

Social Unconscious

IPC/SMU Panel

Monty Evans, PhD, Dale Godby, PhD, John Hendricks, JD, PhD, Linda Stearns, PhD

Hopper, E. (2003). *The social unconscious: Selected papers*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. (Outline prepared by Godby)

Unconscious constraints of social forces

"...the group-analytic situation, while dealing with the unconscious in the Freudian sense, brings into operation and perspective a totally different area of which the individual is equally unaware. Moreover, *the individual is as much compelled by these colossal forces as by his own id* and defends himself against their recognition without being aware of it, but in quite different ways and modes. One might speak of a social or interpersonal unconscious." (Foulkes, 1964, p. 52)

Unconscious repetition of social situations

We tend to recreate situations. The ones most likely to be recreated are ones in which we have been traumatized by I:A/M

Frame for clinical work

Here and now—"I don't want to lie on the couch." "Afraid we won't exist"
There and now—"My wife doesn't understand." "Because rx business partner"
Here and then—"don't want to lie on couch." "Like mom read while feeding"
There and then—"M didn't concentrate on me" "Cousin dying in Warsaw Ghetto."

Asocial—Internal "Dream lost in house, looking for analyst." "Looking for a part of father to help negotiate independence from M."

Asocial—External "Woman wants a baby boy" "Social fact is boys get more advantages."

Social—Internal "Demise of Welfare State." "Losing Mother's attention."

Social—External "Holocaust survivor." "Fear of annihilation is real."

Clinical Illustration

NHS and Maastricht Treaty—These experiences were as unconscious as their experiences as children. Group had shared a fear of annihilation and experienced a process of aggregation.

Terrorist explosion in park—Also unconscious until mentioned.

Maturity

"Make history as well as be made by it."