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IARPP 2010 Paper Session III

Saturday, February 27th

8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session III-1

Invited Panel:

Roundtable on Community-Based Psychoanalysis

Presenter(s): Nancy Drooker, PhD; April Fernando, PhD; Stacy Ann Katz, PsyD
Elizabeth Kita, LCSW & Bart Magee, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Neal Altman, PhD

Abstract:

Relationality Squared: Leveraging the Power of Psychoanalysis in the Community

Representatives of three community-based mental health programs in the Bay Area will discuss the power of psychoanalysis to enable and enrich clinical work in underserved communities. Each presenter, after a brief description of the work done in his or her program, will provide a vignette illustrating the use of psychoanalysis in navigating a complex clinical situation. Particular attention will be paid to points of tension in this work related to social class, culture, race, and a non-traditional frame.

Relational Psychoanalysis in Its Present Socio-Cultural and Historical Contexts

Presenter(s): Mark Gerald, PhD; Thomas Greenspon, PhD,LP,LMFT
Ilene Philipson, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Francesco Andreucci, PhD

Abstract:

Why Now?: A Social-Historical Inquiry Into the Ascent of Relational Theory

This paper links the relational turn in psychoanalysis to the social and cultural circumstances of our clinical practice. It argues that the psychoanalytic audience, that is the clinicians who buy books, attend conferences and read journals, co-constructs theory through being drawn to certain authors and not others. By so locating relational thought we can move away from seeing theory as exclusively the product of individual minds. If we seek to be contextualists, our understanding of the contexts that define us and our theories cannot be confined to our offices and the analytic dyad. This paper argues that regardless of how much we subjectively experience relational theories as better, they are better in part due to their ability to speak to our shifting social circumstances, to our own historically specific needs as clinicians and to those of our patients living in a postmodern world unimagined by Freud and his adherents. At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to explain how the social-historical circumstances of our clinical practice informs theory construction, and describe the specific ways relational thought has come into being.

Desire in Context: Intimacy and Couples' Therapy From An Intersubjective Systems Perspective

The fabric of ongoing intimate relationships is woven from many strands, among which are affect attunement and mutually constructed meanings. In such relationships desire, whether emotional or sexual, is best understood as intersubjectively constituted; desire is frequently evoked by mutual emotional risk-taking in an environment in which each partner feels generally understood by, and important to, the other. Such vitalizing self experiences draw us to intimacy. When feelings of vulnerability have left one or both intimate partners alienated or threatened, the resulting defensiveness can destroy desire. Meanings given to particular intimate interactions are always contoured both by current experience and by each partner's developmentally-derived emotional convictions concerning his or her sense of self and sense of acceptability to others. An intersubjective systems sensibility in couples' therapy, focused on the lived experience of the relationship, invokes an investigation of these emotional convictions in an empathic environment of conjoint exploration. The goal is not to determine who is at fault, but to understand how the issues emerged from the dyadic system. In such an environment of mutual quest, the couple and the therapist attempt to make sense of the issues together through a dialogue resonant with their varied perspectives. Enacted in the real-time therapeutic engagement, the resulting increased understanding and affect attunement help to re-knit the fabric of intimacy via an increased sense of resilience, self coherence, and connection. At the conclusion of my presentation, participants will be able to describe how desire and other affects are intersubjectively constituted; and describe an approach to couples' therapy arising from an Intersubjective Systems Theory sensibility.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session III-2 (continued)

Relational Psychoanalysis in Its Present Socio-Cultural and Historical Contexts

Presenter(s): Mark Gerald, PhD; Thomas Greenspon, PhD,LP,LMFT
Ilene Philipson, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Francesco Andreucci, PhD

Abstract:

What I've Learned About Psychoanalysis by Photographing Psychoanalysts in Their Offices

