



INSTITUTE OF GROUP ANALYSIS

PSYCHOTHERAPY AND LIBERATION MAY '68 ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

2nd – 4th MAY 2008

LVSRC, 356 HOLLOWAY ROAD, LONDON N7 6PA

This conference is about psychotherapy and political action that connects with the spirit of 1968 with papers on the intersection between psychotherapy and liberation. How can we build on the dynamic set in play by 1968? What are the lessons of struggles in the last forty years for what we do now? What practical steps should psychotherapists take now to link the personal and the political?

SPEAKERS: Our invited guest speakers link political struggle and personal change: **Peter Tatchell** and **Hilary Wainwright**.

There will be plenary sessions, large and small group discussions and parallel paper sessions. Topics covered by speakers include feminist therapy, class relations, the cold war, migrants, promiscuity, revolution, identifications, black psychology, psychophobia, gay liberation, Che Guevara in Bolivia, The Beatles, person-centred perspectives, politics and youth work, South Africa, Iran and Israel, deep equality, war, and therapy with child soldiers. Contributors to papers, symposia and workshops from the psychotherapy world link their work with political change. They include Pam Alldred, Simon Bradford, Jocelyn Chaplin, Mick Cooper, Olov Dahlin, Gaby Jacobs, Maya Jarrett, Kevin Jones, Ann Malkin, Sheila Melzak, John Miller, Sally Mitchison, Efrosini Moureli, Maria Nichterlein, Gillian Proctor, Stavros Psaroudakis, Gabrielle Rifkind, Peter Rigg, Andrew Samuels, Pete Sanders, Tamara Sears, Sally Skaife, Radjou Soundaramourty, Nick Totton, Phil Virden, Tania Vosniadou, Earlise Ward, Inge Widlund.

The conference organisers are Dick Blackwell (rich.phill.4@virgin.net), Erica Burman (E.Burman@mmu.ac.uk) and Ian Parker (I.A.Parker@mmu.ac.uk).

REGISTRATION: Conference registration is £120 for the three days (or £50 per day). Lunch on each day is available for an additional £7 per lunch. Send cheque (made out to "The Institute of Group Analysis") to The May 68 Conference, Institute of Group Analysis, 1 Daleham Gardens, London, NW3 5BY, or telephone IGA +44 020 7431 2693 by **13th March 2008**. You can also book on line at www.groupanalysis.org.

PSYCHOTHERAPY AND LIBERATION: MAY '68 ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

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SPONSORING ORGANISATIONS: Asylum: Magazine for Democratic Psychiatry (www.asylumonline.net), the Discourse Unit (www.discourseunit.com), elpnosis (<http://ipnosis.postle.net>), the Group-Analytic Society (www.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk), the Institute for Group Analysis (www.groupanalysis.org), Manchester Psychoanalytic Matrix (www.discourseunit.com/matrix.htm), PCCS Books (www.pccs-books.co.uk), Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility (www.pcsr.org.uk), Psychotherapy Politics International (journal), Red Pepper (www.redpepper.org.uk) and Temenos Person-Centred Education and Training (www.temenos.ac.uk).

ANTICIPATED CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Friday 2nd May

10.30: Coffee.
11.00: Opening Session.
1.00: Lunch.
2.00: Guest Speaker Peter Tatchell.
3.15: Coffee
3.45: Session
5.45: Close

Saturday 3rd May

9.30: Coffee
10.00: Session.
1.00: Lunch.
2.00: Guest Speaker Hilary Wainwright.
3.15: Coffee
3.45: Session
5.45: Close.

Sunday 4th May

9.30: Coffee.
10.00: Session
1.00: Lunch
2.00: Guest speaker.
4.00: Close.



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LONDON, 2nd – 4th MAY 2008

BOOKING FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____

Please tick:

- Registration for whole conference £120 OR
- Day-rate registration £50 per day, Friday 2nd May (11.00 - 5.45)
- Day-rate registration £50 per day, Saturday 3rd May (10.00-5.45)
- Day-rate registration £50 per day, Sunday 4th May (10.00-4.00)
- Lunch at £7 for Friday 2nd May
- Lunch at £7 for Saturday 3rd May

Lunch at £7 for Sunday 4th May

Total: £ _____

Background - Why we're having this May 68 conference.

