

Invited Panel: Culture and the Transformation of Psychoanalysis

Presenter(s): Jeremy D. Safran, PhD; Rachael Peltz, PhD
 Juan Francisco Jordan, PhD; Gianni Nebbiosi, PhD
 Andrew Samuels, PhD & Chana Ullman PhD

Abstract:

As Edith Kurzweil remarked in her classic book: *The Freudians: A Comparative Perspective*. "Every culture creates the psychoanalysis it needs, although it does so unconsciously." Different cultural traditions, assumptions, intellectual fashions and politics inevitably influence the forms of psychoanalysis that become influential in different countries. And these same forces inevitably influence way in which psychoanalytic thinking and practice evolve in different cultures. Psychoanalysis, which originated in the Austro-Hungarian empire at the beginning of the 20th century, evolved in a variety of unique ways as it spread throughout the world. Relational psychoanalysis emerged in the US out of a synthesis of a variety of traditions including American interpersonal psychoanalysis and British object relations theory. In this panel we are will explore the various cultural factors that have shaped the forms of psychoanalysis that have become dominant in different cultures as well as factors that may either or facilitate or impede a receptiveness to relational psychoanalysis. We will also explore the various ways in which relational psychoanalysis is being transformed by different cultures and speculate about how different cultures will transform relational psychoanalysis in the future. Panelists represent a range of different countries and the form of the panel will be dialogical in nature rather than presentation oriented.

Various Aspects of Social Theory and Psychoanalysis

Presenter(s): Doris Brothers, PhD; Marsha Hewitt, PhD & Effi Ziv, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Sharon Beiman, PhD

Abstract:

Confrontations with the Unforgivable: Using Hannah Arendt's Relational Politics to Ponder Evil and the Limits of Analytic Empathy

In this paper, Hannah Arendt's politically influential ideas about evil and forgiveness are applied to the psychoanalytic situation. In an attempt to address questions about the effects of failing to forgive and be forgiven, the complicated relationship between evil acts and unforgivable actors is examined. It is proposed that when we reach the limit of our empathic capacity in the face of an act that is deemed evil, the person who performed the act is often experienced as unforgivable. A clinical example illustrates the relational salience of this formulation. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to explain how Hannah Arendt's ideas about evil and forgiveness apply to the psychoanalytic situation.

An Interdisciplinary Perspective on Social Melancholy and Resistance

In this paper I look at the formation of subjectivity under conditions of continuous social oppression, such as in sexism, racism, and homophobia. I draw on post-structuralist and relational perspectives which articulated the relationships between subjectivity and "social melancholy", which develops under continuous social oppression. Social melancholy is treated as an adaptive "structure of feelings" (Williams, R. 1989). This "structure of feelings", I argue, enables the oppressed subject to maintain the multiplicity of her selves under conditions of symbolic social domination and violence. Within this context, melancholy is not necessarily a pathology. I argue that "healing" from social melancholy, should involve the development of a political consciousness and emotional resistance to the sources of melancholy. This argument leads me to question the absence of models of political forms of resistance within psychoanalytic discourse. At the conclusion of this session, the audience will broaden the epistemological legitimacy to melancholia as a "normal" reaction to persistent social oppression, rather than a pathology. The term 'Social melancholia' best captures this idea; encourage the participants to question their use of (or lack of) "political resistance" in the context of relational clinical work.

Dangerous Amnesia: The Restoration of Psychoanalytic Memory in Social Theory

This paper will examine the reconceptualizations of therapeutic action and the rethinking of social and political realities in writers such as Joel Whitebook, Muriel Dimen, Adrienne Harris, Neil Altman and Ruth Stein in order to demonstrate the continued relevance and necessity of psychoanalysis in theories and practices of social change. The paper will include a brief case study of a woman whose way of coping with severe and sustained childhood traumas took the form of profoundly held feelings that "the Jews" directly undermined all her efforts to live a productive, successful and rich life. This case vividly illustrates the ways in which individual pathologies intersect with, sustain and reproduce social and political forms of intolerance and prejudice. Clinical material strengthens the argument that political, policy and social changes alone are insufficient for the establishment of social justice. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to demonstrate that psychoanalytic theory and practice is integral to social change; and emphasize that clinical practice is socially contextualized; the deeper the exploration of the individual psyche, the greater the contact with culture.

Pornography in a Technological Age

Presenter(s): Gilbert Cole, PhD; Richard Frankel, PhD & Mary-Joan Gerson, PhD, ABPP

Moderator/Interlocutor: Drew Tillotson, PhD

Abstract:

Theorizing a Pornographic Dynamic

Pornography is at once the site and the effect of an extremely efficient conjunction of fantasy and industry. The ready availability of erotic fantasy to exploitation through mass production directs our attention to the multifaceted process that enables the lush proliferation of a vast range of kinds of porn that reliably exerts a predictable set of effects. Porn's simple, alluring surface hides, rests on and is created by a kind of machine built of systems of interlocking dynamisms. It is a system located at and formed by the conjunction of erotic fantasy and industrial production. In this presentation I mean to begin to diagram that system using concepts crucial to relational psychoanalytic thought. One important effect of porn at work: the viewer becomes an accomplice in transgression. Thinking of this moment as an enactment is useful here. The viewer of porn is not only responsive to the erotic stimuli conveyed in an image or staging, but also to the impact of becoming an actor in the erotic moment. As the gaze links the voyeur and the exhibitionist, the distinction between doer and done to dissolves. The viewer is not merely observing, but through the structure of enactment participates in the construction of the pornographic scene. The structure of an enactment is one of the truly ingenious moments of a pornographic dynamic, for while the "what" of the enactment must surely be manifold enough to guarantee an ever growing audience, or rather ever multiplying yet distinctly different audiences, the particular enactment occasioned by a porn moment must be specific enough to be repeated on demand and with expert precision. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to understand and identify the dynamic of enactment at work throughout the system that encompasses the producers and users of pornography, will be able to trace the anxiety that animates and is the self-preserving energy for this system.

Betrayal: Attachment and Intimacy in Cyberspace

How do we define betrayal in intimate relationships, and does betrayal in virtual space differ from the fully embodied experience? Drawing on the play, Betrayal by Harold Pinter, an exploration of infidelity cited for its evocative inclusion of pauses and silences, this paper will examine the quality of omissions and elisions in cyberspace connection. I will explore the quality of reflectiveness, both internal and interpersonal, in cyberspace communication, in the context of a relational theory of self and other, contemporary attachment theory, and cultural premises regarding intimacy. At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will: 1) expand (his)her understanding of how partners in intimate relationships are interpenetrated and linked; 2) how cyberspace communication can both enhance and interfere with reflectiveness about self in relationship and awareness of the other.

Pornography in a Technological Age

Presenter(s): Gilbert Cole, PhD; Richard Frankel, PhD & Mary-Joan Gerson, PhD, ABPP

Moderator/Interlocutor: Drew Tillotson, PhD

Abstract:

The Fate of Pornography in a Technological Age

In this paper, I will explore how personal and cultural relationships to pornography are effected by the Internet where pornography is omnipresent, both in its sheer graphic reality and its immediate accessibility, always there, ready and waiting, in the background, whenever we turn on our computers. Drawing upon the work of Benjamin, Winnicott and Zizek, I will describe the phenomenology of the pornographic experience in a technological age, and the impact it has on our imaginative life. Because pornography in contemporary culture often functions as an antidote for psychic deadness, I will explore the relationship between pornography and eros, examining what effects it has on the already complicated set of relations between wish, fantasy, and reality. In other words, what kind of object relation occurs in the experience of pornography and how does it effect our bearing toward what lies beyond the subjective when we relate to a pornographic other versus a real other? At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to formulate the intrapsychic complexities of our relationship to Internet pornography; and describe the broader psychological implications of virtual reality becoming our dominant mode of accessing and relating to the external world.

Psychoanalysis on the Outer Fringes

Presenter(s): Antonella Battaglia, PhD; Barbara Blasdel, PhD
Talia Hatzor, PhD & Carmine Schettini, MD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Barry Magid, PhD

Abstract:

Extending the Relational Context to the Treatment of Severe Psychiatric Conditions: The Experience of a Group of Parents of Patients Affected by Psychosis

As psychiatrists and psychotherapists, we have a longstanding tradition in the treatment of psychosis through "combined psychotherapy", namely the association of psychotherapy and psychopharmacological therapy. This type of treatment is a sign that, beyond a host of symptoms and neurochemical alterations, we admit the existence of an individual with his/her specific story and suffering. Only relatively recently have we begun to take into consideration the contexts in which that specific story and that specific suffering emerge and are shared. One such context is the family, where relationships can be more conflictual to the detriment of the patient, leading to acute psychotic episodes or progressive withdrawal into isolation. Paradoxically, for a long time the parents of these patients were excluded from treatment protocols because they were considered mainly as disruptive, intrusive elements, or even as the very cause of the condition of their son/daughter. Eventually, they were included in "psycho-educational" therapeutic programs aimed to inform the parents about the meaning and onset of symptoms in order to collaborate with caretakers in preventing the crises. For some years now, the Authors have set up groups of parents of psychotic patients using the specific perspectives of Relational Psychoanalysis. In particular, the concepts of relational conflict between the parents and the sons/daughters-patients, negotiating mutual needs, and mutuality of affect regulation have proven fundamental. The group was able to represent a relational context which, through the shared witness of trauma and the new relationship experiences safe from dissociation, paved new ways for hope. This led to an improvement in symptoms and prognosis, making it possible in some cases even to reduce the dose of psychotropic drugs. Bringing the principle of Relational Psychoanalysis into the psychiatric context has made it possible to consider psychosis as a dimension of the relational experience and not merely as an individual, serious and chronic illness. This helps to further improve the concepts of healthcare policy and of the ethics of therapy. At the end of our presentation, the participant will be able to understand why it was important to include the patients' parents in the treatment of psychosis; and which specific principles of Relational Psychoanalysis have offered privileged perspectives for treatment.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session I-4 (continued)

Psychoanalysis on the Outer Fringes

Presenter(s): Antonella Battaglia, PhD; Barbara Blasdel, PhD;
Talia Hatzor, PhD & Carmine Schettini, MD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Barry Magid, PhD

Abstract:

Off the Couch and into the Streets: Finding a Psychoanalytic Voice for Social Change

This paper argues that the concepts of skin ego and psychic envelope are extremely generative of understanding and insight when applied to social entities. Like the child, a social entity can be seen as functioning as a whole within a social space or envelope, creating a boundary between it and other entities, helping keep the good in and the bad out, promoting the development of internal structures, task maintenance, and functioning – enhancing its capacity to think, as it were. If the envelope is ruptured, too brittle, or leaky. Picking up this signal, we can turn to other important aspects of the social entity to further inform our analysis. I include here ethos – the cultural/social surround; habitus – how the entity embodies its culture; structure – how the culture/social group orders itself; and the known/unknown – the conscious and unconscious aspects of the social envelope. By paying attention to these characteristics, psychoanalysts and social agents can better analyze and intervene to promote change in groups, organizations and cultural settings, freeing psychoanalysis from consulting rooms and taking it to the streets. A range of clinical examples will be given to demonstrate the utility of the social envelope in such diverse settings as the consulting room; a psychoanalytic institute; and a reciprocal learning relationship between a township school in Cape Town, South Africa, and a San Francisco charter school. At the conclusion of this session, the participant will be able to define the concept of the social envelope and its attributes; to analyze a social entity and its dysfunction utilizing the concept of the social envelope; and to describe where she/he might intervene to strengthen the social envelope of a social entity and, thus, its capacity to think.

