

# SEXUAL DIFFERENCES AND GROUP PROCESS: THE INFLUENCE ON EXPRESSING DESIRES

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Source / Izvornik: **Psihoterapija**, 2021, 35, 43 - 70

Journal article, Published version

Rad u časopisu, Objavljena verzija rada (izdavačev PDF)

<https://doi.org/10.24869/psihei.43>

Permanent link / Trajna poveznica: <https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:184:895113>

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Download date / Datum preuzimanja: **2025-02-04**



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# **SEKSUALNE RAZLIČITOSTI I GRUPNI PROCES: UTJECAJ NA IZRAŽAVANJE ŽELJE**

## **/ SEXUAL DIFFERENCES AND GROUP PROCESS: THE INFLUENCE ON EXPRESSING DESIRES**

Ika Rončević-Gržeta

### **SAŽETAK/ABSTRACT**

Pod željom se podrazumijeva subjektivni aspekt i motivacijska snaga koja, osim seksualnog, prožima sve sfere ljudskog života. Kada je u pitanju izražavanje želje u grupi, ne misli se isključivo na seksualnu želju. Seksualni odnosno rodni identitet u grupi, a osobito kad su u pitanju seksualne različitosti, utjecat će na način izražavanja želje u grupi. U kojoj će mjeri članovi grupe biti u stanju izraziti želje u grupi ovisi o više čimbenika povezanih s članovima grupe ili voditeljem kao i sa samom grupom. O sličnim čimbenicima ovisi i tko će biti objekt želje: drugi član u grupi, voditelj ili grupa kao cjelina.

Teme koje se odnose na seksualnost, osobito seksualne različitosti, teško su dostupne u grupnom procesu, budući da se seksualnost drži osobnom temom, često uz prateći osjećaj krivnje i srama. Valjana rasprava na temu seksualnosti često izostaje, osobito kad je u pitanju seksualna različitost. Na taj način otvara se prostor predrasudama, a vrlo često i nepotrebnoj stigmi ili pak patologizaciji određenih seksualnih obilježja koja su često samo različitosti nekog od seksualnih odnosno rodnih identiteta.

U posljednje vrijeme dolazi do znatnog napretka u prihvaćanju seksualnih različitosti i na društvenom planu i na planu grupne terapije. Bez obzira na koji način se pristupa pitanjima seksualnih različitosti u terapijskoj grupi, seksualne različitosti prisutne su i utječu na većinu aspekata grupnog procesa.

Zadaća grupnih terapeuta jest suočiti se s promjenama na planu seksualnih različitosti i prilagoditi vlastita moralna načela kako bi grupa postigla koheziju i kako bi svaki član grupe bio u prilici izraziti želje „ovdje i sada“, uključujući i one seksualne prirode, bez obzira na seksualne različitosti.

*/ Desire includes a subjective aspect and a motivational force which, apart from the sexual, pervades all spheres of human life. When it comes to expressing a desire in a group, this cannot be merely brought down to sexual desire. Sexual identity, or gender identity, in a group will affect the way the desire is expressed, and especially so when diverse sexualities are involved. The degree to which the members of a group will be able to express their desires in the group depends on a number of factors that may concern either the members, the conductor, or the group itself. Similar factors determine who the object of the desire will be: another member, the conductor, or the group as a whole.*



*Topics pertaining to sexuality, especially when sexual differences are in question, are difficult to approach in a group process since sexuality is considered to be a personal thing, often accompanied by feelings of guilt or shame. Healthy discussions on the topic are often not held, especially concerning sexual differences. This way, a path opens towards prejudice and unnecessary stigma or pathologization of certain sexual features that are oftentimes just variations of some of sexual or gender identities.*

*In recent times, we have seen a significant development in acceptance of sexual differences, as in society so in group therapy. Irrespective of the approach to the issues of sexual differences in a therapy group, sexual differences are present and affect most aspects of the group process.*

*The task of group therapists is to face the changes concerning sexual differences and to adjust their own moral principles in order for the group to attain cohesion. Consequently, every member of the group would have the opportunity to express their desires "here and now", including those of sexual nature, regardless of sexual differences.*

#### KLJUČNE RIJEČI / KEY WORDS

grupni proces / *group process*, seksualne različitosti / *sexual differences*, želja / *desire*, seksualna želja / *sexual desire*

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**TO LINK TO THIS ARTICLE:** <https://doi.org/10.24869/psihei.43>

#### UVOD

Posljednjih nekoliko desetljeća naglo raste zanimanje za seksualne različitosti u društvu, što se neminovno reflektira i na terapijske grupe. Zbog prijašnje relativne marginaliziranosti pitanja seksualnosti u stručnoj i znanstvenoj literaturi i relativnog nedostatka odgo-

#### INTRODUCTION

For the past several decades, the interest in sexual differences in society has grown sharply, and this has also been reflected in therapy groups. Due to the topic of sexuality being relatively marginalized in the past in both professional and scientific literature, and because of a relative lack of an appropriate framework for

varajućeg okvira za razmatranje seksualnosti u terapijskoj grupi dolazi do nejasnoća i neizvjesnosti kako se nositi s tim pitanjem u praksi. Nedostatak diskursa može dovesti do nekritičkog (ne) prihvaćanja normativnih aspekata seksualnosti kao i vrijednosti i normi o seksualnoj različitosti. Iako se može reći da je sama grupa ojačala na planu otvaranja tih tema (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), zbog premalo rasprava o njezinoj važnosti i značenju u grupnoj terapiji (7) u ovom će se radu prikazati kako su klasični teoretičari i suvremeni autori prilazili fenomenu želje te kako su pitanjima seksualnosti prišle psihoanaliza i grupna analiza. Rad donosi rezultate nekih istraživanja o seksualnim različitostima i njihovu utjecaju na izražavanje želje u grupi te njihovu utjecaju na grupni proces kao i o ulozi voditelja u vezi s njihovom manje ili više eksplicitnom pojavnošću.

## POJAM ŽELJE

Pitanjem želje, žudnje i strasti bave se filozofi, umjetnici, književnici, psihoanalitičari, psihoterapeuti od antičkog doba do danas. Spomenimo Platona (Simpozij) koji navodi kako su prema grčkoj mitologiji ljudska bića imala dva lica, četiri ruke i četiri noge, a Zeus ih je, u strahu od njihove snage, razdvojio i osudio da vječno tragaju za svojom savršenom polovicom. Čini se da

examining sexuality in a therapy group setting, questions and uncertainties have appeared as to how to approach this issue in practice. The lack of discourse on the topic can lead to noncritical (un) acceptance of the normative aspects of sexuality, and the values and norms of sexual differences. Even though it can be said that group itself has grown more ready to tackle this topic (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6), due to few discussions on its importance and meaning in group therapy (7), this paper will show how classic theorists and contemporary authors approach the phenomenon of desire, and how psychoanalysis and group analysis approach the topics pertaining to sexuality. The paper brings up results of some research on sexual differences discussing their influence on expressing desire in a group and their influence on the group process, as well as the role of conductors in their, at times more, at times less explicit emergence.

## THE DEFINITION OF DESIRE

The topics of desire, lust, and passion have occupied philosophers, artists, writers, psychoanalysts, and psychotherapists since the days of antiquity and this still holds true. Let us mention Plato (Symposium) who describes how according to Greek mythology human beings used to have two faces, four hands and four legs, but Zeus, fearing their power, separated them, and sentenced them to eternal quest for their perfect other half.



grčka mitologija objedinjuje seksualni identitet i želju.

U prvoj polovini prošlog stoljeća nadrealisti se bave promocijom želje i otvorenim izražavanjem želje. Godine 1930. André Breton kaže da je „želja jedini motivacijski princip svijeta i jedini gospodar kojega treba priznati“. Psihoanaliza je stavila naglasak na želju kao središnju snagu u ljudskom iskustvu. Sigmund Freud strastveno je radio na oslobađanju izražavanja želje. Komplexnost želje u okviru Freudove teorije nikad nije do kraja istražena, iako je pitanje infantilne seksualnosti istinska priča o želji. Želja je u tom slučaju iskonska, neposredna i zahtjevana, zasnovana na kombinaciji tjelesnih nagona i primitivne imaginacije. Istodobno, praćena je frustracijama i odricanjem. Tijekom procesa edukacije i socijalne prilagodbe želja biva modificirana i na određeni način ukroćena (8). Jonathan Dollimore (1999.) bilježi da je, prema Freudu, pitanje evolucije i preživljavanja civilizacije ovisno o obuzdavanju, ograničavanju, represiji, sublimaciji i kanaliziranju seksualne želje. Kada je riječ o suprotstavljenim nagonima Erosu i Tanatosu, smatra da nisu u pitanju stvarni događaji kao život ili smrt, nego osjećaj inherentne promjenjivosti života u smislu neizbježnog gubitka i promjene. Dakle, želja može biti „načeta“ gubitkom (9). Stalna prijetnja gubitkom animira želju, kao naprimjer želju za

It seems that Greek mythology unifies sexual identity and desire.

