

From the *P*resident

Penny Rosen, MSW, BCD-P

With the newsletter's tri-annual publication, it's easy to take note of the seasonal changes, and as I write this we are enjoying the springtime flourishing blossoms and mild weather in New York. This leads me to envision the potential of our organization to develop and flourish in many directions based on our aims and purposes. In this column, I will report on how our organization is actively attempting to address its growing needs.

The board met for its annual in-person meeting in March 2014 in New York City, with a very good representation of our board of directors and advisory board, including area chairs and committee chairs, and some invited guests. The discussion was engaging and invigorating in many areas. For example, consideration was given to educational platforms, including online moderated topical forums, and publications, such as the clinical case study method and other topical monographs, and we discussed ideas for incorporating psychoanalytic education with academic faculty. We are at the beginning stages of developing these plans. In addition, funds will be allocated for the redesign of our website, which will improve the technological features necessary to expand our educational and publication objectives.

To get us oriented and keep us on target at the start of the in-person board meeting, we reviewed our aims and purposes, which include the following: (1) To present and protect the standing and advancement of psychoanalytic social work practitioners and educators. (2) To provide an organizational identity for social work professionals engaged in psychoanalytically informed practice. (3) To promote and disseminate the understanding of psychoanalytic theory and knowledge within the social work profession and the public. (4) To affect liaisons with other organizations and professions who share common objectives for social work and the advancement of psychoanalytic theory and practice. (5) To advocate for the highest standards of practice and for quality mental health care for the public. (6) To bridge social work and psychoanalytic discourses by integrating concerns for social justice with clinical practice, and to conceptualize psychoanalytic theory and practice within its broader social-political context.

Psychoanalytic thinking compels us to reflect about ourselves, our dynamics, and group dynamics. Recently, when an article's relevance to clinical theory and practice was questioned on the listserv, a moratorium for discussion was set while we investigated the situation. This became a serious task for the board of directors, and one that involved consultation with Joel Kanter, Listserv Moderator; Donna Tarver, Newsletter Editor; and Jennifer Tolleson, Social Justice Committee Chair. This exploration alerted us to the fact that the listserv forum cannot safely contain emotionally charged controversial discussions, and the reasons for cessation of discussion on the listserv were based on criteria for concurrence with our aims and purposes, in this case, to bridge social work and psychoanalytic discourses by integrating concerns for social justice with clinical practice,

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Editor's Word

As editor of your newsletter, I would like to briefly address the many responses to Rebecca Fadi's article published in our last issue. Interestingly, your responses were about your feelings regarding our publishing the article in the newsletter—not about the topic of the article. AAPCSW was born in conflict in 1980 when the Committee (NMCOP) became a separate entity within the Federation of Clinical Social Work. Over the past twenty-four years we have grown into a thriving group of close to one thousand persons with very diverse histories, religions, political views, psychoanalytic theories, and interests who have found common ground in the theory and practice of psychoanalysis. This has not been without conflict and controversy. We have been successful because we have been committed to principles of inclusion and willingness to consider and to try to understand even dramatically differing points of view. This has been done with a commitment to listening, attempting to understand, and respecting the other's point view, and with being ever cognizant and respectful of the other's vulnerabilities. As Penny Rosen notes in her column, this article has called us together to reconsider our aims and our responsibilities. It is now our task to determine how we can best allow diverse/conflicting voices to be heard, while at the same time assure that our readers are not at risk of "personal injury or animus." It is only by doing this that we can encourage rather than discourage dialogue. We will be mindful of this as we go forward.

Thanks to Diana Siskind for providing us with three very interesting, engaging book reviews for this issue and for three talented reviewers who are gifted writers themselves—Renee Goldman, Patsy Turrini, and Roger Lee. Our members are writing more and more for publication, and we find it very exciting to be receiving so many of those books to review here. It has always been my hope that the *Newsletter* could be a source of encouragement for writing as well as a resource for making us aware of what is being written by our peers.

The *Newsletter* welcomes readers' letters, articles, and opinions on topics of the day and clinical issues; book reviews; notices of or reports on conferences; and news of interest to our membership. We encourage social workers with an interest in writing to use the *Newsletter* as a vehicle for converting their interest into the writing process.

