

The Case of The Specialist Housing Consortium

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Preface and EndNotes added by Philip Boxer

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Preface

The Working Group on Groups and Organisations, set up under the auspices of the Centre for Freudian Analysis and Research, has been seeking to develop a knowledge rooted in practices of intervention. It has been pursuing this through the examination of its members' experience of organisational interventions in which they were engaged, and the challenges this experience presented. It has been using the work of Lacan to develop a critical reading of the theorists in this field, and using the disturbances in this field and the gaps in its own practices to question its reading of the Freudian field-effect.

It has been meeting for a year, and in this time has begun to establish a common language by studying relevant texts by various writers, and by seeking to arrive at critical readings; and by discussing cases. But the question remains of what might constitute a practice 'under the influence' of a Lacanian reading of Freud. The writings which follow approach this question through examining my work with the Waltham Forest Specialist Housing Consortium.

Parts I and II of what follows have been written by Marc du Ry on the basis of extensive conversations with myself about the background and content of the intervention; and on the basis of two hour-long interviews: one with Barry Palmer, the consultant who brought me into the case and with whom I continued to work as the case developed, and the other with David Naylor, the Director. I have added this Preface and the Endnotes as a way of framing Marc's text.

In discussing this text with David, and securing his agreement to include the other members of GOWG in its critical reading, David had a number of preliminary comments to make, which follow in italics. Although David's reactions are critical, his underlying response was that the paper was a significant contribution to our work together that needed to be discussed further by DN, BWMP and myself.

First of all, I don't understand a lot of what is written, which is very Lacanese, although I think I agree with what is said about alienation and separation, and would like to understand this more.

I find that there is a missing sense of PJB's transference in this text. Whereas there is a lot about me from a transferential sense, and Philip from a technical viewpoint, there is no sense, for example, of my feeling as if I were PJB's protégé, or of the fact that PJB was working for reduced fees, and showed his own very real concerns for the organisation's work in the context of what constituted "Care in the Community". Just as it says very little about what was going on with PJB, it also says very little about BWMP. Where is BWMP? It was because of my relationship to BWMP that my trust for PJB could be unquestioned. The dynamic between the three of us, the changes in my relationship with BWMP, and BWMP's own changing role within the organisation were all important aspects of the way things unfolded. This was also one of several 3-way relationships which seemed very significant, others being the Trust-Local Authority-Health Authority triangle, and the Julia-James-Gael triangle within the senior management team.

I also find that the text is both very one-sided and over-simple in the way it speaks about myself and BWMP "struggling" with new terms. It was very clear to me that PJB was struggling too at times, and not everything that PJB said did make sense. So I had to be making judgments about that all the time. This internal struggle of mine over what was wrong or to be rejected in what PJB said doesn't come through. This struggle was not confined to me either. There was an important dynamic going on with management and their acceptance of PJB's work. One of the consequences of this dynamic was the eventual reorganisation in September of this year.

Lastly, there is not enough about the dilemma of my recognising that I didn't know what to do, and needing help; and having to take responsibility for my actions and feeling ignorant. To start with, I might have been more in the needing help, but I was always having to work this dilemma. Crucial in being able to do this was both my being able to rely on being able to be angry, and the knowledge that PJB could work with this; and the fact that PJB and I had certain core ideas and concepts which we shared.

Part I - The Case

INTRODUCTION

This is an attempt to give an account of PJB's consultancy work with WFSHC, where possible drawing out psychoanalytic parallels and differences. This is possible because, ultimately, both deal with a subjective position. A glossary of concepts is provided at the end to facilitate this reading. The general heading is "Meeting the challenge of the case", taken from Winnicott on the one handⁱ and, on the other, it is the title of a workshop once run by the two consultants involved in this caseⁱⁱ. The account infers something of PJB's practice by drawing on the comments of the other two people involved, thus paralleling the procedure Lacan instituted in his School as the "pass", in which a candidate's account of his own analysis is "passed on" to a committee by two of his peers. In this case, however, only one "passer" is a peer, the other being the client himselfⁱⁱⁱ, while the "committee" is itself another account rather than a judgment. As in the pass, nonetheless, the aim of the candidate is to put forward his ethical position. In this case the question supporting the demand resulting in this exercise is: "Why did I do what I did?" which parallels the analytic question: "why did I say what I said?"

I will try to show that an answer to this question is only possible as the sum of three other questions: "what, how and for/to whom did I do what I did?"

Note that these four questions^{iv} form the core of a key diagram PJB has developed to embody concepts which support his consultancy practice and which has driven his intervention in this case^v.

Where relevant, his conceptual position will be outlined together with its analytic correlate.

HISTORY

Before tackling each of these in turn, let us look at the background and history of the organisation in question up to the point where PJB was called in by the acting director of WFSHC early in 1994.

The previous head had been fired partly because of differences over policy and direction with the Board, but also over questions of her competence. When the new acting director, David Naylor, inherited the Charity, there was therefore a need to devolve power, in order to prevent too much concentration of power in the Director. His appointment as an acting Director also meant that he was effectively on probation - an arrangement which continued for 12 months before he was appointed permanently to the post.

This organisation, first founded in 1987, was essentially an instrument of two authorities, the Local Authority and the Health Authority, who both provided for it and purchased from it. The structure of this organisation was complicated: the managers of the Houses under its control together with their staff were employed by other authorities, including the Local Authority and the local Health Care Trust, who in turn had a preponderant role on the board of trustees. When David took over in his provisional role, there was large scale disaffection, crisis management, and a question-mark over the viability and future of WFSHC. As he said: "I was close to being overwhelmed by anxiety, I had a lot of responsibilities, lots of things, lots of

people not really being dealt with, it was my first senior management job. It was an acting position, yet the demands of the organisation were to change so we had to come up very quickly with an organisational change strategy and just accept that there was going to be a lot of risk, about getting the job, that things might change, having a board of directors who might have different views, etc.”

David, who was himself a consultant before he became a manager, needed to prove two things: that his vision of making WFSHC a “robustly independent provider” of specialist housing was the right solution and that he was right for the job. Before this, he had already been talking to the other consultant involved, BWMP, about the key question around which the organisation was built: what was life like for the variously infirm and elderly people who were the residents in these houses and what could be done for them under the existing system. This was the challenge of the case and both DN and BWMP realised they could not cope by themselves. For while BWMP could be a listening post for DN, he realised that someone like PJB was needed to tackle the “organisational complexity” of the case.

WHAT

“I can say that in 1995 99% of his work has resulted in things happening. It wouldn’t be understating it to say that, I mean in the first year he did a lot to secure the viability of the organisation”

The first level of engagement for PJB was in enabling DN to ensure that there was a level of activity which conformed to specifications and could deliver consistent service.

To begin to achieve this, PJB did the following:

1. To bring the actual dilemmas into view by interviewing some of the senior staff and consultants. An analysis of these allowed him to bring out the impasses, blockages, inefficiencies of the organisation [symptom] as well as the various dilemmas which were structural, permanent and to be managed as such, the tension between institutional order and responsiveness to clients, for example. This use of dilemmas was central to challenging the dominant assumptions within the organisation about the nature of its work, and opening up new questions about how these dilemmas might be 'held'.^{vi}

DN: “I think dilemma is a crucial concept, which is much more helpful to me as a manager. It represents a shift from an interpretative position, trying to see what the unconscious motivation is, to a 'problematizing' position, in which it is the dilemma that is being struggled with: a position which questions the ways of holding the dilemma.”^{vii}

2. PJB grappled with the mass of detail and people which made up the “activity chain” in the case, to establish the boundaries and constraints upon it: Central Government legislation, local and health authority contracts and thirdly, the needs of the residents, the effects of house management and staff, and the move away from the medicalisation of symptoms.

By redrawing the structure of the whole organisation by means of a logical analysis of the tension between the actual (historical) lines of power and authority and what they might be in view of the changing aims and realities it had to grapple with, many anomalies came to light.^{viii} The old order had become imaginary in relation to new demands. Hence, it became necessary to

provide a new constitution, one with a more representative spread of trustees than just the local and health authorities^{ix}.

DN: “Up till a few weeks ago the local and health authorities were directors and members of the company and could directly influence, so it was as if you could never go to your own space, the parents would always look at everything, denying they had a conflict of interest. This made it very problematic. So a practical way of shifting the organisation’s position in relation to the market and its contractors has been to change that. The health authority comes off as a member of the Board.”

In clarifying the contractual and constitutional position of WFSHC - and especially the accountability of the houses, it became apparent that their audits and cost structures proved far too general to reflect the more complex reality, the great differences between actual houses. Providing more accurate accounts was vital in guaranteeing the viability of the organisation and DN’s position, as well as prompting a desire for change [symptom].^x

In both cases, staff were inevitably confronted with their own responsibility for the past [rectification], which in turn allowed them in the ensuing work [working through] to make it past and move on.^{xi}

DN : “Essential was his idea that my natural area of support was with the house managers, to build a relationship with them, rather than getting preoccupied with trying to build a relationship with senior managers or people who happen to be working in these offices. Secondly, we looked at the way all the resources should be shaped and driven. That was the core of work then.”

At the same time that staff from the authorities were being transferred onto the payroll of WFSHC to create a shared context and future, PJB also worked on replacing the old hierarchies with notions of teams and networks. What was true for DN was also true for the staff: looking at the “what” involved them more or less explicitly in confronting their own unquestioned assumptions about their object, care for the residents. It is the situation of the analyst who has to discover that his fantasy is not adequate, that the other actually wants something quite different from him than he had imagined.^{xii}

3. Managing such a level of activity requires adequate documentation. Thus, a major part of the work, contracted out after the groundwork was done, went into setting up data architectures, and generally developing an information environment (IT) to support the new ways of working which had emerged from the first analysis of the flow of data and information. This exercise covered all sections of the organisation, personnel, finance, central and house management, and resulted in a tremendous improvement in clarity and transparency of detail concerning the work of WFSHC.^{xiii}

4. Lastly, various models and theories, bringing notions developed in profit-seeking organisations, like internal supply and demand, into a not-for-profit charity like WFSHC, resulted in the long term process for the organisation being explicitly formulated along the lines of the four questions which also inform this account.^{xiv} Four levels of Quality Assurance Guarantee were fleshed out in relation to a central rationale [ethical position]: helping the residents migrate through the system towards the greatest possible autonomy and helping the organisation to migrate through changes towards being of the greatest efficacy for the residents^{xv}.

1. Conforming to the standards of the community (government) as laid down in law. It defines the minimum operational requirements.
2. Ways for centre to balance different demands of various standards found inside and outside organisation, making them work together in interest of the residents. The Centre here operates between the community at large and the managers of the houses. It defines the minimum level of efficiency.
3. Standards developed in response to Residents' needs as conveyed by care staff to house managers and thence to Centre.
4. Working to anticipate the changing needs of residents. Integration of organisation around giving value to client.

HOW

In September 1995, WFSHC reorganised itself along lines laid down and developed in over a year of consulting with PJB. We have looked at the kind of processes PJB had to establish. But how was this achieved? What made DN accept? It is at this level that one cannot understand without the introduction of analytic concepts.

“In the beginning is the Transference”. What did DN demand of PJB? Understanding and sympathy? Expertise? Guidance? To be told what to do?

DN got all of that, but though PJB could not avoid responding to the urgency of the need in relation to the organisation, responding to the demand of DN at the same time provoked what in analysis is called alienation. Instead of elaborating his own solutions and grow into his new role as manager, he had to swallow somebody else's, at least initially.

DN: “Now shifting between seeing Barry and seeing Philip was quite difficult for me. And then Barry taking up a consultancy role within the organisation, seeing house managers, which has worked, and when we would meet sometimes the three of us together, but there was a sense of like who's in charge, you know, it was like Philip was in charge.” And: “The change from one QAG level to another needed lots of talk and time to understand. It was a change of culture. And this was fine if I translated what PJB said to me to the managers but when he spoke to managers as well and changed my version, I felt undermined.” This alienation expressed itself in a disagreement about timing, PJB's pressure for implementation and DN's managerial working-through with his staff.

