NPM in which all interactions are construed of as monetary exchanges in the market place, those that the institution serves are redefined as 'customers' who are 'paying for a service' rather than as trainees, students, passengers, citizens, or patients or whatever.

But in a similar way to HR, 'Customer Services' allegiance is not to the customer, but to the institution. As many readers will attest, the function of Customer Services has become the means of buffering the institution from the customer, by embroiling them in long-winded opaque complaint process.

In sum: NPM uses a number of auditing, monitoring and surveillance tools to control and intimidate the workforce, customer services to enmesh the customer; it uses procedures and protocols that shield senior managers and make them inaccessible to others in the organization; and it uses the rationale of profits as the final arbiter of its decision making processes.

The NPM mind set is highly technologist, rationalist, bureaucratic and for our purposes, singularly *non-relational*.

Values of Group Analysis

What are the values of group analysis? As soon as we try to answer this, we are immediately faced with the fact that there is no consensus within our community. Some value this diversity, and think of group analysis as a 'broad church'. Meanwhile, others think this diversity problematic, and seek to *standardize* group analytic trainings. The standardization process is necessarily a conflictual political process, even though it is likely to portray itself as a neutral 'scientific' process dealing with 'best practice'. But the move to standardization, begs several questions: *Should* trainings be standardized? Whose interests will it serve? I will return to these questions in the last part of the article.

In my view one source for the range of group analytic values is to be found in the relationship of group analysis to psychoanalysis. This I have previously characterized as the distinction between Radical

Foulkes and Orthodox Foulkes (Dalal, 1998). In what follows I focus primarily on the Orthodox frame, as in my view, many of the conventions within our trainings proceed from this way of thinking.

Values of the Orthodox/Classical Analyst

The stance of the classical psychoanalyst—a stance that many a group analyst emulates—is that of the old fashioned scientist: the detached objective observer of clinical phenomena. Unlike patients who are caught up in the transference and are immersed in fantasy/phantasy, the analyst is thought to be able to get a hold of what is really going on.

Authority and Abstinence

The analyst's impassivity, remoteness and reticence are said to be in the service of drawing out the patient's transferences and projections. Not only is authority located in the analyst, it is the task of the analyst to hold on to it. About 10 years ago, I was rebuked by my psychoanalytic supervisor for asking a patient a question. He thought this to be a mistake on several counts—for one he thought that I was reneging on the authority and responsibility invested in me in my role; second, it assumed that there was someone grown up enough within the patient capable of giving a reasonable answer; and third, that in asking the question I was getting unhelpfully involved in something collusive with the patient—*and promoting the pretence that this was a collaborative activity*. To this world view the imperviousness and opaqueness of the analyst is a virtue. At the heart of this attitude is the rule of abstinence. It is a very powerful injunction. For the classicist this does not just mean that the analyst is required to abstain from sexual relationships, but *from participating in a relationship per se*. To this end the analyst does their utmost not to reveal their responses, because to respond would be to participate. I see many a group analyst practising in this way.

Our trainings teach us to sit back, to be detached, to say little, to not interfere, to reflect and to interpret. In effect it is a training in the arts of observation and non-involvement. This stance promotes the inactivity of the analyst as a virtue. The analyst is trained not to *do* anything, but to think and talk about it. Activity and action on the part of the patient or analyst is often characterized as 'acting out', something to be curtailed and contained by interpretation.

Further, trainees are taught to think of all references to the social world, to the group analyst, as well as to dynamics between group members, as manifestations of the transference reflecting dynamics within the internal psychological world. This then leads to an attitude that steadfastly looks away from the external social world and into the internal psychological world.

In sum, the classical method venerates thought and denigrates action; in this spirit it does not promote engagement with the social context, rather it conceives of one's experience of it as due to projections from one's internal psychological world. This does not bode well for the project of engaging with the problematics within the social context.

