

DECONSTRUCTING DISCOURSES OF SEXUALITY IN GROUP ANALYSIS: A PROPOSAL FOR AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PHD THESIS

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Introduction and aim

This is a reflexive, theoretical thesis that addresses the question of sexuality in group analysis. Group analysis is a form of psychotherapy that utilises a group of strangers to effect therapeutic change. It is suitable for a broad range of mental illnesses and interpersonal difficulties. It relies on the concept of the unconscious that alters our feelings and behaviours. Part of the task is to bring meaning to such experiences, which occurs through the process of verbalising, as freely as possible, any such thoughts and feelings with others and through noting behaviours in and around the group itself. It relies on the premise that we are first and foremost social beings. Group analysis can also be applied to non-clinical situations such as organisational and societal dynamics including cultural aspects.

The aim of this proposed thesis is to inspire and generate new material for group analytic training, and to consolidate and expand current conceptions of sexuality, and specifically homosexuality, within group analytic theory, in order to create new theoretical paradigms as to how such categories might be explored within a therapeutic group.

In terms of the contribution to knowledge this thesis will enable an understanding of how sexuality has been constructed by psychoanalytic theory, and its subsequent influence upon group analytic theory. Through an examination of the process of this construction, novel understandings of sexuality both within and out-with group analytic theory may be created, using the Foucauldian methodology of archaeology to examine the relationship between discourse within an episteme and the group analytic concept of the matrix of the group. This will have important implications for the setting of group analytic training curricula and the future training of group analysts.

Within this proposal I shall first present a brief historical overview of sexuality and its discursive origins focussing mainly on psychoanalysis. I shall then present more contemporary developments within Lacanian psychoanalysis and within the broad theoretical field of queer theory, before then moving onto group analytic perspectives of sexuality. Finally I shall present my research questions, methodology including ethical considerations, my proposed timetable and my personal suitability.

Background to the research questions

The term 'homosexuality' did not exist until the nineteenth century¹. It remains a relatively new idea that homosexuality reflects a state of human existence ontologically different to heterosexuality. In 1864 Karl Heinrich Ulrichs first described individuals with an apparently female psyche in a male body ('uranians')². This is seen as the first-ever description of homosexuality in men prior to the actual creation of the term 'homosexual' by Karl-Maria Kertbeny in 1869. Once this word was established within society, homosexuality as a cultural, social and political identity was born. As Michel Foucault argued in his classic text *The History of Sexuality* (1978), in the nineteenth century, the homosexual became a type of person with a past and a childhood set within a social background.

Early sexologists first highlighted sexuality as an object for the creation of discourse, however it was psychoanalysis that would prove most influential in theorising its nature. Sigmund Freud was influenced by early sexological writing and makes an acknowledgement of authors such as Krafft-Ebing, Havelock Ellis, and Magnus Hirschfeld among others, on the first page of his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (Freud, 1905).

Kenneth Lewes (1995) highlights three key statements of Freud to highlight his early support for male homosexuals within the psychoanalytic field. Lewes (1995) noted that in 1921 Freud in a letter to Ernest Jones that homosexuality should not be used as a sole reason to deny entry to psychoanalytic training. In 1928 Freud stated to the Viennese newspaper *Die Zeit* that 'homosexuals are not sick', and finally in 1930 Freud signed a public petition to decriminalize homosexuality in Austria and Germany (Lewes, 1995). Lewes (1995) also describes Freud's now famous Note to an American Mother, which illustrated Freud's position further on homosexuality by offering reassurance to allay her concerns:

Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation, it cannot be classified as an illness; we consider it to be a variation of the sexual function produced by the certain arrest of sexual development. Many highly respectable individuals of ancient and modern times have been homosexuals, several of the greatest men among them (Plato, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, etc.). It is a great injustice to persecute homosexuality as a crime and cruelty too. (Ibid., p20).

Freud also discussed more radical concepts such as universal bisexuality³ (Freud 1887-1904) and the polymorphously perverse⁴ (Freud

¹ According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the use of the word 'homosexuality' is first referenced to von Krafft-Ebing's 1892 text *Psychopathia Sexualis*.

