


# Psychoanalysis - it is a signifier

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## Beginning

I'm going to begin with Saussure's lectures, 1906-11 (see: Saussure 1983), in order to say that 'psychoanalysis' is a signifier that indicates something which exists in another place.

Signifier	Tree	Psychoanalysis
.....	.....	.....
something		?

It is not exactly the same neat example as the classic 'tree': psychoanalysis doesn't exactly grow on its own out there in the real. Moreover, the choice of the word is rather clearly a composite of two other words, not exactly arbitrary: each providing the possibility of pursuit down a chain of their own to reveal some of the intention that went into that particular invention. Nonetheless, it seems fair to still say that when someone says 'psychoanalysis' there is no real intrinsic, automatic, essential, obvious, direct relation to the stuff they are trying to invoke. You can't go point at an object out of the window. You can't just bang on a table (Ashmore et al, 1994). What can you do?

I can't even exactly say that the stuff to which it refers doesn't exist *in* speech: it is after all rather largely made up *of* speech. But it is certainly possible to say that psychoanalysis is '*not all*' speech, speech is '*not all*' psychoanalysis, and '*not all* speech is psychoanalysis.

It really is thanks to Lacan that we can get a bit further with this line of thought. First of all there is the advantage, now, of being able to think about it with the primary trio: the symbolic, the imaginary and the real. Even if we take this bluntly, we can go on to say that 'psychoanalysis' is an imaginative use of the symbolic to grasp something that has to do with the real (for a good way into these three, see: Lacan, Seminar 1, 1988).

The second, thanks to Lacan, follows from the simple addition he made to Saussure's conception: a signifier represents a subject *for another signifier* (see: Lacan, Seminar XI, 1979). This little addition nudges the whole thing over the edge into action; it leaves us with a lively dynamic reflexive concept that moves us along with it.

Now we can say, 'psychoanalysis' is a signifier, representing something - this somehow not entirely speakable subject - for another signifier. If we want to understand something of psychoanalysis we have to go around *two* signifiers, two *gaps*, *and* a subject.

S→S  
s

Let's see if we can freeze this lively little thing long enough to just pick it up and put it to work on a few awkward questions facing us in the UK today. I propose to use this paper to put the petit gadget to work - I have a dozen or so transcriptions from a set of interesting interviews that I carried out with psychoanalysts some 3 years ago (May-November 2000). I'm going to restrict myself to just saying what can be said from a few of these interchanges if the subject is approached through this little aperture above. Five permutations spring to mind that I think will be useful to lay out here for reference:

### **1st take: intentional analysis**

analysand → analyst  
*psychoanalysis in action*

An analysand talks to an analyst, and, if things go well, after some time, an analysis is accomplished. This process effects a transformation in the analysand, and that transformation is effected right at the core of their being. Not only do they now *know* something about why they suffer in a particular way, why they love in a certain pattern, why they work or don't work in a particular field, but they are now no longer *caught up* in that way, pattern or field. This is why psychoanalysis, as a talking cure, works. I'll bet all potential analysands pose this question sooner or later: is it a question of telling the analyst *about* my life, listing out all the details? Or is it something in the process of speaking *in* my analysis, reliving it on the couch: isn't that where it's at?

My life → psychoanalyst  
*X (a change made in the relation to the core of my being)*

This process is in practice a highly artful affair, which requires quite a bit of effort on both parts, and a toleration of gaps of varying quality and quantity over a considerable period of time. The gap between the signifiers, the space between the analysand and the analyst, is put to work to reveal, bit by bit, the otherwise unspoken, forgotten, unrealised, stuff that makes up that particular psyche of that particular subject. And, as the act of analysing passes back and forth, goes on between these two people, the gap between the analysand and their X also gets drawn more knowingly into the process.

### **2nd take: supervision**

psychoanalyst → another psychoanalyst  
*psychoanalysis in practice*

For example, one psychoanalyst may address another psychoanalyst in order to speak about their clinical practice. They speak about something that happens elsewhere, at another time, with another person. But also, the way that the first analyst speaks to the second about that analysis, or the *fact* the first analyst talks less about that subject (the one in analysis with them), than about their own, can also be grist for a mill (the supervisor may suggest that the supervisee take that bit back to their own analysis).