So both had to manage a dilemma. PJB had two clients, the organisation and DN; whereas DN had to be client as well as boss, in other words, he had to remind himself that it was he himself who should be in the position of holding the transference for the rest of the organisation as the “one-supposed-to-know”. One aspect of the work was analysing the transference, so that DN could shift his transference onto PJB as a person (his “fearlessness” and “certainty”, his “knowledge” and “authority”) to a transference onto the work to be done. This shift coincided with a decrease in the demand for consultancy as DN took time for himself and his staff to work through the new ideas, consultancy which, for that very reason, must be considered successful.^{xvi}

The following points can be considered as aspects of the technique which guarantees PJB a degree of effectiveness.

1. The Lacanian ethic of speaking well.

DN: “One of the things in looking for a consultant was that I felt I couldn't capture what felt like an enormous task, I didn't have the language to make

sense of it, and one of the things I was immediately confronted with in Philip was his language". A key part of PJB's strategy is a lucid theory of speech and discourse and their role in organisations. DN :“He stressed the importance of conversations, and the positions people would take in relation to them, especially ways of improving the quality of conversations and getting clarity about who needs to talk to whom about what.” Furthermore, DN found that:“it supports this idea which I've always believed in that there have to be lots and lots of stories about what is going on.”

While both DN and BWMP struggled hard to take on board new terms, they found that everything sank in after a while, and as it did so, it enabled them to get a new handle on what had seemed an ordinary process. The time to understand coincided with the actual use of the concepts, just as, in analysis, certain interpretations remain enigmatic or equivocal until such time as their true sense suddenly dawns.

Speaking well involves not shying away from, as DN said, “uttering the unutterable, of what is not being said, which PJB could do, and then just standing there, of being there to live with it, deal with the projections that arise, work them through, it was good to see him do that.”

It is an ethic in which interpretation aims at action, not just understanding.

DN felt that as an ex-Tavistock person and consultant he was often only concerned with finding the right interpretation. The problem for the manager, however, remained: performance, meeting the demands of reality^{xvii}.

2. PJB makes it a habit to send back to clients a record of what they have discussed plus any interpretations. Nothing is therefore imposed; on the contrary, the client has to accept and work through the actual complexities uncovered. All the more so “because there wasn't any premature closing down of the diagnosis of what was wrong, and there was an enormous challenge to my own assumptions” - DN. In other words, the client is involved in elaborating his “symptom” as well as the most likely cure for it.

3. Controversially, but in line with an ethical position centered on a “relational” way of working, PJB would speak in such a direct way to people that their identifications to their role, their “positional” stance, might be shaken.^{xviii} Uncomfortable but necessary if one person is not to scupper the work of the whole. This means that there was always an explicit or implicit invitation for people to take on the challenge of change, including changing their own roles, in order to find their optimum position in the structures they helped to define. DN... “The way some of them are confronting and challenging where you'd least expect it, to me that's a test of the validity of the theory. People that have been hammered by their organisations, are now saying this is the kind of service I need in order to meet the client's need, and doing it in a way that is not full of hatred or rage. That is evidence... It allows us to provide a service which begins to unpack the bureaucratic, hierarchical experience everyone has had in the last 6 years, or in their own training, the last 20 or 40 years. So it is turning the organisation, if not on its head, at least on its side.”

And BWMP: “The result has been to allow house managers to articulate their needs rather than the Centre imposing directives. But without the managers becoming barons dictating to the Centre. Rather, everybody is organising around one issue: what residents and community at large might want. So it

allows people to give service to each other rather than telling them what to do. Furthermore, there is now a clear notion of an end: when each house can articulate what it is doing for residents and why, can hold dilemmas and paradoxes.”

4. Lastly, PJB has taken on board the Lacanian Plus-one position of one who is both inside and outside a workgroup at the same time, not part of it, but called upon by each, developed by Lacan to prevent a group from getting bogged down in non-work problems. DN: “...this “orthogonal” position that he talks about. And that’s where I want him, to be quite honest, otherwise I’m not learning, I just get stuck in dependency, and that’s not why I’m doing this job”.

WHO/M

We saw that DN started off with a question about the residents - and if he wondered what they might want from his organisation, it was only because PJB was addressing both DN and these residents that he could intimate to DN that in their very inarticulacy they also addressed him with a “what do you want from us?” This is the Lacanian Che Vuoi? with which the client is brought back to his own role and responsibilities.

Inevitably the consultant will embody aspects of this question, like an analyst carrying transference, and it is part of his task to help find the answer, precisely by making clear to whom the question is really addressed.

A large part of the work concerned this bringing into sharper focus of who should be talking to whom, as well as delineating the concerns of the ultimate addressee for all the workers: the residents.^{xix}

WHY

The “Why” is the one question which is kept open throughout, first of all for the reason already mentioned, namely that only the foregoing can begin to answer it. For PJB, it corresponds to relational strategy, a position from which to maximise value to the client, keeping the organisation on its toes. For Lacan it is what keeps the unconscious open for as long as the question remains. It is also the realm of desire, that which can be articulated (in the three questions preceding) but not stated. As desire, it is necessarily linked to an “absolute condition” on the part of the individual or organisation, a condition which corresponds to an ethical position. This is the point of no compromise, the point at which policy is firm, even though compromise is desirable at the level of strategy and tactics. PJB and DN could negotiate the details of implementation but not the desirability of the QAG's once they were formulated as the best way forward.

Being relational, however, meant that the idea of QAG was not something imposed ready made. On the contrary, it was born out of the encounter of at least two desires, PJB’s and DN’s. Likewise, at the level of the houses, the end of the process was defined as a horizon, one which began when managers could begin to articulate why they were doing what they were for the residents. Paradoxically, it was only from a position of lack and ignorance that they could come to arrive at a sense of identity.

Part II - Clinical commentary.

In part I, mention has already been made of certain aspects of the transference. Its handling took place in the context of the client's demand (to clarify the complexity of the case) insofar as this latter was confronted with the desire of the consultant: for the client to confront the nature of the clinic and his role in it. Unlike an analyst's, however, this desire could not remain enigmatic, nor did the consultant wish to keep the role of Other in the transference into which he had been put. If in analysis, the client has to produce and organise his own knowledge only, the consultant is often bound to supply what is lacking. Thus, while PJB could be an analyst insofar as he worked on specific symptoms of DN like his relation to his leadership position, in relation to the organisation and its programme of change, he could only be a consultant, that is, someone who responds to demand with certain suggestions. It is important to be clear about this difference. The consultant, however, approximates to the position of analyst, which is here taken as paradigmatic of maximum benefit to the client, when, like PJB, he proceeds from his own ignorance.^{xx}

In the beginning of the treatment, PJB supported the demand by allowing an extensive elaboration of the various symptoms. He acted analytically by intervening according to the logic of the material presented, especially with respect to the structure of the organisation insofar as it was imaginary, imposed, not in harmony with the underlying problematic. At the personal level, however, the novelty of the approach, language and its "force de frappe" were such that, had it not been for BWMP who implicitly stood guarantee, PJB might have lost the client. As this did not happen, it consolidated the transference instead.

The work demonstrated the Lacanian direction of "crossing the plane of identification", that is, it allowed DN to separate from his "parental" figures, the two authorities, and focus on the work instead, that is, drive activity. But this activity followed a blueprint which was elaborated in relation to certain unquestioned assumptions about the clinic. Nor could it be otherwise. For in order to have a "decided desire" one has to "cross the fantasy" first, and it was seen in part I that the work so far had only brought DN to this threshold, which, as in many therapeutic analyses, concerned with reconciling the client with his being, or lifting certain symptoms in a state of urgency, was as far as it was suitable to go.

What is the relation between the "clinic" of PJB's practice and the "clinic" as object of the organisation intervened on? It seems that the question of what the latter might be or ought to be, the articulation of this vision, directly influences the way of working, insofar as new concepts are brought in which remodel the work processes. This is saying with Lacan that desire, the consultant's desire is equivalent to the twists and turns of its striving. PJB's present practice reformulates previous diagrams to take account of this "ethic" of being centered on the desire of the ultimate clients, the residents in the case of WFSHC. The other Lacanian formula also applies here, that desire is equivalent to its interpretation. In both cases, one can only evaluate by means of the effects and results produced. In this case the result has been that everybody has been set to work, both to work-through and to build.

Perhaps it was a fine line for DN and the other managers between feeling paralysed when hearing a demand that they should know^{xxi}: being alienated in frustration - "I could know as much as I imagine the other knows"; and the galvanising sense that the

other doesn't know either, so that it is all right to be guided by one's desire: castration.^{xxii} To some extent it is inevitable in consulting that the client realises something of the consultant's desire without always knowing if it corresponds to their own. But such a phase of alienation was followed by one of separation which restored the balance.

To what extent can this practice be said to follow the logic of the signifier characteristic of analysis? This depends to what extent one takes a single person in the organisation rather than WFSHC itself as client. For this latter, as an instance of master discourse, cannot be "analysed", turned into a version of the analytic discourse. But a single subject's relation to the organisation insofar as it is structure, and thus unconscious at some point, can be both hystericised and analysed. This happened to DN, whose relation to the master discourse was analysed to the point where he could move from impotence to impossibility, meaning take on a role he did not need to be identified to.

In one sense, this practice did follow such a logic, even if not like an analyst. For it teased out the implications of conceptualising the organisation as a structure made up of conversations, even if these are the imperatives of the master discourse.

The chief issue for PJB was: if the consultant differs from the analyst in that the setting and the nature of the demand does not allow him not to respond to it, how does he nevertheless keep a position from which to parenthesise^{xxiii} and orthogonalise^{xxiv} his response, so that it is not suggestion? (Of course we exclude here the kind of consultancy in which specialist, pre-existing knowledge is bought by the client).

Transference is an analysis of suggestion, quoting Lacan. This means that the client always interprets more than the consultant, on the basis that suggestion is whatever is heard as coming from the Other, and that interpretation here follows on the irreducible equivocation of whatever is said. This is possible because the client himself does not confuse his demand (to get something, love, knowledge, power) with his desire. The consultant, however, if he is lucky enough to be put in that position of Other, can also analyse the transference, as a way of bringing into focus what is brought forth in it, its object. Analysis of the transference, without which no analysis can end, is an antidote to alienation and a prelude to separation, which allows the client to redefine his necessary relation to his object, and therewith his own desire.

If analysis of suggestion means taking what is said with a pinch of salt where necessary, as DN was perfectly capable of doing, what, in consulting, is analysing the transference? In one sense, it is distinguishing those solutions elaborated by the client as a way of being loved or thought well off, from those that truly involve the problematic of his own desire within the organisation. PJB seems to have done this with DN in relation to leadership issues on the one hand, and of course with the organisation on the other by sustaining DN's desire, (as well as his own), in relation to the real object or client, the residents, as something problematic. There PJB can be said to have followed his use of the concept "orthogonality".

Another way of asking this first question is: how can one consult when one is selling a relation to a problematic rather than a solution? How does one sell knowledge which is still to be invented?^{xxv}

The second question concerned the detail of the QAG process and the step-by-step diagram generally: how did PJB, BWMP and DN move from step to step with the organisation? What were the tactics? A specific question of Alan and Barry: at what point did BWMP and DN agree on a diagnosis?

