

A Relational Systems Psychodynamic Approach to the Understanding of
Group and Organisational Processes: the Construction of ‘The Relational
Terrain’

KAREN IZOD

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Submitted Works:

Paper 1: Gertler, B. and Izod, K. (2004) Modernism and Postmodernism in Group Relations: A Confusion of Tongues. In: Cytrynbaum, S. and Noumair, D.A., eds., (2004) *Group Dynamics, Organizational Irrationality, and Social Complexity: Group Relations Reader 3*: Jupiter, Florida: A.K.Rice Institute, pp. 81-98

Paper 2: Izod, K. (2006) Mutuality and Interdependence: Applications of Group Relations Perspectives to issues of career ownership and development In: Brunner, L.D., Nutkevitch, A., Sher, M., eds., (2006) *Group Relations Conferences: Reviewing and Exploring Theory, Design, Role-Taking and Application*: London: Karnac Books pp. 79-93.

Paper 3: Izod, K. (2008) How does a turn towards relational thinking influence consulting practice in organizations and groups? In: Clarke, S., Hahn, H. and Hoggett, P., eds., (2009) *Object Relations and Social Relations*: London: Karnac Books, pp. 163-184

Paper 4: Grueneisen, V. and Izod, K. (2009) Power dynamics of expertise and containment in the process of hiring and being hired. In: Whittle, S. and Izod, K., eds., (2009). *Mindful Consulting*: London: Karnac Books, pp. 57-73

Paper 5: Izod, K. (2013) Too close for comfort: Attending to boundaries in Associate Relationships. In: Whittle, S. and Stevens, R., eds., (2013) *Changing Organisations from Within: Roles, Risks and Consultancy Relationships*: place?: Gower pp. 145-163

Paper 6: Izod, K., and Lawson, C. (2015) Reflections from Practice: Supervision, Knowledge and the Elusive quality of Credibility. *Practice: Social Work in Action, special edition on supervision*. 27 (4), pp. 227–289.

Paper 7: Izod, K. (2016) Representation, Place and Equivalent Realities: an Exploration of Relational Perspectives on Representation and Meaning. *Organisational and Social Dynamics*. 16 (1), pp. 100-128.

Supplementary Pieces:

Whittle, S.R. and Izod, K. (2009) *Mind-ful Consulting*, London: Karnac

Izod, K. and Whittle, S.R. (2014) *Resource-ful Consulting: Working with your Presence and Identity in Consulting to Change*, London: Karnac.

Abstract

This submission comprises a body of published works which update and extend the range of theories-in-use in the practice of Group Relations experiential learning, bringing a relational psychoanalytic framework to the understanding of groups and organisational dynamics, the practice of organisational change consultancy and the challenges of taking up complex professional roles.

The papers span a 15 year period, although the thinking that underpins them draws on a professional career of 40 years in social work, social work management, organisational consultancy and teaching for professional development. The past 25+ years have been in the context of small business management and ownership, which additionally allows for a perspective gained from fluctuating market and workplace practices. Throughout this career, I have worked extensively to create and promote conditions which can support professional judgement in challenging situations. I view this as a relational task which is both intrapsychic and interactional, and accessed through the making of links between inner world experiences of thoughts, feelings and fantasies, external world realities of organisational structures and processes, and the taking up of roles. I use psychosocial methodologies to help make sense of workplace dilemmas, and a broad repertoire of developmental interventions to effect change.

Accompanying the published works is a commentary which outlines the papers and their particular contribution to the field of professional practice. What emerges from meta-analysis of the publications are the foundations for a theory of interaction based on a new framework for understanding and working in organisations, and consulting to group behaviour. I have called this 'The Relational Terrain' and I expound and illustrate it with material from the papers, and from my consulting work.

I give evidence of the impact of these publications, of how and where ideas have been taken up, bringing fresh perspectives to established traditions, as well as practical value for clients attempting to effect change in themselves and their organisations. I suggest that there is now a groundswell of interest in the application

of relational theories to group and organisational behaviour, and that this submission constitutes a body of knowledge which is ripe for a broader audience at this time.

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction to the Commentary

The body of work presented in this DPhil portfolio contains seven publications which demonstrate the progressive development of a new relational systems psychodynamic framework for consulting to groups and organisations. I am calling this framework the ‘Relational Terrain’. It comprises a set of distinct and interrelated conceptual and practice-based approaches (detailed in Chapter 3) to participating in organisational life, understanding group process and consulting to change.

These approaches have at their core the capacity to sustain a mind-ful connection with work (Whittle and Izod, 2009), through developing and negotiating meaning with others. I investigate four theoretical fields as comprising this Relational Terrain:

1. a socio-ecological field, considering the changing nature of systems and their relatedness to ever more turbulent environments (Owers, 2009; Friedman, 2006; McCann and Selsky, 1997; Trist, Emery and Murray, 1997; Von Bertalanffy, 1956, 1950) and emphasising the capacity to build and sustain connection between systems and their environments.
2. theories of human development derived from object and social relations (Benjamin, 2004, 1998; Diamond and Marrone, 2003; Fonagy and Target, 1998; Klein, 1959, 1946; Bowlby, 1988, 1969; Mitchell, 1988; Bowlby and Ainsworth, 1965); and specialists in infant development (Ainsworth et al., 2015; Beebe and Lachmann, 2003, 1988; Stern, 1985).
3. group processes principally through the work of Bion (1961), and later developments of his work in Group Relations and Consulting (French and Simpson, 2015; Sher, 2013; Armstrong, 2005; Pines and Lipgar, 2003, 2002; Bridger, 1990; Miller, 1989; Miller and Rice, 1967).

4. the nature of role; (Simpson and Carroll, 2008; Newton, Long and Sievers, 2006; Reed and Bazalgette, 2006; Krantz and Maltz, 1997).

I conceptualise the Relational Terrain as an intervention within the theoretical framework known as systems psychodynamics: (Sher, 2013; Miller, 2004, 1997; Fraher, 2004; Gould, 2004, 2001; Holti, 1997), which I will expand upon in Chapter 3. I propose a shift of emphasis within this framework which is twofold:

1. a shift away both from Klein's theories on innate drives which are object-seeking in the face of persecutory anxieties (Klein, 1959,1946), giving rise to the defensive mechanisms of projection/projective-identification and splitting, and from Bion's (1961) conceptualisation of the group as defending itself from the primitive anxieties evoked by working as a group and working to task.
2. a shift towards an approach which acknowledges that innate drives are socially oriented, that they are dependent on real experiences with real people (Winnicott, 1971, 1969, 1958; Fairbairn, 1952), and that are connection-seeking and relationship oriented (Benjamin, 2004; Mitchell, 1988). This, I propose, allows for an approach to group understanding that views group behaviour in developmental terms, where the unconscious is concerned with patterns of lived interactions as they become enacted in the behaviour of the group.

This shift of orientation is set within the four fields that I have outlined above. I acknowledge additionally the extraordinary pace of change over the past 50 + years at societal, economic, and political levels, which, together with advances in technological capabilities have meaning for the way in which relations between people and systems are organised.

My interest in undertaking this study, evidenced by the submitted publications, emerges from a concern, over my professional career, to bring theoretically rigorous concepts from the combined field of systems psychodynamics, organisational theory and change consultancy (Neumann, Holti and Miller, 1999), and to apply them to questions in practice that have arisen. This has been in the context of group relations

training in the Tavistock tradition (Gould, Stapley and Stein, 2004; Miller, 2004, 1989; Lawrence, 1979), consulting in organisational change (Whittle and Stevens, 2013; Whittle and Izod, 2009; Neumann, Kellner, and Dawson-Shepherd, 1997; Obholzer and Roberts, 1994), and the professional development of individuals working to effect change in challenging and complex situations (Izod and Whittle, 2014; Reynolds and Vince, 2007; Gould, Stapley and Stein, 2004; Levine, 2002; Hirschhorn, 1988).

This is therefore an experientially driven body of work, which amounts to the generation of a new theoretical framework and consultancy stance underpinning consultancy practice in the systems psychodynamic tradition, and which I evidence through this portfolio of publications.

1.2 Aims and Objectives:

To provide evidence through this retrospective of published papers: of my original contribution to the psychosocial field of knowledge; to my field of professional practice; and to the progressive development and construction of a new theoretical framework: the Relational Terrain. This involves the following:

1. To distill my original contribution to the understanding of group and organisational processes and the construction of the Relational Terrain, through the presentation and meta-analysis of a selection of my publications.
2. To provide evidence throughout this Portfolio as to how my combination of theoretical knowledge and professional expertise in intervening to effect change has accumulated and led to a unique understanding of individual, group and organisational dynamics.
3. To demonstrate how this understanding can be conceptualised and operationalised in a framework I have named as the Relational Terrain. This consists

of a body of theory and practice which challenges and expands current thinking in the field of systems psychodynamics .

1.3 Structure Outline

Chapter	Introduction
Chapter 2	The published works: a synopsis of their key themes and their specific contribution
Chapter 3	The construction of the Relational Terrain as it emerges from the meta-analysis of my publications
Chapter 4	The impact of the work and current reflections upon it
Chapter 5	Methodology: how an action research methodology, evidenced through professional biography, underlines my conceptual development in the field and grounding in psycho-social praxis
Chapter 6	Conclusions and implications for further work
Chapter 7	References and Appendices

Chapter 2 Commentary on the Submitted Works

2.1 Introduction

The submitted work consists of seven publications: five are book chapters which have been subject to editorial and informal peer-review and two are peer-reviewed journal publications.

I am submitting two supplementary pieces as evidence of how some of the ideas from these papers have been incorporated into edited or authored publications with a change-consultancy audience in mind, and as a means of demonstrating impact within the field: *Mind-ful Consulting*, jointly edited with Whittle (2009), and *Resource-ful Consulting: Working with your Presence and Identity in Consulting to Change*, jointly authored with Whittle (2014).

These chapters, papers and books have all been written from my role as a consultant to organisational change and professional development, spanning the period from 2000 to the present day.

Collectively they constitute a ‘hermeneutic cycle’ of investigation (Crotty, 1998 p.92), moving between the generating of theory from practice, testing that theory against other practices, leading to the re-generation of theory.

I will outline the theoretical position prevailing until 2004, when the first of these papers was published, together with more recent developments in the field. I offer some definitions of concepts which are key within, and to, the development of the papers submitted.

Group Relations learning in the Tavistock tradition, is the subject of a considerable literature with its origins in the applied psychoanalytic and social sciences as pioneered by, amongst others (Bridger, 1990; Lawrence, 1979; Turquet, 1975; Miller

and Rice, 1967; Rice, 1965; Bion, 1961; Lewin, 1947) and drawing on the psychoanalytic work of Klein (1959) and Winnicott (1953).

The theoretical literature has been further developed as a practice in publications such as the A. K. Rice Group Relations Readers (Cytrynbaum and Noumair, 2004; Coleman and Geller, 1985; Coleman and Bexton, 1975), the Belgirate series of publications (Aram, Baxter and Nutkevitch, 2015, 2012; Aram, Nutkevitch and Baxter, 2009; Brunner, Nutkevitch and Sher, 2006) and the works of (French and Simpson, 2015; Gould, Stapley and Stein, 2001; French and Vince, 1999).

I draw on the relational psychoanalytic literature as it had been developing in the 1990s, primarily in the work of US psychoanalysts, such as (Aron and Harris, 2005; Benjamin, 2004, 1998; Aron, 1996; Gill, 1994; Mitchell, 1993, 1988).

I additionally am influenced by the British School of Psychoanalysis, particularly: (Bowlby, 1988, 1969; Fairbairn, 1958, 1952), the studies of infants which have progressed understanding of attachment theories: (Beebe and Lachmann, 1988; Ainsworth, 1982); and the developmental work on mentalization, (Fonagy et al. 2004; Fonagy and Target, 1998).

2.2 Key terms in use throughout the papers

2.2.1 Relational

The term *relational* has prolific usage (Dépelteau, 2013; Izod, 2016) and is being applied frequently to describe practices in the ‘human process’ range of interventions (Cummins and Worley, 2008 pp.197-272) which put people and relationships first.

I am using the term *relational*, specifically as it derives from the concept of the ‘Relational Turn’ where it has been used since the 1980s across a range of professional discourses. In sociology Prandini (2015) and Donati (2011) emphasise the Relational Turn as the study of the social relationship itself; in psychoanalysis,

Beebe and Lachmann (2003, p.279) suggest a ‘expanded theory of interaction’, and Layton as a turn to theories ‘whose basic assumption is that development and unconscious phenomena are marked primarily by relationship *and not drives*’ (2008, p.30, my italics).

Fields in which these ideas have been introduced (or re-emphasised) include psychoanalytically informed organisational consulting and role consultation (Diamond, 2017; Izod and Whittle, 2014; Eisold, 2012; Maltz, 2012), coaching (de Haan and Sills, 2010; de Haan, 2008) counselling and psychotherapy (Loewenthal and Samuels, 2014; Ross, 2010), group psychotherapy and group analysis (Grossmark and Wright, 2015; Weegman, 2014, 2001; Roseneil, 2013; Rizzolo, 2012), pedagogy (Crociani-Windland, 2013); leadership (Cunliffe and Eriksen, 2011; Uhl-Bien, 2006) and social work (Cooper, 2012; Ruch, 2005). Clarke, Hahn and Hoggett (2008) bring together applications of the Relational Turn in social and political theory, psychoanalysis, welfare practice, interventions in groups and organisation, and in teaching, learning and social research.

Collectively the Relational Turn emphasises process and the co-creation of knowledge through the interconnectedness of people and systems, shared meaning making, multiplicities of truths and pluralities of voices in the absence of any singular reality.

The origins of relational thinking are debated and contested, depending on formative professional trainings (Ross, 2010; Tudor, 2010) and position on a spectrum between seeing all relations as dyadic, involving a mutuality of mental states, or monadic, operating from the singular mind. (Paper 3:168, *How does a turn towards relational thinking influence consulting practice in organizations and groups?*)

In bringing relational psychoanalytic theories to the task of consulting to groups and organisations, I am concerned with enabling groups to find and sustain conditions under which they can work to best effect. This entails developing a capacity to stay connected to the task, to one’s colleagues and clients, and to one’s own emotional and mental state. I view Benjamin’s thoughts on recognition ‘being able to sustain connectedness to the other’s mind while accepting his separateness and difference’

(2004, p.8) as key developmental and operational issues in group and organisational life. They are central to my relational practice. A consultancy stance which joins with the client system and offers a careful attention and attunement to the dynamics at play, can provide such a developmental experience of connection. To turn to Bion, and his use of the Grid, this is a use of the relational which aligns ‘the communication and the use to which it is being put’ (Bion, 1970 p.4).

2.2.2 Identity and Self

I am using the term *identity* to convey a combination of characteristics: the way an individual thinks, feels and behaves, together with those individual qualities and attributes that blend into something recognisable and unique, that is sufficient to offer a sense of coherence, a sense of who I am, at any one time (*Resource-ful Consulting*:12). Self is something more revisable, to do with taking up a place in the world as thinking, feeling individuals and is the basis for our subjectivity (Giddens, 1991). My thinking about how we come to inhabit our minds and bodies, derives from an attachment perspective and the multiple, repeated patterns of interaction between infant and care-giver, through which our thoughts and feelings can be seen as valid, recognised and as belonging to us (*Resource-ful Consulting*:21; Fonagy et al., 2004; Stern, 1985).

