C-1. Trauma, Contingency and the Psychoanalytic Zero

Presenter: Koichi Togashi, PhD, LP
Discussant: Estelle Shane, PhD
Moderator: Carol Mayhew, PhD, PsyD

Abstract:
As part of an ongoing effort to contribute to the decolonization of psychoanalysis, this paper begins the examination of suffering and its relation to the experience of being human. The author uses principles drawn from Taoism, a philosophical tradition of Chinese origin, to differentiate between trauma and traumatization. From this vantage point, the former appears as no less than human life itself; the human world that emerges at the touch point between a person and the world that needs to be named. Trauma is neither an experience nor an actual event, but the beginning of the ‘human’ condition, the artificial “world that results in the neglect of the world qua world” (Møllgaard, 2007, p.17). Trauma creates human experience, but it does not necessarily lead to pathology or mental illness. Traumatization, on the other hand, is a psychological state in which a human mind or community is divided, and which creates mental illnesses in both individuals and communities. A traumatized person or community is preoccupied with division, identifying themselves as either ‘us’ or ‘them,’ “victim and victimizer;” and dividing the world into “those who experienced it and those who did not,” and “those who were there and those who were not there.” The argument is illustrated with interwoven narratives of transgenerational trauma that arose in the psychoanalytic treatment of a traumatized patient whose parents were atom bomb survivors in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It describes the patient’s and analyst’s surrender to the nameless universe in which the division between victim and victimizer is a production of contingency.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:
1. Discuss the relationship between trauma, contingency, responsibility and the philosophy of emptiness
2. Explain a dyadic process in which both participants surrender to emptiness
3. Apply this perspective to their therapeutic work with traumatized patients.
C-2. Gender as Perspective: The On-Going Psychoanalytic Privilege of the Penis

Presenter: Virginia Terhaar, PhD
Discussant: Janna Sandmeyer, PhD
Moderator: Karen Martin, MA, LCSW

Abstract:
Eons of conscious and unconscious sexism has left psychoanalysis with severe gender bias throughout the development of its theories and practice. The perspective of the masculine gender, with its significant privilege, has gone unrecognized and unanalyzed by the dominant force of masculine theoreticians and practitioners, while feminist critics have been both villainized and marginalized. This paper looks at both context and perspective in theoretical formulation and briefly reviews some key contributions made by women in the field. As women have yet to achieve full theoretical subjectivity, a true intersubjectivity is impossible to achieve with this imbalance. Questions are posed as to why we have been unable to consider a deep analysis of this problem in our own field.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:
1. Assess psychoanalytic theories as historical artefacts, as they relate to gender bias;
2. Describe the inevitability of gender perspective in psychoanalytic theory and practice;
3. Discuss possible reasons for the marginalization of feminist theories in psychoanalysis and how this contributes to maintaining a gendered subject/other construction.
C-3. Metaphors of Agony: The Culture Bond Syndromes of Hyper-independence

Presenter: C. Tyia Grange Isaacson, LCSW, PhD  
Discussant: Rosemary Segalla, PhD  
Moderator: Marcia Dobson, PhD  

Abstract:  
This paper explores the commonalities of culture-bound syndromes prevalent in hyper-independent cultures starting with Freud’s hysteria and ending with contemporary mass gun violence. Utilizing a complex systems lens, this examination frames distress as suffering that goes beyond pathologizing an individual towards a collective cultural expression of pain. This has been termed unsoothability or a co-created, a multi causational, intersubjective systems phenomenon. Implications for practice are touched upon.

Learning Objectives:  
At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:
   1. Define culture-bound syndromes  
   2. List two features of unsoothability and distinguish unsoothability from inconsolability.  
   3. Describe a remedy for hyper-independence and apply it to their practice.
C-4. Suffering Together: When Accessing the Analyst’s Suffering Serves a Twinship Need

Presenter: Elizabeth Corpt, MSW
Discussant: Sandra Hershberg, MD
Moderator: Jean-Francois Bernard, MPs

Abstract:
Although the analyst’s own wounds and suffering tend to remain silent, in the background, and secondary to the needs of the patient—serving as nutritive emotional compost for empathic resonances - there may be times when a particular patient may need to more directly ‘touch’ the wound of the analyst - to encounter something real in the person of the analyst in order to access aspects of his own experience. I would suggest that making direct contact with the analyst’s suffering can help such a patient transform his own suffering from that of an isolating experience to a felt, shared dilemma of simply being a human among humans, thus providing a needed twinship experience.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Explain the importance of the analyst’s suffering remaining silent.
2. Describe the developmental building blocks of shared suffering.
3. Identify situations in which the sharing of the analyst’s suffering can meet twinship needs.
C-5. Revisiting Resistance: The Patient’s Effort to Make Therapy Work