I would say, other than that I have no idea, that the question of tactics concerns seizing the right moment to intervene, that it is identical to logical timing. This timing is only available in as much as the strategy has been articulated which is often only *après coup*. In fact it was DN's fantasy, as he said, that the opposite was the case, that the key process was already waiting in PJB's head, fully armed like Athene, just waiting for the "right moment". That is of course a completely classical definition of transference as a subject supposed of ready knowledge. The parturition of this knowledge takes rather longer, of course, and one wonders here who is Socrates and who Diotima, not to forget the others, like Julia who came up with the name^{xxvi}. Perhaps it is more important to bear in mind that strategy is equivalent to the handling of the transference and to that extent the only timing that matters in a case like this, is that the birth of the right process for the organisation, QAG, which inevitably will bear more or less resemblance to the strategy already embodying PJB's desire, the step-by-step diagram, that this birth is delivered within the time imposed by the real constraints, resources, environment, and people most of all, which DN has care of. It can happen all too easily that someone is blown off the field before the end because any one of these factors did not enter the strategic vision.

In the final analysis, the fact that PJB could say the "right thing at the right time" as far as the organisation was concerned was more important than DN feeling pressurised.

To put it another way, the question is how a certain knowledge was produced for and by DN and how he deployed it within the organisation. More important than the moment in which DN authorised himself to act is the fact that certain steps allowed him to do so. These steps are best known to DN and PJB at present. But one would be right in saying that the very first step is the agreement on how the diagnosis should be formulated, the "time to see" of Lacan's logical time. What other steps can one identify between diagnosis and the decision to restructure? The first account had: (i) negotiating the problematic, (ii) getting stuck in, and (iii) DN moving away from PJB got on with it for himself.

The third, related question, for me, was: how does an organisation incorporate dilemmas and problems in virtue of which it implements its strategies, its way of working, the way an organism in biology incorporates that bit of real, of environment, of pain, like hunger, in virtue of which it can find its way around in this environment and constitute its drive? In other words, how did WFSHC originally constitute its object, the (person with) "special needs", and how has this changed? What is needed to bring this object into such a view that one can begin to separate from it in order to redefine it? I think this is BWMP's concern too.

In all this it is important to say the same thing in a different (Lacanian) way because only then can one arrive at a degree of certainty.

Postscript

DN, in his comments on my text, is quite right about what I left out. Some of these were because they were not discussed in the original interview (for example the triangle within the senior management team). Then, in Part I, the interview was condensed in order to transmit the essential elements of the story. Part II is a very selective commentary supported by this story. My assumptions, in other words what I didn't say, also derive from taking PJB as the primary audience, i.e. one who already knows certain things. He has made many of these explicit in his formulations, for example that the direction of his own desire is towards the clinic, or that he works

from ignorance (also struggling with new terms) cf. the position of the fool. For this reason too, PJB's own struggles with the case are less well represented. As for BWMP's comments in the interview, they often overlap with DN's with respect to the focus I have used, and where this was the case, I have preferred to let DN speak. I apologise, however, for not making more explicit his role in the "triadic transference", as well as his crucial interventions with the House Managers in the case.

The Glossary, which attempts to make explicit the links between analytic and consulting activity, already implicit in Parts I and II, has been fleshed out by Philip and I as an *après coup*.

A more thorough mapping of PJB's use of concepts was projected as a Part III, but has since been partially supplied in endnotes by PJB. From these endnotes, something of the feeling of being paralysed can be gathered, and in retrospect, leaving these out of Parts I and II reflects something of my part in supporting a separation between these concepts, insofar as they functioned as master signifiers, and PJB's practice. Thus, although not much has been said about PJB's feelings in this case, perhaps something of the manner in which PJB has put his position in question has come through.

Lastly, a specific reply to BWMP's question about why the commentary said little about the staff or residents: because it seemed to me that the question of the residents, as a problematic and a focus, was implicit in everything done and discussed, but that the bulk of the work was in clearing the ground and establishing the basic structures in which this problematic could find its permanent "home".

Appendix – Process Evaluation & Critical Review

Aim:

To evaluate Philip's interventions in organisations and how this clarifies issues around the clinic. Three points:

- Gather battle stories
- test diagrams
- use critical review for new dialogues with clients.

Framework:

My research on how PJB and BWMP are handling case of WFSHC.

Hypotheses tested for in interview about interventions:

1. Is there rectification in relation to real?
2. Is there transference to work produced?
3. Relation between start and end? Logic?
4. What is effect of diagrams?
5. Working together - problems?

Interview I: Barry Palmer.

(First registration of effects of PJB)

Background.

MdR I find myself in position of fool because I am not sure exactly what I expect to find, nor what questions are best in order to find it. Hence these questions will not have straight and easy answers, and I may have to improvise along the way. But all concern the effects that PJB's work have, in the specific context of WFSHC, both on your own practice and on the organisation in question.

How would you sum up the challenge of the case?

BWMP I think the challenge is to evolve with the staff of the consortium, a way of organising it as an outfit which is always open to the question of what do these various particular residents need, require, want, so that while in practice, it will in some sense always be institutionalised, that is always provisional, allowing, in the minds of staff and the way it functions, a sensitivity to what these people really need, want, require, I'm not sure what the right word is, not demand, obviously.

MdR Can we isolate a beginning, middle and end in this case, even if on-going?

BWMP What, of that process? How will we know when we've got there?

MdR yes.

BWMP The beginning was before I was....I knew David N. long before PJB did, even in a previous job, before he became CEO. David took over when previous director was fired for various irregularities. ..He said he wanted consultancy, and I gave him Philip's name along with a list of other people. He asked for Philip rather than any of the others because that would have been a very different story. The beginning was what was in many ways a pretty difficult situation for the organisation and the director, partly because of the bureaucratic way it was run, etc. So it starts from that. PJB did a lot of work before I was on the scene...

MdR OK

BWMP I'm not finished yet..

MdR No, this is already my next question. Sorry I have to put this in Lacanian terms...

BWMP I'll struggle with that.

MdR What we call response to demand. How did David first come to you?

BWMP To me? right back in the beginning?

MdR Regarding..

BWMP On this particular project?

MdR Yes

BWMP I'm not absolutely sure. The way I put the story together now is, once he became CEO of this outfit, we had conversations about..what the hell is life like for people with learning difficulties and other elderly infirm people and those with mental illness, and somehow how on earth was the system we'd inherited going to meet with that imponderable question, and somewhere in all that, he said he wasn't going to make it without some kind of external support, and was there someone I could suggest? And I suggested some people who, would have been alright from a process

point of view, but they wouldn't have been equal to the organisational complexity of it, and I think Philip was the only one who would. Does that answer your question?

MdR Yes. I thought I heard PJB say once that you rather than David called him in, but I could have misunderstood.

BWMP You probably did. I could turn up a piece of paper where I said to David, well there are these people, PJB will be good on this, Joanna L good on that, and I was probably nudging him towards Philip but it is a choice which David made.

MdR What did David want you to do and what Philip?

BWMP With me it's been...I've been for him a kind of listening post where in his experience of doing the job he needed somebody that he can talk to, and say, hey I'm having a terrible time, I'm in despair, whatever is happening, we could do some work on that. With PJB he was clearly wanting to look at the organisational set-up, and the various dilemmas he was confronted with. He rightly didn't ask me to do that, I would have been unable to, and I think it would have been muddled with the role I already had.

MdR What paradigms or nosography were used in diagnosis of problems?

BWMP Several things. Part of his strategy was certainly to hear from the headquarters, the centre, the staff, what were the dilemmas in running this organisation, the tension between maintaining some kind of institutional orderliness and being responsive to the needs of the client and that kind of thing. So the analysis of dilemmas which led to a concept that certainly DN got hold of, and other staff in varying degrees, of how did you manage to live with those dilemmas rather than coming up with solutions that foreclosed on them, and made them into an either or. He also did some work which is outside my whole competence really, the financial systems of the organisation, for example it seemed to be quite a turning point when he pointed out that although there were seventeen houses and so many thousands of pounds being spent they tended to think that you could just divide the total by seventeen and that's what the houses cost, by taking their accounts away and rejigging them, it turned out that some kinds of work were much more expensive than others and that the whole thing really, to work out what it was really costing, taking account of different people, you needed a more sophisticated accounting system than what they got and they couldn't really put realistic prices to what people had paid for the residents, so there was quite an elaborate financing thing ¹.

He also had a strategy around how you run an organisation in terms of information required, and how they were trying in effect to run an organisation with very little knowledge of what was actually happening, so he looked at the way he was using information technology to provide information. This is very much a middle stage, they are installing IT systems through people PJB knows, eventually any manager will be able to throw up on screen a whole lot of information, which at present nobody has, they are running in the dark. Another part of the strategy was to, and I'm as much on receiving as on giving end of all this, quite critical strategy for me, in distinguishing between the organisation in hierarchical terms, who is accountable to whom for what, which in itself he did tackle in a way which is not usual as far as I am concerned, you know these family tree things, these went outside what would normally be called the boundary of the organisation into the local authority and the health authority, so he was very clearly treating the consortium as an imaginary

¹ Rectification in relation to the Real...

construct, and not as if it was somehow there, and it was the edge of what we had to look at, so on the one hand the hierarchical level of accountability, but to distinguish that from what he calls the network of conversations, but the pattern of encounters and meetings between people through which the organisation is actually steered then and in the longer term. He was working with DN and his colleagues in workshops to sort of map out, not the hierarchical thing which in some ways is quite easy to do, but also the, which is rather different, who actually has to talk to whom about what for the thing to function.

MdR Rather complex..

BWMP ..it is, but to have the two seems to me to be very profound and something I wasn't familiar with. These were the initials cuts which he made.

The other thing that he seemed to bring in was the concept of what might be the trajectory of someone with learning disability through the organisation. Somebody might come into the house and get looked after, but how would you envisage some process by which they would move to some greater control over their lives, and organise it so that they were able to develop, to migrate through the system to whatever point they were able to achieve or arrive at².

MdR You've already answered some other questions in the process, like how did PJB (re-)define any framework or setting? Did he set any new goals? time-spans, even a new blueprint?

BWMP Yes, there is the goal of the relational organisation, as responsive to the desire, or whatever demands are articulated. So it becomes a kind of objective, not just in time, but at any moment of a process to keep a responsiveness. It became, in terms of a number of milestones for the evolution of the organisation which PJB clearly did have some sense of timing about, some sense of time pressure, although I think David and other people have had to say, well hold on a bit, we need more time to bring people through this than you are allowing for, so there has been some tension between the pressure of PJB who sees what the milestones are, and the staff who are there and have to deal with all sorts of trouble along the way. But the milestones have to do with the idea of operational, functional and relational ways of looking at an organisation, a kind of step by step process. I don't know about David, but for me that is the fundamental map in this project, it seems to me to be the most critical concept.

MdR Any other concepts?

BWMP Well some I haven't really mastered, as you know PJB has quite an array of things, some I hear and understand as he tells me about them, but I couldn't really teach them back to you, but this kind of step process I have been using in my own work, so it has engaged with the situation very profoundly.

MdR Still regarding the beginning of this process? Did you think he excluded anything important? Do you think so now?

BWMP Difficult to say, but that something about timing does represent something of an omission, and I probably was at the time thinking to myself, it is OK for Philip to see his way through this conceptually, but he doesn't seem to be giving credence to what it is like for David N. trying to move a lot of people who are uncertain about their jobs and not understanding what he's trying to do moving along this road. But I'm not at all sure, if that is a gap in his thinking, he may have understood perfectly well, but I did have a sense of strain about that, which has led, I

² Problem of Ideal..

think, to David tending to keep PJB a bit more at arms-length³, as though he couldn't cope with any more thinking until he'd got the show a bit more on the road where it is.

MdR Could you tell me something about the way, David, you and Philip formulated the main problem, the sense of being stuck? I ask because the way it is formulated absolutely determines the question of how one will end.