Truth is revealed through practice: Lessons learned from working with under-privileged mothers and children with domestic violence

In this paper I will describe my work at an inner city program that I founded and directed which provided mental health services to mothers and children exposed to domestic violence. This program provided Child-Parent Psychotherapy; and reflective parenting groups for mothers, and attachment based reflective groups for their children. Both the dyadic and group work modalities apply psychoanalytic principles, attachment theory and an understanding of the effects of trauma on children and parents, along with infant mental health knowledge and intergenerational transmission of trauma. As a result of my work with families living in a climate of violence, threats, and terror, and who suffer from great deprivation, disadvantage and socio-economic oppression, I will argue for the urgent need for psychoanalysts and other mental health professionals to get involved in the socio-economic and political order which ails these families. I will use clinical examples and descriptions of the difficulties of providing trauma treatment to these families to show the urgent need for the analyst to take the socio-political context into consideration, and to recognize its effects on the relational unconscious and the transference/counter-transference dynamics. I will argue for the application of the principles of "Liberation Psychology" as articulated by Ignacio Martín-Baró as the basis and guiding principles for complementing psychotherapeutic work with disadvantaged families. At the conclusion of my presentation the participants will understand the complexity of the interaction between the socio-economic aspect and psychic aspect as it affects trauma work with disadvantage parents and their children; and to understand and be motivated to engage in social action as it pertains to their work with disadvantage patients.

IARPP 2010 Paper Session I-5

Envy and Jealousy in Its Many Interpersonal & Economic Manifestations

Presenter(s): Christopher Bandini, LCSW; Susan Cowan-Jenssen, BA
Roger Salerno, PhD & Sandra Salerno, LCSW

Moderator/Interlocutor: Julie Gerhardt, PhD

Abstract: *Envy and Its Cultural Vicissitudes*

In psychoanalysis the concept of envy describes a specific defence within an object relational structure that denies the subjectivity, need and entitlement of the other and is the antithesis of gratitude and satisfaction. Yet envy cannot be reduced to this formulation. For how far is envy both a representation of a psychological structure which is pathological and a culturally generated phenomenon? Should we not take into account the forces that amplify envy when considering the pathology of our 'envious' clients? With reference to social and political dynamics and clinical material, this paper will consider whether envy can be as much a social disease as a psychopathology that requires psychotherapeutic treatment. It will look at four main areas. 1. The conditions in our society that exacerbate envious reactions. 2. The economic and social consequences of envy. 3. The implications for our culture's psychic health as we struggle to contain and express envy and finally 4. How our own individual envy of more 'successful' colleagues and clients manifest itself and how might this be used creatively. At the conclusion of my presentation the participant will hopefully be able to think about and identify: What might stimulate envy outside of the consulting room, to understand its function for our economy, to think about the social and emotional costs of envy and how we can see it contained and expressed in our political and everyday lives; and instances of their own envy in relation to their colleagues and in their work with clients and to reflect on what it reveals about their own unacknowledged dreams and desires.

Look Outside and Bring It Inside: Exploring the Meaning of Patients' Real Objects

This paper will take us from this background of the early 20th century to current times in terms of thinking about objects and their consumption in three domains. The first will continue to trace the sociocultural and political influences to which we can attribute the proliferation of objects in our lives. The works of Marx, Fromm, Marcuse and Baudrillard will assist in illuminating this notion. We will look at objects from a poststructural perspective in which the consumer and the producer are one and the same, such that the consumer produces the product's subjective meaning. Here the sacred, ritualistic and fetishistic meanings of objects also will be considered. The second will follow the development of psychoanalytic thought in relation to objects, and to those who buy, receive, give and imagine them. The work of Klein, Winnicott and Bollas will be particularly emphasized here. The third will take us from the consulting room to society at large through the examination of the objects consumed by our patients. Here the works of intersubjective and relational theorists, such as Benjamin and Bromberg, will illuminate the multiplicity of meanings of things to the analysand as well as to the analytic dyad. It will be considered that the third, literally, can be the thing. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to identify the sociocultural and political influences to which we can attribute the proliferation of objects in our lives; describe the development of psychoanalytic thought in relation to how key theorists have interpreted people's relationships with their internal and cultural objects; and utilize theories of objects to enhance their work with patients.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session I-5 (continued) Envy and Jealousy in Its Many Interpersonal & Economic Manifestations

Presenter(s): Christopher Bandini, LCSW; Susan Cowan-Jenssen, BA
Roger Salerno, PhD & Sandra Salerno, LCSW

Moderator/Interlocutor: Julie Gerhardt, PhD

The Good Job: Financial Anxiety, Class Envy and Drudgery in Starting a Private Practice

There is much discussion today of the professional future of psychoanalysis and while some articles focus on problems in training, the experience of what it's like to graduate from training and to begin a private practice is rarely discussed. The influences of the analyst's socioeconomic class, economic history and financial circumstances are rarely mentioned, even though they can have a significant impact on how one survives this initial difficult period. The profession has been mostly silent on the ramifications of the "job" aspects of the psychoanalytic profession, including paperwork, dealing with bureaucracy and the need for the analyst to develop additional skills like networking and entrepreneurship. While practicing psychoanalysis will always be a labor of love, it will also always be a difficult undertaking. This hardship is largely ignored and the building of a psychoanalytic private practice remains a mystery, an endeavor that seems to occur magically. Shrouded in secrecy, this process is kept private by everyone from the most senior members of our profession to the newest. Experience tells me that the non-clinical aspects of private practice are significant, but if so, why are there so few places to discuss them?

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will, have a better understanding of class and economic factors and their impact on starting and maintaining a private practice in the present business climate; and Be more willing to discuss referral and financial issues with colleagues and bring a newfound awareness to their practice with clients.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session I-6 Can a Body Age?

Presenter(s): Catherine Baker-Pitts, PhD, LCSW; Jane Habeline, PhD & Susie Orbach, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Judi Kobrick, PhD

Abstract:

How A Patient's Wish to Destroy the Ageing Body of His Lover Is Confronted in the Relationship with the Therapist's Ageing Body

We will begin with a clinical presentation of work with a Jewish male academic whose grandparents fled Poland in 1938 bringing with them his mother who was a young child – they left behind extended family who were killed in the Warsaw uprising. The patient presents with depressive anxiety about his wife's ageing; whilst he was in awe of her beauty when they first met, at the time he seeks therapy she is 38 years old, thinner than he would like and he has become preoccupied with the quality and texture of the skin on her face. He professes to love his wife deeply and is very admiring of her intellect, her humour and her forbearance; there is much evidence that she is perceived as beautiful by others. He is fixated with the impact of different light upon her appearance and is most assaulted by her face when the sky is overcast and grey – on these occasions he fears he can see the skull beneath her skin. He has experienced panic attacks when outdoors with her on such days and has adapted by avoiding going out with her unless the light 'is kind'.

Cut and Paste: Creating Bodies in a Makeover Culture

The cosmetic surgery industry is the fastest growing medical specialty with the biggest profits of any beauty sector globally. As a culture, we are fixated on sagas of self-reinvention, whether the results are radiant or monstrous. I will explore the deep emotional appeal and complexity of cosmetic surgery. Sold on the idea of cosmetic surgery as an emotional boost, even as a token of self-improvement, people around the globe turn to it with big hopes. At the conclusion of the program, participants will be able to understand the multiple meanings of elective cosmetic surgery; consider the impact of the analyst's (dis)embodied subjectivity on the analysand; and situate cultural repertoires and contextualize the changing rhetoric surrounding cosmetic body practices.

Relational Attachment Patterns

Presenter(s): Michael Pariser, PsyD; Alejandra Plaza Espinosa, PhD & David Wallin, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Steven Knoblauch, PhD

Abstract:

Working From the Inside Out: The Therapist's Attachment Patterns as So Insight, Impasse, and Change

Despite the reality that "we are the tools of our trade" (Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995), the impact of the therapist's own psychology upon his or her clinical effectiveness is a topic the psychotherapy literature has largely ignored. From the attachment perspective within which I work, this omission appears very problematic. At the heart of the matter is the fact that, in childhood and psychotherapy alike, the relationship is where the developmental action is. Just as the child's original attachment relationships make development possible, it is ultimately the new relationship of attachment with the therapist that allows the patient to change. The unavoidable points of intersection between our own attachment patterns and those of our patients present both opportunities and obstacles. To identify these points of intersection, so as to be able to work through them, therapists would do well to adopt a stance of mindfulness in relation to the transference-countertransference enactments which arise where the attachment patterns of patient and therapist interlock. An account of the author's experience with such an attachment-related enactment will illustrate these ideas—and the proposal that for the patient to heal, the therapist must change. At the end of the presentation, the participant will be able to understand the power of the therapist's relationship to her/his attachment history as an influence shaping the therapeutic relationship and describe the mismatches, collusions, and/or collisions that may result when the attachment patterns of therapist and patient interlock.

Abstract:

Elements of Affect Intolerance

Affect tolerance is not a monolithic entity; it can, in fact, be broken down into five separate elements: specific affect; the intensity of the feeling; the presence of any feelings about the feeling; sense of permanence embedded in the patient's experience; and the relational context in which the emotion has arisen. These five elements interact in complex ways to make specific affect states more or less tolerable; however, in any given situation, one or two are generally in the foreground of the patient's experience. By addressing those specific foreground elements, rather than intolerance in general, the analyst may be able to generate a more precise interpretive approach, allowing for more effective understanding of the patient's difficulty with a given emotional state. Moreover, identification and exploration of specific aspects of affect intolerance can help to untangle the kind of simultaneous intolerance of affect on the part of both the patient and the clinician that often forms the basis for the inevitable and ubiquitous enactments that are part of every psychoanalytic treatment. At the end of my presentation, the participant will be able to identify the different elements in affect intolerance and explain the interaction among the different elements; and form a hypothesis as to which element or elements of affect intolerance are foregrounded in a patient's (or an analyst's) clinical presentation.

