

2010 DIARY OF EVENTS

JANUARY

Tuesdays 12 – 26 Centre for the Advancement of Psychoanalytic Studies.
Clinical/Theoretical Seminar. *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Work with Parents*

Wednesdays 13 – 27 Introductory Lectures. *Lectures and Seminars*

Friday 15 Connecting Conversations. Juliet Stevenson with Andrea Sabbadini

Sunday 17 Film and Discussion. *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*

Saturday 23 Psychoanalytic Forum. *Internal and External Migration in Adulthood*

Friday 29 Centre for the Advancement of Psychoanalytic Studies.
Spring Term Lecture. *On Being Alive: Between Death and the Primal Scene.*
Michael Parsons

Sunday 31 Film and Discussion. *Deconstructing Harry*

FEBRUARY

Tuesdays 2 and 9 Centre for the Advancement of Psychoanalytic Studies.
Clinical/Theoretical Seminar. *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Work with Parents*

Wednesdays 3 – 24 Introductory Lectures. *Lectures and Seminars*

Wednesday 10 Lecture at Birkbeck. *Imparadised in Hell: Idealisation, Erotisation and the Return of the Split-off.* Ignes Sodre

MARCH

Tuesdays 2 – 30 Centre for the Advancement of Psychoanalytic Studies.
Interdisciplinary Seminar. *Films and Psychoanalysis*

Wednesdays 3 – 24 Introductory Lectures. *Lectures and Seminars*

Sunday 14 Film and Discussion. *Il Postino*

Wednesday 17 Annual Research Lecture. *Varieties of Psychoanalytical Research*
Michael Rustin

APRIL

Friday 9 Connecting Conversations. Alicia Alonso with Luis Rodriguez de la Sierra

Sunday 18. Film and Discussion. *Of Mice and Men*

Thursdays 22 and 29. Centre for the Advancement of Psychoanalytic Studies.
Clinical/Theoretical Seminar. *Autistic Aspects of Adult Patients*

MAY

Thursdays 6 – 20. Centre for the Advancement of Psychoanalytic Studies.
Clinical/Theoretical Seminar. *Autistic Aspects of Adult Patients*

Sunday 9 Film and Discussion. *The Enigma of Kasper Hauser*

Saturday 15 Richard Lucas Conference. *The Psychotic Wavelength: the contribution of psychoanalytic understanding to severe and enduring mental illness*

Friday 21 James MacKeith Memorial Lecture. *Torture Old and New: Degrading Attempts to Legitimate New Methods of Torture*
Justice Arthur Chaskalson

JUNE

Mondays 7 – 28 Centre for the Advancement of Psychoanalytic Studies.
Interdisciplinary Seminar. *Music and Psychoanalysis*

Wednesday 9 Open Evening

Sunday 13 Film and Discussion. *The Idiots*

Friday 18 Centre for the Advancement of Psychoanalytic Studies. Summer Term
Lecture. *Psychoanalysis and Religion: A View from Consciousness Studies*

Saturday 19 Psychoanalytic Forum. *Internal and External Migration in Old Age*

Saturday 26 Connecting Conversations. Wendy Cope with Stephen Grosz

Wednesday 30 Connecting Conversations. Anthony Horowitz with Peter Fonagy

JULY

Sunday 4 Film and Discussion. *The Keys to the House*

Monday 5 Centre for the Advancement of Psychoanalytic Studies.
Interdisciplinary Seminar. *Music and Psychoanalysis*

AUGUST

There are no public events during the month of August

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 19 Film and Discussion. *City Lights*

Wednesdays 22 – 29 Introductory Lectures. *Lectures and seminars*

Saturday 25 Psychoanalytic Forum. *Internal and External Migration in Culture and Society*

OCTOBER

Wednesdays 6 – 27 Introductory Lectures. *Lectures and seminars*

Sunday 10 Film and Discussion. *Magnificent Obsession*

Saturday 15 – 17 Conference. *Psychoanalysis at the Science Museum: Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Human Engagement with Climate Change*

Sunday 31 Film and Discussion. *Land of Silence and Darkness*

NOVEMBER

Wednesdays 3 – 24 Introductory Lectures. *Lectures and seminars*

Sunday 24 Film and Discussion. *Blind Loves*

Wednesday 24 Lecture. *Psychoanalysis at the Science Museum: Cambridge Scientists and Psychoanalysis in the 1920s* John Forrester

