

The University of Alberta

Fantasy and Small Group Interaction

By



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## ABSTRACT

The interaction behavior of 23 undergraduate students was videotaped during 30 fifty minute periods to observe the fantasy development in groups. Transcripts of the videotapes were coded for fantasy styles. The results of the study provide evidence that changing the background expectancies of a group of persons leads to a disorganized fantasy style. Over time organized fantasy patterns and a group culture emerges.

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## Chapter I

### Introduction

This investigation is oriented towards understanding the imagery and metaphor of verbal or acted out presentations as they appear in natural groups. The following model is suggested as one way of perceiving fantasy in a group interaction situation.

When a group of persons meet for the first time, they bring with them certain expectations regarding their future interactions - First, there are concrete or physical assumptions relating to their environment. This includes concerns about such things as chairs to sit on, adequate lighting and seating arrangements etc. Secondly there are psychosocial assumptions including concerns as to proper social distance, basic rules of etiquette and all the implicit rules governing interaction among people. Thirdly, there are psychological assumptions concerned with the psychological history of each person, their similar upbringings, similar relationships with siblings etc.

Within this context, interactions will be relatively organized and logical so that over time certain rituals should develop that would bind and unite the participating group. As this occurs other rituals and styles will evolve that will enhance the growing group culture.

If expectations of the participating members are not met, then a different milieu is created. When it is difficult for an individual or group to validate their experience or to make sense out of their environment there is a lack of coherence and culture in the group.



Reactions of members, to a situation which is inconsistent with their expectations, are usually bewilderment, uncertainty, internal conflict, psychological and social isolation, acute and nameless anxiety, and various symptoms of acute depersonalization. Structures of interaction will be correspondingly disorganized (Bettelheim, 1960; Garfinkle, 1967).

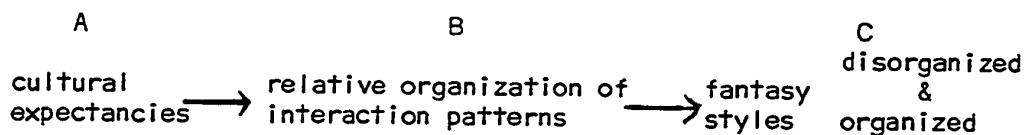
Therefore, in the group interaction situation, the crucial events which will enhance or impede the development of a cohesive group are what can best be labelled as the points in time at which cultural characteristics are established. When the cultural characteristics are consistent, then there is a minimum of dysfunctional behavior in the group. If on the other hand, the cultural characteristics are grossly inconsistent, there will be a correspondingly high degree of disorganization. Bales (1971) notes that it is through the interaction within the fantasy dimension that the culture of a group is established. As each person creates and maintains a system of symbols with other persons in a group or society, he enters a realm of reality, which can surpass him, which may inspire or organize him and which may threaten to dominate him as well. The culture of the interacting group stimulates in each of its members a feeling of a new reality, a world of heroes and villains, a drama, a work of art (Caillois 1966).

The fantasy in group interaction can be differentiated from other behavior by the fact that in fantasy the common elements of the acts present images or potential emotional symbols to the listener, to which he may respond without explicit attention or conscious knowledge.

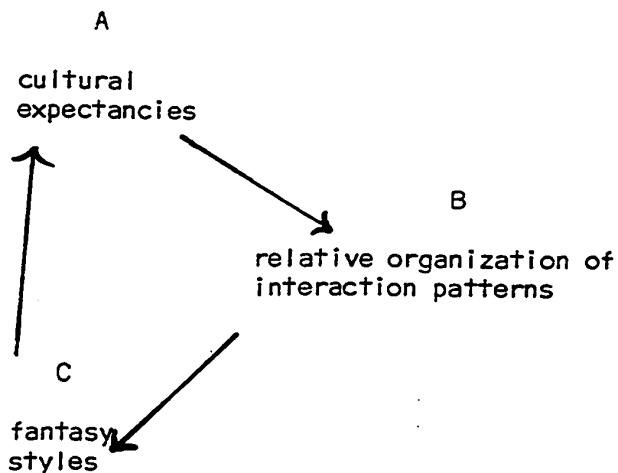
From this theoretical position, a more explicit description of fantasy is needed. A fantasy may be defined as any interaction possessing any of the following characteristics:

- firstly, any discussion of persons or events not in the group. eg. news, gossip, political events etc.
- secondly, the previous interactions of the group, the problems, the hidden attitudes etc. eg. reminiscences about previous interacting sessions.
- thirdly, the past experience of the members particularly their common childhood experiences in relation to families. This category would include such topics as dating experiences, interactions with brothers and sisters etc.

The following illustration graphically describes the relationship of fantasy to culture and interaction.



Once interactions are initiated the following pattern emerges:



This creates in the group-interaction situation a complementary process. In this process cultural prerequisites lead to certain interaction patterns, which in turn lead to more or less organized fantasy styles. These styles contribute to the cultural milieu through which each participating member develops his identity vis a vis each of the remaining participating members. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to:

- 1) identify the fantasy styles in a group interaction.
- 2) determine if the fantasy styles indicate the amount of integration present in the group interaction situation.

## Chapter II

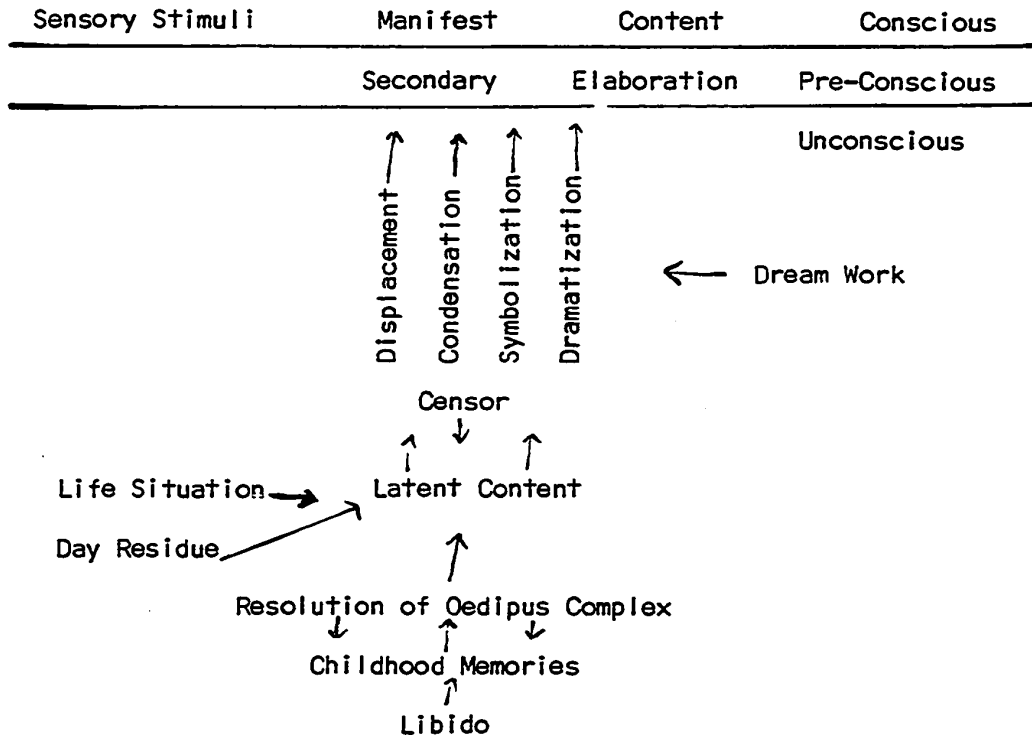
### Review of Related Literature

No investigation in the area of fantasy can be adequate and complete without understanding some Freudian concepts. It was during the period of 1895 - 1910 that Freud developed his theories of dreams and depth psychology. The main aspects of depth psychology were found in Freud's dream theory and his theory of parapraxes. These theories were elaborated simultaneously and presented in two of his major works: *The Interpretation of Dreams*, in 1900, and *the Psychopathology of Everyday Life* in 1904.