BWMP I do, one of the things I puzzle over is this notion of an organisation which is responsive to people with disabilities, elderly and infirm people, I partly think yeah that is important, how do we intuit or recognise what is possible, with these people, and sometimes I think is there some kind of tacit idealism in all this, is it, it may sound a bit crazy. It's alright sitting in the offices in Walthamstow high street saying this, but I have been into the houses and met some of the residents, and when you actually do, you think golly, we are dealing with people who, mentally infirm, lying in bed, seem to be batty, or not compos mentis, and you think of them migrating to greater self-determination, there is a gap. My mind wanders round this bit, to get an adequate formulation of it, because what you seem to be doing is, you're not just meeting these people in isolation, but in the context of what society is able to do for people like this. It is very curtailed. I don't know, therefore, whether something has been missed out here or not.

MdR What you have described here is the key problem of what the idea of a clinic might be.

BWMP Yes. You could say that for a fully articulate person who goes into a psychiatric clinic, or a young person going into Just Ask, - I'm fully aware that it is naive to say tell me what you want and we will see if we can do it, it's not that people can put it out there and this what they are, and therefore in a sense there's no difficulty for someone who's got Down's syndrome, or a very limited vocabulary, not at all, because a baby in a way you have to intuit what they want...

MdR Yes, a key factor, that you have to interpret on behalf of those who can't speak for themselves.

BWMP Yes, and there's a special difficulty; with the infant you can believe in a developmental process whereby if they get it right they can become adults, but with the elderly and mentally infirm people I put an acute question to that because if you talk to staff you see the most you can hope for is to arrest confusion and disability, but they are dying, and everything is limited by the organic processes involved. So I feel positive about this whole angle but I also wonder what we're doing.

MdR Talking of the process, the construction of the case. How do you describe the process you are engaged in? How would you describe Philip's process and his own idea of it?

What is your idea of consulting? How would you define his?

What differences between you are most important?

Sorry this is too vague and general, let us try again: Any views on PJB's aims and methods ie: strategy, policy, tactics?

BWMP By tactics, do you mean if I walked round with a video camera, what would I see him doing? The pragmatics of consulting? I haven't been there a lot of the time, but my perception is that he's worked by setting up quite long conversations with relevant people, interviews, with the key managing group of WF, he hasn't gone

³ Master, not analyst...

out to meet clients or staff in houses, he's worked with the group in headquarters, 23a High street, which is where the director is, and he's worked through conversations with them which he has then ploughed back to them with quite technical notes on where they've got to, and the concepts that have emerged. There was quite a big input of that at the beginning with longer gaps now. There's the clarifying in principle of what will happen once one gets through these various milestones. And then going back to listen to how it's going. Sounds very sort of forthright, though it isn't really. Plus setting up some technical work on the financial and computer side of it all. This has been very critical for the whole thing.

MdR What explicit assumptions did you both make? Did you change any as you went along? Could you say what roles PJB has taken on, where he has been speaking from (in the name of what)?

BWMP Quite a distinctive one. I guess you're ready to allow for my transference onto Philip and my admiration for what he does, but my perception is, if I can put it negatively first, he's certainly not working from the kind of consultancy base which says I or we know how organisations ought to be run, here's something to install, he has got some quite clear notions about what will be necessary to be effective, but it seems to me he's working from a position which is quite open, to the complexities the people within it are immersed in, and to try and articulate those and to try and give back a way of understanding what they are about. I take this to be the position of the analyst in the economy of discourses, predominantly. Although I guess, I and certain others will be taking a certain amount on trust, he does speak, he inevitably is made into a guru in some degree, he knows and can tell us⁴. In the meetings I've been in, it does seem to me that he's working very interpretatively with what people are saying is going on, not saying what they ought to be doing next. I'm quite struck by ... I mean the whole way the organisation is going, certainly for me, for David, does raise questions about whether some of the staff are going to be able to work in the way they will be asked to. The whole concept is changing. He doesn't, I haven't heard him move into the domain of saying we have to get rid of him or her. I think he's always working round what are, ..insofar as we are saying so and so is a problem, we haven't understood something and that somehow if we could unlock how things are for this person then they might themselves find a way of responding to the pressures on them. Does it make any sense?

MdR Certainly. How were power and authority situated in case? Who was seen as having knowledge? Has this changed?

BWMP I suppose really that is what we are intervening on in part, the question where knowledge and authority is situated. This whole linguistic thing about let's not call it HQ, let's call it no 23a is trying to represent in a way which is not just cosmetic, it is an endeavour to move from a position where there is a director, progressively moving, to giving, to working with the knowledge and authority of the managers of the houses. A very mixed bag actually, some are very gifted others are limited. We are actually allowing them to speak and people at HQ are actually getting hold of them. I think that have changed quite radically in fact, I think HQ is giving a lot of credence to what the people in the houses are saying, so it has shifted that. And I guess the challenge at the moment is that it could just become a shift of power onto the barons, they will have their little empires and dictate to the centre. The question is how do you develop a new ethos in which they and the people at HQ are all working

⁴ One who knows... but who is supposed to?

towards the question of the residents, and indeed what the community, not the residents as individuals I don't think but it's something more diffuse than that, what the community at large and the residents want. If I can just add to that, we tend to think of the people in the centre, the house managers, the residents, of course there is another component to that, which is the staff in the houses, not managers but the care staff as they are called. The care staff have certainly felt that they were left out of this process, the house managers are now being listened to but what about them? So there is a question about what part they have in this whole process, which seems to be a current question to me.

MdR Yes, this is a perennial complaint of nursing staff in this type of organisation.

BWMP Yes, a lot of them are ex-nurses as well as "nursing" staff.

To add to this, certainly I didn't see this as clearly, I don't know whether Philip did either, we tended to work as saying here is the Consortium, this was the organisation, there was David, the CEO, and treating as a rather secondary subplot the fact that a lot of people were employed either by the local authority or the local health authority, they were not directly on the payroll of the Consortium in those cases. And when I go into the houses I realise the Consortium is not the world as far as they are concerned, it's there, but there's this funny ambiguity that they are actually employed by the Health service or the local authority. And that looms quite large for some of the staff and indeed the health authority in particular I think, is quite a, is very much the medical world. To give you an example, I interviewed the staff in a house recently which has four men as residents, all of whom have a history of violence of one kind or another, and I only discovered very late in the day, that neither the house manager, nor the staff, nor David himself, had been told what the history of this man was. They wouldn't tell them because of medical confidentiality. So there they are running this house with four men, two of whom could probably have been in Broadmoor, and now collected by this system. So they have at some stage been deemed to have been very dangerous men indeed. It has taken me a long time to realise how powerful some of the institutional influences are on the people the consortium is dealing with. There is a transfer happening as you may know, staff are being progressively transferred to the Consortium. So we have sometimes supposed that things will move in ways in which it is not so likely that they will move until that's been dealt with.

MdR What explicit assumptions did you both make? Did you change any as you went along?

BWMP That was one of them, for me. I could guess it was for Philip, I don't know. I was looking through my file, and the very first document he produced for them has some reference to the management of local health authority, it wasn't ever excluded, but it's the way these things are borne in on you that makes a difference. I don't know off-hand.

MdR No, it is not a fair question perhaps.

BWMP Yes, it might surface along the way. There's this concept of the clinic, Philip wasn't speaking in those terms when we started, so there has been an evolution, but probably not just through this project, through a number of things he's been doing in parallel, Just Ask, etc. So I guess the notion of how to formulate that end state has evolved as we've gone along.

MdR A good way of working, allowing for hypotheses to change. On the question of concepts, master concepts, which can take the form of diagrams, like the step

diagram, have you found other things fruitful, helpful? And generally, as a question of technique perhaps, what do you think of the use of diagrams?

BWMP It seems to me that the diagrams he works with enable him to get a kind of take on the situation very quickly, it's like having a set of maps, something that will give us a way of reading the situation. I certainly find that working with him on it, if he gives me the diagram complete, I'm left struggling, because what's written on it doesn't actually say enough, there seems to be more meaning in it than is explicit⁵. So I think he works with diagrams most effectively when he actually involves them in the conversation. When he takes me through a folder of diagrams I do,.. a lot of energy is going into simply understanding the map rather than the situation the map is supposed to help with, it's like looking at the A-Z and spending all your time trying to read the streets, work out which is North, rather than finding out how to get to CharingX or whatever. So I do think that the diagrams have a meaning which Philip invests in them which is never wholly there in what is written in the oblongs, or whatever. My experience has been that the sessions in which I have spent time struggling to understand the diagrams don't stick with me very much, and next time we come round to it I've lost it again, partly because he has moved on. But the other thing is that at other times in other situations I can find myself using that way of thinking, something about the shape of it, gets into one's thinking⁶, and you can be over-literal in trying to read the street names rather than the sense of where it's going, North South, etc. I think the shape of many of them is "right".

.....

[Some parts lost. Resuming somewhere in response to question: What is most important decision you think either of you had to make in process?]

....

BWMP ...I'm saying that the decision to characterise these processes in terms of QAGs has in turn generated a whole lot of work which has made a difference to the organisation and in the first stage around these guarantees between the HQ and the houses. I think we have under-estimated how long it would take for that phase to work, because I did some work recently and suddenly realised they were still hammering out these agreements, which were supposed to have been done by March, and this is still happening. It's as much the people at HQ who have to get their heads around that as the managers. But then it does seem to be an important decision beyond that which I think is taking shape, not a very clear shape yet, what this will then guarantee to the residents, the QAG III level, and how the houses will make explicit what it is that they are doing for the residents. And it seemed to me a concept which I haven't named before which I picked up is that while you work at one level you are always looking at one ahead, you don't just get bogged down in QAG II, and go onto what the houses are for later, otherwise they get very rigid, instead you are always looking at the next place down the road.

MdR Yes, this is new to me too.

BWMP Example. Philip knows I have been consulting to a primary School, and a very early bit of work was simply to work out what was going to be the job of the school office, and the school secretary and the finance officer. In one sense it was very nuts and boltsy, but I had picked up from the WF work that they would have

⁵ Mathemes are senseless...

⁶ ...but can be transmitted

been only too happy for me to have come back with job descriptions saying this is what you have to do in the light from what you've told me, but I was trying to hold onto the question of what kind of a school do you want, what do you want to do for these children and their families. And in the light of that can we put together a flexible notion of the school office which will always be servicing that process, rather than becoming a little empire which the school secretary sort of runs, a little baronessry, which I think they had had a past history of, and I think that is what consultancy is all about. So the business of trying to look back at what you are trying to do now from further on seems to me to be a very powerful notion.

MdR Yes, it seems to tie in with the "relational" horizon, rather than "positional" closure.

BWMP That's right, yes, it's a horizon, that's a good metaphor, you never reach it.

MdR What are the issues around one client, two consultants? Where is transference? Benefits and drawbacks?

BWMP Yes it is an issue. David's transference on me, his confidence in me, made it possible for him to bring Philip in, and that has changed a bit as time has gone by, but certainly it was Philip's concept that I was somehow holding the transference, that has been a bit complicated at times, as though David and I would go on having these sort of one to one discussions, and Philip would be left out of that. So in fact we've worked quite hard on faxing or posting any documentation which either of us have used with David to each other and letting David know we're doing that, keeping a kind of openness in the information system. I suppose I have been wondering whether the idea of a quasi counselling session with me really makes sense in the way it is evolving, seeming to lapse without either me or David saying let's stop doing this, but it seems to be tapering off. There was a point where David asked me to do a bit of work, which was to meet with him and the three service managers in HQ who deal directly with the house managers as consultants and quality inspectors as well. And there was all sorts of trouble between David and them, symptomatic of the changes in the organisation. I said thanks for asking me, I want to consult Philip about whether from our point of view as consultants we would advise you that that was the best way to proceed. David was a bit put out by this really, he'd hoped I'd just do it. In fact we did something different, it didn't happen. So we have been somehow trying to manage. It has been quite a tricky interface, without ever blowing up. I think David saw the point of the whole thing.

MdR I ask this to get at how you and PJB establish which is the point of intervention in the organisation? It is probably always point from which demand is issued, David in this case, and various key staff.