In the first half of the past century, surrealists promoted desire and the idea of openly expressing it. In 1930, André Breton said that “desire is the only motivational principle of the world and the only master worthy of acknowledgment”. Psychoanalysis stressed the importance of desire in terms of a central force of human experience. Sigmund Freud worked with passion on the liberation of expressing desire. The complexity of desire, within the framework of Freud’s theory, was never fully explored even though the topic of infantile sexuality is the true story of desire. Desire in this case is primordial, direct, and demanding, based on a combination of body urges and primitive imagination. Simultaneously, it is accompanied by frustration and renunciation. During the process of education and social adjustment, desire is modified and tamed, in a way (8). Jonathan Dollimore (1999) notes that, according to Freud, the matter of evolution and survival of a civilization is dependent on restraining, limiting, repressing, sublimating, and channelling sexual desire. When the opposing urges of Eros and Thanatos are concerned, he is of the opinion that it is not a question of real events such as life and death, but the feeling of inherent mutability of life in terms of unavoidable loss and change. So, desire can be “kindled” by loss (9). The constant threat of loss animates desire like, for example, the desire to find a lost object or the desire to rebuild an inner world. Psychoanalysts consider

pronalaskom izgubljenog objekta ili želju za obnovom unutarnjeg svijeta. Psihoanalitičari drže da je želja unutarnji glas *selfa* i ekspresija autentičnog bića kao i snaga koja utječe na povezivanje s drugima. Jacques Lacan dao je poseban doprinos istraživanju uloge želje u ljudskom iskustvu. Za Lacana želja je povezana s nedostatkom. Osjećaj nedostatka usklađen je sa željenim drugim, sa željom za drugim; želja odražava stalnu potragu za spajanjem s drugim, potragu koja je u biti neostvariva od trenutka kad zadovoljstvo ustupa mjesto novoj želji, u neprekidnom lancu: „Želja je želja samo ako uspije odgoditi nešto“ (10). Razumljivo, jer ako bi želja bila ostvarena, više je ne bi bilo. Zato uvijek želimo nešto novo, zato stalno želimo više. Želja je na neki način „perpetuum mobile“ koji nas stalno motivira. Za Lacana zadovoljstvo proizlazi iz nečega što je u osnovi nemoguće. Tako proizlazi da je nedostatak osnova života. Nedostatak je prisutan u brojnim situacijama – ulaskom u simbolično područje jezika, u fantaziji kastracije, ali njegov je glavni izvor izvorni gubitak majke. Primarna želja za majkom uz odvikavanje prelazi u prikladniju želju za drugim objektima; citirano u M. Nitsun (8). Morris Nitsun kaže da je želja ključni aspekt našeg života i vitalni dio terapijskog dijaloga. Želja na neki način definira stanje ljudskog bića. To je subjektivni aspekt i motivacijska snaga koja seže u sve aspekte ljudskog života,

desire to be the inner voice of self and an expression of the authentic being, as well as a force that affects the process of connecting with others. Jacques Lacan gives a special contribution to the exploration of the role of desire in the human experience. For him, desire is linked to lack. The feeling of lack is balanced by the desired other, by a desire for another; desire reflects the constant quest for merging with another, the quest which in fact cannot be achieved from the moment when pleasure gives way to a new desire, in an ever repeating pattern: “Desire is desire only if it manages to postpone something”(10). It is understandable because desire, once fulfilled, is gone. That is why we always desire something new, why we want more. Desire is, in a way, the “perpetuum mobile” which keeps us motivated. For Lacan, pleasure is derived from something that is basically impossible. Thus, we conclude that lack is the basis of life. Lack is present in a number of situations – when entering the symbolic domain of language, in the castration fantasy, but its main source is the loss of mother. The primary desire for mother, by means of breaking the habit, changes to a more appropriate desire for other objects; to quote M. Nitsun (8). Morris Nitsun says desire is the key aspect of our lives and a vital part of therapeutic dialogue. Desire defines the state of a human being in a way. It is a subjective aspect and a motivational force that inhabits all aspects of human life, not only sexual. Desire has an unlimited potential despite its limitations such as the feel-



ne samo seksualni. Želja ima neograničen potencijal unatoč nizu ograničenja kao što je osjećaj nesavršenosti, ovisnost o drugima, neizvjesnost hoće li biti zadovoljena itd. (8).

G. W. F. Hegel smatra da želja nije samo seksualna želja već želja za priznanjem, tj. afirmacijom sebe, svojih težnja i ambicija. No želja za priznanjem komplicira se natjecanjem jednog *selfa* nad drugim, a natjecanje je uvijek praćeno pitanjem moći (11). Nitsun (2006.) navodi da se pod željom ne podrazumijeva samo strast već i želja za malim stvarima kao dragocjena iskustva ili želja za posjedovanjem ili prisvajanjem nečega za sebe, bilo od drugih, bilo iz vanjskog svijeta. Prepoznavanje želje pridonosi samospoznaji, ali time raste i opasnost od sukobljenih osjećaja: s jedne strane pravo da želimo, a s druge strah od želje; osjećaj srama i krivnje zbog neimеноvane želje i ogorčenost zbog uskrate željenoga; zavist prema onima koji se usude željeti i koji dobiju ono što žele. Navedeno je isprepletano u *selfu* kao i u interakciji s drugima. U odnosima s drugima želja živi ili umire, prosperira ili vene, obogaćuje se ili se osujećuje (12).

## SEKSUALNOST U PSIHOANALIZI I GRUPNOJ PSIHOTERAPIJI

Psihoanaliza je od svojih početaka usvojila normativni pristup seksual-

ing of imperfection, the dependency on others, the uncertainty whether it will be fulfilled or not etc. (8)

G.W.F. Hegel is of the opinion that desire is not only sexual, but there is also the desire for the affirmation of oneself and of one's own aims and ambitions. However, the desire for affirmation becomes complicated because oneself starts to compete with another. And competition always poses the question of who has the power(11). Nitsun (2006) writes that desire does not represent just passion, but also the desire for little things like precious experiences or the desire for owning or claiming something for oneself, whether from others or from the external world. Identifying a desire contributes to self-knowledge, yet therein grows the danger of conflicting feelings: our right to desire on the one hand and the fear of desire on the other; the feelings of shame and guilt due to an unnamed desire and bitterness resulting from having the desire denied to us; the envy towards those who dare to desire and get what they want. The abovementioned is intertwined in self as well as in the interaction with others. Desire lives and dies, prospers, and withers, in relations with other people (12).

## SEXUALITY IN PSYCHOANALYSIS AND GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY

Psychoanalysis has adopted a normative approach to sexuality from its be-

nosti. Freud je smatrao biseksualnost i ranu polimorfnu seksualnost prirodnom, s time da su te tendencije morale biti potisnute zbog prilagodbe društvenim očekivanjima. Psihoanaliza sve više predstavlja društveno konformistički stajalište o spolnim različitostima. To ima velik utjecaj na percepciju i razumijevanje seksualne različitosti, s glavnim naglaskom na perverzijama. Ishod takva razvoja rezultirao je paradoksalnim stajalištem psihoanalize. Paradoksalno podrazumijeva istodobno prisutan liberalizacijski i suzdržavajući utjecaj. Liberalizacijski je u određenoj mjeri skinuo veo tajne sa seksualnosti, dok suzdržavajući odražava ortodoksne društvene norme i ima tendenciju u znatnoj mjeri patologizirati spolne različitosti (7).