DECEMBER

Wednesday 1 Introductory Lecture. *Lecture and seminar*

REGIONAL EVENTS

PSYCHOANALYSIS LECTURE SERIES

In conjunction with Plymouth TPCT Department of Psychotherapy & Clinical Psychology Teaching Unit, University of Plymouth. At Buckfast Abbey Conference Centre, Devon. 01752 233 228

Saturday 6 March *Elements of the Oedipus Complex* Richard Rusbridger

THE INTRODUCTORY LECTURES: INTO THE REGIONS

Belfast Tel: 02890 565 768

North of England (Leeds Site) Tel: 01132 670 099

Colchester. Email: marie.bridge@tiscali.co.uk

*Further details of all these events will be on our website www.pschoanalysis.org.uk and in either the Spring, Summer or Autumn issues of *Beyond the Couch**

THE INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

NEWS & EVENTS

Annual Issue 2010



N.A.S.A.

THE SCIENCE OF PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE PSYCHOANALYSIS OF SCIENCE

Wilfred Bion

“This discussion may be regarded throughout as the scientific methodology of psychoanalysis and the psychoanalysis of scientific methodology; my preference, in the interest of accuracy, is for it to be seen as both simultaneously.”

“Though we are aware that any knowledge at which we arrive is the result of a process on our part, we do not reflect on the nature of the process – at any rate in any systematic way – and make it the object of a special study. But sooner or later knowledge of our mistakes and the desire to be sure that we are getting the genuine article, i.e. something that is really knowledge, lead us to reflect on the process. We do so, prompted by the hope that we can discover the proper process, i.e. that in

which we shall be safe from error, or at least to determine within what limits we can carry out such a process. But in the end we find ourselves having to ask whether we are capable of knowing at all and are not merely under the illusion of thinking that we can know”. Prichard, ‘History of the Theory of Knowledge’, from *Knowledge and Perception*, 1932

Prichard points out that in ordinary life when we are seeking knowledge, our interest is chiefly absorbed in the nature

of what we are trying to know, and not in the process by which we try to get to know it. It is probably true that most psychoanalysts are similarly absorbed in psychoanalysis rather than in the process by which we arrive at a knowledge of psychoanalysis. This preoccupation with the subject, to the over-shadowing of the study of the process by which it is learned, is excusable; for the subject is vast and there is much to learn. And yet one may permit oneself some surprise at this imbalance, for psychoanalysis itself may be seen as born of a doubt about the realities of the knowledge we have, and of the processes by which we obtain it. The central feature – the analysis the aspirant has to undergo – is imposed because it is supposed that without that experience the candidate’s inadequacies relate to and prejudice the mental processes by which he acquires knowledge of his patient. Furthermore, psychoanalysis is itself a technique for the investigation of the human mind, and it can be said to have discovered – in the course of the work that culminated in Freud’s paper on the ‘Two Principles of Mental Functioning’ [1911b, SE 12] – the origin of the elaboration of psychoanalysis itself, namely the pressure of inner needs that demand more than hallucinatory gratification. [Marginal comment added later: The demand is for the *reality*] Nevertheless there has not yet been much work done relating psychoanalysis to the general body of scientific history, or its methodology to the elements common to the methodologies of all scientific discipline.

Criticism of psychoanalysis also applied to other sciences

It has been a common criticism of psychoanalysis that its methods are not scientific. It is therefore with some surprise that the student of psychoanalysis who turns to the study of scientific method in order to learn of the respects in which psychoanalysis, and