The gap between the two psychoanalysts in the supervision may represent the gap of experience. But, it can also represent the gap between two different positions in a dialogue: the S that represents the subject and the S that the subject is being represented to. A psychoanalyst is someone who listens not just to the words but also to something beyond the words: to something that is said knowingly and to something that is said unknowingly.

### **3rd take: clinical seminars**

psychoanalyst → psychoanalysts  
*psychoanalytic technique, or theory*

A further variant of this might be found in a clinical seminar, or perhaps a lecture. One psychoanalyst speaks to a room of other psychoanalysts about psychoanalysis (either to demonstrate their practice, or their theoretical concepts). This room full of other psychoanalysts, gathered together first of all to listen, and then respond to what they have heard. It is almost certainly going to be a room full of psychoanalysts who have already decided which kind of way of speaking they choose for this purpose. There are different orientations, involving their own languages, made up of particular words, organised in particular relations to other words.

There are an awful lot of variations within the orientations; there may even be fundamental and irreconcilable differences. As long as no one speaks to anyone from another school or orientation, none of us need be concerned about the consequences of this.

But, if we are interested in talking to psychoanalytic practitioners who have trained in different places, in different schools, different orientations, or even just different parts of town, then perhaps it is as well to have a gadget that doesn't mind the variations. A gadget, moreover, that can give just enough of a glimpse of the process so that we might begin to understand what subject (X) is being represented by who (what signifiers organised by which discipline?) and to whom (ditto).

### **4th take: extension**

psychoanalyst → neurologist (for example)  
psychoanalysis as a particular practice

What happens when a psychoanalyst begins addressing people outside the clinic, outside the supervision session, beyond the clinical seminar or lecture? What happens when they begin to address clinicians outside their particular orientation, or in another field of practice altogether? When a psychoanalyst attempts to speak about psychoanalysis to people who have not travelled much of the particular distance, so to speak, what happens then? The gap between the first signifier and the second signifier can really become quite stretched. What happens to psychoanalysis when it is *extended* to cover this gap? Does the signifier stay true to the subject? Does the person who speaks, adequately speak? Can they be said to take up the position and the signifier in a way that is true<sup>1</sup> to the subject.

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<sup>1</sup> Now, the word True needs a little explanation – I follow the etymological line to link it to an idea of trust: can the subject trust the signifier? Or will s/he be betrayed?

## 5th take: confusion

GP (for another example) → psychoanalyst  
*Psychoanalysis*

Now we can begin to see more clearly that the positions of the first and second signifier are also rather important. Put it another way: what happens when another signifier, not psychoanalytic, attempts to represent the subject of psychoanalysis? We have a kind of structure upon a structure. A second layer of signifiers built on the first. The gap between the signifiers is stretched, but the gap between the signifier and the subject is also stretched. This imaginary GP, speaking as a GP; trained and experienced as a GP has not really studied psychoanalysis, lets say, and is trying to replicate an argument given her by someone else somewhere else a long time ago, perhaps. This raises the question of how someone comes to be able to take up the signifier that represents a subject for another signifier. The process of training, of discipline, of formation, is implicated rather closely to the outcome.

## Middle

Three years ago, in May 2000, I was moved to go interview more than a dozen people who were participating in a debate around the use of the label psychoanalyst in the UKCP. What gave the final impetus that set me off down this path was the conference staged on May 6<sup>th</sup> (a not insignificant date to our topic) and organised by the Psychoanalytic Psychodynamic Section of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP).<sup>2</sup> This itself was caused by a particular stimulus - the UKCP Governing Board had reversed the decision of its Registration Board to allow certain registrants to label themselves as psychoanalysts in the annual published register. In effect, the signifier 'psychoanalyst' was expelled from the UKCP. That, in turn, had been provoked by yet another stimulus - and here it becomes more complex - which had been administered rather sharply by the BCP.

The history of this will have to be written in detail elsewhere, but for now, I shall say that the UKCP at its inception, had been intended as the way to organise a confederation of organisations to include those of psychoanalysts as well as of psychotherapists. This organisation (UKCP) was invented to reflect a 'ground up' ethic, which would be based on discussions arising from the practice of its members. We might say, that it was indexed on the real of the practice, rather than the hierarchy of the organisation. A number of different sections were in the process of construction and these went on to become known as 'modalities' of practice. Each section of the organisation would then go on to be responsible for participating in a process of review for each other's practice. This dynamic would help to maintain an ongoing debate, and would insist that people keep up the effort to talk beyond their own little group. The British Psychoanalytical Society sought a privileged position amongst this confederation, and left the UKCP before a debate could be held on the question. They then went on to set up the BCP. Why did they leave? This is a point in history that could usefully be elaborated.