*The Interpretation of Dreams* elaborates some of Freud's most basic ideas concerning the psychological phenomena of man. Ellenberger (1971) illustrates Freud's concepts in the following manner (diagram p. 6).

At the top of the graph (p. 6) we have the manifest content or the dream as it is remembered. Freud considered the relationship between the manifest content and the latent content the most important part of the dream. Between the manifest content and the latent content extended a network of diverging and converging associations.

In the dream work, various mechanisms are purported to be operating, the most prominent of which are displacement and condensation in which the process of symbolization also occurs. In the dream the latent content also tends to express itself in dream symbols. The dream work transforms the latent content into the manifest content



because there is a dynamic factor, the censor striving to keep the latent content in the unconscious. The censor does not permit latent content to find expression in the dream unless it is modified by means of displacement, condensation and symbolization.

Freud's theory of the dream was a construct of two levels. The upper level was the dream itself with its latent and manifest contents. In the latent content, Freud finds the day-residue as a constant element. Among the many trivial events of the day, the dream chooses the one that shows some relationship to a childhood memory. Then one is led from the latent content still further back to a childhood memory

expressing an unfulfilled wish of that remote time.

At this point Freud introduced a notion he had found in his self-analysis and in his patients. This was the Oedipus Complex: the little boy wants to possess his mother, wishes to get rid of his father, but is frightened of this threatening event and of castration as a punishment for his incestuous feeling toward the mother.

To finish the picture we have the secondary elaboration i.e. the changes occurring in the manifest content when the dreamer is awakened, when the dream may acquire a more organized and pleasant form. Freud considered as his major discovery the idea that the dream is a fulfillment of a repressed unacceptable sexual wish, and this is why the censor must intervene to keep it down or to allow its appearance only in disguised form.

The dream is also a process of regression that manifests itself simultaneously in three ways: a topical regression from the conscious to the unconscious; a temporal regression from the present time to childhood; and a regression from the level of language to that of imagery.

Freud further elaborated these concepts in the "Psychopathology of Everyday Life". In this instance he started from the conscious waking state and maintained that forgetting was the result of repressed material. Forgetting therefore is the outcome of a conflict between the conscious and the unconscious rather than merely the result of the weakening of the representation.

The concepts Freud developed in "The Interpretation of Dreams"

and redefined in the "Psychopathology of Everyday Life" and in "Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious" can be related to Freud's original work on Hysteria. This can be illustrated in the following way.

Hysteria	Interpretation of Dreams	Psychopathology of Everyday Life	Jokes and Their Relation to the Uncons.
Hysterical Symptom	Manifest Content	Loss of Memory	Play on Words
Trauma	Latent Content	Disturbing latent representation	Underlying thought
Repression	Censor (displacement, condensation)	Repression	Techniques at Witticisms

Freud perceived the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious as being the most crucial in his theoretical situation. Because of repression the disturbing thought or event is kept in the unconscious and only through many disturbing and concealing maneuvers is it able to express itself in real life either as a hysterical symptom, loss of memory or a play on words. In the dream situation, the remembered or manifest dream is the expression of the repressed wishes.

Bales (1971) uses this model in describing the fantasy dimension in a group interaction situation. He maintains that fantasy is connected with overt behavior as the unconscious aspects of the mind are with the conscious aspects; that is through many distorting and concealing defenses. In the group interaction situation each person communicating to others harbors individual fantasies that contain many similar or

related elements to other participating member's fantasies. A group fantasy derives its compelling power from elements which have unconscious meaning for most or all of the active participants. The unconscious meaning may be different to some extent for different individuals. The desired fantasy outcomes may also be different.

Once a common fantasy theme is aroused by a certain number of images and emotionally charged interactions, other individuals add additional elements from their own associations. A confusion sets in between the images talked about and the person speaking about them. The fantasy chain then begins to develop a certain coercive power over the participants.

The feeling of coercive power is due to the fact that the fantasies aroused are partly unconscious, because they are repressed. It is also due to the fact that the precipitating features of the present situation are also repressed, thus not recognized. The problem as Bales perceives it is much the same as in the interpretation of dreams.

If one can manage to recognize and isolate such episodes, he will find they often yield to understanding by much the same procedure as the analysis of dreams. (Bales 1971, p. 139)

Bales maintains that behavior in a group process situation cannot be fully understood, without there being an awareness of the symbolic undercurrents of fantasy in individuals, their spread into verbal form among members of the group, and sometimes into physical excitement. Therefore group fantasy becomes multiply-motivated as in a dream. There is a psychological overlap of three symbolic and emotional domains: First there is the domain of the manifest content: the situation and



persons being talked about usually outside the group, a play, a movie, some political event, gossip, jokes, or a reported episode from some other time and place. Second, there is the domain of the "here and now" - the interacting group with its present members, their relations to each other, the hidden attitudes, the things going on between some of the members which are concealed from some of the other members and so on. Third, there is the domain of past experiences of the member, particularly their common childhood experiences in relation to their families in which their personalities were formed; relations to mother, father and siblings.

The meaning of the particular fantasy is achieved by superimposing mentally these three imaginary group models upon each other and looking for similarities. Thus a group fantasy consisting of gossip about the latest news of a political figure may represent the negative feeling aroused by one of the persons in the group who is behaving in a dominant, hostile, or moralistic way. The negative feeling toward him, in turn, may actually stem as much from the memories of a parent, an older brother or teacher, as from the present group situation. Bales notes that one usually finds many other symbolic similarities between the domains in addition to the psychodramatic actions, but the latter are usually prominent and central.

The forces toward expression of fantasy are strong and reinforced since the members define themselves psychologically in different ways and repress different aspects of the same themes, they circumvent and undo each other's defences. It is from these fantasies that are so unstructured that we learn more about the group structure and the

relations of persons in the group to each other. The fantasy derives its compelling power from elements which have unconscious meanings for each or most of the active participants. The unconscious meanings may be, different and each tries to control the symbols presented by the other in the way he tries to control his own fantasies. This control often fails and the feeling of powerlessness is due to the fact that the fantasies aroused are partly unconscious because they are repressed.

One of the functions of the members in the group interaction situation is to understand and interpret the meaning of their respective fantasies. In the group situation concordance of these domains of symbolism results in a reinforcement of similar associations. Therefore one of the tasks in the milieu is the effective interpretation of fantasy that emphasizes the similarities between group fantasy chains and the present situation.