2.2.3 Role

I think of *role* as occupying a set of negotiated spaces: between the individual and their identities and proclivities for doing things in certain ways, and between the expectations of an organisation and its stakeholders as to what they consciously and unconsciously require of an individual in relation to the tasks they are undertaking.

These spaces allow for reflective work between our inner worlds of thoughts and feelings and outer worlds of behavioural tendencies and actions. This conceptualisation derives from key theorists that include Krantz and Maltz (1997) and their concepts of role given and role taken, Reed and Bazalgette (2006) in

relation to finding, making and taking a role, and Simpson and Carroll (2008) who propose role as an intermediary device, constructed for the negotiation of identity and difference. Experience in my practice suggests that roles are multiple and provisional, political and often contested (*Resource-ful Consulting*:56). I propose that a key aspect of taking up a role to support these multiplicities is to generate role space: this builds upon the idea of transitional space (Winnicott, 1953) through which we might keep open possibilities for role negotiation. This, in turn, is influenced by how we handle the dynamics of identity and presence (Whittle, 2014b p.121).

2.2.4 Meaning-making

I am thinking here of meaning as ‘being achieved when one isolated phenomena is located in relation to others and brought within the structure of a system, and organisation’ (Symington, 1986, p.40). My concern in consultancy work is to make those structures for *meaning-making* accessible and available for thinking about, and as a route to generating new perspectives.

Making meaning, as described in the competencies for using ‘self as instrument’ (Whittle, 2014 p.122) requires the capacity to construct meaning, with others, in relation to a range of data sources. These include: one’s self, accessed through the dynamics of presence, identity and role; one’s experiences in the here and now/there and then, with their attendant fantasies and emotional states, and making use of the theories and concepts at one’s disposal.

I have in mind Marris’s (1982) work on attachment relationships which are central to the capacity to make meaning (Paper 7:120), and recognise that there is no singular truth, rather that meaning is developed in relational cycles of interaction between individuals (Paper 1:92). For Weick, (1995, pp.13-14) the idea of ‘interpretation’ of meaning is better constructed as ‘sense-making’, less about discovery, more about invention: a process that ‘renders the subjective into something more tangible’. Section 3.4 describes more fully the negotiation of meaning within the Relational Terrain.

2.3 Commentaries for the submitted works

Each paper will be introduced through a synopsis, highlighting the relational features that it addresses, along with the theoretical or practice based contribution it makes. Linkages between the papers will be made to illustrate thematic and narrative developments which are not necessarily linear. This Chapter will then be followed by a meta-analysis of these themes and their construction as The Relational Terrain.

2.3.1 Gertler, B. and Izod, K. (2004) Modernism and Postmodernism in Group Relations: A Confusion of Tongues.

Jointly conceptualised and authored, this paper offers a primarily theoretical perspective on the underpinnings of group relations conferences in the Tavistock tradition. We proposed that many of the assumptions relating to role, boundary, authority and task (the central systemic tenets available for exploration in conference work), belonged to a high-modernist position, no longer sufficiently congruent with experiences of both staff and member participants, at the beginning of the 21st Century. We advocated locating this work in a different paradigm that sits within post-modern concepts, which has implications for the construction of staff and member participant relations, and their capacities for sense-making.

Gertler and I were both immersed in the Group Relations field and also consulting to organisations from a perspective that integrated systems psychodynamics, organisational theory and consultancy skill (Neumann, Holti, and Miller, 1999). I was a member of the Group Relations Advisory Board, later the Group Relations Committee of the Tavistock Institute, and an organising member of the newly formed Group Relations Forum for the UK and Ireland.

The paper itself is of a moment, and foregrounds a necessity, as we saw it from our practice at that time, for change and innovation in line with the Relational Turn. We wanted to open up for dialogue the different mindsets held by staff participants by offering new concepts and language to work with. Critique of group relations takes

place within the same power dynamics that the conference work sets out to explore, and can be encountered and interpreted within the conference as personal attack, from one generation to another (Aram and Sher, 2013). Our intention was to theorise differences in practice that could go beyond the individual, the interpersonal and the immediate conference experience.

The organising premise for the paper emerged from our experiences: ‘to what extent does the theoretical and structural framework of group relations allow for contemporary analysis of that experience?’ (p.89). In addressing this, we explored how the linking between conference and contemporary organisational experiences might be improved.

We considered three inter-related questions:

1. How to improve the application of conference experience to realities of organisational life. Conference members reported their learning as being particularly related to the personal and interpersonal, and much less so to group and systemic relations.
2. How to surface and open up for debate the very different sense-making repertoires in staff and member participants, which come to light in analysing ‘critical moments’ in conference work. What are the theories-in-use (Argyris, 1980), or espoused beliefs about role, authority, boundary and task that come to bear in understanding relatedness between individuals, groups and systems? How might we understand the nature of the unconscious at play, in attempts to make sense of these variances?
3. How participant and staff members can engage more closely with each other’s experiences, having in mind the tendency for alienation when experience and knowledge fail to be recognised or seen as valid.

The paper explored and confirmed our premise that working conferences in the US and Europe are essentially modern in their design, theory and practice, yet located in

a world which is increasingly postmodern in its organisational and psychoanalytic paradigms and experiences.

Conference work, in this tradition, is reliant on the contributions of Klein (1959, 1946) and Bion (1961) for its psychoanalytic explanations in organisational life. We critiqued their work for positions that give emphasis to absolute truths deriving from universal internal structures, and to rational objective observation which gives rise to interpretation constructed from singular, objective positions (p.93). We acknowledged our own tendencies toward polarisation, recognising that our readings of these theorists were themselves taken in historical moments, in relation to how these came to be operationalised in group relations practices.

We placed emphasis instead on the co-construction of experience and meaning (p.91), as it had been emerging from relational psychoanalysis in the US (Teicholz, 1999; Ogden, 1994; Gill, 1994; Barratt, 1993; Mitchell, 1993), and introduced new perspectives on meaning, knowledge and experience (p.92).

Drawing from organisational theorists (Hatch, 1997; Hirschhorn, 1997; Hassard, 1993; Gergen, 1992; Clegg, 1990; Morgan, 1986), we set out an overview of modern and postmodern perspectives, revising and updating the nature of role, authority, boundary and task with their implications for the distribution of power (p.97).

We built on Miller's reminder of the action research orientation of group relations work (2004, 1989), to propose a consultancy stance which fosters enquiry. We saw knowledge as contextual, emerging from multiple perspectives with meaning constructed and negotiated between participant and staff members (developed further in *Reflections from Practice: Supervision, Knowledge and the Elusive quality of Credibility*, Paper 6:283). We invited dialogue and enquiry in the field as a means of continuing to maintain relevance to contemporary organisational life.

The paper is unique in so far as it was the first paper (in 2004) to challenge the emphasis given to the work of Bion and Klein (Aram and Sher, 2013; Gould, 2004) in the theoretical model underpinning Group Relations practice (p.93), and to update its founding concepts. It expanded the range of theory available for understanding

human process and interaction in these temporary experiential learning systems. It proposed conference design with the potential to support a more distributed set of power relations through a co-enquiring stance.

Relational features emerged from the post-modern framework that the paper outlined (p.96). They are embedded in staff/member interactions which allow for an action orientation achieved through enquiry, play and experimentation, co-construction of meaning, the possibility of and potential for multiple meanings, and organisational systems with complex structures which may be fragmented. Power relations are re-balanced as staff and participant roles are reconstructed as co-enquirers (p.95) and as leadership changes in relation to task and context. These are operationalising elements of the theory, which I come on to explore further in Paper 2: *Mutuality and Interdependence: an application to issues of career ownership and development*, and Paper 3: *How does a turn towards relational thinking influence consulting practice in organisations and groups?*

The importance of identity as a mechanism for meaning making, is noted here, but not explored, and foregrounds work in Paper 7: *Representation, Place, and Equivalent Realities: an Exploration of Relational Perspectives on Representation and Meaning* and in *Resource-ful Consulting*, Chapter 2.

2.3.2 Izod, K. (2006) Mutuality and Interdependence: Applications of Group Relations Perspectives to issues of career ownership and development.

This book chapter was commissioned to explore how the experience of group relations conference work could better align with organisational dilemmas as encountered in the work place, and was developed from a conference paper presented at Belgirate 2004. There was a growing concern amongst Tavistock Institute colleagues that Group Relations conference work was being seen primarily as offering individual learning. Greater theoretical and practice links were being sought to facilitate transfer of learning to a systemic level. The paper explored the duality of theory and practice, locating the praxis of Group Relations in an action

research/enquiry methodology (pp. 81–82) and moving away from a more normative/interpretative positioning.

Having set out a theoretical position in Paper 1: *Modernism and Postmodernism in Group Relations: A Confusion of Tongues*, this paper explored in practice the tensions present in the renegotiation of relations between individuals and organisations dealing with changes in organisational culture. Working from an action research approach, I took the features of modern and post-modern psychoanalytic and organisational forms (Paper 1:88-90) and tested their relevance against the challenges faced by individuals as they encountered and attempted to shift dynamics of dependency and autonomy in relation to their roles and careers.

The empirical data for the paper drew from my experiences of running an action learning set (Vince, 2008; Revans, 1982) addressing career issues within an international company as part of their staff retention strategy. At this same time I was coaching individuals on their career development across a number of organisations and sectors. All examples came from large and internationally located organisations with complex boundary conditions. These client systems found themselves challenged by multiple perceptions of relatedness: to their organisations, to their peers, across geographies. The nature of dependency and autonomy, and the extent to which both organisation and individual could tolerate risk at the boundaries of change, proved challenging features of their employment (p.86).

The paper makes links to experiential learning programmes for professional development that I was leading at the time, and proposed the idea of working ‘with a spirit of enquiry’ (p.80) as a bridging construct between conference and ‘back-home’ learning. It suggested an organisational player role encompassing ‘active enquiry and experimental engagement’ (p.81) in the face of preferred and persistent ways of doing things. These ideas critiqued (p.86) the values and expectations placed on a linear progression from dependency to autonomy (Miller, 1993). The paper advocated a mutually constructed interdependent position in the way that individuals and organisations manage the ownership of careers and in the way that they contract and negotiate their relations. It recognised shifting and variable capacities to manage

personal and organisational risk and how these become embedded in organisational cultures (pp.90-91).

The capacity to take action, both in an action research enquiring stance and as an element of group life, became a central consideration in developing a relational framework for understanding group dynamics. This is outlined in Paper 3: *How does a turn towards relational thinking influence consulting practice in organizations and groups?* It influenced my own shift towards attachment theory (Bowlby, 1988,1969) in understanding tensions at boundaries and the capacity to be curious (Fisher, 2011) in role. Taking up a role as an organisational representative with the responsibility of both forming and responding to an organisation's identity foregrounds my thinking on the dynamics of representation developed in Paper 7: *Representation, Place and Equivalent Realities: an Exploration of Relational Perspectives on Representation and Meaning*.

The paper's contribution lies in its operationalising relational features from *Modernism and Postmodernism in Group Relations: A Confusion of Tongues* (Paper 1:89,96) particularly those of role, task, boundary and authority, to explore some of the emergent dynamics of attempting to work in a co-constructed relatedness between individuals, peers and organisations. In particular it illuminates how power dynamics inevitably surface and have to realign to bring about more interdependent relations (p.86), and the challenges of working in positions that are neither dependent, nor autonomous. The paper evidences the continuing process of negotiating and re-negotiating relations between individuals and organisations, particularly in relation to the risks associated with facilitating and taking up more interdependent interactions, 'without being overly reliant and sustained on the one hand, or overly separate and disengaged on the other' (p.86). The paper locates this tension within a socio-technical systems framework as a feature of contemporary working practices (Trist and Murray, 1993).

2.3.3 Izod, K. (2008) How does a turn towards relational thinking influence consulting practice in organizations and groups?

This is a pivotal work in this submission. In a return to theoretical development, it built from my previous papers towards the exposition of a relational psychoanalytic framework and tool for analysing group behaviour and for promoting conditions for the effective functioning of groups. The paper applied these ideas to contemporary organisational challenges and to group relations conference design.

This commissioned book chapter was developed from a keynote conference paper for the (then) Centre for Psycho-Social Studies at the University of West of England. Underpinning the theoretical perspectives of the later papers, it led towards a consultancy practice that has the potential to promote productive and developmental behaviours in groups and organisations.

The paper is organised around the question, ‘What contribution to the conceptual and practical range of consultancy interventions in the field of human process and human relations can be brought through the linking of theoretical strands’ (p.164), with the aim of exploring what the Relational Turn means for consulting to groups and organisations.

Several professional experiences and challenges contributed to my thinking at this time:

1. I had been asked to review Ellman and Moskowitz’s (1988) work on enactment, a key relational concept, with regard to how its ideas could be applied to organisations and organisational consulting (Izod, 2003). This work confirmed my view that the field was lacking a detailed relational framework for understanding group dynamics.
2. A number of practice issues were additionally surfacing and incorporated as data sources to shape the paper. Teaching process consultation skills (Schein, 1999) to organisational consultants posed a challenge of how to describe group dynamics from a relational perspective, and to access a language for audiences unfamiliar with,

and often alienated by psychoanalytic terms. What kind of consulting role would a relational approach support?

3. This question additionally arose when I was engaged to design and direct an experiential event as an action research initiative for a European management institute. The client system wanted to understand the nature of relations between its management, staff, associates, alumni, clients and external stakeholders, so as to position itself better in the market for executive coaching. These kinds of ‘in-house’ experiential learning events are known to be problematic (Miller, 1997), with the everyday reality of organisational roles intruding into the projective space of the conference and diminishing the opportunity for learning. How could the kind of action research that Miller proposed (*ibid*, p.34) be further developed for in-house exploration?

The paper provided a meta-theoretical overview of features from relational psychoanalytic literature (p.167), charting its position alongside developments from socially oriented object-relations theorists in the UK (Fairbairn, 1958, 1952; Winnicott, 1958). It incorporated aspects of infant development from Fonagy and Target (1998) and Fonagy et al. (2004), notably those of recognition, representation and regulation of affect, and began the work of introducing contemporary thinking from attachment theorists (Gerhard, 2004; Diamond and Marrone, 2003).

Against this, the paper explored a range of common dilemmas and tensions encountered in my consulting practice with groups and organisations, notably the tendency for polarisation that emerges from emotionally charged entanglements, the task of maintaining subject-to-subject relations and the ability to hold ‘the other’ in mind (pp.169–175).

Linking with the task of consulting to organisational change, the paper again drew on post-modern features presented in Paper 1, to reach a position where the challenge to continuity, and thereby any sense of the self as enduring, autonomous and knowing, plays out in a lack of continuity of meaning. The negotiation, and construction of meaning then became the central tenet in this conceptualisation of the Relational Turn (p.168-9), and the key feature of the Relational Terrain outlined in Chapter 3.

These ideas were integrated to formulate a developmental framework and analytic tool for understanding group process, which is represented in Table 1 (p178). It introduced the notion of governance as a means for a group to recognise and manage its own behaviours, needs and assets.