BWMP Yes.

MdR So the question is, between the two of you, who intervenes where.

BWMP There is an area where it is clear enough, because some of the things which David asked me to do, tactical rather than strategic, is to interview the people in one house, which I did last month, to facilitate the discussion between them and their house manager, which seemed to be wholly within the larger strategy. That was fine. But some of the things around David are more ambiguous, like the example mentioned earlier, where I didn't do what he wanted. There are definite potentialities for splittings and projections.

MdR Still on this question of process, what can you say of Philip's style?
Consensual or confrontational?

BWMP I think he has a very interesting combination of a lot of charm with the ability, which is not confrontational exactly, to say things to people which are pretty confrontational, not emotionally, but in terms of some kind of challenge or reality held up to people. So sometimes I have sat in meetings and thought, golly I don't think I would have said that, but I think it is OK because, although someone might be disconfirmed in some way, I think they would seldom feel he was having a go at them in some personal manner. That's one thing, and then there's the level of intellectual demand, which you are well aware of, he does cope with people not quite understanding what he's saying. But also going over it again and again, so I think the effect of that is that people get hold of the shape of something even though they are bewildered a lot by the actual sentences.

MdR What form do interventions take? Normally conversations, but is there at any point something analogous to an analytic interpretation?

BWMP I have only been in two meetings with Philip and the Consortium so I don't have a lot to go on really. He and I had a meeting with David lasting three hours, of the type how is it going David, and David was describing what was making progress and where he was stuck, what was problematical for him. Philip and I mainly listened, but then there was a point where David said, well let us take these various things you've described as symptomatic of what is going on in the organisation and we did then come up with a reading of what this might signify, with David saying that's probably right, I'm not sure about that. But I wouldn't say that if you played the whole thing on video you could say: this is the point where the interpretation is made, in a set piece kind of way, the process was an interpretative one from what was deemed to be symptomatic rather than just random. The notion of the symptom was very prominent in Philip's work, and I have picked this up and used it elsewhere. When you construe things as a symptom you are faced with questions about what is the body where it is located, or the group, or organisation or society or what. So it is quite an open-ended way of working, and good because people understand it. It is a metaphor you can work with, when you think you understand something and maybe you don't.

MdR Moving on to my own notion of an end, the cuts and results, indeed the effects of intervention: was there any explicit feedback or review mechanism?

Or was the project, the task so well-defined at the start in terms of its expectations that this was more or less automatic, self-evident?

BWMP Well, the feedback mechanisms are not as formal as what you call mechanisms, but I do think that there was generated quite a lot of information about how house managers are changing their behaviour, and how particular procedures are getting installed and are beginning to work, how David in particular is thinking about where the whole set-up is moving. So Philip and I are hearing a lot of indicators about changes in thinking and how things are being done differently in the organisation. And I would be very surprised if DN wasn't hearing similar things and thinking we haven't got a long way to go yet. Quite what will count as an end is an interesting question, and no doubt there will be one. It won't be when we have reached a fully relational set up because that would mean you have reached the horizon. But we haven't reached that paradox either, there is more work to be done before we can realise that analysis can go on forever.

MdR Could you pinpoint any changes resulting from PJB's intervention: in structure (constitution, groupings, power balance, distribution of responsibilities) or functions (positions, tasks)?

BWMP There are certainly some things that are constitutionally different. I haven't mentioned the position of the trustees, the directors who employ David and the staff. Through consultation with Philip, David has got the trustees to agree to a new constitution. This does include other representation among the trustees than the people there to begin with. The Consortium was set up by local and health authorities to manage houses for their clientele. It is now moving in a direction of greater autonomy with representation from the community at large, from the houses, the residents, and Philip has provided the constitution for that. That level had to change otherwise things would have ground to a halt.

There is a re-definition of roles in the 23a grouping as well, assuming that they do get the IT system installed as well. So quite a lot of radical change. Rather vague but...

MdR No, no. What about his effect on various departments? Personnel, Housing, Care, Data management.

BWMP I'm pausing because I don't know exactly what in the course of this has been due to Philip talking directly to David and how much he might have been working towards anyway. My perception is that there is quite a radical redefinition of roles, in central services, personnel, service managers to the houses, the finance dept, in which they don't tell house managers what to do but what kind of service they want. The finance manager for example, had a lot of trouble with us, I don't know how much he is moving, but I was there when he was supposed to be offering guarantees to the house managers about the financial services they could count on from him, and it seemed that in practice he couldn't guarantee them very much, and saying you have to trust us, we're doing our best, we have a lot of difficulties, which seemed really not to represent very much change. The personnel manager on the other hand seems to have fully got hold of the idea and I've heard her working with house managers and she is very consultative, giving clear guarantees of what they can expect and is prepared to be taken to task if her department doesn't deliver. So the change moves at different speeds according to capacity of staff to move their heads to a different place. Then there is the question of the deputy manager of the whole set up, who seems to be totally stuck and may well leave. She is not really able to move into another mode. Big turbulence around this.

MdR. I take it that the volume of work taken on or achieved, the number of conversations among staff has increased.

BWMP Yes number and quality... Can I just add something. I interviewed all the house managers with the brief to find out what they wanted from HQ. My strong impression from most of them was that they didn't have much to ask for, but the reason was that they thought there was no point in asking, because there was no money anyway, so what was the point in asking for more staff or a dishwasher or a fan or anything. In the odd cases where people said this is what we have to have, this is what we want, HQ has said OK you have to have it and produced money and staff coverage. So there is another shift. This is quite frightening for David because he thinks if they really get hold of this idea they will come in with huge demands which he can't meet.

MdR. Classic.

BWMP Philip has already said to him and to me that if they move beyond a certain point they are going to have to find other funding, or else they will come up against a stopper in working with the local health authority. There is a kind of business, entrepreneurial philosophy coming into view here.

MdR. Any striking changes in attitudes, in morale and staff relations, perhaps resistances to idea that their job is being rewritten somewhere else without their being consulted?

BWMP My impression is that David feels that something very important is happening, so his sense of morale, his optimism is being enhanced, as is his sense of direction, by this whole process. I do also think that he is pretty exhausted. It is making enormous demands on him. Very hard pressed, because there are always terrible crises blowing up, something awful happening somewhere, all pretty gruelling for him. There's three people, the service managers, who are the main consultant, .. have a curious dual role. On the one hand there are the rules they have to keep, the statutory requirements, they are inspectors, but they are also advisors to the houses. They are the people I was at one point being roped in to see if I could sort something out. But they last seemed in pretty good nick as if they feel there is a real job here. What is difficult for them is that as house managers are given more authority they have got less immediate hands on opportunity of doing what they, they're having to shift from: I know how to run houses because I've done it in the past, to giving authority to the house managers to run the houses. Shift from being an expert to someone who has to advise, nurture, etc, while house manager can make decision at end of the day that they may not agree with.

It is not clear to me yet whether all three of them will find this tenable. It is quite a learning challenge for them. The house managers neither of us deal much with but I think some are feeling empowered and are picking themselves up. In my consulting work in general I find you get an important take on the organisation in the way you are dealt with yourself, what it is like walking into reception, etc. And I must say it is a nice place to go into. The way the staff talk to each other, offer coffee, etc. But I can't compare that with how it was before.

MdR David has had to rise to a challenge. It was a test of leadership. Have you or Philip had an effect on framework or environment in which David has to work, or rather on his own control over it?

BWMP In what sort of way?

MdR Things that are normally taken as beyond one's control, in relation to leadership issues, do you think David feels more "empowered", more able to shape direction?

BWMP I can give you an example of what David has started doing. The houses which are owned by housing associations, remember this is quite a complex situation, the housing associations seem to be pretty uninterested in what the houses are doing, when water is pouring through the ceiling somewhere, they don't seem to be really sensitive to what is going on and what services they might need, David has said that they needed to be managed rather than taken as a given, treated as part of the outside world you have to put up with. Maybe that will be someone's full time job. So I do see David pushing out into domains in which he could have some influence. But I have no idea, he's someone growing into a job, he has never been a manager before. He was a consultant on various jobs and I said to him at the time he had to run an organisation not just advise. I believe he would have taken on more of the outside world anyway, as long as he was sufficiently alright, through his own development.

On the other hand he might not have done so so readily if he did not have a sense that he had a serious philosophy that he was working on. So he is more empowered to be the kind of person he is because he has a clearer idea of what he wants, and ways of getting there. He might well have collapsed if he had been left under the old setup. It was a difficult situation as acting director.

MdR Interesting that he was a consultant before he was a manager, insofar as one aim of Philip is to get a manager to be a consultant, to himself or the organisation.

BWMP In David's conversations with me he was more concerned with how to stop being a consultant and be a manager!

MdR What unexpected solutions do you think have been found by either of you? New ideas, concepts, insights?

Has Philip learnt something or changed?

BWMP It is difficult to see because we talk about other projects as well. So I don't know how WF has changed his thinking, though he may be surprised to hear me say that. I guess what has been critical for him is moving from business to the voluntary sector. I have been intrigued by how quickly he has been able to latch on to the issues in the voluntary, care-giving world. I suppose that gives me confidence in the theoretical background, that it is not only rooted in the business world. He has not said, like some other consultants, that this ought to be run like a business. So he must in practice have learnt a lot from running a large scheme in the public sector.

MdR This leads me to last question, what conclusions can you draw with respect to his ethical position and how does this fit with idea of clinic being constructed?

BWMP What comes to mind is that it has taken me some time to tumble to the fact that Philip brings to the work a very powerful concern about how things should be, as opposed to myself, as I tend to be more cold about it. I'm into analysing organisations but I don't often begin to think about things like, God, this shouldn't be happening, or something. My sense is that it is about desire, the question of how you evolve organisational forms which are open to the desire of all the parties concerned, something like that, rather than becoming foreclosed around vested interests or defenses or something... Difficulty in answering all these questions because of the way I've been answering all of them all the way along. So I never quite know what there is else to say which isn't already implicit in what I've already said. It seems to me that the notion of relational is an ethical position and not just a geometrical concept.

MdR You're quite right.

BWMP Of course I don't know how else we would have a conversation like this.

MdR So perhaps we can end by you telling me something about Philip's involvement in this case without me asking you any question!

BWMP The thing which is unfinished in the conversation, the bit which my mind has generated a bit more about, is the question of how you would know when a cut has come, when something has been completed, a semi-colon. I have a sense that we're certainly not there yet, but also that there is a definite end, not that David would never see us again, but a point where it was explicit, some kind of language about what each house was doing for its clientele. It is not inarticulate at the moment, a lot of things are being done that have always been done and they seem to work, but they are not compared with anything else, so it isn't that they could give a reason for why they are doing this rather than that, they would find this difficult, but it doesn't mean

that what they do, this tacit knowledge is invalid. So I think that we would be at some point of closure when there was an explicit rationale for the way the houses work, for each of the houses. Which could be named, and it was possible to say that this was in a sense happening, or being implemented, but was also seen as a provisional structure, always open to the horizon of maybe this is leaving something out. And that form, I'm quite prepared to believe that it may not be all terraced houses with half a dozen staff doing shifts. I mean it is not at all clear now whether these houses may not be bad for some of these residents. When I interviewed all the staff of a particular house, what came across to me and what I fed back to them, although I don't think they could make much sense of it, was that staff knew, although they didn't know they knew, was that the house was bad for the residents. That their violence and passivity and their incompetence with life was their response to being banged up in this terraced house with no work. What they knew was, sometimes when they were taken to the Zoo or on holiday, or the pub, they were different men, not wholly different as though they were geniuses or something, but less limited and cantankerous than in the houses. I think that they know that the house is as much part of the problem as the solution. If WF can engage with that, then it is possible for the consultants not to be needed anymore, they would have moved on. I didn't know that until I told you, but that seems to be what the thing is about.