Notwithstanding the validity of the aforementioned theoretical interpretation, certain limitations are inherent in the psychoanalytic framework. First, psychoanalytic theory in general tends to use simple, cause and effect, linear, one-to-one, sum of parts explanations such as impulse versus defense, driving force versus counterforce, fantasy or wish versus repressing force and so on. But biological systems and the psychological phenomena that result from the activity of such systems are not simple linear arrangements. These systems and phenomena are much better described and conceptualized as networks, hierarchial arrangements, or systems of mutually interdependent and interconnected parts; a vast number of phenomena are always taking place simultaneously

and sequentially; the relationships among the parts are highly complex and contingent, and they vary over time; simple cause and effect and simple sum of parts relationship do not obtain. In fact, the idea of a vast system of inter-connected parts where multiple phenomena occur simultaneously is actually implicit in the fundamental role and the basic assumption of the psychoanalytic process.

Secondly, it is generally recognized that psychoanalysis has no theory of structure formation and learning. Implicit in the very concepts of structure and learning are the ideas of permanence, specificity and the fixation of experience, but these are ultimately inconceivable in the absence of information storage and the structure and functions of the central nervous system.

Singer (1966) states that any attempt to develop a conception of fantasy must be based on constructs which mesh with our increased awareness of the significant role of cognition, affect, and the stimulating properties of the environment or the social milieu. There is increasing support for viewing man in the framework of his information processing capacities and for regarding personality as a complex organization of five subsystems: first, homeostatic system which is primarily concerned with maintenance of a healthy body through proper balance of various biochemical conditions; second, the drive system, a signalling system which provides motivational information. This system consists of the physiological and safety requirements of the body such as hunger, thirst, sex, pain and warmth. These states require some form of amplification to motivate the organism to direct action, except in rare cases of source deficit states.

(i.e. starvation, extreme thirst, etc.).

The third system, the affect or emotion-producing system of the body, is a primary motivational system. Drives are effective in influencing behavior ordinarily only if amplified by the arousal of affect. These affects include interest - excitement, enjoyment - joy (positive affects), distress - anguish, fear - terror, shame - humiliation, contempt - disgust, and anger - rage (negative affects).

These affects are conceived of as innately differentiated patterns developed through natural selection in the human and are closely associated with differentiated facial and other bodily responses. While the drives are quite specific, the affect system is more general. Rather than attempt to develop a vast superstructure of differentiated behavior out of the conflicts or vicissitudes of genital sexuality, the theories of affect make it possible to see a whole host of behaviors as motivated by the positive or negative affects.

In addition to the three motivational systems of which the affective is most versatile and significant, there are two other major subsystems of personality structure, the cognitive and the motoric. The cognitive realm, which has recently become the focus of significant theoretical as well as experimental interest, deals with man's capacities as an information processing organism, the limitations of his capability for organizing or excluding stimuli, the capacity to deal with varied or competing stimulation, the ability to shift material from short to long-term memory, etc. The motoric system involves overt action, physical skills, well-established habits, and co-ordination of action

sequence to name but a few.

Prior to actual problem-solving, there often is a stage in which it is not clear what the "problem" is or whether a problem exists. Typically, relevant information is easily assimilated and processed through existing structures. However, a person is also continuously receiving information which is not relevant to a previously structured problem but is nevertheless incompatible with his "existing model" of the environment. Rather than immediately identifying the discrepancy he may find that his thoughts "drift" from one element to another in an apparently "undirected" or unorganized sequence. Each sequence of thought may relate or compare different elements in memory, or compare recent perceptual events with elements in long term memory. If discrepancies or incongruities are great and of sufficient importance to the organism, these "incipient" problems may develop into more formal problems.

One of the basic theoretical assumptions is that any event in a group must be looked at as something which potentially involves the whole group, although it may be expressed in endlessly varying configurations. In the case of communication, attention should be drawn both to the many additional meanings which can be conveyed in the process of communicating a message with a simple definite content, and the many ways in which we are continually communicating impressions to one another unintentionally. Communication includes all the processes, conscious and unconscious, intentional and unintentional, understood and not understood, which operate between members in a group. At one end of

scale are deliberate verbal communications fully understood and responded to, and at the other, symptoms and inarticulate movements. Between these two extremes lie all modes of expression.

In summary then, fantasy has assumed a negative connotation in out action oriented life. It would seem that fantasy is a fundamental human characteristic and it also seems reasonable to regard fantasy as a consequence of the ongoing activity of the brain and to apply models that relate to man's cognitive and affective environmental adaptation and his requirements for varied stimulation.

Singer states that some people are more comfortable and utilize fantasy more easily than others. For these people, fantasy is an adaptive mechanism, for others, the learning environment does not seem to reinforce high levels of fantasy in differing life situations.

The style of fantasy used by the group can reflect both high anxiety as well as an effort to understand (code) new information. If the situation includes both components the style used will be more disorganized. On the other hand, if the situation has only some anxiety and is primarily oriented towards understanding, the fantasy will reflect greater organization. Also, the fantasy structures present are involved in this process. If the member has not used fantasy as an adaptive mechanism, this lack of fantasy structures, as well as anxiety and novelty, will cause disorganization.

In the group, collective fantasy is a method of communication which will be resorted to when members are unable cognitively to identify the nature of the focal concern when it provokes a high degree of anxiety.

The style of fantasy will reflect the programs that are available to each member, since they share similar concerns. Foulkes and Anthony (1957) have observed that all groups are faced with similar concerns. Attitudes regarding conformity, authority, dependency and change, may at some time become burning questions for the group.

From an analysis of many groups Foulkes and Anthony found that certain themes recurred with exceptional frequency.

- (a) Mixed feelings toward loving women.
- (b) Hostility, distrust and fear of people.
- (c) Feeling of inferiority and desires to be average.
- (d) The problem of blaming others or accepting the responsibilities of our own actions.

These concerns catch and hold the interest of the group for longer periods than any other, but even they undergo characteristic cycles. Out of a silence will come one of these topics, gradually the whole group may become involved in an interchange, possibly a "chain" reaction; and slowly there is a gradual waxing of interest until a point of "theme satiation" is reached. It does not always follow this format since at times the leader's interpretations, or merely his presence, will affect the theme development.

More specifically these psychological experiences are conceptualized as phenomena which correspond to or parallel the various ever-present information processes in the central nervous system. These experiences include thought, fantasy and feeling as well as awareness. Differences in these phenomena are explained in terms of differences in

the way information is processed.

In the group interaction situation the person is cut off from outer stimuli, from the demands of the workaday world and even from some information from the leader. Furthermore in the group the role of the leader is not based on full information inputs. As in dreams, the corresponding psychological phenomena tends to appear regressive - odd, crazy, bizarre, unreal. There is a natural tendency for learning programs to branch to personal and emotional themes.

In the group new learning structures are needed to cope with a unique situation. The leader can refuse to assume an active traditional role in the group, and therefore a sense of deprivation and an intense ambivalence about the freedom so suddenly thrust upon the group members occurs. This creates a disorientation and confusion within the members.

The situation may not be perceived by the members as a reality oriented situation. However there is a tendency for group members to draw upon a rich cultural heritage in expressing their reactions to the difficulties of establishing and maintaining a complex set of interpersonal relationships. These fantasies are multidetermined, they utilize the most varied raw materials - personal fantasies, misunderstood rituals and representation, historical events --- and pour them through an endless series of molds: the whims and wishes of storytellers, the forms of language, the strains of the culture, the pressures and seductions of the family system and so on.