Relational Attachment Patterns

Presenter(s): Michael Pariser, PsyD; Alejandra Plaza Espinosa, PhD & David Wallin, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Steven Knoblauch, PhD

Abstract:

Automatic Pleasure, a Mirage of the Neoliberal Societies. The Deep Relation of Attachment, an Alternative.

A case of a 15 years old adolescent will be presented. She was lonely, because her parents were involved in their own problems, so she was just interested in being popular with narcissistic and alcoholic problems. The therapeutic relationship will be presented. She tried to use the therapist to obtain benefits with her mother, without affective connection. She had a sister that was intelligent and mature while she had academic and relational problems. The process of constructing a therapeutic bond was very difficult. She wanted automatic satisfaction of her needs. The therapist was embodied with a feeling of emptiness and futility. A thin attachment relationship was little by little established, that could bring the possibility of an "historification" process that could make her feel in a deep emotional connection with someone else. She had to change her story, not to feel the problematic daughter. An alternative to the loneliness and automatic pleasure of the postmodern societies is to established strong security attachments, to allow people to be creative, to feel accompanied and satisfied. At the conclusion of my presentation, the participants will be able to explain how postmodern societies promise automatic satisfaction and the consequences are that there's no time or interest for culture, art, scientific research; and describe how the therapeutic attachment is important to give the possibility of feeling close and involved in a deep relationship and to co-construct an "historification" process that can modify the image that the patient has of his own.

Is One God Good Enough?

Presenter(s): Lisa Cataldo, Mdiv, PhD; Cynthia Colvin, PhD & Pamela Cooper-White, Mdiv, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Peter Carnochan, PhD

Abstract:

Is One God Enough? Multiplicity, Monotheism, and Relational Psychoanalysis

In this panel, the two presenters – a psychanalytically-informed pastoral psychotherapist and a theologically-trained psychoanalyst – propose to expand upon a public conversation that began in 2007 at a session on multiplicity sponsored by the Psychology, Culture and Religion Group at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion. By bringing this conversation into the relational psychoanalytic community, the presenters hope to further the dialogue between psychoanalysis and religion/spirituality in a way that will contribute needed complexity to a subject that has too often succumbed to reductionism on both sides.

The first paper will explore how relational psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on multiplicity and “not-knowing,” adds a valuable dimension to work with patients seeking psychotherapy in a religious or spiritual context (e.g., “pastoral counseling”), as well as to progressive, postmodern models of Christian theology (expanding on the classical Christian concept of the “Trinity”). **The second paper** considers the clinical question of how the relational understanding of the human person as multiple moves us to look at our patients’ religious experience, faith, or spirituality as a kind of “functional polytheism,” regardless of religious tradition (or even lack thereof). At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will discuss how multiplicity can function as a shared metaphorical “third space” in relation to psychotherapy and religion/spirituality that can contribute to a mature form of spiritual dissent and creativity; and describe how notions of multiplicity and unity as mutually dependent “illusions” in the experience of self and the “sacred Other,” can be identified in relation to patients’ “multiple Gods.”

Abstract:

A Fall Into Grace: An Analyst's Ability to Surrender

As analytic clinicians, we face a rewarding yet at times daunting task of allowing ourselves to be swept into the stormy seas of our patients’ minds. Our patients have come to us with the hope and need for us to survive and to tolerate their projections, impingements, and penetrations. But how do we survive such a profound psychological challenge that threatens to disrupt our sense of psychic equilibrium and that has the potential to catapult us into primitive states of breakdown? In this paper I discuss two clinical experiences, one in which I was unable to be receptive to my client’s material and one in which I was pulled into the vortex of trauma. How was it that in one instance I was walled off from the material, and in the other instance I was able to experience my patient’s enormous press upon my psyche? Drawing upon the ideas of Ghent, Winnicott, Bion and Odgen, I present the idea that we need more than reliable “thirds” to hold us as we enter into such psychic disturbances. I explore how my faith in God and the Jewish teachings act as essential ingredients that allow me to relinquish my sense of familiar cohesion and be pulled into this unknown voyage. At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to understand the role of the container in the therapeutic/analytic relationship; and to recognize and appreciate the complexity of projective identification in an analytic moment.

Global Trauma and Silent Catastrophe

Presenter(s): Rose Gupta, PsyD, LCSW; Harvey Peskin, PhD & Jeanne Wolff Bernstein, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Sam Gerson, PhD

Abstract:

'Man Is A Wolf To Man': Disorders of Dehumanization In Psychoanalysis

Aggressors are represented far more than their victims in drive theories of aggression-- a conspicuous shortcoming in our time of wanton violence against non-combatants. In his late acknowledgment of non-erotic aggression, Freud recognized well enough the dehumanizing effects of crimes against humanity but indicated that these very effects countered the psychoanalytic treatment of dehumanization, even as aggression was put on even footing with sexuality. Still, once Freud relegated sexuality to the life instincts, rehumanization becomes a proper analytic goal. In this revision, victimization--at its worst in genocide--reveals psychic conflict as compelling and concealable as classical conflict: between urges to keep silent or to speak; between habituation to human abandonment or reparative search for witness. What therapeutic neutrality is to psychic reality, therapeutic witness is to the recovery of objective reality and one's right to live in it. The dehumanization-rehumanization dimension helps distinguish between guilt-as- civilizing vs. guilt-as-humanizing, in the respective service of the destructive and life instincts.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to describe disorders of dehumanization as outcomes of grim experiences that have gone unwitnessed, unbelieved or unverified, taking on an unutterable existence in the self; and formulate humanization as an organizing principle in contemporary psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

A Place for History

The paper argues for the steadfast appreciation of a patient's history. The ordinary existence of a communal/documentary history exerts such a powerful influence that dictators and tyrants in times of communal crises, destroy historical records and rewrite their own history. History and the testimony it provides, through the uncovering of a single letter, document or photograph, can evoke such an unshakable evidence of a history thought to be lost. Individual and historical facts, as the dimension of the Third, requires the analyst to avoid unwitting collusion with their erasure but, instead, to serve as their protector and conservator.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to recognize how historical facts provide a dimension of the Third for the patient how the analyst serves as a conservator and buffer against erasure.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session II-1

Invited Panel:

Latest Developments in Attachment Theory, A Conversation With...

Presenter(s): Stephen Seligman, DMH; Mary Main, PhD & Erik Hesse, PhD

Abstract:

Knowing You, Knowing Me, Recognition Beyond the Treatment Room

Presenter(s): Jill Bresler, PhD; Barry Cohen, PhD & Caryn Gorden, PsyD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Larry Zelnick, PsyD

Abstract: *Who's Afraid of Google?*

Our current technological and media advances, and internet usage in particular, has transformed the way we procure, receive and process information. By giving us access to information about individuals (either previously unavailable or unavailable with the same ease), the ways in which we are recognized and recognize others has profoundly affected us. As the acquisition of extra-analytic information has become almost routine, analysts and their patients have less control over how known they are to one another, which has inevitably pushed and redefined the notions and boundaries of privacy and disclosure. By focusing on a clinical vignette, this paper exemplifies the way in which extra-analytic disclosure through an internet search (initially unbeknownst to the analyst), influenced an analytic treatment. In particular the paper details how an analyst's privacy was compromised and how that event impacted on the dyad and the analysand's treatment. Further the paper illustrates how the analysand's trauma history and the ways in which the analyzed both sought and disavowed knowing set the stage for this event. Additionally, the paper explores the co-constructed, enacted aspects of the analysand's intrusion into the analyst's personal life, the multi-dimensional transference-countertransference configurations and how the patient's extra-analytic "recognition" both interfered with and enhanced his treatment. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to describe the ubiquitous contemporary dilemma of extra-analytic disclosure; and delineate ways in which extra-analytic disclosure can impact an analysis.

Abstract:

Unwitting Glimpses of the Analyst's Personal Life and Their Impact on Treatment

Although the psychoanalytic inquiry seems predominantly designed as an exploration of the patient's psyche, personal history, intrapsychic and interpersonal dynamics, the analyst, as a participant observer in the process, inevitably presents him or herself to the scrutiny of the patient. What patients allow themselves to observe and to know about their analysts provides the analyst with an in vivo experience of their ability to perceive, to tolerate, to attend and to selectively in-attend to aspects of the "other" in the interpersonal situation. I will present the treatment of a patient whose rigid reluctance to experience the individuality of the analyst for many years became confounded when he inadvertently saw a TV program which featured the analyst and his family. The subsequent impact on the treatment and the dynamics of the relationship will be explored and examined. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to understand the potential impact of the patient's unwitting view of the therapist's extra-analytic life on the dynamics and course of analysis; and the complex nature of the process of overcoming the analysand's selective inattention to important aspects of the analyst's character.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session II-2 (continued)

Knowing You, Knowing Me, Recognition Beyond the Treatment Room

Presenter(s): Jill Bresler, PhD; Barry Cohen, PhD & Caryn Gorden, PsyD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Larry Zelnick, PsyD

Abstract:

Every Song Tells a Story

Due to the internet, we are all much more "know-able", than we used to be. This is especially true if we accept the premise that what is available about an individual via the internet, or the "digital self" represents aspects of the person that might not be revealed or perceived otherwise. This is true for analysts and patients alike, as what can be known about each of them may be broadened once aspects of their lives are revealed on-line. In this paper, the question of what the analyst does with her own curiosity is examined. Here, an analyst describes the sense of transgression when she sought out information about a patient on the internet without seeking permission, as well as her gaining a new understanding of her patient in the process. The patient's reactions to the analyst sharing this material with her, and the use made of the information are also discussed. In this case, this form of analytic curiosity and inquiry had a positive effect on the treatment. This is by no means inevitable. Questions about the implications of our ability to access information that our patients may not be able to share with us directly are discussed in this paper.

At the end of this presentation, attendees will be able to have an understanding of how the internet extends both our capacity for self presentation and our capacity for knowing about one another; and have a conceptual framework for addressing treatment issues that arise in this context.

Cross-Cultural Aspects of Relational Psychoanalysis

Presenter(s): Fişek Güler, PhD; Amrita Narayanan, PsyD & Margy Sperry, PsyD, MFT

Moderator/Interlocutor: Dawn Farber, MFT

Abstract:

Indian Psychology in Expanding Relational Context: Formation, Decolonization and Debate

In recent years the idea of an "Indian Psychology" is being discussed in institutes and conferences in India. Modern Indian psychologists and yoga teachers are coming together to reinvent an indigenous body of philosophical texts, experiential knowledge and healing resources under the English language rubric of "psychology". A number of relational processes are co-occurring in the development of Indian Psychology, most notably a forging of links between antiquity and post-colonial thought within India and between the multiple cultural links that are India's heritage and the global notion of what is called psychology. This paper will present the "State of Indian Psychology" while raising questions about what can be legitimately examined under the umbrella of Indian Psychology and what methods are appropriate in this exploration. A particular example involving an analytical exploration of the central female character in one of India's epic myths will be used to further discussion about how the choices being made in Indian Psychology will affect diverse groups such as Diaspora Indians and women. At the conclusion of this presentation participants will be able to explain what is meant by "Indian Psychology" and describe some of the complexity and conflicts in this definition; and understand through a particular example, how Indian and western thought can potentially coexist within Indian Psychology.