The paper is located in the field of ‘object and social dynamics’, taking its place alongside applications of the Relational Turn to welfare, research and education (Clarke, Hahn and Hoggett, 2008). It provided both an extension of, and an alternative to Bion’s Basic Assumptions (1961). Ideas emerging on an asset based approach to consulting are central to the ‘use of self as instrument’ developed later in Whittle, 2014b.

2.3.4 Grueneisen, V. and Izod, K. (2009) Power dynamics of expertise and containment in the process of hiring and being hired.

This jointly authored book chapter considered the dynamic relationship which is constructed between client and consultant during contracting activities, and proposed that ‘both consultant and client are mutual sources of anxiety and of containment for each other’ (p.59). It recognised that accessing competence in role required an acknowledgement and management of this interrelatedness and the power differentials involved.

This work continued a ‘hermeneutic cycle’ in action research (Crotty, 1998, p.92). It moved between the theoretical developments of Paper 1: *Modernism and Postmodernism in Group Relations: A Confusion of Tongues*, and Paper 3: *How does a turn towards relational thinking influence consulting practice in organizations and groups?* It looked at the nature of systems and tested further ideas about mutuality and interdependence seen within organisations begun in Paper 2: *Mutuality and Interdependence: Applications of Group Relations Perspectives to issues of career ownership and development*, applying them in this paper, to the consultancy challenge of managing power dynamics in the contracting phase.

Following an editorial brief from Mind-ful Consulting editors to make consultancy challenges available and accessible for an audience of consultants and change agents, the paper was written as an illustrative case study (Berg, 2002). It explored how needs of, and capacities for, expertise and containment are present in initial contracting but are almost inevitably blurred, with the potential to take the consulting work off course.

The paper was organised around our (Grueneisen and Izod) experiences in contracting and being contracted as consultants/educators, where some assignments, originally perceived as desirable, failed to meet anticipated outcomes. We specifically were curious about the desire for expertise-based consultations, the dynamics involved in claiming expert positions and how these might be mitigated to improve outcomes for both client and consultant.

We made use of an educational action research methodology (Carr and Kemmis, 1986) to explore our own consultancy practices, and noticed in particular our fluidity of responses to each other's case examples. The paper investigated the way power dynamics (p.60) operated in the process of contracting, and the tendency for narcissistic dynamics (p.63) to be mobilised. We considered ways in which these aspects of contracting played out during the course of organisational consultations, and focussed on the interrelated nature of expressing need and offering expertise.

Through a series of vignettes we outlined a dynamic model of engagement to describe a process that is mutually constructed and constantly changing (p.61). We proposed, for those engaging and being engaged as consultants, that the relative and shifting positions of power of both the contractor and the consultant, together with the dynamics of taking personal and organisational risk, are features of contracting that need active management (p.71). There is no resolution to these dynamics. The metaphor utilised is one of a circus artist balancing plates on sticks, constantly acknowledging and attending to these relations.

This practitioner paper added to the literature on consultancy practice, placing emphasis on the very early stages of interaction between client system and consultancy system through identifying and acknowledging a mutual capacity to be a

resource to the other. We offered a practitioner model in which contracting work can allow for a fuller exploration of needs for expertise and for containment of associated anxieties. Models of consultancy/client relationships, at this time, often referred to a two-way fit between players, for example Schein's (1987, 1966) doctor/patient relationship, or one based on contribution, Block's (1981) fifty-fifty collaboration, pair of hands, and expert.

The paper in particular illustrated nuanced aspects of power relations previously described as decentralised and personal (Paper 1:96), and related those to task specific behaviours involved in contracting. It built on the premise raised (Paper 3:168-9) of the need to negotiate and re-negotiate around each other's perceptions, and drew upon the idea of the consultant taking up a fluid relatedness to meaning, knowledge, and power (Paper 1:104). We brought ideas on recognition, regulation of affect and emotions that entangle into our definition of containment (p.60). I later brought these ideas into a consultancy skill-set on managing 'reputational risk' which was further developed in *Resource-ful Consulting* (p.110).

2.3.5 Izod, K. (2013) Too close for comfort: Attending to boundaries in Associate Relationships.

This application paper progressed ideas on the mutually constructed and contracted relationship between consultant and client outlined in Paper 4: *Power Dynamics of Expertise and Containment in the process of hiring and being hired*, and extends them to consider the complexities of multiple systems at play in working with an organisation as an associate consultant. The Associate consultant role is described as 'part of a triangular relationship' (p.146) comprising self, as an independent practitioner, the consulting organisation which the associate is representing and the client system who is commissioning the consulting services. The paper illuminated and examined this increasingly contested area of professional practice, in the light of changing workplace practices in employment and self-employment. Its intention was to provide frameworks and language to negotiate role and purpose more effectively in the complex relational space existing between associate, the 'host organisation' (as I came to call it) and the organisational client.

The paper explored further and tested ideas about the properties of boundaries and the nature of authorisation (Paper 1:104), integrating these with the relational dimensions involved in working with others, (Paper 3:171-175), in particular the capacities to hold in mind subject-to-subject relations, and the risks posed in working with difference. A key element of managing this distance and proximity in boundary relations is that of how the consultant constructs their identity (p.199) as they take up associate roles, and the potential for this construction to have meaning in the client's system (p.205).

The paper is an illustrative case study (Berg, 1990) offering a richly detailed set of consulting experiences for a consultant/change-agent audience. It set out to explore a premise that associate relationships are formed on the basis of identifying with or being in agreement with, some aspect of the host organisation (p.198), i.e. its principles, the way it does business and its theoretical stance. But inherent in this formulation are the dynamics of difference, i.e. how to manage aspects of the association that are contentious, often those relating to separateness and autonomy. When a third party, the client, enters the scene, then dynamics of inclusion/exclusion, trust and control can be encountered, and the question of 'who benefits' (p.207) starts to come to the fore.

Data sources for the case studies drew upon my experience as a long-standing Associate with the Tavistock Institute and the challenges to authority posed by this role, together with my own direct work with client systems on their behalf. Additionally, the paper drew from my consultation to independent practitioners working as associates, either in supervision or attending professional development programmes that I directed, where participants were engaged in wide-ranging contractual arrangements with organisations. The paper gave examples to illustrate the different voices of the consultant, host organisation and the client, and to explore how these multiple perspectives impact the work that is being attempted. It proposed that working with the tensions between similarity and difference could allow for a more negotiated relational space (p.214).

Underpinned by postmodern concepts on role/task/authority and boundary together with ideas on what constitutes a recognisable output of the work (Paper 1:89), the

paper explored the central construct from Paper 3:168-9 of the capacity to negotiate and re-negotiate meaning, including here, the tendency for polarisation in perspective and in how positions are taken up. I suggested that dynamics in this mix include the nature of authorisation, trust and control (p.210), identity and belonging (p.203). I introduced the idea of working with ‘equivalent realities’ (p.208) to allow for a multi-perspectival approach to how the associate role is constructed.

The paper is of practical and conceptual value, given the expansion of contractual relations now in play for self-employed professionals, and the multiplicity of perceptions about how these relations can be organised within the complexity of the relational space. It has the potential to add to the nature of out-sourcing and supply-chain management (Child, 2015). In following themes on mutuality, dependency and autonomy begun in Paper 2, it pre-figured ideas about authorisation in the context of representational roles, later taken up in Paper 7: *Representation, Place and Equivalent Realities: an Exploration of Relational Perspectives on Representation and Meaning*.

Freedom to innovate and experiment in representation role is explored and taken into the question of credibility in the next Paper 6: *Reflections from Practice: Supervision, Knowledge and the Elusive Quality of Credibility*.

2.3.6 Izod, K., and Lawson, C. (2015) Reflections from Practice: Supervision, Knowledge and the Elusive quality of Credibility.

This application paper completed a picture of the consultant at work. It contextualised some of the key elements derived from the Relational Turn and illustrated how the negotiation and re-negotiation of meaning (Paper 3:168-9) is central to social work supervision, supporting the decision-making processes of social workers and their managers.

The paper’s intentions were to investigate the nature of credibility in role. This theme emerged from the range of practice concerns brought into supervision and consultation in our differing roles: Lawson’s experience as a practice educator and supervisor, and mine of consulting in inter-professional contexts and directing a number of experiential learning conferences for professionals working with children

and families. Data were generated from these sources at both the level of the individual and of the system.

Given these intentions, the paper stayed close to the relational dimensions of working in and with groups outlined in Paper 3:178. It provided a specific professional context against which the themes of subject-to-subject relations, management of self over time, the management of difference and the capacity to generate action from meaning, could be tested for applicability. These themes offered a framework to address the specific challenge to social work in understanding what constitutes knowledge, and remind the reader of the collective assets and perspectives of a multi-professional system (p.285).

The paper considered the imperative to know and the imperative to act as dynamics within the social work role, and viewed the supervisory process as being one which could support these challenges through the capacity to co-construct knowledge, generating meaning to support action (p.284). It raised the dilemma of utilising emotions and fantasies as data in the difficult field of protecting children, acknowledging that inter-professional work needs to embrace multiple perspectives of reality.

Exploring the nature of credibility in role, we considered the desire for and myth of singular, all-seeing positions when faced with knowledge which is at best partial, incomplete, and imbued with power by the knowledge holder (p.280). We drew attention to the everyday technologies of record keeping which can fix language and knowledge and interrupt the development of ideas and professional judgement.

The paper built on the theme and description of containment (Paper 4:60). It emphasised the importance of play (p.285), and its equivalent in social work intervention, in challenging routine (Whittle, 2009; Izod, 2009) and in developing a professional practice which acknowledges the service user as an agent of change. 'Doing things together' (p.286) requires that professionals step outside tight role definitions and relocates, at least in intention, the service user in a subject-to-subject position. Analysing the relatedness of the social worker/supervisor to their

employing agencies highlighted the potential for tension in roles, which I later developed in the concept of Role Space (*Resource-ful Consulting*:53-61).

Written for a special edition (Harlow and Izod, 2015) the paper was invited to bring a psychodynamic orientation to the edition. The practice of supervision has become linked to managerial and professional development agendas, (ibid p.235) and consequently has moved away from a close reflective practice, focussed upon the service user. Social work as a profession is losing these supervisory skills (Munro, 2011), and we built upon the reflective and relational stance embedded in Cooper (2012), and Ruch (2007) to bring to the fore elements of a relational approach to supervision. This can be daunting for practitioners and runs the risk of being lost as a skill set in the profession.

2.3.7 Izod, K. (2016) Representation, Place and Equivalent Realities: an Exploration of Relational Perspectives on Representation and Meaning.

This paper began a new cycle of exploration in relation to contemporary organisational practices, bringing new ideas to an under-theorised aspect of the group relations and organisational repertoire – representation. It drew on the post-modern aspects of boundary and role outlined in Paper 1, and brought attachment theory into the frame to consider boundaries between inner and outer worlds that can support self-authorising behaviours. It was influenced by the work developed in *Resource-ful Consulting* on presence and identity, incorporating dynamics of identity principally those of recognition (p.116). The paper updated and re-conceptualised thinking on representation (p.121), and proposed that emotions and behaviours are rooted in place: ‘place... is a formative aspect of the way we encounter organisations and undertake representational tasks within them’ (p.110). Place therefore becomes a significant aspect in our relatedness (French and Vince, 1999), and the way we take up roles. It gives a new emphasis to the ‘here’ of ‘here and now’ analysis of role.

Beginning with an organising hypothesis based on my professional experience - that place is an aspect of role that plays out in representational work – the paper updated earlier theories of representation (Aldefer, 2010; Miller and Rice, 1967) as belonging

to times when organisational belonging and loyalty were more easily defined (p.111). It proposed representation as a negotiation with one's inner world, sense of identity and sense of place.

The paper extended the theoretical range influencing relational dimensions of working in groups (Paper 3:178) through bringing attachment patterns to bear, and adding to existing literature on place and attachment (Seamon, 2014) which emphasised disruptions of place and the capacity to develop new attachments in new places. It suggested that place is an active and formative aspect of attachment and of the development of the mind through both autobiographic and procedural memory (p.115).

The paper was a progression of thinking on representation from Paper 2, and on equivalent realities from Paper 5. It proposed that the term 'equivalent realities' has the potential to acknowledge experiences that are fragmented and allow for more fluid representational behaviours (p.125).

The paper was prompted by questions in practice, in an attempt to make sense of specific experiences encountered in experiential learning events, and their equivalents in contemporary organisational practices, where representational roles may be influenced by patterns of movement/migration, and the geographical spread of organisations and their cultures.

Data sources for this paper were derived from role analyses and consultations to organisations both nationally and internationally. It drew specifically on two professional development workshops dealing with (a) the challenge of continuity to brand and reputation, and (b) systems, role and belonging in relation to sustainable urban planning.

My approach drew on aspects of grounded theory, in seeking to conceptualise the nature of representation (Holton, 2008; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Themes emerged from a variety of systems with which I engaged and from which the organising hypothesis of the paper was formed. I tested this central premise (the link between role and place) in further iterations of workshops and role analyses. I have

additionally engaged with my own reflective processes and attachment behaviours made available in memoir. I interwove the paper with ideas drawn from art to enrich the potential for impact.

2.3.8 Supplementary Pieces

Whittle, S.R. and Izod, K. (2009) *Mind-ful Consulting*.

Izod, K. and Whittle, S.R. (2014) *Resource-ful Consulting: Working with your Presence and Identity in Consulting to Change*.

These two books are submitted to illustrate impact, and are discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 3 The Relational Terrain

3.1 Introductory Comments

I have outlined in Chapter 2, a trajectory of writings each concerned with ways of thinking about group and organisational processes and taking up roles that are informed by such understandings. The publications advocate locating Group Relations practices within a post-modern conceptual framework, introducing a consultancy stance which is co-constructed, and based on active enquiry (Paper 1). Paper 3 combines ideas from developmental psychology and relational psychoanalysis to offer a framework for analysing group task and process, based upon the need for recognition, the regulation of emotion and the mobilisation of inner representations. Paper 7 integrates further the developmental approach offered by attachment theories to consider place as a significant factor in the formation of attachment patterns and ‘here and now’ experiences.

The papers additionally take contemporary working dilemmas in which the capacity to: relate to ‘the other’ and negotiate meaning with them, is central to the way in which careers can be managed (Paper 2), consultancy tasks and roles contracted for (Papers 4 and 5), and knowledge and meaning generated in the service of carrying out complex professional tasks (Paper 6).

Taken as a whole the papers develop a framework of distinct and interrelated conceptual and practice-based approaches for participating in organisational life, understanding group process, and consulting to change which I have called the Relational Terrain. I have arrived at this framework from a meta-analysis of these publications, which identifies and codifies the relational components that have emerged in the context of my thinking, writing and practice.

This framework has at its core the capacity to make and negotiate meaning with others (Paper 3:169), which is supported by the meaning afforded by four domains of theory and practice, as outlined and referenced in Chapter 1: a socio-ecological field

in relation to systems and their environments, theories of human development drawn from object and social relations, the introduction of relational perspectives to group processes, and implications for working in role. I will explore these further in Section 3.3. below.

I locate this work in the context of the systemic and psychoanalytic theories which combine to make the Tavistock Open-Systems-Psychodynamic approach, as outlined in **Figure 1 ‘Genealogy of systems psychodynamics’** (Miller, 1997, figure 10.1, p188).