Since the fantasies are multi-determined, a system of classifying the fantasies seemed necessary. Through factor analysis



Singer found seven distinct categories of individual day dreaming styles. Each style reflects a certain degree of cognitive and affective organization as well as a familiarity with fantasy as a mode of thought. With minor changes these styles have been used in the group interaction milieu. Because one of the styles was an autistic mode of fantasy, it could not be operationalized adequately for the experimental situation and for this reason it was dropped from the classification system.

After the minor changes were made, a system of classification was operationalized. In the final analysis, six fantasy categories were developed. This can be illustrated by placing these styles on a continuum.

Disorganized

Organized

-----

Autistic    Perceptual    Imaginative    Thoughtful    Perceptual    Imaginative    Thoughtful  
(not used) Disorganized    Disorganized    Disorganized    Organized    Organized    Organized

The present investigation attempted to describe and interpret fantasy styles using this classification system.

## Chapter III

### Procedure

#### Rationale:

Fantasy may be regarded as involving a great deal of rehearsal, reminiscence and formation of superordinate coding schemes which in effect prepare the person to run off relatively smooth ideational sequences. The individual differences in perceptual, imaginal, and thoughtful activity may be due to individual differences in reinforcement for responding to external and internal stimulus sources.

Fantasy, therefore, in the group may be either productive or non-productive. Productive fantasy is used constructively in maintaining motivation and in the solution of immediate problems as in creative imagination. Non-productive fantasy is merely a wish-fulfilling activity, compensating for lack of achievement or need gratification rather than stimulating or promoting achievement. Behavior in this instance presumably permits a person to avoid or escape negative affect elicited by internal events stored in memory.

It is important to realize that a self-analytic group is a sophisticated product of a complex civilization and therefore there is a tendency for group members to draw upon a rich cultural heritage in expressing their reactions to the difficulties of establishing and maintaining a complex set of interpersonal relationships.

In the group situation an event is likely to be recalled because

it is somehow emotionally related to the present situation and because it offers appropriate symbols for some of the emotions felt. The fantasy event not only reflects something about the teller and the audience, but to some extent molds their feelings in new ways.

In summary, the hypotheses to be tested which have been derived from the previous discussion are:

- (1) Using the fantasy classification system it is possible to identify six different fantasy styles in the group interaction situation. The six fantasy styles can be subsumed under two major headings. (a) organized fantasy, (b) disorganized fantasy.
- (2) Over time as the group integration develops there will be an increase of organized fantasy and a decrease in disorganized fantasy.
- (3) The fantasy styles used in a group interaction situation are indicators of the amount of group organization or integration present.

#### Method

##### Subjects:

The subjects in the study were 23 undergraduates enrolled in teacher education programs in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. These students were invited to volunteer for a new experimental senior level Educational Psychology course which was concerned with human relations training and classroom dynamics. Prior to enrolling the students were informed in a general way about the nature of

the course. Emphasis was laid on its lack of formal content, the behavior expected of them in terms of regular attendance, punctuality, completion of psychological tests. The course was conducted over a 3½ month period during which all subjects were required to attend four pre-testing and course evaluation session. All sessions were 50 minutes in length. The 23 students were separated into two groups of 11 and 12 students respectively. Everything was done to ensure that the only difference between groups lay in the times they met for group interaction and these groups were differentiated by labelling them T3 and T4.

#### Milieu:

The students met on a regular basis in a room with a one-way viewing window. The members were videotaped, as well there were also observers behind the mirror. The observers consisted of both undergraduate and graduate students.

Both groups sat in a circle of chairs facing one another. The task set for the groups was "to observe and understand behavior as it happens". The groups were referred to as SAT groups, i.e. self-analytic groups. The groups were provided with a trainer who was there to "help them understand behavior as it happens".

The trainer's role was to be an impartial objective observer and occasional contributor. He spoke infrequently and when he did speak it was only to interpret the group processes that were occurring.

An explanation of the trainers role will clarify somewhat the circumstances under which the interaction occurred. During each session

the trainer offered himself to the group as a "blank screen" upon which members may project their feelings. The assumption behind this approach is that it encourages members to explore and integrate whatever residual conflicts that may be preventing personal growth and development. (Tavistock Institute, London).

The trainer focuses on the following areas:

- (1) the dynamic group interactive processes
- (2) the conflict situation in which the individual engages in a group situation
- (3) past experience which relates directly to the group activity
- (4) the current experience in life outside the immediate treatment situation.

The trainer's focus is upon the current reality, current experience and the current network.

#### Data Collection

The data was collected in five steps.

##### Step One:

Each interaction session was videotaped. This process extended from September 1970 to December 1970. The 30 fifty minute videotapes were stored until May 1971.

##### Step Two:

The second step consisted of two persons transcribing the 30 videotapes. One session was improperly videotaped so that only 29 transcriptions were possible. Step Two extended from May 1971 to August 1971.

### Step Three:

The transcript was coded into two broad behavior categories. Bales definition of fantasy was used for coding. Bales (1970) states that the common element of acts scored in the fantasy category is the fact that acts in this category present images or potential emotional symbols to the listener to which he may respond without explicit attention or conscious knowledge. More than one level of symbolic meaning or emotional connotation is always present in a dramatization. As well as this, reports of acts of other persons or personified beings are very likely to have indirect levels of symbolic meaning, though the report or account may appear quite factual as in telling what one has read in a newspaper or magazine.

If the interaction possessed any of the following characteristics it was coded as fantasy. Firstly, any discussion of persons or events not in the group. e.g. news, gossip, political events, etc. Secondly, the interactions of the group, the problems, the hidden attitudes, etc. e.g. discussion of preceeding sessions and feelings relating to sessions. Thirdly, the past experience of the members particularly their common childhood experiences in relation to families.

Two independant persons coded the transcript into two categories, (fantasy and non-fantasy). For the final step, only those excerpts agreed on by both observers as conforming to Bales discription of fantasy were used.

### Step Four:

Two independent raters coded the fantasy excerpts chosen in Step 3.

The rater had six possible choices for any one excerpt that was presented.

A Spearman's rho was calculated for the reliability of the raters.

( $r = .75$ )

The following classification system is the detailed system that was developed and used in this investigation. This system highlights the participating members capacity for coping with new information, and the strengths and limitations of their capability for organizing or excluding dissonant material as well as their capacity to deal with varied stimulation.

#### Classification System of Fantasy Styles

1. Perceptual Disorganized. This fantasy is vague, amorphous, has poor story line, depends on immediate extrinsic perceptual cues, is characterized by lack of organization, distractability. It is disjointed, unpredictable, fluctuating and lacking in direction. (Category 1)

##### EX. 1. T4

S: I know if we sat here, I would be sitting here playing with my rings, that would be my first nervous reaction. What would you do if everybody else was sitting here quietly?

P: Count the tiles on the floor.

D: (mumbles)

P: I think it's all planned. I think he's a very good actor.

J: His wife . . . (nervous laughter).

Trainer: I'm sorry I didn't hear what you said.

J: That remarkable composure.

L: He was nervous when he first came in.

R: Why do you think so? Why do you think so?

L: He was *breathing too heavily* (nervous laughter).

EX. 11. T5

L: What were we talking about last week?

G: Trying to analyze what we had accomplished, if anything.

L: Oh yeah.

J: Can't hear you G.

G: Continues . . . because the first statement that was made was that the purpose of this group was . . . especially to observe . . . and interpret.

: Whose.

J: It's a funny place to put a blackboard or a funny place to put a thermostat.

G: That's a magic eye.

J: It's what?