Thanks to all contributors to this issue—Penny Rosen, Ashley Warner, Diana Siskind, Patsy Turrini, Renee Goldman, Roger Lee, Judy Kaplan, Joe Palombo, Sonia Hsieh, Mark Ruffalo, Diane Barth, and Susan Levine.

My apologies to Steven Kuchuch, who very gracefully pointed out that his name was misspelled in our last issue. I will be reviewing his new book, *Clinical Implications of the Psychoanalyst's Life Experience: When the Personal Becomes Professional*, in our next issue. A podcast of Steven's interview with Tracy Morgan of New Books in Psychoanalysis (NBiP) is available online at newbooksinpsychoanalysis.com. ■



Donna Tarver, MSSW

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and to conceptualize psychoanalytic theory and practice within its broader social-political context. Much thought and deliberation went into this decision, and we continue to struggle with many issues this decision has raised. In tackling this issue, we learned about our need to monitor and follow our aims and purposes more closely in our newsletter columns, the limitations of electronic communication, and how to be sensitized to our community with its diverse viewpoints. There is a sense among us that we can grow as a community from a challenging experience that allows us to reflect on our mission, aims and purposes, and vision for the future.

In addition, at the in-person board meeting, we discussed the many ways we are invested in another one of our aims and purposes: to affect liaisons with other organizations and professions who share common objectives for social work and the advancement of psychoanalytic theory and practice. For example, most recently we became a sponsoring organization of the *Psychodynamic Diagnostic Manual* (PDM-2), as we were of the first edition. The second edition will enhance dialogue between the PDM, the ICD, and the DSM; it will also be involved with empirical research. Sections will cover infants, children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly. A few of our members will be part of the task force, contributing to these different sections. Our participation does not preclude our understanding of the pitfalls of the medicalization of the diagnostic model, which has stigmatized certain populations, such as the LGBTQ community, the poor, and women. We will be vigilant about these concerns and work on addressing them.

In relation to another one of our aims and purposes—to advocate for the highest standards of practice and for quality mental health care for the public—we agreed at the in-person board meeting to support the Excellence in Social Work Education Coalition that will work on

issues related to online MSW programs, addressing the importance of in-person field internships, face-to-face supervision, and face-to-face field placements.

From the proceedings at the in-person board meeting, it became obvious to us that we are operating to advance our aims and purposes, and we will continue on this track.

Our advisory board is expanding, and we want to welcome its new members: Marcia Spira, Education Committee Chair; Diane Frankel, Area Chair of Pennsylvania; and Andrea Harris Alpert and Mary-Beth Golden, Area Co-chairs of Illinois. We are grateful that they will be contributing their energies and ideas to our organization.

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Conference 2015 Update

Since the report in the last *Newsletter*, here are a few more highlights on the 2015 conference, “The Art of Listening: Psychoanalytic Transformations,” March 12–15, in Durham, North Carolina:

- In her plenary address, **Elizabeth Corpt** will present “The Ethics of Listening and Psychoanalytic Conversations: Philosophical Underpinnings and Dilemmas for the Contemporary Clinician.”
- A film was selected for a general session on Friday afternoon, March 13. Samoan Barish will be the discussant of this session, and we are working on having the filmmaker participate through Skype.
- The peer-review process for the Call for Papers is in progress and the selection will be made in June and July. Additionally, Candidate and Student Paper submissions will be selected for awards. A new prize category has been added for papers submitted by MSW students.
- In light of the Southern spirit, the Saturday night gala event—“Jazz and Juleps”—will take place at the Durham Arts Council, with our own musicians Jerry Brandell and John Chiaramonte leading the quartet. Irregardless Cafe of Raleigh, a renowned local restaurant known for its creative farm-to-table cuisine, will be serving lots of delicious food for carnivores, vegetarians, and vegans.

More updates about the Conference will be reported on in the forthcoming issues of the *Newsletter*. ■

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Encounters with Loneliness: Only the Lonely

Edited by Arlene Kramer Richards, Lucille Spira, and Arthur Lynch; IPBooks, 2013; 348 pages; \$35.00

Reviewed by Renee Goldman, LCSW

As I read the chapters of this remarkable anthology on the subject of loneliness, I was surprised to learn that prior to this book members of our profession had not examined the subject of loneliness in an orderly investigative manner.