Several years ago I began a project of taking photographic portraits of psychoanalysts in their offices. Many factors contributed to the creation of this endeavor, some of which I will mention as I describe the work and its influence on me as a psychoanalyst. I studied photography as a young man and thought for a period of time of having a profession as a photographer. That dream was deferred as my imagination was captured by psychoanalysis and the years of training that were required in becoming an analyst. Yet, I never completely lost my love for photography and realized at some point that I could express a more integrated and personally satisfying experience by combining my artistic vision with my psychoanalytic vocation. Hence, "In the Shadow of Freud's Couch". It is my intention to tell you of some of my observations and ideas about the current state of psychoanalysis based on photographing so far, more than fifty analysts in New York City and its suburbs, San Francisco, Oakland and Berkeley, California, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Mexico City, London, Paris, Athens, and Buenos Aires. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will re-evaluate what constitutes psychoanalytic space with an appreciation for the physical; realize that the "face and body" of psychoanalysis has changed and, inevitably, will continue to do so. This includes assumptions that have been made about where and how we practice; and examine our own work space as a creation and reflection of our inner psychic space and its objects.

Trespassing Sexual Limits

Presenter(s): Laura Caghan, PsyD, PsyD; Margaret Crastnapol, PhD
Barbara Eisold, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Aaron Balick, PhD

Abstract:

Seeing the Sexuality of Self and Other On Line: A Means for Making Sexuality Part of A More Congruent, Metabolized Sense of Self

In the paper I am proposing, using case material, I hope to demonstrate the following: a) how the analyst can ask for detailed descriptions of the sexual scenes the patient is viewing or projecting on the internet; b) how, then, the internet can be used as a mirroring tool, upon which un-metabolized sexual aspects of self can be seen (by the patient at home), discussed in therapy, and symbolically "mirrored" by analyst and patient together, with the hope of c) encouraging the growth of the patient's self-representation to include sexuality, so that d) finally sexuality with a partner can be embodied in mutual interaction. In considering mutual interaction, the concepts of Jeffrey Urist (1977), concerning what he called "mutuality of autonomy" in Rorschach perceptions will be loosely applied. At the conclusion of my presentation, participants will be able to 1) carefully question patients, both about the kinds of sexual scenes they are viewing on the internet and about the ways in which these scenes do, or do not, fit comfortably into their view of themselves; 2) understand the implications of these scenes, in terms of their need, respectively, to enjoy sexuality in parallel with a partner, in imitation of a partner, by controlling a partner, by leaning on the instigation of the partner, or in mutual exchange with a partner.

Gender Near: Fitting Theory to Transgender Realities

The author describes entering clinical work with gender variant clients. She explores the gulf between transgender clients' subjective truths and the perspectives of recent psychoanalytic authors. Both analytic case studies and postmodern views of gender are considered. The author then recommends several useful approaches for working with clients who are gender variant. It is essential to accept clients' subjective assertions about the primacy of their psychic gender. Acceptance and recognition further help these clients to process their often traumatic internal states. In addition, some trans clients are particularly inexperienced in authentic relating; they benefit greatly from efforts to enlarge their relational capacities. At the conclusion of my presentation, participants will have a greater understanding of the psychological and social challenges facing transgender clients, as well as how their experiences may differ from recent psychoanalytic thinking; and will have strategies for working with clients who are gender variant.

Trespassing Sexual Limits

Presenter(s): Laura Caghan, PsyD, PsyD; Margaret Crastnapol, PhD
Barbara Eisold, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Aaron Balick, PhD

Abstract:

