



D S P P B U L L E T I N
Dallas Society for Psychoanalytic Psychology
Exploring and promoting the psychoanalytic perspective

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NOVEMBER MEETING PREVIEW

JOEL FEINER, MD
 presenting on
Alienation and its Assumptions

**WEDNESDAY
 NOVEMBER 20, 2002**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FALL WORKSHOP

“REFLECTIVE SPACE”
 WITH
ROBERT D. HINSELWOOD, MD

Reported by
SCOTT NELSON, PHD

All of us bring assumptions into our work. These assumptions potentially alienate us from those whom we strive to help. Dr. Joel Feiner, nationally recognized Community Psychiatrist, and Professor of Psychiatry at UT Southwestern will present on Hinshelwood’s *Alienation and its Assumptions*. Here Hinshelwood challenges readers to examine their therapeutic assumptions. These assumptions determine the forms of psychiatric treatment and care given to patients. But being assumptions they are, like the air we breathe, essentially unobserved, and taken for granted. Hinshelwood prompts reflection on the cultural ‘air we breathe,’ refuses to take human nature for granted, and provides possible alternative ways of thinking about the persons we encounter in our work.

Readings:

Hinshelwood, R. D. (2001). *Alienation and its Assumptions*. In *Thinking about institutions: Milieux and madness*, (pp. 152-160). London: Jessica Kingsley.

Dr. Robert Hinshelwood, M.D. presented “Reflective Space” to the Dallas Society of Psychoanalytic Psychology for the 2002 Fall Workshop on October, 12. Dr. Hinshelwood is an internationally known psychoanalyst, and considered by many the leading authority on Kleinian psychoanalytic theory and practice. He is the author of numerous books, including *Clinical Klein* and *A Dictionary of Kleinian Thought*, hundreds of journal articles, is currently on the editorial board of *the International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, as well as the founder of *the International Journal of Therapeutic Communities* and the *British Journal of Psychotherapy*. For many years, Dr. Hinshelwood was Clinical Director of The Cassel Hospital, London, maintained a thriving private practice, and consulted to numerous institutions. Dr. Hinshelwood is currently on the faculty of the University of Essex Centre for Psychoanalytic Studies as Professor of Psychoanalysis. During the fall 2002 semester, Dr. Hinshelwood is serving as the *Heinz Kohut Memorial Professor of Psychoanalysis*, at the University of Chicago, where he is leading graduate seminars in psychoanalysis and Kleinian thought.

During his visit to Dallas, Dr. Hinshelwood also consulted about “understanding organizations” to the Board of Directors of the Austin Street Centre. The Austin Street Centre is a homeless shelter, which provides shelter and meals to 400 people every day. The Austin Street Centre operates a therapeutic community program that utilizes homeless residents of the shelter to help run the facility. These working-residents thereby gain important vocational experiences and an opportunity to live in a structured, supportive environment. This therapeutic community program is run in a fashion that is, in part, based on the writings of Dr. Hinshelwood.

Dr. Hinshelwood’s workshop presentation to DSPP was

NOVEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2002
Social Time: 7:00 PM
Presentation: 7:30 PM
Location: Pecan Creek Office Park
 8340 Meadow Road
 Dallas, Texas
Speaker: Joel Feiner, MD
Topic: Alienation and Its Assumptions

divided into a morning session and an afternoon case presentation. During the morning presentation, Dr. Hinshelwood delivered a clear, thoughtful and easy to follow, paper on the theoretical concepts of technique, specifically on the creation of *Reflective Space*. He expressed a desire to help therapists understand “where they are” while in session. This introduction led Dr. Hinshelwood into a description of the concepts of “containing,” “linking,” and the creation of “reflective space.”

The idea of containing was derived from Klein’s original discussion of projective identification, where one person, in some sense, contains part of another. Using the example of the mother-child relationship, containing was related to the soothing of a crying baby: a) the baby experiences intolerable anxiety, which is expressed through relentless crying, b) through the crying, the baby projects the anxiety into the mother, c) whose job is to take in and acknowledge the baby’s distress, d) which is modified and e) returned to the baby (reintrojected) in a tolerable form. Likewise, according to Hinshelwood, the therapist’s duty is to take in the intolerable aspects of what the patient experiences and describes, and return that, in a tolerable, modified form, to the patient.

Bion’s idea of “linking” was also discussed to further the understanding of reflective space. Linking represents the way in which contents of the mind are brought into words, experiences are put into thoughts, thoughts into words, and the emotions and thoughts are put together in the relationship between two people. Dr. Hinshelwood then connected the ideas of containing and linking.

Dr. Hinshelwood contrasted his idea of containing in the therapeutic encounter with the extremes of unavailable and overwhelmed therapists. First, appropriate containing was described as “flexible,” when the therapist is open to the opportunity of understanding the patient’s emotional experience. This was contrasted to a “rigid” stance, one in which the therapist is walled off, immune to, or self-protective of experiencing the patient’s anxiety. Finally, a picture was described in which the therapist can’t cope with the patient’s distress and “goes to pieces.” These illustrations were used in an attempt to understand and describe the creation of *reflective space*. Thus, reflective space indicates a therapeutic situation in which the therapist allows oneself to be open to linking with a patient and to “flexibly contain” the distress which is brought to the session. When the mind of the therapist is open to reflection the important modifying influence of the process can proceed and, therefore, can be taken on by the patient in the long term, the end result being that

patients learn to create their own reflective space. Dr. Hinshelwood demonstrated his ideas, and revealed some of his own analytic struggles through numerous clinical examples of group and individual sessions. These examples clarified his ideas and resulted in a number of questions and comments from the audience. From the nature of the questions, it was clear that Dr. Hinshelwood made an impression and his ideas piqued the interest of the DSPP membership. Ron Schenk, John Herman, Rosemarie Rothmeier, Lee Jagers, Myron Lazar, Dale Godby, Marc Rathbun, Robert Aberg, and others asked questions, made points, sought clarification, or attempted to further their understanding of their own current cases using the language of Dr. Hinshelwood. Through his answers to questions and dialogue with the audience, our speaker demonstrated great clarity of thought, and even expressed a curiosity to compare and contrast his approach to clinical situations with that of “the American School.”

