

# THE OEDIPAL PARADIGM IN GROUP DEVELOPMENT A Clinical and Empirical Study

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**Small group researchers** and participant observers of psychotherapy and training groups have for some time attempted to identify and explain the “phases” or “stages” which characterize the development of small social systems. To this end, many different kinds of groups have been studied—laboratory groups, sensitivity training groups, psychotherapy groups, college classrooms, and “natural” groups in “real life” settings. In addition, several generations of social scientists have struggled with the complexities of social change in a wide variety of collectivities. One perennial goal of at least some small group researchers has been the elucidation of

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principles of group development which can be applied to the phenomenon of small social systems and much larger social groups. The notion has been advanced (see Dunphy, 1968, 1964; Slater, 1966) that the study of small groups offers a microcosmic view of phenomena common to most social systems.

The research reported in this paper is based on the study of rather unusual (and unusually interesting) small groups. The two groups in this particular study are "self-analytic" classrooms composed of college students who have committed themselves to a psychological examination of their own classroom and, to some extent, of their own personalities and interpersonal styles.

We shall explore in some detail the usefulness of a particular proposition about the evolution of groups such as these—the hypothesis that much of group development reflects the unfolding of an *oedipal paradigm*. It was Freud (1955a: 69-143, 1955b: 1-161) who first introduced the notion that underlying themes of sexual attraction and rivalry play a significant role in the dynamics of small groups. Elaborating on this idea, Slater (1966) stresses the importance of the "revolt" against the group leader which often occurs in small groups similar to the ones we shall describe in this paper. Slater believes that, through a process of revolt or confrontation, the group members are able to grow more independent of the leader and more deeply involved with one another. Since this process is profoundly influenced by the transference of oedipal feelings of attraction, resentment, and inhibition onto the group leader and other group members, the revolt involves a reactivation, expression, and partial working through of infantile fantasies and attitudes. Similarly, Holmes (1967) has applied Freud's primal horde hypothesis in a naturalistic study of developmental processes in a (university) seminar, tracing the influence of underlying oedipal themes in the formal, "rational" conduct of the seminar.

Clearly, the oedipal paradigm is not a proposition which can be "tested" in a straightforward and unequivocal fashion. But we do have available a set of data with which we can chart the evolution of member-leader and member-member relationships in small groups, data generated by an act-by-act scoring system developed specifically for the study of such groups. We hope to demonstrate in this paper that our understanding of what we have termed the oedipal paradigm can be extended through such a clinical and empirical inquiry.

### STUDIES OF SMALL GROUP DEVELOPMENT

As Chin (1961), Dunphy (1964), and Mann (1967) have noted, there are two major issues in the study of developmental change in small groups—the nature of the developmental process and the content of the specific phases which can be identified.

With respect to the conceptualization of developmental process, the principal distinction is between those developmental models which present group evolution as a progressive movement from some initial state of frustration and anomie toward an eventual state of harmony and productivity and those which emphasize the recurrence of particular interpersonal themes and patterns of behavior. Dunphy has suggested that there are several different kinds of change in small groups and that different types of change may apply to different aspects of the social order. He believes, for example, that a "major cultural event" may require no repetition, whereas "the processing of resources" may involve a continual repetition of a particular pattern. The question of which patterns predominate at what level and under what conditions is intriguing, and has for the most part been neglected by students of developmental change. The great majority of studies, as Tuckman's (1965) extensive survey of

work in this area documents, has followed the model of progressive movement from stage to stage.

Tuckman has brought together observations from three research settings—psychotherapy, sensitivity training, and natural and laboratory group studies. He finds that, at the highest level of generalization, four stages of group development can be discerned, which he titles “forming,” “storming,” “norming,” and “performing.” An interesting application and partial confirmation of Tuckman’s scheme in a study of small work groups in a classroom setting has been reported by Runkel et al. (1971).

Tuckman’s synthesis of a variety of small group studies reflects both the advantages of wide-ranging integration of the field and the shortcomings of such an overview. A comprehensive discussion of small group development is beyond the scope of this paper, but we should comment on two issues which are of some relevance to our present concerns.

Tuckman’s model implies, as do most of the studies which he reviews, that group development can be more or less equated with an inexorable progression from one phase to another. In addition, this model is one which portrays the terminal point of group development as the apex of the group’s evolution. Several authors have, however, followed Mills (1964) in endorsing what he describes as a “life cycle” model. Significantly, most presentations of this model (compare Dunphy, 1968, 1964; Mann, 1967, 1966; Slater, 1966) are based on studies of self-analytic classroom groups. These are groups which generate considerable emotional involvement and which have a “closed” membership and a fixed and finite life span. Proponents of a life cycle model emphasize both the “partial consummation” and incomplete “success” of such groups and the importance of group dissolution and the painful experience of separation and termination. The life-cycle conception of group development is one which recognizes and documents a period charac-

terized by separation concerns and which views separation as an important issue throughout the life of the group. Second, the vast majority of studies of group development describe change over time at the level of the group as a whole without considering the distinct possibility that "the group" can be better understood as the complex product of the combining of various factions and subgroups. Only a handful of studies (e.g., Bennis and Shepard, 1956; Stock and Thelen, 1958; Mann, 1967, 1966) have dealt systematically with the ways in which polarizing issues give rise to subgroup development and subgroup change over time.

The conception of group development presented in this paper reflects a commitment to a life-cycle model of group evolution. Even more importantly, the notion of an oedipal paradigm underlying developmental shifts clearly implies that sex differences constitute a major consideration and necessitates a systematic analysis of those differences.

Bennis and Shepard (1956) were among the first to introduce an explicit developmental distinction between authority and peer concerns.<sup>1</sup> Their theory of group development emphasized two principal "areas of internal uncertainty." The first area centers on the members' ambivalent orientation to the group leader ("the distribution of power in the group"); the second centers on the relationships among the members themselves ("the distribution of affection in the group"). The first major phase of group development involves the expression and ultimate resolution of the dependency-counterdependency ambivalence. The eventual angry confrontation of the group leader ("the trainer-challenge") is followed by a period of "mutual responsibility for the fate of the group" and a heightened sense of cohesion and solidarity. This point in the evolution of the group corresponds to the "norming" and "performing" phases which follow, in Tuckman's formulation, the phase of intense "storming."

Bennis and Shepard argue that a satisfactory resolution of the authority-related conflicts focused on the group leader is

a necessary condition for the full emergence and eventual working through of conflicts in peer relationships. This is a question of relative emphasis, as some working through of peer relationships must occur before any confrontation can take place, but Bennis and Shepard do point to a definite and discernible shift from a preoccupation with the group leader to an increasingly intense involvement in peer relationships. They also describe this developmental pattern as one which involves two principal subgroup polarizations. In the first phase, the group is split between the "dependent" and the "counterdependent" members, in the second phase between the "overpersonal" and the "counterpersonal." In each period, a third subgroup of members who are relatively "unconflicted" and hence not hopelessly entangled in the conflict, takes the lead in formulating a compromise solution which enables the group to move beyond the conflict.

Bennis and Shepard do not propose an explicitly oedipal basis for this developmental pattern, nor do they point to any significant behavioral differences in male and female responses to the two major developmental conflicts. Whitman (1964) is one of the few writers who has identified sex differences in training groups. Whitman (1964: 317) describes what appears to be a quite traditional pattern: at the beginning of the group, the males compete for informal leadership roles while the females occupy more peripheral positions, "hanging back, occasionally to appear as maternal supportive figures to momentary 'losers' or as allies to emerging power figures."

Mann's (1967) detailed examination of the development of four self-analytic groups is generally supportive of these findings. Mann studied four groups of college students, approximately half male and half female, and employed an act-by-act scoring system to chart the unfolding of the member-leader relationship. In this study, all the leaders were male. Mann found that the female members were on the whole closer to the "loyalty" end of the factorial dimension

which he termed "loyalty versus rebellion," while the males initiated most of the rebellion against the leader. Female group members tend to demonstrate more uneasiness and uncertainty and are more explicit in their desires for a "sensitive, protective authority." Mann's analysis of the phase of most heated confrontation emphasizes the centrality of the most active males, with the females waiting in the wings as supporters of the males attacking the leader. He also points, however, to two ways in which females may become more directly involved in the confrontation. First, they may struggle to work through and renounce a sexualized dependency on the leader and become more independent of him and more responsive to their male peers. Second, female rebellion may express "a delicate mixture of efforts to save their male peers and to shame them by initiating hostility which the males had not managed, but should have" (Mann, 1967: 172).

Slater's (1966) analysis of the member-leader confrontation and its antecedents is the most complex and detailed in the literature. He argues that the revolt may be manifested in a dramatic single event—the "ganging up" against the leader which culminates in his real or symbolic "expulsion" from the group—and in a much more gradual process of acting out, attempting to understand, and working through the ambivalent tie to the leader.<sup>2</sup>

It is through the process of revolt, particularly when the revolt occurs early in the group and thus entails an attack on a relatively intimidating authority figure, that the group is able to make a significant move toward independence and self-sufficiency. Even when the highly dramatic (and actually quite infrequent) expulsion of the leader does not take place, a more subtle phenomenon does occur, one which involves a recognition and renunciation of dependency, greater understanding of motives, heightened group solidarity, and an increased capacity to function without the guidance or explicit approval of the leader.

The revolt has, in Slater's view, significant oedipal implications. He notes, for example, the common fantasy that the group leader (assuming he is male) maintains a sexual "monopoly" such that all of the women in the group "belong" to him. This notion is accompanied by a "dilution and distortion of normal sexual interest among group members." On the one hand, the males compete with the group leader for the attention of the females. On the other, they compete with the females for the attention and support of the leader. Both the men and the women are somewhat "enthralled" with and overawed by the leader. This gives rise to an ambivalent and complex struggle to move away from a sexualized dependency on the leader toward a more peer-centered group culture. One obstacle in this struggle is the difficulty which the male members experience as they attempt to move into a more active and assertive role in the group. Slater suggests that the males are almost always more inhibited, more anxious and depressed, and less able to mobilize themselves to overcome oedipal submission than are the females. He advances a number of possible explanations for this finding. Since "libidinal liberation" is accomplished partly through the open and shared expression of libidinal "thralldom," the males must run the risk of expressing in some fashion feelings of homosexual attraction. In addition, the revolt is for the females a process of oedipal renunciation, while for the males it is more a process of acting out an oedipal involvement, at least initially. Finally, the males are faced with a male leader who is intimidating yet inactive, and who is thus not particularly helpful as a role model. If they do imitate his "strong, silent" stance, they are in effect forcing the females to assume the initiative in the revolt.

Perhaps the most important outcome of the revolt is the change in the "sexual economy" of the group. The taboo on intermember sexuality is replaced by expressions of sexual and affectionate involvement and the libidinated preoccupation with the leader diminishes considerably. In addition,



Slater observes, member-member hostility gives way to a concentration of hostility on the leader and a taboo on intermember hostility. Once the period of most intense confrontation has passed, it again seems safe to express hostility toward another peer without endangering the solidarity which was a prerequisite for the revolt.

Lundgren's (1971) study of two ten-man training groups lends considerable support to the notion that a hostile confrontation with the leader or trainer relatively early in the group serves to establish and maintain intermember solidarity and openness. Lundgren's naturalistic and statistical comparison of the evolution of the two groups—one with a pair of active and quite directive leaders, one with more ambiguous, laissez faire trainers—suggests that the initial tension and polarization created by nondirective leadership can create the conditions for a more nearly complete resolution of authority concerns. The most "rational" explanation is simply that the tension and frustration catalyzed by non-directive leadership can, if it is expressed openly and fully, be followed by a more dispassionate analysis of previously unconscious fantasies and unrealistic expectations. Another explanation (which seems to receive more support from Slater) is that the process of consolidating the collective resources of the group to attack or repel the group leader provides the group members with a common bond of opposition, a bond which serves a crucial group formative function, regardless of how much or how little the process is understood or worked through.

The oedipal paradigm is an ideal model, one which will be at best approximated by any particular group. But it is a model which is internally consistent and which is based on a great deal of clinical evidence. It therefore seems reasonable to employ the model as a basis for a systematic study of the developmental processes in the context of our two self-analytic groups.

In summary, then, we shall test in an exploratory fashion

the working model of the oedipal paradigm and the revolt which we have drawn from Slater's work. More specifically, we shall focus on the two principal developmental changes which Slater has postulated: (1) a decreasing libidinal involvement with the leader and an increasing libidinal involvement among peers, (2) a relatively low level of intermember hostility during periods of hostile confrontation with the leader and an increase in intermember hostility once the confrontation has passed.

The issue of sex differences is more problematic. Slater's discussion of sex differences points to the strong possibility that the pattern which we have termed traditional—rebellious males, loyal females—may well reflect an overly simplistic view of what actually occurs in these groups. Slater argues that the revolt is a joint product of male and female activity and that it may be even more the result of female than of male initiative. Our data, which make possible a quantitative comparison of male and female performance over time, will facilitate a careful consideration of the sex differences in these two groups.

Finally, we shall discuss the position, stated explicitly by Slater and Lundgren and implicitly by several other researchers, that a collective rejection of the group leader reflects structural changes which indicate that a group which does expel its leader has "developed" further than a group which does not. Stated in more relative terms, the argument is that the extent to which a group mounts a rebellious confrontation with its leader provides one index of its development toward goals such as increased solidarity, independence from authority, an assumption of joint responsibility, and so on. It is impossible to offer any clear operational definition of such "development," but the question of the significance of the revolt in the broader context of the entire group experience is an important one, and one which we shall attempt to answer.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE TWO GROUPS

The two self-analytic classroom groups which are the focus of this study were sections of a course entitled "Analysis of Interpersonal Behavior," an advanced undergraduate course at the University of Michigan. The course was similar in many respects to Social Relations 120 at Harvard College, several descriptions of which have appeared in the literature (Dunphy, 1964; Mills, 1964; Mann, 1967, 1966; Slater, 1966; Bales, 1970).

The groups met for forty sessions of fifty minutes each. The sessions were held three times a week in the same classroom in the same academic "trimester" (September-December). One important goal of the course was to strengthen the student's ability to understand interpersonal behavior and group processes in an ongoing small group. Thus much of the group's attention centered on its own evolution as a "case study" worthy of exploration. The reading list was extensive, with selections from the psychoanalytic, human relations, and literary fields. Each student was asked to write a weekly "log" analyzing the events of the previous week's sessions and his own feelings about the group. There was also a final "take home" examination. Several case studies illustrative of small group phenomena were assigned, and the group members were free to discuss or to ignore them. The grade in the course was based on the student's performance on the logs and the examination. Each group had about 25 members, with approximately equal numbers of men and women in each group.

The two group leaders (the authors) were quite similar in age, experience, and theoretical orientation. It is of considerable importance for this particular study that both were male. They tended to be nondirective, interpretive, and analytic, particularly in the early sessions. They directed their observational and interpretive comments toward shared feelings and groupwide phenomena rather than toward individual psychodynamics or dyadic interactions and relationships.

### METHODOLOGICAL BASIS OF THE STUDY

We shall limit our presentation of the procedures employed in this research to a summary of the methodology and a discussion of the rationale for its development and application in this context. This summary is drawn from earlier, more detailed explanations of the methodology (Gibbard, 1969; Gibbard and Hartman, 1972; Hartman, 1969).

The basic research strategy has its roots in both the clinical study of interpersonal behavior and the systematic assessment of social interaction by means of quantified, act-by-act scoring. The fundamental aim is to interweave quantitative and clinical evidence—to use clinical observation to make sense of statistical summaries and “hard data” to raise questions which might otherwise have been overlooked by the clinical observer. The major precedent for this approach to the analysis of small group interaction is the work of Richard Mann (1967, 1966). His “member-leader” scoring system is designed to assess and record the feelings which group members express toward the group leader. It is thus a system which incorporates and monitors the process of clinical inference as it unfolds from moment to moment.

The member-leader system was first employed to explore the principal dimensions and the developmental history of the member-leader relationship in self-analytic classrooms (Mann, 1967, 1966). Subsequent applications have included a similar investigation of introductory psychology classes (Mann et al., 1970). The scoring system on which the present study is based is a revision and extension of the member-leader system, one which includes systematic attention to member-member as well as to member-leader interchanges. We have introduced a number of other changes in the scoring system, but space does not permit a thorough discussion of these changes (for additional discussion of revisions in the scoring system, see Gibbard, 1969: 58-79). Instead, we shall simply outline the revised system. To avoid any confusion

between the original and the revised system, we have chosen to refer to the revised system as the *process analysis scoring system*. The current system contains eighteen *affective* and four *thematic* categories. The affective categories are divided into three main "areas"—Impulse, Power Relations, and Ego State. These three areas are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they should be seen as three separable scoring systems which can be used simultaneously to codify a given interpersonal behavior. In addition, there are four thematic categories which enable the scorer to capture the interaction between the feeling expressed and the thematic concern operating at the moment. So each "act" may receive one or more scores for the affective categories. The process analysis categories are listed and briefly defined in Table 1. Both groups were scored from tape recordings. All the scoring was begun and completed within a few months of the groups' termination. Each group was scored by a trained scorer who had been a member of the group he scored. The data from each of the groups consist of approximately 15,000 lines of scored interaction (for additional discussion of the scoring procedures, the determination of interscorer agreement, and related questions, see Gibbard, 1969).

#### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The first major analysis undertaken was a factor analytic study designed to identify the basic dimensions of member-member and member-leader interactions. The assumption here is that if, for example, two categories correlate positively with one another, it may be appropriate to consider them both phenotypic reflections of a more fundamental, genotypic process. Similarly, a distinction between *surface* traits (e.g., the categories in the scoring system) and *source* traits (e.g., the more basic dimensions of which surface traits are presumed to be manifestations) has been made.

**TABLE 1**  
**PROCESS ANALYSIS CATEGORIES**

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**IMPULSE AREA**

*Hostility*

- (1) Moving against: direct, personal anger; ridicule, mockery, rejection.
- (2) Disagreeing: more indirect, impersonal, role- or opinion-oriented hostility.
- (3) Withdrawing: a pulling away from personal involvement; expressions of indifference or boredom; distancing, changing the subject.
- (4) Guilt-inducing: attempts to impose moral or ethical principles on the other; attempts to make the other feel guilty.

*Affection*

- (5) Making reparation: apology for one's own hostility; disassociation from the hostility of someone else; an attempt to undo or neutralize the effect of a hostile remark.
- (6) Identifying: imitation; expressions of similarity of feeling, behavior, perception, and so forth.
- (7) Agreeing: relatively indirect, impersonal, role- or opinion-oriented affection.
- (8) Moving toward: direct personal affection, liking admiration; expressions of personal closeness.

**POWER RELATIONS AREA**

- (9) Showing submission: adopting a submissive attitude toward someone perceived as more powerful or whom the speaker is encouraging to be more dominant.
- (10) Showing equality: demonstrating a sense of relative balance with respect to submissive and dominant feelings and behavior; autonomy, independence, freedom from power concerns.
- (11) Showing dominance: denying concern with power; denying one's own dependency; attempting to move from a submissive to a dominant position.

**EGO STATE AREA**

- (12) Expressing anxiety: statements of tension, uneasiness, embarrassment, fear of criticism.
  - (13) Denying anxiety: disavowals of one's own anxiety; minimizing or belittling the anxiety expressed by others.
  - (14) Expressing depression: demonstrating a sense of helplessness in relation to one's own competence, attractiveness, and the like; statements of sadness, loss, weakness, lack of understanding.
  - (15) Denying depression: disavowals of one's own depression, minimization of the impact of loss, sadness, failure, separation, and so on.
  - (16) Expressing guilt: expressions of helplessness in relation to inner impulses felt to be unacceptable; self-criticism, apologies accompanied by self-rebuke.
  - (17) Denying guilt: disavowing one's own guilt; externalization of blame, disassociating oneself from the guilt of others.
  - (18) Expressing self-esteem: statements of self-confidence, self-acceptance, pride, genuine freedom from anxiety, depression, and guilt.
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TABLE 1 (Continued)

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**THEMES**

- (1) Nurturance: An act is scored as nurturance whenever issues involving trust, support, protectiveness, safety, and so on are salient. This may mean that such a goal state has been reached, has been lost, is desired, or is feared.
  - (2) Control: Issues involved in the scoring of the control theme are those which imply standards, values, and demands which come from higher authority and status.
  - (3) Sexuality: Included in this theme are acts involving male-female relationships, sex role definitions, homosexual bonds, sexual rivalry, attractiveness, and potency.
  - (4) Competence: The concept of competence implies, within this framework, a concern with work and accomplishment. The most frequent manifestation of this concern in these groups is stirred up by the official academic and the analytic, interpretive work of the course.
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The factors were idealized somewhat (i.e., recast into "major" and "minor" category loadings or weights) in order to facilitate the tasks of understanding them and of applying them to other kinds of summaries, particularly summaries not included in the original pool of profiles which were factor analyzed. The advantage of this idealization is that it focuses one's attention on a few categories which are strongly correlated with a particular pattern (for further discussion of this point, see Gibbard, 1969: 80-86). In addition, this kind of *scaling* keeps the data in proportion form and is, from a statistical point of view, very compatible with the percentage profiles which are the basis for all of our analyses. Hereafter we shall refer to *scale*, *scale scoring*, and *scale pattern* just as one would refer to factor, factor scoring, and factor pattern.<sup>3</sup>

The psychodynamic interpretation of the scale patterns has been reported in some detail elsewhere (Gibbard, 1969; Gibbard and Hartman, 1972). Our present discussion is limited to a definition of each scale and a listing of the categories which constitute each scale pattern (Table 2).

The bipolar scales shown in Table 2 are the foundation for all data analyses reported in this paper. The development of the scales reflects the interweaving of clinical and quanti-

**TABLE 2**  
**LEADER AND MEMBER SCALES**

<b>Leader Scale I: Response to the task demands of the leader</b>	
<b>I+ Self-Absorption</b>	<b>I- Ambivalent Compliance</b>
<i>Minor positive weights</i>	<i>Major negative weights</i>
Withdrawing	Agreeing
Expressing anxiety	Identifying
Expressing depression	Showing submission
Expressing guilt	<i>Minor negative weights</i>
Denying anxiety	Disagreeing
Denying depression	Moving against
Denying guilt	
<b>Leader Scale II: Response to the leader as a person</b>	
<b>II+ Seduction</b>	<b>II- Neutrality</b>
<i>Major positive weights</i>	<i>Major negative weights</i>
Moving toward	Control
Sexuality	Competence
<i>Minor positive weights</i>	
Guilt-inducing	
Making reparation	
<b>Leader Scale III: Response to the leader as an authority figure</b>	
<b>III+ Rebellion</b>	<b>III- Apology</b>
<i>Major positive weights</i>	<i>Major negative weight</i>
Moving against	Expressing depression
Showing dominance	<i>Minor negative weights</i>
<i>Minor positive weight</i>	Making reparation
Control	Showing submission
	Nurturance
	Competence
<b>Member Scale I: Response to the contributions of the other</b>	
<b>I+ Hostile Dominance</b>	<b>I- Support</b>
<i>Major positive weights</i>	<i>Major negative weight</i>
Moving against	Agreeing
Showing dominance	<i>Minor negative weight</i>
<i>Minor positive weights</i>	Nurturance
Guilt-inducing	
Denying guilt	
<b>Member Scale II: Response to the other as a potential friend</b>	
<b>II+ Closeness</b>	<b>II- Distance</b>
<i>Major positive weights</i>	<i>Major negative weight</i>
Making reparation	Disagreeing
Moving toward	
Showing submission	



TABLE 2 (Continued)

II+ Closeness (Continued)	II- Distance (Continued)
<i>Minor positive weights</i>	
Expressing anxiety	
Expressing depression	
Expressing guilt	
Sexuality	
<b>Member Scale III: Response to the other as a sexual object</b>	
<b>III+ Courting</b>	<b>III- Inhibition</b>
<i>Major positive weights</i>	
Moving toward	
Sexuality	
<i>Major negative weight</i>	
Control	
<i>Minor positive weights</i>	
Withdrawing	
Showing dominance	
Denying depression	

tative approaches which was noted earlier: from a series of clinical inferences, we move to an act-by-act coding system; the data generated by this system can be subjected to a variety of statistical treatments, and, in this instance, a factor analytic procedure was employed to "reduce" the data and to identify the basic dimensions of interaction in this particular context; we then undertook a clinical assessment of the scale patterns.

We can now spell out the relationships between the scales and the working model of the oedipal paradigm introduced earlier. With respect to member-leader interaction, we are primarily interested in Scale II (seduction versus neutrality) and Scale III (rebellion versus apology). Scale II provides at least a good approximation to Slater's descriptions of group members' libidinal involvement with the leader as well as their flight from or disinterest in such involvement. A high score on the positive pole of Scale III will serve as an operational definition of rebellious confrontation. In the sphere of member-member relationships, Scale I (hostile dominance versus support) offers a good index of the level of

hostility in member-member relationships, and Scales II and III can be employed as operational definitions of the level of affection and sexual involvement in member-member relationships. Scale II (closeness versus distance) points to interactions in which the sexual component is rather muted and sublimated. In Scale III (courting versus inhibition), there is a more explicit concern with sexual attraction and flirtation. Both scales provide relevant information about the level of "positive" feelings in member-member interchanges.