U grupnoj psihoterapiji situacija je upravo obrnuta. Dok je psihoanaliza prožeta seksualnošću, u grupnoj psihoterapiji i grupnoj analizi gotovo da nema rasprave o seksualnosti. Nema mnogo radova na tu temu, a još se manje zna kako se taj problem rješava u samoj grupi. S.H.Foulkes, otac grupne analize, nije dao previše prostora seksualnosti, niti je razradio to pitanje u grupi, iako je bio svjestan pitanja seksualnosti u grupi. Ipak, priklonio se ograničenjima koja su postavljala tadašnja konzervativna društva. Smatrao je da ne treba previše pozornosti posvećivati retrospektivnim problemima

ginnings. Freud considered bisexuality and early polymorph sexuality as natural, with the caveat that those tendencies had to be repressed in order to adjust to social expectations. Today, psychoanalysis increasingly assumes the socially conformist view on sexual differences. This has a strong influence on the perception and understanding of sexual differences, particularly on perversions. The outcome of such a development resulted in psychoanalysis' paradoxical stance on the matter, meaning exerting both liberating and restraining influence at the same time. The liberating influence has partly removed the veil of secrecy shrouding sexuality, whereas the restraining influence maintains the orthodox social norms and tends to significantly pathologize sexual differences. (7).

In group psychotherapy, the situation is reversed. While psychoanalysis is permeated by sexuality, in group psychotherapy and group analysis, discussions on sexuality are virtually non-existent. Papers on the subject are few and far between, and even less is known about how the problem is solved within a group itself. Michael Foulkes, the father of group analysis, did not give much space to sexuality nor did he develop this issue in a group, even though he was aware of it. He embraced the limitations dictated by the conservative social attitudes of his time. In his opinion, retrospective problems like infantile sexuality, excretory problems or perversions should not be given too much attention, and in case





ma kao što je infantilna seksualnost, ekskretorni problemi ili perverzije, a ako je grupa zaokupljena time, smatrao je da je riječ o dubljem, regresivnijem problemu koji zahtijeva individualnu analizu (7, 13, 14). Tijekom povijesti grupne terapije malo pozornosti posvećivalo se pitanju želje u grupnom procesu. Nitsun 2006. godine navodi da je Foulksova škola psihoanalize ostala bez odgovarajućeg razmatranja želje općenito, kao i specifične seksualne želje. Malcolm Pines veliku je važnost pridavao zrcaljenju i koherenciji u grupi, a marginalizirao je seksualni aspekt grupne analize. Pomogao je u prepoznavanju analitičke grupe kao „objekta želje“ u širem smislu, predstavljajući grupnu analizu kao smislen i humaniziran psihoterapijski medij, no izostaje seksualna dimenzija želja (8). Za razliku od Foulksa i Pinesa, Earl Hopper daje znatno više prostora seksualnim problemima u grupnom procesu stoga su neki rezultati njegovih kliničkih opservacija opisani u nastavku.

## ŽELJA U TERAPIJSKOJ GRUPI

Prema Nitsunu (2006.), grupa djeluje kroz tri različite perspektive: grupa kao tijelo (*embodied group*), grupa kao kontejner erotske imaginacije i grupa kao modifikator moralnih principa. Još je jedna važna dimenzija grupe „grupa kao svjedok“.

a group was still focused on those, he was of the view that this was a deeper, more regressive problem that required individual analysis (7,13,14). Throughout the history of group therapy, little attention was given to the issue of desire in a group process. Nitsun (2006) noted that the Foulks' school of psychoanalysis never elaborated adequately on the subject of desire, both in general terms and in terms of specific sexual desires. Malcolm Pines gave a great deal of attention to mirroring and group coherence while marginalizing the sexual aspect of group analysis. He contributed to identifying the analytic group as an "object of desire" in broad terms, presenting group analysis as a meaningful and humanized psychotherapeutic medium, but still the sexual dimension of desire was absent (8). In contrast to Foulks and Pines, Earl Hopper gave much more space to sexual problems in a group process, hence some of the results of his clinical observations will be mentioned in the paper.

## DESIRE IN THERAPY GROUPS

According to Nitsun (2006), the group acts through three different perspectives: an embodied group, a group as a container for erotic imagination, and a group as a modifier of moral principles. Another important dimension is "a group as a witness".

Speaking of the embodied group, Nitsun mentions several authors who back his

Govoreći o grupi kao tijelu, Nitsun spominje više autora koji potkrjepljuju njegove navode. Kad je riječ o temama seksualnosti u grupi, Michael Lukas Moeller (2002.) opisuje grupu kao visoko nabijenu libidnu mrežu, a Isaac Tylim (2003.) opisuje ju kao „kazalište želja“ (15). Nitsun usmjeruje pozornost na tjelesni, neverbalni aspekt grupe pri čemu su članovi tako blizu da se jasno mogu vidjeti, dotaknuti, pomirisati. Seksualna privlačnost, seksualne želje i fantazije ulaze u grupu „ovdje i sada“ uz svjesnost o vlastitoj seksualnosti i izvan grupe. Grupna terapija nije samo komunikacija između različitih umova nego i komunikacija između različitih tijela, uključujući i seksualno (7).

Erotska imaginacija u grupi podrazumijeva ne samo erotske misli i fantazije nego širok raspon i kontejner erotskih želja i maštanja. Terapijska grupa generira erotsku maštu koja obuhvaća želje članova grupe uronjene u matriks. To uključuje svjesne i nesvjesne fantazije. Što je erotska mašta slobodnija, to daje veći prostor za istraživanje u grupi pa je veća i vjerojatnost da će članovi podijeliti skrivene aspekte svoje seksualnosti. Ograničenje erotske mašte reflektirat će se u inhibiciji i prikriivanju u grupi. Iako za neke članove to možda nije važno, za druge može biti ključno, osobito za one koji su zabrinuti zbog „transgresivnih“ misli i impulsa, za one koji prikriivaju bolne

claims. So, when sexuality in a group is concerned, Michael Lukas Moeller (2002) describes the group as a highly charged libido mesh or network. Isaac Tylim (2003) describes it as a “theatre of desires” (15). Nitsun directs his attention to the bodily, nonverbal aspect of the group where members are so close to each other they can clearly see and touch one another or feel each other’s scent. Sexual attraction, sexual desires and fantasies enter the group “here and now”, with awareness of one’s own sexuality even outside the group. Group therapy is not only a process of communication between different minds, but also between different bodies, including the sexual aspect (7).

Erotic imagination in a group means not only erotic thoughts and fantasies, but also a wide array and a vessel for erotic desires and reveries. A therapy group generates erotic fantasy that encompasses desires of the group members immersed in the matrix. This includes both fantasies one is aware of and those one is not aware of. The freer the erotic fantasy is, the more space for exploration in the group is given, therefore the greater the probably the members will share hidden aspects of their sexuality. Limitations of erotic fantasy will be reflected in inhibition and concealment in the group. That may not be important to some members, but it may be key to others, especially those who are worried about their “transgressive” thoughts and impulses, those who conceal the painful aspects of their



aspekte svoje seksualnosti i one koji su posebno skloni osjećaju srama. U terapijskom procesu važan je prijelaz od zahtjeva do želje. Naime, zahtjev podrazumijeva pritisak za priznanjem i gratifikacijom na početku i na neoblikovan način, a želja se izražava putem govora, što je glavni alat u analizi. Želja je usmjerena na diferencijaciju i svijest o granicama između subjekta koji želi i željenog objekta. Cilj je grupne terapije prepoznavanje i imenovanje želje bez poticanja bilo agonije ili zanosa. Drugim riječima, grupa je tu da pomogne članovima da artikuliraju svoje želje, a ne da ih samo gratificiraju. Imenovanjem želje umjesto njezina odigravanja (*enactment*) kontejnira se napetost u grupi što jača razumijevanje i integraciju seksualnih impulsa i fantazija u životima članova grupe (8).

Nitsun se podosta bavio pitanjem želje i izražavanjem želje u grupi (Nitsun, 2006.; Nitsun, 2012.). Tijekom grupnog procesa u situaciji „ovdje i sada“ mnogo je prostora za izražavanje želje, budući da grupu čine pojedinci povezani na specifičan način, a želja je upravo čin komunikacije u kojoj je potreban drugi. Želja je glas kojim se otkriva ona dimenzija *selfa* koja govori o tome koliko tražimo, hoćemo i želimo (8). Prepoznavanjem želje od strane drugog želja se može imenovati. Imenovanje želje temeljna je funkcija analize. U grupnom *settingu* samo međusobnim

sexuality and those particularly sensitive to the feelings of shame. The transition from demand to desire is important in the context of therapeutic process. Demand implies pressure for affirmation and gratification in the beginning and in an unformed way, whereas desire is expressed via speech, which is the main tool in analysis. Desire is directed towards differentiation and awareness of the borders between the subject who desires and the object that is desired. The goal of group therapy is to identify and name desire without enticing either agony or ecstasy. In other words, the group is here to help its members articulate their desires, rather than simply gratify them. By naming a desire instead of enacting it, tensions in the group are contained, which strengthens the understanding and the integration of sexual impulses and fantasies in the lives of group members (8).