Cross-Cultural Aspects of Relational Psychoanalysis

Presenter(s): Fişek Güler, PhD; Amrita Narayanan, PsyD & Margy Sperry, PsyD, MFT

Moderator/Interlocutor: Dawn Farber, MFT

Abstract: *The Politics of "We-self Intimacy" and Intersubjectivity: Nonwestern Constructions Undergoing Social Change*

This paper is an attempt to explore the vicissitudes of a familial self construction, along the lines described by Roland (1988), that used to be modal in traditional Turkish culture, but is undergoing rapid change in response to socio-economic-political forces. The main focus of the paper is on changes affecting the intense emotional interdependence or "symbiosis-reciprocity" characteristic of familial intimacy, and the implications of these changes for intersubjective relatedness. Symbiosis-reciprocity refers to an affective experience of we-ness, especially with the mother, involving highly empathic openness and receptivity to intimate others, expectations of mutual support and a reliance on nonverbal communication. As social change leads to an erosion in formal hierarchical relations, the balance of implicit we-ness and explicit separateness can get disrupted, creating a tension in the relational arena as well as potential confusion about one's sense of self. The ramifications of these issues for self development within the family relational matrix, interpersonal relationships and psychopathology, which can also be reflected in the therapeutic relationship will be touched upon. A second focus of the paper involves the relevance of western modes of intersubjective recognition in dealing with the issues of intimate relatedness in a changing social context. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will hopefully be able to evaluate the context-boundedness of her/his own constructions of selfhood, to pose further questions as to the nature of intersubjectivity and intimate relatedness, and also get a glimpse of ways of being that may be different but encompass large sectors of our planet.

Putting Our Heads Together: Mentalizing Systems

Mentalization is a concept at the forefront of psychoanalytic theorizing that provides a way of understanding and working with trauma states, and especially patients who have difficulty reflecting on their own states and experiences let alone entertaining alternative perspectives. The capacity to mentalize enables one to understand one's own experiences and to comprehend the subjective states, feelings, and intentions of others. In contradistinction to Peter Fonagy and his colleagues who view mentalization as an individual intrapsychic developmental achievement, I argue that mentalization is an emergent capacity of a relational system that is mutually and reciprocally mediated by the other members of the system. When a capacity to mentalize is present, it reflects and facilitates the system's complexity. Alternatively, the absence of mentalization is reflected in the rigid interactional patterns characteristic of traumatized systems. Thus, the capacity to mentalize is a system potentiality that is realized when the system self-organizes in a way that produces its own agent of change. At the end of the presentation, participants will understand that the capacity to mentalize is an emergent capacity of a relational system and therefore mediated by that system's interactions; and to describe qualities of systems which lend themselves to the emergence the dyadic capacity to mentalize.

IARPP 2010 Paper Session II-4

Termination and Its Vicissitudes

Presenter(s): Jill Salberg, PhD & Joyce Slochower, PhD, ABPP

Moderator/Interlocutor: Talia Appelbaum Peled, PhD

Abstract:

The Ever-Expanding End of Treatment: Endings, Beginnings and Post-terminations

A patient, whose treatment had long since been terminated and was the subject of an earlier paper, was re-contacted for permission to publish our work. I explore the longevity of the transference-countertransference relationship and how it remains dormant after the ending of an analysis, as if frozen in memory and time. Simultaneously I was contacted by my first analyst and we too entered a "remembered by enacting" kind of frozen, unchanged state. These two intersecting dyads, re-entered our prior transference-counter-transference dynamic as if no time had passed. My work on endings, with my patients and my own analyst, explores the way that termination has been too static a concept in the field and needs to evolve and be integrated with our relational concepts of intersubjectivity, attachment theory and the way the analytic dyad co-constructs and makes meaning of their interactions and relationship. At the conclusion of my presentation, participants will be able to describe the history of termination concepts and the utility of expanding conceptualizations to include current Relational theory and Attachment research findings; and be able to explain a variety of ways of understanding how termination of treatment can not only be an ending but also signal a beginning, or suggest changes and continuations of relational experiences.

Unnecessary Losses

The place of termination within the psychoanalytic ideal has remained largely unquestioned, and this is true across the theoretical continuum. In unshadedly embracing termination as an analytic goal, we ignore its complexities, problematic edges, or the possibility that at times, *not* terminating may be in the patient's best interest. Complicating our relationship to the goal of termination is the space between this analytic model and clinical actuality. For we analysts share an open secret: At least among professionals, complete terminations happen only some of the time. But even more striking are instances in which these treatment relationships actually morph—into professional and personal connections. These phenomena are routinely ignored, remaining sequestered from public discussion and exploration, probably because post-analytic relationships tend to be colored by some shame and anxiety on both analyst and patient's part and the shadow of shame renders it unspeakable. In this paper I examine termination as an analytic goal. I explore its underbelly and dynamics, challenging underlying assumptions concerning the nature of human connectedness, loss, and necessary separation on which the termination model is based. Based on a rigid, indeed, calcified professional vision, termination has become one of the last unexplored frontiers of clinical actuality. Using several case vignettes, I describe some of the ways in which treatments may both end and not end, arguing for a deconstructed termination model that leaves room for both outcomes. By challenging the heretofore impenetrable boundary of termination as an analytic goal, participants will develop a more complex understanding of the multiple issues (theoretical & clinical) informing this process; and examine the role analytic self interest as it plays out on both sides of this decision.

Shame and Migration

Presenter(s): Catherine Hicks, MA; Lisa Lyons, PhD & David Wald, MD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Stephen Hartman, PhD

Abstract:

Homelessness as an Emotional State

The term "homelessness" has traditionally been associated with an empirical state relating to a socio-economic status that projects on behavioral and emotional states. An interdisciplinary analysis of homelessness may provide a deeper understanding of homelessness as an emotional state. For the past two years I have been working as a volunteer amongst a group of young people who regularly visit a day care center for the homeless. The existential state of many of the homeless that I met evolved not only from their socio-economic context or known mental illness but also from an internal experience of a vacuum in the place where we would expect to find images or longings for home. The paper will outline some of the work done by psychoanalysts on this subject and examine homelessness as an emotional state, bringing cases drawn from my experiences with this community. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will review the inner empty space as an expression of the lack of attachment figures (Bowlby) or of the dead mother (Andre Green), in the context of homelessness as an emotional state-self state; and examine the interaction between cultural, and socio-economic factors with the self state as described above.

A Diaspora Of Shame: Migration As Flight From Shame

In this paper, I explore, from a personal viewpoint, this sense of shame associated with the experience of migration. Taking as point of departure the view that human development can be seen, metaphorically, as a series of migrations mediated by the quality of the earliest relationships (Grinberg & Grinberg, 1984), I consider the ways in which, amongst a myriad of feelings and responses, a sense of shame may accompany the flight from a political, social and economic system that is felt to represent too great a dissonance between the ideal and the reality, even though, and perhaps especially because, this new system had been eagerly awaited. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to outline the prominent features of the affect of shame as it is presented in the recent literature on the topic; and describe the core elements of the concept of 'diaspora' as it is used in the academic literature of the last twenty years.

Shame and Migration

Presenter(s): Catherine Hicks, MA; Lisa Lyons, PhD & David Wald, MD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Stephen Hartman, PhD

Abstract:

Red Diaper Baby: Growing Up in the Old Left—An Exploration of Secrets, Shame & Terror

In this paper I will explore my experience growing up as a Red Diaper baby in NYC in the 50's. The areas of particular focus include the role of secrets – the demand on children to hold secrets whose careless revelation could lead to the loss of parents and family; the profound confusion of the contradictions, in many families including mine, between the political and social ideals of our communist parents, and daily life as it was lived and longed for --the dissociation, and enactment, of greed, envy, and materialism; the profound and naïve idealism inherent in my family's belief that the working class would rise up – in a child's mind maybe even tomorrow – and the lived experience of growing up in a family of academics and musicians where, aside from the black maids who cleaned our apartment once a week, no-one had ever talked or socialized with a "working man", and I was instructed never ever to use the "dirty" toilet in the maid's room. I will explore the psychic consequences on a child of growing up knowing that her parents could be the object of an attack by the state, the need to preserve and protect my parents, the terror of the state, and the deep sense of secret "otherness" we all carried. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to describe the adult sequelae of growing up with the need to keep secrets about the family's political affiliation; and illustrate two ways fear of the power of the state shapes a child's representations of attachment.

The Intrusion of the Third in Matters of Human Sexuality

Presenter(s): Steve Kuchuck, LCSW; Elaine Luti, PhD & Peter Shabad, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Bob Carrere, PhD

Abstract:

The Split between Love and Sex: Desire and the Pursuit of the Unattainable Other

The split between love and sex makes it more difficult to passionately foster the romantic imagination and maintain the emotional stamina of a serious "face-to-face" (Levinas, 1961) commitment to an other. Instead, one's emotional commitments may be reserved for the conservation of a self-sameness with its familiar attachments and split off from the sexual desire toward the other. In a similar sense, heterosexual desire may also frequently be detached from the powerful glue of homo-emotional attachments. Without access to one's integrated passion, sexual desire takes on a "hide-and-seek" quality through the pursuit of an unattainable other. The emotionally passive person, who is using much of his/her passion to conserve the security of self-sameness, flirts teasingly with the promise of novelty in otherness to arouse her desire. The unattainable other often is never actually "attained", however, and this individual suffers greatly as he/she clings obsessively to the fantasy of a desired connection with someone who does not reciprocate those wishes. Alternatively, when one sexually conquers or wins over the affections of the Other, the stimulating flirtation with the promise of the new dissolves into "the same old, same old", and the relationship may be experienced as "empty" or "boring", with the consequence that the restless search for the promise of novelty resumes. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will understand the connection between passivity and the need for the stimulating novelty inherent in the fantasy of the unattainable other; and how the promise of novelty carries with it the ever-present possibility of reversing prior indignities.