MdR which answers my question about to what extent the idea of an end is.... {end of tape}.

Interview II: David Naylor.

Background.

MdR - I find myself in position of fool because I am not sure exactly what I expect to find, nor what questions are best in order to find it. Hence these questions will not have straight and easy answers, and I may have to improvise along the way. But all concern the effects that PJB's work have on the organisation and your way of managing it.

How would you sum up the challenge of the case?

DN - In the Winnicottian sense, you mean, "Challenge of the case"?

MdR - Exactly.

DN - For me, sifting out personally, professionally and organisationally... One of the reasons I got in contact with Philip was that I found myself in position of acting director, when there was a crisis in the organisation and the director was booted out, I seemed to be in a position or was seen to be the only one around who could fulfil that role, and in inheriting an organisation that was very much a subsystem to very large ones, a Local authority and a Health authority, and yet the responsibilities that were given to it required it to be robustly independent. But here we had an organisation that was full of the culture, the bureaucracy, hierarchical, lots and lots of responsibilities, legal ones like care for clients, - and I suppose I must say quite clearly here that one of the reasons I got a clear picture of this is because of the work I did with Philip. Although my kind of background is in consultancy, in systems work within organisations, I share some of the background that Philip has and some of his colleagues. I came to him via someone I have been consulting with for a long long time in my previous work, whom you might be meeting, Barry Palmer. I suppose, well my training was in internal consultancy where it is quite clear that there is a business element to this, ie. how do you make this happen, we provide community care services, we're a voluntary organisation, but we're in a market. ... So you're trying to find out who's around that's sympathetic to what we do, that can give us a bit of an edge, give us another language to describe the work that we're doing. And so I've been trained to look at using consultants at times like this, to deal with management anxiety, and Philip was on offer. But also I was in a total, not quite overwhelmed by anxiety, but I had a lot of responsibilities, lots of things, lots of people not really being dealt with, it was my first senior management job. It was an acting position, yet the demands of the organisation were to change so we had to come up quickly with an organisational change strategy and just accept that there was going to be a lot of risk, about getting the job, that things might change, having a board of directors who might have different views, etc.

MdR For working purposes I am trying to isolate a beginning, middle and end in this case, even if on-going. One question about the start which you have already touched upon is how and where did you get stuck? You called Barry first and then Philip?

DN - I was seeing Barry for the last six weeks, the crisis happened, selfishly I realised that one way of insuring I got the job permanently was if with Philip's work I made myself indispensable, that there was another agenda to it. So I talked to Barry and he suggested a number of people, and, I had heard of Philip, his name, when you're with Barry you hear about Philip, so I was curious to meet him, we had a joint meeting at the very beginning, and that was it.

MdR - Can you remember whether your diagnosis of problem was different from Philip's?

DN - I think I would say I have a retrospective view of what went on, I can now look back, and say, I knew there was a challenge here, and I could present it as such, as the challenge of the case, or what was the presenting threat that had to be dealt with. But one of the things in looking for a consultant was that I felt I couldn't capture what felt like an enormous task, I didn't have the language to make sense of it, and one of the things I was immediately confronted with with Philip was his language. It blew my mind in the sense that I would see him, and we would talk about what was going on here, so I'd go to him with some idea of what I thought was the problem here, the issue, and then come away even more confused and anxious at times, because there wasn't any premature closing down of the diagnosis of what was wrong, and there was an enormous challenge to my own assumptions, I was trained at the Tavistock, and he enjoys pissing all over that stuff, you know [laughter]. So sometimes it was like going to the professor or tutor, and yet in this organisation I was the most senior person, that was quite confronting,.. not unmanageable and we were able to talk about it, but I do remember the language thing being such a problem to me. I remember there was this classic word "orthogonal", and you know, I thought to myself where is this guy coming from [laughter], and yet the explanation of it is, I now use, in my mind I use it, not with other people, but I understand what he means by it, in sense of holding a position, so it was developing a language. Sorry I'm rambling a bit.

MdR - No, no, just anticipating, don't worry. In this retrospective view, do you think now that in his formulation/presentation of the time, he excluded anything important?

DN - I think that the one thing that I've had to take control of is the timing. I felt he very much underestimated the pace, the change that was possible here, and in some way that was a detachment of theory and practice. When we used to meet we met at the Charing Cross Hotel. We'd have these very in depth theoretical discussions about what we thought was going on, and then there would be the sense of what was the practical application of this. But one point I did feel that his sense of what should be happening was different from mine, but I was caught in a dependency phase if you like, so we didn't know what to do. It has taken me some time to sort out priorities and say the theory is right but the pacing of it is my responsibility, you know, we can't do all these jumps in twelve months. So that is the one issue we struggled with.

MdR - Now, I know you have been a consultant and you still are at times. So you have your idea of consulting and Philip has his. Could you sketch the differences briefly?

DN - I suppose one of the things that struck me about him was that he didn't have much selfdoubt, he was pretty clear about what was and should be going on. I have grown to admire that, but it does feed a dependency, I don't know if it does for other people, but it does for me... Remind me of question? Oh yes. The other thing was... he was quite fearless, is quite fearless, sometimes. He will call things what they really are, even though it ...people's opinions, there is not a lot of hedging around, he can be quite direct sometimes, he's done work with our management team and he's been very confronting, and he just stood there and grinned, and, it was interesting, because it was very much what we needed to learn, as a way of kind of fighting, a kind of family fight, in the organisation about how things should or shouldn't be done, it opened things up, and people got so pissed off [my laughter] . You spoke of being a fool, and that was one of my pictures of him, saying something really very brutal to my finance manager and just laughing, while this guy is going ballistic, and yet it was

addressing something that I've been able to pick up and work with in the sense of teasing out this finance manager in a different kind of role and getting him to speak and not being just one of these self-defining kind of number crunchers who are completely useless in an organisation like that.

MdR - On that subject, I wanted to ask what role you think he has taken and where you think he has been speaking from.

DN - One image coming to mind is, there was a terrible vacuum here, I found myself being asked to manage a vacuum and the outside world being very hostile and we had a lot to do and they sacked the director when we were negotiating the transfer of some staff, it was terribly publicly difficult and it leads me to this notion of the professor, it is quite interesting, someone who had an idea, some clear idea about what we should be doing, and in the absence of anything else, I just said let's go for it. Then there was the notion of supply-demand economy within the organisation, the importance of conversations, and the positions people would take in relation to them. The other thing I remember is the idea of every-day words. There used to be this "economy of conversations", that was his favourite phrase, and I used to think, what is this guy talking about. So there was a lot of clarification and understanding of what was basically a simple concept, and which I now realise I probably did understand, and know about, but somehow it has a label on it now, a different label that helps me kind of think about it. But he does have a knack of anticipating what is coming up, of sensitising me to issues that are emerging in the organisation. So I'd go to talk to him, in a relatively unprocessed way sometimes, you'd then say, well maybe its this and this, an example was, what we now call who knows best what's best debate. In any care organisation, if you employ three hundred people you get three hundred experts. The fact that 99.9 % of them are off the mark is neither here nor there. And some of the fights that were going on here that I was talking about, he developed this phrase which I was then able to bring back, just to kind of throw it out, and see if things would coalesce around it, to begin to find it more manageable, begin to get a handle. My position is now, that he is there, in relation to us here, and I can go to him, although he did some work with the managers, a kind of summary, this orthogonal position that he talks about. And that's where I want him, to be quite honest, otherwise I'm not learning, I just get stuck in dependency, and that's not why I'm doing this job.

MdR - What assumptions have you had to change this last year in relation to the work?

DN - A nice and tightly focussed question..

MdR- [laugh] A bit abstract perhaps..

DN - Yes. Well one of them is the Tavistock training type of assumption, the notion that if you can hit with the right interpretation then things are going to be Ok. And I have done a lot of consultancy to groups, lot of supervision around it, and it was always the search for finding the right thing to say, the right interpretation. What I have definitely changed around is the sense that, when all has been said and done, the interpretation has been made, I as a manager, rather than as consultant, am left with a problem. I may understand why a member of staff is behaving as they are, I may be sympathetic to it, but in the end I still may have a performance problem, that challenges the organisation's ability to deliver, and that I do directly relate to the work with Philip. He has had the courage to say something very important, that interpretations are important, but they are not the be-all and end-all. That was quite important to me personally because I've been in analysis quite a long time and I felt

trapped by all of that, that there is this kind of physical external reality which you have to play in, be in, work in, perform in. So now I'm less hung up on getting it right, but also telling people what to do, it is also about authority. It's making that shift from consultancy to this notion of a much more relational management style that has been important.

MdR - To stay with the question of interpretation, what form did interventions take? How different from analytic interpretation? If it is true that PJB is more Lacanian than Kleinian, to take models from therapy, what characterises this for you?

DN - Before you said the last bit I was going to say that one other form of intervention has been diagrams. You know, here is a man with a diagram for every situation. Some I find very illuminating, others have been so complicated that I haven't been able to understand them. ...The Lacanian thing has come in and out, and I don't know anything about that really. He's the only person I've known who's been into that and it is difficult to say this is Lacanian and that's not.

MdR - But if he has made interpretations at all, how have they differed from a Kleinian model?

DN - I'm just remembering one of the conversations we had was around ways of explaining what has happened, I don't know if that is a Lacanian concept, how one describes what is going on, one's story. I found this useful because it does personalise the story, it supports this idea which I've always believed in that there have to be lots and lots of stories about what is going on. It is particularly relevant with the kind of work we do where clients are often disempowered, and people like to impose a story about this particular schizophrenic or mentally handicapped person, etc. It is allowing us to say, well, you can have lots of different stories about the same situation, which is more helpful, quite important. Because it institutionalises a degree of humility in what you have to say. I don't think that is uniquely Lacanian. We have had lots of conversations about it, about his stays in Paris and the place that has in his life, but more with Barry really, I don't know a lot about it.

MdR - Which diagrams did you find particularly illuminating?

DN - More a concept than a diagram, the notion of dilemmas. I think that is a crucial concept. It is a shift from an interpretative position, which is much more helpful to me as a manager, rather than seeing what the unconscious motivation is, to represent the dilemma that is being struggled with, a way of holding the dilemma. So that diagram and the associated work has been very important. There's a lot of stuff around the management of information, because one of the things that's been a key has been picking up an IT strategy in the organisation. Again I really struggled with that, trying to understand, the layers. I have absolutely no background in that but I knew enough to know it had to be started...

MdR - He started things off.

DN - Yes, I can say that in 1995 99% of his work has resulted in things happening. It wouldn't be understating it to say that, I mean in the first year he did a lot to secure the viability of the organization. Ok I was here to listen to him, to do some of the legwork around it, to hold things together, day to day, but in terms of filling the vacuum with some ideas and a direction, the notion of a supply-demand economy in the organisation, the position of client and house-managers in the organisation, I attribute to him. I mean I had the good sense to listen to him, but actually that comes from him. And one of the key things he was saying to me was, when I was really struggling about whether I was going to get the job as CEO, and having real problems

putting forward the idea of supply-demand and the changed position of the house managers, as the key management drivers, if you like, was his idea that my natural area of support was with the house managers, to build a relationship with them, rather than getting preoccupied with trying to build a relationship with senior managers or people who happen to be working in these offices. And that was presented, we looked at supply and demand, how it could be construed, the way resources should be shaped and driven. That was the core of work then.

MdR - That covers a question about Philip's introduction of concepts. Perhaps you can say something about his technique or style?

