Feminism, Politics and Power in Therapeutic Discourse
Nollaig O'Reilly Byrne and Imelda Colgan McCarthy

In situating Feminism, Politics, Power and Therapeutic Discourse as a title for this chapter, an attempt will be made to follow their uneasy engagement and affiliation. Implicit in the four terms is a recognition of a variety of practices that seek to destabilise sites of oppression, and to promote an ethic of reciprocity. The validation of these practices relies on the primary assumption that colonizing discourses produce stable hierarchies of devaluation across a range of social, cultural, and representational positions in society. The devalued "other" -- woman, race, social class -- of this hierarchical structure occupies a marginal or sub-ordinate status, limiting the potential for autonomy and self-determination, and in which the politics of its own production remains submerged (Kearney et al., 1989; McCarthy, 1991; Byrne & McCarthy, 1995).

Alternatively, practices based on reciprocity, as an ethics of human relationship, rely on the mobilization of a range of materials, linguistic and extra-linguistic that come into service as tropes and sites of resistance and freedom. These practices aim to increase the margin of liberty for subject positions in a particular arena, which discloses self to self, self in relation to others, and self in relation to various social discourses (Andersen, 1990, 1995; Anderson, 1997; Byrne, 1996: Epston et al., 1992; Foucault, 1982, 1994; McCarthy & Byrne, 1988; McNay, 1992; White & Epston, 1990; White, 1993; Tomm *need date; Penn & Frankfurt, 1995).

Essentialism and Relativism
The articulation of the constitution of subjectivities and identity politics in sites of protest and contest brings the dual perspectives of essentialism and relativism into an ambivalent play. Essentialism occupies the tradition of classical dualisms, in which difference is a bi-polar construct. Relativism, by contrast is a postmodern perspective, which proposes difference as multiplicity, ambiguity and upheaval of dualisms (Gergen, 1994; Shotter, 1993; Shotter & Gergen, 1989). Deconstructive strategies as features of discourses of resistance are drawn on by these contrary perspectives. Essentialist dualisms of essences or stable identities are exaggerated in the exploration and restoration of their revalued specificity and difference. From the perspective of relativism, difference is a multiplicity, which denotes a space of proliferation, disrupting the confines of dichotomised dualisms. There are difficulties with both perspectives in grounding the commitment of political and ethical practices (Benhabib et al., 1995; Flax, 1993; Butler, 1990; Braidotti, 1989). Taken to extremes, heightening of specific differences may become foundational and over-arching of other differences, while an exaggerated relativism undermines the possibility of any stable representation. It is around these contraries that tension in contemporary feminist theory emerges.

Therapeutic Discourses
A discourse is a network of theories and practices engaging with, colliding with or erasing other discourses. What marks a particular discourse as therapeutic in contemporary society is drawn from a broader professionalised binary form of relationship, i. e. help-seeker and help-giver. This implicit asymmetry produces

practices with varying contents of inequality and non-reciprocity but if useful to the help-seeker for strategic ends they may continue to hold a normative status.

Therapeutic discourse specifies a multiplicity of practices which hold possibilities to bring into view the different contents of colonization that circumscribe autonomy and, hence, a derogation of the primacy of ethics as 'self esteem' in an individual life. As an amalgam of several discourses, it is not immune from a colonizing potential of its own, to the extent that it projects a framework through which the client's narrative is filtered and re-shaped. Good intentions, or the alleged absence of any framework will not prevent this in the absence of a critical appraisal of the positionality of the discourse as therapeutic rather than colonizing (McCarthy, 199, 1, Byrne & McCarthy, 1995). In our view a discourse can be said to be therapeutic to the extent that the exchange between participants foregrounds the potential for reciprocity of perspectives and mutual respect. This is the domain of liberty which is a *sine qua non* of therapeutic practice. There is a requirement of politics and ethics in establishing this positionality, referred to by one of the authors (IMcC) as "the politics of listening and the ethics of speaking."