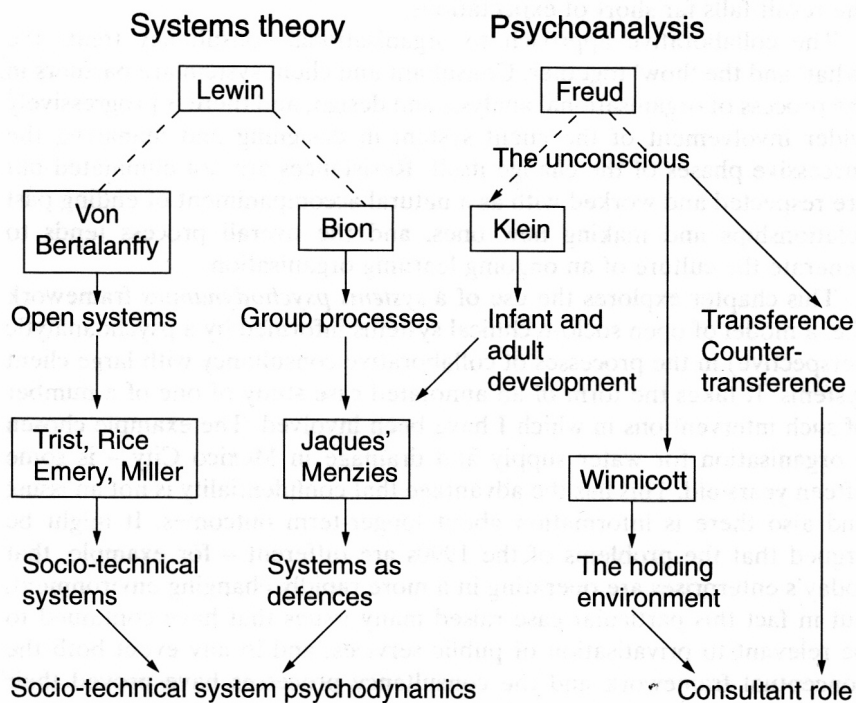


Figure 10.1 Genealogy of systems psychodynamics

Systems psychodynamics as it is depicted here, is the subject of a considerable literature with its origins in applied psychoanalytic and social sciences (Abraham, 2013; Gould, Stapley and Stein, 2001; Jacques, 1997,1955; Miller, 1997; Trist and Murray, 1993; Menzies Lyth, 1989, 1988, 1959; Lawrence, 1979, 1977; Miller and Rice, 1967; Rice, 1965; Bion, 1961; Klein, 1959; Emery, 1959; Freud, 1958, 1955; Von Bertalanffy, 1956, 1950; Winnicott, 1953; Lewin, 1947).

As stated earlier Group relations practitioners add to this picture, see Section 2.1. A broader inter-disciplinary range of theories are now being introduced, or re-introduced: anthropology, philosophy, and aspects of spirituality, amongst others (Aram and Sher, 2013).

Applications of systems psychodynamics have additionally been developed within the fields of: organisational consultancy (Diamond, 2017, 2008; Whittle and Stevens, 2013; Whittle and Izod 2009; Gould, Stapley and Stein, 2004; Huffington et al. 2004; Gabriel et al. 1999; Hirschhorn, 1999, 1997, 1988; Neumann et al., 1999, 1997; Obholtzer and Roberts, 1994); in the development of Organisational Role Analysis and Coaching (Bunning, 2006; Reed and Bazalgette, 2006; Newton, Long, and Sievers, 2006; Krantz and Maltz, 1997); and into experiential learning in higher education and professional development (Izod and Whittle, 2014; Fraher, 2005; Stein, 2004; Levine 2002; Aram and Nobel, 1999; Palmer, 1979).

The body of knowledge encapsulated in systems psychodynamics does not stand still, and Miller (2004) advocates for an updating of both psychoanalytic and organisational theories within the model.

The intersection between relational psychoanalytic theories and group process is relatively recent and occupied by contributions from the intersubjective, and interpersonal fields (Weegman, 2014, 2001; Friedman, 2014; Roseneil, 2013; Long, 2013). These theorists represent a meeting point between the Group Relations tradition, with its origins in the group work of Bion (1961), and the therapeutic tradition of the Institute of Group Analysis, with its origins in the work of Foulkes (1990), as described by Hinshelwood (2007).

3.2 The Relational Terrain: ideas and associations

In addition to my definition of *relational* and its specific usage in the Relational Turn, (Section 2.2.1) I have in mind relational as having the function of relating one

thing to another (Oxford English Dictionary, 2007). As a consultant to the process of organisational change and development, I look for ways of bringing sense to multiplicities of experience, both in my client systems and in myself. So relational, in my view, includes the idea of a search for meaning: between this one feature of organisational life and another, between one individual and another, between inner worlds of thoughts and fantasies, and outer worlds of tasks and behaviours. Systems psychodynamics involves the study of dynamics arising in the act of relating within and across the boundaries of these personal and organisational phenomena, and the exploration of their relatedness (Miller, 1997).

Relating, as a behaviour, additionally implies a communication, a telling of a story, the construction of a narrative, so that within the concept of relational lies an act of creating, acting with others, and acting between others.

Perhaps because of this sense of movement and shifting ground, I am using the word *terrain* to denote a morphology – an inner landscape with varying structures, forms and textures within which the mind can travel, together with a more constructed landscape which comprises knowledge domains; in this case, the domains of systems psychodynamics and theories of organisation and organisational change.

Put together, I aim to convey a form which is conceptual and perceptual, concerned with the organisation of relations within and between human systems, in the face of shifting bases for understanding. The vignettes offered (Paper 7:113 concerning Leela, and (Paper 1:87,94) the ‘door scenario’ are examples illustrating these shifting bases for understanding which pose such conceptual and perceptual challenges when we literally stand at thresholds of experience and meaning. I will draw attention to similar examples as I explore each of the constituent elements below.

3.3 The constituent elements of the Relational Terrain

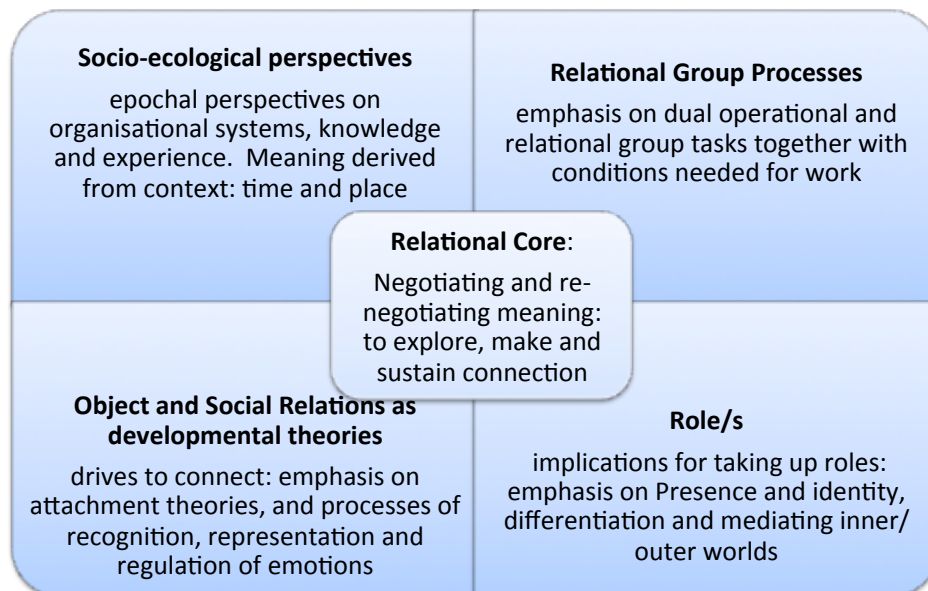
Locating one’s self in a Relational Terrain allows for an approach to understanding and being a part of group behaviours that is co-constructed (Paper1:92; Paper 3:181),

action oriented (Paper 2:81), and invites play and experimentation (Paper 3:178, Paper 6:285) as a basis for growth and change.

The Relational Terrain brings together ideas about systems and psychoanalysis. From systems, the concepts of boundary, role, authority and task (Paper 1:89; Paper 5) and the capacity to take an active and mutually interdependent stance within an open system (Paper 2:86) in a time and a place (Paper 7:117-121). From psychoanalysis, theories about mind, and human development. Relational psychoanalytic theories address the way in which one's inner world is supported by processes of mutual recognition, (Paper 3:173-4) and defences evoked through the extent to which one is able to regulate one's affect and consequent behaviour. Aspects from both these fields impact on how group process and role can be conceptualised.

Figure 2 Components of the Relational Terrain

Fig. 2 Components of the Relational Terrain



3.3:1 The Relational Core: negotiating and re-negotiating meaning

At the centre of the Relational Terrain is an intention: to promote conditions whereby human systems, be they social, political, organisational, can *construct, negotiate and re-negotiate meaning*. I describe this as the core of the Relational Turn (Paper 3:169). This requires the individual to explore, make and sustain connections between phenomena emerging in the act of relating, which arise in our inner world of thoughts, feelings and emotions, and play out in external worlds of behaviours, tasks and roles. In my view (Paper 3:171) this is supported by the capacity to take up a subject-to-subject relatedness.

Building the conditions whereby a subject-to-subject relatedness can flourish derives from those developmental features involving recognition, attuning to the emotional register of self and other and regulating one's own emotional repertoire in the presence of others. These are interactional processes, whereby promoting conditions for, and developing capabilities of, are interdependent entities.

Working from an intention to relate subject-to-subject, requires an awareness of the self-in-process (Paper 3:172), the acknowledgement of self as an open system engaged in interactions with others to think, act and be in the world (Kristeva, 1984). This contrasts with notions of self as an independent and autonomous being (Paper 1:89). In so doing, the self inhabits positions of interdependence, not relating to others as an object serving a purpose for the self, but as a similarly thinking, acting and subjective being. Vignettes (Paper 4:61-70) give examples in relation to contracting for consultancy, and (Paper 5:158–160) explore the nature of trust and control present within inter-dependent relations.

Noticing one's self in relation to others requires an ability to work away at emotions that entangle in fixed positions, and rigid stances which can result in polarisation of views and actions. These kinds of polarisations are emerging in the UK presently between national/global, young/old, north/south as disconnections between social identities play out. They are seen in the political world (May 2017)) in increasingly

extreme individual and group behaviours which objectify and fail to recognise others, and in a withdrawal from the collective and collaborative.

I propose that these interrelated intentions: negotiating meaning, subject-to-subject relations, maintaining connection in relation to polarising dynamics are core elements of a relational practice in consulting to individuals and organisations in the context of constant change. They involve emotional work in working towards a 3rd position in relation to self and others, and conceptual work accessing theoretical models to support meaning making, and to take up roles which are both sufficiently fluid and grounded to work with presence, authority and credibility (Whittle, 2014b). As a consultant to change I am additionally attentive to how these features manifest in the artefacts, structures and processes of organisational life. They present themselves in employment contracts, reward systems, policies that favour one community over another, that exclude rather than include.

This core of the Relational Terrain, derives from and is supported by:

3.3:2 A Socio-Ecological perspective

The capacity to derive meaning from context is to take an epochal perspective: presently an ontology which includes post-modern/post structural considerations on the nature of knowledge, meaning, and experience (Paper 6: 284). It poses questions on the nature of systems and their component features of boundaries, roles, tasks and authority, and how they are encountered in the context of identities, discourses, routines and the power relations embedded within them. (Paper 1:87-89). Who am I? Who are you? Where are we? are central considerations in working with one's presence and identity (*Resource-ful Consulting*:11-24; Whittle, 2014a) at this time, and this place.

This gives rise to an approach emphasising the perspectivist nature of knowledge, and the multiplicities of meanings as they emerge in language and dialogue between individuals, and as they are culturally and historically influenced. Realities arise from experiences that are fragmented, and true for the individual as they resonate

with an individual inner world, but diverse and differentiated at the organisational or social level (see vignettes Paper 5:156-158; Paper 7:112-113;122).

In terms of organisational systems, boundaries may be blurred and changing, with authority assumed and negotiated as much as determined, weaving through roles and tasks in emergent processes.

Working from this perspectivist approach in situations of societal and organisational complexity is to struggle to find focus and sustain connection (Izod, 2016b) and taking up a role in these turbulent conditions (Owers, 2009; McCann and Selsky, 1997; Emery and Trist, 1965) is to try to generate and keep open sufficient space to engage others in the co-construction of possibility and meaning, and noticing one's own essentialising tendencies (*Resource-ful Consulting*, pp.70-74).

3.3:3 Object and Social Relations as Developmental Theories

A recognition that we are born into and develop in a social world emphasises lived experience, with this mother, this family, this neighbourhood, at this time (Paper 7:117). Social theories of development are rooted in the work of the British Independent School of psychoanalysis Bowlby, Fairbairn, Winnicott, together with the American relational psychoanalytic tradition Aron and Harris, Benjamin, Mitchell, and the observational studies of Fonagy et al., Fonagy and Target, Beebe and Lachmann. References for these theorists are at Section 2.1.

Bowlby, together with the observational theorists, addresses the formation of attachments where mind develops through minute patterns of interaction which become internalised over time (Stern, 1985), and the process of mentalization, the capacity of the caregiver to attune themselves to the shifting moods and needs of the infant. Over time this impacts on the growing child's ability (a) to recognise themselves as separate and unique, (b) to regulate their emotions in particular ways, and (c) to form inner representations of experience in a procedural memory (Paper 3:167).

I propose these three aspects of social development as central dynamics to consider in relation to identity (*Resource-ful Consulting* pp.15-24), in particular to the question of how our identities are mobilised, and their role in forming interpretative structures for understanding (Marris, 1992). The capacity for sustaining connection and for sense-making struggles in situations of loss and change (ibid), such as that evoked by organisational and societal change, when attachment behaviours can be triggered in situations encountered as threatening or anxiety producing (Paper 7: 112-113).

Of importance for the Relational Terrain, is the shift toward drive theories that are object seeking and where human relations are privileged over instincts as the causal factor in development (Guntrip, 1961; Fairbairn, 1952). Winnicott's (1953) ideas of the creative space afforded through transitional phenomena lays the ground toward group behaviour supported by developmental drives for connection, (Paper 3:176-177) rather than that seen as defensively responsive to persecutory anxiety (Bion, 1961).

3.3:4 Relational Group Processes

I am proposing that the group has two tasks: its operational task, the work that it is there to do, and its relational task, that is the task to promote conditions for the functioning of the group and its capacity to construct meaning (Paper 3:176-177).

Looking at the group from a relational perspective emphasises the struggles for maturity in group functioning through its capacities for learning and forgetting (regression) as a developmental process, and its ability to engage in experimentation and play, the features of Winnicott's transitional space (1953).

I suggest the following coupling of relational intentions with group tasks:

1. Subject-to-subject relatedness: working together to find, share and create meaning with others, testing emotional states for applicability, relevance and moderation by noticing how the group relieves or accentuates emotional patterns,

and considering how or whether these impact on the formation of group patterns or rules.

2. Management of self in relation to others over time: involves a recognition of desires and creating actions to fulfil them, and relates to the developmental attributes of the group over time. Inherent in this is a sense of self that moves between temporary and enduring states, noticing how aspects of the self are mobilised.

