

Editorial: doctrinal change in psychotherapy

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Abstract *The Editorial draws together the papers by Boadella, Goldberg, and Wilkinson, in a way which focuses upon their common thread of wrestling with the nature of disagreement in psychotherapy. Their respective themes focus on: a much widened concept of transference applied to social and cosmic themes (Boadella); the clash between intrapsychic and socially ethical models of the function of analysis and the ethical dilemmas it poses (Goldberg); and the difficulty yet necessity of holding our disagreements in the profession upon a pluralistic basis, which yet enables us to bring issues of method and criteria of method into view (Wilkinson). All these themes are seen in the Editorial in the context of the way transference process (or its equivalents in other psychotherapies) both ensures that our local differences are seen as absolute, yet also that we can never suspend the 'personal', 'historic' and 'contextual' element in the equation. We are all caught—perpetually—in this tension. The Editorial ends with a note on the death of Deryck Dyne, and his anarchic, troubled, yet formative role in the development of the Federal models of pluralistically based psychotherapy organisations.*

There is no remembrance of former things, nor will there be any remembrance of later things yet to happen among those who come after. (Ecclesiastes, Ch. 1, V. 11)

Introduction: remembering dispute and change in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy

If we examine, in after-years, some of the major psychoanalytic disputes, it is hard for most of us now to understand, other than abstractly historically, how these should have been experienced as grounds for partition or the possibility of it. Yet at the time they were, at least by some, experienced (and institutionally acted on) as based, in an absolute and cardinal way, on grounds of dispute, which were felt to be definitive of psychoanalysis as a theoretical framework, whether it be as science or as theology. Such disputes were: the Freud–Jung disputes, over the range and scope of the sexual model of neurosis and psychosis, which led to the partition of the psychoanalytic movement in 1914 (McGuire, 1974); the Freud–Klein controversial discussions (King & Steiner, 1991), over the issues of the emergence of object relations in relation to the Oedipus complex, held within the British Psycho-Analytical Society from 1941 to 1945; and the French conflict over the psychoanalytic status of Lacanian psychoanalysis (with its claim for the Freudian authenticity of the application of gestalt psychology principles, the 'Ziegarnik principle', of the enhancement of learning through interruption of its task, to the timeframe of the work).

This has led outsiders to ridicule the dogmatic, theological, and authoritarian character of the disputes within psychoanalysis, and psychotherapy, or argue as if they were merely functions of the personality, and personal bias, of Freud himself—or of others. Yet could it

be legitimate that both things may be true—both that they were legitimately experienced as absolute, and that we may perceive the significance of the disputes as historical and contextual—quite aside from the elements of truth in views about Freud's own, endlessly controversy-evoking, personality! How could this be?

Context and the significance of conflict

In his 'paper on technique' entitled 'The dynamics of the transference' (Freud, 1957) discussing the nature of the transference-resistance, and the issues and objects it focuses on, Freud remarks, in one of those sharply significant footnotes of his (which, so like transference conflicts, overflow their text):

From which, however, one need not infer in general any very particular pathogenic importance in the point selected for resistance by transference. In warfare, when a bitter fight is raging over some little chapel or a single farmhouse, we do not necessarily assume that the church is a national monument, or that the barns contain the military funds. Their value may be merely tactical; in the next onslaught they will very likely be of no importance. (Freud, 1957, p. 317, my italics)

As so often with Freud, we have here a principle which is of far wider application.

Indeed, we might even say, many of Freud's applications of his own insights, which are taken by so many of his successors, and even partly by himself, to be doctrinally fundamental, have a 'merely tactical' importance. The systems theorists, the theorists of frame, and the theorists of the context of texts—such as Gregory Bateson (1979), Erving Goffman (1974), and Jacques Derrida (1978, 1988)—might well remind us, in another way (the other side of the coin perhaps), of two implications of this 'tactical importance' principle:

1. that the meaning of no text, and of no principle, can be exclusive to its immediate context; and
2. that the meaning of any text, and any principle, may apply to 'the text itself' in ways which are both unforeseeable and transformatory.

These implications are the more true the greater a thinker is; and this is also expressed in Freud's own fundamental concept of overdetermination (Freud, 1961)—his concept of how there are always multiple meanings, and multiple contextual connexions, for the same portion of 'text'—whether the 'text' be of a dream, a symptom, a belief system, or the 'text' of literary or religious symbolisms. So, then, the principle of 'tactical importance' is another manifestation of the same fundamental recognitions: those of contextuality, of multiplicity, and of the dynamic 'positioning of forces'.

The all-pervasiveness of transference

We can apply this principle of 'tactical importance' to the psychodynamic understanding of the disputes within psychoanalysis. Since the principles of human dynamics which psychoanalysis discovered must always apply also reflexively to it itself, most if not all of the disputes within psychoanalysis may have been 'merely tactical', in the sense of expressive of transference conflict. And at the same time in their context they are what are authentically experienced as most real at that moment, that epoch.