DN - A very simple one is that when we would meet he would write, saying this is what we have discussed, it's like revision notes, in the privacy of my home or office I could read it and begin to understand it. So what I've built up is, not quite like a theory, but there is somewhere to go back to, saying that's important now, and that relates to the timing which inevitably you can't get right, but some of the things that we've talked about have just been on hold, so I've been able to go back to them because they've been written down, with a diagram, so I can say, Ok I can start using this now. That was very helpful... Even though I'm used to consulting, one thing that I haven't been able to carry off as well as I've seen Philip do is this idea that, of uttering the unutterable, of what is not being said, and then just standing there, of being there to live with it, deal with the projections that arise, work them through, it was good to see him do that. And as I said he has sometimes been quite fearless, he'd say things that, that almost took my breath away, you know, ... this is helpful as a manager, building up my sense of, being much more confident in dealing with people, much more direct, remembering that there are real things at stake here, and you do have to be direct.

MdR - Do you find it easy to comment on his work to him?

DN - That has changed over time. As I have got hold of the more negative side of the dependency, it has been easier for me to challenge it, or just choose not to do it, and to accept that it has to be at my pace, because I'm responsible for it now, always was, I feel it now, I know I am. So, that is no longer a problem, it was, because I was just baffled.

On the whole, the notion of an audience with the professor was more or less what it was like. It is not a problem now.

It related I think, I don't know if this is of interest to you, but he does the work for the organisation at a much reduced rate than he does with his private work, we cut a deal. I'm not sure how that affected things, but I suppose, there was a sense that he took me under his wing, I don't know if that is anybody else's experience, it may depend on experience, age, etc. but that was the feeling, he was going to help me, and the organisation, and he wasn't going to ask £1600 for it, there was a recognition of the circumstances. And he was also quite clear about his own personal interest in this area of work, in a provider organisation like this, residential care. I remember one thing, when one of the service managers was present, a very bright woman, very well-read, we were talking about how you provide services to people challenged on behaviours, and she was really pushing him quite hard on some of his assumptions, and his response was, well where is your reference, your book, you know, there was this book, and he got that book and read it. That kind of characterises him for me. It gains him credibility in the organisation, because people know he's made the effort to listen and understand, rather than come from a prejudiced position.

MdR - Let us go the specifics of the case. Are there any changes you can point to that have resulted from Philip's ideas and interventions? For example, in structure (constitution, groupings, power balance, distribution of responsibilities) or functions (positions, tasks)?

DN - In the structure, one of the things I was doing today was finalising the restructuring of the first level of resources that are located here, senior management team is being reorganised, basically according to principles I've been working out with Philip, and that is very much to institutionalise the supply-demand side of the organisation. So that is a concrete outcome.

The role of the house managers has changed. He developed the concept of QAG as a way of driving this changed relationship with the Centre, and the notion that only house managers are in a position to know what clients need, which is a big assumption to make, it has to be supported by training development, lots and lots of conversation, who knows best what's best debate. There has to be an explanatory framework for that. But that is the path I'm committed to, that is the only way we can get closer to the client. There is a whole bunch of other theories that support that, a sound way of progressing, as a way of avoiding institutionalising practice. So the house managers have been liberated, they are now putting a lot of pressure on people here to provide a service which begins to unpack the bureaucratic, hierarchical experience everyone has had in the last 6 years, or in their own training, the last 20 or 40 years. So it is turning the organisation, if not on its head on its side. And some of these house managers are not massively conceptually switched on, for some English is not their first language. But the way some of them are confronting and challenging where you'd least expect it, to me that's a test of the validity of the theory, people that have been hammered by their organisations, are now saying this is the kind of service I need in order to meet the client's need, and doing it in a way that is not full of hatred or rage. That is evidence. It changes the quality of the conversation for me. It also throws into relief where the resistance is in an organisation. The restructuring is to unpack that a bit more. So he has affected the power, the types of relationships people are having and structural changes.

MdR - This is across all the sections, house managers, personnel, data management?

DN - That is the bit we never had. We had information lodged in people's heads. We suffered terribly when people left, so the computer on the desk, the network is three or four months old. We have a massively complex set of payments, which was all done by paper, ad hoc systems, and Philip has brought in another consultant who is attuned to the notion of you identify the workflow, then you build the system on top of that. What meetings are going on, who needs to talk to who, in the inevitability of having to break down functional management, that's been reinforced, built into the organisation, ... so he's been very clever in bringing in the people who are able to support us. So you get a coherent package, that's if you agree with it.

MdR - This QAG process, this cascade of relations from you to the client, how was this brought in, as an ideal from the start, or progressively developed?

DN - It was clearly developed. My fantasy was that it was already fully developed and that Philip was looking for somewhere to try it out. To try it in this sector of activity, my fantasy was that in business this process, the relation between customer and those responsible for meeting their demand has been well thought through. That customer in this case is a client living in the house. What was confronted by this was the idea that the most senior people knew what the customer wanted. QAG is saying that is about demand and response in an organisation. Level II is about functional managers

defining the service that they provide the houses with. The guarantee is compliance with the multiple demands of legislation. So it gave us a language to understand that the business we're in is full of conflicting legislative requirements. So good practice in ordinary life says that people live in ordinary houses, but fire officers say that every fire exit should be automatically closing and have a siren. I mean a simple thing but house managers struggle with that. So the job of people here is to hold that dilemma here to free up the house managers to think about the agenda of the client. At level III it is about the house managers saying, this is the way I want resources shaped. I'm pulling down resources because I know best what the client wants. In order to get from II to III you have to do all the radical cultural shift stuff, which is, the reorganisation is at an ending point of that. So it was quite complex, it took a lot of understanding, I have to say. Seminars with senior managers, lots of talk. It became, there was always an issue of translation. He would talk to me, and I would try and make sense of it, and then I would make a translation to the senior managers. What happened in the beginning was, we would then meet with him, and he might change the translation I'd given. So there was a struggle at the beginning, who is defining the culture in the organisation, and he took a big lead in that. And while nobody else was able to articulate what we should be doing because we were truly into crisis management, it did cause some resentment, and I mean I was anxious that I wasn't seen as having enough authority, although the reality was that I was an acting position and not .. it still made me a bit anxious. I don't think we ever really, I don't think I clearly articulated that dilemma, but things have moved on since.

He can intervene very powerfully, he is authoritative and he can control things.

MdR - Any other changes, in morale, staff relations, any problems? What effect on the other staff.

DN - Well, inevitably some people didn't agree, don't agree. I think when he first arrived, people wondered what the hell he was talking about. The gap between his ability to describe and conceptualise and how other senior managers were able to conceptualise was enormous - to the point where people came to me and said why are you doing this to us? We don't want to meet with him. We all want to meet together.

MdR - It was that hard? [laughter]

DN - I won't lie to you...

But the general principles have been accepted, they are now the guiding principles of the team's strategy, there is no doubt about this, people are aligned to it, well, two of them are, one isn't. He's being very ambivalent about it. We choose to deal with that in the reorganisation, we've done enough talking things through individually.

It is a resistance which manifests itself in questions about how much things are costing. But I remember Philip used to work on reworking the costings of the organisation, how do you kill the ...finance manager [laugh], he was very confronting. Then the other side would come back with, the rational explanation was, well he's a consultant, he's got time to do this, and if I had time I would do this, but there was also the sense that, well Philip was competent in a lot of areas, which would lead you to think why the hell doesn't he run this organisation? Generally it was about the competence of consultants, because day to day they don't actually live it, with all the compromises you have to make, the nitty-gritty, the bloody activity that's real here. But that's true of consultants generally, it really clarified it for me, the difference. But he was seen to be somebody who could hold his own, make sense of things, could explain things, he was just coming from a very different position.

MdR - Do you feel he dealt with you more as a consultant or as a manager?

DN - I don't think.. it always did feel like consultancy. What I didn't do, what I tend to do now, is to be much clearer with the consultant what it is I want. Sometimes it is not appropriate to be a 100% clear. Sometimes you have to say Talk to me about it because I don't know what to do. But I always associate my conversations with him as reviewing what has gone on and in some way anticipating what will be the next set of challenges.

MdR - I did wonder how between the three of you you agreed on what the next step was.

DN - I see Barry for myself, when I was doing lots of internal consultancy in the Health authority, then it was like getting into what goes on between Barry and Philip, about the way they talk about things and review things, which is quite different and I used to move between those two. Now shifting between seeing Barry and seeing Philip was quite difficult for me. And then Barry taking up a consultancy role within the organisation, seeing house managers,.. which has worked, and when we would meet sometimes the three of us together, there was a sense of like who's in charge, you know, it was like Philip was in charge.

MdR - Even though you had to take charge

DN - Yes, getting paid for it all, and paying these two...

MdR - What conclusions can you draw with respect to his ethics and how does this fit with idea of clinic being constructed?

DN - It is funny you ask me that. One of the last conversations we had was about what the hell do you mean by this concept, the clinic? And finally getting down to fact that for most of us clinic means white coats. I trained as a nurse, so it was more what he meant by it. My struggle is that I still don't understand, but it is about what actually goes on. That is one of the concepts he brought in...

You mentioned ethics and he has been instrumental in bringing that word into the organisation, the difference between ethics and values, the very precision he brings to the terminology, this is linked to the who knows best what's best debate, how do you get hold of that, in a way that doesn't constrict the creativity that's around. One of the demands is now that you can no longer just say this is what's best because I know it is, there is a demand for some evidence, and acceptance.. we use phrase dominant assumption, what are the ones that need challenging here, and again another idea is critical instant evaluation, so when there has been a major cock-up in the organisation, to sit down and review it in a non-punitive judgmental way, outside the disciplinary arena. And that's been crucial in shifting from a crisis to a more learning type of organisation. It has terrified some people, they feel it's going to be their fault. Where it has worked very well is in teasing out dominant assumptions. Barry has worked with it and the alignment works very well, moving from a space of knowing to not knowing. He came up with a different position around an issue we had covered with the client. This is progress in the knowing best what's best debate because it's beginning to establish a way of intervening on that. But some concepts I haven't internalised yet, and he knows that.

MdR - I forgot to ask you about changing relations to the local and health authorities.

DN - The key change was the articles of association, the rules by which directors could be appointed, who could be director, up till a few weeks ago the local and health authorities were directors and members of the company and could directly influence, so it was like as if you could never go to your own space, the parents would

always look at everything, denying they had a conflict of interest, made it very problematic. So a practical way of shifting the organisation's position in relation to the market and its contractors has been to change that, so the health authority comes off as a member. Freeing up the notion of membership outside of people who have just got a statutory interest in offloading their responsibilities to us. I think in some ways we have perplexed the local authorities because we have evolved a different management style, which sometimes is chaotic, because our position is there are usually system failures rather than individual failures, we are perceived to allow things to carry on, they can't understand why we don't try and hold people responsible and blame them. Of course when we do they go crazy as well. I think, particularly the local authority who have been very controlling of this organisation, who have retained control of all the services that they transferred years ago to our responsibility, who have colluded with bad practice, I mean not just minor infringements, but points of abuse of clients, there is quite a sense of toughness here about exposing that and trying to live with it, back to Kleinian notion of shifting to a depressive position, most recently we have managed to piss everybody off, but that is the intent... I'm just thinking of conversations I've had with Philip about his other work as a trustee of Just Ask... I can't imagine what it would be like to have Philip as director of the company [laugh]...

MdR - Anything you can add generally?

DN I can just say that he was the right person at the right time, so I could say that we were lucky, although by talking to Barry I was ensuring that we would probably get somebody, Barry was quite clear it wasn't for him, and I opted for someone with private sector experience. It has been of enormous benefit to work with somebody like him with his training, his interest in challenging an analytical position around organisational development, and the fact that he's had lots of private sector experience, the discipline that I assume there is around it. So I benefited personally and I know the organisation has. I did really struggle at the beginning. Conceptually I felt he was a million miles away from where I was and lucky I was so dependent on him otherwise I'm not sure how long I could have lived with it, in the sense of trying to understand, and the tension between being the boss here and the pupil there, and this was very difficult. But he's more than just important to the organisation and to me, he's the right person in the right place at the right time saying something very relevant to what we were doing. And I think if we continue it will give us an edge as an organisation. And I've always enjoyed working with him. It is interesting that in the last few months I haven't seen him. I think that this has been a period for me of taking much more ownership of the ideas and moulding them here with the people here. So I see it much more as a flow or a process our work together. I certainly don't see it as over. There might just be a different emphasis in future.