Presenter: David Kealy, RSW  
Discussant: George Hagman, MSW  
Moderator: Lawrence Ballon, MD

Abstract: Divisions between schools of psychotherapy may be bridged by opening up conversations about common occurrences and processes in psychotherapy. One such issue is the frequently observed phenomenon referred to as resistance. This presentation will provide a brief overview of the concept of resistance, and review contributions of self psychology to the understanding of resistance in psychotherapy. The presentation will also integrate contributions from control-mastery theory regarding patients’ use of apparent resistance to advance their therapies. Clinical case material will be used to illustrate ways in which resistance can be viewed as pro-active therapeutic work through complementary perspectives of self psychological and control mastery theories.

Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Analyze resistance phenomena from vantage points that emphasize the patient’s objective to achieve therapeutic goals.
2. Describe how the concept of testing can be integrated into self psychological perspectives on the therapeutic process.
C-6. Difference in Desire and Other Sexual Problems: A Self Psychological Approach to Helping Couples Improve their Sexual Connection

Presenter: Carla Leone, PhD
Discussant: Amy Joelson, LCSW
Moderator: Nancy Nigro, MSW

Abstract:
Despite the difficulties the topic of sex can pose for both patients and their therapists, sexual problems are so common in distressed couples that it is crucial that couples therapists feel comfortable and competent in addressing them. Contemporary self psychology and related psychoanalytic theories can help us better understand and respond to couples with sexual difficulties of various kinds, while also helping us better understand ourselves and own reactions to the topic. Toward that end, this paper will present a self psychological view of how sexual behaviors and attitudes develop, and discuss ways problematic ones can be impacted through both implicit and explicit channels in a self psychology-informed couples treatment.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:
1. List three things that influence sexual difficulties in couples.
2. Discuss the impact on the couple relationships of sex being experienced differently by different partners.
3. Describe ways of altering dysfunctional relating around sexuality through the lens of self psychology.
C-7. Similarities, Dissimilarities, and Blind Spots in Therapeutic Relations

Presenter: Mor Shechory-Stahl, PhD
Discussant: Joseph Lichtenberg, MD
Moderator: Christina Connell, BA, Dipl TCPP, RP

Abstract:
Dimensions of similarity and dissimilarity between therapist and patient are present, in different degrees, in every therapeutic dyad and influence the therapist’s subjectivity, her therapeutic stance, and the way therapy proceeds. Similarity and dissimilarity occur in gender, religion, culture, profession, as well in biographical and intrapsychic details. Some elements of these are easily identifiable and known to both subjects in the therapeutic dyad. Other elements are known to only one of the parties and there are elements of difference and similarity between patient and therapist that may go unidentified and are unknown to both. These latter unknown and unconscious zones are the most susceptible to projections, splitting and dissociation. Like yin and yang, similarity and dissimilarity entertain relations of opposition and complementarity. The similarity between therapist and patient may lead to blindness to what is different, strange, separate. The dissimilarity between them may prevent the clinical dyad from seeing similarity. At both ends, there may be enmeshment and lack of separateness between the therapist’s self and that of the patient. This presentation includes a case study of psychotherapy between an ArabIsraeli Muslim woman patient and Jewish-Israeli woman therapist in Israel. The paper shows how cultural strangeness and distance in the political-social-religious context that became linked to similarity in the dissociation resulting from parallel traumas from terrorism led to mutual and shared dissociation and enactment.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:
1. Discuss the influence of the intersubjective similarity and dissimilarity between therapist and patient
2. Identify how what is unconscious and blind may block vital therapeutic processes
3. Discuss the challenge related to a background of hate, trauma and violence between the clinical partners.
Sunday, October 20th             Paper Session C
8:00 am – 9:30 am

C-8. Meet-the-Author: Revisiting Charles B. Strozier’s HEINZ KOHUT, The Making of a Psychoanalyst, upon the occasion of its Hebrew translation’s publication

Presenters:  Charles Strozier, PhD and Eldad Iddan, MA
Moderator: Roger Segalla, PhD

