Précis: What is psychoanalysis? Different theories answer differently. This course provides a preliminary contextualization of what distinguishes interpersonal psychoanalytic theory and practice. Readings establish landmark points of view occupied by seminal theorists. This overview should enable candidates all the better to develop their own points of view orienting psychoanalytic change in regard to theory and to clinical praxis. As well, this overview should spark curiosity as to who and how you are, alone and with others, as analysand and as the analyst you will grow into.

Presentation: Candidates are encouraged to present case material relevant to concerns raised in the readings.

September 10, 2019
1. Finding Sense in Nonsense: Sigmund Freud’s Definitive Unconscious
   Freud’s “discovery” of the unconscious was central to his theory of dreams, in turn central to the edifice of psychoanalysis. Dreams are messages from the unconscious, susceptible to interpretation via free association. Saying whatever comes to mind can reveal to the ear of the analyst hidden secrets and deeper truths. Yet, of what was Freud still unconscious? Does psychoanalysis converge on truths, or open divergent possibilities?

Required Reading:

Souvenirs:
1. The Freudian unconscious poses a threat: “You’re not who you think you are.”
2. Freudian “free association” provides clues to deeper truths freer from illusion. Dreams are the “royal road” to the unconscious.
3. Interpersonal/relational models challenge the idea that the analyst “knows” what is in the patient’s unconscious, as postulated by classical and developmental arrest models. Contents of the unconscious are inherently interactive and ambiguous, co-constructed by analyst and patient.

Relevant Reading:


September 17, 2019

2. Sándor Ferenczi's Elasticity: A Fork in the River

Who owns reality? For Freud, transference—the patient's jamming present and future experience into unconscious templates from the past—distorts reality. Psychoanalysis undistorts. Freud vouchsafed the orthodoxy of his own deeper understanding, which would lead by mid-century to its consolidation in positivist ego psychology. Ferenczi's recognition of an interactive mutuality between analyst and analysand (though long suppressed in the mainstream literature) would lead to the countervailing constructivist currents of interpersonal and object relational theory. His analysand, Clara Thompson, was the founding Director of the Wm.A. White Institute.

**Required Reading:**


**Souvenirs:**

1. Freudian transference: A patient's neurotic distortion of reality replicates past relationships. Analysis cures neurotic illusion revealing the truth.
2. Ferencziian transference: Elasticity between two points of view defines the interpersonal analytic dyad. Analysis stretches their overlap, revealing further possibilities.
3. The analyst's countertransference: for Freud is to be minimized; for Ferenczi is to be utilized.

**Relevant Reading:**


Sullivan’s active detailed inquiry and posture of participant observation in the flux of an interpersonal matrix betrays the stereotype of the aloof and silent analyst. He places in theoretical centrality anxiety rather than drive, and the negotiation of security vs. satisfaction, stasis vs. change. Edgar Levenson subsequently recognizes detailed inquiry’s undermining as well as determining of definitive truth. Reality is not what it’s cracked up to be.

**Required Reading:**

**Souvenirs:**
1. Sullivan: “…the detailed part of the psychiatric interview has to be exceedingly far from a conversation made up of simple, correct answers to clear questions.” (p.92)
2. Sullivan: “…anxiety is the general explanatory concept for the interviewee’s trying to create a favorable impression.” (p.94) To avoid anxiety the patient ever strives to save face.
3. Levenson: “The intrapsychic perspective presumes that the patient distorts reality out of… fantasy. The interpersonal perspective presumes that the patient distorts experience in an attempt to grasp reality.” (p.538)

**Relevant Reading:**

October 1, 2019

**4. Hans Loewald: Shifting Boundaries**
While Sullivan and Levenson were rejected as theoretical outcasts by the dominant orthodoxy of their times, Loewald pushed the limits of ego psychology from within: “I hope to have made the point… that there is neither such a thing as reality nor a real relationship, without transference.”(p.254) He espied a tension between intrapsychic and interpsychic ‘structures’, an
interpenetration.

Required Reading


Souvenirs:
1. “The patient can dare to take the plunge into the regressive crisis of the transference neurosis… if he can hold on to the potentiality of a new object-relationship, represented by the analyst.” (p.224)
2. “I believe it to be necessary and timely to question the assumption… that the scientific approach… represents a higher and more mature evolutionary stage of man than the religious way of life.” (p.228)
3. “Language… in analysis, as interpretation, is thus a creative act similar to that in poetry… reorganization of material according to hitherto unknown principles, contexts, and connections.” (p.242)

Relevant Reading


October 15, 2019

5. Stephen Mitchell: Interweaving Transference and Countertransference

Implications of psychoanalytic models of change: classical drive-conflict, object relational developmental-arrest, and interpersonal relational-conflict. Is transference distortion or fleeting truth? Countertransference likewise? Is conscious reality unconscious construction?