Nitsun spends a great deal of time and effort on the matters of desire and expression of desire in a group (Nitsun, 2006; Nitsun, 2012). During a group process, in a “here and now” type of situation, there is a lot of space for expressing desire since the group is comprised of members linked in a specific way and desire is an act of communication that requires another person. Desire is the voice that reveals the dimension of self that speaks of how much we seek, how much we are willing to do and how much we want (8). By being identified by another, the desire can be named. Naming a desire is

prepoznavanjem želje unutar grupnog matriksa želja se može ostvariti (16). Dakle, grupni terapeut treba imati na umu želju tijekom grupnog procesa te poticati njezinu eksploraciju u grupi.

### ŠTO UTJEČE NA IZRAŽAVANJE ŽELJE U GRUPI?

Grupa sa svojim članovima pulsira sa željom i osigurava arenu za eksploraciju želje. Postavlja se pitanje u kojoj mjeri članovi grupe mogu izraziti želje unutar grupnog procesa. Želja, seksualna fantazija i erotska maštanja često se drže izolirana od grupe (8). No isticanjem želje u terapijskoj grupi dobiva se nova terapijska perspektiva u kojoj se stavlja naglasak na pripadanje, koheziju i predanost. Na izražavanje želje u grupi utječe više čimbenika, npr. strah od osude ili voditeljev sustav vrijednosti. Grupa može evocirati ne samo želje povezane sa sudionicima u grupi nego i želju za grupom kao iskustvom. U grupnom procesu važno je imati na umu želje, jer to može poboljšati ishod tretmana u smislu postizanja dodatnih promjena (8).

Nitsun devedesetih godina u više svojih radova raspravlja o konceptu antigrupe. Taj koncept stavlja u fokus kako bi otvorio raspravu o frustracijama koje doživljavaju voditelji i potpori koju trebaju pružiti i pojedincima

the fundamental function of analysis. In a group setting, only by interpersonally identifying desire within the group matrix is it possible for a desire to come true (16). Therefore, the group's conductor must be aware of such desire during the group process and encourage its exploration in the group.

### WHAT FACTORS AFFECT EXPRESSING A DESIRE IN A GROUP?

A group and its members pulsate with desire and create space for its exploration. The question is then to what extent the members of the group can express desires within the group process. Desire, sexual fantasy, and erotic reverie are often kept isolated from the group (8). However, by expressing a desire in a therapy group, a new therapy perspective is gained where belonging, cohesion and devotion are more pronounced. A number of factors like fear of being judged or conductor's value system affect the expression of a desire in a group. A group can evoke not only desires linked to group participants, but also desires linked to the group as an experience of its own. In a group process, it is important to be aware of desires because that can improve the treatment outcome in terms of achieving additional changes (8).

During the nineties, Nitsun commented on the concept of the anti-group in several of his papers. He put this concept



članovima prije ulaska u grupu i grupi tijekom formiranja kako bi grupa kao cjelina u svojstvu moćnog terapijskog medija postala predmet želje. Do tada postoji otpor ulasku u grupu, a ulaskom u grupu članovi trebaju zatomiti svoje individualne potrebe i težnje na račun zrcaljenja i na račun interakcija s drugima (8). Antigrupa se može promatrati i kao antilibidna grupa, kao pandan Fairbairnovu antilibidnom egu. To se može potkrijepiti odrazom straha od izražavanja libidnih potreba u grupi kao i u ograničavajućem potencijalu za intimnost, seksualnost i igru. Može se sagledavati kao izravna inhibicija libidne ekspresije ili prikriveniji napad na želju i seksualnost. Osim poteškoća u izražavanju libidnih tendencija, u grupnom procesu redovito je prisutan i problem u izražavanju agresije. Agresija je suštinski aspekt seksualnosti i obrnuto, u osnovi seksualnosti često je agresija. I jedno i drugo važni su aspekti grupnih interakcija koji se često doživljavaju kao prijeteći i destabilizirajući, a često su marginalizirani u grupnoj analizi (8). Grupa s izrazitim antigrupnim tendencijama vjerojatno će biti ona u kojoj se intimnost i seksualnost neće moći otvoreno istraživati, naprotiv, može se pojaviti disocijacija i potiskivanje seksualnosti što pridonosi stvaranju antigrupe. Da bi grupa izrasla u „grupu kao objekt želje“, potrebno je dovoljno povjerenja i sigurnosti za

into focus in order to open discussion on frustrations that conductors experience and the support they are supposed to provide to individual members before they join a group and to the group itself during its formation. This is needed so that the group as a whole, in a capacity of a powerful therapeutic medium, can become the object of desire. Until then there would be resistance to joining the group, as when joining the group its members must suppress their individual needs and wants on account of mirroring and interaction with others (8). An anti-group can also be considered an anti-libido group, a counterpart to Fairbairn's anti-libido ego. That can be backed by the reflection of fear in expressing libido needs in the group as well as limited potential for intimacy, sexuality, and play. That problem can also be interpreted as a direct inhibition of libido expression or a disguised assault on desire and sexuality. Besides difficulties in expressing libido tendencies, the problem of expressing aggression is also typically present in a group process. Aggression is a quintessential aspect of sexuality, and vice versa, aggression can often be found at the base of sexuality. Both are important aspects of group interactions and we often perceive them as threatening and destabilizing. Both are often marginalized in a group analysis (8). A group with strong anti-group tendencies will probably make it hard or virtually impossible to openly explore sexuality. On the contrary, it is possible for dissociation and repression of sexuality to emerge, which contribute

slobodno uključivanje u seksualni diskurs, uključujući različite oblike seksualnih različitosti (7).

## SEKSUALNE RAZLIČITOSTI I ŽELJA U GRUPI

Grupa je vrlo blizu društvenoj domeni kad je riječ o ambivalenciji i dvostrukim mjerilima po pitanju izražavanja želje. S jedne strane postoje slobode i zahtjevi za izražavanjem želje, a s druge postoje pravila i ograničenja, moralni i etički principi koje treba uzeti u obzir. Stoga se često treba boriti s osjećajima srama i krivnje kad je riječ o seksualnosti. Minimiziranje želja u grupi, seksualnih i drugih, znači poricanje i gubitak, zbog čega treba dati prostora izražavanju želje u svim njezinim oblicima. Ponašanje specifično za rodne uloge rezultat je anksioznosti i obrambene konfiguracije. Interakcije među spolovima u grupnom *settingu* osvješćuju ona obilježja koja nisu u skladu s anatomskim spolom; žudnju i želje koje su uznemirujuće i koje ne mogu biti ispunjene, kao i praznine i nedostatke koje drugi spol posjeduje u izobilju, uzrokujući zavist u grupi (8).

Suvremeno društvo još uvijek se bori s teškoćama u prihvaćanju seksualnih različitosti. Još smo svjesno i nesvjesno skloni kategorizirati pojedince i njihovo ponašanje prema uvriježenom

to the creation of the anti-group. For a group to develop into a "group as an object of desire", it is necessary to develop enough trust and safety for members to feel free to engage in a sexual discourse, including different types of sexual differences (7).

## SEXUAL DIFFERENCES AND DESIRE IN A GROUP

A group is very close to the social domain when it comes to ambivalence and double standards concerning desire. On the one hand, there are freedoms and demands to express desire, on the other hand, there are rules and limitations, moral and ethical principles that need to be acknowledged. This is why it is often necessary to fight the feelings of shame and guilt regarding sexuality. Minimizing desires in a group, sexual or otherwise, also implies denial and loss which is one more reason to allow for space to express desire in all its forms. Behaviour specific to gender roles is a result of anxiety and defensive configuration. Interactions between sexes in a group setting bring awareness of those features that are not congruent with anatomical sexual features; lust and desire that are disturbing and that cannot be fulfilled in addition to the flaws the other sex possesses in abundance, thus creating envy in the group (8).