Object Relations

The fact that many practitioners who would ally themselves with the classical attitude would characterize their theoretical and clinical stance as 'object relational' is to me both ironic as well as revealing. The relationship in the classical encounter is a one-way street—the patient relates to the analyst, while the analyst somehow stands outside the relationship and interprets it. Feelings arising in the analyst are construed of as counter-transference, by which it is meant that the feelings are not those of the analyst rather they are being provoked and caused by the patient's projections. The analyst is the register and observer of the patient. In this sense the patient is an object to the analyst—a thing to be observed and analysed. Meanwhile the fact that the analyst does their utmost not to give anything away about themselves to the patient, means that they too are a kind of object for the patient not a person—thus, *object*-relations, rather than *person*-relations.

Enigma and Mystery

One consequence of the distanced stance of the analyst, is that it generates an air of mystery around them. About five years ago an individual described her experience of her first large group on an introductory course at the IGA in London: at the appointed hour the group analysts swept into the room, looking at no one, they silently took their seats. She said that for her they seemed to be like Jedi warriors, cloaked in an invisible aura of mysterious knowledge. Of course you might now interpret her response as an idealized transference.

Whatever truth there might be to this, it leaves out the sheer theatrical-
ity of the situation, which is designed to evoke a sense that something
portentous has just taken place. The mystique around the enigmatic
unresponsive group analyst is bound to create (amongst other things)
an air of deference around and towards them.

Anyhow, this form of practice generates a conception that the ana-
lyst is some kind of superior being residing in a higher realm, beyond
the ken of ordinary mortals. All of this generates a situation that is
authoritarian and hierarchical, with lesser beings looking up in awe
and reverence at higher beings.

The Values of Group Analytic Trainings

I will now look at group analytic trainings and compare and contrast
them with the classical psychoanalytic ethos as well as the New
Managerialist ethos. I ask: in what ways do group analytic trainings
reproduce the ethos of each, and in what ways do they challenge them
and produce meaningful alternatives?

Caveats

I need to make some caveats before I begin.

First, what follows is not a critique of *persons* who serve on our
committees, and who take on onerous responsibilities without finan-
cial remuneration. I also know that things look very different when
one is actually 'in government' from the easy claims made when one
has no responsibilities.

Second, to question NPM's understanding of 'efficiency', is not to
suggest that our committees should not concern themselves with the
financial viability of our institutions, which would amount to negli-
gence. Similarly, to question particular *versions* of analytic practice,
for example the idea of 'boundaries', is not to imply that these ele-
ments should be dispensed with.

Third, I speak from by *my experiences* of participating in trainings,
as trainee (late 1980s) and since that time as teacher, as supervisor
and as committee member. My primary experiences have been with
the IGA, London, but also with each of the other trainings in the UK,
as well as several on mainland Europe. Importantly, my claims are
also informed by my participation in large and small groups at con-
ferences over the years, which give a window onto the on-going
norms of practice within our profession. *My* subjective experiences,

particular and partial as they are, constitute the 'data' on which I base my claims (Stolorow and Atwood, 2002). This way of proceeding accords with *my* group analytic values, which are in conflict with those who conceive of group analysis as a scientific activity that in principle is capable of producing an objective evidence-base.

In what follows keep three questions in mind:

1. How does the training institution organize its bureaucratic structures, and what are the rationales for doing it and that particular way?

2. What is the ethos of the training's relationship to its trainees, and how does it deal with them?

3. How do the various committees of the institution speak to and deal with its Membership?

The Bureaucracy

The first thing that strikes me is the fact that in the last five years or so the IGA in London appointed a lawyer to be its Executive Director (ED). Until a year or so ago, so too was the person who generously volunteered to be Chair of the Ethics Committee. But as far as I know neither of them had had much to do with psychotherapy or group analysis prior to taking on their roles.

Is the fact that the IGA London has created a new salaried position of Executive Director, compounded by the fact that the ED had no previous experience of our day to day work, a clue that it is slowly buying into the public management mentality?