Milan Kundera said that man's struggle against power was the struggle of memory against forgetting. The fortieth anniversary of May 68, 'les événements', recalls a time and a movement that aspired to collective and individual liberation, and taught us that it was not only 'man's' struggle. The outburst of frustration, protest and rebellion in Paris was an iconic moment in a mounting wave of democratic culture rooted in grass roots activism. This included the Civil Rights and Black Power movements in the US, third world independence and liberation struggles (often symbolised in the growing legend of Che Guevara) and the international opposition movements against the Vietnam War and 'Apartheid' in South Africa. '68' was also the year of the 'Prague Spring', of a series of campus protests that spread across the US, and the famous black power protest at the Olympic Games. Slogans like 'make love not war' expressed the belief that the personal could be, and indeed is, political. Flower power and hippy culture emphasised the value of individual freedom of lifestyle and personal rebellion as modes of political action. Student Power drew attention to the power structures and repressive discourses inherent in the transmission of certain forms of knowledge through 'teaching', and demanded direct grass roots democracy in universities, colleges and schools. 'Anti-psychiatry' brought the same values and critiques to bear on mental health institutions and professions but not, significantly, on many psychotherapy institutes.

It was from this complex matrix and the aftershocks of the events that a number of us found our way into psychotherapy trainings; seeking some link between internal and external repression, between the internal struggles rooted in our early life, our intimate relationships both past and present and the external political world in which those early experiences and family relationships were formed and conducted; seeking our own liberation from the power of our internal and external conflicts through the triumph of memory over repression. These events also saw the rebirth of the Women's Liberation Movement, and a questioning of leftist forms of organisation that failed to respond to the 'personal' aspects of political change.

What did we find and where have we got to? Has psychotherapy turned out to be the pathway to liberation for ourselves and others that we originally hoped for? Or have we been caught in the system? Has the repressive tolerance of our society and our professional discourse incorporated and institutionalised our desires into a discourse of conformity and social control? How far has our society and our profession transformed alienation, distress, deviance and personal struggles for meaning and fulfilment into an assortment of psychopathologies and diagnostic categories to be treated and cured by psychotherapy? Is psychotherapy still a subversive discourse or is it now a way of incorporating everyone into an ever more inclusive and ever more stifling model of normality? From the beginning, psychoanalysis struggled with the conflicting impulses to be, on the one hand, a radical and subversive discourse, and on the other, a respectable form of medical or quasi medical treatment. Has the conservative impulse now taken over, or is the spirit of '68 still alive?

How fragmented has protest and challenge to the status quo become? Feminism was a crucial force in the turn to psychotherapy as a form of liberation, and the consequences of that have yet to be fully worked through. The Gay and Lesbian movements have made considerable progress since the early days of 'Gay Liberation' and since then Lesbian and Gay therapists have pushed psychotherapy towards recognition and acceptance of what is becoming known as sexual diversity, while heterosexuality still seems relatively circumscribed. Black and ethnic minority groups have established a bridgehead in contemporary society and have pushed psychotherapy towards addressing 'difference' at least at a cultural level, (though it seems a long way from 'Black Power'), while post-colonial theory seems to have made little impact on mainstream psychotherapy. Anti-capitalist and anti-globalisation movements, along with eco- campaigners have also made headway in the past decade. In Latin America, Chavez seems to offer a level of hope not seen at least since the Sandinista revolution, perhaps even since the death of Che Guevara. On the downside, most of Africa seems to be at war, and peace in the Middle East seems as remote as ever, while the so called 'War on Terror' erodes liberties around the world and attempts to re-establish torture as a legitimate activity in defence of something called 'civilised values'.

Can we speak in any meaningful way about a counter-culture or a protest movement or are the progressive movements now fragmented into their own interest groups? Has identity politics failed to provide, or even undermined any sense of solidarity? Is feminism the only bridge between the person and the political, and how does that transform traditional politics and psychotherapy?