Contemporary society is still struggling with the acceptance of sexual differenc-



konceptu muško-žensko, maskulino-feminino (13). Prema tom obrascu žene se doživljava emocionalnijima u odnosu na muškarce (17) za koje se drži da su samouvjereni, neovisni, autonomni i emocionalno suzdržani (18), iako se taj popis pridjeva umnogome mijenja (19, 20). U grupnom procesu seksualne različitosti su implicitne i temeljene na zapažanjima da je uobičajeno aktivna želja u muškaraca, a pasivna kod žena, kao i na činjenicama da uglavnom muškarci imaju tendenciju atakirati na voditelja, dok žene češće idealiziraju voditelja i iskazuju zadovoljstvo grupom. U grupnom procesu to može pridonijeti *splitingu* ili ga odražavati. Rod je izrazito povezan s moći, čime se bavilo više grupnih analitičara. Tako naprimjer Barbara Elliott smatra da je grupna psihoterapija, osobito psihoanaliza, feminina aktivnost. To obrazlaže činjenicom da se grupa bavi vidljivim i prikrivenim emocijama što je feminino obilježje. U tom procesu muškarci gube na svojoj dominaciji. U daljnjem tijeku razvoja grupe dolazi do spoznaje biseksualne prirode jednog i drugog spola što može rezultirati porastom anksioznosti. Na kraju i jedni i drugi će imati koristi, jer očekuje se da će biti u stanju otvorenije izraziti svoje biseksualne želje (21). Erica Burman (2002.) bavi se ženskim rodnim pitanjima u grupi, s posebnim osvrtom na seksualnost i moć. Također, smatra da je previše šutnje unutar grupne analize u vezi s erotskim tran-

es. We are still prone to, consciously or not, pigeonhole individuals and their behaviour according to the ingrained concept of male – female, masculine – feminine (13). According to this script, women are seen as more emotional when compared to men (17) who are seen as confident, independent, autonomous, and emotionally restrained (18), even though this list of adjectives varies greatly (19, 20). In a group process, sexual differences are implicit and based on the observation that desire is usually active in men and passive in women, as well as on the fact that men usually have a tendency to attack the conductor, whereas women are more prone to idealize the conductor and to express their content with the group. The aforementioned can contribute to splitting or reflect it, in the context of the group process. Gender is strongly linked to power, which has been the subject of research of many group analysts. Barbara Elliott sees group psychotherapy, and especially psychoanalysis, as a female activity. She explains it by the fact that the group deals with both visible and concealed emotions, which is a female feature. In the process, men lose some of their dominance. Developing further, the group discovers the bisexual nature of both sexes, which may increase anxiety. In the end, both profit out of it because it is expected they will be more capable of expressing their bisexual desires (21). Erica Burman (2002) deals with female gender problems in a group, particularly those linked to sexuality and power.

sferom s naglaskom na homoerotskom transferu i kontratransferu (22). Istraživanje seksualnosti u grupnoj analizi Nitsun (2006.) stavlja u okvir grupe kao objekta pri čemu govori o želji za grupom kao terapijskim medijem, mjestom gdje se mogu izraziti dublji aspekti osobnosti, uključujući seksualnost i želju (8). Pitanje roda i konfiguracije moći često ostaje neistraženo i može biti izvor napetosti koja se pojavljuje u grupi. Takvi i slični diskursi možda nikad neće izići na vidjelo, no svejedno oblikuju grupni proces (8).

U želji za priznanjem i afirmacijom vlastitog *selfa* u grupnom *settingu* susreću se različite osobnosti, sve sa željom za priznanjem i sve s potencijalom za negacijom drugoga. Ta pojava u grupi je kontinuirana, bila ona otvorena ili prikrivena. No u grupnom procesu postoji mogućnost suočavanja s dvojmom „ja ili drugi“ uz mogućnost međusobnog priznavanja. Grupa je koristan okvir i za promatranje seksualnosti u čijem području napetost može biti osobito izražena i po pitanju priznavanja i po pitanju negacije (8, 23). Idealno bi bilo da postojati simetrija, tj. da ljudi podjednako žele jedni druge, ali to često nije slučaj. U pitanju je narcistička osjetljivost zbog čega se pojavljuje sumnja u privlačnost, poželjnost i želju od strane onoga drugog. Zato angažman kroz želju često sadržava suptilno manevriranje kao flert, testiranje, igre moći, čak

She says that too much silence in group analysis is linked to erotic transference, particularly homoerotic transference and countertransference (22). According to Nitsun (2006), exploration of sexuality in group analysis falls within the framework of group as an object whereat he speaks of desire for a group as a therapeutic medium, a place where deeper aspects of personality can be expressed, including sexuality and desire (8). The matters of gender and power configuration are oftentimes left unexplored and can be a source of tension within a group. Such discourses may never surface, but they can still influence and shape the group process (8).

Many personalities meet in a group setting, each seeking to affirm oneself, each with a desire for affirmation and a potential to negate the other. This is a continuing phenomenon, whether it is evident or not. However, in a group process there is a possibility of facing the “me or them” dilemma using the option of mutual affirmation. Group makes for a useful framework for observation of sexuality in situations where tension can be salient both in terms of affirmation and negation (8, 23). The ideal situation is the one where there is symmetry, where people want one another equally. That, however, is not often the case. It is a matter of narcissistic sensitivity which causes one to doubt the attractiveness, the desirability, and the feeling of being desired by another. Therefore, engaging via means of desire often contains subtle





i mučenje. Takvi procesi u grupi često su prikriveni, a i kad postanu vidljivi, mogu se manifestirati osjećajem nesigurnosti. Erotski osjećaji mogu ostati neotvoreni, što može rezultirati *acting out* ponašanjem (8).

Seksualni odnosno rodni identitet u grupi, osobito kad je riječ o seksualnim različitostima, utjecat će na način izražavanja želje u grupi. U kojoj će mjeri članovi grupe biti u stanju izraziti želje u grupi ovisi o više čimbenika povezanih s članovima grupe ili s voditeljem kao i sa samom grupom. O sličnim čimbenicima ovisi i tko će biti objekt želje: drugi član u grupi, voditelj ili grupa kao cjelina. Zadaća je voditelja suočiti se s promjenama na planu seksualnih različitosti i prilagoditi vlastita moralna načela kako bi grupa postigla koheziju i kako bi svaki član grupe bio u prilici izraziti želje „ovdje i sada“, uključujući i one seksualne prirode, bez obzira na seksualne različitosti (8).

## REFLEKSIJE SEKSUALNIH RAZLIČITOSTI NA GRUPNI PROCES

Grupa se smatra specifičnim i učinkovitim tretmanom u liječenju mnogih psiholoških problema i poremećaja (13). Grupna terapija idealan je *setting* za istraživanje vlastitog identiteta, za rad na sociokulturnim čimbenicima

manoeuvres such as flirtation, testing, power play, even torture. These processes are often concealed, and when they are revealed, they can be accompanied by the feeling of uncertainty. Erotic feelings can remain contained, which may result in “acting out” type of behaviour (8).

Sexual or gender identity in a group, especially when sexual differences are concerned, will affect the way desire is expressed in the group. The degree to which the members will be able to express desires will depend on a number of factors that concern either the members of the group, the conductor and/or the group itself. Similar factors determine who the object of desire is: another member of the group, the conductor or the group as a whole. The conductors' task is to face the changes pertaining to sexual differences and to adjust their own moral principles in order for the group to achieve cohesion. Consequently, every member of the group has an opportunity to express their desires “here and now”, including those of sexual nature and regardless of sexual differences (8).

## REFLECTIONS OF SEXUAL DIFFERENCES ON THE GROUP PROCESS

Group is considered to be a specific and effective treatment for a number of psychological problems and disorders (13). Group therapy is an ideal setting for ex-

te na međuljudskim odnosima, ali i na intrapsihičkoj dinamici koja podrazumijeva osobnu motivaciju i konflikte koji utječu na interakcije pojedinca i na njihovu percepciju (24).

Kultura grupe po svojoj je prirodi sklon različitosti; većina psihoterapijskih grupa formirana je od heterogenih pojedinaca i njeguju različitost koja je preduvjet za rast i promjenu (7).