Required Reading:


Souvenirs:
1. “…the analytic process is not so much a treatment for psychopathology, but, more broadly, a uniquely structured experience which allows the possibility of loosening the inevitable restraints generated by the residues of early experience.”(p.278)
2. Does psychoanalysis “flush out the beast” (drive-conflict model), allow rebirth of the “true self” of the baby (developmental-arrest model), or enrich the range of experiencing both self and other (relational-conflict/interpersonal model)?
3. Is the relationship with the analyst therapeutic via interpretations that convert transferential experience to memory (drive-conflict model) or by returning the patient to an infantile state and offering a second chance (developmental arrest model) or by altering the basic structure of the patient's relational world (relational-conflict model)?

Relevant Reading:


Fiscalini, J. (1995), Transference and countertransference as interpersonal phenomena: An
October 22, 2019

6. Playing with Reality: Squiggles of Mind

When I was very young, my ratty doll Winnie-the-Pooh did speak to me. Inside out, outside in, what’s the difference? Where is the boundary? True self, false self? Do I forget that I make up the world, the very world that makes up me? We tell each other who we are. Whose stories to trust?

Required Reading:


Souvenirs:

1. “From birth… the human being is concerned with the problem of the relationship between what is objectively perceived and what is subjectively conceived of…”(p.11)
2. Can sameness and difference, belonging and loneliness, safety and terror, be reconciled in transitional space?
3. How much is any adult’s subjective reality an illusion, no less so if it happens to be shared by others? Is self-in-the-world a transitional object, not to be too closely questioned?

Required Reading:


October 29, 2019

7. Emmanuel Ghent: The Psychoanalytic Victory of Surrender

"...there is, however deeply buried or frozen, a longing for... surrender, in the sense of yielding, of false self.”(p.109) This surrender is not a defeat, but an opening, a transcendence, a liberation. Do we each have within us a force towards growth, a yearning towards freedom?

Required Reading:


Souvenirs:
1. Winnicott’s developmentally early “object-relating” treats the other person as a projective object, a thing to be manipulated. Tyrant baby rules from the high chair.

2. Winnicott’s later transition to “object usage” recognizes the other person as a subjective partner in a shared reality. Pleased to meet you, to share who we are, person to person.

3. Sadomasochism is a retreat to object-relating, while “surrender” risks opening to object-usage, to knowing and being known. Does psychoanalysis require surrender?

**Relevant Reading:**


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**November 5, 2019**

8. **Thomas Ogden: Powers of Indeterminacy Afloat in the Between**

Central to the analytic work is not just what one pays attention to, but as well how one pays attention—or not—both to the focal and the peripheral. Reverie becomes not a lapse of properly knit-browed attention, but rather an elusive guide to intersubjective influence.

**Required Reading:**

**Souvenirs:**
1. Interpersonal encounter: “…you must allow yourself to think my thoughts while I must allow myself to become your thoughts and in that moment neither of us will be able to lay claim to the thought as our own exclusive creation.” (p.1) : the delineation of intersubjectivity.

2. “…one can no longer simply speak of the analyst and the analysand as separate subjects who take one another as objects.”(p.62)

3. “Mrs. B’s behavior in the analysis seemed to reflect an immense effort to behave ‘like an adult’…[As that lessened] I felt for the first time that there were two people in the room talking to one another.”(pp.91-92)

**Relevant Reading:**


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**November 12, 2019**

9. **Stern Wriggles in the “Grip of the Field”**

Is psychoanalytic treatment an interpersonal experiment in applied phenomenology undertaken both by analyst and patient? Enactment is inevitable, revealed by attention to the play of attention itself?
Required Reading:
Read Chapter 8, pp.147-160, “The problem of the private self: Unformulated experience, the interpersonal field, and multiplicity”. And Chapter 10, pp.185-201, “The analyst’s unformulated experience of the patient”.

Souvenirs:
1. “…the spontaneous, unconsidered reactions of analyst and patient to one another may be the sole evidence… of the very influences which cannot be articulated by either participant, but which most need to be known.” (p.185)
2. Stern asserts that the natural tendency is for experience to remain outside awareness (dissociated), such that effort is required to bring experience into awareness, not to keep it out of awareness (repression).
3. Role of the analyst is to help the patient formulate what has previously been unformulated.

Relevant Reading:

November 19, 2019
10. A Dare to Walk in Boundless Space
Multiple self states and glissando dissociations require the sleight of mind to presume one self while being many. Clinical implications. Watching my mind, how far in must I go to get out? How can the eye see itself?

Required Reading:

Souvenirs:
1. “'Standing in the spaces' is… a person’s relative capacity to make room… for subjective reality that is not… ‘me’ at that moment.”(p.274)
2. “The analytic situation is an ever shifting context of reality that is constructed by the input of two people.”(p.280), “an enacted collision of realities between patient and therapist.”(p.288)
3. The depth of the field: “Classical psychoanalytic theory attributes change to a more complete understanding of what is… not to a fleeting awareness that what is, is illusory, a contextual convenience, a passing albeit necessary construction.” (p.634)

Relevant Reading: