



Saturday, October 15th

Paper Session B-1

Psychoanalysis and the Social-Political: Two Worlds or One?

Promise-Making and the Ethically Committed Analyst

Presenter: Doris Brothers, PhD

Discussant: Maxwell Sucharov, MD, FRCPC

Abstract:

Starting with the premise that the therapeutic relationship cannot be isolated from the socio-political contexts in which it is embedded, this workshop explores the increased willingness of some analysts to embrace an “ethic of commitment“ and assume the risks inherent in political activism. A paper entitled, “We Will Not Stand By: The Intersubjectivity of Promise-Making and the Ethically Committed Analyst,” is presented that tackles the complexities involved in relinquishing the role of silent bystander in the analytic space as well as on the world stage through an examination of the concept of promise-making. A clinical example illustrates how the complicated and demanding process of making and keeping promises affected a therapeutic process. A discussion follows that will hopefully engage participants in a dialogue about the ways in which a radically contextualist sensibility reveals the tensions between the pressures to maintain cultural norms and the longing for psychological and political transformation.

Objectives

1. At the conclusion of our workshop, the participant will be able to explain how the social-political context affects the therapeutic dialogue.
2. At the conclusion of our workshop, the participant will be able to describe how promise-making contributes to an ethic of commitment among therapists.



Saturday, October 15th

Paper Session B-2

Trauma, Loss, and the Collapse of Time and Memory in the

Films of Charlie Kaufman

Presenter: Julia Schwartz, MD

Moderator: Peggy DuBois, PsyD

Discussant: Lorraine Cates, PhD

Abstract:

Charlie Kaufman is well known for scripts that deal with creativity, mortality, and the meaning of life, often with the leading character (his alter ego) plagued with ruminations about these themes. His work also deals with trauma and loss quite movingly. Focusing particularly on *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and *Synecdoche, New York*, I will show how his films effectively convey the experience of traumatic temporality- i.e. temporal discontinuity, temporal collapse, and dysjunctions. In addition, there are other elements seen in Kaufman's film-making (and writing), which strike me as concretizations, in which the character's subjective experiences are manifested outwardly. This capacity to "paint on film" is how he conveys his character's inner emotional state visually, and lends a surreal quality to his films. These features will be demonstrated using clips.

Objectives:

At the conclusion of my presentation,

1. The participant will be able to describe and recognize elements of traumatic temporality.
2. The participant will appreciate the importance of finitude in the experience of traumatic loss.
3. The participant will be able to recognize concretizations both as they appear in the arts and in the clinical situation.



Saturday, October 15th

Paper Session B-3:

**Improvisational Play with Adolescents and
Adults in Contemporary Psychoanalysis**

Presenter: Philip Ringstrom, PhD
Moderator: Allan Gelber, PhD
Discussant: Ilene Philipson, PhD, PhD

Abstract:

Working improvisationally has been built into psychoanalysis from its beginning. Phillips (1993) that Freud sought to create a “profession of improvisers” but knew he had to legitimate psychoanalysis’ scientific rigor, which made his first vision – that of improvisation – a hard one to legitimate – hence it became psychoanalysis’ “dirty little secret”. This paper seeks to elevate improvisation to a status of legitimacy. It takes up how an improvisational attitude on the part of the analyst corresponds more with a stance of embedment versus transcendence (Coburn, 1999). That is, that the analyst’s subjectivity is inextricably embedded in the work, versus his being able to transcend the field in a manner that lends to an objectivist stance. The paper then elaborates on what some of what improvisation entails: 1) it involves a mutually playful engagement fomenting in a great deal of curiosity, 2) with the engagement slipping back and forth in the implicit and explicit domains of communication, 3) in a manner from which moments of the “heretofore unimaginable” emerge, 4) creating a quality of co-authorship of an emergent “relational unconscious” sharing features of both analyst’s and patient’s unconscious, 5) that culminates in the emergence of the quality of “psychoanalytic thirdness.” All of these points contrast to inevitable (and necessary states) in which the improvisational play is constrained or merely stops resulting in the process of “mutual inductive identification.” This latter process corresponds to something akin to bi-directional modes of projective identification, wherein both patient and analyst, both experiencing states of anxiety, revert to (often unconscious) historically “scripted” ways of functioning, involving inducing each other to take up some split off, projected part of themselves. The purpose in the case is patient is to induce the analyst to become someone the patient can more readily control, largely to combat fears of being unsafe, as well as the analyst trying to induce the patient to become the kind of patient he is comfortable working with. It is working through these inevitable enactments (“mutual inductive identifications”) the both parties change and grow and are able to restore the sense of play that they have lost. The two clinical vignettes that flesh out the theoretical paradigm represent more than half the length of the 15 page paper, making the presentation very “user-friendly” for the audience.