3. Management of difference and the drive to polarities: recognises that the group is a collective of assets, knowledge and capabilities accessed through its diverse membership identities. This requires exploration of the way that different interests intersect through noticing how the capacity to recognise the other (or not) needs a capacity for working at holding a 3rd position, in one's self, and in relation to the governance of the group.

4. Generating action from meaning: necessitates keeping a relatedness to the external environment, and managing internal world/external world dynamics, through generating material for reflection. This may be supported through experimentation, play, use of metaphor, and involves the capacity to hold on to, rather than disperse intentions (French, 2001).

3.3:5 Roles

I suggest that the capacity to work at the relational tasks proposed for group functioning requires an updated conceptualisation of the nature of role. Role with its mediating function between inner and outer worlds, is at the same time, a mediating function between individual processes and group processes, such that the individual is able to act in a considered way. Bion suggests that the 'individual is a group animal at war, not simply with the group but with himself for being a group animal and with those aspects of his personality that constitute his 'groupishness' (Bion, 1961, p.131).

The tasks that I have proposed for promoting group functioning (3.3:4) are those which attend to this idea of ‘groupishness’ by supporting individuals in their choices about how they contribute to and respond to group dynamics from a perspective emphasising connection rather than war. This balance between self and group draws upon the capacity for sense-making afforded through our identities together with the ability to identify and place emotion (*Resource-ful Consulting*:15–20; Paper 7:120). Role, with its mediating function, is what ‘shapes and guides the clusters of identities that we have at our disposal’ (*Resource-ful Consulting*:58). Roles enable choices in behaviour and action (ibid).

Key aspects for working in role therefore include:

1. Acknowledging that the individual inhabits multiple identities, and engages in multiple dynamics so as to manage actively one’s presence in the group process (Paper 1:89).
2. Enlarging and enriching the spaces in which an individual can operate (*Resource-ful Consulting*:53), and attending to ways of generating and keeping open sufficient space to engage others in the co-construction of possibility and meaning. This has particular significance in the way that boundaries are felt, conceptualised and operationalized (Paper 5).
3. Undertaking the emotional work needed to attain a 3rd position in relation to self and others, recognising patterns in how one relates to ‘the other’ (Paper 3: 173), in particular the handling of difference. This involves a willingness to differentiate one’s self from others (Paper 5:159), whilst also recognising one’s needs for joining and belonging (Paper 2:84). It involves a heightened attention to the ‘here and now’ recognising the importance of place as a component of ‘here’ and cultural/ecological considerations relating to ‘now’ (Paper 7:118).
4. Undertaking the conceptual and emotional work needed to access theoretical models to expand what we can know, and to notice what we can’t (Paper 6:279-280). This supports a capacity to engage fully with presence, authority and credibility, making use of structures for containment of anxiety (Paper 4:60). These are features

of the capacity to develop one's 'self-as-instrument' (Paper 6:283; Whittle, 2014 p.122), and see below Section 3.4.

3.4 The relationality of the terrain - how the constituent elements interact

In my introduction to this section on the Relational Terrain I proposed that it constitutes a framework for participating in, and understanding group and organisational life from a relational systems psychodynamic perspective. I have described how the core of the Relational Terrain concerns itself with the construction and negotiation of meaning, and this concern is central to my practice in consulting to processes of change. Making meaning, as described in the competencies for using 'self as instrument' (ibid) requires the capacity to construct meaning, with others, in relation to a range of data sources: one's self, accessed through the dynamics of presence, identity and role; one's experiences in the here and now, there and then, with their attendant fantasies and emotional states, and making use of the theories and concepts at one's disposal.

Working in this way requires an attempt to link experience with concepts, emerging thoughts and feelings and holding them open in such a way that new perspectives can arise (Izod, 2012). The Relational Terrain supports such an approach to consultancy through its structuring of specific theories, perspectives and practices, and the dynamic processes occurring between them.

Figure 3 Constituent elements of the Relational Terrain in a dynamic process

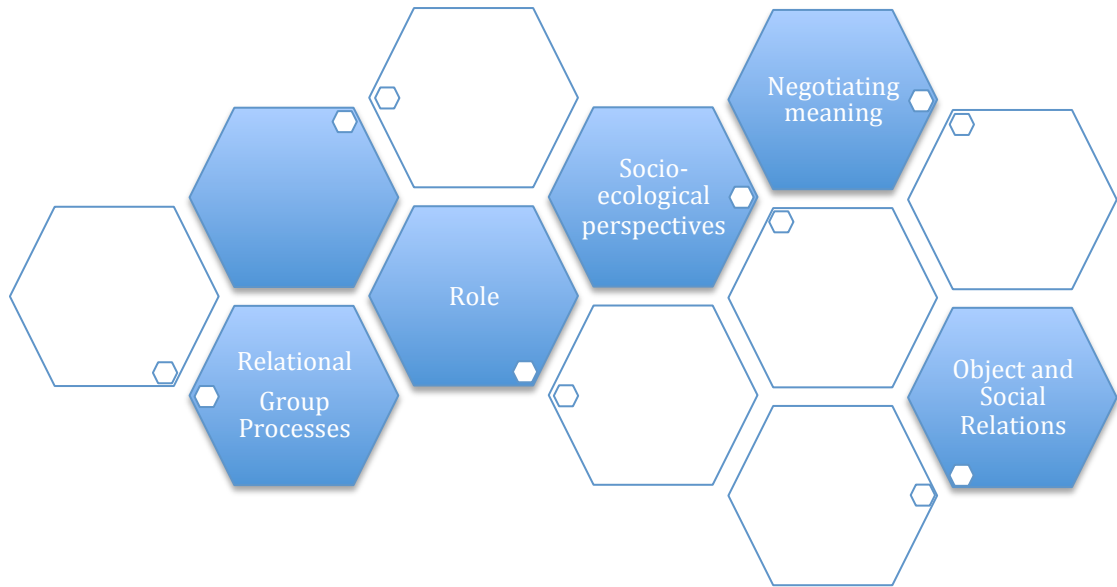


Figure 3 is an attempt to illustrate the constituent elements in a dynamic structure, as different components come into mind, and into play to develop meaning. These are not constant factors, nor checklists of considerations (although they may alert as to what is out of mind), but exist as morphological features which may make sense at one moment, in relation to one phenomenon, but shift away at another time and place.

Meaning making is a constant task, existing in the moment, and for the moment, and requires an active processing of multi-faceted phenomena. Ultimately meaning is mediated by the identities of the self-in-role, as to what makes sense and what has to be rejected as it touches upon one's inner world and the integration of perceptions and beliefs.

As a feature of the socio-ecological, and postmodern aspect of the Relational Terrain is that there is no one truth, and no one meaning, then there is also no one route to generating understanding: the 'relationality' of the terrain and the capacity to interlink and make connections across it is its defining feature. The constituent parts

of the Relational Terrain interact with each other so as to offer potential connections between inner and outer phenomena. Allowing our thinking to range across these parts, in a sufficiently open way, can bring new or ‘novel combinations’ of factors to bear, with their potential for innovation and change (Izod, 2009 p.202).

Each of the papers in this study give examples of how the central thread of the Relational Terrain interacts with its constituent parts in consultancy work, and I will use Paper 6: *Reflections from Practice: Supervision, knowledge and the elusive quality of credibility* to illustrate this interaction. This paper explores the challenge to social workers who are required to bring understanding and judgement to complex phenomena at work, where the tendency to polarise is embedded in the social work task: is the social worker there to support the family, or to protect the children? How can we hold on to both aspects as complementarities and how can we recognise if and when the one switches to the other.

As I engage my consultant self in this challenge, then my preference is not to address role, task and the capacity to bring judgement head on, but to bring a relational approach ranging across various dimensions:

1. how to work with fragments of data in complex and unpredictable human systems, noticing the desire for singular, coherent systems and reliable, predictive bodies of knowledge? This is about the nature of knowledge and how we relate to uncertainty, which at the same time will have resonances with attachment patterns and the feelings and behaviours evoked under threat.
2. how to manage the professional self in relation to inter-professional networks, when it feels that the social work stance cannot be recognised by other professionals, and the worker is lacking credibility? This is about recognition of self and other as a relational group process, and the dynamics at play in inter-professional systems when inter-dependency and the value of multiple perspectives cannot always be tolerated.
3. how to think about a family, which is already bereaved, and whose own capacity for meaning making will be depleted by that experience? This is about the

nature of loss and change, and the difficulty of staying in touch with one's own identity and resourcefulness.

As a set of questions, these are relational questions, helping to direct attention to fluid states, and the way that they inter-relate. They are examples of where the capacity to sustain connection with one's own thoughts and experiences impact on the capacity to negotiate role and task, with one's self, and in one's professional networks. They show where the consultant/supervisor/professional might direct their attention so as to turn reflective practice into meaningful action.

3.5 Why the introduction of relational approaches is needed

The question of why a relational approach is needed has emerged at varying times throughout the 15 + years in which I have been writing these publications. Hahn (2008, p.xiv) addresses this in his introduction to *Object and Social Relations*:

As with all new developments there is a tendency to deal with them in one of two ways: either to insist that there is nothing new about them, and that existing practices already include their implied critique, or to sharpen and exaggerate the differences, thereby construing the new arrival as something that is a counter, rather than an extension, and complement, to what already exists.

In Paper 3:169 *How does a Turn towards Relational Thinking influence Consulting Practice in Groups and Organisations*, I write that my conceptual ground makes a distinction between working out of a relational paradigm and a classical psychoanalytic one, and I agree with this still. I work from this perspective because it finds resonance with the 'babble' (Paper 3:163) of my inner world and because it fits with some of the challenges in consulting to groups and organisations that I encounter in my practice.

Coming to this question following the descriptions of my papers, I am of the view that this tension is embedded in my thinking about 'equivalent realities' (Paper

7:122-125), and that the relational approaches that I outline can live alongside the approaches from systems psychodynamics that already serve the learning about groups and organisations well. I think they operate as an equivalent, and that their application can be thought about as a preferred way of working with and through developmental tensions in consulting, in particular those that tend to polarise: inclusion/exclusion, intimacy/isolation, recognition/failure to recognise or be recognised.

A review of the work I have been undertaking since the writing of this commentary (see Appendix B for case examples) illustrates that one of the key questions that I work with is: ‘can this group of people working together keep going, can we/they maintain a connection with the tasks we/they need to do, without turning it into a dismissal of the other?’ (Izod, 2016b). This question arises in the acknowledgement that organisations operate in times, conditions and societies, that are complex, and raise particular challenges most notably those of survival (Layton, 2008). Sustaining connection, to be present, to join and yet differentiate are challenges for leaders, seen in the recent behaviour of politicians post Referendum 2016 (Parliament. House of Commons, 2016). Arguably we are in constant ‘epochal’ change (Cummins, 2017).

Additionally, there is a new audience for the study of and intervention in groups and organisations. Much team and group development work is now done through internal consultants (Whittle and Stevens, 2013). Individual and team coaching which has gained in popularity as a professional development and change intervention, attracts coaches from a range of professions, including human resources, project management and operational leadership. Skilled and knowledgeable in their own fields, these professionals need an understanding of group dynamics sufficient to undertake a range of process interventions (Schein, 1987, 1969) from within their own teams and organisations. This has challenged me to find ways to explore the language and frameworks for understanding the unconscious in groups and organisational systems and to make it accessible. As Hinshelwood (2007) comments, Bion’s work, whilst lending itself to organisational consultancy in terms of its application to systems, is rarely applied to practice outside of the group relations conferences. Similarly a consultancy style which relies on interpretation and which ‘underemphasises the interpersonal encounter’ (Symington,

1987 p.274; Mitchell, 1995) can be encountered as intimidating and foster regressive dynamics which can be problematic in short-term organisational work.

Chapter 4 Impact

4.1 The publications as a whole:

These publications are concerned with practice and written for practitioners. Where I have developed theories these are with practice in mind, with the intention of making complex ideas available to those who might work directly with them. So the impact of my publications is felt in the work that I do, its effectiveness in challenging and supporting conditions for change and its effectiveness in educating others to take up interventionist roles. The papers can therefore be seen collectively as an intervention into systems of practice.

Faldezer (1998) draws attention to the issue in psychoanalysis that the transmission of theory and of ideas, more than in any other scientific field, relies on an oral tradition, that of being in analysis, and of being in supervision. He proposes that the borders between theory, practice and methods are bound up in the professional (sometimes personal) relationship between trainee and trainer. I would argue that this is much the same in any professional development where use of the self is an essential tool of practice. In learning to consult from a relational systems psychodynamic position much is gained in the participatory experiences involved in such an education, working with transformational ideas and testing them for validity against one's own experience. So I want to begin this section on impact in the knowledge that many of the ideas which have emerged in these papers from practice, are thought about, contained, made sense of, accepted or rejected, and returned into the mix of practice, by the hundreds of participants I encounter on courses and group relations programmes, and by the hundreds of client systems that I have worked with over the course of my professional life.

To that end I am including *Mind-ful Consulting* (Whittle and Izod, 2009) and *Resource-ful Consulting: Working with your Presence and Identity in Consulting to Change* (Izod and Whittle, 2014) as supplementary publications. *Mind-ful Consulting* was a developmental intervention into the Tavistock Institute Advanced Organisational Society (AOCS), to support previously unpublished members to write

‘tales from the field’ of consultancy, making their own experiences available for practitioners. This publication from an international group of authors has sold well in the UK, US and Australia.

Resource-ful Consulting: Working with your Presence and Identity in Consulting to Change draws upon the authors’ experiences of designing and directing the Tavistock Institute Practitioner Certificate in Consulting and Change (P3C) and other consulting and educational work at that time. It is an example of bringing complex ideas, theories and models for practice, to an audience of organisational consultants, change agents and learning and development specialists responsible for commissioning and designing professional development programmes. With that intention, I was keen that our writing should be in handbook format, inviting an active engagement by its readers, while acknowledging the limitations of encountering practice on the page rather than in relation to others.

Both books were made available to all participants on the Practitioner Certificate in Consulting and Change 2009 – 2012, and remain recommended reading on that programme. We (Izod and Whittle) have drawn on *Resource-ful Consulting* as a core text in our subsequent professional development programmes, and I have made use of it directly with my clients who work as change professionals, and in two coaching supervision groups. It is recommended reading for the MSc. Coaching and Behavioural Change at Henley Business School; the MA. and taught Doctorate in Systemic and Psychoanalytic approaches to the organisation, Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust and for the Tavistock Institute’s Leicester Conference.

Resource-ful Consulting illustrates and evidences the way in which many of the theories introduced in the submitted papers can be applied to the task of consulting to change, and integrated within one’s practice. Themes from the papers have been reformulated as practice preoccupations, for example developing an awareness of ‘reputational risk’ (p.110) draws on the dynamics of identity, projective processes, and organisational and personal risk. Evaluation of change (pp. 82–87), draws on the importance of one’s own attachment patterns in attributing change outcomes or lack of them.

A selection of reviews of both books is available at Appendix C.

4.2 The individual publications:

Each paper within the submission made and continues to make its own impact to varying degrees, and I will give a summary of the data that I have gathered, and some of the constructions that others have placed upon them. Reviews and endorsements of a number of these papers are available at Appendix C.

4.2.1 Paper 1 Gertler, B. and Izod, K. (2004). Modernism and Postmodernism in Group Relations: A Confusion of Tongues.

Group Relations Reader 3 (Cytrynbaum and Noumair, 2004) is the latest in a series of anthologies charting contemporary thought and development in the field. The intended audience is for practitioners and participants in group relations conference work, and for faculty and students on higher education programmes on Organisational Development and Organisational Psychology in the US and UK. It is recommended reading for Group Relations conferences run by the A. K. Rice Institute, the Tavistock Institute and internationally for conferences run in the Tavistock tradition (grouprelations.com). Citations in the group relations literature include, amongst others: Rizollo (2012); Page (2008); Harding (2007); Shaffer (2006).

The paper attracted an interest at the (then) Centre for Psychosocial Studies, University of West of England, and was included in their reading group on 'relational psychoanalysis'. This later led to the conference 'Relational Thinking: connecting psychoanalysis, institutions and society' papers from which are gathered in Clarke, Hahn and Hoggett (2008). It spawned their study group on Relational Practice in Higher Education, which I attended for several years.

This approach to group relations and experiential learning is now embedded in the way that I design and consult to experiential learning events. Through my group

relations and educational portfolio I have contributed to a new generation of practitioners internationally, who have experimented through their participation in these trainings, and integrated ideas into their own event designs. (See Appendix B for details)

The paper has additionally influenced a number of individuals who have written to indicate how it has spoken to their experiences at the level of the unthought known (Bollas,1987), that it has explained something they had felt but not understood. However, the impact at institutional level has been modest. I understand this as primarily relating to the strength of tradition and orthodoxy in the field, and this continues to be addressed by co-author, Gertler (2015).

Rizzolo who cites this paper (2012) indicates by email (2016) that his paper also met with a degree of resistance. Most specifically this related to the dominance of the idea that the conference consultant had to behave in a way to maximise transference phenomena, through a ‘blank screen’ approach, and that bringing a more engaged and transparent consultancy could undermine the model, and I have also encountered this response. The question of the extent to which a relational analytic stance requires self-disclosure remains a concern both in individual and group analytic writings (Friedman, 2014; Cooper, 2012; Greenberg, 1995). My own position is that working with one’s presence and identity is offering neither a blank screen, nor taking a self-disclosing position, but is an active component of engaging with one’s clients.

4.2.2. Paper 2 Izod, K. (2006) Mutuality and Interdependence: an application to issues of career ownership and development.

This paper is published in the first of the Belgirate series (referenced Section 2.1) offering commentaries and reflections on the state of group relations theory, practice and application.

The paper is very much of its time, the language of group relations has moved on, and the ideas of mutuality and interdependence offered here, are now the everyday

language of consulting from a systems psychodynamic perspective. What was a transitional framework for linking conference experience with ‘back home’ experience is now a common feature of my own work and that of other conferences linking with broader societal issues (see C for Group Relations Program of Hope of the Amazon Civil Association).

The paper has been read by a number of my consulting clients, who are working without protocol, and typically building platforms for their work as they go along. It has been helpful for them to relate to the case examples, noticing their own resistances to being mobile around their organisations, and highlighting tensions between different models of dependency/interdependency that are operating organisationally. They have found the group relations language i.e. the authority that goes with a plenipotentiary role both challenging, and aspirational.

These concepts make their way into my consulting and coaching work, particularly for organisations which demand a high degree of mobility in international placements, but meet up against seemingly irrational resistances, and in organisations that are developing internal coaching cultures.

The Tavistock Institute read the paper as part of its internal reading group, to generate analysis of its own employment/career progression practices, and open up these themes for development.

4.2.3 Paper 3 Izod, K. (2008) The Relational Turn, implications for organisations and groups.

This paper has provided a launch pad for numerous applications in my consulting, coaching and teaching practice. I make constant use of it in developing models to explore, for example, inter-professional relations, in my former role at University of Christchurch Canterbury, (MA Inter-professional practice), for team-coaching, team supervision, experiential learning in my Visiting Tutor role at Henley Business School (MA Coaching and Behavioural Change), and for process consultation and experiential learning as a Director of the Practitioner Certificate in Consulting and

Change, Tavistock Institute. It shapes the way that I have worked with group process in all the professional development programmes and group relations conferences that I have designed or worked on since (see Appendix B for details). Most importantly it has enabled me to take experiential learning into workplaces, as a mode of enquiry, and in a way which has inspired curiosity and allowed new meanings to emerge.

The paper has yielded a number of communications from colleagues and readers:

*I read your chapter when it was first published. It's very thought provoking and theoretically dense. You also quote many of the writers who I think have recently influenced my thinking in recent years. **Colleague and tutor at Ashridge Business School***

*It is like a beautifully written programme notes for a play or an opera, full of detail, but I don't get to see the performance. **Organisational Consultant/Group Relations consultant and supervisor***

And this mixed response: *We do this already vs it is theoretically impenetrable – **colleagues in professional organisation***, a view consistent with Hahn's (2008) introductory comments to the book. I recognise this as a continuing challenge in introducing new perspectives into a strong tradition.

As a result of these comments, I decided that I would work towards making these concepts more accessible, and they influenced my decision to structure *Resource-ful Consulting* as a practitioner handbook rather than as an academic publication. The key aspects from object and social relational development have been simplified and developed further as dynamic aspects of identity – recognition, regulation, revelation (pp. 15-21). Ideas on task have been developed as 'relational tasks' that groups need to attend to alongside their operational tasks, and shaped as pro-active individual behaviours to sustain the work of the group. This is developed as teaching material for Henley Business School and is presently unpublished.

This paper has its origins in a key-note paper in the Group and Organisational stream, that I presented at ‘Relational Thinking: connecting psychoanalysis, institutions and society’ organised by the (then) Centre for Psycho-Social Studies, alongside response papers from the Institute of Group Analysis, and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia. These response papers set up a dialogue which continued over several years with colleagues at RMIT who were then developing ideas on inter-subjective approaches within a broad system’s psychodynamic approach (Harding, 2007).

4.2.4 Paper 4 Greuneisen, V. and Izod, K, (2009) Power dynamics of expertise and containment in the process of hiring and being hired.

This practice paper has embedded itself in my thinking and become a part of how I manage my presence in consulting and training. It is much used in my professional development programmes, for novice and experienced consultants alike, who all grapple with the complexities of contracting for work. I incorporate these ideas as a tool for analysing contractual relationships in supervision. The vignettes offered enable the reader to identify with the states of mind that are constructed between contractor and consultant, and provide language to describe their own scenarios.

The chapter is published in *Mind-ful Consulting* (Whittle and Izod, 2009). The central model from the paper has been updated and revised for inclusion in *Resource-ful Consulting*:69-70.

4.2.5 Paper 5 Izod, K. (2013) ‘Too close for comfort: Attending to boundaries in Associate Relationships’

This paper is in everyday use in my consulting and supervision practice, both for my own reflexive practice in clarifying aspects of my roles and identities, and in consulting to associates and others working in contractor/supplier relationships who encounter tensions in those roles. I offer the paper to my clients who can identify

with the case vignettes outlined, and gain sufficient distance from their experiences to explore them.

The paper has been especially helpful in working with clients occupying boundary or internal change-agent roles, and offered new dimensions for exploring emergent group dynamics in an 'in-house' professional development programme, where associates participated alongside employed staff.

This paper, together with Paper 2 provide contextual frameworks for my work with organisations and their staff whose business strategies require a shift towards a more entrepreneurial culture, yet where structures, processes, and rewards, struggle to support more inter-dependent/independent behaviours. I have additionally applied these ideas to the kind of issues raised in work and job design (Child, 2015) i.e. supply chain management, by providing means by which those dynamics can be explored.

A number of clients and readers of the paper have been in correspondence:

I have just read it again- it tunes with recent experience I have had working alongside another organisation where my role was expert/ maverick, mostly really enjoyable but really resonates! **Colleague and freelance consultant.**

'Too close for comfort'. Your paper - and particularly that phrase - resonated strongly with me and some of my fellow associates in describing a quality of relationship with our client in common. It offered us a perspective in our conversations, which then developed into a participative inquiry into our association with XYZ. ...

In the meantime I've attached a link (below) to our participative inquiry, in which I hope you will see the impact of your chapter. I will be submitting this Learning History as an appendix to my thesis later this year... or next. **PhD candidate working on Associate relationships – at Ashridge Business School**

The book as a whole was written to provide theories and practice examples of consulting within one's own organisation. This internal role, as Whittle, (2013) introduces, has been the subject of commentators looking in from the outside, either as external consultants, or researchers, and the practitioner voice from the inside, or from the margins, has been lacking.

4.2.6 Paper 6 Izod, K and Lawson, C. (2015) Reflections from practice: supervision, knowledge and the elusive quality of credibility.

This paper which address issues arising in social work supervision, makes its way into much of my consulting, group relations and experiential learning, as a way of holding in mind that there is no one system, and that knowledge is at best fragmentary. I specifically make use of the ideas on 'credibility' and what that constitutes, in my role consultations and activities to support professional judgement.

Written to provide a psychodynamic perspective on supervision, the paper was viewed as an energising and innovative contribution by peer reviewers.

Lawson has since presented the paper and debated these ideas as a CPD activity for Practice Educators in the Midlands. I have engaged with a number of readers who have expressed interest in the paper and its ideas through ResearchGate.

4.2.7 Paper 7 Izod, K. "Representation, place and equivalent realities: an exploration of relational perspectives on representation and meaning".

This paper has had a long gestation, and although only published recently, interest in the key themes of attachment to place, representation and equivalent realities has sparked and accumulated, with data from my work being integrated into the paper and ideas from writing built into practice.

Specific examples of work on attachment to place include workshops for:

KTH business school, Stockholm (2013/2014) with its application to Sustainable Urban Systems; Social Science in the City, UWE Bristol's social engagement programme (2014), and Guildford Institute (2015) with an application to the consultation process for the Local Development Plan.

Examples of work on representation and equivalent realities have most specifically been developed for University of Christchurch Canterbury and experiential work on inter-professional relations. I have developed a model, 'Matrix in the Mind', after Armstrong's Organisation in the Mind, (2005) and Ghoshal and Bartlett' mental matrices for global organisational structures (1998). This is available as teaching material and is presently unpublished.

Place as a significant aspect of working in the 'here and now' and of role analysis, is an embedded part of my role consultations and teaching. The perspective that derives from attachment theories contributes to my thinking about the nature of curiosity (Fisher, 2011) and is further written up (*Resource-ful Consulting*: 85–87) with reference to the dynamics of evaluation.

The paper has proved to be a powerful projective device through which the reader can bring their own associations. I have participated in discussion of the paper at a 'virtual reading group' organised by the Chicago A. K. Rice group, and invited to write a book chapter making a clinical connection with these ideas. Additionally the paper has evoked questions about seeking asylum, the nature of temporary refugee communities, and 'knowing your place'.

Here are comments from anonymous peer reviewers:

'I found it to be a refreshing application of psychoanalytic theory to organisational consulting. It provided an original perspective on aspects of taking up role and of representation of organisational symbolism in a fresh and very useful way...'

'This is a highly original and extremely interesting paper. It takes a scholarly approach to a theme not much considered in organisational literature, yet very relevant to the work of the consultant. I particularly appreciated the personal

anecdotes and the learning developed for these as a leitmotif to the process being described’.

4.3 Impact on Practice

The following examples of consultancy illustrate some of the key elements of working from within a ‘relational terrain’ and how they help to effect change: they come from my own practice in 2015 – 2016.

1. An application of relational psychoanalytic theories to the understanding of group and organizational behaviour was able to help an internal consultant explore the difficulties he encountered in designing and setting up an integrated statutory/3rd sector initiative. Paying attention to how he was ‘constructing the other’ enabled the consultant to bring an approach which recognized the interdependency between the sectors, and to challenge the them/us mindset which was prevailing. Recognising that the context of potential parliamentary reform provided a ‘mind-ful void’ (Izod, 2009) for innovation, allowed this client to take up a more collaborative and experimental role of enquiry in a widely dispersed system.

2. Utilising the idea of temporary, fragmented systems, that cannot constitute a coherent whole (Paper 6), together with work on my own identity as a stakeholder in this system, helped two directors to conceptualise their roles as joint-directors of a merged financial services organisation, operating on two different global platforms. They (and members of their executive team) were able to allow each other more role space (*Resource-ful Consulting*:53-61) to take up differentiated approaches to their leadership, and to use this to present themselves with authority within their global matrices. This work depended on the key players being open to multiple perspectives and the voices of multiple agents and attempting to sustain that position in merger dynamics which were seeking to shut down difference.

These are combinations of theories, models and the ability to utilise one’s identities in role. They occur in situations of significant change, and of high expectation.

Clients find this work accessible and helpful, and professionals working in change value the capacity to make robust judgements about how to intervene.

5.1. Professional biography and identity

Working with organisational change requires an ability to take up a role in an interdisciplinary domain which can encompass political, technological, economic, social and human sciences at its most broad. My own practice draws upon the combination of a psychosocial awareness of behaviour in groups and organisations, theories of organisational development and change, and knowledge of and skill in consultancy practices to effect such change (Neumann, Holti and Miller, 1999) and as described in the ‘tales from the field’ in *Mind-ful Consulting*.

I describe my formative trainings in social work and consultancy (Paper 3:165-165) as coming from a socio-political (Townsend, 1975; Pinker, 1971) and systemic framework (Minuchin, 1973; Pincus and Minahan, 1973) prevalent in social work in the 1970s (and a clinical training in social work from the Tavistock Clinic in the 1980s, based on Klein (1976) and Bion (1970, 1961)). My training in consulting to change with the Tavistock Institute, in the mid 1990s introduced me to socio-technical systems psychodynamic perspectives, emphasizing the relatedness between individuals and the technologies of their working environments (Abraham, 2013; Miller, 2004; Holti, 1997; Trist and Murray, 1993), alongside theories of change and development (Cummings and Worley, 2008; Beech et al., 2004; Stacey, 2000; Buchanan and Badham, 1999; 1996; Mintzberg, 1991, 1983; Chin and Benne, 1969). These professions are interventionist: they depend upon a capacity to use ‘one’s self as an instrument’ (Izod, 2015 p.283; Whittle, 2014b p.122; Cheung Judge 2001); and they require the ability to act from a range of theories, methods and skills, in the moment, so as to bring about change in the relating of these approaches to the human dilemmas being encountered.

My methodological approach derives from my career of 40 years which has been steeped in the socio-technical approaches outlined above, and from the identities that I inhabit and work with, which provide me with a range of ‘interpretative structures’ (*Resource-ful Consulting*: 15; Marris, 1982). Since the early 2000s I have embraced

a more relational and intersubjective approach, Aron and Harris, Benjamin, Mitchell, (references for these theorists are at Section 2.1), which I have integrated into the socio-technical systems perspective and which is the subject of this submission. As the growing field of psychosocial studies emerges, then I have additionally drawn from their approach and methodologies (Clarke and Hoggett, 2009; Hollway, 2008; Hollway and Jefferson, 2000).