#### **THE IDENTIFICATION OF PHASES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT**

The act-by-act scoring of consecutive sessions provides us with several distinct ways of describing change over time. One can, for example, compute percentages for each category for each session. The method would produce a great many profiles of a given session, and group trends could be ascertained by noting the changes from session 1 to session 2, session 2 to session 3, and so on. But such a procedure would quickly prove impossibly cumbersome. Alternatively, one could use profiles based on the six scales rather than on the individual categories. One could then select on theoretical or some other grounds a particular scale and could proceed to base a developmental scheme on the shifts in that scale.

We chose a third option—to define the phases on a more inclusive basis which could take into account all rather than only one or two dimensions (and, ultimately, all rather than only some categories). It was decided to identify separable periods by using the category percentages for each session. Phi coefficients were computed for adjacent sessions using median splits on all categories. The result of these computations was a series of phi coefficients describing the degree of association between a session and an adjacent session, on all of the categories. Positive phi coefficients indicate that similar activity, taking all measures into consideration, is

occurring in both sessions, while negative phi values point to a significant shift of some kind. The boundaries of the phases are demarcated by a very low positive or negative correlation between the last session of one phase and the first session of the next (for additional clarification of this point, see Hartman, 1969: 75-77).

#### STATISTICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PHASES

The phi coefficient values provide a clear-cut statistical definition of the phases, but our analysis of group development is based on the member-leader and member-member scale scores for the phases, standardized within each group (the purpose and mechanics of this standardization are explained in Hartman, 1969: 68-76). For each phase, we have available summary scores for all males to the group leader and all females to the group leader. In addition, we are able to compare male-female, female-male, male-male, female-female scores in each phase. This division of members does reflect an arbitrary definition of the major subgroupings of members, but it is the division which is most germane to the focus of this paper.

The phi coefficient procedure pointed to four major periods of development in each group. In examining the events of each period, we shall look first at the statistical summaries, then return to transcripts and tape recordings of the sessions in order to make psychodynamic sense of those summaries. We shall concentrate on the initial phase in each group, since in both groups the first phase contained the most intense and sustained confrontation with the leader. Finally, we shall review and compare the evolution of the groups and discuss some more general implications of this study.

TABLE 3  
SCALE SCORES FOR MALES AND FEMALES IN EACH GROUP: PHASE 1

Member-Leader Scales	Self-Absorption (+)		Seduction (+)		Rebellion (+)	
	Ambivalent	Compliance (-)	Neutrality (-)	Neutrality (-)	Apology (-)	Apology (-)
Group 1 males to leader						+++
Group 1 females to leader	--		+			-
Group 2 males to leader	++		-			--
Group 2 females to leader	+++		-			++
<b>Member-Member Scales</b>						
	Hostile Dominance (+)		Closeness (+)		Courting (+)	
	Support (-)		Distance (-)		Inhibition (-)	
Group 1 males to females	+		++		+++	
Group 1 females to males	+		++		+	
Group 1 males to males	+					
Group 1 females to females	-					
Group 2 males to females			+++		+++	
Group 2 females to males	++		+			
Group 2 males to males	+++					
Group 2 females to females			--			

KEY: + or --: score at least .5 standard deviation from group mean for all phases; ++ or --: score at least 1 standard deviation from group mean for all phases; +++ or ---: score at least 1.5 standard deviations from group mean for all phases.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE TWO GROUPS

Table 3 summarizes the scale scores for males and females in each group for the first phase. Our first task is to review the statistical correspondences and the differences between the two groups in this initial phase.

Looking first at the member-leader scores, we are most impressed with the differences between the two groups on Leader Scales I and III. In group 1, the females, though not the males, are high on ambivalent compliance; in group 2, both the men and the women are high on the opposite pattern, self-absorption. The contrast between the two groups is even sharper when we examine the scores on Scale III. Here we find, in group 1, what might be described as a classical oedipal pattern—rebellious males, rather apologetic and loyal females. In group 2, on the other hand, it is the men who are high on apology and the women who are initiating rebellion against the group leader.

Turning to the member-member indices, we see that, in group 2, both males and females are directing a great deal of hostile dominance toward the males. In both groups, the men are expressing a great deal of closeness and courting toward the women. The key differences between the groups is that the group 1 women are reciprocating both the closeness and the courting, while the group 2 females are only slightly high on the closeness pattern.

It would appear that this phase in group 1 is characterized by a predictable and rather traditional constellation of member-member and member-leader interactions. The men initiate the rebellious confrontation with the leader. The females are relatively compliant, seductive, and apologetic toward the leader, though at the same time they express many positive feelings toward the men. The statistical portrait of group 2 is quite different, and quite puzzling. The men are not leading the rebellion, and their expression of closeness and courting toward the women is not strongly reciprocated. In addition, the men seem to be the targets of

both male and female hostility, which suggests both that they are fighting one another rather than the leader and that the women are dissatisfied with their apparent passivity vis-à-vis the leader. These are, then, the principal questions raised by the statistical profiles for the phase. We shall now turn to a review of the clinical evidence from each group for this phase.

*Group 1:* This group began with a discussion of an assigned case study, a discussion which was abruptly interrupted by Arthur,<sup>4</sup> a rather "hip"-looking member who suggested that the members indicate by a show of hands whether they wished to talk about the case or about "pot." This suggestion was ignored, but was followed by a great deal of anxious concern about the tape-recording of the class, people who were not saying much, and the relatively silent leader. This led to some expression of doubt about the usefulness of the assigned readings and a more general questioning of the lack of structure in the course. Again Arthur broke in, offering on several occasions lengthy narratives about his involvements with the police, legal rights, and marijuana. When some members expressed concern about whether they would actually learn anything, he took the position that one should not worry because like all psychology courses this one was worthless. He said he was taking it only to stay out of the army. He was joined in a subsequent session by Abe, who offered a new approach to the leader—referring to him by his first name. This was a practice that had previously seemed taboo, though the leader had not indicated any preference in this respect. Abe was supported quite enthusiastically by Rolfe, another male who had identified himself as anti-establishment. The next few sessions were devoted to discussions of the leader's role in the group, with the women generally more on the ambivalent side. They expressed a great deal of curiosity about the leader, were mildly seductive toward him, were more explicitly uneasy about the academic

evaluation which was a part of the course, and appeared more mistrustful than the males. Abe countered these concerns with a renewed insistence on calling the leader by his first name, a practice which the group eventually agreed to follow, despite the obvious discomfort which accompanied the decision.

Much of the remainder of the phase was an elaboration of these themes. Abe, Arthur, and Rolfe emerged as the three most rebellious members. They consistently criticized and even ridiculed both the leader and other members who endorsed a more traditional view of classroom authority. Later in the phase, overt flirtation made its first appearance, and sexuality and related topics received more attention. There was a brief period of concern, particularly on the part of the two or three most active females, about the relative dominance of the males in the group, though by the end of the phase there was an apparent acceptance of this dominance.

The most direct attack on the leader occurred in the last session of the phase. The leader began the meeting with a protracted interpretation which several members did not understand. This precipitated a persistent questioning of the leader's motives, with the group describing the leader as "vague," "obscure," and "ungiving." Abe took the lead in describing the leader as "selfish," and several members alluded to the "great insight" which the leader supposedly possessed but would not share with the group. Each effort by the leader to clarify his motives and intentions was at this point met with even more hostile questioning. Finally, when a female member asked a question which the leader parried, Abe started a chant which was spontaneously echoed and progressively amplified by the rest of the group: "Answer the question! Answer the question! Answer the question!" This outburst left the leader somewhat shaken and was experienced by the members as both an exhilarating and a frightening statement of their anger at him.

This is, then, a phase characterized by concern and uncertainty about this strange classroom with a teacher who is unwilling (or unable?) to teach. There is also a lack of clarity about what constitutes the "correct" behavior in such a situation. The attack in the last sessions of the phase centers on the complaint that the leader is hoarding the knowledge which might rescue the group from its floundering. The confrontation with the leader is a request for guidance, an overthrow of his power and authority, an attempt at calling forth and obliterating superego controls—all at the same time. It is clear that three active and rebellious males serve a crucial catalytic function in the revolt. They offer an explicit model for dealing with the situation created by the group leader—deny any anxiety about criticizing the leader, challenge and ridicule his authority, demand that he change his behavior or remain silent. The female members are initially reluctant to endorse this rebellion but are gradually won over by the males.