Feminist Politics: Equality as a Trope of Resistance
While equality is the originary trope of resistance within feminist politics, it relies on the foundational narrative of patriarchy as the stable object to which it is opposed. Within this view patriarchy has generated a highly differentiated masculinity and femininity by a rhetorical detour through biological and sexual differences (Belsey & Moore, 1989; de Lauretis, 1987; McCarthy, 1990; Joeres & Laslett, 1996). Thus it is the erasure and denial of sameness, which oppresses women and which is resurrected by the equality argument. Feminism originated as a political position that advanced a social analysis about the specific character of women's oppression and thus claimed a universalist project. The equality argument within feminism is based on the potential sameness of the sexes. This argument dates back to Mary Wollstonecraft and the early suffragists and remains the cornerstone of liberal politics (Wollstonecraft, 1982). As the articulation of women's rights, it has made possible a range of equality reforms that materially improved the lives of women and rendered them as equal subjects under law. However, as a political agenda the overstretch of this claim is modified by a filtering social analysis that identifies the particularities and burdens of oppression across historical time and in different societies.

The specific mechanisms of oppression and subordination of women, it has been argued, are not invariant; they are a complex mediation of concrete cultural phenomena, both materialistic and non-materialistic, which are inscribed to varying degrees on sexual difference (Benhabib, 1992; Spivak, 1987, 1988; McCarthy, 1995). Thus while the demand for equality in male-female relationships is the justification for feminism, this is contested and circumscribed by attention to the weight of other colonising markers of inequality, particularly those of racism, ability, sexual orientation and poverty. These markers constitute greater burdens of oppression for specific groups of women which the equality argument of Western feminism suppressed. These are salient differences which separate women from each other in the name of different contents of oppression and hence specify different political agendas, in which feminism as a large scale identity politics is no longer realisable (Higginbotham, 1996; bell hooks, 1990).

Two issues arise within feminist politics. Firstly, feminism as a political struggle, must revise its universalist aim, to take account of the concrete differences which separate women from each other and thus generate more local solidarities. Secondly, it is recognised that legislative equality alone cannot reach those arenas of everyday life in which devaluation is symbolically coded and secured. 'What is an act of resistance, given that the subject who needs to resist is already complicit in 'technologies of gender', those linguistic and social networks in which gender is produced and re-produced' (de Lauretis, 1987).

Feminist Feminine Theories: Difference as Trope of Resistance
Broadly speaking, these are separatist theories that radicalise women as a counter society to male privilege and domination. Drawing on divergent assumptions, what they have in common is an articulation of the specificity of female subjectivity and desire, suppressed or devalued under patriarchy (Daly, 1978; Braidotti, 1989; Moi, 1987; Ruddick, 1980; Grosz, 1989; Chodorow, 1978; Flax, 1993). In extending the analysis of the power axis of men-women relationships, not only as subjects under law, where sameness is accentuated, other postulates of difference emerge. While "sameness", as a citizenship issue has legitimated the demand for equality between men and women, it is the philosophy of "difference" which has come to structure feminism as an ambivalent interplay of separatist and pluralist discourses. In the internal feminist critique, in dispute is the fact that the feminine subject produced by these various feminist feminine theories place an aggravated emphasis on gender difference to the neglect of other differences that significantly mediate subject positions.

There is an irony here in that it is sexual difference that legitimates the naturalised inferiority of the feminine and it is this distinction that radical feminists draw on to articulate and re-value an extreme difference feminism. The positing of extreme difference slides into an essentialism of universal and invariant status which paradoxically elides the real differences that exist between women in different contexts (McNay, 1992:, 19). In attempting to excavate the founding sexual difference beneath other determinations, this " leaves woman once again reduced to her body…rather than figuring as a culturally shaped, culturally complex, evolving, rational, engaged a noisy opposition" (Soper quoted in McNay, 1992:, 19). However, it is also argued that in, revaluing the feminine, the patriarchal logic of the discourse of sexual difference is a deconstructive strategy. The rhetoric of the body as a feminine articulation is an ironic exaggeration which exposes the elimination and the derogation of the female body in classical dualisms (McNay, 1992:, 13, 20).