Sexuality and the Uninvited Third: When Worlds Collide

This paper is a travelogue of a sometimes desperate search for answers still to be discovered. Trusted colleagues and friends and internalized professional objects from Freud to Mitchell and beyond, are summoned for consultation as I struggle with what it means to work in a shifting and eclectic theoretical terrain while juggling multiple, sometimes conflicting self states and roles; patient, self, analyst and friend. What happens when otherwise relatively secure boundaries between the outside world and the treatment room crumble, stirring bodily and affect states that threaten to undermine self regulation, focus and authenticity? When the relational context expands and two becomes three or more, the frame can sag under the weight of new and uninvited objects; ethical and clinical questions abound. What forms are my own desire and sexuality taking and how do these mesh intersubjectively with my patient's? Do I have the right to share what I know or, alternatively, must I? Which words are best left unspoken in the interest of the treatment or my own psychic preservation? These questions and others will be explored. At the conclusion of the presentation, participants will be able to identify various forms of the third as they present themselves in this case; discuss the notion of hearing and utilizing internalized professional voices; and elaborate on dilemmas that may have arisen in their own practices when boundaries or professional and personal roles became confused.

Aesthetics and Relational Psychoanalysis

Presenter(s): Bernard Ratigan, PhD; Thomas Rosbrow, PhD & Leslye Russell, MS

Moderator/Interlocutor: Rina Lazar, PhD

Abstract:

Expanding The Relational Context: Desire Sexuality Politics Economics Aesthetics Technologies

The space between religion, art and psychoanalysis has been contested for much of the last century. The paper will take a *prima facie* arcane topic to illustrate how the visual has been used to articulate alterity – otherness – and express powerful psychological mechanisms that shore up identity at the expense of tolerating difference. Illustrated with examples of visual culture from 15th and early 16th century (mainly Northern) Europe, the paper will explore the complex and often painful relationship between the monotheistic ideologies (Judaism and Christianity mainly, but also Islam). Using the relational discourse it moves beyond earlier drive-theory attempts to ‘psychoanalyse’ artists such as Michelangelo and Leonardo by way of psycho-biographical exercises. Setting themes from the ‘art’ of the period in a psychosocial context, the paper will take three foci: how the images of *synagoga/ecclesia* show the use of splitting; passion iconography illustrates how hate got put into ‘guilty’ Jews to exculpate Christians of the charge of deicide; lastly, how the blood libel myth and the reactions to the *Corpus Domini* cult, graphically show how scapegoating, envy, love and hate are always linked relationally. The paper is a prolegomenon to a discussion of how psychological processes defensively inhibit engagement with the other in contemporary contexts. The presentation will be illustrated with vivid examples of the relevant visual culture of the period. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to describe ways in which alterity is shown in early renaissance visual culture; and illustrate how contemporary ideological/religious conflicts can be understood from a relationally-informed aesthetics.

Harumki Murakami as an Aesthetic Model for 21st Century Psychoanalysts

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will understand the concept of multiple selves as illustrated in Murakami’s writing; and the significance of pluralism as a theoretical and clinical concept.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session II-7 (continued)

Aesthetics and Relational Psychoanalysis

Presenter(s): Bernard Ratigan, PhD; Thomas Rosbrow, PhD & Leslye Russell, MS

Moderator/Interlocutor: Rina Lazar, PhD

Abstract:

The Verities of Astonishment: Close Looking and Close Listening

The art historian and poet, T.J. Clark, (*The of Sight Death: An Experiment in Art Writing*, Yale University Press, 2006) uses the method of repeated close looking to get to the truth of two paintings. His questions are, why are we drawn to view certain paintings again and again and what will we learn about the paintings themselves. His method suggests a fruitful analogy between close looking and close listening. This paper proposes that psychoanalysts and psychotherapists can learn much from the results of Clark's experiment in art looking and writing. Both clinical theory and practice are informed by a consideration of truthfulness to materials, the ethics of a painting, the value of repetition, detail, scale and the use of history. Balancing contraries, such as surface and depth, spontaneous gesture/ considered intervention, near and far, concrete and abstract is not simply achieved through rhetoric or metaphor but through thinking that arises from embodied experience. Close looking linked with an experimental attitude dissolves the abstraction of the concept of the unconscious and makes the unconscious vividly material. At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to apply the concept of close looking to the clinical situation and shape their interventions and interpretations closer to the felt, immediate experience of both members of the analytic dyad; expand their field of attention and extend their repertory of technique through heightened awareness of close looking and close listening; and distinguish between repetition compulsion, defensive use of repeating and repetition in the service of deeper learning.

Implications of Sexual Attractions and Intimate Encounters for Psychoanalytic Treatment

Presenter(s): Christopher Bonovitz, PhD; Irwin Hirsch, PhD & Karen Peoples, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: My Frankel, PhD

Abstract:

Reflections on the Absence or Presence of Analysts' Sexual Desire in the Analytic Dyad

Though analytic attentiveness of any sort can promise more than what is truly available, inattentiveness and/or disinterest is rarely helpful unless this is viewed as a mutual enactment, and before too long addressed as such. What is less specifically examined in the literature are the potential consequences of the absence of sexual attraction from analyst to patient, particularly when a patient feels sexual desire for the analyst. This rather common phenomenon is yet more stark when an analyst feels something in the neighborhood of sexual distaste for a patient? Such a response may readily reflect elements of unrequited physical love in a patients' life history – a repetition of a painful absence of being adored and seen as precious and beautiful by key caregivers. This painful and potentially humiliating configuration must also be addressed as a transference-countertransference enactment no less so than a mutually erotic configuration. Based largely on analysts' anxiety both of these relational integrations too often remain unaddressed in the here-and-now of the analytic relationship. However, because so much attention has been given in the literature to the erotic transference-countertransference (especially the transference), it is easier for analysts to avoid the possible consequences of not feeling desire for our patients. Clinical illustrations will emphasize the potentially salubrious impact of analyzed mutual sexual desire in the transference-countertransference matrix, and as well, how the painful absence of countertransference desire, if courageously addressed and grieved, may also lead to analytic gain. At the conclusion of this presentation, the attendee will be able to help detoxify the theme of analysts' sexual attraction to patients, arguing that when adequately addressed this can be experienced as genuinely affirming; and to bring to further light the range of potential impact on patients when they feel sexual desire for an analyst and that analyst is either not physically attracted or finds the thought of sexual engagement repelling.

Implications of Sexual Attractions and Intimate Encounters for Psychoanalytic Treatment

Presenter(s): Christopher Bonovitz, PhD; Irwin Hirsch, PhD & Karen Peoples, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: My Frankel, PhD

Abstract:

Sustaining the Charge: The Exciting and Destructive Edge of Erotic Fantasies

This paper explores the charged nature of erotic fantasies in the transference/countertransference, where flirtation and sexual fantasies can suddenly become a repetition of the trauma from the past. *The past becomes the present*, corrupting sexual desire and making play too dangerous and fraught. In these hot waters, the analyst feels herself or himself to become the agent of the repetition, seemingly inflicting pain onto the patient. And, yet, the analyst's constraints that may inhibit even getting one's feet wet out of a fear of becoming the perpetrator, limit the opportunity to play with and get to know one's desire. It takes the fun out of sex. The destructive edge of fantasies is examined with regard to the emergence of erotic fantasies in relation to trauma, including those occasions when fantasy breaks down, rupturing beyond repair. At the conclusion of the presentation, the participant will be able to describe and become more familiar with the negotiation of erotics in the analytic situation; and develop ways of conceptualizing and using one's feelings/reactions in the context of erotic transference/ countertransference.

When Our Hair Stands on End: Uncanny Communication and the Relational Unconscious

In this paper, I present a nearly identical dream experience occurring on the same night in a patient and in myself. In my dream I was able to take a relieving action that my patient was unable to do for himself in his dream. The next day I learned that the action I took in my dream appeared in my patient's dream as a relief provided by another at the moment of his most intense helplessness and fear. I use this dream, along with examples of startling unconscious communication presented by other analysts, to explore the nature of uncanny experience *in its implications for our working models of the unconscious*, including the implicit limits we assume. I argue that these implicit limits circumscribe our unconscious openness to experiences that may seem beyond our ken. I attribute some of these implicit limits to the powerful foundational pull of psychoanalytic thinking toward early infantile states, and propose that a capacity for "transitional experiencing" is present as a *human* -- rather than infantile -- capacity. Revisiting Freud's extensive interest in and experiments with uncanny or 'telepathic' phenomena, I explore the role extreme affects and need states may play in uncanny experiences. Finally, I consider what it might mean for analytic practice if the implications of Bion's limitless scope of the unconscious were realized. At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to identify some of the ways in which their perceptions of the field of the unconscious in which they practice are limited by theoretical assumptions and preconceptions; and examine experiences of uncanny unconscious communication from the perspective of a broadly human capacity for "transitional experiencing."

Troubled Waters: The Impact of Ethical Violations

Presenter(s): Jane Burka, PhD & Kathy Sinsheimer, MFT

Moderator/Interlocutor: Alan Senauke, BA

Abstract:

Troubled Waters: The Impact of Ethical Violations on Professional Community Dynamics

In the current climate of concern about social and political transgressions, we propose to present a panel that focuses on the impact of ethical violations on the organizational life of a psychotherapy training institute. "Troubled Waters: The Impact of Ethical Violations on Professional Community Dynamics" will explore boundary violations by psychotherapists and the resulting disturbed relationships within their professional community when these violations became known. The panel will consider how the inter-relationships among patients, students, faculty, therapists, supervisors, the Ethics Committee, and the administration are complex and sometimes dysfunctional; yet they may also generate self-reflection, open discussion, organizational change and improved health for the community.

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to identify the dynamics, sequellae and trauma inherent in individual and group boundary violations; consider the possibilities for healing from the trauma of boundary violations; and better understand dynamics of wounded healers and their subsequently wounded communities.

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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

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 dominated 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.

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: *By Herself: Women, Solitude and Creativity*

Artistic creation in essence is a solitary vocation, usually not forced upon one, but chosen and even cultivated. Winnicott wrote about the capacity to be alone and Storr connected this capacity to the creative enterprise. Both writers point out how we often overlook the enormous significance of creative possibilities that present themselves in solitude. As solitude is split between fear and need and between self and other, we retain a sense of ambivalence toward it. My paper will focus on women, solitude and creativity. Women, for the most part, are and have been expected to be more social, communicative, and nurturing, therefore, when they retreat, they break free of the social constraint of engagement. Recently I finished authoring a book on ten self-representational women artists who lived throughout the last century. It took me 15 years to complete this book, 15 years during which I spent much time alone contemplating these women, their art and their lives. Over the years, these women artists stepped off the page and out of my research. My paper will discuss creativity and solitude in each of these women, as expressed in their art, and in me as I worked on this project.

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 and Its Relationship to Sexuality

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.