*Group 2:* The first four sessions were taken up with discussions of assigned cases and of a variety of abstract, intellectual issues. Eventually the topics of conversation became more concrete, and the familiar split between those who wanted more structure and those who wanted even less emerged and was the focus of one session. The next three sessions were devoted to a consideration of the roles of men and women in society. This discussion revolved around the question of whether women could (or should) hold leadership positions and whether men would then "take orders" from them. The focus then shifted somewhat to the question of whether men were innately more aggressive than women or whether this sex difference was culturally determined. Most of the males rejected, however, the leader's observation that this abstract discussion reflected more immediate concerns about the balance of power in the group. The leader's repeated interpretation of this point led to a brief attack on



him, but this subsided rather quickly following an anxious discussion of what might occur if he were not in charge of the group. This tentative attack continued in the following session, which began with the expression of the almost unanimous opinion that one of the assigned readings, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, was useless. But then Harvey, a consistently loyal male supporter of the leader, began berating the group for not preparing for class discussions of the reading and expressed concern about several members who had not spoken much. He was implicitly criticizing the active females for attempting to goad the group into rebellion and was calling on the silent members and the other males to rally for tradition. At this point Natalie, a previously silent person, voiced her support for the more active, rebellious cadre of which Vickie was the chief spokesman. It was at the end of this session that Vickie suggested that the group meet in the student union for the next session. The plan was carried out, though eight members did meet with the leader at the appointed place and time. The majority of the group went to the cafeteria, apparently to develop a strategy for dealing with the leader in future sessions. Subsequent allusions to this planning revealed that several members expressed the fear (and perhaps the latent wish) that the leader might retaliate by instituting a series of lectures.

Following this revolt, which occurred about midway through the phase, a clear split emerged in the group. The members who had attended the "official" meeting of the class remained loyal, dependent, and somewhat depressed. The "union people" denied any feelings of distress or residual dependency. A great deal of hostility was directed toward Harvey, one of the most dependent members, who seemed to invite this scapegoating. A few sessions after the revolt, the leader returned a set of graded "logs," and this created a great deal of anxiety in the group. It became clear that the members perceived the leader as expecting too much of them. At the same time, the group's inability to learn was attributed to the leader's inability or refusal to teach.

The last session in the phase was characterized by a relatively open expression of feelings toward the leader. The meeting began with a discussion of parents, particularly the attitude of parents toward grades. The leader was then explicitly equated with parents, especially by Vickie, who had been one of the instigators of the move to the cafeteria. Vickie argued that much of her previous hostility had served to deny the leader's importance to her. The focus then shifted to the centrality of the leader as the person to whom the group looked for support, love, and security. The grades which he handed out were clearly experienced as expressions of his personal feelings toward the individual member. The phase ended with a discussion of the possibility that the leader might "come down to our level," a suggestion which was met with intense ambivalence. Larry described the session as an "apology" to the leader.

We commented earlier that our initial statistical comparison of this phase revealed an important set of differences with respect to the activity which the men and the women in the two groups appeared to be initiating. Our clinical review of the period has certainly supported this statistical impression. Clearly a key difference between the two groups has to do with the "balance of power" in male-female relationships. In group 1, the subgroup of active, assertive males consistently criticizes and ridicules the leader. In group 2 the withdrawal to the cafeteria is initiated and directed as much by the women as by the men. It is thus not surprising that there is more overt sexual involvement in group 1 than in group 2.

Aside from these group differences, however, we are struck by some important similarities which are not reflected in the statistical summaries. In neither group do the attacks on the leader appear to have a predominantly oedipal significance, nor does either confrontation culminate in any definitive overthrow of the leader. Instead, we have documented a

much more complex and ambivalent series of encounters in which the major demand is not that the leader withdraw from the group, but rather that he reform and begin to meet his responsibilities to the group. This demand is stated quite literally in group 1, in which the most focused hostility has to do with the leader's retentiveness—"Answer the question! Answer the question!" In group 2, the request for nurturance is stated more obliquely. The group, rather than asking the leader to leave, leaves the leader and "plays hooky" by going to the cafeteria. The choice of this particular meeting place suggests that the members are saying both "We can feed ourselves" and "We must be fed."

All in all, the events of this period in these two groups remind us that the hostile confrontation with the leader has a multiplicity of meanings and that any such confrontation is likely to be born of intense ambivalence. At the same time, this conclusion leaves us somewhat uncertain about what to expect in the next period of development. Group 1 appears to have confronted the leader more directly and forcefully than has group 2. In addition, the most sustained attack in group 1 occurred at the end of the phase, where in group 2 the trip to the cafeteria midway through the phase was followed by several group discussions in which the potential gains of this rebellion were negated or undone. Our impression, then, is that group 1 has made significant and discernible movement toward greater autonomy, whereas group 2 has yet to do so.

#### THE SECOND PHASE

We again turn first to the statistical profiles of the two groups which are displayed in Table 4. In group 1, we find a constellation of relationships which is not too different from the one which our working model would lead us to predict. The rebellion of the first phase has disappeared, with the males slightly high on the seduction pattern and the females

TABLE 4  
SCALE SCORES FOR MALES AND FEMALES IN EACH GROUP: PHASE 2

Member-Leader Scales	Self-Absorption (+) Ambivalent Compliance (-)	Seduction (+) Neutrality (-)	Rebellion (+) Apology (-)
Group 1 males to leader		+	
Group 1 females to leader	++		--
Group 2 males to leader	-	--	+++
Group 2 females to leader		++	
<b>Member-Member Scales</b>			
	Hostile Dominance (+) Support (-)	Closeness (+) Distance (-)	Courting (+) Inhibition (-)
Group 1 males to females	-		++
Group 1 females to males	--	-	
Group 1 males to males		--	
Group 1 females to females	-	-	-
Group 2 males to females		--	-
Group 2 females to males		+++	
Group 2 males to males	++	+	
Group 2 females to females	--		

KEY: + or --: score at least .5 standard deviation from group mean for all phases; ++ or --: score at least 1 standard deviation from group mean for all phases; +++ or ---: score at least 1.5 standard deviations from group mean for all phases.

expressing a good deal of self-absorption and apology. The males are, in other words, not much preoccupied with the leader and the females are relatively loyal and dependent, but not seductive toward him. In the sphere of member-member interaction, we find male courting of the females, but without female reciprocation. There is mutually expressed support (Scale I-), but an absence of male-female closeness. These data suggest that the group 1 females, while not explicitly seductive toward the leader, are still very much involved with him and are as yet unable or unwilling to respond to male flirtation. They are, in fact, less expressive of closeness and courting toward the males than they were in the previous phase.

In group 2, we find that the males are now high on rebellion toward the leader, while the females are no longer high on this pattern—a reversal from the first phase in which the females had attacked and the males had tended to support the leader. This suggests that the males are perhaps “catching up” with the women. We could feel more confident about this interpretation if we also found the mutually reciprocated courting and closeness which characterized male-female relationships in the first phase of group 1. We do not find this pattern, however, as the males are rather distant and inhibited toward the women and do not reciprocate the closeness which the women express toward them. The picture is further complicated by the females’ high score on seduction toward the leader. For the group 2 males, then, we have found a striking reversal from the first phase. In the initial phase, they were high on closeness and courting but were unable to mount an attack on the leader. In this period they do mount such an attack but appear to have little interest in the women. This points again to the possibility that the confrontation of the leader is not an exclusively or even a predominantly oedipal process, at least at this point in the evolution of these groups.

As before, we shall now turn to a clinical review of this

phase in order to validate and elaborate our statistically based summary of this phase.

*Group 1:* The male-female interaction in one of the first sessions in this phase exemplified much of what occurred in the phase. Josephine talked at some length about her ambivalence toward psychoanalysis and wondered how a psychoanalyst "gets people to open up." As she spoke it became evident that for her the prospect of "opening up" or "being opened up" was both desirable and anxiety-arousing. She expressed some fear of the leader's insight but also sought his attention. Later in this meeting Becky asked if she could bring a "friend" to the group. Significantly, this request followed a demand by Kevin that members put aside for the moment various "outside interests" and commit themselves to the task of "getting someplace with this group." Several other males demonstrated intense curiosity about the identity of this prospective guest, who was eventually identified as a senior faculty member at the university and Becky's cello instructor. This revelation led to a burst of hostile teasing and flirtation. Eventually the group voted not to permit any guests to attend group sessions. The issue of allegiance and commitment to the group was addressed in a variety of ways throughout the phase. In one session, there was a great deal of concern with the apparent "artificiality" of the group. Clyde argued that it was a "false community." This intellectualized expression of ambivalence with respect to involvement in the group was followed by an extended consideration of Kevin's plea that the group was not becoming the "warm, accepting group" that he had initially expected. Kevin had from the beginning of the group complained that many people were not "paying attention" and that the majority of members did not recognize the serious "lack of cohesion" which existed in the group. In the second phase his concerns became less idiosyncratic and his goals were to some extent endorsed by other members. Kevin

argued, in effect, for the creation of mutually supportive dyads. He seemed to be describing relationships characterized by consistent supportiveness, intense closeness, and a diffuse and essentially pregenital sexuality. His centrality offered the group a number of opportunities to respond to his demands for closeness and nurturance. Some members, as we have noted, did encourage him. Others simply tolerated him. Some were more openly hostile. Kevin's performance evoked and reinforced the fantasy that the group could become a utopia of sorts—the ideal “good group” in which unconditional love, harmony, trust, and closeness prevail and conflict and competition are eliminated.<sup>5</sup>

There are several recurrent themes in this material, but the most salient concern is with the issue of allegiance, commitment, and involvement. It is clear, for example, that the females are hedging their bets and are still mildly enthralled with the group leader (the psychoanalyst who opens one up) and with other older oedipal figures (e.g., the cello instructor). There are male objections to these kinds of “outside interests,” but the females remain as much committed to various older men as to their peers in the group. Later in the phase the group's ambivalent preoccupation with Kevin reveals that full-fledged heterosexual ties are still avoided in favor of a more diffuse and less distinctly “sexual” closeness.