Otherness and Estrangement – Tracing Their Roots in the Organismic Self

Jean Laplanche suggests that the enigma that structures psychic life is no more nor less than the subjective desire of the other. In counterpoint to Laplanche's position, I argue that there is indeed a further enigma, one that is both subjective and objective. This enigma consists of one's experience of one's own and the other's neurophysiological self. Familiarity and estrangement from oneself and others inhere significantly (though of course not solely) in the experience of one's own or the other's pervasive disposition and temperament. At times these inner tendencies seem exceedingly unknowable, mysterious, and alien to us. Having an especially intense sexual desire – or for that matter a very mild one -- may reflect a physiological difference that feels like an "otherness" within oneself, or may make us feel like an "other" relative to our partner, or to the rest of the world. We discover idiosyncracies and actual limits to our cognitive, affective, and behavioral functioning in various spheres throughout life, and these too are often experienced as contrary or "other" to our subjective sense of who we are or should be able to be. Biophysiological ingrained aspects like differing intellectual strengths, emotional warmth or coldness, boldness or shyness, etc., contribute to structuring different self-object constellations internally, and these reflexively influence the meaning we ascribe to our own organismic traits as they are inscribed in the psychesoma. All of this is expressed in the multiplicity of self-states internally and "I"/"Thou" relationships externally. The biophysiological "otherness" of the analyst relative to the patient can be capitalized on to create a psychic differential to promote the latter's psycho-emotional growth, as my clinical illustration shows. To fully explore this perspective, relational psychoanalysis needs to expand its scope to encompass new developments in the fields of neurobiology and personality research. Siever and Weinstein (JAPA, 2009) offer one fertile approach to understanding how four core psychobiological dimensions (cognitive organization, affective regulation, impulse control, and anxiety level) contribute to the structuralization of different personality constellations – and, as I will show, different experiences of familiarity and estrangement within the self and with the other.

The learner will be able to discuss Jean Laplanche's views of enigma and otherness, and contrast this with the presenter's view of organismically rooted "othernesses" within the self. The participant will be able to list the central biophysiological dimensions described by Siever and Weinstein and by Baron-Cohen, and will be able to describe how they may create intrapsychic and interpsychic experiences of "otherness" within the patient. The learner will be able to apply their newfound understanding of biophysiological underpinnings to enhance their therapeutic sensitivity and approach to dealing with estranged, divisive internal experiences within and between their patients.

Longings for Recognition

Presenter(s): Moshe Bergstein, PhD; Hendrika de Vries, MTS,MA & Stefanie Teitelbaum, MSW

Moderator/Interlocutor: Jane Kenner, PhD

Abstract:

*Transformation of the Wish for Recognition as Subject of Desire
Into a Wish for Annihilation in "Love-Death", in Wagner's Tristan & Isolde*

Viewing gender development as a relational process involving identification processes attributes a central role to recognition of subjectivity, especially recognition as "subject of desire" (Benjamin, 1991). Wagner's opera adaptation of the 800 year old story of *Tristan & Isolde* powerfully demonstrates some consequences of interruption of such developmental processes, resulting, under certain conditions, in the transformation of the wish for recognition as subject of desire into the wish for annihilation of self and other through "love-death" (*liebstod*). The opera is accompanied by a tight texture of musical leitmotives, appearing as a kind of "unconscious" alongside the textual narrative. A close reading of the use of these leitmotives enables an understanding of the manner in which the opera demonstrates the pathologization which may result from the need for recognition gone awry. Such a reading of Isolde's narrative in act I suggests the origin of the protagonists' love as their mutual gaze at a traumatic moment. In this moment, there is a convergence of powerful and contrasting emotional elements, such as humiliation, recognition and the phantasy of redemption through the evocation of thwarted developmental wishes and needs. By removing the magical elements from the story, Wagner enables a deeper understanding of the character's unique position in relation to each other, each with his or her own needs for recognition and experiences of humiliation. These positions invite mutual identifications which result in rising tension between acute subjectification and annihilation, with actual death as the only possible psychic solution. These processes will be exemplified in detailed reference to the central love duet of act II, and to the *liebstod* concluding the opera. The presentation will include video demonstrations of short excerpts from the opera.