Gender Specificity
The maternalist strand of feminist feminine theories essentialises the body from the standpoint of reproduction, child-birth and child-care (Chodorow, 1978). It variably was seen as the inescapable cultural duty or biological destiny of women (Wollstonecraft, 1982). For the maternalists, the particular experiences of reproduction determine female sexual desire and essentially feminine values of care and protection. In mothering theory, the incompleteness of the mother-daughter separation is posited as the source of gendered feminine generative capacity and desire. Here, the feminine, positioned in a gendered genealogical chain of being born and giving birth, is the founding sociality ensures a relational sense of self,

now understood as of feminist ethics (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 1984; Clement, 1996;).

Feminist ethics, drawing on Chodorow's mothering theory, the notion of a deep sense of gendered self formed in infancy, has ushered in what is known as the care-justice debate (Held, 1995). While radical and separatist, the conception of a culturally constructed, stable and constant gender identity emerging early in life, (Chodorow, 1996). is at odds with the feminine, theorised as "otherness", "supplement", "margin", by the "new French feminists. In the internal feminist critique, however, both conceptions are politically suspect to socialist feminists (Nicholson, 1990, 1995; Spivak, 1987; Barrett, 1988).

Sexual Specificity

Within this feminist explanation, division by sex as the elemental structure of living forms, and hence of human life, is an inescapable difference and specificity of a sexed human life. In the natural domain -- outside history, culture, ideology and human consciousness -- this elemental difference is offered as the *sine qua non* of continuity in complex organisms. For Luce Irigaray and Helene Cixous, both Lacanian psychoanalysts, language operates on corporeal sexual difference as the *apriori* structure of difference in which language unfolds as an articulation of binary oppositions (male/female) or 'the play of differences. ' (Cixous, 1976; Cixous & Clement, 1986; Irigaray, 1993, 1994).

The ancestral woman, (Irigaray) the elemental woman, (Cixous) and the symbolically marginal woman, (Kristeva) are utilised, not only to articulate a feminine specificity, but to re-position the feminine as a contemporary positive evaluation. Irigaray deconstructs the ascription of interminable and heightened ambivalence of the daughter's separation struggle with a restorative genealogy; Cixous deconstructs the devaluation of the feminine implicit in classic dualisms by replacing the hierarchical structure of devaluation with the Derridean term of "supplement". Kristeva's relational description of the feminine, as a shifting positionality in relation to the socio-symbolic contract, establishes it as a sacrifice articulated in the margins. Here the margin is the double emblem of woman's sacrificial history and the site of self-knowledge which constitutes feminine desire. Thus she is attempting to undo the victim-oppressor axis of femininity-masculinity as the founding script of male and female relations. In retaining the masculine-feminine axis, her notion of positionality draws attention to the non-equivalence of different contexts and contents of oppression and resistance (Moi, 1986).

While Irigaray seeks specificity and equality within the symbolic order, Hélène Cixous, by contrast, theorises the feminine as irreducibly other to the socio-linguistic symbolic order. Sexual difference exists, and masculinity as constituted symbolically, is fixed and stabilised; by contrast the feminine constituted by "otherness" rather than lack and circulates on the borders and the limits of the masculine as a deconstructive potential. Cixous proposes a textual practice of "écriture féminine", a writing at the margins of logocentric texts (Belsey & Moore, 1989: 14). This, paradoxically, conjoins the essentially feminine as "otherness" in Cixous's theory with Derrida's postmodernist theory of difference as textual supplement. For Irigaray we have lost our mothers; for Cixous we are dead and spoken for in male idioms and practices. Both however specify the body in terms of

its elemental sexual difference as the critical location for the operation of patriarchal oppression. In essentialising sexual difference as both Irigaray and Cixous do, at the level of the body and of language, however, they are reclaiming a site for women that counters the existing linguistic domination, gaps and silences of women's experience.