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<sup>2</sup> A report of this conference, together with indications as to where to follow up the presentations at the conference can be found in *The Psychotherapist*, the UKCP magazine, issue 15, Autumn 2000. This report was also posted on the BP-AS web site, attached to the paper by one of the speakers (Jennifer Johns).

In brief, this is the history to the context that currently seeks to strictly limit questions about who is entitled to the title of psychoanalyst. It is the context *against* which this paper is written.

### **Key points from the Interviews:**

#### **First Point. The cause and the aim of the signifier**

*“There is a push for a non-psychoanalytic discourse to enter the training process within the UKCP. This is the discourse of NVQ's, and it speaks for rationalities, for measurement, and for credit accumulations.”* Interview 1, Haya Oakley (Guild, Site)

The signifier NVQ offers itself as the appropriate representative for a candidate to be presented to its training committee. The product of this process could be the attribution of the title of psychoanalyst to the subject on the say-so of the NVQ, so to speak. The training committee, (or perhaps the answer sheet), would then be in a position to grant this particular person the use of the title psychoanalyst. This new psychoanalyst will be released into the world as a representative of the real psychoanalysis in practice: a representative that is so true to psychoanalysis, that any other person can put her to the test.

NVQ → Training Committee  
Candidate

The question raised here is can an NVQ adequately represent a psychoanalyst for another psychoanalyst? This makes it necessary to trace the history of the NVQ, to discover who invented it, for whom, and to represent what, exactly? In the meantime, another route is more readily available, as a very similar question was raised by Peter Fonagy's address to the UKCP conference: he listed more than fifty items which he suggested could be used to judge the 'competence' of an analyst. He then, to the obvious gratitude of the audience, contributed a couple of anecdotes that revealed the more important elements at stake. During Interview 7 Lesley Murdin talked about these competencies, and had this to say about the difficulty of capturing the essence of a psychoanalyst wholly in the symbolic.

JL: alongside the list of criteria, he [PF] gave an anecdote that captured the importance of the relation between the trainee and the supervisor, about what actually goes on in the gaps between the criteria. How do you think about that problem?

LM: Yes, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Hmm, that's right. I've been involved alot with developing competencies, involved with NVQs, which I found a very difficult business altogether. And I'm very unhappy with the outcome of that. It does a useful job of stirring up what we are looking for in a qualified psychotherapist or psychoanalyst, but it isn't possible to specify that indefinable something because in any case you couldn't legislate it, because it is different with each patient that comes along. I've been asked to explore NVQs just to see what that was like, to become an NVQ assessor. It involves trying to assess micro-skills and competencies broken down into minute details. It is very unsatisfactory, and we have to say, yes they did that, but I have no idea whether that person would be a good therapist. You will have to rely on the subjective view of the supervisor. I don't see how we are ever going to regiment that or break it down to such small areas. You still have to rely on the subjective view of the supervisor. And certain people will be

better at working with some people than others. There's no single answer. It is the awareness and willingness of looking at all those things that might have characterised psychoanalysis in the past. So I suppose if we are claiming to be psychoanalysts, and to do psychoanalysis, then I suppose we are going to have to do some original thinking and really work on it.

## **Second Point: the relation of the signifier with its subject**

*"There is a problem of labels, titles, names and descriptions. For example, there is an IPA psycho-analyst registered in the UKCP as a child psychotherapist."* Interview 1, Haya Oakley (Guild, Site)

Labels, titles, names and descriptions are not really reliable signifiers; in fact, why don't we say that they have a weak relation to the subject they purport to represent. The relation between the signifier and the subject deserves our attention. I'm going to use a few minutes from the interview that occurred during Interview 5 (with Peter Fonagy, BP-AS). This interview provided more than enough occasion for misunderstanding and gives plenty of opportunity to apply the gadget to see what might be going on in the gaps.