G: The magic eye.

J: Tell us another one.

G: I haven't heard one lately . . . see it's a mad house.

2. Imaginative Disorganized. This fantasy reflects an ego-centric preoccupation with ruminations over body reactions and relations. It can be characterized by a banal, concrete, common-place theme and is unimaginative and unreflective. (Category 2)

EX. 1. T4

P: Because it interferes with my body, my body might degenerate



sooner (laughter) than is healthy.

EX. II. T5

P: Because for one thing, I'm sure I look like a dumpy little old lady with two sticks.

G: Well I wouldn't describe old ladies as two sticks.

P: No, really though you got yea, much, and your waddling along.

EX. III. T5

J: Reminds me of someone swimming, you have to have a purpose, there is no sense in me running around the beach ten times unless I have an urge to do, or a reason to do exercise. I am slightly overweight, let's say, then I have a purpose to do exercise like weight lifting; you have to have a purpose.

3. Thoughtful Disorganized. This fantasy reflects suspicion about people and their motives and is characterized by a critical, labelling and negative theme line. The person using this blames others and blames self, as well as being derogatory, narrowranged and equivocating in interaction. (Category 3)

EX. I. T4

D: Wondering if they were collaborating or not.

J: Right there are times you've got to be skeptic.

EX. II. T4

D: Why did he say it would go away?

P: Because it's not really properly organized and people are taking advantage of it?

EX. III. T5

G: Well no, but if you meet people that say socially or not at work don't you usually try to . . . them? What type of person is he or she. Is he going to be a person that you can work well with? That you have cooperation with?

4. Perceptual Organized. This fantasy style is characterized by a wide-ranging, diverse, open and perceptive approach to experience. (Category 4)

EX. I. T3

M: I wish we had a carpet, so we could sit on the floor and get rid of these chairs.

J: You like sitting on the floor?

M: Yes I do. It's more informal.

EX. II. T4

L: We'd all be talking at the same time. I mean, I think so many things are here and gone, like you know, a while ago, I was thinking about how that lamp was made and how I'd like to make one.

5. Imaginative Organized. This fantasy reflects a spontaneous, original and imaginative approach to experience. It is characterized by an awareness of cognitive activity and employs analysis, comparison and extends accepted positions. In addition, a concern for people and interpersonal relations is usually shown. (Category 5)

EX. I. T3

M: I do think that is true, you know I do think I would react differently from how I wrote the answers to those spots.

M.A.: Yeah same here for most of them, except sometimes I was sort of at a loss.

M: You're actually supposed to be the sixth person; you have to transfer yourself to that group, pretend that you were there, but if you were physically, it would really affect me. I was there mentally anyway.

EX. II. T3

M: Or is there a screen . . . is there a screen that things percolate through?

E: There are screens all over.

L: I think it would be impossible to express every little thing that we felt or thought.

E: Yeah.

M: Why?

6. Thoughtful Organized. This fantasy reflects an objective, consistent, reliable and organized approach to experience. It is characterized by an unprejudiced, purposeful and theoretical orientation. (Category 6)

EX. T3

M: Well, I've read it very quickly so I . . . he made an analogy between the group as a living thing and a living organism approach. Now for any individual organism to function efficiently, there's

got to be coordination between the members. There's got to be adequate communication. There's got to be release of emotion, release of feelings, as the person within the group, as an individual sees fit, we're not doing it as far as I can see. We're aiming at coalescing as one complete unit and that's the way she left it.

Step Five.

A verbal synopsis of each session was done by the author to elaborate and demonstrate the meaning and impact of fantasy in the group process situation.

## Chapter IV

### The Findings

The purpose of this study was to identify fantasy styles in the group interaction situation and relate these styles to group organization or disorganization.

The findings will be presented as follows:

#### Part I

- (1) Synopsis of each session.
- (2) The relationship between fantasy and the group interaction situation.

#### Part II

- (1) Distribution of fantasy styles (Tables I and II).
- (2) Comparison of fantasy styles (a) over time and (b) between groups.

#### Part I .

##### I. Synopsis of each session.

###### Session I. T3

In this session, the most notable theme, was the trainer, the trainer's role, and the participating members feelings toward the trainer. Other topics covered were the task, the "artificiality" of the situation, the silences, and the video tape, etc. The fantasy used was linked to the task. e.g. "I can rebut most of what he said so far, the group is accusing the trainer of manipulating them. --Man is a manipulator anyway you know. In the same way, I said we show anxiety towards other people initially, or to certain people we show fear or anger.

### Session 2. T3

During this session, there were about 23 themes, with an increase in fantasy. The beginning of the session is task oriented, however, the members begin to discuss trust, friendship, materialism, and indifference. The predominant feelings of the fantasy seemed to be hostility, distrust, and fear of people. At the end of the session, one member questions the reason for the missing members, and suggests that perhaps the reason they are missing is because the group organizers planned it this way. This would support the idea that the fantasy themes were indirect expressions of their real concerns.

### Session 3. T3

The topic discussed was the trainer. Some members view the trainer as good and kind, while some other members see the trainer as inhibiting and critical, with intense angry feelings toward him. This creates conflict in the group, which instead of being attributed to the situation is attributed instead to the presence of observers. Some members discuss the feelings of fear and anger from the previous session because they were not aware of why some of their members were away.

### Session 4. T3

During this session the members refocus their feelings about the trainer and his role. One suggestion is to exclude the trainer by asking him to leave. He doesn't and the group then discuss the readings and several members confront the only member who has done the readings.

What seems to have happened is that a great deal of anxiety and hostility that exists toward the trainer is discharged on the member who had done the reading. This could be due to two possible reasons, one, he had tried to assume the trainer's role and/or he had raised the members expectations in relation to excluding the trainer.

#### Session 5. T3

The main focus of this session is the task. The trainer's role is discussed only once, instead the non-participation of the quiet members becomes an issue. The anger and disappointment felt by the members of the group in relation to how the group has been progressing is also introduced. A great deal of ambivalence is expressed about the value of the experience.

#### Session 6. T3

Many topics are discussed, none in any depth. Some of the topics are, the task, trainer's role, the non-participating members, and the genuineness of feelings expressed. The session ends with the group discussing the advantage of being an observer, and whether the group has accomplished anything.

#### Session 7. T3

The issues brought up during this session are, the problem of the task, role playing, intimacy, and responsibility, and also the survival or progress of the group as an entity versus the survival or progress of the individual. Then the topic of marriage is introduced and discussed

until the end of the session. It is discussed in the context of religion, different kinds of love, and the philosophy of marriage.

#### Session 8. T3

At the beginning of this session the members of the group discuss many topics. Some of the topics covered are reaction to a missing member, the missing member's role in the group, another member's feelings about the topic in the previous session, the discussions' effect on the task, advantages of being an observer, questionnaires, diaries, religious beliefs, trainer's comments and expectations. The session ends with the group discussing their ambivalence about the task, and expressing their boredom and depression.

#### Session 9. T3

The same recurrent themes are expressed. The first part of the session is concerned with silent members and the possible reasons for their non-participation. Several issues are covered in relation to these members, the sub-groupings that occur, and the responsibility to include certain member. One person confronts another member about being a non-participant; the member evades the challenge and brings up the previous session. For a few minutes the group is disoriented and then one member introduces the religious topic. This continues until the end, and the seating positions in the group are discussed.