² In a series of five booklets between 1864-65 under the collective title of *Forschungen über das Räthsel der mann-männlichen Liebe* (Research into the Riddle of Man-Male Love).

³ Laplanche and Pontalis (1973) describe universal bisexuality as being linked to biology in the first instance by quoting Sigmund Freud's use of the term in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* to describe anatomical hermaphroditism in the developing embryo. It is the idea that every human is constitutionally composed of both masculine and feminine sexual dispositions and is seen through the conflicts with which a subject must tackle when taking up a sex.

1905). This was Freud writing about a subject who is more fluid and harder to categorise at least in the early stages of life. These concepts are perhaps Freud as his most queer in the sense of destabilising fixed categories of identity, but they do not account for same-sex desire in itself.

Lacanian perspectives

Coming to contemporary psychoanalytic thinking, Jacques Lacan, who envisaged a re-reading of Freud, argued that developmental processes could not account for either gender identity or libidinal object choice (Ragland, 2001). This challenged Freud's developmental theories of infantile sexuality that required the infant to proceed through the sexual stages of oral, anal and phallic⁵. Lacan argued that sexuality, or *sexuation* as he termed it, was due to unconscious identifications ingrained during the Oedipal phase as the infant negotiated through the Real, Symbolic and Imaginary orders (Ragland, 2001)⁶.

Lacan's famous axiom 'there is no sexual relation' was his way of interpreting gender within the unconscious (Lacan, 1972-73). He argued that there is no signifier for gender and that differences in gender are only to be found by the absence in the image in the signifying chain (Ragland, 2001). With this in mind it seems Lacan viewed homosexuality as a product of language: an effect of representation rather than biology. For him there was no need to develop a theory of homosexuality *per se* as it was irrelevant and would be superfluous given his theory of sexuation. This non-normalised and non-naturalised view had advantages for the development of queer theory. Lacan may have sought a quest to return to Freud but it is at this point their paths bisect, Freud inclining towards seeing all as biologically determined whereas Lacan seeing sexuality as a product of the Imaginary.

For Lacan, sexuation was not innate but develops from the relations between infant and an other and the Other. Concisely, people are not masculine or feminine according to anatomy or gender. The identification is founded by adopting one of two psychical positions: masculine or feminine. As is typical of Lacan, the identifications are not dependent on the characteristics of each position, but on the differences or absences as deciphered in the Imaginary (Ragland, 2001). Lacan also wrote extensively on desire and his concept of *jouissance*. For Lacan desire has no object at all that can be truly satiated, but only an

⁴ Laplanche and Pontalis (1973) define this in relation to the developing infant gaining sexual pleasure from non-genital areas such as the mouth or anus, and is this outside apparently socially normative areas.

⁵ As originally described by the German psychoanalyst Karl Abraham in *Contributions to the theory of the anal character* (1921) and in *A short study of the development of the libido* (1924).

⁶ Evans (1996) suggests that Lacan's 'famous formula': 'There is no such thing as a sexual relationship' is misleading as it suggests people do not have sex. He proposed an alternative translation of, 'There is no relation between the sexes', thus emphasising the relationship between masculine and feminine rather than the act of sex itself. The Imaginary order according to Evans (1996) is related to infantile development whereby the infant learns of itself during the so-called mirror stage as part of its ego development. The process is essentially alienating however and is linked to narcissism. The Symbolic order is linked to the development of language, the Other and the unconscious. The Real is that which cannot be symbolised into language.

object-cause. Apparent satisfaction of the desire is only mythical in that desire continues to push for something else (Nitzgen, 2009). Desire only operates at the level of the signifier in terms of the words symbolising the desire. The object is desire (*petit objet a*) is unobtainable and lost, barred through the Oedipus complex, paternal law and the fear of castration (Nitzgen, 2009). Lacan later developed this further bringing in the concept of *jouissance*. He envisaged desire as a defence against going too far beyond a certain painful limit (beyond which is the territory of *jouissance*). Lacan described *jouissance* as the path towards death, in essence reformulating the death drive (Evans, 1996).