I arrived at his office at University of London where he is the Freud Emeritus Professor, in order to speak to him about the paper that he had delivered at the UKCP conference. I introduced myself as someone in training with CFAR, but situated the interview also in the field of sociology of scientific knowledge (SSK).<sup>3</sup> Fonagy took some care to discern that I was someone who *used* to be an academic. I was not at that time working in the university sector, having just emerged from three years working on the wards in adult acute psychiatry. My label was indeed in question. But, as it turned out, so was his. It was because of his position as a practicing psychoanalyst that I had come to speak to him. I knew him to be a Training Analyst in the British Psychoanalytical Society. In the BP-AS, not everyone is a Training Analyst - it is a special position that can be applied for, and granted to those deemed fit to pass on psychoanalytic know-how to the next generation. I thought he would be an adequate representative of one of the variants of psychoanalysis in that particular institution. However, he quickly made it clear that he was not representing psychoanalysis as a psychoanalyst in this interview, he was representing psychoanalysis but as a professor in the university.

PF: I'm not speaking on behalf of the Institute here; I'm speaking on behalf of myself. I'm not even on the education committee. This is a sampling issue; if you want the view of psychoanalysts, you would have to sample a range of points of view.... you must not confuse me with the Institution.... [Professor of Psychoanalysis in a University] - yes, I can say something about that - this is an institution that I am responsible for.

At the time of the interview I didn't really understand what he could mean. What seems a little clearer now, is that Peter Fonagy was making a distinction between a psychoanalyst guaranteed by the Institute (which is tightly but not wholly linked to the BP-AS), and a psychoanalyst guaranteed by the University, or the Academy, if you like. I was puzzled. Was this the point he was making? Did he know that he was

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<sup>3</sup> Sociology of Science is a variety of sociology that includes insights from discourse analysis, anthropology, philosophy and ethnomethodology.

making it? In what way was the Freud Emeritus Professor of Psychoanalysis a different thing from the BP-AS Training Psychoanalyst who happened to be in post? So I asked him then to say something about the difference. Now it was his turn to hesitate and wonder what I was talking about. He didn't know. So, trying to be helpful (just like a sociologist, not at all like a psychoanalyst), I outlined a scenario that characterised the university system of knowledge not usually known for taking into account the unconscious, whereas psychoanalytic institutions often were, was that it?

PF: I don't understand what you are saying.

JL: Oh. Can you say more about what you don't understand?

PF: When you talk about the unconscious, I don't know what you mean. What is the unconscious?

JL: er, that which Freud - ha ha – discovered.

PF: You mean, that which he discovered, and then moved away from. You know, he initially had the view of the unconscious in the topographical model, and then he moved beyond it, and saw a lot of different, a range of structures. And Freud's major discovery, is that what the philosophers of mind call the intentional stance, which Richard Hopkins calls the sentential stance, applies to non-conscious as well as conscious mental functioning. Beyond that there are inherent conflicts, and beyond that those conflicts cause certain ideas to be pushed aside in favour of other ideas. Ah, or distorted, both the process of distortion, conflict, and all these other processes, run the gamut from the fully conscious to the totally unconscious, the kind of topographical view that The Unconscious implies, is over simplistic beyond belief. It is totally inappropriately simplistic. There is no such thing as The Unconscious, you know, like it was a box somewhere in the mind. Or a bucket.

JL: yes I agree it's not a box, or a bucket, it's a thing.

PF: It's not a thing.

JL: well this is how I understand it, a thing or an it or an...

PF: Well you're wrong

JL: HAHA!

PF: There is no such thing as the unconscious.

JL: In your view.

PF: No. Not just in my view.

JL: What about slips, bungled actions, sex....

PF: Well, yes, some of these things are very conscious, some are very [pause] non-conscious. Some of it is dynamically non-conscious in that some of it is pushed aside....

JL: By what?

PF: Ah, by the er, mind in conflict.

JL: With?

PF: With different ideas being in conflict with one another.

JL: Conscious ideas?

PF: No. Ideas between one another.

JL: Conscious ideas?

PF: No. Consciousness is an epiphenomena. Consciousness is not a thing either.

JL: This is really interesting. Don't you find this interesting?

PF: No.

JL: HA! You are a Training Analyst in a psychoanalytic institution, and you are telling me that the unconscious does not exist.

PF: The way YOU are talking about it is a massive oversimplification.