I have not been party to the discussions that led to the decision to create this position, so I speculate; and I confess that my speculations are founded in total ignorance rather than knowledge about the actual discussions that took place. One rationale for the appointment might have to do with the fact that the rules of the Charity Commission prohibit the institution paying members of the Board of Trustees for their time spent taking care of us. But the rules do allow a person from outside the institution to be employed to share this burden. Whilst this strategy does make rational sense, is it also a part of a progressive drift within the IGA towards corporatization?

It is also the case that between a half to two thirds of committee members of the UK trainings, have (or have had) substantial 'day-jobs' as senior managers in the public sector, where they are obliged to practise according to the principles of managerialism. Having been steeped in that discourse, this way of thinking is bound to have become normative for many of them. Could it be then, that they are

importing and replicating this (in my view, pernicious) ideology in our institutions, as they have come to believe that this is how good organizations are run?

I come to think that this might well be the case to some degree. For example I now discover that the language of managerialism has already found its way into the IGA London, and been established there for some time. 'Convenors' of courses are now called 'Directors'. They in turn are now required to report to their 'Managers', whereas they previously reported to the relevant committee.

It is worth pausing a moment to think about the significance of this change in nomenclature and the meaning of the words 'manager' and 'director'. What both these terms do is to undermine the prospect of collegiate reciprocity in the interactions between fellow professionals. The very notion of manager or director rigidifies a 'top-down' hierarchy and creates an asymmetry in the communicational process. The manager/director (A) tells (B). In this way (B) becomes the instrument of (A), *and so is instrumentalized*. This top-down form of communication is to be contrasted with conversation between fellow professionals in the spirit of collegiate reciprocity. For me this sort of managerialist bureaucratization of our training institutions is deeply troubling, and runs counter to the spirit of Foulkesian group analysis. For one thing, accountability in managerialism is to policies and procedures rather than to persons—be they colleagues or clients.

Standards and Standardization

I want to say one other thing about bureaucracies. Bureaucrats like order and consistency; it makes their lives easier. They create procedures to simplify things by ironing out eccentricities and differences. In part, I think that it is this that lies behind the drive to standardize trainings and make them alike by requiring them to be like each other.

On this last point, the distinction between standards and standardization, should be kept in mind. I think that it is important that umbrella bodies like EGATIN and the UKCP create standards. However,

> Standards . . . should refer to criteria of competence; . . . . [not just] a simple set of criteria for training, formulated primarily by 'bean counting' numbers of hours. (Kernberg, 2012: 707)

Standardization meanwhile would impose the same syllabus across all trainings; it would also determine the teaching methodology as

well as the sorts of principles and philosophy to be inculcated (Tjelta, 2012).

For example here in the UK training institutions have formal regulations that not only *require* therapists to remain in supervision for the duration of their career, they also stipulate the minimum number of hours a year of supervision that they should have. Not to do so is considered to be unprofessional, arrogant, and a serious breach of the Code of Ethics. Meanwhile, the *German Society of Group Analysis and Group Psychotherapy* has no such formal *requirement* of its members. Presumably, although they have no *requirement*, they have an *expectation* that their therapists are sufficiently well trained and trustworthy enough to gauge their supervisory needs as and when necessary.

These are very different philosophies. The UK seems to be heading down the road of increasing rules and regulations, which fits the defensive and controlling ethos of NPM. Standardization would entail the imposition of one set of values on both nations. Personally, in this instance, I would favour the German way of doing things.

Ethics

Another element to be thought of is the way that the training institution handles complaints about its members. The NPM norm is to handle these through a series of previously established bureaucratic procedures, as this is thought to make the process objective. The person complained about is often immediately suspended, told that they are not to contact their colleagues, and not informed about the nature of the complaint. Those charged with the investigation conduct their investigation locked away in an office looking at the written evidence. These procedures are literally mindless *because they have been manualized*; they are the opposite of relational.

