



# **The World within the Group: Developing Theory for Group Analysis (The New International Library of Group Analysis)**

*Martin Weegmann*

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The World within the Group is an original and ambitious endeavour to connect group analysis to philosophy, history, and modern social theory. The book argues that group analysis needs theoretical renewal to remain relevant, and that philosophy is a valuable resource for such thinking. In particular, the work of three philosophers is examined: Nietzsche, Dewey, and Gadamer, each being associated with "pragmatic-perspective" inquiry. The author demonstrates that group analysis is compatible with such inquiry, and that we understand and intervene from within the horizon of specific traditions of training and theory. Group analysis typifies an unremitting relational stance, valuing openness of dialogue, and moving in and out of the perspectival worlds of the participants. The book also offers a re-formulation of the concept of social unconscious, seen as a discursive world of production and articulation. Drawing on contemporary social theories, it chimes with the spirit of Elias's historical approach. Considering social worlds markedly different, often incommensurable, with our own, the author provides accounts of the shifting social unconsciousness during the Reformation and revolutionary upheavals in England. The social unconscious generates ideals and exclusions, both model and abject figures, such as those of the witch, the model Christian, degenerates and other "dangerous classes". Returning to clinical concerns, the final two essays address the "narrative turn" in social sciences. The implications of considering persons as story-telling, metaphorical animals is explored, as is the inevitability that personal stories are infused by wider, cultural narratives. Society has changed considerably since Foulkes' day and the final chapter considers how group analysis can help contain as well as illuminate some of the complex issues we face in the modern world, and thus remain relevant.

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