A further application of the same principle leads to this: that there is no 'original text', no 'original meaning', and no 'original content' of an event of personal history, or personal narrative, or transference process, to be found (c.f. Derrida, 1978). None, then, of the disputes within psychoanalysis can be understood in absolute terms, without first taking

account of their significance in their historical context. They are, then, one and all 'transferential', in this sense—but without possibility of reduction to what is 'non-transferential'.

One of the positions that falls if this is the case is the absolute distinction between 'psychoanalysis' and 'psychotherapy'.

If there remain residual principles of absolute difference within the field, after having seriously explored the context, then we can consider them; but we can, in advance, rule out as premature any absolutist claims which have not submitted themselves to this criterion. And we can thus rule them out on psychoanalytic grounds.

And, of course, now I have just made an absolute claim—and one about 'psychoanalytic grounds'! Suddenly the paradoxes multiply. This one might be called 'the paradox of contextual hermeneutics (interpretation)', and psychoanalysis is a form of contextual hermeneutics which is subject to the paradox. It is also the paradox of transferential understanding, and so the paradox of dispute within psychoanalysis, which, notoriously, can neither avoid, nor rely upon, mutual transferential interpretations, as part of the dispute process, with their inherent circularity and mutually cancelling out character. Ultimately it is also a pluralistic paradox—of which more below.

This is the background to the three papers in this issue—of which David Boadella's important and necessary paper is, however, of two-paper length, for an important reason. Because of the way his position integrates very diverse positions, he has to explain it before he can apply it. And it also illustrates how one of the positions that simply falls is the absolute distinction between 'psychoanalysis' and 'psychotherapy'.

David Boadella: Narcissism, transference, and politics

David Boadella is setting out a three-phase model, drawing the links between cosmic and natural paradigms of resonance, psychoanalytic and post-psychoanalytic paradigms of transference, and the application of these widened conceptions to the understanding of social and political interactions—their norms and extremes. His position, on the one hand, draws fully and uncompromisingly on the psychoanalytic tradition of the understanding of the transference, in a way which classical psychoanalytic approaches would recognise, and on the other, he takes account of the positions of those, like Reich and Ferenzci, who apply these understandings in active ways, assumed to be completely beyond the perimeter of the orthodox classical positions. Like Nick Totton (1998) he point blank refuses the polarity of 'psychoanalysis versus body work, versus existential approaches, versus the psychospiritual', and so on.

Accordingly, he is able to go on to application of all this to social situations, in a way which combines an analysis of social-political narcissism, with which the most 'socially diagnosing in terms of psychic positions' psychoanalyst would not quarrel, whilst at the same time mapping an embracing positive model of the whole process which is fully emancipated from psychoanalytic restrictions (and, though wider in scope, and touching on the temporal dimension in a very Kantian way, has some parallels to Clarkson's five relationship model; Clarkson, 1995). For, in 'Beyond transference: a model of relationships', he evokes five kinds of ethical relationship—based on frame, on the past, on the present, on the future, and on unbounding time, and both the quality aspects of ordinary relationship, and the transpersonal-spiritual relationship, are evoked.

The outcome of this demonstration of his, aside from the specific models and arguments, is once again forcefully to exemplify that it is well possible to sustain a wider vision, which is also therapeutically specific, and which thus (Hegel-like) retains within it the history of positions which have also been transcended.

Dr Carl Goldberg: The case of the unpatriotic prostitute

In contrast to the sweeping scope and generality of David Boadella's paper, Dr Goldberg illustrates his themes, as is his way, with a graphic and poignant personal illustration from his practice, and indeed—with sharpened poignancy—from the days of his psychoanalytic apprenticeship. He tells the story of a high-level call girl whose services were regularly drawn upon by the CIA, and who only began to question herself in this path when it became a matter of the authenticity of her relationship with her daughter, who knew nothing of all this. Dr Goldberg felt that the enabling of development by her of social concern was the overriding issue, but he was overruled by his supervisor, who argued on grounds of the primacy of the intrapsychic and thus of Oedipal issues in this work, throwing in sarcasms about Dr Goldberg's ventilating social concerns in the contemporary anti-Vietnam war demonstrations of the time. As he was restricted to this supervisor, and despite the indications of a genuine therapeutic alliance, Dr Goldberg had to refer the client to another analyst.

This is the kind of graphic illustration with which Dr Goldberg makes it inescapable for us to have to confront, in a very common-sense way, our core ethical stances as psychotherapists. Once more, at the time and in context, it seems a harrowingly absolute argument. Yet such a position in its pure form would now be held by less and less even of psychoanalysts. And yet fashions can always turn again. How do we know and how do we decide what the fundamental disputes are?

Heward Wilkinson: Pluralism as scientific method in psychotherapy

As we try to assess the nature of such disagreements, Wilkinson's paper attempts to offer a methodology to sift out which differences are fundamental and which are local and contextual—a method he claims is the only way the psychotherapy field, with its multiplicity of methods, can be held as a whole. And then how to deal with, or live with, the differences—for which he has a pluralistic recommendation. Pluralism he sees as a method which is not a recipe for tolerance but for respectful confrontation of difference. He distinguishes initially two models of pluralism, absolute and relative pluralism, which he evokes through an application of Hume's argument on miracles and testimony to psychotherapeutic dispute. Hume says it is, by definition, inherently more probable that someone should have lied or been deceived, or we might say, become deluded, than that the course of nature should have been suspended—as a miracle requires. But what is 'impossible' is precisely what is at issue. Hume's position is circular. He is also positivistic. And he is so valuable because he is perhaps the finest, most explicit, illustration of such widespread circularity of reasoning. The application of this, to such arguments from 'impossibility' as those against recovering memories from preverbal phases of life, is clear.