Yalom u svojim inače opsežnim tekstovima o grupama teško da se dotiče te teme. Nitsun razmatra jednu od važnih dimenzija grupe, a to je „grupa kao svjedok“. Za razliku od individualne terapije, pri čemu terapeut i pacijent igraju različite uloge, grupa ima prednost s obzirom na to da ima veći broj članova, uključujući voditelja, što unatoč težini te teme olakšava eksploataciju seksualnosti. Jedna je od poteškoća u svakodnevnom suočavanju s intimnošću izolacija u kojoj se intimnost ostvaruje. Budući da se obično događa između dviju osoba, što i jest odgovarajući uvjet za izraz intimnosti, može biti i povod za tjeskobu, invaziju i zlostavljanje. Unošenjem intimnosti u grupu otvaraju se mogućnosti za nove oblike facilitacije i razumijevanja. Nitsun (2006.) govori o „ponovnom kontekstualiziranju intimnosti“ (8).

Više autora daje prednost grupnoj terapiji u radu sa seksualnim različito-

ploring one's own identity, for working on socio-cultural factors and interpersonal relations, but also on intrapsychic dynamic that implies personal motivation and conflicts that affect individuals' interactions as well as the way they are perceived (24).

Group culture is prone to differences by its nature; most psychotherapy groups consist of heterogenous individuals and nurture differences, which are requirements for growth and change (7).

Yalom hardly ever tackles the subject. Nitsun elaborates on one important dimension of the group – “group as a witness”. Unlike individual therapy where the conductor and the patient play different roles, group's advantage is the number of members involved, including the conductor, which makes it easier to explore sexuality even though it may be a difficult subject to begin with. One of the obstacles in tackling intimacy is the isolation in which it takes place. Since it usually happens between two persons, which is the appropriate requirement for expressing intimacy, this can cause anxiety, invasion, and abuse. By introducing intimacy to the group, new forms of facilitation and understanding are enabled. Nitsun (2006) speaks of “recontextualization of intimacy” (8).

Many authors prefer group therapy when working with sexual differences. Some research confirms the idiosyncrasies of homogenous groups in comparison with heterogenous ones, implications of the



stima. Velik broj istraživanja potvrdio je specifičnosti homogenih u odnosu na heterogene grupe, implikacije spola voditelja, utjecaj različitih spolno specifičnih stilova itd. (13, 24).

U psihoterapijskoj grupi, bilo mješovitoj ili homogenoj, u svakom trenutku ima onih koji će se baviti pitanjima povezanim sa spolom/rodom. U kojoj će se mjeri otvarati takva pitanja ovisi o sastavu članova, o razvojnoj fazi grupe, razini povjerenja i, što je vrlo važno, osjetljivosti i otvorenosti voditelja (8). Postoji strah da bi otvorena rasprava o seksualnosti u grupi potaknula *acting out* ponašanje seksualnog tipa, no prema iskustvima nekih grupnih terapeuta događa se upravo suprotno (7).

U grupnom procesu treba raditi na otvaranju značenja rodni uloga na međuljudskom i osobnom planu (25). Grupna terapija i grupna analiza pružaju široke mogućnosti za premošćivanje identiteta te fluidnost i višestrukost rodni identiteta uz međusobnu rezonanciju i zrcaljenje, obogaćujući tako unutarnje svjetove članova u grupnom procesu, različitim obrascima identifikacije, prevladavanjem narcističke ranjivosti i jačanjem jedinstvenog rodni identiteta. U grupnom procesu mnogo je prostora za istraživanje biseksualne prirode svakog pojedinca i za istraživanje uloge primalne scene (Nitsun, 2006). Prisutnost članova

conductor's sex, the influence of different sex-specific styles etc (13, 24).

In a psychotherapeutic group, either mixed or homogenous, at any given moment there are those who will tackle the issues that deal with sex/gender. To what degree these issues will be tackled depends on the member structure, the developmental phase of the group, the level of trust, and, very importantly, the sensitivity and openness of the conductor (8). There is a fear that an open discussion on sexuality in a group might lead to the acting out behaviour of sexual type. However, in the experience of some group conductors, exactly the contrary takes place (7).

Group process necessitates working on the topic of the meaning of gender roles in interpersonal and personal contexts (25). Group therapy and group analysis offer a wide array of options to bridge identity and fluidity and multifacetedness of gender identities through mutual resonance and mirroring. This enriches the inner worlds of the members of the group process by means of different forms of identification, overcoming narcissistic vulnerability, and strengthening unique gender identity. In a group process, there is a lot of space to explore the bisexual nature of every individual and the role of the primal scene (Nitsun, 2006). The presence of members of the other sex in a group drives these issues here better than in dyadic therapy (26). The matter of inclusion and exclusion, the character of the fixed sex versus the

drugog spola u grupi otvara ta pitanja znatno bolje nego u dijadnoj terapiji (26). Pitanja uključenosti i isključenosti, karakter fiksnog spola naspram fleksibilnog rodnog identiteta, istovjetnost i razlika u spolovima i između spolova dovode se u prvi plan. Analitička grupa predstavlja arenu i priliku u kojoj član grupe može identifikacijom doći do stabilnog ali fleksibilnog rodnog identiteta koji omogućuje prihvatanje seksualnih različitosti (27).

Muškarci i žene trebaju jedni druge da postanu cjeloviti, tj. trebaju jedni druge kao vanjske reprezentacije sebe samih. Grupa tako predstavlja „pješčanik“ u kojem je moguće uz „igru“ povratiti cjelovitost i biseksualnost. Činjenica je da muškarci mogu pokazati nježnost i ranjivost kao i zanimanje za isti spol, a žene asertivnost veću od očekivane. Članovi grupe obaju spolova mogu pokazati konfuziju u relacijama s članovima istog i s članovima suprotnog spola (25).

Pitanja spola/roda u grupi manifestiraju se u „grupi kao cjelini“. Ta pitanja voditelj treba imati na umu tijekom svih faza razvoja grupnog procesa. Tijekom pripreme za ulazak u grupu jedan je od uzroka anksioznosti i otpora ulasku u grupu tjeskoba povezana s intimnošću, i u relacijama izvan grupe i unutar nje (7). Prema Warrenu Bennisu i Herbertu Shepardu (1978.) pitanja spola pojavljuju

flexible gender identity, the sameness and the differences within and between the sexes are brought to the forefront. Analytic group is an arena, an opportunity where any member of the group can by means of identification reach a stable yet flexible gender identity, which enables the acceptance of sexual differences (27).

Men and women need each other in order to become whole, meaning they need each other as external representations of themselves. Thus, a group represents a “sandbox” where it is possible to regain wholeness and bisexuality through “play”. It is a fact that men can exhibit gentleness, vulnerability, and interest for the same sex, whereas women can be more assertive than expected. Members of the group of any gender may exhibit confusion in relations with members of the same or the other sex (25).

The matter of sex/gender in a group is manifested in “a group as a whole”. The conductor must be wary of these matters during all phases of the group process development. During the preparation for joining a group, one of the causes of anxiety and resistance to joining the group is the anxiety linked to intimacy in relations both in the group and outside the group (7). According to Warren Bennis and Herbert Shepard (1978), the issues of sex manifest at specific phases in the shape of conflict of dependency, power, and authority. Social behaviour is often regulated via a feeling of shame so, similarly, anxiety and tension are



se u specifičnim fazama u vidu konflikta ovisnosti, moći i autoriteta. Socijalno ponašanje često se regulira osjećajem srama pa je na sličan način anksioznost i napetost povezana s rodnim ulogama zasnovanim na sramu (25).

Opservacije povezane s rodnim ulogama moguće su tek kad je grupa dovoljno zrela i kad je prevladala ranu preokupaciju ovisnošću i agresijom i kad se postigao određeni stupanj individuacije i separacije od voditelja. Grupe moraju imati i vlastito moralno stajalište, bilo ono otvoreno ili prikriveno. Kako je seksualnost prema društvenim normama ograničena tema, način na koji terapijska grupa predstavlja konvencionalni moral utjecat će na stupanj slobode za obradu seksualne tematike. Nitsun u svojem radu citira i Norberta Elias (1978.), sociologa koji je pisao o ulozi društvenih ograničenja, i navodi da društvena ograničenja mogu biti nužna i nepotrebna. Nužna ograničenja nužna su za uređeno, zdravo društvo, a nepotrebna ograničenja sadržavaju dijelove stečenih interesa i proizvoljne kontrole. Kad je riječ o seksualnoj različitosti, ograničenja su potpuno odgovarajuća u situacijama u kojima pojedinci mogu biti oštećeni, tj. kad postoje oblici seksualne različitosti s destruktivnim i perverznom obilježjima. U tom smislu grupa ima potencijal da postane benigni autoritet, pošteniji i ljubazniji od moralna superega koji je često oštra, kritička

linked to gender roles based on shame (25).