Objectives:

1. To learn what is involved in cultivating an attitudinal stance congenial to being improvisational in psychoanalytic treatment.
2. To learn what are some of the key elements of improvisational engagement.
3. To learn about the process of “mutual inductive identification” (when the play of improvisation is constrained or stops) and how to recover from this in a manner the produces the “heretofore unimaginable”.



Saturday, October 15th

Paper Session B-4:

On Recent Representations of Kohut

Presenter: Michael Clifford, PhD, MDiv

Moderator: Karen Kay, PsyD, PhD

Discussant: Alan Kindler, MBBS, FRCPC

Abstract:

The author reviews the recent representations of Kohut in the psychoanalytic literature, especially focusing on two 2007 papers by Aron and Strozier. Three points have been made about Kohut by Aron and Strozier, which the author questions: Was Kohut Mr. Z?, Did Kohut “Betray” His Jewish Identity?, and Was Kohut “Sexually Confused”? The author asserts that Aron and Strozier are swimming against the postmodern current when they make conclusions with certainty that their methodology cannot finally support. In particular, the author contends that the movement toward the individual’s right to self-definition in establishing his or her own identity is contrary to the claims made by Aron and Strozier about Kohut’s identity.

Objective

Those who attend the presentation will come away with a greater understanding of the way Kohut has been represented recently in the psychoanalytic literature. In particular, the author questions the methodology used by recent writers on Kohut, especially how these authors can come to such certain conclusions about Kohut’s psychology and behavior, that the author argues cannot be known with such certainty in our postmodern era.



Saturday, October 15th

Paper Session B-5:

An Integrative Sensibility: A Post Postmodern Challenge

Presenters: Lynn Preston, MA, MS and Ellen Shumsky, LCSW

Moderator: Rosalind Chaplin Kindler, MFA

Discussant: Judith Guss Teicholz, EdD

Abstract:

Now is a time of dizzying cross currents and cross fertilizations – the results of the interplay of new technologies, a global village, and a plethora of rapidly emerging new ideas, theories and models. It is a time calling for the transcendence of both the reifications of modernism and the postmodern threats of relativism and nihilism. We are addressing a psychoanalytic need in this pluralistic time, for self psychology to take up the challenge of broadening our horizons of belonging - incorporating neighboring ideas, genuine dialogue with other approaches, and an ideal of a sensibility that fosters integration. We discuss some of the components of an integrative sensibility: attitudes of openness, curiosity, fallibilism and complexification. We use the metaphor of immigrants arriving from different professional shores, speaking our own native tongues, facing the dilemma of holding onto our traditions as we encounter and embrace otherness. Calling upon Gadamer’s idea of genuine conversation and Gendlin’s focus on the implicit dimension of experience, we posit the “language of experience” as a bridge between the exasperating limits of the language games inherent in different theoretical communities.

Objectives

By the end of this presentation participants will:

1. Understand the concept of an integrative sensibility.
2. Understand the ideal of a “Gadamerian conversation.”



Saturday, October 15th

Paper Session B-6:

Experiencing Gender: A Systems View

Presenter: Lawrence Ballon, MD

Moderator: Valerie Pulcini, PhD

Discussant: Susan Lazar, MD

Abstract:

After acknowledging confusion in the terms used to think and write about gender, the author reviews viewpoints and controversies in gender theorizing. He then proposes a dimensional model for conceptualizing gendered experience based on complexity theory and non-linear dynamic systems theory. Finally, he demonstrates the usefulness of the suggested paradigm in the clinical situation.

Objective

At the conclusion of this talk, attendees will be able to organize expressions of the experience of gender in the clinical setting according to a dimensional model grounded in complexity theory and systems thinking.