*Group 2:* A session early in this phase was devoted to a consideration of one of the assigned cases, *Long Day's Journey into Night*. The focus of this discussion was the alcoholism and addiction in the play, and this intellectualized handling of dependency feelings led several members to complain that the group was “bored” and needed a “crisis” to bring “real feelings” to the surface. Norm and Larry criticized the group for a lack of honesty and for not getting down to the “nitty gritty.” As this session ended Larry offered himself as a “subject” for group investigation. This

“analysis” did not take place, however, as the subsequent meeting was taken up with an abstract and relatively unproductive consideration of Larry’s qualifications for “leadership.” Natalie and Vickie praised him as a kind, considerate, and attractive person who could solve the group’s problems. Larry responded with an endorsement of closeness, warmth, and honesty as group goals. There was, on the other hand, some resistance to Larry’s bid for leadership, and he did not again offer to be “analyzed” by the group.

The disappointment stemming from the failure to find in Larry an appropriate and willing peer leader became apparent in the next session. Several members voiced the opinion that only if the group could elect and rally behind a strong peer leader could the dependency “hangup” with the “official” leader be resolved. The meeting was devoted primarily to a lengthy discussion of deaths in concentration camps (attributable to a loss of purpose), suicides in training groups, and a black man who became increasingly distressed and alienated in a training group. Somewhat later in this session, Larry and Harvey were compared. Harvey, who was portrayed as dependent and thus “weak,” appeared to represent one extreme position which most members attempted to disown and reject. Larry was perceived as stronger, more independent, and more appealing—as the kind of protective and nurturant male figure whom the members had hoped to find in the group leader. This session was followed by sporadic efforts to define and create an atmosphere of honesty, closeness, and warmth in the group; but these attempts were accompanied by a great deal of manifest tension, with the result that no real progress toward this goal was made in this phase.

There were three sources of conflict at this point in the development of the group, all centering on the fantasy that the group’s conflicts could be resolved if only an effective peer leader could be recruited: (1) the nomination of Larry



as a possible leader contained a veiled wish for the instructor to assume a more active role in the group; (2) Larry seemed to want to serve as both a leader and as a more passive "subject" of analysis; and (3) the idealized peer leader would, if he were more than a substitute for the official leader, lead the rebellion against the instructor and provide a model of sexual assertiveness for the other males in the group. Here again Larry fell short of this ideal.

We find, then, that the males in group 2, despite some rebelliousness toward the group leader, are unable to band together or to recruit a single member who is able to fulfill the requirements of effective and sexually viable peer leadership. This group thus continues to experience a great deal of difficulty in its efforts to move beyond its initial dependent position vis-à-vis the group leader.

### THE THIRD PHASE

From an inspection of Table 5, we learn that this period in group 1 was, at least statistically, very similar to the first phase. The males are again high on the rebellion pattern while the females are high on self-absorption and seduction, and slightly high on apology. In the member-member domain, we find reciprocated male-female closeness and courting, though there is also a high level of female-male hostile dominance. These figures suggest that the males are involved in a second burst of hostility against and competition with the leader while the females are again ambivalent about this struggle and unable to make a clear commitment to either the leader or their male peers.

Group 2 continues to present us with a puzzling statistical profile. There is a great deal of positive feeling for the leader being expressed (seduction) in addition to some male rebellion and some female apology. Male-female relationships appear to be mildly positive (reciprocated courting and some female-male closeness), but this constellation of relationships

TABLE 5  
SCALE SCORES FOR MALES AND FEMALES IN EACH GROUP: PHASE 2

Member-Leader Scales	Self-Absorption (+)		Seduction (+)		Rebellion (+)	
	Ambivalent	Compliance (-)	Neutrality (-)	Apology (-)		
Group 1 males to leader			-		++	
Group 1 females to leader	++		++			-
Group 2 males to leader			++		+	
Group 2 females to leader			+			-
Member-Member Scale						
	Hostile Dominance (+)		Closeness (+)		Courting (+)	
	Support (-)	Distance (-)	Distance (-)	Inhibition (-)		
Group 1 males to females	-		+		++	
Group 1 females to males	+++		+		+	
Group 1 males to males	+++					
Group 1 females to females	--					
Group 2 males to females						
Group 2 females to males			+		+	
Group 2 males to males	+				+	
Group 2 females to females	---		-		+	

KEY: + or --: score at least .5 standard deviation from group mean for all phases; ++ or ---: score at least 1 standard deviation from group mean for all phases; +++ or ---: score at least 1.5 standard deviations from group mean for all phases.

is not sufficiently strong to point to any predictions in which we can have much confidence.

*Group 1:* The opening sessions in this phase were characterized by some male-female "pairing" activity, intense and prolonged concern with peer leadership, the formation of a female subgroup, and a variety of competitive struggles among the males. After one particularly heated session in which several of the males argued about whether a peer leader was "needed" and if so, who that leader should be, four of the most active females stayed behind to talk and were in the next meeting identified as the first significant female subgroup which had developed. The leader observed that this subgroup crystallized in response to the male competition of the previous session. Following this observation, Abe and Eli engaged in a mock battle which serves as a paradigm of much of the competition in this phase:

- ELI: This conversation sounds terribly animalistic, like a couple of reindeers vying for female reindeer.
- ABE: You don't like the idea of being animalistic?
- ELI: There wasn't any value judgment really.
- ABE: There's a distinct value judgment. You said "terribly animalistic" and that's bad, like "pathological."
- ELI: Wanna lock horns?
- ABE: Yeah.
- ELI: Which one (woman) do you want?
- ABE: I don't care. It's O.K.
- ELI: It's O.K., what?
- KEVIN: He doesn't want to lock horns.
- ABE: You take yours, and I'll take the leavings.
- ELI: That sounded like the entrails.

Interestingly, most of the hostility directed toward the leader arose in response to his interventions. While much of

the sparring among the males seemed designed, at least in part, to win the leader's attention and favor, any such motivation was consistently denied; and any interpretation to that effect was immediately rejected. In addition, any recognition of the fact that the males were competing with the group leader as well as among themselves was studiously avoided.

Later in this phase, the rivalry diminished considerably and was replaced by a great deal of overt tension. The number of absences rose dramatically near the end of the phase. In one session Norma suggested that the intense competition had frightened several members. Rolfe commented that the group should have a computer for a leader, since a computer would at least be reliable and would not "drop out," as had previous peer leaders. In several of these sessions the women sat together (whereas earlier seating arrangements had been more flexible) and stayed close to the group leader.

It is clear from this summary that the second period of male rebellion is much more closely tied to sexual and competitive fantasies than was the earlier, more dependent and demanding confrontation. As the phase progressed, the sources of anxiety became more clear; both the oedipal aspect of the nascent sexual fantasies and the intense hostility which is simultaneously aroused stir up more anxiety than the group is able to handle at this point. Thus, the open expressions of attraction and rivalry early in the phase are followed by reactive fears and obvious indications of defensive disengagement.

*Group 2:* These issues were approached much more slowly in group 2 than in group 1. The subject of male-female relationships was introduced by Phil, who had previously been virtually silent. He devoted an entire session to a presentation of some rather mundane problems that he was having with his girlfriend. Several of the women responded

with kind words and sisterly advice. The next few sessions were concerned with a variety of dangers which the group felt might accompany increased "closeness" and personal revelation. There was another flurry of criticism of the leader, again focused on his failure to play a directive role in the group, and there was a good deal of anxiety about the possibility that the group was not "in control" of its own and of individual member's impulses and behavior. Others argued that such control was unnecessary and that "defenses" should be "broken down."