Because loneliness, to varying degree, spares none of us and is a much examined subject in literature, theater, and film, as well as a frequent subject in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy and, to a degree, in general conversations between friends, its conspicuous absence in analytic literature is all the more striking. Why this is so is unclear and perhaps worthy of future studies.

I have often wondered if perhaps the shame and social stigma of admitting to loneliness, in both childhood and adulthood, is one reason that it is mainly portrayed in fiction rather more directly in real life. It has always felt confessional when I have personally admitted to it in my own treatment or in conversation with a friend. Yet productive hours of analytic work about loneliness allow it to shed important insight into one's past and present. This book is the kind that encourages one to think about this subject both personally and professionally.

In the foreword, Dr. Harold P. Blum defines *loneliness* as "a painful longing for the missing absent love object." He is careful to distinguish it from *solitude*, in spite of an overlap in the terms. Loneliness is usually highly troublesome, while solitude is maybe sought for and treasured, even when unavoidable. The beauty of this book is how ideas in one part have been expanded and explored by other writers elsewhere in the book. An example of the many ways solitude can be discussed is illustrated in the chapter "Artist's Solitude and the Creative Process," by Danielle Knafo. Here, the author discusses the poignant and heroic memoir *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly*, written by the journalist Jean Dominique Bauby. Bauby was totally paralyzed by a massive stroke, which left him with the single motion one eyelid. Knafo writes, "He felt intensely suicidal until he discov-

ered the two gifts his stroke had not eradicated: memory and imagination." And so, "one eye blink at a time," he wrote his memoir: "Even in such an extreme state of solitude Bauby opted to make his world communicable." I found the story of this heroic effort awe-inspiring.

The book is divided into 4 sections, a layout that invites perusing: Loneliness, creativity, and the artist; the clinical dimensions of loneliness; loneliness/solitude in the psychoanalytic training process; and loneliness in life events.

One of the editors of the book, Arthur Lynch, defines *loneliness* as the most painful affective state a person can experience. The aim of the book is to examine loneliness from the point of view of broad psychoanalytic principles and should be read with that orientation in mind.

Very rarely have papers about analytic training contained a call to arms regarding the quality of the training experience such as that by Sandra Buechler in her article titled "No Place Like Home." She feels strongly that our institutes should foster an environment that is emotionally safe and comfortable for the process of learning and absorbing new and complex concepts and ideas. Buechler maintains that our analytic "homes" (institutes) have not always been optimal in providing a secure climate because of their preoccupation with policies and politics and their insufficient encouragements of different points of view.

Dr. Richard Gotlieb, in part of a generous conclusion in which he offers comments on each section of the book, gives well-deserved special praise to my good friend and colleague Patsy Turrini. He finds her article, "The Death of the Loved Spouse, the Inner World of Grief: A Psychoanalytic Developmental Perspective," to be "brave and poetically

eloquent," as she describes her struggle to survive the death of her spouse of forty-seven years. Shattered by the emotional pain, she turned to the literature on grief,

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Book & Film REVIEWS

I welcome suggestions for books to be reviewed, and if you have a chapter in an edited book, please send me the book and we will review the entire book.

If you are interested in reviewing books, or films please send me your name and e-mail address.

I can be reached by e-mail at dwsiskind@aol.com



Diana Siskind, MSW

Relational Social Work Practice with Diverse Populations

Edited by Judith B. Rosenberger; Springer, 2014; 293 pages; \$39.99

Reviewed by Patsy Turrini, LCSW

Great credits go to Judith Rosenberger for compiling this informative book, and to Carole Tsone, whom Rosenberger acknowledges with “great thanks” for her “unparalleled tireless advocacy of social work’s role in the helping profession.”

“Social work has a long-standing creed that relationship is key to helping clients,” Rosenberger claims. Could be that the use of the term relational in this text—building, as it does, on social work’s conviction that the relationship is key—help in unifying social workers in various practices, research, settings, and clinical specialties? Might it help bridge a common ground from the psychoanalytic world to the other clinical social work communities? Might it help some consider that there is a value in psychoanalytic thinking and findings?