In terms of homosexuality, Lacan postulated that the loss of desire is in fact the loss of object *a* and is a direct cause of desire through the effects of *jouissance*. The loss and subsequent prohibition of *jouissance* is inherent in the symbolic nature of language. Renounced in the castration complex by failing in its attempts to be the imaginary phallus of the mother, the infant learns the incest taboo. It is this part of *jouissance* that the infant strives to find again (Evans, 2005). This Lacan termed this the *jouissance* of the Other: a specifically feminine *jouissance* as opposed to phallic *jouissance*⁷. Lacan plays on the combination of *homme* and feminised *sexuelle* to elaborate on this loss. The *hommosexuelle* becomes a man concerned with discovering the soul of the other in love, taking Woman as his ideal. So although the quest of the *hommosexuelle* may seem to be sexual pleasure and orgasm, the Real goal is to seek a lost Other in the objects of *jouissance* (Ragland, 2001).

Further contemporary discussions about sex and gender have occurred with the development of so-called poststructuralist approaches to sexuality including the development of the broad theoretical body of knowledge commonly known as queer theory. This has started to move our understanding of homosexuality away from a static and objectified position to one where subjectivity is seen as central as well as problematizing apparently stable concepts through critical discussions located in discourse.

This position is one embedded within Foucauldian discourse analysis, which aims to disentangle the politics surrounding such structures rather than through explanation. Michel Foucault had a significant impact on how gender and sexuality were theorised. Foucault tended to stay away from describing sex and the subjective experience of sex, but instead drew our attention to identities and the so-called technologies of subjectivity creating such categories. His thinking about the production and regulation of sexual identities, as described in *The History of Sexuality* (1978), have had a profound impact on the writing of subsequent authors in the field.

Group analysis and sexuality

Bringing this to group analysis, both as a form of therapy and as a theoretical body of work, it emphasises the need to understand the individual and the group simultaneously, and also the social context. Originally constructed by the psychoanalyst turned group analyst S.H. Foulkes, it has also started to make attempts to integrate and develop

⁷ The other/Other is described by Evans (1996) as being two concepts. Other with a non-capitalised O is a reflection of the ego as part of the Imaginary order and is linked to the object-cause of desire. Capitalised Other designates 'radical alterity' and is essentially the Symbolic insofar as it represent law and language.

group analytic theories using Lacanian perspectives (de Maré, 1991; Nitzgen, 2009; Giraldo, 2012). One of the key aspects of group analysis is its ability to link psychoanalytic theory of the individual into its own analytic theory of groups and wider sociological theories, particularly those within critical theory and the Frankfurt School (Elias, 1994). Indeed Norbert Elias is considered one of the founders of group analysis alongside Foulkes. Burman (2005) reminds us that group analysis has its historical roots within critical theory having originated from the Frankfurt School in the 1920s and reminds us that Norbert Elias was an important figure connecting social theory and group analysis in that he provided criticism of dominant structuralist approaches and also emphasised the need to attend to language and culture.

Group analysis is described as a form of psychotherapy of the group, and by the group, including its conductor (the analyst) (Foulkes, 1948). It relies on the idea of an unconscious, which determines our behaviours based on attachment patterns rooted in early experience. It also relies on the ever-more articulate expression of the symptom, which it sees as being autistic at the start. A key component is the idea that we are social beings before we become individuals. Dialogue and the development of language (miscommunication of meaning) is seen as the central task within the group to achieve this in the group matrix. Group analysis, both as a body of knowledge and as a treatment, has much to offer how we construct homosexuality within society particularly given its background within psychoanalysis, politics, cultural studies and sociology. Yet despite this potentially rich background, group analysis has been slow to construct a clear theory of psychosexuality, and specifically homosexuality. Few writers have examined the experience of being gay in a therapeutic group or the experience of conducting a group as a gay analyst.