Making observations on gender roles is possible only when the group attains an adequate level of maturity, overcomes early preoccupation with dependency and aggression, and when a certain degree of individuation and separation from the conductor is established. Groups must have their own moral stance, explicit or tacit. Since sexuality is, according to social norms, a sensitive topic, the way a therapy group represents the conventional moral will affect the amount of freedom allowed when working on sexuality-related topics. Nitsun quotes Norbert Elias (1978), a sociologist who wrote on the role of social limitations, by saying that social limitations can be either required or nonrequired. The required ones are necessary for an orderly, healthy society, whereas the nonrequired ones contain parts of acquired interests and arbitrary control. When sexual differences are concerned, the limitations are completely appropriate in situations where individuals can be harmed, meaning when there are forms of sexual differences with destructive and perverse features. In that sense, the group has a potential to become a benign authority, fairer and kinder than the moral of superego which is often a harsh, critical function of self and the culture, and it implies the internalization of repressive social controls (Elias, 1978). The revised moral of the group could help to ease

funkcija *selfa* i kulture i podrazumijeva internalizaciju represivnih društvenih kontrola (Elias, 1978.). Revidirani moral grupe mogao bi pomoći u ublaživanju srama koji je čest aspekt seksualnosti, osobito po pitanju seksualne različitosti, budući da je sram zbog različitosti još veći. Benigni moral u grupi od velike je važnosti za povećanje dometa i širenje seksualne tematike. Odnosi između muških i ženskih članova mogu biti podijeljeni na površne odnose i na one izrazito željene (25). Fenomeni kao dominacija, kohezija, koalicija, stupanj bliskosti, intimnosti ili kompetencije razlikovat će se ovisno o spolnoj ideologiji članova grupe i ovisno o kompoziciji grupe s obzirom na spol (13). Bez obzira na kontradiktorne podatke i rezultate ograničenog broja istraživanja, činjenica je da u grupnom procesu pratimo kontinuitet muško-ženskog ponašanja. Neki autori otkrili su da žene rjeđe preuzimaju ulogu vođe i da su manje kompetitivne, jer kompetenciju smatraju agresivnom, što nije feminino ponašanje. Osim toga, takvo ponašanje može se ocijeniti sebičnim pa žene u takvim slučajevima mogu riskirati povezanost s drugim članovima (28).

Spol odnosno rod u osnovi je grupnog procesa, jer se uzima kao primarni okvir za koordiniranje ponašanja u međuljudskim odnosima (29). Moreno (2005.) citira više autora koji govore o seksualnim različitostima zapaženim

the shame, which is a common aspect of sexuality, especially when sexual differences are concerned since the differences amplify shame. Benign moral in the group is of great importance for increasing the range and for expanding on the sexuality-related topics. Relations between male and female members can be categorized as either superficial or very desired (25). Phenomena of domination, cohesion, coalition, degree of closeness, intimacy or competition will differ depending on the sexual ideology of group members and depending on the group's structure with regard to sex representation (13). Irrespective of the contradictory data and the results of a limited number of research, the fact remains that a continuity of male/female behaviour is tracked in the group process. Some authors find women take the role of leader less often and are less competitive because they find competition aggressive, which does not figure as a feminine behaviour. Not only that, such behaviour can be seen as selfish which makes women risk their connectedness to other members in such situations (28).

Sex or gender is at the base of the group process because it is used as a primary frame for behaviour coordination in interpersonal relations (29). Moreno (2005) quotes several authors who speak of sexual differences noted in the group process. Beth Glover Reed (1981) wrote a paper where she noted that women in mixed groups spoke



u grupnom procesu. Beth Glover Reed (1981.) u svojem radu zapaža da žene u mješovitim grupama manje govore, da se uglavnom obraćaju muškarcima, dijele manje osobnih informacija te nastoje biti ugodne. Neki autori zapazili su da su žene sklone povlačenju i pokazuju manje asertivno ponašanje u odnosu na muške članove grupe (Linda Beasley i John Childers, 1985.). Prisutnost žena u grupi muškarcima daje mogućnost da budu ekspresivniji u odnosu na homogenu grupu sa samo muškim članovima (Judith Lazerson, 1992.). Samuel Krugman i Steven Osherson (1992.) smatraju da muškarci imaju višestruke dobrobiti u mješovitoj grupi. Te dobrobiti proizlaze iz same grupe, iz odnosa sa ženskim članicama, iz kompeticije s drugim muškarcima kao i iz transfera prema voditelju. Carolyn Knight (1993.) smatra da mješovite grupe predstavljaju društvo u malom pa grupa osigurava mogućnosti za rad na odnosima s drugima. Ljutnja, neprijateljsko raspoloženje i sumnjičavost prema suprotnom spolu lakše će izići na vidjelo u mješovitoj grupi. Mješovita grupa *setting* je u kojem se otvara mogućnost za eksploataciju tendencija ka stereotipima i na koji način ti stereotipi ograničavaju razumijevanje drugih. Osim toga, grupa je medij u kojem je moguća i eksploracija uloge zahvalnosti prema drugima (13).

Transforni fenomeni u grupi usko su povezani s ideologijom spola, jer per-

less, they mostly spoke to men, shared less personal information, and tried to be agreeable. Some authors noticed women were more prone to withdrawal and displayed less assertive behaviour in comparison to male members of the group (Linda Beasley and John Childers, 1985). The presence of women in a group allowed men to be more expressive in comparison with a homogenous group of male members only (Judith Lazerson, 1992). Samuel Krugman and Steven Osherson (1992) are of the opinion that men draw multiple benefits from a mixed group. These benefits stem from the group itself, the relations with female members, competition with other men, and the transference with the conductor. Carolyn Knight (1993) writes that mixed groups represent society scaled down, so it allows for the opportunity to work on relations with other people. Anger, inimical mood, and suspiciousness towards the other sex will be more apparent in a mixed group. A mixed group is a setting with open possibility for exploring tendencies towards stereotypes and the way these stereotypes limit one's understanding of others. A group is a medium where the role of thankfulness towards others can be explored too (13).

Group transferences are tied tightly to the ideology of sex since the perception of others is largely shaped by the early experiences of group members in their relations with emotionally close figures during their upbringing, based on

cepcija drugih umnogome je oblikovana ranim iskustvom članova grupe u odnosu s emocionalnom bliskim figurama tijekom odrastanja, na temelju onoga što znamo o transferu iz Freudova učenja o transferu kao i na temelju učenja teoretičara objektnih odnosa. U terminima spola na druge prenosi-mo osjećaje i reakcije koje odgovaraju našem spolnom odnosno rodnom prototipu. Članovi grupe u grupnom procesu, kao i pacijenti u drugim terapijskim *setinzima* na temelju transfer-nih fenomena percipiraju psihoterape-uta sukladno ideologiji njihove spolne/rodne uloge. Taj transferni odnos ovisi o njihovu ranom iskustvu u odnosu s roditeljem istog spola (30).

Hopper ističe utjecaj traume na grupu te ističe ulogu voditelja, što ima učinak na izražavanje želje u grupi, ali i na prirodu grupne analize općenito (31). Bavi se pitanjem želje u grupi u radu s teškim pacijentima (traumatiziranima, ovisnicima...) i pritom postavlja pitanje tko je predmet želje u grupi: drugi pacijenti, grupa kao cjelina ili voditelj. Ponekad može doći do tenzije po tom pitanju budući da će član grupe imati potrebu biti posebno blizak s voditeljem, a ponekad će imati problem dijeljenja voditelja s grupom. Hopper posebnu važnost pridaje nesvjesnim socijalnim procesima koje smatra moćnijima jer su nevidljivi, nepoznati, marginalizirani ili se izbjega-

what we know about transference from Freud's teachings on transference and based on the teachings of object relations theorists. In terms of sex, we transfer to others those feelings and reactions that match our sexual or gender prototype. Members of a group in a group process, as well as patients in other therapeutic settings, use the transference phenomena to perceive the conductor according to their sex/gender role. This transferential relation depends on their early experiences with their parent who is of the same sex as them (30).