JL: Well I have hardly spoken about it. That's quite rude if you dont mind me saying.

PF: I don't mind you saying. But calling It The Unconscious is an oversimplification.

JL: Well, can I ask you to say it in the way that you would say it then?

PF: Well, I wouldn't call it The Unconscious, I would talk about the range and complexity of psychological functions, and that consciousness is one dimension that may distinguish them but that the unconscious is not the crucial one. I mean, 95% of what goes on in the human brain is non-conscious. It's an interesting question not so much as why something is unconscious, but why something becomes conscious. That's the special thing. The non-conscious is not special. It is much more the way these things are. It is just the mind is not a conscious organ by and large. You see, the way that you understand me speaking, your brain is processing absolutely millions of bits of information that you are totally unaware of processing. The way I pause between words, how two phonemes juxtapose to make a different sound, together to make a morpheme, from that you stick all these together to make a sentence, you unpack that. All that you do at an incredibly rapid rate, so that in the end, what you become conscious of is the sense of my meaning. How you got there you have no idea about. It was a fantastically elaborate complex process.

JL: Is that - the articulation of the fantastically elaborate process - is that the project of psychanalysis?

PF: No. That's the project of the study of the mind. And you know, these are different. Psychoanalysis concerns itself with, erm, psychoanalysis is psychotherapy, it concerns itself with attempting to address psychological disorders through the medium of communication.



There was more but here is enough already to help to illustrate some of the points I am trying to make. First, it was unclear whether this was a psychoanalyst (i.e. someone recognised as a psychoanalyst by the BP-AS) representing psychoanalysis for another psychoanalyst (albeit not known to the BP-AS). Or an academic calling himself a psychoanalyst representing something that is no longer psychoanalysis for someone either who used to be an academic, or is now an analyst in training. Second what was being represented under the signifier of psychoanalysis was different in a rather crucial way. What is clear enough from this part of the interview was that our signifiers were not lining up. Each of us was trying to transmit something but the other receptor was not available in the room. Perhaps this is an important point to stress. For Fonagy, the receptors in question were both located in the brain of a particular body. The receptors in question for me were implied by two different bodies, the subject and the other, as a sociologist might want to say.

The equation Fonagy made of psychotherapy with psychoanalysis is worth pushing a bit further. The misunderstandings between the two of us had in fact begun right at the start. My opening question had been 'How did you come to be a speaker at the conference?' and it was met with a reply which silenced me for almost more than several seconds.

PF: I was asked by the organiser to talk about psychoanalytic training. I was quite surprised to find myself in a context that was the controversy between the BCP and the UKCP about who should call themselves a psychoanalyst. It is not an issue that I find the most burning at the moment. It is to me a sign of a field that is in trouble. Impoverished in some way. In France everyone is a psychoanalyst. In this country it hasn't been the case. It has been restricted in the past. I have no real strong feelings one way or another. But I was asked to speak about training. Not about the controversy. If I had known that it was about the controversy I wouldn't have agreed to go. Because I didn't have anything to say about that.

I was taken aback. How can psychoanalytic training not be relevant to the question of taking up the signifier, title, label of a psychoanalyst? The statement later in the interview (and reported first above) retroactively explains this one. Peter Fonagy did not have time for the idea of a *speciality* of psychoanalysis. Either it was neuroscience of the brain, or it was helping people to overcome their disordered psyche (never mind asking about the difference between the psyche and the brain). There is no need for psychoanalysis. There is nothing missing in speech, nor anything of excess to the words: it is all there waiting to be revealed in the snapping synapses of the brain.

This is a good moment to refer to the three registers of the symbolic, imaginary, and real. Having read Lacan, I can understand that the unconscious does not exist in the real (it is not that tree growing independently of human existence). But I can also understand that language implies an unconscious - you can't say everything all at once, and you can't avoid something else coming along in excess of your words. The unconscious, as we call it, indicates something that is produced because we, strange creatures that we are, speak. Communication is not *all* it is, and paradox that it is, more than all that it is, this is something Freud pointed out. By bringing together the relation between the symbolic, the imaginary, and the real Lacan let himself and us get a better grasp of the complexity of this our strange condition.