Nitzgen (2009) gives a good summary description of work so far within group analysis on the issue of sexuality and groups starting with Foulkes's paper *Oedipus conflict and regression* (1972). In this Foulkes described the Oedipal conflict as situated within the whole family, and conceived the conflict as not being biologically inherited but transmitted through the family. Foulkes said that it was not possible to isolate biological, social, cultural and economic factors, and that mental life was the expression of all these factors both horizontally and vertically into the past. Foulkes emphasised the interactive nature of infantile sexuality but did not develop this into a group analytic concept of psychosexuality (Nitzgen, 2009). Nitzgen (2009) also describes work by de Maré in his book *Koinonia: From hate, through dialogue, to culture in the large group*. In this book, de Maré, by examining group analysis in relation to Lacan, emphasises the symbolic nature of sexuality as expressed through language rather than through biological expression of drive, and suggests that in addition to the pleasure and reality principles, we should also add a third principle of meaning (Nitzgen, 2009).

Other group analytic writers in these areas include Morris Nitsun and Macario Giraldo. Nitsun in his 1996 book, *The Anti-Group: Destructive Forces in the Group and their Creative Potential* attempted to describe and theorise about the aggressive and destructive processes that can exist within therapeutic groups as a source of creative potential. His later 2006 book, *The Group as an Object of Desire: Exploring Sexuality in Group Therapy* has brought this thinking full circle

by conceiving of the therapeutic potential of a group not from the previous anti-libidinal perspective but from a libidinal perspective by describing a group that encourages the expression of desire, fantasy, attachment and love. Indeed Nitsun expressed the view that the group could be seen as the object of desire. Giraldo's book (2012) *The Dialogues In and Of the Group: Lacanian Perspectives on the Psychoanalytic Group*, and Nitzgen (2009) have brought the understanding of the differences between discourses in the group and of the group, as described above through Lacan, into focus within group analysis.

Hypotheses and research questions

It can be argued that Lacan, Nitsun and Nitzgen (and arguably Freud) have located desire outside of sexuality. Lacan locates desire as occurring in relation to desire of the Other. This brings group analysis to a radical position where the group in itself is argued as being the object of desire, potentially agreeing with Lacan by locating desire outside of sexuality. This has potential similarities to post-structuralism, queer theory and the pink therapy movement in their attempts to move our understanding of sexuality from sexual instinctual drive to desire as situated within an interpersonal discourse, and may provide a novel understanding of homosexuality within group analysis.

Watson (2005) suggests that being queer is akin to being like someone in therapy who is in a state of flux and is challenging boundaries and definitions. Bacha (2005) proposes that sexuality can be broken down into identity, desire and gender. By doing so, we can see the inherent instability of identity based around sexuality. She proposes that to be in a group could be seen as a queer experience in itself in that it is an attempt to deconstruct identity through dialogue. This could be taken further and more specifically to wonder about what happens to a gay person in a group. If being in a group is queer in itself, in that it can deconstruct the individual and identity, then does being gay in a group also result in a queer experience where an identity such as being homosexual can be deconstructed? This could be seen as highly polemic particularly given the recent statements by various organisations and the UK Department of Health that conversion therapy has no evidence base and is highly questionable from an ethical point of view⁸.

However this is not about converting from one discourse such as homosexual into another equally invalid discourse such as heterosexual. Being gay in a group and giving up an identity that has been painfully fought for and is a hard-one standpoint is a difficult experience. However it could be extremely helpful for an individual in that this may enable a working through of anger and shame, and also allow other identities to come to the fore. It would be concerning if a gay individual were giving up

⁸ In January 2014, 14 organisations including the British Psychoanalytic Council, NHS England, the Royal College of General Practitioners and the Royal College of Psychiatrists met at the Department of Health to agree to end the practice of conversion therapy for sexual orientation in the UK. The organisations signed a Memorandum of Understanding detailing how professional psychotherapy bodies will work to develop training to ensure therapists are better equipped to handle appropriately requests for change from those unhappy about their feelings of sexual attraction. The Institute of Group Analysis is regulated by the United Kingdom Council of Psychotherapy, which also signed the memorandum.

their gay identity within this process of deconstruction to a position of heteronormative presumptions that might exist within a group or indeed giving it up to sea of unknown identities where, in effect, there are no identities. The latter of these two possibilities would be a very bland affair where difference is ignored.

An exploration of the above ideas within the frames of desire, gender, sexuality and homosexuality could provide new understandings of groups and their dynamics. Within the contexts of Foucauldian discourse analysis, feminism and queer theory, this could be part of a paradigm shift in the theoretical approach to homosexuality in group analysis, which until relatively recently was seen as a mental disorder in need of correction.