At the conclusion of the presentation, the participant will be able to illustrate the importance of the developmental need for recognition as subject of desire, and the pathological consequences of the thwarting of this need; and illustrate the possibility of expanding psychoanalytic discourse by using art forms, in this case opera, not just as objects of analysis by psychoanalytic theory but as a medium which may enrich psychoanalytic thinking.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session III-4 (continued)

Longings for Recognition

Presenter(s): Moshe Bergstein, PhD; Hendrika de Vries, MTS,MA & Stefanie Teitelbaum, MSW

Moderator/Interlocutor: Jane Kenner, PhD

Abstract:

“At Home:” Loss, Desire and Re-engagement with an Expanded World

This paper will address the universal longing for home and the global relational impact of loss of home as experienced by survivors of war and natural disasters, by political refugees, emigrants, and displaced workers. The presenter will urge clinical attentiveness to the difference between the universal concept of home as an inner state of mind and the actual experience of feeling “at home” that occurs in relationship to one’s environment and with deep engagement in projects and activities with like-minded others. We will also explore loss of home in the broader sense of loss of relatedness with a familiar cultural milieu, lost connections with known landscapes, faces and body types that mirror our own, familiar sexual mores, economic status and beliefs, political attitudes and particular aesthetics that fed the soul. Drawing on archetypal images from mythology, I will then suggest that, in addition to mourning the loss, healing and relational re-engagement call for an awakening of the Lover archetype in the psyche. At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to describe the clinical difference between “home” as a universal concept and “at home” as a relational experience. The participant will also have an understanding of the Lover archetype as a mythic symbol for the psychic energy necessary to re-engage with the world as the beloved other after the familiar has been lost.

The Echo Injury: Narcissus and Echo on Line and the Loss of Body Cues in Electronic Communication

Concepts included in the paper will be the hallucinatory, psychotic experiences of object voice and object gaze in the absence of material voice and gaze (Lacan), the confusion of language in the absence of sensual cueing (Grandin, Tustin), the experience of abjection in the loss of the material self (Kristeva), the sense of dissipation in the absence of a face in the mirror (Bromberg). I will also explore Echo, in her abject loneliness, abandoning the relational part of her personality and cathecting her Narcissistic self in an overdetermined attachment to her own written post as a defense against the annihilation anxiety resulting from the failure of the striving for contact. The self split into Narcissus and Echo opposites annihilates the dialectic. I will include vignettes of my own and colleagues list serve experiences, as well as clinical vignettes and analysis of my increasing use of email with my patients. I will additionally explore the difference concept of preverbal strivings in a language dominate contact media (Balint) and the resulting risks of Echo injury. I will explore the gender implications of the myth – Narcissus as male, Echo as female, male verbal dominance, female preverbal dominance – and the defensive juxtaposition of male and female parts of the personality in a relational crisis. I envision a highly interactive panel audience dialogue of shared experiences. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will gain educational insight of a different way of reading electronic communications, to hear the missing voice, to see the missing face, to sense the hiding losses in the spaces between the written words; and will be sensitized writers, readers and moderators to the breakdown of the dialectic into dissociative Narcissus and Echo parts and discuss interventions to reanimate a derailed written/read relational processes.

IARPP 2010 Paper Session III-5 Death of an Analyst

Presenter(s): Robin Deutsch, PhD & Dianne Elise, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Adrienne Harris, PhD

Abstract:

A Voice Lost, A Voice Found: After the Death of the Analyst

What is the fate of the analytic life created by the analysand and the analyst when only half the dyad remains? This essay explores the author's experience in the wake of her analyst's sudden death. After experiencing the sudden loss of her analyst, the author loses contact with that part of herself that had come to access thoughts and feelings and share them with a particular other. In this essay, the author describes a process of alteration in her relationship with the person, transference and real, of her analyst. She focuses on a series of dreams after her analyst's death, which illustrates how retaining and cementing her relationship with her deceased analyst, through internalization, facilitated the return of her analysand voice. The author explores the confounding variable of entering another analytic relationship within the context of a traumatic ending to her previous analysis.

Time to Say Goodbye:

This discussion addresses the way in which omnipotence over time that dream life affords can allow for healing in the face of traumatic loss. Dreaming creates a psychic space for a "termination phase" that the analysand has been robbed of in real life when an analyst dies mid-treatment. This mourning is greatly facilitated by the presence of a new analyst, underscoring that it is not detachment, but attachment that heals. Attachment to a third creates a space for dreaming, and is not merely a substitution of a new object for the lost object.

