

Uncloaking Priceless Pieces of Evidence: Psychotherapy with an Older New Zealand Man; Contributions to Understanding Hidden Historical Phenomena and the Trans-Generation Transmission of Silent and Un-Witnessed Trauma

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Abstract : This paper makes use of the case notes of a single psychoanalytically informed psychotherapy of a now 72-year-old man over a four-year period to explore the potential of qualitative data to be incorporated into a research methodology that can contribute theory and knowledge to the wider professional community involved in mental health care. The clinical material arising out of any psychoanalysis provides a potentially rich source of clinical data that could contribute valuably to our historical understanding of both individual and societal traumata. As psychoanalysis is primarily an investigation, it is argued that clinical case material is a rich source of qualitative data which has relevance for sociological and historical understandings and that it can potentially illuminate important 'gaps' and collective blind spots that manifest unconsciously and are a contributing factor in the transmission of trauma, silently across generations. By attending to this case material the hope is to illustrate the value of using a psychoanalytic centred methodology. It is argued that the study of individual defences and the manner in which they come into consciousness, allows an insight into group defences and the unconscious forces that contribute to the silencing or un-noticing of important sources (or originators) of mental suffering.

Keywords : dream furniture (Bion) and psychotic functioning, reverie, screen memories, selected fact

Conference Title : ICPAF 2018 : International Conference on Psychodynamic Approach and Freud

Conference Location : Rome, Italy

Conference Dates : May 03-04, 2018