The following questions therefore structure this thesis:

How does group analytic theory understand sexuality, including desire, sex and gender?

What influence has psychoanalysis had on group analytic theory with regard to how questions of homosexuality are addressed in its training?

What kind of generative dialogue could be created between poststructuralism, as informed by queer theory and feminism, and group analysis?

How could gay and lesbian be thought of as not being identity in group analysis?

Methodology

There will be three main focal aspects, as described in detail below, to this thesis, namely:

A close reading of already published clinical vignettes and texts in group analysis as well as other examples within literature relevant to a group-based view of sexuality.⁹

A textual analysis of contemporary and historical group analytic training curricula and reading lists.¹⁰

⁹ For an example see *The Boys in the Band*. This 1970 American drama film, as directed by William Friedkin having been adapted from the original screenplay by Mart Crowley, is probably one the first ever films from America to depict the contemporary lives of a group of gay men. The film offers the opportunity to explore what happens when a group of gay men is interrupted by the arrival of someone different, in this case a straight man. Likewise, the film can be read in reverse and offers an insight into what happens when a group of heterosexuals or indeed heteronormative society is interrupted by the arrival of queerness.

¹⁰ Group analytic training in the United Kingdom is defined by complicated three-way relationships between the Institute of Group Analysis, linked regional organisations such Group Analysis North and Group Analysis South West, and the international Group Analytic Society.

A reflexive account of my experience within an institutional group analytic training programme.¹¹

Close reading of published clinical examples and curricula

Parker (2005) suggests four key ideas in discourse analysis, namely that language has a 'multi-voicedness'; the use of semiotics; the resistance to language, and finally the social bond of discourse. Discourse analysis is a way of trying to understand the social world by reading it like a text and ascribing meaning to what is read. In this sense discourse analysis is a hermeneutic. It is an examination of language and how it shapes and constructs how we understand the world and ourselves. It involves a specific epistemology and ontology rather than being simply a methodology. Discourse analysis sees languages constituting reality. Language is understood beyond speech and words to include symbolic mediation generally in that it is not transparent and requires a more expansive definition. Direct 'translation' then becomes impossible because language is more than referential, but rather reflects and creates cultural meaning.

Discourse analysis relies heavily on language and includes both the literal and symbolic meanings of words. In this sense discourse analysis allows unconscious processes to come into understanding the psychosocial world in that there may be unconscious meaning behind certain words used. Post-structuralists have recognised that social relationships and how we view ourselves is not produced by one singular structure but is constituted through differences between different discourses.

The specific methodology of archaeology will be taken from Foucault's book *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969). This methodology is based on the idea that knowledge (as in discursive formations or epistemes) is governed by rules functioning beyond the conscious awareness of individuals. These rules define the boundaries of thought and language for a particular period of time. Foucault argues that history depends of moments that become discontinuous and collapse, allowing a shift between different modes of knowledge. From these modes, discourses arise according to various complex sets of discursive and institutional relationships.

Foucault's archaeology allows us to consider historical material concerns such as economics and power but also examines systems of knowledge and systems of power and their links to discourse. So when a particular discursive artifact is uncovered, it has to be situated within a particular layer, which represents an entire era of history (an episteme). Discourse then is a kind of power, which allows certain types of questions to be asked and frames the answers deemed possible. Foucauldian discourse analysis, specifically Foucault's methodology of archaeology adopting a feminist and queer theory stance, will form the methodology of the close reading of the literature review using already

¹¹ Wider relevant experiences will also include my ongoing membership of the advisory group on sexual diversity for the British Psychoanalytic Council.

published clinical vignettes and training curricula¹². This literature review of group analytic texts for terms such as sexuality, sex, gender, desire, language and discourse, in addition to reading of relevant texts from feminism and queer theory, will form the main method. The examination of such texts will involve the critical method of close reading, whereby close attention is given to certain words, syntax and sentence order in order to examine the portrayal of dominant discourses and counterdiscourses.