### **Third Point: the difference between the practice and the institution**

The variety of forms of (psychoanalytic) organisation is legion. The way institutional form comes together reflects something about the way its constituent members try to support something crucial about what they are doing. Pure and perfect forms, however, don't exist. Period. And just because a form was good last year, does not mean it is good this year.

Organisations are as alive as their members. However, the signification they come to achieve in the extended domain can become quite distant from the reality of their practice. There doesn't appear to be a short cut: to understand how each organisational form participates in the guarantee or otherwise of an adequate psychoanalyst must also be open to debate.

Interview 4, with Sylvia Cohen, then Chair of the UKCP Psychoanalytic Psychodynamic Section (and member of the Guild and the Site), gives some background to the difficulties of achieving this point:

SC: There have been nasty things happening, mainly instigated by the BCP. This is the insistence on there being a single membership policy for their member organisations. It started about 2 or 3 years ago at that time training organisations could belong both to the UKCP and to the BCP. But then they began insisting on a choice, and their organisations began voting. It took a while, and the last to go were the BAP and the LCP.<sup>4</sup> So that was one of the things that the UKCP were very angry about really. Now what's happened is that some new organisations within the UKCP have been inaugurated and individual people have joined them, so these people are actually members of both, registrants of both [UKCP and BCP], but the training organisations have had to leave. There is an organisation called the Forum for Independent Psychotherapists, for example, and people from the BAP and the LCP have joined that so that they can be members of both the UKCP and the BAP. A similar thing has happened in the Jungian section too.

She went straight on to reflect how this level of consideration can interfere with the more important matters:

CH: So, how to keep sight of our practice in relation to the name Psychoanalyst? I do think it is something to do with the direction of attention and the direction of let's say treatment, rather than what seems to me to be peripheral details. I mean you train in CFAR so you must know, but I think it is perfectly possible to see somebody once a week and direct their attention to let's say the unconscious, for want of a better way to say it.

JL: Why do you hedge the word 'unconscious'?

SC: Because I think it is very complicated, that we are addressing the unconscious. You have to be very cautious; it is not a simple process. We may well think we are addressing an unconscious process when in fact we're not. You know. I just think it's very difficult to define. But there is something about the direction of attention, all the same. Not to get caught up in the story, the manifest content, but to try to address

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<sup>4</sup> Votes were taken more than once, and it appeared that this was done until the requested result was obtained.

what might be 'underneath' (although the word underneath is a bit topographical); it is very difficult to find ways of talking about it. And then there's the notion of what transference is, and how it manifests itself.

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The label psychroanalyst [in the UKCP published directory] merely describes what we do, and this should be clear. The phrase psychoanalytic psychotherapist kind of fudges it. I'm not sure what it means.

#### **Fourth Point: Known and unknown relations to the signifier**

Interview 7, with Lesley Murdin, (the previous chair of the (then) Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Section (UKCP), Director of WPF Counselling and Psychotherapy and member of FPC and SITE) allows us to consider the passion of the debate, and to consider at what point this becomes something pathological.

LM: I was the Chair of the section last year, and there was a lot of passion and debate going on about who is entitled to call themselves a psychoanalyst. The word does have a great deal of status and emotional connotation attached to it. There is a mystique and an aura about it. All organisations in the section have a responsibility to think about what psychoanalysis is, and what a psychoanalyst is entitled to do, and who is entitled to call themselves a psychoanalyst. When I was Chair of the PPP Section last year, I came to realise that in Europe, in North America, and in Australia there are very different views on psychoanalysis, and what a psychoanalyst is. They do not have the forelock touching hierarchical system that we have in this country. So I do think there is a debate to be had. And the section agreed last year that we would open up the possibility of using the title, to see what the member organisations think about that. But what we haven't done, and what we have to do, I think, is to agree what the criteria are to recognise a psychoanalyst. Speaking for our organisation, the WPF, and the graduates in the FPC (Foundation for Psychotherapy and Counselling), we've had some debate about this, and I think that people are prepared to accept that what we do is psychoanalysis most of the time. But in this country, the tradition is that a psychoanalyst is someone who was trained at the Institute, and there are many people who want to maintain that status quo.

JL: How would you characterise psychoanalysis as a practice?