My professional identity is one of a consultant to organisational change and professional development, working with and through models of planned and emergent change (Whittle, 2014a; Kolb and Frohman, 1970; Cummings and Worley, 2008). I work in a cycle of exploration, learning, and dissemination, through the combination of activities that I undertake. This involves exploring organisational needs and dilemmas so as to effect change with my client systems, bringing and disseminating learning from that experience into my educational activities and writing, and integrating that new learning into my consulting practice. I am recognised in my field as someone who straddles practice and academia and my writing emerges from a practice base, drawing on theories that have meaning for me, and attempting to convey ideas in ways that readers can recognise as relevant to their practice.

Central to my practice are capacities for reflection and reflexive practice (Crociani-Windland, 2003): paying a heightened attention to thoughts, and feelings in a critical reflection in the moment; being at the edge of knowledge (French and Simpson, 2000); and noticing one's own behavioural responses and the mobilisation of identities to make sense of experience (*Resource-ful Consulting:15*). I work with my imagination, being open to ideas, images and fantasies that the work evokes in me, and seeking some meaning in them, and draw on a capacity for empathy – thinking my way into colleague's and client's perspectives and aiming to understand what is at stake for them. These aspects of my work allow me to follow my curiosity, to listen for continuities and discontinuities in narratives, to notice what is absent as much as what is present.

I work in a tradition of action research with client systems, attempting to surface and illuminate the factors that influence and govern their structures, processes and

behaviours (Gayá Wicks and Reason, 2009; Cochlan, 2003, 2002, 2001; Eden and Huxham, 2002; Somekh, 1995; Heller, 1993; Lewin, 1947). I attempt to generate shifts and changes in the way that problems are perceived and enacted and bring a reflective practice to action science (Argyris, Putnam and McLean Smith, 1985) with the intention of generating knowledge that can be used to produce action. My aim is to notice the emotional impress and form (Bollas, 2011) of the encounter, and its consequent enactment (Izod, 2003; Ellman and Moskowitz, 1998) where the bringing of thoughts and feelings, recognised or not, into action, are examined for meaning in relation to the research process.

In order to access this material for myself and with my clients/course participants, I make use of re-presentational material in the form of narratives/story telling, storyboarding (Adamson et al., 2006; Brown, Gabriel and Gheradi, 2009, Gabriel, 2004), drawings and poetry, and peer and supervisory discussions. These can amplify and reposition the central questions for enquiry, and support the capacity to relate to, or access a multiplicity of perspectives and voices. My emerging identity as a poet also provides me with insights as to what is surfacing into consciousness, and reveals patterns over time.

5.2. Methodology employed for this study

The publications presented for this study have not set out to comprise a coherent whole - should this even be possible, rather have responded to questions arising in my practice, and within the field of consulting to change and professional development. I am regarding them as artefacts which embody my thinking over a period of time, and which hold meaning for myself and others who interact with them. Whilst these artefacts are finished, in the sense that I cannot change them at this point, they are also fragments, and I did not begin this study with any expectation that they might fit, as a jigsaw, but rather that aspects of 'the relational' might become explicit, rather than tacit, and to explore what that might then constitute as a terrain of relational practices.

The papers have all been written from experiences in my consulting and educational work, and include illustrative and comparative case studies (Berg, 1990). Such data are gathered in the context of work: consulting, coaching and teaching, and not in research interviews with research subjects. All these activities inherently are research activities, where data have the purpose of enabling change, and are co-constructed so that all players are both subjects and agents of change. Research is therefore: working in the moment to make sense of experience, conversation rather than interview or interrogation, working with both ‘here and now’, and ‘there and then’ material for sense-making, along with accessing theories that might describe what is going on. The linking factor is one’s self in role.

The meta-analysis across these publications engages with methodologies from the psychosocial repertoire (Clarke and Hoggett, 2009; Hollway, 2008). I bring a mindful (Whittle, 2009) self to bear, noticing how the papers now sit within my experience, and acknowledging the interplay between the psychic experience and the social experience (Clarke, 2008). This involves my own capacity to be present and available to my work, and to generate data that I aim to be developmental and illustrative rather than defensive.

Given that an intention of this commentary is to illustrate a narrative arc of development then I have undertaken a narrative analysis (Silverman, 2001) of the presented publications as a whole: that is to look at what lies in, and between them. I have undertaken a close reading of each of the publications and made a selection of themes which have emerged as constituting a terrain of relational theories and practices.

I have been aware, in this process of the pull to privilege narrative coherence over incoherence, and the struggle to recognise that there is no one meaning and no one reality. The selection of themes for discussion, has inevitably meant that much detail has been placed in the background, to allow the relational to be located in the foreground, and there is certainly data that are contextual and worthy of their own deeper analysis, for example the nature of power relations in contemporary working practices, which lies in the background of each of these papers.

Publishing one's work as a consultant and educator inevitably requires a degree of 'fictionalising'. Confidentiality for one's clients and their organisations has to be maintained, and an element of substitution (gender/sector/role) is involved in the writing of a case study. For this reason, the texts are incomplete, revisable, and belong to a time and place (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). For the purpose of building theory from case material I have drawn upon Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007), Weick (1989), and Whetton (1989).

Part of the work is to assess impact and relevance. I have sought further dialogue with others in my professional network; here at HASS, and at the Tavistock Institute where I presented these ideas as part of their public engagement programme 'Food for Thought' (Izod, 2016b). Appendix B gives examples of workshops, teaching and experiential learning events influenced by features from the Relational Terrain, and examples of work with client systems where this approach has been both relevant and enabling of change.

However, in so far as this is a 'retrospective' study, then I understand that primarily meaning is constructed through me and with others, and what they and I can believe is valid, at this particular moment.

Chapter 6 Concluding remarks

This study and its selected publications have demonstrated my contribution to the field by providing:

- 1 An updated and extended range of theories-in-use (Argyris, 1980) in the practice of Group Relations, which aligns this form of experiential learning more closely to contemporary organisational practices and which can be applied to work-based scenarios.
- 2 An application of relational psychoanalytic theories to the understanding of group and organisational behaviour, providing a new framework 'The Relational Terrain' for analysing group and organisational dynamics and the behaviour of individuals within groups.
- 3 Concepts from this relational framework which develop the capacity to think about and manage one's self in professional roles, in relation to contemporary organisational challenges.

This work has involved a foray into the outputs of my thinking and practice as it has evolved over the past 15+ years. It is an emotional journey, as much as an intellectual one, and memories relating to the generation of ideas with client systems and co-workers, and my own investment in those ideas have inevitably entangled with, and become part of the narrative. Engaging with my practice in this way has required engaging with aspects of relational practice as I have espoused it: recognising that ideas and practices are formulated with colleagues, in particular contexts, in relation to particular tasks, and where I am also in a position of making revisions to my sense of self so as to differentiate my own position and contribution.

Looking at this commentary as narrative, I change from the position of a central narrator co-constructing plot lines with my clients, to the creator of singular or jointly authored texts, and finally to a commentator on a composite of texts. Each of these processes allows for an increasing space between experience and understanding as I attempt to establish a body of thinking and practice from these textual fragments.

Collectively the papers illustrate a knowing attempt to influence a field of practice that is strongly rooted in tradition, whilst also, for much of that time, being on the boundaries of that tradition: in other words, to attempt ‘change from within’ (Whittle and Stevens, 2013). The impetus for this has come from my teaching and consultancy work, where participants and clients have wanted to access theories that help them understand organisational dilemmas, and access models that help them to intervene. This is not a position that stands still. The desire to grasp complexity is a strongly motivating force, which encourages me to read, think, make links between thoughts, emotions and tasks and to bring these as ideas into conversations with clients. I also have felt a need for change, that goes beyond the tried and tested.

The Relational Terrain, as I have outlined it here, emerges from these theoretical and practice-based considerations, as I have written about them or communicated them in workshops or in direct work. As I have engaged in the research for this study, I am aware of the passage of time: some of these papers would benefit from revision and updating, and this is particularly so for Paper 1: *Modernism and Postmodernism in Group Relations, a Confusion of Tongues*, where organisational practices and the design of group relations conferences have not stood still. Paper 2: *Mutuality and Interdependence: an application to issues of career ownership and development* also reminds how much expectation of life-long careers, and the nature of employment has changed. Now is a moment when ‘epochal’ change is being mooted (Cummins, 2017), requiring a constant refinement to the assumptions on which theories and practices are based.

Since beginning on this commentary (Jan 2016) I have become aware of a ground swell of activity in ‘taking stock of current developments’ (Fotaki, Long and Schwartz, 2012), and bringing relational theories to groups and organisations which encompass intersubjective and interpersonal approaches. These include the development of practices in socio-analysis and the associative unconscious (Long, 2013) and the work of Weegman (2014, 2016) who is advocating a paradigmatic shift to align IGA practices more closely with contemporary social needs and demand.

In organisational consultancy, Diamond (2017) has brought 'relational attachment' theories to bear on the nature of organisational identity, and in group therapy, Grossmark and Wright (2015), are exploring the impact of relational approaches on the way therapists relate to groups and make use of their own experiences.

Much of the work cited above, is about developing theories of 'mind' and better understanding the nature of unconscious group phenomena. This has not been my approach, and my theory is much more one of 'interaction' with an intention to strengthen the individual in role, so as to be able to move out from a 'do or be done to' position (Benjamin, 2004), taking up agency, and asserting a position. However, further work is indicated on thinking about what constitutes a group unconscious, in consulting to groups from this perspective, when the unconscious – as I view it from a relational perspective, relates to lived and forgotten experience, noticed in the routines that emerge from the procedural memory. Further work is needed to explore the kinds of developmental concerns and needs that typically arrest development, or create tensions in group and organisational life, and how these manifest, so as to help with their recognition and codification. Most frequently I notice the tension between connection and disconnection to one's self, the task, to colleagues, to sectors, in the context of organisational viability, and economic threat. This is for further research.

Chapter 7 Statements and Acknowledgements

7.1. Statement pertaining to joint authorship and other types of collaboration

Paper 1: Modernism and Post-modernism in Group Relations: A confusion of Tongues

The paper is co-written with Dr B. Gertler, PhD. Our collaboration dates from 1999, when we were both members of the Advanced Organisational Consultation Society, an alumni society of the Tavistock Institute's AOC programme. Gertler is a psychoanalyst trained with the William Alanson White Institute, New York, and a faculty member for their (then) Organization Program, whilst I was a faculty member for the MA in Advanced Organisational Consultation, Tavistock Institute/City University. Between 2000 and 2005, we worked jointly on a number of workshops and conferences in both the US and the UK. Between 2000 and 2010 I was Visiting Scholar at the William Alanson White Institute, having the opportunity to meet and discuss ideas with a number of the relational theorists working there at that time.

This paper was jointly conceptualised and authored, bringing together our different experiences of conference work in the UK, the US and in Europe. Gertler wrote the relational psychoanalytic material and I wrote the organisational theory, although we jointly developed the thinking behind those perspectives.

Paper 4: Power Dynamics of Expertise and Containment in the process of hiring and being hired

This paper is co-written with Dr. V. Grueneisen, PhD, psychoanalyst, training analyst DPG, IPA, organisational consultant and (then) Chairperson of PCCA (Partners in Confronting Collective Atrocities). Dr. Grueneisen and I were both participants in the Tavistock Institute's AOC programme 1995-7 and members of its Alumni.

The paper was jointly conceptualised, arising from our peer supervision and discussion of mutual concerns. We separately provided case examples from our practice and each wrote two vignettes: Grueneisen focussed on issues of containment, and I focussed on issues of expertise.

Paper 6: Reflections from Practice: Supervision, Knowledge and the Elusive Quality of Credibility

This paper emerges from a joint exploration and reflection of the themes, and draws on our individual perspectives and data. I wrote the paper, with case material input and feedback from Chrissie Lawson.

Chrissie Lawson is a Practice Educator working with Social Work students who are completing placements in Local Authority Children and Families Teams. We were both participants on the West London Institute of Higher Education Certificate in Qualification in Social Work 1977 – 79, and have remained colleagues engaged in each other's learning since.

Resource-ful Consulting: Working with your Presence and Identity, (supplementary item)

This book is jointly authored with Dr. Susan Rosina Whittle, BA, MSc., PhD., MIC. Dr Whittle was my academic supervisor for my MA (2004) and we have since worked closely together as faculty on the Tavistock Institute MA in Advanced Organisational Consultation and Change, and latterly as founders and Directors of the Tavistock Institute Practitioner Certificate in Consulting and Change. We are the joint editors of Mind-ful Consulting 2009, and have additionally collaborated in delivering professional development programmes to specific clients.

The conceptualisation, 'working with one's presence and identity', was jointly developed, and we have written individual chapters and joint chapters, each named to illustrate the lead author.

7.2. Statement setting out how the research training requirement has been met

The Graduate School Accredited Learning Panel (meeting 28.3.17), confirmed my accredited learning for 60 M.Level Credits from prior learning: MA Advanced Organisational Consulting and from a portfolio of learning and teaching events as matched against the university's modules Research in Contemporary Contexts and Researching Beneath the Surface.

7.3. Statement confirming which part of the work submitted, if any, has been or is being submitted for another academic award.

No part of this submitted work has been or is being submitted for another academic award.

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Chapter 8 References and Appendices

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Appendix A Publications, Presentations and Scholarly Activity

Publications

Izod, K. (2016) Representation, Place and Equivalent Realities: an Exploration of Relational Perspectives on Representation and Meaning. *Organisational and Social Dynamics*. 16 (1), pp. 110–128.

Harlow, E. and Izod, K. (2015) Guest Editorial. *Practice: Social Work in Action, special edition on supervision*. 27 (4), pp. 235–238.

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I am additionally a published poet.

Workshops and Presentations

‘4,446 books on Amazon on relational practice, but what does it mean? presentation at Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, Food for Thought public engagement programme, September 2016,

‘Who needs to be here and who doesn’t? The challenges of defining who to involve in consulting for change’ Presentation to Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Alumni, April 2016

‘Exploring 'reputational risk': working with one's identity as an asset’ workshop with Doctoral candidates, Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust, December 2015

‘Evocations of Guildford: Place, Identity and Belonging. Guildford Institute, public workshop in the context of Consultation process to the Local Plan. May 2015

‘Reputational Risk: working with your presence and identity’ for MSc Psycho-Social studies (Integrated Professional Development) October 2015 and Dec. 2014 University of West of England

‘Attachment to Place: Identity, Representation and Equivalent Realities’: Conference paper (November 2014) Opus annual conference. London

‘Evocations of the City: Identity, Belonging and Representation’. Social Science in the City presentation, June 2014. University of West of England.

‘Perceptions of People and Places’ April 2014 and 2013: a workshop on attachment to the built environment. Executive Programme in Sustainable Urban Systems, KTH Executive School: Stockholm

‘Identity, Representation and Equivalent Realities’ May 2013, Workshop for PhD students and staff, Centre for Understanding Social Practices, University of West of England

‘Attending to Group Dynamics in Group Supervision’ November 2012 Henley Business School, University of Reading.

‘Coaching and Social Work: a reclaiming and a re-combination’ Guest Speaker, Hybridity, Creativity and ‘New Professionalism’ ESRC HEIF sponsored conference, University of Chester. June 2012

‘Supporting political mentors’, panel speaker, launch of Political Mentoring Toolkit, Local Government Group, London Oct 2011

‘Making More of Coaching Teams’ Guest speaker, with Ali Gill at Henley Business School, Annual Coaching Conference May 2011

‘Creating the conditions for Team Effectiveness’ Guest Speaker at Conference for banking sector sponsored by Crelos Consulting, ‘Can coaching be used to accelerate organisational change?’ London, Oct 2010

Professional Development Workshop, International Society for Psychoanalytic Understanding of Organisations, ‘A break with routine: creating the space for innovation in coaching interventions’ Elsinore, Denmark 2010.