The close readings of relevant texts will involve a case-study approach of already published clinical material. Case study research, as described by Flyvbjerg (2006), provides a critical examination of the use of case-studies. Flyvbjerg (2006) describes the use of case-studies as follows:

For researchers, the closeness of the case study to real-life situations and its multiple wealth of details are important in two respects. First, it is important for the development of a nuanced view of reality, including the view that human behavior cannot be meaningfully understood as simply the rule-governed acts found at the

lowest levels of the learning process and in much theory. Second, cases are important for researchers' own learning processes in developing the skills needed to do good research. If researchers wish to develop their own skills to a high level, then concrete, context-dependent experience is just as central for them as to professionals learning any other specific skills (p223).

Flyvbjerg (2006) proposes certain strategies for selecting samples and cases. I propose for this thesis that I use an information-oriented selection strategy based on my expectation of the information they contain, giving particular attention to apparent paradigmatic cases that may serve as a '...a metaphor...for the domain that the case concerns' (p230).

Reflexive research diary

As part of group analytic qualifying training I have maintained a reflexive diary of my training experiences and am required to produce a 'qualifying paper', which is seen as the final mark of readiness to qualify as a group analyst and become a member of the Institute of Group Analysis. Through a close reading of these texts produced within the context of training, I aim to develop specific theoretical links involving the previously described methodologies. Qualitative research allows for an exploration of participant meaning by conducting the research within as natural a setting as possible. Context is seen as an essential part of the research by addressing the researcher's own awareness and reflection. Parker (2005) describes reflexivity as '...a way of working with subjectivity in such a way that we are able to break out of the self-referential circle' (p25). Reflexivity allows for the exploration of the subjective experience and is a way of attending to the institutional location of historical and personal aspects of the research relationship (Parker, 2005).

A specific technique for achieving research within psychoanalysis, and to some degree in group analysis, is free-association. There are

¹² For an example of this in relation to training curricula, I refer to Clare Hemming's 2011 text *Why stories matter: The political grammar of feminist theory*.

criticisms of this method however in that it can be seen as individualising and pathologising, and attempts to create a master narrative (Parker, 2005). This research however will use the technique of free-association to produce my own personal reflexivity rather than through interviews. Criticism of this remains but it does allow for a unique perspective of this area in terms of my own personal development on the training programme, which will include issues around sexuality and gender.

Law (2014) describes the self as coming from two positions, namely a Freudian-Marxist angle or a Foucauldian one whereby the analysis of self is as constructed through experiences within culture, gender, race and sexuality to name a few. These discursively created categories produce the reality of each category as if it were a thing in itself. Although these are seen as very different to how psychoanalysis may understand such categories, there are striking similarities to this understanding and how group analysis may try to understand such categories as each is understood within a particular group or social encounter.

Taking this further, Law (2014) sees the construction of the self happening through institutions such as family, media or school. A paradox for group analysis is that it is an example of discourse analysis in action in a therapeutic context, but that it is also an institution that both creates group analysts and 'treated' patients. Our ability to accept or reject discursive knowledge from these institutions as it is passed through to us determines many aspects of the self. A consequence of this owned knowledge being applied is that it can produce apparent problems of the self such as psychiatric illness or moral defects. Whether we accept or reject such knowledge can determine our experience of oppression and inequality. We are therefore political beings interested in power and its application.

A group analytic methodology: integration of the three focal aspects

With reference to sexuality, discourse analysis allows us to think about knowledge and power within that particular episteme. Freud is often regarded as the liberator of our modern sexual selves. However, Foucault in his text *The History of Sexuality* has described how since the nineteenth century we have become more constricted and prohibited about talking about sex rather than liberated. He has concluded this by describing what could be seen as an explosion of different forms of writing about sex and sexuality. This was particularly seen through writings of a medical nature in which various sexual acts were legitimized or made into disorders and perversions. Legal discourse has followed suit.

New categories of subject were created through the layering of identity onto sexual acts. The term homosexuality, for example, was invented and its practice criminalised. So, rather than repressing sexual discourse, the European enlightenment had radically multiplied them. The effect of this multiplication of discourses is that they became multiple systems of power and knowledge, which are intricately bound together and thus become systems of control. Sexuality can be controlled through these systems. Instead of Freud being seen as a revolutionary helping us liberate our sexual identities, he is actually part of the repressive regime that is complicit in controlling sexuality.