Hopper is stressing the influence of trauma on the group and underscores the role of the conductor, which affects the expression of desire in the group, but also the nature of group analysis in general (31). He also addresses the matter of desire in a group, in work with difficult patients (traumatized, addicts...) and poses the question of who the object of desire in a group is: other patients, the group as a whole or the conductor. Sometimes there can be tension with regard to this matter since any given member of the group will have the need to be especially close to the conductor, and sometimes they will have issues with sharing the conductor with the group. Hopper gives a special significance to the unconscious social processes he deems insofar more potent because they are invisible, unknown, marginalized or avoided. So, next to Bion's basic assumptions, he introduces the fourth one – "aggregation/mastification" as an aspect of fragmen-





vaju. Osim Bionovih osnovnih pretpostavki on uvodi i četvrtu pretpostavku „agregacije/mastifikacije“ kao aspekt fragmentacije i nekohezivnosti grupe. Taj aspekt povezan je sa strahom od uništenja uzrokovan psihološkom socijalnom traumom (31).

### **STAJALIŠTA GRUPNOG TERAPEUTA POVEZANA S RODNIM IDENTITETOM**

Grupni terapeut treba imati na umu da se eksploracija rodnih identiteta može događati samo u sigurnom okruženju. Stajališta i predrasude samih grupnih terapeuta utjecat će na facilitaciju otvorenog i konstruktivnog dijaloga oko pitanja seksualnosti, osobito kad je riječ o seksualnim različitostima u grupnom procesu. Obveza je grupnih terapeuta pružiti etičku i afirmativnu skrb za transrodne i rodno nesukladne osobe (6, 32).

Grupni terapeuti trebaju imati u fokusu situacije koje pobuđuju snažne emocije kao što su pitanja autoriteta i moći kao i specifične načine kako će ih manifestirati članovi grupe ovisno o rodu. Snažne emocije i ponašanje koje će izići na vidjelo u grupnom procesu odnose se i na pitanje uključivanja i intimnosti. Uključivanje i intimnost bazične su snage u grupnom procesu, a strah od odbacivanja i bliskost

tation and division of the group. This aspect is linked to the fear of destruction caused by a psychological social trauma (31).

### **ATTITUDES OF GROUP THERAPISTS ON GENDER IDENTITY**

Group therapists must bear in mind that the exploration of gender identities can take place only in a safe environment. Attitudes and prejudice of group therapists themselves will influence the facilitation of an open and constructive dialogue when it comes to the matters of sexuality and sexual differences in a group process. It is the duty of group therapists to offer ethical and affirmative care for transgender and gender-incongruent persons (6, 32).

Group therapists should focus on situations that cause strong emotions to emerge, like the matters of authority and power, as well as the specific ways in which the group members will manifest them, depending on their gender. Strong emotions and behaviour that emerge in a group process pertain to the matters of inclusion and intimacy too. Inclusion and intimacy are basic forces in the group process, and the fear of rejection and closeness are almost always occurring in conflicts linked to gender roles. There may emerge a flood of feelings linked to trauma, incest, and abuse in the group. It is essential to pay

gotovo uvijek pojavljuju se uz konflikt povezan s rodnim ulogama. U grupi se može pojaviti bujica emocija povezanih s traumom, incestom i zlostavljanjem. Potrebno je obratiti pozornost na potisnuta traumatska iskustva (25).

U vezi sa spomenutim pitanjima iznimno je važan moral grupnog terapeuta. Kad se pojave teška pitanja i predrasude, vjerojatno će biti članova grupe osjetljivih na stajališta grupnog terapeuta, bila oni izražena ili ne. To ovisi o tome tko je grupni terapeut, kakvo je njegovo seksualno iskustvo i kakva su njegova stajališta u vezi sa seksualnim različitostima. Naime, malo je grupnih terapeuta bez vlastitih preferencija, inhibicija i predrasuda. Nije nužno potpuno se osloboditi predrasuda, ali važno je osvrnuti se na njih i prepoznati kako one utječu na grupu.

Kad govorimo o spolu psihoterapeuta, u grupnom *settingu* nisu utvrđene razlike po pitanju ishoda tretmana. Johnson (2001.) navodi da su s obzirom na spol očekivanja od grupnog terapeuta drugačija. Od ženskog terapeuta očekuje se usmjerenost na odnose, da bude topao, da prihvaća te da nikad ne bude ljutit ili kritički raspoložen. Neka druga istraživanja pokazala su da ženske terapeute često doživljavaju kao majke ili seksualne objekte (Krugman i Osherson, 1992.). U prilog tomu idu i istraživanja u grupama koje su koterapijski vođene i pri čemu je ustanovlje-

attention to repressed traumatic experiences (25).

Group therapists' moral is very important. When tough issues and prejudice arise, at least some members of a group will probably be sensitive to conductors' attitudes, whether those attitudes are articulated or not. It depends on who the group therapist is, what their own sexual experiences are, and what their attitudes about sexual differences are. There are few group therapists who do not have their own preferences, inhibitions or prejudice. It is not necessary to be completely free of prejudice, but it is important to review it and to recognize in what way this affects the group.

When talking about the psychotherapist's sex in a group setting, no differences as to the outcome were established. Johnson (2001) writes that the expectations from the group conductor are different, depending on their sex. From female conductors it is expected they focus on relations, be warm, kind, and accepting and never display anger or critical mood. Other research has shown that female conductors are often seen as mothers or sexual objects (Krugman and Osherson, 1992). Research on therapy groups that were conducted co-therapeutically and whereby it was established that male conductors were seen as less emphatic and less considerate toward other members of the group speak in favour of the aforementioned (Geilinger and Tess, 1992). Group conductors' attitudes will have an influence on sex/



no da su muški terapeuti doživljeni kao manje empatični i manje obzirni prema članovima grupe (Geillinger i Tess, 1992.). Stajališta grupnih terapeuta utjecat će i na spolno/rodno specifično izražavanje želje u grupi, uključujući i onu seksualne prirode (13, 33).

## ZAKLJUČAK

Pod željom se podrazumijeva subjektivni aspekt i motivacijska snaga koja osim seksualnog prožima sve sfere ljudskog života. Želja je čin komunikacije u kojoj je potreban drugi. Stoga je grupa medij koji omogućuje izražavanje želje, uključujući i seksualnu želju. Način izražavanja želje u grupi ovisi o više čimbenika, među kojima važnu ulogu ima spolni odnosno rodni identitet članova grupa, ali i voditelja grupe, pri čemu je važno da je voditelj otvoren za seksualne različitosti. Seksualna različitost više nije tabu-tema. Iako zahtijeva tolerantno okruženje, u pogodnim uvjetima dostupna je za otvorenu raspravu i eksploraciju. Psihoterapijska grupa u skladu sa suvremenim trendovima odgovarajući je okvir za suočavanje s pitanjima seksualne različitosti. Grupa kao tijelo ima kapacitet za suočavanje s osjećajima privlačnosti i intimnosti kao i za erotske fantazije. S obzirom na adaptivne moralne principe to je ostvarivo bez straha od osude i bez osjećaja srama ili krivnje. Grupa na taj način osigurava osjećaj pripadnosti

gender-specific expression of desires in the group, including those of sexual nature (13, 33).

## CONCLUSION

Desire implies a subjective aspect and a motivational power that, apart from sexual, pervades all spheres of human life. Desire is an act of communication that requires another person. Therefore, group is a medium that enables the desire to be expressed, including the sexual desire. The way in which desire will be expressed in a group depends on a number of factors, among which sexual or gender identities of the group members and the conductor figure as the important ones, so it is essential that the conductor be open to sexual differences. Sexual differences are no longer a taboo. They require a tolerant environment, but in the right conditions it is possible to openly discuss and explore them. A psychotherapeutic group compatible with current trends is an adequate framework for tackling issues pertaining to sexual differences. An embodied group has the capacity to face feelings of attraction, intimacy, and erotic fantasy. Given the adaptive moral principles, that can be achieved without any fear of being judged or feelings of shame or guilt. In this way, the group guarantees the feeling of belonging which is the opposite of the feeling of detachment and alienation that can emerge in the process of exploration of sexual differ-

nasuprot osjećaju odvojenosti i otuđenosti koji se može pojaviti u procesu eksploracije seksualnih različitosti. Grupa kao cjelina tako postaje objekt želje, za razliku od antigrupe koja je izraz za frustraciju želje. Eksploracija seksualnih različitosti u grupi i rodno specifično izražavanje želje u grupi put je ka stvaranju uvjeta za konstruktivnu promjenu.

ences. Thus, the group as a whole becomes the object of desire, in contrast to an anti-group which is an expression of frustration of desire. The exploration of sexual differences and the gender-specific expression of desire in a group is the path towards creating conditions for constructive change.

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