Saturday, October 15th

Paper Session B-7:

Heaven and Hell

Presenter: Michael Pariser, PsyD

Discussant: George Atwood, PhD

Abstract:

One of the commonest sequela of childhood trauma, both cumulative and discrete, is the creation of an experiential world of loneliness, hopelessness, and depression. I have come to refer to this world as a Personal Hell. The existence of Hell as a painful emotional potential often pulls for the creation of a second world, a Personal Heaven, an experience of bliss, which is designed to help the individual avoid Hell altogether. The two worlds exist in dynamic interaction, often creating a repetitive cycle of hope for magical transformation followed by disappointment and a plunge into dark despair. In order to escape this cycle, Hell has to be experienced, tolerated, and integrated. The key to this integrative process the presence of an understanding other, who can accompany the patient on the journey into Hell, as well as an attitude of courage on the part of both participants that will allow them to fully inhabit the emotions that arise in the encounter. To the extent that integration is successful, the need for Heavenly antidotes will subside, allowing for the possibility of living a flawed but human existence on Earth.

Objectives

At the conclusion of this program, participants will be able to recognize the manifestations, in patient behaviors, of the existence of hidden worlds of trauma (personal Heaven and Hell), observe the interactions between those worlds, and identify potential avenues for intervention. In addition, they will be able to recognize the need for an attitude of courage that requires analytic movement toward, rather than away from, the painful experiences of the patient.



Saturday, October 15th

Paper Session B-8:

Twinship:

The Cinderella of Transferences in the Case of a Traumatic Life Challenge

Presenter: Margaret Allan, PsyD, LCSW

Moderator: Phyllis DiAmbrosio, PhD

Discussant: Elizabeth Carr, MSN

Abstract:

The concept of twinship is examined from a variety of psychoanalytic perspectives. Two main theoretical understandings are taken up in the discussion; the concept of twinship as a selfobject transference and as the special relationship for the treatment of trauma. The paper elaborates on the concept and, in its multifaceted form, it is then applied to a case in which the twinship transference appeared to play a pivotal role in the process of treatment and its outcome.

Objectives

At the conclusion of my presentation the participant would be able to understand the twinship transference as operating in a bidirectional and mutually influencing way.



Saturday, October 15th

Paper Session B-9:

Contextualizing Those Who Hurt Us: Clinical and Social Implications

Presenter: Sally Howard, PhD, PsyD

Moderator: R. Dennis Shelby, PhD, MSW

Discussant: Amy Eldridge, PhD, MSW

Abstract:

A highly needed and hopeful trajectory is emerging in contemporary psychoanalysis as analysts extend their creativity and passion toward the individual in context and the world beyond office walls. This paper explores the aspects of healing and recovery of the individual and collective imagination following the experience of dehumanizing trauma. Intergenerational cycles of violence and dehumanization are a central aspect in the lives of both victim and victimizer that perpetuate loss of hope and connection, and desperate measures to escape vulnerability. Recognition of the effects of intergenerational trauma and recognition by the victim of the victimizer's human vulnerability can be an important aspect of coherent narrative formation, empowerment, and recovery of open, dialogic meaning systems following trauma. Two clinical models are explored, that of Boszormenyi-Nagy and that of the Yale Psychiatric Institute Family Study, each of which utilizes narrative formation that incorporates the context of both victim and victimizer in the treatment of intergenerational trauma. A case illustration is given, followed by application of these concepts to the wider social context, specifically, in the theory of restorative justice and one of its derivatives, the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. The paper concludes with Lear's notion of radical hope to offer thoughts about healing versus destructive narrative formation in the individual and collective imagination.

Objectives:

1. Attendees will identify three analysts who have written about the recognition of context and compassion in psychoanalytic treatment.
2. Attendees will understand Nagy's concept of multi directed partiality and how it is applied clinically.
3. Attendees will understand the role of contextualizing victim and victimizer in coherent narrative formation.



Saturday, October 15th

Paper Session B-10:

**Psychoanalytic Complexity:
Context, Attitudes and Epistemological Ineptitude**

Presenter: William J. Coburn, Ph, PsyD

Moderator: Elena Bonn, PsyD, PsyD

Discussant: Estelle Shane, PhD

Abstract:

This paper highlights the clinical utility of examining the attitudes that emanate from one's chosen theoretical perspective. In this instance, this paper underscores those attitudes that emerge from a psychoanalytic complexity perspective, elaborating two in particular that inform the results of the clinical material presented. Whereas a psychoanalytic complexity sensibility offers a rich explanatory framework for understanding the emergence of emotional life, it also has potent implications for how our attitudes emerge from within and influence the clinical encounter.

Objectives:

1. To understand the role of the clinician's personal and theory-based attitudes in the clinical setting.
2. To understand the attitudes embedded in a psychoanalytic complexity sensibility.
3. To understand the role of the therapist's attitudes and, importantly, narcissistic vulnerabilities in a self psychological/relational psychoanalysis.