his own method of practising it, falls short in scientific rigour and precision, finds that the scientific defects that are charged against psychoanalysis are observed by the more self-critical scientists in the practice of their own disciplines. It might be said that the history of mankind is full of instances of the kind of experience described in the quotation from Prichard [ibid. p. 151] – instances, that is to say, of the falsification of a theory followed usually by the questioning of the theory, but sometimes by the questioning of the methods by which the supposed knowledge was obtained. Plato’s well-known description [*Republic, Book VII*], in which he likens mankind to men in a cave seated with their backs to the light, is a famous instance of overt expression of suspicion of the validity of knowledge based on the perceptions of men held in the cultural framework of a group. In more recent times, Hume’s attack on the idea that the scientific hypothesis is based on anything other than the tendency of the human mind to associate various elements, did much to prevent the growth of an almost mystical belief that a ‘natural law’ was the statement of a truth that various elements were constantly conjoined because their conjunction was a function of some linking force parallel with, but independent of, the human tendency to see them as conjoined. Despite the somewhat way-ward approach that Hume made to the problem, his insistence on the part played by association as a function of the human mind carried enough weight to be disturbing, notably to Kant, who felt impelled to refute him. Yet despite the vulnerability of Hume’s attitude it is doubtful, in the opinion of some philosophers of science, whether Hume has ever been really answered (cf. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy*).

Relationship between cosmology and phantasy

First I must draw attention to the uncertain fate of various ideas often well expressed and established in their time. Such a one is the heliocentric theory of the earth’s movements, which was put forward by Aristarchus of Samos and attested by Archimedes and Plutarch. It appears to have ‘disappeared’ – as far as any practical influence it had – until it was put forward again nearly two thousand years later by Copernicus.

The lack of means for establishing the reality of the earth’s movement round the sun as a factual counterpart of the heliocentric theory meant that there was freedom to entertain views that appeared to be supported by the observations available to the ordinary individual, and at the same time enabled those observations to correspond with certain classes of internal phantasy, and for certain classes of internal phantasy to be externalized to the exclusion of others. Or I should say that certain phantasies could then be externalized by virtue of the geocentric cosmology, leaving others to be given some different outlet. This state of affairs is common to all cosmologies and not simply to those existing during the dominance of a particular school of thought. I wish to emphasize that while it is true that internal phantasies play a very big part in supporting a given scientific view, or even in precipitating its adumbration, the traffic is two-way, and the view that the community holds on what it quite reasonably regards as scientific grounds dictates what phantasies are to be externalized in the prevalent cosmology, and what phantasies are to achieve some other outlet. A little thought will show the seriousness of this situation.

Consequences

Let us suppose – and what follows is only intended to be a postulate – that the geocentric view makes it easier to externalize a phantasy of the superiority of the all-providing breast or mother.

Then the phantasy of the dominance of the male would need to find a means of externalization in some activity – scientific, political, aesthetic or religious – that lent itself to such externalization.

My object is to indicate that in addition to the obvious importance of establishing correct methodology – because only in that can we approximate to confidence in the kind of knowledge our methods win for us and so achieve a corresponding and proportional freedom from errors that might be disastrous – there is the fact that our methods are prey to forces derived from a class of phenomena of which little is known but which it is very much the business of psychoanalysts to study. I refer to the phenomena associated with the need to establish a particular scientific view for the greater ease in externalization of one particular class of phantasies, and the further associated phenomena that derive from existent cosmology – the phantasies to which it allows an outlet in externalization, and the phantasies which its existence compels to seek some other outlet of externalization.

I suggest that there is a vested interest in the maintenance of an existent cosmology, or for that matter any existent scientific deductive system, which derives from manifold sources but with only two of which I wish to concern myself here. One is scientific and realistic – as for example that seen in the maintenance of Newtonian Laws even after the behaviour of Mercury’s perihelion had shown them to be inadequate, but there was no Einstein to propound a relativity theory to take their place – and the other is emotional and relates to group and individual phantasies. It is notorious that there is the strongest resistance to the upsetting of an established scientific deductive system, even though that system was itself feared, hated, and opposed at its inception. (Cogitations pp151-156)

FURTHER READING

Bion, W. R. (1962). Learning from Experience. London: Karnac Books.

Bion, W. R. (1978). Four Discussions with W.R. Bion. Clunie Press, Perthshire. [WRB 12]; and republished (2000) in Clinical Seminars and Other Works (Ed. F. Bion). London: Karnac.Books. (Single volume edition containing Four Discussions with W.R.Bion and Clinical Seminars and Four Papers)

Bion, W. R. (1985). All My Sins Remembered: Another part of a Life and The Other Side of Genius: Family

Letters. (Ed. F. Bion). Abingdon: Fleetwood Press 1985. Reprinted London: Karnac Books 1991 (1985). All my Sins and The Other Side of Genius.