The afternoon session consisted of a case presentation by Dr. Carolyn Bates, a psychologist and Jungian analyst from Austin. Dr. Bates has spoken extensively about the issue of sexual impropriety in the therapeutic relationship and has authored a book on this subject. Dr. Bates’ case included a lengthy psychological description of clinical material, her own struggles in the work, and the client’s familial pressures against the therapeutic endeavor. The case material allowed Dr. Hinshelwood to contrast his approach and conceptualization, with that of Dr. Bates, and of the “American ego analyst” viewpoint. The case presentation was followed by more questions, clarification, and a lively discussion.

The entire workshop was further evidence of the intellectually curious, energetic and thoughtful environment that the members of the Dallas Society for Psychoanalytic Psychology have created for the psychological community of North Texas.



NOTE: NO DECEMBER MEETING OR BULLETIN

**Deadline for submissions for the z
January DSPP Bulletin is December 31st**

Wishing You All the Best for the Holidays!



**LETTER TO THE MEMBERSHIP
From the Division 39 Board of Directors**

On August 18th, 2002, the Board of Directors of Division 39 voted unanimously to write to the editors and the readership of all of the major psychoanalytic journals, and to publish this letter in our own newsletter and in the newsletters of our local chapters.

Our purpose is to share with you our grave concerns about some of the materials found on the website of the Freud Museum in London. During the past several months, very many of our members, along with other psychoanalytic colleagues, have called to our attention the disturbing nature of some of these web pages.

After learning of these concerns we undertook a careful study of the Museum web pages. We then wrote to the Director, Research Director and Director of Education (the person responsible for these particular web pages), expressing the substance of our concerns. The replies we received were wholly unsatisfactory. Although minor changes were made in some areas, additional offensive and problematic material was added at the same time, and all three individuals justified the material on these pages in the context of freedom of expression and of making Freud relevant in today's times.

We want to use this letter to invite our members to view the Freud Museum website and evaluate for yourselves the nature of the problem. The stated mission of the Freud Museum is to "celebrate the life and work of Sigmund and Anna Freud." But the web pages in the section entitled "Freud Today" are not in any substantive way related to the work of Sigmund and Anna Freud. Nor, for that matter, are they a presentation of the current status of psychoanalytic thinking, theory and practice, which, as we know, is a field that is filled with vibrant discussion, exploration, and the kind of exciting controversy that keeps a discipline alive. None of this is reflected in "Freud Today."

Instead, there are many pages written by the Educational Director (who has only recently added a note that the views expressed are his own) which purport to comment psychoanalytically on events of the day. The topics covered are a conglomeration of issues, the most problematic of which have to do with commentaries about the Middle East conflict. The writing, which we urge you to view for yourselves, consists of putative, tendentious, convoluted "psychoanalytic interpretations" as if these might be the views of Freud were he examining these issues today. As you will note, the connection to anything Freud might have actually said about even a remotely related topic seventy or eighty years ago is far-fetched at the very best, and represents a

trivialization of psychoanalytic ideas and ways of examining evidence.

However, what our Board has found most troublesome is the use of the imprimatur of the Freud Museum to covertly advance a particular political agenda, in a very sad and complex conflict, using the guise of Freud's work and the rubric of psychoanalytic interpretation and insight. We believe your readers will agree with us that this is a cavalier misuse of psychoanalytic interpretive discipline and of Freud's deep and thoughtful contribution on many subjects. The manner and content of these web pages discredits our field and makes a mockery of the careful, painstaking work done by generations of psychoanalytic thinkers and clinicians who are especially cautious about making sweeping interpretations that may be misunderstood in a public context.

Surely, if the Freud Museum is to truly celebrate the work of Sigmund and Anna Freud, and to illustrate the contemporary relevance and excitement of psychoanalysis, then it should not be in a position of even appearing to covertly advance a political agenda about which there is much legitimate difference of opinion. Nor should its materials suggest to the public that psychoanalytic ideas can be formulated in such a seemingly simplistic manner.

The professional staff of the Freud Museum have justified these web pages on the basis of freedom of expression. For our members, the issue is not freedom of expression. There are many web forums on which individual points of view can be posted. Rather, our concern is the way a psychoanalytic institution explicitly and implicitly provides materials to the public which discredits our field and our founding thinkers.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Jonathan H. Slavin, Ph.D.

Jonathan H. Slavin, Ph.D.,
President, Division of Psychoanalysis (39)
on behalf of the Board of Directors

Relevant web urls:

<http://www.freud.org.uk>
<http://www.freud.org.uk/arab-israeli.html>
<http://www.freud.org.uk/Being%27pro-Arab%27.html>
<http://www.freud.org.uk/mycelium.html>
<http://www.freud.org.uk/arab-israeli.html>
<http://www.freud.org.uk/Holocaust.html>
<http://www.freud.org.uk/Settlers.html>

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2002-2003**

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