LM: Doing psychoanalysis is essentially working with unconscious processes, and using whatever kind of relationship you think you need to do that. If you are working very much with the content of the conscious mind that a patient already has, and not trying to get beyond that, then I would say that it is not psychoanalysis. At WPF we work with a huge range of people, and many of them have been psychiatric patients. Much of the work that might get done is fairly supportive and contained, and there's quite a bit of that. But many of the people can work psychoanalytically. It depends on the patient.

JL: I'm thinking about the presentation given by Bernard Burgoyne at the conference, where he was trying to isolate a minimum set of concepts that define psychoanalysis - transference, interpretation, resistance - are those something that you would agree with?

LM: Yes those are central. Key aspects of the training. For anyone who trains here,

those are central, but we teach people when to gauge whether those concepts are something they can think about, or whether they can give them back an interpretation. Especially if you are only seeing someone once a week, and he or she has to get through the rest of the week, you have to gauge how disturbing an interpretation might be to them. Time what you say. Judge how much you say. I think this is the thing that unites the section. As you know there will be various points on a continuum.

JL: There seem to be two separate questions in relation to this term psychoanalyst. One is about how it relates to what you are doing, one to one in a room somewhere, how well this describes what is going on. And the second is in relation to the profession.

LM: Yes, I much prefer to talk about doing psychoanalysis than being a psychoanalyst.

Towards the end of the interview, she added:

LM: You haven't mentioned the BCP. Well, I've been talking about the rational reasonable part of the debate. But there is an emotional part. This goes back very strongly to the fact that the BCP withdrew itself from the UKCP and proceeded to draw a fence around itself, and of course to make organisations choose, no matter how much their members wanted to belong to both organisations. They just kept on having votes until they got the result they wanted. In some organisations, it really looked from the outside anyway, as if they were doing this against the will of the majority of members. And that has left scars and bad feelings. It is beginning to change a bit, but there is a great deal to do. ...But within the UKCP there is a great deal of deference to the Institute, and then there are the psychotherapy institutions who are much more deferential to the Institute. I was telephoned before Christmas, when I was Chair of the section, by 20 or 30 people, both psychoanalysts and psychotherapists in the BCP saying 'how dare you do this', 'how could you possibly think you could claim the title psychoanalyst', 'absolutely outrageous that you could contemplate it'. We got agreement from the Registration Committee [of the UKCP] to use the label, psychoanalyst, and we agreed that within the section we would look at the criteria for using it during this year. The BCP didn't seem to know that we had done that, it was only when a motion was put to the AGM this January to change the title of the section to accommodate the term psychoanalyst, that the BCP suddenly realised that something was happening. There was a huge outrage before the AGM and attempts were made to get us to withdraw that motion.

JL: On what grounds?

LM: The psychoanalysts had been told by their organisation that there was a rule (and they said that it was the International Association's rule, as it turned out it wasn't - it was the Institute's own rule, but at the time, they were told that it was the International rule), that said any psychoanalyst who worked with - either analysing or supervising - anyone on a training that claimed to train psychoanalysts who were not going to be members of the IPA would be instantly thrown out of the organisation. So they were saying to me this is terrible, I am going to have to stop working with my patients. Well, so I said, that sounds rather unethical to me. Surely you have to look to your own position, if this really is the case, you'd better get the rule changed! So they were very indignant with the UKCP for putting them in this position. I would have thought that stopping seeing a patient because of a rule like that was highly

unethical. Our conference arose out of all this. We invited people from the Institute of Psychoanalysis to come and talk, but most of them declined, saying that they weren't ready yet - we invited them to come and tell us what psychoanalysis was, and how different from psychotherapy. I suppose we were thinking: surely they already know what psychoanalysis is. Peter Fonagy was actually, I think quite brave, if that's not patronising, I think it was very principled of him to come and talk to us, because I don't suppose there was much support or enthusiasm from his own organisation.

## End

The starting point was the signifier, and so is the end. At the entrance it led quickly on to 5 possible domains in which to pursue the enquiry (the clinic, the supervision, the seminar, in extension, and over-extension or confusion). During the course of analysing the interviews it brought five questions more sharply into view: These are What *is* a psychoanalyst? Who says so? How is this say so supported? What goes on in the gap between the 'one who is saying so' and the thing that they say is so? And what goes on between the 'one who is saying so' and the one they are saying it to. Two signifiers, one subject, and two gaps.

$$\frac{\Psi \rightarrow \Psi}{\Psi}$$

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