Bion, W.R. (1991). Cogitations. London: Karnac Books.

Bion, W.R. (1994). Clinical Seminars and Other Works. London: Karnac Books

The above article has been edited. The full text can be found on the Institute of Psychoanalysis web site at www.pschoanalysis.org.uk

PSYCHOANALYSIS AT THE SCIENCE MUSEUM

Starting in October 2010 there will be an exhibition at the Science Museum about Psychoanalysis. A large programme of related events are being arranged around the exhibition. These will include general events for older adolescents as well as for adults on topics such as sport leadership, relationships, sexuality and identity, as well as psychoanalytic discussions around arts events such as films. Some of the events will be specifically related to Psychoanalysis and Science on topics such as the evidence base for psychoanalysis, neuroscience and models of the mind. Academics, philosophers and authors will participate with us in discussion.

Two of the events planned are the following:

Conference 15 – 17 October 2010
Psychoanalysis at the Science Museum: *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Human Engagement with Climate Change*

Lecture 24 November 2010
Psychoanalysis at the Science Museum: Cambridge Scientists and Psychoanalysts in the 1920s

Details of these and other events will be posted on our website as soon as they become available www.pschoanalysis.org.uk. There will also be a dedicated website for the Science Museum events which will have listings from June 2010 when online booking will also be available.

www.pschoanalysisatthesciencemuseum.org.uk

INFORMATION

The British Psychoanalytical Society was founded in 1919. Soon after, the Institute of Psychoanalysis was established to administer the Society’s activities. These include: the development of the theory and practice of psychoanalysis, the training and further education of psychoanalysts, the provision of treatment through the London Clinic of Psychoanalysis, publishing books and journals, maintaining a library, research and public lectures. The Society has a Code of Ethics and an Ethics Committee.

The Society is a component society of the International Psychoanalytical Association, a body with members on all five continents that safeguards professional standards and oversees the stages by which new societies are created. It is also a member of the British Psychoanalytic Council, which publishes a register of British psychoanalysts, analytical psychologists, child psychotherapists and psychoanalytic psychotherapists.

The Society currently has 438 members and 46 candidates. The majority of them live in or near London, though there are 158 members in many different countries and in other parts of the British Isles. Many psychoanalysts work in public organisations, principally in the Health Service, as well as in private practice. Recently it has become possible for those living at a distance from London to do the Training.

Those accepted for training come from a variety of backgrounds; the usual age

A list of psychoanalysts can be found on the Society’s website. For further information please contact Nick Hall, Institute Manager, 020 7563 5005. For information about treatment for adults, adolescents or children, contact Trudy Turner, Clinic Executive Officer, 020 7563 5002. For psychoanalytic training, contact Luke Perry, Training Executive Officer, 020 7563 5015. For the library phone 020 7563 5008. For general enquiries phone 020 7563 5000. For press enquiries, contact Ginette Goulston on 07958 448 002. Website: www.pschoanalysis.org.uk

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of people beginning the training is between 30 and 40. Many are medically qualified and the remainder are psychologists, social workers or academics with the occasional student from another background. The training takes a minimum of four years and its main elements are: a personal analysis, which lasts from at least a year before the student starts seminars until at least his or her qualification, a psychiatric placement for non-medical students, theoretical and clinical seminars, and the supervised psychoanalysis of two patients. There is also a two-year post-qualification course and training in child and adolescent psychoanalysis.

The London Clinic of Psychoanalysis offers a Consultation Service for anyone who may be interested in having a consultation with a qualified and experienced psychoanalyst. Recommendations for further treatment may include an analysis through the low-fee scheme at the Clinic or referral to a qualified psychoanalyst through the referral service. The Clinic has about 100 patients in treatment and the Child and Adolescent Department provides assessment and treatment for young people.

Through its work, and the work of its individual members, The British Psychoanalytical Society has made an unrivalled contribution to the understanding and treatment of mental illness. Members of the Society have included Michael Balint, Wilfred Bion, John Bowlby, Anna Freud, Ernest Jones, Melanie Klein, Joseph Sandler and Donald Winnicott.