One session was devoted to a discussion of motherhood, led by the three married women in the group, one of whom was a mother. One of the women was particularly concerned about the men in the group, most of whom seemed to her to be so "passive." This was followed by a discussion of close relationships between men, and there was some concern with whether such closeness was "good" or "bad." This anxiety about impulse control, the stability of the group, and male passivity culminated when Norm suddenly launched into a diatribe against the group and the leader. He revealed that he had discussed the group experience with several other faculty members and with his own therapist and that all were unanimous in condemning the group as dangerous and potentially harmful. He said that his own emotional balance was being undermined and that the leader could not be trusted. This "bombshell"—an enactment of what is perhaps every group leader's worst dream—was followed by intensely anxious discussions of the future of the group, with several suggestions to the effect that the session (and perhaps the group) should be ended early. The leader, despite his own anxiety, managed to cope reasonably well with this very real crisis, and in subsequent sessions most members agreed that he was sufficiently strong and competent to be trusted. Still, much of the remainder of this phase was devoted to an effort to cope with the distress which Norm's performance had engendered. Much of this effort took the form of animated

discussions of comedian Bill Cosby's account of "Noah and the Flood," a tape recording of which one member played in a group session. This humorous monologue contains one interchange which Jeffrey, the member who provided the tape recording, cited as particularly relevant to the group situation:

Noah was bringing two hippopotamuses onto the Ark and God stopped him. Evidently both animals were male and God had requested Noah to find him a male and a female of each species. Noah complained that he was too tired after all of his work and asked God simply to alter the sex of one of them. God replied, "You know I don't work like that." Jeffrey exclaimed that this might serve as a perfect description of the group leader's style: "You know he might have the power to do lots of things in here but he'd rather let us struggle with them rather than telling us what to do."

The group responded immediately to this association and began to discuss the grading procedure in the course. The grading of the final exam was characterized as similar to God's punishment. This raised the issue of rivalry for grades, which one member described as the "competitive instinct for self-survival." Thus the initial reactions to the playing of the Noah story centered on dependency and competition, with no mention of the clear sexual implications of the story. In the following sessions, the issue of rivalry continued to be discussed, and gradually members became more aware of an explicitly sexual theme—"group intimacy" and the dangers associated with it. Several members expressed anxiety about their feelings of sexual attraction to other members, and this focus was gradually replaced by an explicit anticipation of the end of the group, as well as by an intense involvement in the fantasy that the leader had somehow "given birth" to the group and thus possessed the power of life and death over the group.

This fantasy material is immensely evocative, and we shall restrict our comments to those points which are most

relevant to the focus of this paper (for a more extensive analysis of this group's involvement in the Noah story and similar fantasy material from another group, see Hartman and Gibbard, forthcoming). First, it is clear that the introduction of the Noah tape was an attempt at a solution in fantasy to the threatened collapse of the group following Norm's diatribe and his subsequent departure from the group. The story of Noah offered a vehicle for the expression of the wishful fantasy that the group might begin again, might be reborn with the sins of the past washed away and forgiven. The flood is a symbol of punishment for those aspects of the group which are felt to be dangerous and unacceptable. In addition, the image of Noah as a protector of pairs of animals is close to the preconscious notion of the leader as chaperone of the group. This entails both an expression of and a retreat from the recognition of the oedipal attraction and rivalry within the group. The group's initial associations to the playing of the tape concern sibling rivalry and competition for the love of the leader as parent, without any mention of sexuality. The principal difficulty in heterosexual relationships in the group is portrayed in the interchange, noted above, in which God refuses to change the sex of one of the hippopotamuses. This can be understood as an indirect statement of the members' fantasy that it is the leader's passivity and lack of active encouragement which is responsible for the failure of intermember sexuality. The members wish that the group could establish an atmosphere characterized by sexuality without conflict—a group in which problems of rivalry and competition are resolved by the leader-God (selecting pairs of each species so that there can be no misunderstandings about who belongs with whom) and supervised by a nurturant older figure who is himself neither lover nor rival.

This clinical review helps us understand the mixed statistical profile for this period. There was, as we commented earlier, some indication of what we have described as the

TABLE 6  
SCALE SCORES FOR MALES AND FEMALES IN EACH GROUP: PHASE 4

Member-Leader Scales	Self-Absorption (+)		Seduction (+)		Rebellion (+)	
	Ambivalent	Compliance (-)	Neutrality (-)	Neutrality (-)	Apology (-)	Apology (-)
Group 1 males to leader	---					
Group 1 females to leader	---		---			-
Group 2 males to leader	-		---			
Group 2 females to leader	---					---
<b>Member-Member Scales</b>						
	<b>Hostile Dominance (+)</b>		<b>Closeness (+)</b>		<b>Courting (+)</b>	
	<b>Support (-)</b>		<b>Distance (-)</b>		<b>Inhibition (-)</b>	
Group 1 males to females	---		+			
Group 1 females to males			-			---
Group 1 males to males	-		---			---
Group 1 females to females	+		---			---
Group 2 males to females	---		---			---
Group 2 females to males	-		++			---
Group 2 males to males			---			---
Group 2 females to females	---		---			---

KEY: + or --: score at least .5 standard deviation from group mean for all phases; ++ or ---: score at least 1 standard deviation from group mean for all phases; +++ or ---: score at least 1.5 standard deviations from group mean for all phases.



classic oedipal pattern, in that this phase is characterized by reciprocated courting, male rebellion, and female apology. At the same time, both sexes are high on the seduction pattern, which suggests that there is still a libidinally toned involvement with the group leader. One psychodynamic correlate of this statistical pattern is the fantasy of the safely sexualized group in which the members are free to become sexually involved, at least in fantasy, as the presence of the beloved leader ensures that no harm will befall the group.

For both groups, then, the anticipation of sexual liberation is accompanied by the anxiety-arousing expectation of uncontrolled hostile rivalry, paternal retribution, and a variety of other dangers. Hence, neither group is able to consolidate a firmly heterosexual orientation. Group 1 appears to come closer than does group 2, but moves "too fast" and forces itself into a reactive withdrawal near the end of the phase. In group 2, the chronic dependence on the leader, the failure to recruit a peer leader, and the distress created by Norm's diatribe create insurmountable obstacles to mature heterosexuality. Given this state of affairs, the Noah fantasy can be seen as a maximally adaptive response to the group's dilemma.

#### THE FOURTH PHASE

An inspection of Table 6 makes it quite clear that the statistical profiles for the two groups are quite similar for this final phase. Member-leader relations are characterized by ambivalent compliance, neutrality, and apology. This points to the emergence of a relatively dispassionate task orientation toward the leader, an orientation which reflects the suppression—and the partial resolution—of the more intense, transference-laden involvement of earlier phases. The most striking feature of the member-member profiles is the extremely high levels of distance and inhibition in this period. Intermember hostility is muffled. There are some

minor exceptions to this general pattern, two of which are particularly interesting. In group 1 the males are expressing closeness toward the females, but the females are not reciprocating. In group 2, it is the females who are moving toward the males and the males who are rebuffing them. Both of these findings are consistent with the relationship patterns we observed in previous developmental periods. In group 1, the males pursue the females but are unable to break the stronger and safer tie to the leader. In group 2, the males present themselves as chronically passive and unable to mount any sustained attack on the leader. The females alternately court, support, and ridicule them, but to no avail.

Our clinical review of the sessions in this phase can be summarized quite succinctly: this is a phase marked by a withdrawal of active interest and involvement. In each group, there is a concern with evaluation, both of the group as a whole and of individual members' performances. There is some attempt to resolve the heterosexual conflicts which had plagued both groups and some disappointment when these last efforts to work through interpersonal difficulties are not very successful or satisfying. At the same time, each group must come to grips with the finitude of its life and deal with the feelings of regret, loss, and sadness that this implies.

We find many of the separation phenomena which others have observed—the bursts of euphoria, the moments of almost funereal silence, the fantasies of rebirth and reunion, the occasional bitter complaint that nothing has been accomplished. But the finding most relevant to our particular interest in the evolution of the oedipal paradigm is that, for the most part, there is a pronounced absence of both the statistical patterns and the clinical material which we noted in earlier sessions. The end of the groups thus appears to be accompanied by a rather abrupt disappearance of manifest content having to do with oedipal fantasies rather than by a more protracted process of working through.

## RECAPITULATION AND DISCUSSION

The major aim of this paper has been to assess the usefulness of the notion that much of the developmental change that occurs in self-analytic groups can be understood as a reflection of an oedipal relationship paradigm. We chose to study intensively the development of two college classrooms, and this selection was governed partly by the fact that it is in such a setting that these kinds of interpersonal conflicts are most likely to be observed. One would expect that late adolescents and young adults, struggling to resolve lingering problems with parents and to consolidate a firmly heterosexual orientation, would find in a self-analytic group a convenient arena for the expression and analysis of such conflicts. It may also be, as Bennis and Shepard argue, that "power" and "affection" are the central concerns in a much wider range of unstructured small groups, at least in this culture. We prefer to leave open the question of the extent to which it is appropriate to generalize from our findings. Instead, our interest has been in extending our understanding of these two case studies and in exploring the fruitfulness of a style of research which interweaves clinical and statistical methods.