Abstract:
This “Meet the Author” session will include Charles B. Strozier, author of his highly praised biography of Heinz Kohut, and Eldad Iddan, the scientific editor of the translation.
Strozier will begin the session with some introductory comments about Kohut’s life and work and why one wants to understand his life in order to grasp the dynamics of his theory of self psychology.
Iddan will then address the fascinating issue of why Kohut’s life and theory are of such interest to Israelis. Kohut of course struggled with his own sense of identity as a cultured Jewish man-of-the-world and his ambivalence about his Jewish roots. Hebrew is, after all, the ancient language of Kohut's ancestors. Freud was thrilled to learn that his writings have been translated into Hebrew and expressed regret for never having mastered the language himself. How would Kohut react? What is the significance of having Kohut’s biography published in Hebrew? Kohut's profound ambivalence about his Jewishness is one of the themes in the book. His life as a Jewish intellectual in America and his creation of a theory that opens up new avenues for identity and creatively in self-expression are a fascinating paradox and may explain why his life is so interesting and important to understand, along with his theory. As Strozier put it in the book, Kohut sought to change psychoanalytic theory in order to find a place for himself in it.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will:
1. Discuss the roots of Kohut's life, his profound understanding of historical process, and the relevance of his thought to our current reality both outside and within the participants’ consulting rooms.
2. Describe Kohut's life as a Jewish intellectual in America and how his creation of a theory opens new avenues for identity and creativity in self-expression.
3. Describe how these factors may explain why his life is so interesting and important to understand, along with his theory.
C-9. In the Shadow of Apartheid: Intergenerational Transmission of Black Parental Trauma as it Emerges in the Analytical Space of Inter-racial Subjectives

Presenter: Zelda Knight, PhD
Discussant: Barry Segal, MBCh, FRCP(C)
Moderator: Christa Paulinz, MA, MEd

Abstract:
Using the construct of projective identification and integrating it with the body of literature on intergenerational transmission of unsymbolized parental trauma, I describe the case of an adult black South African woman called Sibulelo. It is suggested that Sibulelo has unconsciously identified with her disavowed parents’ and grandparents’ trauma that they suffered as a result of the system of Apartheid. Such trauma is expressed through her feelings of being dis-located in time and space, as if she is ‘living outside’ of herself, unplugged from life, and living someone else’s life. The paper details the unfolding therapeutic process in relation to the therapist’s whiteness in the context of her blackness. This brings into sharp focus an exploration of black-white racialized transference countertransference matrix in the context of intergenerational trauma. It is a reflective paper and opens up my own countertransference, thus foregrounding the notion of therapeutic intersubjectivity. A further contribution to psychoanalytic theory concerns the role of recognition and being seen as a powerful process in facilitating the symbolization of trauma. In addition, the author argues that if there is no interruption of the cycles of intergenerational trauma, and there is no symbolization, it becomes an unconscious ‘familial compulsion to repeat’. Moreover, this therapy case highlights the idea that a traumatized family living within a bruised culture of intergenerational transmission of trauma, such repetition of trauma becomes a ‘cultural compulsion to repeat’ what has not been spoken or named.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:
1. Describe and understand a clinical case study of intergenerational transmission of parental trauma through projective identification.
2. In the context of intergenerational transmission of trauma, describe the clinical nuances of working with race when the dyad represents a linked history of ‘oppressor-oppressed’.
Sunday, October 20th                  Paper Session C
8:00 am – 9:30 am

C-10. Candidate and Student Consultation with Shelley Doctors, PhD

Case Presenter:  Sally McGregor, MC, LPCC
Moderator:      Joshua Burg, PsyD

Abstract:
In line with the conference theme, “Engaging Difference and Sameness: Pathways to Empathic Dialogue,” this live consultation event will demonstrate the ways in which the themes of sameness, difference, and empathic dialogue are embodied within a self psychologically oriented consultation/supervision relationship. The presentation will use case material from a doctoral student’s clinical work to explore how notions of sameness and difference can both foster and hinder a therapeutic process. The consultation will discuss ways in which aspects of sameness and difference can be engaged empathically within treatment, as well as within the consultation relationship. By the end of this presentation, audience members will

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the ways in which themes of sameness and difference impacted the presenting student’s treatment relationship with their patient.
2. Describe ways to approach qualities of sameness and difference from an empathically grounded self psychological perspective within psychotherapy and consultation/supervision relationships.
3. Compare their own understanding of a consultation or supervisory relationship with a developmentally focused self psychologically informed approach.