Thus when Judith says in her introduction that this volume has three goals—“First, it explains the psychodynamic process and practice skills of relational theory that have emerged from the developments of object relations

theory and self-psychology, giving illustrations of their application in clinical social work practice. Second, it provides innovative content about the research support for relational theory in social work and its inextricability from issues like race and religion. Third, it gives a wide range of specific examples of the application of relational practice skills to the particular needs of a wide range of diverse populations”—I am heartened and hopeful that the intense significant papers in this book will extend and expand, rather than detract from, the rich, vast body of knowledge in social work and psychoanalysis and will capture the hearts of concerned citizens and professionals.

For an inside view of the collection, here is a look at the table of contents. *Part 1—Foundations of Relational Diversity Practice Paper*: Judith Rosenberger, “Introduction”; Harriet Goodman, “Orientation and Validation of Relational Diversity Practice”; Neil Altman, “The Color of Whiteness and the Paradox of Diversity”; Frederick J.

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Hungry for Ecstasy: Trauma, the Brain, and the Influence of the Sixties

By Sharon Klayman Farber; Jason Aronson, 2012; 444 pages; \$90.00

Reviewed by Roger Lee

I was eager to read this book because the four elements of the title are all very significant to me: ecstasy-seeking, especially through books, was what gave meaning to my childhood and helped me survive the adverse experiences of childhood or traumas; trauma aka emotionally overwhelming experiences seems basic to most if not all forms of emotional distress; the brain is significant because study of it is confirming the existence of a dynamic unconscious, the importance of emotion and body-feelings, the need for free association and the relatively nondirective empathetic “interventions” that facilitate free association; and last but not least, I grew up in the 1960s.

What I found most engaging about the book were the following points: Farber states she was first drawn to stream of consciousness as a budding writer before she discovered free association and psychoanalysis. She loves to explore and did not have a plan in writing the book but followed her nose, so to speak, and investigated the mysterious, ambiguous, uncanny, and paradoxical—going down one rabbit hole after another, in her journey

through the wonderlands of ecstasy and trauma and the brain and the 1960s.

Other points that stand out in my mind are that Farber describes herself as an “independent scholar” who is independent of college politics and other institutional constraints on the scope and nature of her research and conclusions. When she gets interested in a subject or subtopic she pursues that interest deeply and in detail. She also aims for her writing to be accessible, straight-forward, engaging, and readable.

I was born in 1948, and, like Farber, I experienced the 1950s as repressive and conformist. I later discovered in the 1960s that there had been systematic efforts highlighted by the Taft-Hartley law passed in 1947 and Joseph McCarthy’s Senate hearings to roll back the democratic reforms won by the labor movement of the 1930s through purging jobs and unions of activists.

In the 1930s millions of people got involved actively in the labor movement and had created the industrial

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Reply to David Phillips

M. Louis Ruffalo, MSW

I would like to thank Dr. David Phillips for his reply (Winter 2014) to my original article, “Self-Responsibility and Contractual Psychoanalysis” (Fall 2013), and for his cordial manner of response. It has been my experience that those who question the established, fundamental practices of mental health are often ridiculed and viewed very unfavorably by colleagues, so I appreciate very much the fact that his criticism was made on intellectual rather than personal grounds. I also appreciate that Phillips acknowledges openly what so many in contemporary practice are unwilling to recognize—that suicide is not of itself an indication of mental illness. Dr. Phillips repeats this point twice in his response, so it appears to me that he holds this to be very true. Notwithstanding, I believe that his arguments in favor of depriving psychoanalytic patients of their liberty and responsibility in the name of “helping” them are without merit. I will outline briefly my response to each of his counterpoints.

Phillips notes correctly that psychoanalytic social workers in every state have a legal responsibility to “protect” suicidal patients by hospitalizing them involuntarily by virtue of their license to practice social work in their respective states. While it is true that social workers are legally obligated to breach confidentiality when the patient is deemed a risk of danger, this point is a red herring, since the legal status of involuntary psychiatric commitment is irrelevant to any ethical or philosophical discussion regarding its utility in psychoanalysis. Additionally, such an argument says nothing about the clinical implications of the use of force in the psychoanalytic relationship, which is the topic of my original article. I trained and currently work on an inpatient psychiatry unit and deal with involuntary psychiatric patients on a daily basis. I have not, however, ever hospitalized a private patient against his or her will.