A language that shatters the exclusion and silencing, which constitute the binary oppositions of the patriarchal order, is proposed as 'womanspeak' (Irigaray) or 'écriture féminine' (Cixous) (Belsey & Moore, 1989: 13). In this shattering Cixous proposes that, 'woman will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her by patriarchy' (ibid.). Specifying female sexual difference as 'otherness' rather than 'lack'/absence', provides the escape from the claim of dichotomised oppositions in which one position of the binary pair is devalued and/or silenced. The (re)inclusion now configures a new interplay of opposites and unites their feminist project with the philosophy of deconstruction. These positions, lexical markers of sexed subjectivities opened the way for imagining and defining presentations of sex as a social construction. The term, 'gender' now enters as an attempt to highlight the different ways women and men are re-presented throughout history (Nicholson & Seidman, 1995: , 10). These writers provide a feminist anthropology, the ancestral woman, (Irigaray) the elemental woman, (Cixous) and the symbolically marginal woman, (Kristeva) to articulate a feminine specificity, now repositioned as a contemporary positive evaluation. They can also be read as a narrative of colonisation which locates the death (Cixous) the loss/devaluation (Irigaray) and the marginality (Kristeva) of woman in the socio-symbolic contract under patriarchy. They provide textual anti-colonial strategies which resonate with emergences in other contexts of colonisation. Native language revival (Cixous), restoration of mythic sources (Irigaray) and speech from the margins (Kristeva) mark the efforts of the colonised as narratives of emancipation.

For our part, we draw on these resources not for their anthropological merit but rather as literary exegesis in which the motif of colonisation emerges. Radical, essentialist and separatist to varying degrees, what the various feminist positions have in common is an articulation of the specificity of women's experience and requiring the emergence of other subject positions and strategies of resistance beyond or in addition to that of political mobilisation.

Multiple Feminisms: Differentiation
Within contemporary postmodern Continental philosophy, as we have seen the theory of difference was a critique of classical dualisms, and was proposed as a deconstructive strategy by Kristeva, to undo the polarised terms of masculine/feminine (Braidotti, 1989, McNay, 1992: 16). However, Nicholson and Seidman (1995: 1) moving in a different direction have recently pointed out that 'Difference feminism', however, has been most at fault in ignoring differences among women'. Nicholson (1990, 1995) goes on to argue that we need to get beyond explicit or implicit notions of biological foundationalism if we are to get beyond the erasure of differences which supplement the notion of similarities. In this she means that we need to acknowledge all the different criteria of what constitutes male and female subjectivities in diverse societies and cultures.

As Carole Pateman writing from a different orientation has stated, 'who a "citizen" is, what a citizen does and the arena within which he [sic] acts have been

constructed in the masculine image'. She goes on to say that even though woman have formal citizenship in Western countries their participation is still for the most part devalued (Pateman, 1987, 1988a, 1988b). To get over what she describes as the 'Wollstonecraft dilemma' (demanding equality under a patriarchal concept of citizen is to demand to be like men, which runs counter to the demand to be included as women in the first place), she proposes that the notion of sexual differentiation be embraced. A sexually differentiated concept of citizen and equality would acknowledge women's embodied subjectivity in their ability to bear a child as of equal political relevance to men's 'willingness' to 'fight and die for his country' in defining citizenship (Quoted in Mouffe, 1995: 32, 1 - 322).

However, Chantal Mouffe extends the previous propositions as to how women might be (re)entered into public space by proffering a deconstructed notion of citizen which stretches beyond sex divisions and gender differences (Mouffe, 1995: 323; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). She argues that sexual difference should be irrelevant to political citizenship and looks towards a notion of citizenship wherein social agents would be viewed as subjects who are articulated through 'an ensemble of subject positions' which correspond to the multiplicity of social relations in which they are inscribed. This multiplicity would be constructed within specific discourses which have no necessary relation but only contingent and precarious forms of articulations. Within this schema, which is akin to Baudrillard's idea that subjectivity is created through the interactions of social discourses and networks of relationships (Baudrillard, 1988), she would argue that there is no reason why sexual differentiation would be pertinent to all social relations within what she calls a radical democratic conception of citizenship (Mouffe, 1995: 323 - 324).

Towards the New Millennium

As we enter the new Millennium we have proposed that an 'identity politics' which appears to offer group membership for some political purpose calls for a rethink. In its early phases identity politics held out hopes of specifying the rights to social inclusion for marginalised groups, e. g. women, gays and lesbians, minority racial and ethnic groups, the differently abled and so on. However, while the issues that these groups campaigned on were in part taken on board as it were by the dominant culture, those who defined themselves as belonging to them were continually judged according to personal embodiments. Therefore, these groups were not the same as other political groupings where one could join because of interest or inclination - one did not generally choose to be a woman, a Jew, a muslim in the same way as one did to be a member of a political party (Gergen, 1995).