Invited Panel:

Aesthetics

Presenter(s): Eric Essman, MA; Michael Shoshani Rosenbaum, PsyD
Carola Kaplan, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Spyros Orfanos, PhD

Abstract:

Navigating Trauma in Joseph Conrad's Fiction: A Voyage from Sigmund Freud to Philip Bromberg

In his 1915 novel *Victory*, Joseph Conrad revises his earlier treatment of trauma as a singular cataclysmic event in the life of a potentially heroic adult, usually male (as depicted in *Heart of Darkness*, *Lord Jim*, and *Under Western Eyes*) to a conception of trauma as the corrosive effect of a child's repeated exposures to emotionally invalidating caregivers. In this revision, Conrad departs from a view of trauma that accords with Freud's account of a single shocking incident--witnessing the primal scene, surviving a train wreck, fighting in a war--to a concept of trauma as a series of mundane but nevertheless toxic childhood occurrences or reoccurrences, a view that accords closely with the contemporary understanding of trauma by relational theorists, most notably that of Philip Bromberg. Thus Conrad's novel presciently anticipates the corrective vision of contemporary psychoanalytic theory, which has supplanted Freud's rather sensational narratives with a more subtle and nuanced understanding of trauma as a long-term lack of validation in childhood that forecloses adult possibilities. In *Victory's* detailed and nuanced portraits of two characters whose lives are constricted by pathological dissociation, Conrad presents literary examples that confirm and illumine Bromberg's clinical and theoretical explications of this pervasive psychological phenomenon. At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to 1.) observe similarities in literary and psychoanalytical understandings of trauma, in a comparison of the treatment of trauma in Joseph Conrad's novel *Victory* and in Philip Bromberg's psychoanalytical study *Awakening the Dreamer*; and 2.) understand how the related fields of literature and psychoanalysis both confirm and augment each other's insights.

When Borges' Esthetics Meets the Psychotic Personality of an Analyzand

In this paper I shall attempt to weave together two different forms of narrative: the psychoanalytic exploration of an analysand's developing capacity to think-feel based on a six-year analysis and a literary quest of similar concerns and regarding the author's internal dialogue with Borges, the Argentinean author, poet and philosopher. The paper discusses the transformation of the analysand who was unable to tolerate the therapeutic setting. The suffering of solitude and the absence of memory of his past is discussed in the context of Borges' stories including 'The Aleph', 'The Circular Ruins' and 'Funes, the Memorious'. At the conclusion of this presentation, the participant will be exposed the therapist to Borges literary universe and thus enrich one's understanding of the psyche's abyss, especially in very difficult to reach patients; and will be exposed to an interdisciplinary exploration study between literature and Psychoanalysis.

Invited Panel:

Aesthetics

Presenter(s): Eric Essman, MA; Michael Shoshani Rosenbaum, PsyD
Carola Kaplan, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Spyros Orfanos, PhD

Abstract:

"This madness which was mine. . .:" Winnicott's Madness and Hamlet's Melancholy

Winnicott interfaces clinic and culture in the "Creativity and its Origins" chapter of *Playing and Reality* (1971), in which he appends a novel interpretation of *Hamlet* to a vignette portraying the dilemma of a male patient who after a quarter century of therapy experiences "the doom of interminability". Winnicott ascribes to dissociated femininity both the long-term clinical impasse and the destructive failure of the tragic hero, and describes a dramatic intervention that breaks the impasse. I discuss the analyst/hero as role-player; the characterization of "madness" in delusional transference-countertransference and Renaissance drama; and phenomena Winnicott identifies with non-integrated gender. Imagery and selected passages from the tragedy also point toward Hamlet's split paternal imago and the political context of identity, suggesting that Winnicott's wary but reductionist focus on dissociation necessitates a wider scope of interpretation, such as Jones' (1949) Oedipal reading of the play, Ruth Stein's (2007) conception of the "kernel of unbearability," and T.S. Eliot's (1922) notion of the objective correlative. Returning to Winnicott, I propose a failure of the maternal environment at the core of Hamlet's breakdown. The complexity of creativity and of its inhibition is underscored in the broadly-relational context imported by the play and in the proto-relationality of Winnicott's technique. At the conclusion of my presentation participants should be able to discuss how disclosure of counter-transferential "delusion" and role playing may facilitate unraveling of a clinical impasse; to compare and contrast Renaissance-theatrical conceptions of the etiology and phenomenology of "madness" and melancholia with those of current psychoanalytic theory; to understand how Winnicott grounds creativity in gender integration and maternal provisioning; and to consider how personal identity may be linked to collective-political circumstances.

Language and Mind Embedded in Relational Psychoanalysis

Presenter(s): Peter August, MS; William Coburn, PsyD, PhD & Karl Loszak, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Maurizio Pinato, PhD

Abstract:

Psychoanalytic Complexity and The Forward Edge: It's (Almost) All About Attitude

Psychoanalytic complexity posits ideas about the influence of a variety of attitudes that inevitably impact the clinical surround. One of these key attitudes includes the assumption that emotional life and emotional development are emergent properties of a larger, complex relational system—the attitude that we thus “find ourselves” inextricably embedded in a larger relational, life context (for which we cannot be entirely responsible but for which we nevertheless must come to assume responsibility). Additionally, it presumes the attitude that it is through a deepening awareness of our contextuality that, paradoxically, we are offered the conduit through which we might find greater emotional freedom. This attitude articulates well with that of our presumptions about “forward-edge” phenomena and the importance of locating, following, elaborating, and articulating them in the clinical setting. Drawing from psychoanalytic complexity theory as well as the seminal ideas of Marian Tolpin and her abiding focus on “forward-edge” phenomena, this paper examines, with the help of a clinical illustration, the foundational importance of psychoanalytic complexity and forward-edge attitudes and their essential role in the formation of therapeutic action and change. At the conclusion of this presentation, the participant will be able to explore and elaborate the crucial role and impact of the analyst’s attitude in the clinical setting as it pertains to the contextuality of human experiencing and the “forward-edge”, developmental phenomena to which the analyst draws the patient’s attention; and to understand the essential and key attitudes that emanate from a psychoanalytic complexity sensibility and their impact on the clinical relationship.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session IV-2

Language and Mind Embedded in Relational Psychoanalysis

Presenter(s): Peter August, MS; William Coburn, PsyD, PhD & Karl Loszak, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Maurizio Pinato, PhD

Abstract:

Is There a Language of Legos? The End of Metaphor and the Beginning of Time

The paper consists of three points: 1) encounters like the one with the little boy playing with Legos constitute an experience of language which I call 'poetic' and which involve the emergence or making of incipient languages which reveal the thing in its 'naivety' or as thing. This tension can also be thought of in terms of the contact between the ultimately incompatible conditions of continuity (the flow we associate with narrative) and contiguity (the always ever-present we associate with the infinite). 2) Engaging with 'poetic' language makes time. If time is that shared sense of "on-going-ness" (Winnicott) our coming to that experience has to do with our engaging language in a particular way which I claim has to do with 'interruption' (Blanchot), specifically the interruption of the continuous and the contiguous by each other. 3) Engaging language and our patients in these ways changes the way we can write about our work as therapists. Our hours, as they are written, can become poetic and naive like the Legos. The writing is no longer separate from our encounters but in fact emphasizes poetic nature of the face-to-face (Levinas) work we do with the other. At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to consider his or her role in a certain performative aspect of psychotherapy in which time, not meaning, is the product and goal; and to encouraged to consider her or his own representations, during and after the 'hours' themselves, as literary versus documentary.

The Mind Has Legs – Relationality and the Embodied Mind

The mind body split of Cartesian dualism is fundamentally at odds with a relational view of human interaction. *Cogito ergo sum* implies the existence of a subject, a *res cogitans* – a thinking thing – which is not a *res extensa* – a thing which exists in three dimensional space. But we well know that 'minds have legs'; after all, that's what gets them into our offices. In their attempt to reconcile Western cognitive science with the teachings of Buddhism, in order to escape the duality of objectivism and nihilism, Varela, Thompson and Rosch (in *The Embodied Mind*) state: 'Western thought in general has no tradition that works with cognition and lived experience in a direct and pragmatic way. (The one possible exception is psychoanalysis, but in most of its current manifestations it has been unable to confront the basic contradictions in our experience of the self or to offer a transformative reembodiment.)' In this paper it will be argued that the model of an embodied mind engaged in enactive cognition fits seamlessly into a relational perspective. Relational concepts such as multiplicity of selves, co-construction of the therapeutic relationship, the central importance of enactment, and the contextual nature of all human experience, fit much better into an embodied concept of mind than into a dualistic model. Moreover, if we are fully to embrace a relational view, we must take seriously the dissolution of the distinction between mind and body and between subject and object. To do so is to free ourselves from the dualism implicit in object relations which is, after all, our collective context. The paper will draw on three main sources – Hegelian dialectic, in particular Hegel's notion of the 'inverted world', the Varela / Thompson / Rosch model of enactive cognition, and current notions of subjectivity and objectivity in philosophy of science. At the conclusion on this presentation, participants will have an improved appreciation of the inseparability of psyche and soma, and of the implications for psychoanalytic treatment; and will have an improved understanding of how the relational model parallels current developments in philosophy and cognitive science.

Economic Repercussions

Presenter(s): Julia Beltsiou, PsyD; Marco Bernabei, PhD & Kenneth Eisold, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Joan Sarnat, PhD

Abstract:

Risk and the Management of Denial: The Multiple Collusions Underlying Our Economic Crisis

The aim of this presentation is to understand the unconscious psychological interactions and collusions that helped bring about our current economic crisis. The financial institutions that had dangerously leveraged and loose credit policies were all set up to "manage risk." But it now appears that the very procedures that they relied upon to protect themselves were infiltrated with unconsciously determined beliefs, unexamined assumptions, and skewed data. The very idea that "risk" could be managed itself contributed to unfounded confidence. The books and articles that are now surfacing make it possible to grasp many of the motivations and interactions that led the management of these firms and their overseers to minimize and, finally, deny the risks they faced: their competition with each other, the pressures from their stakeholders to come up with ever greater profits, the inhibition of oversight given the triumphant ideology of "free markets" in a post cold war era, and investor demands for returns in an era of "investor capitalism." Ultimately, it was how these motivations led financial managers to subvert their own procedures and deny the real risks they faced that paved the way for the crisis. They persuaded themselves that the problem of risk had been solved. This educational aims of this paper are to grasp the inevitability of unconscious psychological processes throughout organizational life; and to understand how unconscious forces can be better managed in public life.