#### Session 10. T3

The members begin this session by discussing their seating



positions in the group. The members discuss the trainer and his role, the reading assignment and the term assignment. The issue of trust and intimacy is introduced again, as well as the value of the group experience. The session ends with members expressing their depression and disillusionment about the entire group experience.

#### Session 11. T3

The 11th session begins with the same theme that concluded the previous session. The members express feelings of depression and disappointment. The issues are discussed from a philosophical point of view. eg. "...all of a sudden something happens and you're just really, really happy. But it doesn't last that long".

The session ends with the member discussing love and hate.

#### Session 12. T3

The members express their feelings about love and hate again. Some discussion of the trainer occurs and his expectations for each member, after this they discuss a reading on exotic environments. Eventually the group decides to discuss defense mechanisms and the meaning of silences. One member expresses her feelings about the experience. (eg. B: "I don't think we can fool ourselves anymore into really thinking we are getting anywhere with these safe little topics!") The session ends with the group exploring whether it is "normal" or "abnormal" to distrust and experience hostility towards people at certain times.

### Session 13. T3

Two themes emerge in this session.

- (1) the trainer is preventing or holding the group back
- (2) manipulation by the trainer and other members

The members also discuss their feelings of belonging to a group versus feelings of only one or two people making up the group. The session ends with the group discussing women and also attempting to include a withdrawn member. He responds by saying that only one person (a woman) in the group is genuine and all other members are "phony." Many members express anger and dismay. (eg. "But you're a very irresponsible member of this group for not having said anything, for not having said that...")

### Session 14. T3

This session returns again to the theme of participating and non-participating members. The trainer makes a statement that distracts the group and they discuss the trainer for a while and return again to leadership, participation and non-participation.

### Session 15. T3

The last session is spent in attempting to understand their experience. Again participation and non-participation is introduced. Eventually the members return to the meaning of their learning experience.

### Session 1. T4

In this first session the group discussed the trainer's role, the environment, and the trainer's comment. Eventually the group decides

that one way to get to know each other is for the members to tell about their summer experiences.

#### Session 2. T4

The session begins half-heartedly. Eventually the members discuss the meaning of the task and the last session. One member is very critical towards the remainder of the group. The group vacillate around the task. (e.g. I don't know, the rest of you seem to want a task and I couldn't care less if we never have one, I just as soon sit here and talk about anything.")

During the remainder of the session the group discusses the following topics; summer jobs, somebody's trip, the treatment of women in Japan and education in society.

#### Session 3. T4

In this session the silences are 8 minutes long. There is a considerable amount of nervous laughter, and mumbling. Eventually the members decide to reintroduce themselves again. The topics covered are the night spots in town, somebody's trip, studying, the reasons for attending University. The session ends on this note.

#### Session 4. T4

The silences are 4 minutes. The group swings back and forth between fantasy themes and the task. The group is unable to make any decision about the task. e.g.

J: When are we going to pick the common topic?

L: I don't like common topics.

P: (to J.) You talk to us.

J: I don't like picking them.

L: Sounds too structured.

S: Yes.

The session ends on this theme. In the second session one member had critically evaluated the first session. Since then she has not participated and when members talk to her she answers very curtly.

#### Session 5. T4

The silences in this session are 11 minutes. There is also considerable pairing of the members. In this session one pairing group talked for 3½ minutes. Some discussion of the trainer occurs and the task, otherwise they discuss Amish culture, prostitution and homosexuality.

#### Session 6. T4

The silences are 6 minutes. The members barely discuss the task. There is again as in the previous session pairing and mumblings. The fantasy is very disoriented. (e.g. J: Everybody believes in God, we can't discuss that), or (P . . . and I was just surprised, I think it's a moral breakdown). The disorientation can also be seen in the following statement. (D: Yes, a lot of things pop into your mind but what's the use of saying that?) The topics covered in this session are movies, parties, T-groups, hypnosis. The last topic engages the interest of the group for a considerable amount of time.

#### Session 7. T4

The session begins with a discussion of an article one of the members had read. The indistinct talking is still a characteristic of this group as well as the pairing and sub-grouping. During the session they discuss movies, a strike of janitorial staff in a local school, the teachers reactions, the political scene (FLQ), one of the members' problems with medication, a friends problems, The session ends on this note. The group ignores for the entire session the trainer and his expectations for them.

#### Session 8. T4

The session begins with the members forming sub-groups and talking for 3 minutes. They continue also to speak indistinctly. The group does not focus on any one theme for any length and the silent member is still silent. The detachment can be perceived from the following statement; (D: I don't know, at the start I thought the trainer was just playing psychological games, and I kind of enjoy trying to figure out what in the world he's trying to do, that's almost all my interest in the session). Another member responds and says that the role he is portraying is playing it real cool. The silence at one point lasts for 6½ minutes. During the remaining time they try to understand the task. Fantasy and task are interspersed until a chaotic situation exists. e.g.

P: It's time to go. (Some start to leave)

D: Nobody told us to go.

P: This should be developing better than it is.

R: Yes, certainly, what can I do, that's the big question,  
(Pause, members start to leave), you didn't ask to be  
excused.

D: Pardon?

R: You didn't ask to, to be excused...no, you can't leave.

J: Well it's time to go.

R: Well come back here.

J: I have to, sorry.

The session ends.

#### Session 9. T4

During the first 4 minutes the group forms sub-groups. Some attempt is made to discuss the task but it is not successful and the group breaks down into pairs and sub-groups for another 4½ minutes. The remainder of the session is spent in evaluating the relative merits of town versus country living and also foreign country values. At the end, the group discusses the best practical jokes.

#### Session 10. T4

The session begins with the staging of a mock fashion show and then the group goes on to shopping procedures. Many members sit back and are not involved. This lasts for 10 minutes. During the rest of the session they discuss travelling, Xmas holidays, practical jokes, and differences between men and women. The session ends with the members talking about marriage and the opportunities for each sex. At one point

in the session, the group discusses the trainer and the possible conflicts in the group, but no time is spent on the topic.

#### Session 11. T4

The session begins with a member handing out papers. This continues for 10 minutes. The group then begins to discuss the handouts which are about group dynamics, and then discuss the trainer and their perception of his destructiveness. This goes on for some time, the group evaluates the inhibiting factors they perceive such as the trainer, the observers. The silent member states that what is important is: "how do you think you relate to other people, not so much how they relate to you, but how do you really relate to other people really."

The session ends with the members discussing a questionnaire and their inability to be natural in the group setting. Some members have suggested having a party and the group ends on this note.

#### Session 12. T4

The session starts out with the members pairing. One member leaves and then another. The two members come back with coffee and doughnuts, in the hope that the situation will be more personal and relaxed. e.g.

J: That was the idea of the coffee and doughnuts, just to try and relax everybody.

D: Obviously it has not worked.

The group then discusses the meaning of the experience and the discouragement they feel. The session ends with this discussion.

### Session 13. T4

The beginning is unremarkable, and the members begin to discuss the differences between friendship and acquaintances and the reason people develop the attitudes and feelings they have. During the session the silent member is confronted with her non-participation. The remainder of the session is spent on attack and counter-attack.

### Session 14. T4

The session begins with the members discussing the missing members and then moves on to friendship. The group then begins to discuss their failure and the causes of failure in a group, eventually the conversation focuses on the non-participating member. The session ends with the members expressing anger and hostility to one another.