If language is purported to be a masculinist socio-linguistic system, then the idea of a feminine discourse, makes sense as a way to shatter oppositions of identity-other in favour of irreducible differences (Cixous); to situate oppositions in a relational frame where marginality is articulated as the unrecognised sacrifice exacted by the symbolic order (Kristeva**);** to locate in the literary heritage of the ancient world, those powerful mythic mother-daughter ancestors who were later suppressed (Irigaray); to revalue maternity and mothering as the historically constructed site for the development of a gendered sense of self and gendered values (Gilligan).

In this sense The Women's Movement has been a resistance movement either to claim power, as the demand for equality, or, as in radical feminism, to propose a

counterpower (Belsey & Moore, 1989: 205). However, the achievement of power, of money or status by individual women has not transformed sexual power relationships or created solidarity for women. What is masked in this consolidation of power is the identification by women with male values. Here the specificity of women's needs and interests remain unarticulated in what is essentially "a man's world". In the counter-society of counter-power, the refusal to be conscripted is an anti-sacrificial trespass on the socio-symbolic contract, the most specific of these being a refusal of the exclusive role of perpetuating and providing for the care of the species.

Feminisms, Postmodernism, Foucault and Power

In Foucault's analysis of power, he breaks with revolutionary theory and humanist assumptions of the individual, and hence with both Marxist and liberal politics (McNay, 1992; Foucault, 1982, 1994). It is his view that power, as a feature of postmodern life, is not a possession of individuals or the central apparatuses of the State. He draws attention to the forms of power as exercised in multiple networks of relationships at the microlevel of society "that invests the body, sexuality, family, kinship, knowledge" (*what is this reference?Feminist Interpretations p222). This is not to deny that state and institutional power exists, or that the forms of power exercised in some societies may be repressive or coercive. His interest lies in providing an understanding of the postmodern subject, postmodern forms of subjectivity and subjugation mediated by relations of power. In replacing ideology with discourse, the position of the subject as a site of accommodation and resistance is theorised as important to Foucault's microanalysis. Hence power and resistance could be said to have a cybernetic structure in the Batesonian sense (Bateson, 1972, 1979; McCarthy, 1997,). Here, the discourse of power re-presents the full array of normative cultural interpretations and values while resistance, as the discourse of protest, occurs in a multiplicity of sites that challenge the given and the taken for granted in the name of individual or collective social change.

Thus resistance in postmodern society, is in the first instance a self-determining protest by individuals against forces of over-determination that is 'the government of individualisation' (Foucault, 1994). The discourse of protest is a counter-discourse that mobilises groups that are marginalised, silenced or made invisible in normative discourse

In Foucault's genealogical critique of history, the dialectic of power and resistance plays itself out in an ambiguous and oscillating fashion in specific and local struggles. In this view, no large scale social change or transformation can be produced in advance of the creative participation of subjects who will benefit or be disadvantaged by this change. For Foucault, freedom and self- determination cannot be an abstract universal of contingent inalienable rights, but is an action-context sustained by the desire of subjects to produce some effects while resisting others. It is this which is said to have impact on dominant networks. However, Foucault's emphasis is neither on large scale networks or ideologies of domination, but rather on how the individual constitutes power relations and is in turn constituted by them. In his later work, he counters the constitution of the "docile body" as the effect of modern disciplinary power and 'technologies of subjectification' with a theory of self that avoids the passivity implicit in his early work. 'An ethics of self' is a narrative of emancipation addressed to the colonised and 'docile body'. It is this

later analysis that can be incorporated into feminist discourse and other discourses of resistance (McNay, 1992: 4; Foucault, 1994). On a general level, victimisation is construed as only one of the subject positions, possible in relationships of power. Specifically in male-female relationships, the theory of the self as a self-fashioning and self-determining subject of freedom and constraint deconstructs any essentialist concepts that predicate male-female power differences.