The IGA London has since changed its procedures, but about two years ago, it came to light that the committee charged with examining these issues, dealt with a complaint about a member in a very similar way. The first that the member came to know about anything was on receiving through the post a summary of the list of accusations. The entire 'investigation' that followed, took place behind closed doors. At no time did the committee try to talk to the member. In my view, perverse versions of neutrality and objectivity created defensive communication protocols that were *anti*-relational, dictating that *all* communication was to be through letter, not email, not phone, not conversation. The process took three years. The member was absolved

of all charges, despite being treated as guilty until proved innocent over this time.

Training and Trainees
In its dealings with trainees and fellow members, many training institutions reproduce in the organizational setting, the opacity required of the classical analyst in the clinical setting. To this end the institution and its panels are often deliberately non-transparent in relation to its trainees, potential trainees and other kinds of interviewees.

An instance of a day-to-day informal version of detached non-transparency is as follows. About 15 years ago I ran experiential groups for trainees at a large and prestigious psychodynamic counselling training in west London. The culture was such that tutors and teachers would walk past trainees in corridors giving no sign of recognition or greeting. I presume that they were engaged in this bizarre behaviour because they thought it 'analytic', and thought that to acknowledge the student in the corridor would be 'boundary-breaking' in some mysterious way. I myself have experienced versions of this on a few occasions whilst a trainee at the IGA. This sort of attitude is designed to put the trainee in their place—a place which is somewhere down there. The situation is not that different today. Three persons *currently* in group analytic trainings (UK and Mainland Europe) report similar experiences (personal communications following the EGATIN lecture).

The opacity is particularly evident in some of the formal transactions of training institutions. I do not know how it is these days, but it certainly used to be the case that on the occasions that an applicant for a group analytic or psychoanalytic training was unsuccessful, the communication consisted of a bald statement saying simply that they were unsuccessful, and sometimes they would add that they could apply again at a later time. The institution conceived itself as being above giving explanations, because presumably they think like the classical analyst, that to do so is to dilute the purity of the analytic attitude in some way.

A couple of final points about the clinical aspects of the training: Our trainings privilege the internal psychological world over the social external world. So much so that a large part of the clinical aspect of the training is to learn how to interpret and understand references to the social world within the therapy as reflections of the internal world or the transference.

This methodology is likely to create professionals who might have a tendency to interpret people's experiences of existing oppressive social structures, as manifestations of projection, rather than take them at face value and challenge them.

Boundaries

Many colleagues and protocols utilize a peculiar understanding of 'boundaries', to rationalize and legitimate non-transparency and the detached attitude. To my mind on many an occasion these actions and non-actions are in fact self-protective, self-justifying and defensive.

For example, three or four years ago, I was part of a discussion at a regional group analytic training, regarding the subject of whether or not the training group analyst ought to report on trainees in groups to the training committee. It was a good discussion. But my suggestion that we might ask the trainees about their opinion on the matter, was greeted with gasps of horror by some, as they thought this would be a violation of boundaries. Further, in drawing in the trainees into the discussion, the institution would somehow be abdicating its authority. Here you can see the echo of my supervisor who had declared that one should not ask questions of patients. The often voiced rationale for not involving the trainees is that it will make them too anxious. To my mind this is yet another example of the training infantilizing trainees; as one colleague said: 'They won't be able to cope with this responsibility; we are protecting them'.

But many a group analyst believes that not only should they not ask questions, they should give no answer when asked a question. I base this claim on my repeated experiences of participating in large and small groups at conferences over the years. For example the large group conductors at *this* conference (EGATIN, Bristol 2015) only spoke in the third person in objectivist language, and interpreted attempts by participants to speak directly to them as attacks that vilified the conductors.

The convention would have it that to answer questions is a bad thing, as to answer is to enter a conversation. I am not of course suggesting that we adopt the opposite course, and *always* say something.