## 2. Comparison of fantasy styles (a) over time and (b) between groups

A comparison of the synopsis of both groups highlights the difference of fantasy styles. Garfinkle (1967) and Bettelheim (1960) have stated that the reactions of members to a situation which is inconsistent with expectations (i.e. of modifying the objective structure of the familiar, known, in-common environment by rendering the background expectancies inoperative) are usually bewilderment, uncertainty, internal conflict, psychological and social isolation, acute and nameless anxiety along with various symptoms of acute depersonalization. Structures of interaction should be correspondingly disorganized.

Indications that a situation inconsistent with their expectations existed for the participating members can be seen from the dialogue of



the members during the first session.

T4

R: He said he's going to help us. I expected him to say something else you know. He's shut us up completely. That's not fair . . .

D: I wonder if this action of his was pre-planned?

T3

E: I guess we just start our own discussion then.

M: Yeah, we're sure not going to get cues.

Each group coped with the anomalous situation differently. As could be seen in the tables, T3 had more organized fantasy than did T4. T3 also had less silences than did T4 (average 2 minutes per session) and much less pairing and mumbling. There was more continuity of topic from session to session for T3. For instance, in session 3 the observation is made that two major sub-groups seem to exist in the group. This is discussed in sessions 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, and 13. This concern is expressed in a variety of forms, in session 3, the form is the trainer as good and kind, or distant and punishing, in session 4, the concern is expressed through confronting or not confronting the trainer, and in session 5, it is expressed in the discussion of participating or non-participating members.

T4, on the other hand does not establish any continuity of topic from session to session, and instead, experiences long disquieting silences and considerable pairing and mumbling during each session. In

session 3, there are 8 minutes of silence, in session 4, 4 minutes, in session 5, 11 minutes, in session 6, 6 minutes. As the silences increase, so does pairing and mumbling. For instance in session 5, 11 minutes of silence was noted and also pairing occurred for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  minutes. Eventually the silences decrease, but, an increase in pairing and sub-groups increases from session 5 until the end of the experiment.

It would seem that these phenomenon support the hypotheses that disorganized fantasy is an indication of disorganization in the group. In the self-analytic situation, a new learning experience occurs. The members' threshold for reception is variable. It may be affected by any of the hundred and one physical or psychological distractions that habitually block the logical process of thought. The incoming idea may be distorted out of all recognition by the inner circulation of fragmentary fantasies and lead to misunderstandings and misconceptions. The amount of distortion is related to the individual's degree of organization and/or the amount of anxiety present in the milieu.

## Part II

### 1. Distribution of Fantasy Styles

Tables I and II show the frequency of each style of fantasy for each session. (Table I for T3 and Table II for T4). Also shown in these tables are the totals of disorganized fantasies (Categories 1, 2, 3) and of organized fantasies (Categories 4, 5, 6) for each session. T3 had 39.4% disorganized fantasy and 60.6% organized fantasy. T4 had 57.7% disorganized fantasy and 42.3% organized fantasy. The frequency of styles was distributed regularly over the 29 sessions in both groups.

TABLE 1

Distribution of Fantasy Styles for Group T3 Sessions 1 - 15

Group T3 Session No.	FREQUENCY OF DISORGANIZED FANTASIES CATEGORIES				TOTALS	FREQUENCY OF ORGANIZED FANTASIES CATEGORIES				TOTALS
	1	2	3	TOTALS		4	5	6	TOTALS	
1	2	1	3	6	4	3	2	10		
2	5	3	4	12	1	1	1	3		
3	1	4	3	8	3	2	1	6		
4	4	2	5	11	5	1	3	9		
5	1	1	4	6	4	2	1	7		
6	1	2	3	6	4	7	1	12		
7	1	2	2	5	6	7	7	20		
8	2	3	2	7	6	5	1	12		
9	2	2	2	6	6	6	2	14		
10	2	1	2	5	5	2	0	7		
11	1	1	2	4	4	7	1	12		
12	2	1	1	4	2	4	1	7		
13	1	0	4	5	3	2	0	5		
14	0	2	1	3	3	5	3	11		
15	2	0	3	5	0	5	3	8		
				<u>93</u>				<u>143</u>		
				39.4%				60.6%		

TABLE II

Distribution of Fantasy Styles for Group T4 Sessions 1 - 14

Group T4 Session No.	FREQUENCY OF DISORGANIZED FANTASIES			TOTALS	FREQUENCY OF ORGANIZED FANTASIES			TOTALS
	1	2	3		4	5	6	
1	4	2	2	8	4	1	0	5
2	5	3	3	11	3	1	1	5
3	5	3	4	12	3	1	3	7
4	4	2	2	8	6	5	2	13
5	7	3	2	12	3	2	1	6
6	6	3	4	13	4	3	2	9
7	7	5	4	16	3	3	1	7
8	2	2	3	7	3	5	0	8
9	4	4	2	10	4	0	1	5
10	3	0	4	7	7	2	1	10
11	5	2	6	13	3	2	1	6
12	4	1	4	9	1	2	0	3
13	2	1	4	7	2	4	1	7
14	2	0	1	3	2	4	3	9
				<u>136</u>				<u>100</u>

57.7%

42.3%

## 2. Comparison of Fantasy Styles (a) over time, (b) between groups.

Tables III, IV, and V indicate the differences in proportion between organized and disorganized fantasy over time. In T3 in sessions 1 - 5 there was more disorganized fantasy (55.84% compared to 44.16%). During sessions 6 - 11 this trend reversed: 31% disorganized fantasy, 69% organized fantasy. There was a slight increase in disorganized fantasy in sessions 11 - 15 (32.8% and a slight decrease in organized fantasy (67.2%).

Tables VI - VIII indicate the difference in proportion of organized and disorganized fantasy over time. In T4, during sessions 1 - 5 there was more disorganized fantasy than organized fantasy. (58.6% compared to 41.4%). This did not change significantly for the duration of the experiment. Sessions 6 - 10, 57.6% and sessions 11 - 14, 56.2% disorganized fantasy.

A comparison of Tables III - V and VI - VII indicates that T4 had about the same amount of disorganized fantasy at the end of the experiment than T3 had at the beginning of the experiment. T3 had 55.84% during sessions 1 - 5 and T4 had 56.2% during sessions 11 - 14.

A comparison also indicates that T4 had about the same amount of organized fantasy at the end of the experiment than T3 had at the beginning. T3 had 44.16% during sessions 1 - 6 and T4 had 43.8% during sessions 11 - 14.

