

Caroline Garland

Caroline Garland is a Psycho-analyst, and Consultant Clinical Psychologist who has worked in the Adult Department of the Tavistock Clinic for over 20 years.

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Currently she is engaged in the long-term Tavistock Outcome Study of treatment-resistant depression. Her background included three years' study of social development in chimpanzees as well as observation of the behaviour of new-born infants at the Behaviour Development Research Unit of St. Mary's Hospital. She has published a book on the subject of young children in day nurseries as a member of the Oxford Pre-School Research Group, under Jerome Bruner - and has also taught in primary schools on the way to training as a child psychologist, an experience which left her with a lasting interest in group psychology. She taught group psychotherapy at the Maudsley Hospital from 1983 - 1997. In 1987 she founded the Tavistock's Trauma Unit, which now receives referrals from across the country, and whose members have recently worked with organisations traumatised by 7/7. She has written and published widely on the subject of trauma in adults. This together with her interest in group dynamics and group therapy has led to much consultative work with traumatised organisations.

Books: *Children and Day Nurseries* (1980) co-authored with S. White; *Understanding Trauma: a psychoanalytical approach* (1998) Her most recent paper was *Myth in the service of work: Bion and Groups*, given in 2005 at the conference *Bion Today* at the University College London Psychoanalysis Unit. She is currently preparing a book on group treatment, which includes a detailed treatment manual.

'Some are More Equal than Others': Oedipus, Dominance Hierarchies and the Establishment

This paper examines the universal human tendency to position the self in relation to others within a dominance hierarchy, perceived in terms of a variety of characteristics involving power and status. The ubiquity of modern organisational hierarchies is at odds with the evolutionary alternative, that of hunter-gatherer societies, in which man was capable of organising himself in an egalitarian mode (some versions of which still exist), in which dominance behaviour was rejected, ridiculed and punished. I suggest that the origins of dominance behaviour lie in the early Oedipal situation. The creation of 'an establishment' within a given group can represent either a defensive identification with a authoritarian and repressive version of the parents, or alternatively stand for a way of functioning that is reality-based, focussed upon the actual needs of those for whom it is responsible.

I offer clinical material from a therapy group to make a link between Bion's Work Group and the relatively stable and cooperative form of society represented by egalitarian functioning; and Bion's Basic Assumption groups, which function hierarchically. The shifts between Work and non-Work functioning is illustrated through events in the group, linking with the shifts between egalitarian task-orientated work and non-task orientated struggles for dominance. The 'Establishment', in contrast to Hoggett's view of it as essentially negative, a product of the death drive, is seen as a *transitional state*. Making use of John Steiner's (2000) work on dominance in the Oedipal situation, I see the establishment as capable of functioning by and large in the two modes described above. When in a defensive identification with a cruelly repressive parental object, it creates a paranoid-schizoid regime, creating a hierarchical society often characterised by struggles for dominance. However 'the establishment' is also capable of a relatively benign and more productive style of management, with 'the good of the family/society' as its given task. A depressive-position stance, whether in families or groups, has the potential for learning from experience, with the chance of change and growth as the outcome.