Members

A similar sort of theme is recognizable in reports of interviewees of their experiences with formal gatekeeping panels—which many have

described as not only as humiliating, but also as brutal and bruising. Some panels are run on collegiate lines that are inquiring yet relational. Others however are run on authoritarian lines and are not only inquisitorial, they tend to play a version of 'guess what's in my mind, and then speak to it'.

For example, the panel member asks a question of the interviewee; unsure what was being asked, the interviewee replies, 'that sounds interesting, but I don't quite follow it. What do you mean?'; the panellist responds: 'It's not for me to answer it, I want you to talk about it'. This by the way is a verbatim account of an actual exchange that took place in the last months (personal communication).

I recall that I myself had a similar experience (although it was not bruising) in my interview to be accepted on the IGAL training (1986). I was a school teacher at the time. I did not understand what a panel member was asking. I recall asking for clarification, but I did not understand that either. She said, never mind, and moved on. Later in the interview, I forget the details now, I suddenly realized that the panellist had been concerned to check how prone I would be (because I was a teacher) to educate and inform the patient during the therapy. I asked is this what you were asking? She said yes, and I responded in some way. This trivial experience has stayed with me for almost 30 years, because it is an exemplar of a practice that I think deeply unhelpful, and at times unethical. My guess is that in 'moving on' the panellist thought that I could not understand her because of some emotional resistance, or that in some way I was not ready to hear it, rather than the possibility that *her* communications were not clear. I do not know any of this for a fact, but it is possible that if we had *conversation* between adults rather than a question and answer session between the-one-who-knows and the one-who-has-to-show-that-they-know, we might have got there much earlier.

Trust the Group

Sometimes the rationale for being unresponsive and withholding, is that the inactivity of the conductor is in the service of 'trusting the group'. Last year I came to hear of a supervisor declare that the conductor should not say the thought that comes to their mind, and if the thought returns, still not say it. This is because to say it would rob the group of the opportunity to say it. I am sure that this is true some of the time, but not all of the time. The intention of this kind of withholding is allegedly enabling, but it often ends up being mystifying,

bewildering and disabling. Consider, if you truly trust the group—then surely you ought to trust the group *with yourself, as well as your thoughts and feelings.*

Teaching

The infantilizing of trainees can also take place in the way that theory is taught—which is uncritically. I have personal experience of this. Early in my training (1980s) I was reprimanded by a senior psycho-analyst for questioning Freud's take on men and women. I was told that first I ought to understand Freud. On another occasion, on voic-ing my difference of opinion regarding some statement of Klein's, I was told that my disagreement was due to me not understanding Klein properly. If I understood her, then I would not, could not, disagree.

Critical engagement is to be deferred to a time post-qualification. In the last couple of years I have heard from at least two recently qualified group analysts in the UK, who reported being told exactly this by their tutors: that first they need to understand the theory; after they have qualified will be time enough to question and engage criti-cally with the premises and pronouncements of the theorists.

In this regard is it significant that in the UK we refer to the process of cultivating group analysts as a 'training', while in Norway they refer to the process as an 'education'? In one UK regional group ana-lytic training three or four years ago, I found the trainees literally cowed. The culture of their training made it impossible for them to engage critically with the reading. In conversation with them I dis-covered that there had been occasions at which teachers actually stopped trainees questioning at a fundamental level the belief sys-tems that they were supposedly learning about. For example, not being allowed to question the belief that *there exists* a mechanism called 'projective identification', and instead being asked told that their task was to understand how it works.

I do not know how commonplace this attitude is, but it is at least common enough for it to have made an impression on me. This atti-tude seriously misunderstands the learning process itself. To proceed in this way is encourage the trainee not to think but swallow whole. This is not unlike learning the Bible or Koran by heart and therefore being more likely to think that every word in it must be true; there-fore, those who question it or do not agree with it, are dammed. This is how one would set about creating disciples and dogmas. Recall the

citation I started with from Shaull. What we are witnessing here are ways in which our trainings might 'facilitate the integration of generations into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it'.

