

IARPP

IARPP 2010 Paper Session IV

Sunday, February 28th

8:30 AM – 10:00 AM

Invited Panel:

Aesthetics

Presenter(s): Eric Essman, MA and 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 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 understand how the related fields of literature and psychoanalysis both confirm and augment each other's insights.

Invited Panel:

Aesthetics

Presenter(s): Eric Essman, MA and 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 (continued)

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.

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): Patricia Raya, 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.

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, MD

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 & Jana Edwards, 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.

Relational Dilemmas

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

Moderator/Interlocutor: Dennis Facchino, PhD

Abstract:

The Desire is in the Shame: A New Look at the Compulsion to Repeat

The author of this paper is interested in exploring how early experiences with shame become a major element in the intersubjective system of couples. Applying findings from neuropsychology and infant research, the paper describes a cycle of shaming followed by attempted reunion with the caretaker that begins at around 14 months of age and becomes part of every child's attachment schema. The author proposes that the re-experiencing of this shame/reunion cycle is a critical unconscious determinant in the desire that attracts intimate partners to each other and is compulsively repeated in every couple relationship. She further discusses how the enactment of the cycle is addressed during therapy through the presentation of two couples she has treated.

At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to recognize the shame/reunion cycle in couple relationships as a strong component in the partners' attraction to each other; and explain how enactments of intimate partners' particular shame/reunion cycle is addressed in couples therapy.

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

Presenter(s): Alejandro Avila Espada, PhD; Carlos Rodríguez Sutil, PhD;
& Susan Espinosa, MD

Moderator/Interlocutor: Martine Aniel, PhD

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.