What Parents Desire, What Sons/Daughters Desire: The Identification of Parents and Their Sons/Daughters in the Transition to College During a Period of Crisis

This paper focuses on the significance of the identification and disidentification mechanisms involving parents and their sons/daughters which are activated and reactivated during a particular phase of late adolescence, that is when kids prepare to go off to college. This reactivation belongs to a developmental stage in which the adolescent's need to decide *what to do when he/she grows up*, and to choose a university faculty accordingly, often clashes with their parents' wishes. At the end of the paper, the participants will be able to describe the importance and scope of the identification processes that occur in the parent-son/daughter relationship especially in late adolescence. The participants will also be able to illustrate the role of such identification processes, as well as of disidentification processes, in the phase when the transition to college forces young people to define themselves vis à vis their parents through the important decisions they have to make in relation to their professional future.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session IV-3 (continued)

Economic Repercussions

Presenter(s): Julia Beltsiou, PsyD; Marco Bernabei, PhD & Kenneth Eisold, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Joan Sarnat, PhD

Abstract:

Hard Times: Financial Uncertainty as Creative Opportunity in the Analytic Process

In this paper I explore how the current economic crisis finds its way into the consulting room. I examine the multiple symbolic and concrete economies of money that enter into the relationship between analyst and patient. In particular, I focus on the interplay of financial anxieties in the analytic dyad and delineate ways to understand and explore financial uncertainty in the psychoanalytic process. Case vignettes illustrate how financial uncertainty is expressed and worked with in the analytic dyad and show how the psychoanalytic exploration of financial anxieties offers the opportunity to re-symbolize the various psychic dimensions of money. Literature on the topic of (tolerating) uncertainty in the analytic process underlines how a generative exploration of financial anxieties must include how money and ideas of economic security are used to defend against deeper feelings about the existential truth that life (and the analytic process) is uncertain. A growing ability of the analytic dyad to hold this truth in mind allows a creative exploration of life choices. At the conclusion of my presentation, participants will be able to point out some concrete and symbolic dimensions of money in the analytic relationship; and be able to explain the link between financial anxieties and deeper feelings about the existential truth that life is uncertain.

Family Affairs: Relational Analysis and the Family

Presenter(s): Etziona Israeli, MA; Patricia Raya, PhD
Ruth Sharabany, PhD & Nur Yeniceri, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Ruth Fallenbaum, PhD

Abstract:

The Implications of Therapeutic Work with Children and Adolescents in the Absence of Institutional Resources

Clinical work with children generally elicits strong feelings in therapists as children express themselves through nonverbal expressions rather than words. These feelings intensify even further when care is given to children with primitive internal structures. In such cases, challenges for the therapist are twofold. While containing her own anxieties provoked by the child, and thus keeping the child safe, the therapist also attempts to create a holding and attuning environment outside the realm of her therapeutic work. This requires the assessment and utilization of all available external resources in the child's life. In the nearest circle to the child comes the family. Much can be accomplished, though may not be sufficient in all cases, when the family is eager to form a therapeutic alliance with the therapist and is competent enough to carry out what is expected of them. However, quite frequently either the family lacks the strength to stand strong behind the child or, at times, the family context itself is the source of chaos in the child's life. Thus, removal of the child from his/her familial context to a more attuning and structured environment becomes inevitable. For such cases, foster families, residential treatment centers or in-patient psychiatric units typically stand out as alternative environments. In other terms, more remote circles serve as external resources to provide the child with a holding environment. The displacement process is difficult enough for a therapist to live through. However, what is even more difficult is to work in a system that lacks such alternative placements for children. That is the challenge a therapist has to face with when working with young clients in Turkey. This presentation intends to discuss the implications of this issue on the therapist in her work with children and adolescents. It is hoped that this discussion will (1) stimulate thoughts on pros and cons of various mental health services in different cultural contexts, and (2) draw attention to the effects of these services on therapists.

Female Genital Mutilation as Complex Trauma and the Perpetuation of Multigenerational Trauma

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is an egregious practice that perpetuates complex, multigenerational trauma. To support this proposition, the researcher will examine FGM within the context of three frames: (1) as a tool of economic, sexual, political, and social subjugation; (2) as a tool of shaming and false consciousness; and (3) as a form of complex, psychoneurobiological multigenerational trauma. To accomplish this, colluding systems that enable FGM to occur in the United States, Sudan, and Egypt are examined. Despite the hideous mind-body trauma, a central question is examined—to what extent is trauma mitigated through emotional attunement? At the conclusion of this presentation, the participant will be able to examine the social and political consequences of female genital mutilation as a multifaceted form of subjugation and complex trauma; and to explore the relationship between emotional attunement and healing of trauma.

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IARPP 2010 Paper Session IV-4 (continuation)

Family Affairs: Relational Analysis and the Family

Presenter(s): Etziona Israeli, MA; Patricia Raya, PhD
Ruth Sharabany, PhD & Nur Yeniceri, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Ruth Fallenbaum, PhD

Abstract:

The Darker Side of Motherhood: Conscious and Unconscious Inevitable Processes in Psychotherapy and Parenting

The goal of the paper is to address central issues for therapists based on different levels of experience that can be organized around the issue of being bad toward the patient. An analogy is drawn between functions of mothering meeting various developmental needs of her child. There is an array of inhibitions in therapy where therapist can not perceive aspects of the therapy, is reluctant to address or intervene in the therapy process. The paper is intended to identify the sources of these occurrences, and to present a way to examine them as legitimate, which in turn would free the therapist to meet them in therapy. An analogy to parenthood is drawn, where parent who strive very hard to be good parent miss on aspects of their subjective self, developmental need of their children, and as a consequence have to hide their "failures" for being inconsistent either with their own good parent image, or with the potential judgmental perceptions of their children. Various issue of both therapy and parenthood are examined under the magnifying glass of not accepting the role of being "bad" as well as "not wanting to hurt". At the conclusion of this presentation, the participant will expand the knowledge of several sources literature (mythology, psychology, ethology etc.) that is related to aspects of psychotherapy and parenting that are often neglected, in a effort to view the more positive empathic altruistic aspects of psychotherapy and parenting; and deliver an applied perspective that should benefit both therapists but with special implication for dealing with parent-child issues. Practitioners could benefit from both teaching these aspects as well as counseling about them.

The Too-Muchness of Excitement

Presenter(s): Galit Atlas-Koch, PhD; Jessica Benjamin, PhD & Darlene Bregman Ehrenberg, PhD, ABPP

Moderator/Interlocutor: Patricia Rosbrow, PhD

Abstract:

Containing Excess- Sexuality, Attachment and Intersubjectivity in Theory and Transference

Excited Idiot- Excess and the Death of Desire

Galit Atlas-Koch and Jessica Benjamin will focus on the experience of dysregulation or, as it has been called by LaPlanche, Stein and Benjamin "Excess," that is inherent in the formation of sexuality. In particular, we will focus on the effects and trajectory of male sexuality, where classic themes of overstimulation, seduction and betrayal in the early relationship to mother are crucial. One effect is that overexcitement and anxiety become indistinguishable; excitement becomes dangerous and shut down of desire is the result. In treatment the work with the mother-baby relationship is essential to deal with what appear to be problems of sexual inhibition and death of desire. The therapist is constantly monitored by the patient in relation to the threat of overstimulation by maternal desire as well as the threat of abandonment and betrayal, all of which contributes to destabilizing the attachment relationship. The most minute sign of the therapist's subjectivity can arouse anxiety and fear of being overwhelmed, seduced and then dropped, reverberating with insecure attachment. Nonetheless, the therapist must find a way to facilitate play in the relationship, in order to move from concrete to symbolic modes and use the intersubjective potential of the treatment. The delicate balance of restraint and play will be explored in the clinical presentation. We will describe how these issues are manifested in treatment with a female therapist and the manner in which parts of the mother-infant dyad and the mother-child relationship are revived. We will start with a theoretical framework, be followed by a clinical paper and a discussion of both clinical and theoretical implications. The conclusion will elaborate on the idea of play as both a transference experience and a developmental process. We will theorize the movement from concrete experience, seen as a way of managing hyperarousal and overstimulation, to attachment and intersubjective relatedness that allow enjoyment and non-functional eroticism. Educational objectives include learning how to track the moment by moment shifts in the interaction and the patient's self states regarding the therapist's subjectivity and how the therapist manages the regulation of stimulation and excitement. This is conceptualized in terms both of the use of the therapist's own subjectivity and the facilitation of the developing attachment relationship which serves to stabilize the person and open them to the possibility of excitement and desire as a shared experience.

The Too-Muchness of Excitement

Presenter(s): Galit Atlas-Koch, PhD; Jessica Benjamin, PhD & Darlene Bregman Ehrenberg, PhD, ABPP

Moderator/Interlocutor: Patricia Rosbrow, PhD

Abstract:

*Passionate Desire, Attachments, Addictions, Rages and Violence:
Dealing with Acting Out in Response to a Specific Kind of Internal Agony*

This paper focuses on my work with a patient who has at various times in her life been anorexic, addicted to drugs, to compulsive shopping, to compulsive masturbating, to stealing, and to cutting herself. Her relationships were characterized by a level of violence that at times was life threatening as she beat up her lovers or they beat her up, or as she and her lovers ignored or abused each other emotionally. The relationships, like the drugs, seemed to become addictive. At times it seemed the more destructive they became, the more addicted she would become and that she was helplessly in the grip of feelings, both positive and negative, that she was unable to predict or control. Though initially it seemed that what held her in these relationships was a kind masochistic enthrallment, partly based on the degree of pain that she was willing to endure to sustain them, what became clear over time was that the pain was not what drew or held her. Rather, her experience within each relationship at the time was that it was somehow serving as a lifeline. It seemed to help her to manage an inner agony of such proportions that, as far as she was concerned, felt worse to her than death itself. At times she thought of suicide as a way out of her pain. Because she feared she could be suicidal if she could not find relief, and because the relationships helped her to be able to simply stay alive, the actual pain of these relationships was in her eyes a small price to pay. She was not looking for pain. She was desperately seeking relief from a worse pain. Taking drugs was another way of trying to alleviate unbearable pain. The rocky course of treatment and the changes that became possible will be detailed. The impact on our work of her reading and being able to comment on this paper as I worked on it will also be discussed. At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to recognize the importance of appreciating the nature of the kind of unmanageable agony that is often at the basis of addictive and acting out behaviors; and appreciate the potentially transformative power of working in particular ways in the interactive moment between patient and analyst in dealing with such issues.

Skype and the New Technology of Psychotherapy at a Distance

Presenter(s): Alicia De Torres, MA & Tessa Philips, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Charles Strozier, PhD

Abstract:

Skype and the New Technology of Psychotherapy at a Distance

This paper will examine the experience of providing therapy via SKYPE and live synchronous chat. Both these technologies have made it possible to communicate in real time with others in very different times and contexts from the therapist. Both modalities offer new challenges to the therapist and their clients but also expand the meaning of the relational. Moreover, these technologies expand access of many formerly excluded individuals to a wide range of therapists. These technologies cross borders, time zones and cultures giving rise to the potential for therapeutic interactions which co-mingle vastly different economics and politics and it is intriguing to contemplate where these relationships will take us as humans but also as a therapeutic community which will have to rise to the challenges of newly emerged forms of communication. In much the same way as the advent of the telephone, it is proposed that these technologies will further collapse the frames of time and space, thus changing the form and demographic of relationships. At the end of this presentation it is expected that the participant will be able to identify the two primary forms of technology described (SKYPE, live synchronous chat) and have been stimulated to consider the limitations and possibilities that these new modalities offer for the therapeutic community; and have an increased understanding of the political and economic issues that emerge in treatment of clients across cultures and borders.