Conclusions

It is uncontroversial to assert that the characteristics of individuals are deeply informed by the kind of upbringing they have experienced. What is true of infants is also true of trainees. The kinds of experiences that trainees are put through by their training institution are deeply formative. Particularly formative are trainees' experiences of being in their own therapy/analysis, as well as their experiences in supervision. Also formative are the values and practices embodied by trainers and other individuals that the institutional ethos reveres and respects.

Trainings with deeply conservative and authoritarian attitudes towards their trainees produce group analysts who are deeply conservative and authoritarian in relation to their patients and colleagues. The more conservative the training institution, the more interpretative and non-dialogical the group analyst, who is less likely to make actual contributions to changing or challenging the social context. Although this might seem like an extreme picture, I venture nevertheless that this state of affairs in not uncommon.

One last thing: the title of the conference—Group Analytic Training *and* the Social Context—invites one to think of the training and the social context as separate entities. However, group analytic trainings are already a part of the social context (and vice versa). NPM norms are a part of the social unconscious, or as Lynne Leyton has called it, the Normative Unconscious (Leyton, 2006). As such, many trainings have already unthinkingly absorbed the norms of NPM, and are in the process of bureaucratizing their structures in line with its managerialist, non-relational ethos.

Jane Campbell concluded her Foulkes Lecture thus: '. . . [group analysis] is forever part of the counter-culture, in itself anti-establishment, subversive, too humane, too unregulated, too freedom-loving in its conceptualization to be useful to any engine of the state' (Campbell, 2010: 431).

If this is so (and I think it is), then in our efforts to 'fit in', to comply with the regulatory requirements of the state, are we transforming group analysis from a subversive enterprise into a state-compliant

one? Are we in danger of allowing the regulators of group analysis to destroy the philosophy and spirit of group analysis?

To my mind, group analysis has been in thrall to classical psychoanalysis for far too long. But just as it starts to free itself from the authoritarianism of classical psychoanalysis and its objectivist ethos, it is in danger of becoming mired in the authoritarianism of New Public Management and its authoritarian, rationalist and objectivist ethos.

A real danger is that we end up with the worst of both worlds: the bureaucratic prescriptions of NPM legitimated and underwritten by perverse, authoritarian and defensive versions of psychoanalytic conceptions of confidentiality, containers, boundaries and authority.

Addendum: We are all Relational now

Some readers might think like one of the referees for this article, that I have created a 'psychoanalytical straw man' to produce false polarizations. Further that the situations that I refer to are from the distant past, and that things are very different now. Another reviewer thought that 'The critique of the so-called "classical analyst" might still be appropriate for some orthodox Kleinians, but does not fit with the present practice of many psychoanalysts who adopted the intersubjective turn with its emphasis on mutuality, exchange and co-construction'. In other words, we are all relational now.

However, my experiences suggest that the orthodox ethos I am describing is alive and well in sections of our institutions *today*. Whilst there is indeed a growing rhetoric regarding 'the relational', in my experience (UK and mainland Europe) this is yet to translate into actual practice which continues to emulate the classical psychoanalytic ideal of the detached analyst, delivering interpretations couched in objectivist, third person language. There are of course many colleagues who do not practise in this way, but to break with this norm in front of other colleagues requires a degree of courage. The fact that many colleagues continue to subscribe to the distinction between analysis and therapy is telling.

As Sue Einhorn has pointed out several times, many group analysts have not yet understood the radical shift required of them by the last term in Foulkes' famous statement that group analysis is 'a form of psychotherapy by the group, of the group, *including its conductor*' (Foulkes, 1964: 63). I think that if one holds to these sorts of values then it is beholden not only for group analysts to be *responsive* and *engaged* rather than non-transparent and detached, so should our trainings.

Acknowledgements

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