In focusing on the oedipal relationship paradigm, we identified two principal developmental changes, constructing a working model drawn primarily from the work of Slater (1966): (1) a decreasing libidinal involvement with the leader and an increasing libidinal involvement among peers, and (2) a relatively low level of intermember hostility during periods of hostile confrontation with the leader and an increase in intermember hostility once the confrontation has passed. We also discussed the importance of sex differences in group behavior and noted Slater's view that there is a clear and positive correlation between the extent to which a group is able to confront and rebel against its leader and the extent to which it is "successful" in resolving conflicts centering on relationships to authority.

Our two case studies are quite instructive, though the evidence which they provide is certainly not unequivocal with respect to the points raised above. We shall summarize our conclusions about the development of each group, then consider again the applicability of the oedipal paradigm.

Group 1 began with a phase which on a statistical basis can be characterized as "classically" oedipal. The males were high on rebellion, the females were more on the loyal and dependent side, and member-member relationships were predominantly affectionate. A review of the sessions in this period revealed that three active and consistently provocative males served a crucial catalytic function in the revolt, which culminated in an angry chant directed against the leader. At the same time, we discovered that this was in essence a "dependency revolt," in that the members were demanding that the leader either behave properly or remain silent, with a subtle but discernible preference for the first option being voiced by most. The "Answer the question!" episode captures the members' conflict (and the leader's dilemma) quite nicely. The group demands to be cared for, but the nature and intensity of the demand makes it impossible for the leader to meet it. The key males at this point are those who offer a counter-dependent solution to the authority conflict, with the females adding their cautious and partial endorsement. This sex difference continues into the second phase and beyond, and a second burst of male rebellion in the third phase is accompanied by female-male affection but not by female rebellion against the leader. The *content* of the second burst of hostile confrontation is much more obviously sexualized than was the earlier demandingness, but the constellation of relationships remains constant. Whether the issue is dependency or sexuality, the males assume the dominant role and the females remain ambivalent, forcing the males to woo them, attack the leader, and struggle among themselves. All in all, the sex differences in group 1 are quite consistent with traditional sex role expectations.

In group 2, the network of member-leader and member-member relationships is from the very beginning quite different from that of group 1. In the first phase, the men are high on apology while the women are initiating the rebellion and expressing their displeasure with the relative passivity of the men. This revolt also is closely tied to the frustration of dependency needs, with the meeting in the cafeteria expressing both the rejection of the leader and the continuing search for nurturance. In the second phase, we found that the males were able to begin to move against the leader, but that they quickly found themselves stymied by the absence of a peer leader. The attempt to recruit a peer leader had little chance of success, however, as it was too closely associated with the dependent tie to the leader and was in itself a symbolic admission of the inability of the group males to establish a strong and reasonably united front against the leader. From this point on, the group could make only uncertain and halting progress toward libidinal liberation. This progress was fatally undermined by one member—characteristically, for this group, a male—who warned that the group was treading on thin ice. This diffuse danger seemed to become linked with a variety of more specifically oedipal anxieties over attraction and rivalry. The result was that the group seized upon the Noah story and constructed a collective fantasy of a limited and sanctioned sexuality supervised by a benevolent and beloved patriarch.

It is apparent that the development of neither group corresponds in all respects to the patterning of relationships and the sequence of events postulated by the working model of the oedipal paradigm. There was, for example, no definitive revolt in Slater's sense of the term. There was no "overthrow" of the leader and no firm commitment to the acknowledgement and expression of heterosexual fantasies. There was, on the other hand, a definite increase in the expression of sexual feelings and fantasies over time, though we did not find a strong correlation between the emergence

of sexual imagery and the expression of hostility against the leader. We discovered two general types of rebellion, one stemming primarily from the frustration of dependency needs, the other from a more sexualized competition with the group leader. The relationship between member-leader and member-member hostility is also an unclear one, particularly when male and female subgroups are separated in the analysis of the data. There are times when most of the expressed hostility is being directed toward the leader, and there are other moments when the leader is spared and member-member antagonism runs high. On the whole, however, we noted a more ambiguous and subtle relationship between member-leader and member-member hostility, one which becomes more understandable, though no less complex, when sex differences are considered.

The analysis of sex differences has, in fact, led to our most consistent findings. Despite the fact that neither group reached any lasting solution to the "authority problem," group 1 did make more progress in this direction, and this group difference had a great deal to do with the fact that group 1 was clearly a male-dominant and group 2 a female-dominant group. It was the relative assertiveness of the group 1 males which resulted in the more intense and sustained rebellion and the more open and expressive sexuality of that group. The basis of this group difference is less clear, and we can only conclude that some interaction of personality and situational-compositional factors was operating. But this group difference does support Slater's and Lundgren's arguments that there is an important difference between groups which have managed to mount a sustained attack and those who have not.

What can be inferred about a group which does not fit the oedipal paradigm? In our view, the achievement of explicit confrontation and (relative) resolution with the leader reflects a genuine developmental advance. Similarly, the oedipal phase in individual development presupposes object

constancy and at least a partial mastering of the challenges of previous phases. Our study suggests that group development entails both oedipal and preoedipal issues and that no single paradigm can account for the development of an experiential group. In some groups, just as in individuals, preoedipal fantasies and dilemmas predominate. In other groups, oedipal issues gain ascendancy after the preoedipal have been surpassed to a sufficient extent. Group 2 is an example of the former and group 1 an example of the latter possibility. The dominance of the females and the fears aroused by the leaving of one of its members made it difficult for group 2 to mount an oedipal assault on its leader. The males in group 1, on the other hand, initiated a hostile confrontation which grew increasingly oedipal over time.

Other research on these same groups has described developmental phenomena consistent with the notion that the group as a whole is often experienced as a preoedipal maternal entity (Hartman and Gibbard, forthcoming). One of these studies (Gibbard and Hartman, forthcoming) focused on the "utopian fantasy" as an expression of a wish to maintain a symbiotic tie with the good, preoedipal mother as well as a defense against becoming aware of the dangerous, enveloping aspects of such a symbiosis. The other study (Hartman and Gibbard, forthcoming) demonstrated that group development is characterized by significant shifts in the expression and denial of "ego state distress" (anxiety, depression, and guilt). It was suggested in this paper that group development is in part an accommodation to introjective and extrojective processes involving shifts in group boundaries, processes analogous to those which underlie the establishment of self-other boundaries in the preoedipal child.

The present contribution in light of our past studies points to the conclusion that group development is *simultaneously* oedipal and preoedipal. A genuine revolt against authority entails a struggle for a forbidden sexual object (or objects),

and incomplete revolts reflect a regressive flight from such a struggle. At the same time, the sequence of developmental stages is analogous to the preoedipal child's progress toward a clarification of self and object representations vis-à-vis a maternal entity. In our view, in most instances, the group as a whole represents the *preoedipal* mother, and the group leader the *oedipal* father, though there may be variations in these designations.<sup>6</sup> We are suggesting that the group situation, unlike the dyadic situation in individual therapy, dictates that oedipal and preoedipal themes may influence group process at the same time and in ways that make it difficult to relate the two processes. It is left to future work to unravel the interweaving of oedipal and preoedipal processes in the development of groups. Our experience so far, however, does not suggest a simple, linear development, as in normal individual development. Rather, we are of the opinion that simultaneous processes analogous to oedipal *and* preoedipal paradigms have to be considered in any comprehensive theory of group development.

## NOTES

1. Bennis (1964) has subsequently revised this formulation somewhat, though the essentials of the theory remain unchanged.

2. The reader familiar with Slater's work will note that we have not discussed his more encompassing conceptualization of group development as the expression of the gradual "evolution of conscious bonds," a process based on the differentiation of individual and group "boundaries." For a consideration of some correspondences between Slater's boundary awareness theory and our own observations, see Gibbard and Hartman (forthcoming) and Hartman and Gibbard (forthcoming).

3. The factor analytic method employed was the UCLA/Biomedical format with varimax rotation, using the estimate of the multiple R as the diagonal.

4. Pseudonyms are used for all group members.

5. We have in another context (Gibbard and Hartman, forthcoming) discussed in some detail the significance of such utopian fantasies.

6. Our work has dealt exclusively with male leaders and groups composed of men and women. Our conclusions may be obscured or may not even apply in one-sex groups or in groups with female leaders. Future research might focus on such issues.



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