At this point in the argument, through the juxtaposition of Hume's positivistic assumptions with aesthetic-historical reasonings, a third form of pluralism is invoked—aesthetic—historical pluralism. It is not fully clear how this is intended to encompass absolute and relative pluralism and how far to be an alternative. Yet it is apparent that the view taken is that a 'human enquiry' position, which can include but not be confined to the methods of positive science, is upheld—and this once more evokes the paradox of pluralism, which is constantly to transform itself into a new position in its own right. The paper ends with a number of suggestions as to how pluralism of method might be 'held' in specific ways.

We are back to the recognition that since 'transference' or equivalents, are all-pervasive, we can only hold our positions both with confidence—and simultaneously with complete suspension of belief (and disbelief) in them. This, as Bion (1970) reminded us, Keats called 'negative capability' and attributed to Shakespeare pre-eminently. We are pluralistically

suspended between the poles of a Shakespearian pluralism, positive scientific method, and other articles of faith.

The late Deryck Dyne

A final note: it is fitting in the context of the United Kingdom's progress towards the statutory recognition of psychotherapy to remember the contribution of Deryck Dyne, who has died this year, to these developments. Deryck's career ended partly under shadows, and with him many of us had our quarrels, but the fact needs to be recorded that without the stimulus of his anarchically creative vision, expressed through the Freegrove Society at a crucial time, the emergence of UKCP, and in many ways of the Federal Model in general—which has had great influence on the EAP also—would have been far less likely. We need to ensure, if possible, that the essential creative anarchy is retained, even within a publically regulated framework, and that the legitimate requirements of ethical propriety are not confused and conflated with bureaucratic control. Whilst not assuming, with our colleagues in the Independent Practitioners' Network, and its mainland European equivalents, that this is more likely without legislation, there remain 'questions for the jury'—the kind of questions that Deryck Dyne always asked.

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Résumé *L'éditorial fait la synthèse des articles de Boadella, de Goldberg et de Wilkinson, et se concentre sur ce que ces articles ont en commun, c'est à dire l'exploration et l'étude de la nature des désaccords en psychothérapie. On retrouve les thèmes respectifs suivants: Celui d'un concept de transfert à portée plus générale et qui s'appliquerait aux thèmes sociaux et cosmiques (Boadella); Le conflit entre les modèles éthiques intrapsychiques et sociaux de la fonction d'une analyse et les dilemmes éthiques posés (Goldberg); La difficulté, mais en même temps la nécessité est de contenir les désaccords au sein de notre Profession sur une base pluralistique qui nous permette d'examiner des points et des critères de méthode (Wilkinson). L'éditorial examine tous ces thèmes à la lumière du processus de transfert (ou de ses équivalents dans d'autres psychothérapies), qui garantissent que nos différences locales soient vues comme absolues, sans que nous puissions cependant jamais suspendre l'élément 'personnel', 'historique' et 'contextuel' de l'équation. Nous sommes tous prisonniers à perpétuité de cette tension. L'éditorial se termine par une note sur la mort de Deryck Dyne, et le rôle anarchique, troublé, mais cependant formatif qu'il joua dans le développement des modèles Fédéraux des organisations psychothérapeutiques à base pluralistique.*

Zusammenfassung *Der Leitartikel bringt die Aufsätze von Boadella, Goldberg und Wilkinson zusammen, indem er den gemeinsamen. Leitfaden des Ringens mit Widerspruch in der Psychotherapie hervorhebt. Die jeweiligen Themen: ein erweitertes Konzept der Übertragung angewendet auf*

soziale und kosmische Themen (Boadella); der Konflikt zwischen intrapsychisch und sozial ethischen Funktionsmodellen der Analyse und das daraus resultierende ethische Dilemma (Goldberg); die Schwierigkeit aber auch Notwendigkeit, unsere Streitigkeiten innerhalb des Berufsstandes auf einer pluralistischen Basis auszutragen, was uns ermöglicht, Fragen zur Methodik und deren Kritik zur Diskussion zu bringen. Alle diese Themen werden im Leitartikel in dem Zusammenhang betrachtet, daß der Übertragungsprozess (oder sein Äquivalent in anderen Psychotherapien) sowohl eine absolute Sicht unserer lokalen Unterschiede sicherstellt, aber auch daß wir nie das persönliche, historische und kontextuelle Element verlieren. Wir alle sind—auf immer—in dieser Spannung gefangen. Der Leitartikel schließt mit dem Hinweis auf den Tod von Deryk Dyne und seine anarchische, aber dennoch formende Rolle in der Entwicklung von Bundesmodellen auf Pluralismus basierender Organisationen für Psychotherapie.