Feminist Critique within Systemic Therapies

This considerable critique has drawn attention to the gender neutrality paradigm on which therapeutic practices were based and in which gender inequality was unarticulated (Hare-Mustin, 1987, 1988, 1994; Goldner, 1985, 1991; McGoldrick et al., 1990; Jones, 1993; McCarthy, 1990, 1991; McKinnon & James, 1987). Here, as in the general social arena, the systemic feminist political analysis of divided spheres, public and private, provided the recognition for the emergence of the personal as an appropriate subject of politicisation. The 'systemic model' as a theory of stability and change in social systems, indebted to biological and cybernetic theory and relying on normative assumptions of dominant social theory, subsumed/elided gender asymmetry under the dominant frame of circular interaction.

   Therapist 'neutrality' as a central methodological component of Milan Systemic Practice (Palazzoli et al., 1981) sustained the strongest critique as the unwitting political buttress of the status quo (Jones, 1993). These challenges both theoretical and political, problematised the nature of power relationships and the status of determinism versus voluntarism as action contexts. For systemic practitioners what continues to survive from the Batesonian framework is the positing of the primacy of relationship, i. e. sociation as the apriori in individual development (Gergen, 1994) in which emerges the intersubjective constitution of subject positions and the insertion of power as a circular interactive frame, i. e. a strategic game of influence among equals (symmetry) or a strategic game of domination and resistance among unequals (complementarity) (Bateson, 1972, 1979; Foucault, 1994).

   Thus in systemic practice the theoretical narrative of relationship and interaction is no longer an abstract schema that can be observed, stabilised or changed for strategic ends. Rather what now comes into view, as an ethically informed emancipation project, is the discursive formation or unfolding of social realities and subject positions, the self as an ethical subject (determined and free), and identity as the unique narrative unfolding of the stories one lives by (Foucault, 1994).

Therapeutic Discourse: A Fifth Province Approach

The Fifth Province Approach was developed by the authors and a colleague, Philip Kearney (Colgan, 199, 1; McCarthy & Byrne, 1988; Byrne & McCarthy, 1988). The approach takes its name from the ancient Celtic myth of the Fifth Province in Ireland. There is debate as to whether this province existed or not. Many say that it was not a geographical domain but rather a province of imagination and possibility, whose only existing trace is in the Irish language. In our native language the word for province is *cuaige*, which means fifth. Other versions of the story site the Fifth Province at the centre of Ireland where the four geographical provinces were supposed to have met. Here, it is cited, there existed a druidic place where kings and chieftains came to receive counsel and resolve conflicts through dialogue. Whatever the story, the metaphor of the fifth province has come to mean for us the

creation of a dialogical and imaginative space wherein participants might create together opportunities for a polyphonic and polysemic interplay. The Fifth Province approach is our particular innovation within systemic practice, one that attempts to resist the primacy of essentialism or relativism with the re-positioning of ambivalence as the paradigmatic structure of discourse and relationship (Byrne, 1996).

Colonisation has been a guiding metaphor in our articulation of the Fifth Province approach (Kearney et al., 1989; McCarthy, 199, 1). In recognising the binary structure of thought and language as paradigmatic to discourse, ambivalence is posited as that abstraction and movement which propels thought along binary axes into divisions, oppositions and exclusions. In a logo-centric critique, indebted to Derrida, the French feminist psychoanalysts describe division as death (Cixous), opposition as devaluation (Irigaray) and exclusion as marginality (Kristeva). In our view, death, devaluation and marginality can be understood as the productive effects of colonisation. Thus in our approach, colonisation is the overthrow of ambivalence, securing the claim to certitude. Ambivalence, on the other hand, is the movement in relations of power creating the possibility of reversed and/or re-versed perspectives constituting and constituted through new discourses. Without this quasi-structure of ambivalence the world of discourse would be a static place where the 'last word' becomes the final say.