TABLE III

Percentage of Organized Fantasy For Group T3 Sessions 1 - 15

Group No. / Sessions	Group T3			Sessions 1 - 5		
Style of Fantasy	Disorganized Fantasy			Organized Fantasy		
Category No.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Frequency For Each Style of Fantasy	13	11	19	18	9	8
Sub-Totals	43			34		
Percentage of Total	55.84%			44.16%		

TABLE IV

Percentage of Organized and Disorganized Fantasy For Group T3 Sessions 6 - 10

Style of Fantasy Category No.	Disorganized Fantasy			Organized Fantasy		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Frequency For Each Style of Fantasy	8	10	11	26	27	12
Sub-Totals	29			65		
Percentage of Total	31%			69%		

TABLE V

Percentage Organized and Disorganized Fantasy For Group T3 Sessions 11 - 15

Group No. / Sessions Style of Fantasy Category No.	Group T3			Sessions 11 - 16		
	Disorganized Fantasy			Organized Fantasy		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Frequency For Each Style of Fantasy	6	4	11	12	23	8
Sub-Totals	21			43		
Percentage of Total	32.8%			67.2%		



TABLE VI

Percentage of Organized and Disorganized Fantasy For Group T4 Sessions 1 - 5

Group No. / Sessions	Group T4			Sessions 1 - 5		
Style of Fantasy	Disorganized Fantasy			Organized Fantasy		
Category No.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Frequency For Each Style of Fantasy	25	13	13	19	10	7
Sub-Totals	51			36		
Percentage of Total	57.6%			42.49%		

TABLE VII

Percentage of Organized and Disorganized Fantasy For Group T4 Sessions 6 - 10

Group No. / Sessions Style of Fantasy Category No.	Group T4			Sessions 6 - 10		
	Disorganized Fantasy			Organized Fantasy		
Frequency For Each Style of Fantasy	1	2	3	4	5	6
	22	14	17	21	13	5
Sub-Totals	53			39		
Percentage of Total	57.6%			42.49%		

TABLE VIII

Percentage of Organized and Disorganized Fantasy For Group T4 Sessions 11 - 14

<u>Group No. / Sessions</u>	<u>Group T4</u>			<u>Sessions 11 - 14</u>		
<u>Style of Fantasy</u>	<u>Disorganized Fantasy</u>			<u>Organized Fantasy</u>		
<u>Category No.</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Frequency For Each Style of Fantasy</u>	13	4	15	8	11	6
<u>Sub-Totals</u>	32			25		
<u>Percentage of Total</u>	56.2%			43.8%		

## Chapter V

### Discussion

The results of this investigation seem to indicate that:

- (1) Fantasy should not only be perceived as inherently pathological and defensive, but should also be perceived as a cognitive skill through which a person carries out explorations in interaction with his environment and playfully combines and reexamines new ideas.
- (2) If the crucial events which enhance or impede the development of a cohesive group (cultural characteristics) are not consistent with the participating members expectations, then the style of fantasy utilized will be an indication of the integration present within the group.

In considering the first point, the early psychoanalytic view that fantasy was a compensatory, defensive or drive reducing mechanism does not seem general enough or precise enough to become the basis of a model for fantasy. It seems more reasonable to suggest that fantasy is also a cognitive skill utilized by the person to explore a variety of perspectives. This can be observed in T3 in relation to the formation of sub-groups within the larger group. In one session, the presence of sub-groups is attributed to the different feelings for the trainer. Another time, the sub-groups are caused by the division into participating and non-participating members, and still yet another time it is the result

of deciding about the value of confronting the trainer.

The findings of this study concur with Singers observation that practised daydreamers can engage in distracting imagery in the fantasy realm or work out resolutions of their anger or fear. T3 seemed much more comfortable about expressing their feelings about the trainer and vis à vis one another. T4 were more hesitant about discussing the intensity of their feelings. For instance, in both groups, a critical confrontation occurred at the beginning of the experiment. T3 coped with the feelings that were uncovered by discussing intimacy, the value of expressing such feelings and the genuinness of feelings expressed. Contrast this discussion with the discussion in T4. In the session immediately following the confrontation, the silences totalled eight minutes and were accompanied by mumbling and nervous laughter. No reference was made to the confrontation or to their feelings. Instead, the group discussed for the next four sessions such varied topics as, night spots in town, reason for attending University, study habits, Amish culture, prostitution, homosexuality, movies, hypnosis etc. Needless to say this did not allay the anxiety present in the group.

The findings of this study also seem to support Singers contention that persons who are not familiar with fantasy as a mode of thought and are left to their own devices during a period of stress or while angered may become more uncomfortable. Whether in fact the participating members in T4 had less well developed fantasy styles, and as a result more defensive personality traits, the fact remains that the members were less able to cope with the situation and their anxiety, and

did experience more discomfort. This point can be verified in session 12 when some members bring coffee and doughnuts: J: "That was the idea of the coffee and doughnuts, just to try and relax everybody". D: "Obviously it has not worked".

Another crucial variable which may have adversely affected the development of fantasy chains was the trainer's role. The trainer is supposedly a blank screen. However, keeping in mind the counter-transference phenomenon, it seems quite possible that in one group (T4) the trainer may have created such an anxious milieu as to prevent development within the group.

In the experimental milieu the cultural characteristics that make it possible for the participating members to validate their experience did not exist. The findings support that the fantasy styles used in this situation are measures of the presence or absence of organization. Furthermore the presence of organized fantasy in one group (T3) permitted the establishment of a rudimentary culture. In T4 however the lack of organized fantasy prevented the development of any group cohesiveness.

The presence of organization in T3 can be seen in the continuity of topics from session to session. The tendency to interact was greater in this group. In T4 on the other hand it was not unusual for a member to engage in a long soliloquy. This phenomenon did not occur in T3.

Fantasy in this group was usually employed in two ways:

- (a) to explore and confirm feelings and ideas about an issue before confronting it

(b) as a way of understanding the complexities of events from previous sessions.

This observation supports Singer's point that in the fantasy domain, cognitive skills are being utilized, and that fantasy can be an adaptive mechanism as well as a defensive mechanism.

The self-analytic situation required that participating members develop new skills in interaction. This means that members must acquire skills without the presence of a formal instructor. The Freudian model would have us believe that all behavior in the situation is comparable to the dream process. Using these assumptions, the important focus of fantasy should be the latent content of each fantasy chain. Not to deny the importance of unconscious feelings and thus impact on behavior, it seems more reasonable to focus on the stylistic differences that are present in fantasy chains. The findings of the investigation highlight the functional properties of fantasy and its impact on group behavior and as well, outline the styles that impede the development of a group culture. The findings also show the importance of understanding fantasy since in fact it is not irrelevant to the task of the group. On the contrary, this investigation suggests that without adequate fantasy interaction the culture of a group becomes so impoverished that it is unable to develop minimum interaction relationships.

The implications of these conclusions indicate that fantasy should be interpreted as being both functional and dysfunctional. It also seems to indicate that learning experiences can be presented in which the development of fantasy will be enhanced or impeded.

It seems plausible to suggest that much of the task irrelevant thinking reported in the group process situation belongs to this species of cognitive events. Fantasy, as in dreams, should allow a high degree of mental function, far from the limitations imposed by the socially conditional logical orientation of normal thought. Bales' definition of fantasy, however, precludes such an interpretation and leads to vagueness. He includes within his paradigm definitions that ordinarily belong in social interaction. (eg. discussing the news). In order to understand the subtleties present in the fantasy dimension, it will be necessary to redefine fantasy. Only then, will Singer's conceptual scheme of fantasy be applicable.



### Limitations of the Study

A major limitation was a lack of criteria for indicating the beginning and ending of a fantasy excerpt. Bales defines the unit to be scored as a communication, or an indication, either verbal or non-verbal, which in its context may be understood by another member as equivalent to a single simple sentence. Unfortunately, for the purpose of this study, this definition is too narrow and does not reveal the fantasy chains as they unfold. As a result, rigor was put aside in an attempt to describe more explicitly a phenomenon not previously investigated.

A second limitation was the absence of rater reliability for step three (i.e. the coding of the transcripts into task and non task behavior). The raters required extensive training which time did not permit, and untrained raters were employed. To mitigate some of the variation in scoring only those excerpts that both raters agreed on were used in the investigation.

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