Skype and the New Technology of Psychotherapy at a Distance

Skype patients and supervisees have entered my practice in many different ways and for many different reasons. Skype has provided an opportunity and the medium to continue sessions with current patients who move or travel, to accept referrals from patients and supervisees in different areas of the country and overseas, and to become part of training programs in other countries, for example China. My initial rationale for entering into this technology was that I could not wait to try and take advantage of this stimulating new venture. In many ways it has provided the longed for connection and expansion of new relational possibilities in culture and theory, but there are concerns that the limits set by technology on full human nuanced contact may introduce frustrating elements that need to be noted. In my paper I will give clinical examples to illustrate the pros and cons of continuing with ongoing therapies and the excitement and challenges involved in supervision with two Chinese analytic candidates currently living in China. At the conclusion of my presentation participant will be able to give reasons for the pros and cons for expanding relational frame of therapy to include skype; and to explain how skype opens new challenges for supervision across cultures.

The Longing to Belong or the Hope for Transformation

Presenter(s): Susan Hyde, PhD; Jade McGleughlin, LICSW;
Gavin Stansfield, MD & Jeremy Younger, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Chris McIntosh, PhD

Abstract:

The Longing to Belong or the Hope of Transformation: A Trialogue on Desire, Citizenship and Social Change in the Queer Marriage Debate

A queer psychoanalyst, a historian, and a marriage equality activist propose a panel discussion on gay marriage from three different perspectives. The first paper is from a psychoanalyst who has written a first-person narrative/reflection that explores the contradictions and paradoxes of her personal decision to marry in light of a political critique that recognizes and names the ways that marriage creates and replicates stultifying and restrictive notions of normalcy. The author grapples with her own ambivalences: support for the critique of marriage's power to define normal and its simultaneous marginalization of anyone living outside its construct on the one hand and an understanding of the ways we remain deeply psychologically tied to the social structures that shape our own longings and desires. The second author, a historian, will present a paper that explores her hesitancy about the "right to marry" as a primary political goal of the LGBT movement. Her concern focuses on the ubiquitous and uncritical use of analogies to the 20th century civil rights movement and the legal history of interracial marriage. The third participant is an organizer and activist who worked on the five-year campaign to secure marriage equality in Massachusetts and will comment on the contradictions and conflicts raised in the marriage campaigns, as well as the ambivalent feelings expressed by many, including her wife, the psychoanalyst. At the conclusion of this panel, participants will be able to identify the major tensions within the marriage equality movement; to consider the psychic reproduction of family ideology that is both shaping and limiting to individual desire; and to consider the use and abuse of analogies to interracial marriage and their historical relevance.

A Queer Pitch: Group Analytic Psychotherapy with Gay and Bisexual Men

Traditionally, gay and bisexual men have not been well served by psychoanalysis, and the dominant voices within it have largely reflected and reinforced prevailing societal prejudices about homosexuality. In our interactive and relationally based workshop in this conference, participants will gain greater insight into psychoanalytic psychotherapy with gay and bisexual men, and into aspects of group analytic work with similarly marginalised groups of people. Using a short, multimedia presentation we will outline the socio-cultural context of our group, and explore and elucidate how important foundational themes around power, gender, homophobia, and the struggle for both belonging and authenticity in the face of difference, have emerged in the dynamic matrix of the group. We will share some of our thoughts, feelings and experiences as gay psychoanalytic psychotherapists and co-facilitators of this group over the last five years, and then invite participants into a conversation that mirrors our desire to foster a deeper relational experience for the members of our group. We hope to counter some of the ways that the current polarising debate about homosexuality inhibits the unhurried and shared 'not knowing' essential to creative and liberating psychotherapy, and to open a space for dialogue about the rich interplay of all sexualities and genders in ourselves, our patients and the spaces we create together. At the conclusion of our presentation participants will have gained greater insight into psychoanalytic psychotherapy with gay and bisexual men, and into aspects of group analytic work with similarly marginalised groups of people; and will have a greater understanding of the rich interplay of all sexualities and the need for psychoanalysts and psychotherapists to keep thinking about these issues in themselves.

Improving Institute Life by Thinking About Groups

Presenter(s): Charles Brandes, PhD; Suzy Spradlin, PhD & Angela Sowa, PsyD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Sam Kimbels, PhD

Abstract:

The Institute-at-Large and the Dilemma of Groups within Groups

Analytic creativity increased at all levels within an institute once attention was focused on unconscious group dynamics including the relation of groups to each other (i.e., the graduate members to candidate members). The synergistic use of a task force, consultation, and training for candidates, institute officers, and graduate analysts helped the evolution towards an institute-as-a-whole perspective. Members found that an understanding of and respect for unconscious group processes has enhanced institute life by fostering a culture of belonging, enriching the training and progression of candidates, supporting the work of the faculty, and strengthening the functioning of committees and the Board. However, the process has at times been frustrating, painful and permeated with confusion. Despite evidence that a self-analytic function is now more prevalent throughout the institute, we have found that incorporating a group process element into candidate training, however difficult, has proved easier than building pathways for group awareness in the institute-at-large. This paper will describe the history of one Institute's interest in group process, its evolution and implementation within the organization, and its integration, at times ambivalently, into the life of the institute. The presentation will include vignettes, reflections from institute members (candidates, faculty and institute leadership), and a theoretical description emphasizing the relevance of group-as-a-whole models. Finally, the presentation to group process will be posited as a way of understanding the emotional history of the institute through the reflection on and incorporation of multi-variant perspectives of members.

At the conclusion of the presentation, a participant will be able to articulate the types of difficulties and benefits of integrating a group dynamics perspective at their Institute or organization; and to illustrate the advantages in the group-as-a-whole perspective for the health of intra-group relations.

Relational Dilemmas

Presenter(s): Christine Kieffer, PhD, ABPP & Amy Lieberman, MSW

Moderator/Interlocutor: Dennis Facchino, PhD

Abstract:

On "Psychoanalytic Siblings": Expanding the Relational Context Beyond the Analytic Dyad

The role of *psychoanalytic* siblings—that is, real and fantasized encounters with others who see the same analyst—can serve to help illuminate the function of sibling-ship in psychological development. Just as deceased or otherwise missing siblings may loom larger in the psyche of children and adults as compared with living siblings, psychoanalytic siblings who are either unseen, or who are only glimpsed periodically in waiting rooms or hallways, may have a significant impact on the elaboration of transference themes, and, further, may resonate within the intersubjective construction of the analyst-patient dyad. Particularly for those without siblings—that is, “only children”—these encounters may provide some missing but essential experiences that promote development, including mirroring and regulatory aspects of this important bond, as well as increasing capacities for mutual recognition. The rapidly increasing prevalence of one-child families (at least in western cultures) may lead to an increased “sibling hunger”, which is then manifested in the clinical domain. The ideas developed in this presentation also have implications for psychoanalytic education, since psychoanalytic siblings often encounter one another in the course of their training at psychoanalytic institutes. The author will present a clinical vignette to illustrate these phenomena. At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to explain three essential functions of sibling-ship in psychological development; and to describe three features of the role of psychoanalytic siblings as it shapes the patient-analyst encounter.

What Do We Think We're Doing?: Musings on Relational Practices and Therapeutic Ambitions

Following the lively IARPP online conversation about “technique,” and intrigued by the impassioned notes of caution against codification of the multiple ways relational psychotherapists practice, I was provoked to explore the recent literature for any trends and patterns that might nonetheless be emerging within the community of therapists identifying as relational. Looking within the domains of frame, language, interpretation and interaction, I seek to catalog without codifying, identify without reducing, how the explicit shift to a two-person psychology has influenced what actually happens within the consulting room, and how those practices relate to implicit and explicit theories/hopes for therapeutic action. Discussion of my own evolving ways of working from 20 years of clinical practice will find its way into the mix. My hope would be that ample time for conversational discussion of audience thoughts and experiences related to the topic would be included. At the conclusion of the presentation, the participant will further their familiarity with emergent therapeutic practices within a community founded on ideals of multiplicity and ongoing creative development; and may be inspired to examine their own theories of therapeutic hopes and practices and reflect on sources of influence.

The Construction of Cultural Identity, Economy, Culture, and Society

Presenter(s): Alejandro Avila Espada, PhD & Carlos Rodríguez Sutil, PhD

Moderator/Interlocutor: TBD

Abstract:

One of the central postulates of relational psychoanalysis is that there is always present a relational matrix with the significant others and that personal identity is constructed in the context of this (conscious and unconscious) matrix and its posterior substitutes. We also confer different meanings to the world around through the multiple matrices we have lived on. There's no such thing as an individual without culture. And that culture, in its most essential aspects, is transmitted to the individual through his primary caregivers, and then, through the social group in which he is inserted. Cultural differences might be very obvious and hardly acceptable (as polygamy or genital mutilation) or very subtle and procedural (as the demonstration of love between mother and child, the subtleness of looks between people or the concept of private property, etc.) Cultural factors determine such differences, which in immigration, we can't always count on integration coming true. In fact, the exact opposite might happen: after a pseudo-integration, the memory of a deep-seated identity which might jump to the next generation is kept latent, among two cultures, in its most exaggerated form, as an opposition or negative vision of its environment. From the cultural perspective of a mental trauma we can also highlight how in western cultures we have developed the idea that people can control their own destiny, whilst in eastern cultures, set under the influence of Hindi and Islamic religions, each person's destiny is set. When you lose patterns, identity and cultural relationships, life becomes unpredictable. We have the incommunication paradox in the telecommunications era, which deepens the perception of loneliness in the postmodern world. The human being living in "no places" (Marc Augé, 1993), spaces of anonymous junction, of blurry shared identity, deprived from relation and history –symbolic identity expressions- that undertake areas of modern society that become bigger every day, turn into pathologies linked to the absence of *autoconservative and intersubjective* that Silvia Bleichmar calls *pathologies in the bond with the other human being*. Benedetto Croce's maxim "all history is contemporaneous history" has served to make us more conscious of the place of the present when it comes to orienting ourselves towards the past and in order to take into account from which problems or present-day situations we should question the past. Even so, as the historian Edward Carr (1961) said: "The belief in an osseous nucleus of objectively existing historical facts independent of the historian's interpretation is an absurd fallacy but which is difficult to uproot" (p. 16). We complete our presentation with a clinical vignette.

At the conclusion of our presentation the participant will be able to improve his/her understanding of other people from other cultures; and to learn from the multicultural stance of the psychoanalytic clinic from the vantage point of a multicultural group of psychoanalysts.