Psychoanalysis perhaps became a device within the multiplicity of different discourses that operated to maintain these economic institutions. It was invented as a way of being able to speak about sex and have it spoken about. It set up definitions, norms and limits, and also had within its remit the making public of sexual knowledge. An important part of this activity was the surveillance of sexuality.

Foucault (1979) highlighted the idea of surveillance and its development in the eighteenth century with regard to prison design and the development of the panopticon, which allowed for the surveillance of all prisoners at once without them being aware they were being observed. Applying this to group analysis makes the group a panopticon, and links to ideas of the group becoming the norm from which individual members can deviate. Psychoanalysis and group analysis may share some similarities with the ideas of surveillance and diagnostic labelling and other attempts to analyse and classify but there are significant differences. Thus psychoanalytic discourse may participate in the systems of power and knowledge through the use of language in that it creates technical and authoritative words, which are expressed through a type of confession (thus replacing religious discourse). It seeks to uncover truth particularly those hidden from 'dark areas' of our minds. This uncovering then allows for control to be exerted. Sexuality was considered to be a prototypical 'truth' to be uncovered and controlled.

However psychoanalysis and group analysis are unique in that they also attempt to deconstruct resistance to such dark areas. Freud (1923) was interested in understanding why we may resist an ideal stable ego. The challenge to this though is that psychoanalysis and group analysis both offer the opportunity to break with current discourses. They attempt to create a dialogic exchange, which is not governed by the observing subject's domination of the observed object, but instead are created through the meeting of two subjectivities, or multiple subjectivities in the case of a group. So although psychoanalysis may contribute to discourses of power, it also forces us to re-evaluate the relationship between the observed and observer, which might subvert those structures created to maintain knowledge/power and that current discourse.

Free-floating discussion is the group analytic equivalent of free association in psychoanalysis. Schlapobersky (2000) describes three primary forms the speech that arrives in the so-called matrix of the group. Monologue is a form of self-expression with no audience or an audience that is not listening. Dialogue involves communication between two people and finally discourse is the speech pattern of more than three people, which allows free interaction of all participants. As Schlapobersky describes, 'Monologue can be understood as a soliloquy; dialogue as the resolution of opposites or the search for intimacy; and discourse as the work of a chorus' (p212). Schlapobersky suggests that the group analytic approach is different to other forms of group therapy in that both monologue and dialogue are encompassed by the group experience in addition to discourse creation. Schlapobersky further suggests that the use of free-floating discussion allows a particular pattern of exchange to be created that allows movement between these different forms of self-expression. This movement bridges the dialectic between the psyche and the social world.

Schlapobersky (2000) explores language to examine dialogue in group analysis. He examines the group's developing agency through, 'the solitude of private encounters with the self that are allowed by the audience of the group' (p212). Dialogue is created through the resolution of conflict due to different understandings and intimacies within the group experience. This exposure of conflict results in discourse that allows for an expression of primary process thinking through the, 'emergence of archaic anxieties and there were apparently resolution' (p212). This deepening discussion allows, 'the construction of an ever widening zone of mutual understanding within the group (Foulkes, 1964, p116) as described by Foulkes. Foulkes (1964) likens this to finding meaning in a dream through examining its latent content. By doing so, a new language of the unconscious is learnt together as a group, thereby creating the group's own discourse.

By examining Foulkesian and post-Foulkesian thinking in relation to Foucault's archaeology, I propose that the group analytic matrix, as a communication network, is structured by language. It is differences in our understanding of symbol and language within the matrix that creates power and social difference in a group. These conversations about and across difference reshape these symbols into a plethora of group-owned symbols in the group matrix, thus creating therapeutic change. This reshaping of symbols provides new understandings at transcendental intersections of foundation and dynamic matrices both intrapersonally and within the group. It is in the nature of these intersections whereby unconscious non-verbalised material becomes conscious that *savoir* shifts into *connaissance*, to use Foucauldian terms, and a new discourse is constructed. It is within this theoretical framework that sexuality and its associations can be (de)constructed.

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