‘Negotiation: the management of unique and distributed assets, Collaboration: the management of shared and emergent assets’ A workshop to explore competing stakeholder interests for Collaborative Doctoral Award/AHRC students, Queen Mary’s College. London October 2010, 2009.

Professional Development Workshop, ‘Retrieving and Recycling: Enriching Narratives for Continuing Professional Life’. A workshop for coaches and consultants working with life-cycle dynamics. Sponsored by Royal Melbourne Institute for Technology, Melbourne, and Group Relations Australia. Melbourne 2009

‘Mutuality and Interdependence: an application to issues of career ownership and development’. Conference Paper at ‘Group Relations – Reviewing and Exploring Theory, Design and Application’, Belgirate Italy, Nov 2003,

Professional Development Programmes – in public domain

- 2009– 2012 Director, The Tavistock Institute Practitioner Certificate in Consulting and Change
- 2007 – 2011 Co-Director, the Tavistock Institute Certificate in Coaching for Leadership and Professional Development.
- 2007 – 2011 Programme Director, Certificate in Coaching Skills for Political Leaders, commissioned as a bespoke programme for a government client.

Academic Roles

- 2014 - present Visiting Research Fellow, Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences, University of West of England.
- 2012 – present Visiting Tutor, Henley Business School
MSc. Coaching and Behavioural Change, and Certificate in Coaching Supervision
- 2013 - 2016 External Examiner, University of East London, for MA in Consultation and the Organisation: Psychoanalytic Approaches, Tavistock and Portman Trust
- 2008 - 2014 Visiting Lecturer, Canterbury Christchurch University
MSc Interprofessional Health and Social Care.
- 2004 – 2009 Module Faculty, City University/Tavistock Institute
MA Advanced Organisational Consultation and Change.
- 2001 - 2010 Visiting Scholar, William Alanson White Institute
Organization Program, New York

1998 – 2007 Visiting Lecturer, University of Westminster and Director of experiential Master's level modules: Inter-Agency Dynamics

1996 –1998 Part time lecturer, University of Surrey
Diploma in Psychodynamic Counselling

Peer Reviewer for: Human Relations, Socio-Analysis, Organization Studies

Professional Memberships:

Member of the Tavistock Institute Association, ownership and governance body of the Tavistock Institute

Registered Social Worker, Health and Care Professions Council (retired 2016)

Member Association for Psychosocial Studies

Member Opus, an Organisation Promoting Understanding in Society

Appendix B Practice

Group Relations (and associated developmental activities in the field) and examples of organisational consultation and professional development activities

MSc Coaching and Behavioural Change, Henley Business School,

University of Reading: Module Understanding groups and Organisational Behaviour.

Leader experiential event, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013.

Practitioner Certificate in Consulting and Change, (P3C) Tavistock Institute

Double task learning laboratories each module

Director: 2012, 2011.12, 2011/12, 2009/10

Double task learning laboratories (in-house programme for commercial client)

Director: 2014/15, 2013/2014

William Alanson White Institute,

Mid-Term experiential event for staff, students and alumni.

Organizational Risk: Comfort, Conscience, Critique

Collaborative working event, 2010

William Alanson White Institute, New York

Internal Conference

‘Relational Matrices: Understanding and Engaging with core concepts from the Group Relations Body of Knowledge’

Director, 2004

Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust

‘Facing the Complex Realities’

Director working conference, 2009, 2010 and 2012

University of Christchurch Canterbury

MA, Interprofessional Health and Social Care

‘The psychodynamics of interprofessional practice and organisational development’

Module Staff member, and leader 4-day experiential events

2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2008

University of Westminster,

School Integrated Health/Thames Valley University/Tavistock Institute

‘Inter-Agency dynamics’

Director: 2006, 2005; Staff Member: 2007

Management Institute, Sweden

‘Systems for Executive Coaching - within the context of action research methodologies.’

Workshop Leader, 2006

Tavistock Institute Sub Committee on Group Relations

Member 2000 – 2007

Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust

10 x weekly double-task study group for Adult Psychotherapy Trainees

Consultant, 2005, 2003 and 2001

University of Westminster, School Integrated Health/Tavistock Institute

‘Pride and Prejudice in Organisational Life’,

Director, September 2004, 2003, 2002; Staff Member 2001, 2000, 1998.

Tavistock Institute: The Leicester Conference:

Staff Member: 2003, 2002

Tavistock Institute: The Leicester Conference Study Days:

Staff Member: 2002, 2001

University of Hertfordshire Business School, MBA programme

‘Group Behaviour’,

Staff member 2003, 2002

University of Columbia, New York,
‘Self and Systems Management in Complex Organizations’
Associate Director 2001.

Tavistock Institute, Women’s Work,
Leading consultant, 2000

IAS International Conference, Holland,
Staff Member, 2000

Trans European Management Conference, Germany,
Staff Member, 2002, 2001, 2000 1999.

Opus/Tavistock /Portman Trust
‘Containment for Growth’
Staff Member, 2001 and 1998; Steering Committee Member 1997 – 1999

Metanoeia/Pohto Finland
‘Shadow Consultancy in Action’
Staff Member 1998

Consulting for Change

A selection of consultancy activities undertaken 2015 - 2017
(see also examples Section 4.3)

- Leading a ‘didactic supervision group’ for a small group of internal consultants for an international bank, wishing to integrate narrative/story telling approaches into its consulting repertoire.

- Consulting to an NHS primary care team, encountering interpersonal conflicts in relation to changes implicated by shifting government policies and priorities.
- Together with a colleague, designing and delivering a certificated professional development programme for professionals and leaders in a European knowledge-based organisation. (2 x1yr programmes)
- Member of Advisory group to research project 'loss of political office' Local Government Association/ Open University
- Providing subject expertise to an appointment panel seeking to appoint to an executive position in a consulting/teaching institution.
- Coaching a Finance Director in an international investment bank, attempting to improve staff relations.
- Consulting to a Sexual Assault Referral Centre, on the nature of the work they do, the impact it has on them and the way they organise themselves to provide a service.

Appendix C: Additional material: reviews, communications

Reviews for

Izod, K. and Whittle, S.R. (2014) *Resource-ful Consulting: Working with your Presence and Identity in Consulting to Change*.

1. Timothy Kitching, Chartered Management Institute -excerpt

‘Well referenced, the content is grounded in both theory and practical experience.... Its seven chapters are laced with figures, boxes and analytics intended to share real world experience, illustrate ideas and, importantly, help enable the reader to know themselves better’ ‘I would recommend Resource-ful Consulting to consultants willing to take the time to think deeply about themselves and prepared to challenge their preconceptions.’

‘The key challenge is embedded at page 89 of the book; reading the book will not in itself make the reader a better (“more resourceful”) consultant, to achieve that requires action now and not at some point in the future. ‘Good: Worth reading by a manager or leader.’

2. Carol Jarvis, Bristol Business School (in Organisational and Social Dynamics, Vol 15, No. 1. Karnac 2015) excerpt

‘It is clearly written for a consultant-practitioner readership and wears its depth of scholarship lightly’

‘...its offer of encouragement to work through consulting dilemmas in what they describe as “asset-based approach to consulting” is of practical value to consultants seeking to effect change’

‘A strength of the book is the way the authors draw on ideas, theories and concepts to propose practical “analytics” designed to encourage resourceful application.’

‘I enjoyed the way the authors stick to their purpose and role model not getting hung up on their preoccupations; it takes confidence and is the hallmark of a good consultant when you clearly know your stuff inside out to resist the need to flaunt it; to show rather than tell, and not step into the way of the client’s learning.’

‘Alongside its target readership of experienced consultants, engaging with the ideas, exercises, and analytics in this book could provide valuable preparation and insight for those embarking on an experiential programme.

A recommended read.’

3. Amazon Fr Resource-ful Consulting Anatole Damerique

This book looks like a simple, practical manual for consultants. It is that, and much more.

Written in a comfortable and lively style with numerous short cases, guidelines, tables, and bullet points, it is at the same time full of the complexity and richness that characterize the Tavistock approach to consulting. Working through the book (readers are indeed invited to work, to think, to write and to learn from their own experience as they read), one is driven to explore a number of standard questions for coaches and consultants. These form the backbone of the book: Space, identity, presence, role, practice, and change. Yet the authors (who had the courage to write the book as a team, with two distinct voices doing a shared task - a situation familiar for some consultants) clearly have an additional agenda, which is teaching the readers to explore comfort and discomfort in all these areas, and to learn to understand our privileged ways of working and to challenge them as needed. Just as the reader starts to think, now I've got it! - the authors arrive with a challenging question or a new set of points for consideration that open up the topic. The final chapter, devoted to future developments, is of course about future developments on

which the authors are working, but it is also a model of how consultants can think of themselves as continuously developing as they move into their professional futures.

The book is a challenge, to be read, marked and inwardly digested gradually. It is based on a coaching and consulting training program originally run by the Tavistock Institute, and it probably does a good job of capturing the type of work and interactions one could expect in such a course.

Reviews and endorsements for

Whittle, S. and Stevens, R., eds., (2013) *Changing Organisations from Within: Roles, Risks and Consultancy Relationships*: Farnham: Gower

1. Book endorsement

'This impressive work deepens our understanding of this basic, yet insufficiently considered aspect of organizational change, engaging in the change process as an insider. This work is indispensable for managers, consultants, students and others who want to understand the change process while functioning in a role that has a physical or psychological attachment to the organization. Susan Whittle and Robin Stevens have collected readings that cover an array of the psychological pitfalls and psychodynamics that change agent's experience. This is a must read for those wanting to look at the process of organizational change, not from the outside, but from the inside.' ----- William Czander, St. Thomas Aquinas College, USA

2. A Great Contribution 26 July 2013 By James Krantz – Published on Amazon.com

Bringing this perspective into dialogue with the challenges of internally led change efforts is a great contribution to the field. Internal change agents face so many unique and complex challenges. Many efforts flounder because change agents are stymied by the forces that arise from these complex crosscurrents. These essays will be invaluable for anyone trying to navigate these waters or advise others in that

situation. As an external consultant I also found many of the insights and ideas helpful. Highly recommended

Review for

Clarke, S., Hahn, H., Hoggett, P. (2009) eds. *Object Relations and Social Relations: The implications of the relational turn*, London:Karnac

Louis Rothschild: excerpts from

<http://www.apadivisions.org/division-39/publications/reviews/object-relations.aspx>

...What at first left me wondering if I had mistakenly found a primer to relational psychoanalysis, fortunately changed into something remarkably different once I let myself sink into volume. With chapters on working with disenfranchised clients in the welfare system, research methodology, and the organizational culture of the workplace this collection of papers engages relational theory in an innovative manner that is worthy of the attention of clinicians, academics, and researchers of either stripe—including graduate students.

...Karen Izod's use of Klein and Bion in her consulting practice and work with the Tavistock Institute's Advanced Organisational Consultation Society, where being an agent of change at the organizational level is her charge, makes for additional good reading of psychoanalysis outside of the consulting room. Here splits in departments and organizational meaning in general are understood pace the paranoid/schizoid position and the consultant's capacity to surface and manage tension.

...Well known to those affiliated with Division 39, and noted by Karen Izod in the eighth chapter of the volume under review, relational psychoanalysis is American in origin. Writing from her side of the Atlantic, Izod gently reminds that this American outcropping has roots in Winnicott, Fairbairn, and the British Independent Group. Possibly owing to the emphasis on a shared relational context, such a history has been explicit for some time (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983). The collection of papers reviewed here affords an interesting relational matrix. Is it that the English now get relational, or that we on American shores get traction from looking to the English?

Clearly the dichotomized quality of "or" is wrongheaded here. This work is an illustration of the mutuality of "both/and." The authors of this volume are hopeful that relational psychoanalysis could allow transparency in regard to practices among colleagues and critique what is taken for granted. It is notable that such issues have also been explicit for some time now (cf., Moscovici, 2008/1961). Given that, it may come as a mild surprise that there is much herein that is downright refreshing.

Reviews for

Whittle, S.R. and Izod, K. (2009) *Mind-ful Consulting*.

1. Greg Latemore, The University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
Latemore, G. (2010) "Mind-ful Consulting", *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 31(8), pp.758-760 – excerpt.

A helpful insight in this book is that the consultant needs acute awareness of one's own needs and behaviour. This is reminiscent of Manfred Kets de Vries who speaks of the "inner theatre" of leadership' and cautions senior managers against narcissism (De Vries, 2001). This is a wise concern – the notion of "re-perceiving" the client consultant relationship might indeed assist to move out of the "shadow" of the consultant's narcissistic brilliance (p. xxix). In similar vein, in chapter 4 the authors later warn us:

The lure of brilliance privileges a power-based relationship, the power of knowing, which is seen as preferable to that of power being located in the relationship, in the capacity to help people think and generate conditions for change (p. 63).

The audience for this book is scholarly practitioners. It has a distinctive post-graduate flavour and would be most useful for experienced organisational development practitioners and senior human resource practitioners. These readings are indeed thoughtful and there is rigor in the research support for the ideas presented: this is not a simple "tool kit" for the novice consultant, nor is it merely a breathless exhortation on how to become a successful and wealthy consultant. This book offers a wise and healthy challenge to the naïve charisma of the "one-string-in-

your-bow” gurus to whom clients pledge unquestioned loyalty and abundant recompense!

2. Amazon 15 Mar. 2010

Mind-ful Consulting promotes an approach that is non-judgemental, focussed on the present, and encouraging of creativity and new possibilities. The book's ten chapters (written by alumni of the Tavistock Institute's Advanced Organisational Consultation programme) explore the process and outcome of practice. Whilst each chapter describes a case study, the sophisticated theoretical and reflexive stance of the author(s) makes the content more than just a captivating read: it is both educational and inspirational.

3. Amazon 21.Nov 2011

This is a terrific book.

It is a collection of essays by people who completed the Tavistock Institute's training on organisational consulting, it gives a good sense of what that training involves, through the medium of real live consulting case-studies.

If you are interested what goes on below the waterline in organisations it well worth a careful read.

4. Communication: Monica Velarde President, Hope of the Amazon Civil Association

‘Ms. Izod work about Entry, Negotiating and Contracting (Mind-ful Consulting) derivated in the introduction of the ENC event that was a pilot and later incorporated in the Group Relations Program of Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas UPC and Esan Business School over the years 2009 and 2012.

Since 2010 the event acquired a larger significance at the Group Relations Program of Hope of the Amazon Civil Association. ENC at the Amazon offers an opportunity to work through ethical dynamics when introducing GR methodologies into a new population. The ENC event offer members to negotiate aspects of the conference design and verify an understanding of the work in which participants were deciding to engage themselves. While the first ENC event was the foundations of the start of what is now a relatively established work in the Amazon, the nature of the event every year provided members with opportunities to exercise agency over certain aspects of the conference design and generated a larger appropriation of the conference methodology and task by its participants. At the same time, it allowed GRC to be really embedded in the Amazonian context and made possible to work on a turbulent environment'.