At the conclusion of this presentation, the participant will be able to better attend to the voice of the analysand in the wake of the analyst's death; and understand how attachment to a new analyst, and the co-creation of an analytic third, creates a space for transformative dreaming.

IARPP 2010 Paper Session III-6

Solitude and the Need for the “Other” in the Creative Process

Presenter(s): Limor Kaufman, PhD & Danielle Knafo, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Dana Amir, PhD

Abstract: *Alone Together: Solitude and Encounter in Art and Psychoanalysis*

I examine some of the creative and transformative aspects of solitude, especially as it pertains to artists, while showing how both relationship and solitude are layered and dynamic states that exist in constant interplay. Additionally, I specifically address the uniqueness of women's solitude and offer a clinical vignette to illustrate the interplay between solitude and relatedness in analytic treatment.

Expanding the Relational Context to Art—Race, Rorschach, and Re-Enactment in the Art of Kara Walker

How can a relational perspective on the enactment of trauma expand our understanding of the complex relationship between artist and audience? Kara Walker is the most prolific, complex, and controversial African American artist of our generation, listed by 2007 Time magazine as one of the 100 most influential people in the world. My paper will describe how Walker's art enacts racial relationship in America. Walker invites her viewers to abandon their attempt to be politically correct and allow themselves to experience their racism. Walker uses a “Trojan Horse” strategy, “joining” and inflating racist clichés in order to expose their prejudice towards blacks. Walker's art creates a “Race Rorschach,” scenes that involve complex, ambiguous images and narratives that trigger her audience's unconscious reactions, stimulating their most primal racist fantasies and fears. At the conclusion of this panel, participants will be more knowledgeable of the female creative process; and understand how trauma and reparation take place in art, in the artist and in the audience.

The Body in the Analytic Relationship

Presenter(s): Judith Blackstone, PhD & Jon Sletvold, PsyD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Susan Sands, PhD

Abstract:

The Relational Body

This paper explores the experience of embodiment in the psychotherapeutic relationship. The relational field is not solely a narrative co-construction; it is also a qualitative experience of interconnection or resonance between bodies that transcends self/other duality. Repetitive, discrete self/other configurations may become anchored in the body as patterns of tension. These patterns diminish the qualitative sense of oneself and others, and limit both self-coherence and the capacity for intimacy. If we view the direction of psychological health as moving towards a more flexible, varied, nuanced relational capacity, understanding and facilitating the experience of embodiment can enhance the healing potential of the clinical encounter. At the conclusion of my presentation, participants will be able to describe the value of the qualitative experience of embodiment for the therapeutic relationship; to discern the experience of embodied contact and resonance between themselves and their patients; have some tools for cultivating embodiment in themselves and their patients.

Wilhelm Reich and the History of Embodied Analysis

Starting with Freud's early work this paper reviews the origins of interest in embodied dimensions of experience in the work of Wilhelm Reich and the response of Scandinavian analysts Harald Schjelderup and Tage Philipson, both of whom were strongly influenced by Reich during his term working and teaching in Denmark and Norway. The development of character analysis is outlined and compared to interpersonal theory and relational psychoanalysis. Recent models from Beebe & Lachmann and others highlighting the distinction between the implicit emotional and the explicit verbal dialogue in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy have provided a conceptual scaffolding for the emergence of an embodied relational analysis. The paper then reviews work performed at the Norwegian Character Analytic Institute over the last decade to integrate embodied character analysis, relational analysis and recent research in neuro- and developmental psychology, a process influenced by the Franco-American psychoanalytically oriented body-psychotherapist, George Downing. At the conclusion of my presentation the participant will hopefully be able to evaluate possible value of early conceptions of embodiment in psychoanalysis, and to see a relevance of an embodied perspective for contemporary relational psychoanalysis.