Within this approach therapeutic discourse becomes a vernacular exploration and dialogue, economised by the movement of ambivalence which narrativises provisional and coherent identities from the force lines of multiple constituent discourses. As a relationship of power and mutual influence, resistance is also bi-directional. Here the claim of pathologising genres of discourses as significant closures attempts to be resisted by participants. In a politics of listening, one is searching for the form of colonising discourses hidden in the apparent transparency of personal accounts (Byrne & McCarthy, 1995; Hyden & McCarthy, 1994). Such colonising discourses leave the personal account with a singular form, a form of devaluation and imposition. Through questions which mobilise and intensify the colonising impulse which deforms a personal account the latter is brought to the limits of affective tolerance and coherent intelligibility. This dialogical enquiry, referred to by us as '*questioning at the extremes*' brings back the movement of ambivalence and the binary form of the discursive field, previously suppressed (Colgan, 199, 1; McCarthy & Byrne, 1995). Listening thus, requires an immersion in and prior reflection on the specific contents on the shared world of the participants, particularly those that constrain individual or collective liberty. Here is a duty to 'know' before one can adequately listen in order that one can 'know' more.

In an ethics of speaking, participants draw together in a commitment to speak the 'truth' for one's own sake and for the sake of the other. Therapeutic discourse is a pre-eminently recognisable and specific form of truth making in which the primacy or reciprocity in discursive exchange resists the closure of dogmatic assertion. How then can the practice of 'questioning at the extremes' be considered as a form of truth making. Of itself it has no truth content. Rather, it is situated dialogically from inside a discourse challenging its claim to truth and certitude. It is a deconstructive strategy that loosens the hold of singular discourses over a personal life. Personal freedom and increased autonomy does not eliminate the rhetorical and material presence of the discourse. It is merely muted and estranged by the return to

individual recognition of the binary form and suppressed pole from which it became individualised and stabilised in place and in time. The ethical dilemma thus is not to substitute a dominant discourse with its suppressed other but to embrace their juxtapositioning as an ambivalent structure of thoughtful life and moving point for preferred actions and choices (McCarthy & Byrne, 1988, Byrne, 1996).

The metaphor of the Fifth Province can thus be said to be a cultural resource that we invoke to sustain an ethical disposition towards relational reciprocity among participants, and an openness to the contents of discursive binary forms in which subject positions are constituted. We have imagined that this juxtaposing of binary opposites creates possibilities for the emergence of resources, solutions and generative ideas and behaviours (Byrne & McCarthy, 1988; McCarthy & Byrne, 1988).

Re-Versed Perspectives

Interviewing constitutes the major activity of therapeutic conversations, and within the context of this chapter the products of interviewing are articulated as co-constructions emerging within *inter-views* or between views and voices. As one of the authors has previously stated, an interview is a joint product between the interviewer and the interviewee (Hydén & McCarthy, 1994). Thus it is a mutual endeavour between both parties within the interviewing process. Within the domain of therapy, however, this joint product presupposes a primacy in relation to the interests of the help-seeker and not the help-giver. The concerns and complaints of the help-seeker are privileged articulations. As therapists we are thus called upon to background our own issues in the service of those we work with. This apparently noble policy of privileging client discourse has however, constituted a dilemmatic encounter between therapist and client. In backgrounding the therapist's experiential, emotional and theoretical world the client is and has been at risk of an unintended but exposing gaze of an objectifying professional expertise. In such an encounter both parties in such activities run the risk of being alienated from the other within the intended dialogic interaction. They are alienated, or one might say 'hurt', within these interactions by a listening to theoretical and emotional calls from outside of the dialogue (Salamon et al., 1993). It is as if a third voice has entered, drowning out the authentic voicings of both client and therapist.

Such silencing is also possible when we consider that each interview is also carried on within a discursive culture, socio-political and professional, which constitutes the process. The emergent process in turn constitutes the culture so that (a) nothing changes, (b) pathology is co-constructed, and/or (c) the interview has the potential to constitute the culture sub-versively so that the discursive culture in which the interview happens is changed both for the actors and in terms of a professional practice. The authors, in this chapter, imagine a subversively situated practice in relation to the dominant, pathologising and professional narratives which can drown out the local narrative of the interviewee's lived experiences and which in turn form the 'tyrannising power of the therapeutic motif' (Ehrenhaus, 1993: 82). As such our practice is imagined as a Janus-faced activity pervaded with ambivalence, ambiguity and open-endedness.

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