MdR - Thank you very much.

Afterthought.

DN - What will you do with this? Will he know these are my comments?

MdR - Yes.

DN - That's alright.

Provisional Glossary

alienation - too much meaning, no position. Being represented only by what the other thinks/knows	7
castration - I can't have it, but neither can anyone else	12
cross the fantasy - exhausting your chains of words and seeing what turns you on	11
crossing the plane of identification - realising why you hold ideals you do	11
cuts - distinction as action	39
desire - identity in the problematic nature of things	6
discourse - the subject's relation to what can't be said in saying	8
drive - being in relation to the problematic	11
fantasy - unquestioned assumptions about how things are	6
Freudian field-effect - any work which can be said to situate itself in relation to the effects of the unconscious	2
frustration - I can't have it, but I could have it	12
hystericised - unmasking an alibi, specifically if the consultant refuses to take the position from which the client draws comfort. For example, a master who shows his lack to a hysteric, or a dead master who shows he is alive to an obsessional	12
imaginary – misrecognition - the way we have always done things around here, that which we try to make present again	6
interpretation - opening to action/decision	8
intervention - a cut which effects a change in the subject's relation to jouissance, jouissance being vested interest or excessive return on investment.	2
logic of the signifier - one says more than one thinks	12
logical timing - the succession of time to see, time to understand and moment to conclude, this latter being the moment in which the undecideability of a 'right' conclusion in the time to understand results in an act in which the subject is anticipating a certitude in its place, the moment in which the subject 'authorises himself to act'.	13
love - desiring the desire of the other	12
need - urgency - survival	4
demand – stuckness - love me even if I am inefficient	4
object - the real problem and its products (as presenting problems)	6
orthogonal - to be in (an organisation) but not of it.	9
Other - what comes in the place of ignorance	11
real - the impossibility in dilemmas	12
separation - reclaiming a position, acting	12
strategy - the management of ignorance	5
suggestion - inherent in speech, because the subject is by definition dependent on the Other as place of language for his existence	11
symptom - knots, nodal points, aversion, repetition, problem	5
time to see - moment in which that which is self-evident is encountered seeing as believing	13
time to understand - time needed to verify that what one has seen (in the time to see) can only have one conclusion	7
transference - somebody somewhere must know	7

Endnotes

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- ⁱ D.W. Winnicott (1965) *Training for Child Psychiatry* in "The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment". Hogarth Press.
- ⁱⁱ Philip Boxer & Barry Palmer (1994) *Meeting the Challenge of the Case* in Casemore et al (eds) "What makes consultancy work - understanding the dynamics". South Bank University Press. pp358-371
- ⁱⁱⁱ The complication of a "triadic transference" situation will be examined further on.
- ^{iv} These four questions arise as a result of two 'cuts' made by the observer, firstly to establish an inside-outside distinction; and secondly a viability-identity distinction. When applied to the structure of an organisation-in-relation-to-its-context, these describe successive levels of embedded context. (Outlined in *Maturana and Checkland's Weltanschauung: paradigmatics*. GOWG working paper 1st July 1994)
- ^v All levels are always present, but the concept of *strategy ceiling* approaches organisation as a discursive formation, in which not all of these 'layers' are made explicit. This diagram is a way of describing the step-by-step process whereby this strategy ceiling is lifted to the point where the organisation is capable of fully relational strategies. (The problematics associated with this are described in *Foucault's Archaeological method*. GOWG working paper 30th December 1994).
- ^{vi} These dilemmas were worked through in a first workshop, which aimed at formulating the fundamental problematics faced by the organisation. The origins of this approach to dilemmas lie with the Milan method, and the work by Cronen, Pearce and Tomm in elaborating the Systemic Epistemology with which they worked. The dilemma is, in their terms, a *strange loop* (*Toward an Explanation of How the Milan Method Works: An invitation to a Systemic Epistemology and the Evolution of Family Systems* in Campbell & Draper (eds) "Applications of Systemic Family Therapy: The Milan Approach" Grune & Stratton 1985. pp69-84.) These strange loops have the characteristics of the mobius strip, and their effects are further elaborated in *Charting the Corporate Mind: from Dilemma to Strategy*, by Charles Hampden-Turner. Blackwell 1990.
- ^{vii} This comment concerning an interpretative position is a reference to the Tavistock Clinic's interpretative methods of working with Human Service Organisations, critiqued in the GOWG working paper on *The Unconscious at Work*, Routledge 1994. DN had done a Tavistock Consultancy training.
- ^{viii} This second workshop used a method which responds to some of the criticisms of Checkland's SSM methodology (*Checkland: Soft Systems methodology*. GOWG working paper 1st July 1994) in making a distinction between structure, process and (formal) organisation. (*Projective Analysis* GOWG working paper 1st July 1994). It enabled the management team to think through some of the complex processes which constituted the work of WFSHC.
- ^{ix} This constitution introduced a distinction between 'members' and the Board - the members were appointed to represent the interests of those affected by the organisation, including residents, who in their turn elected the Board. This differed from the previous constitution in which Board members were appointed directly by local institutions.

^x The approach to this was through the use of Activity-based Costing - ABC - which involved analysing the cost structures from the point of view of the activity logics of the organisation (rather than vice versa, where the activity logics are analysed from the point of view of the cost structures, which tends to happen in the use of absorption costing approaches.) This approach to cost structures introduced a different kind of basis for accountability.

^{xi} The other part of this approach lay in an intervention by BWMP in which he interviewed House Manager. In these interviews he was seeking to understand how they formulated their work as House Managers; and what was problematic in that work. The results were fed back to the House Managers, and discussed collectively in workshop for House Managers and Centre staff. BWMP used the step-by-step model to make sense of the different ways in which House Managers spoke about the problems they faced.

^{xii} This *network-based* or *frame-based* approach to managing processes involved DN in opening up a 3-way distinction between: (i) clarifying the nature of the demands arising from line management; (ii) ensuring the supply of appropriate support and resourcing in order that the demands could be met; and (iii) holding the frame (context) within which this supply-demand relationship could unfold. See towards the end of *Intent and the future of identity* in Boot, Lawrence & Morris (eds) "Creating New Futures: A Manager's Guide to the Unknown". McGraw Hill 1994.

^{xiii} This used a concept of the information environment outlined in the *Projective Analysis* GOWG working paper above (*Footnotes on links with the topologising of organisation*); and which is further developed in *Freud's Project and topologising organisation*, GOWG working paper 20th July 1995.

^{xiv} Regardless of whether organisations are profit-seeking or not, a distinction can be made between "r-type" and "K-type" organisations. r-type organisations are organised around an Ideal, to do as little as possible for their customers within the dictates of that Ideal without jeopardising the business, and to reproduce their culture in their offspring on the principle of "as above, so below". K-type organisations, on the other hand, are knowledge-based, organise themselves around the problematic nature of the problems which their clients present, and seek to do as much as possible for their clients without jeopardising the business. The models and theories being used were concerned with the nature of K-type organisations. (*Is the 'customer' an endangered species?* with Robin Wensley. In draft.)

^{xv} The QAG's arose as a way of describing the progressive differentiation of behaviours which the organisation had to be able to articulate in order to address the fundamental problematic of its residents/clients. The step-by-step diagram is a way of relating this progressive differentiation of behaviour to the corresponding elaboration of more complex forms of integrating behaviour.

^{xvi} DN was having to grapple with the whole problematic of what constitutes leadership in this context. This is written about further in *Intent and the future of identity* in Boot, Lawrence & Morris (eds) "Creating New Futures: A Manager's Guide to the Unknown". McGraw Hill 1994.

^{xvii} Action is necessary to producing performance, but the *performativity* of the organisation - the effects of the organisation as context to action - is crucial. Interpretation aiming at action is concerned with affecting the performativity of the organisation.... (*Performative organisation*, with Robin Wensley. In draft.)

^{xviii} A relational strategy is one in which as much as possible is done for the client without jeopardising the business, whereas a positional strategy is one in which as little as possible is done.... whereas relational strategies demand that the organisation is formed around what is problematic for the client, positional strategies organise the customer around what is being offered. (Thus K-type organisations seek to be relational, and r-type organisations need to be positional; although the senior managements of r-type organisations may seek to be relational in the way they develop strategies....)

^{xix} This formulation of the problematics of speaking-and-listening is outlined in *Schein: Process Consultation*, GOWG working paper 6th June 1994.

^{xx} The challenge to my practice in the extension of the ethic of psychoanalysis lies in how the alienating^g effects of responding to the client's demands can be included in such a way that they lead neither to paralysis nor to privation as an end in itself.

^{xxi} One of the central questions running through this practice is around the nature of the manager's response to this feeling, and the ways in which my practice affects it. The feeling of paralysis arises because the manager is facing a privation: he doesn't know it, and never will know it - it is for someone else to know. Interpretation which introduces symbolisation also introduces an Ideal, and it may be that the consultant is perceived as knowing what I, the manager, will never know. Faced with such an outsider, who can blame the managers for excluding him from the organisation; unless, that is, the frustration within is even more terrifying.

On the other hand, if this outsider is struggling too, and the realisation dawns that no one else can know it either, then both manager and consultant are freed to work from their own lack.

A central question for my practice, therefore, is how the frustration-privation-castration series is encountered by the client.

^{xxii} If symbolisation is not itself problematised, then all that there is is mother and child, and no fourth (father) to mediate the overwhelming nature of the (third) Other. The presence of so many 3's in this case suggest that this Oedipal problematic is strongly present... Thus, if Local Authority-WFSHC are mother-child, then what kind of fourth was the Health Authority? Was the constitution of WFSHC a solution to a father (Health Authority) whose refusal of castration made the privation of WFSHC unbearable?

In a similar way, if Julia-House Manager are mother-child, was James' father not sufficiently limiting of the mother's desire for the child to bring about a privation? Were DN and James in competition for the place of the father? And what if we now have a new mother in the form of Gael as Director of Human Resourcing? Where is the frustration now? Is the problematising of the work of Houses strong enough to maintain the direction of movement?

Taking this back to the "triadic transference", if Barry-David are mother-child, did I do a good enough job as father in enabling David to assume his own desire? Did David find his own privation sufficiently bearable to move through it to castration?

In problematising symbolisation itself, it is not surprising that a practice under the influence of Lacan proliferates 3's!

^{xxiii} Parenthesise, a term from my practice which MdR would rephrase as: preventing S₂'s from coming under one S₁, multiple stories. This is a helpful term which can be "lacanised" further. In essence, it refers to being aware of one's master assumption,

the place from which one evaluates all knowledge. One could say that it has an affinity with Derrida's deconstruction.

In the practice, it entails interpreting in such a way that S_1 s are produced as problematic, ie. they appear in a different place from the normal, hidden one. However, this may involve a change of discourse, to one other than that of mastery (one knowledge is supreme), rather than just giving a different S_1 , as in the example of ABC accounting in the case. The dilemma might be that organisations cannot exist outside of a master discourse. This means that at some point they have to ignore/be blind to their own division/lack/castration, in order to put forward an S_1 , something that gives them the illusion of being identical to themselves. (An S_1 is a term in relation to which a certain knowledge (S_2) and practice is articulated).

^{xxiv} Derived from St John (via BWMP). See also the GOWG working paper on Consulting (30th October 1995)

^{xxv} The sustaining of a relation to a problematic is what is described as a critical process in the GOWG working paper on *Consulting* (30th October 1995)

^{xxvi} "Parturition" means 'the action of bringing forth or of being delivered of young; childbirth'. Diotima was the midwife in the Symposium and friend of Socrates. His account of love is given by her.