Phillips continues, “It is hard to say if we, as clinical social workers, support the autonomy of the individual in all of his or her actions as long as no harm is done to others—it is often too difficult to weigh the proportion of value over disvalue and to predict the various dimensions of harm.” He uses the potential impact of a person’s suicide on family members as an example of harm to others, which in his view is something that the analyst must forcibly prevent. In this statement, Phillips either intentionally confuses or is misunderstanding of the role of the psychoanalyst in the contractual analytic relationship. Psychoanalysis is a contract between two people,

the analyst and the patient, and a true analysis cannot occur without this strictly private and confidential arrangement. Whether a patient’s actions outside of the consulting room inflict any emotional harm on third parties is outside the purview of the professional relationship. Phillips’s statement implies that he believes that psychoanalytic social workers should take responsibility for patients’ extraanalytic behavior, a belief that of course runs counter to any psychoanalytic theory, contractual or otherwise. Freud (1914) wrote that the psychoanalyst must “leave untouched . . . the patient’s personal freedom” and should not “hinder him from carrying out unimportant intentions, even if they are foolish.” Freud himself repudiated his obligation to the patient’s family and to society and considered himself solely an agent for the patient. Indeed, this is what differentiated Freud from the psychiatry of his time, as Szasz (1965) points out. Psychoanalysis in the Freudian spirit has always been an individualistic enterprise.

Dr. Phillips concludes his response by stating that social work psychoanalysts have a responsibility to restrict the patient’s freedom of conduct when the patient’s decision-making abilities are compromised. He writes, “It is fine for clinical social workers to support the principle of autonomous decision making, but as trained professionals they also understand that not everyone is equally capable of making autonomous decision and that not everyone is capable of making an autonomous decision at all times.” I would ask, How do we as mental health professionals determine the judgment of suicidal persons? Of course, this is a determination that is always made *ex post facto* by labeling human conduct as illness and consequently depriving the person of his or her ability to choose. This “clinical judgment” is nothing more than a moral valuation shrouded in the power and authority of psychiatric diagnosis. The suicidal person is labeled “major depressive,” said to have a “chemical imbalance” and stripped of his liberty and his responsibility. Ironically, Phillips believes that suicide can sometimes be justified as a free and rational choice, but only sometimes. I wonder how he makes this distinction.

I thank David Phillips for his thoughtful response to my original article, and I, too, look forward to continued discourse on these very important matters at the heart of

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social work and psychoanalytic practice. I maintain that psychoanalysis is by its very nature a form of psychotherapy that puts above all else the freedom of the individual to make his or her own choices, regardless if they are viewed by others as foolish, morally wrong, or are incomprehensible. ■

M. Louis Ruffalo, MSW, is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist in private practice in New Bern, North Carolina. He serves as a staff psychotherapist at CarolinaEast Medical Center in New Bern and is an adjunct faculty member in psychiatry at the University of North Carolina.

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studying the biology of grief and trying to make some sense of her emotional state. We are grateful for her efforts and her generosity in sharing them with us.

Gottlieb is also particularly impressed with Dr. Lucille Spira, another friend and colleague, whose article "Shades of Loneliness: Psychological and Social Perspectives" describes biological and sociodemographic factors, often overlooked by psychoanalysts focusing on the unconscious. Such concern fails to account for the impact of reality factors of age, gender, educational status, widowhood, and so on. Spira is also one of the editors of this volume.

This is a thoughtful, well-written collection by writers with much to say about the subject of loneliness. Additionally, I found this collection enjoyable reading. ■

Renee Goldman, LCSW, is a psychoanalytic psychoanalyst practicing in New York City.

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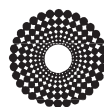
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Streets, "Relational Social Work and Religious Diversity." *Part 2—Racial and Ethnic Diversity*: Victoria R. Winbush, "A Relational Approach to Clinical Practice with African-American Clients"; Many J. Gonzalez, "Relational Social Work Practice with Hispanic Clients"; Monit Cheung and Carol A. Leung, "Relational Social Work Practice with Asian American Populations"; Mohan Krishna Vinjamuri, "Co-Creating Culture Through Relationship with Individuals, of Asian Indian Origin." *Part 3—Religious Diversities*: David P. Cecil and Kenneth M. Stolfus, "Relational Social work Practice with Evangelical Christian Clients"; Cheryl El-Amin and Ameesah Nadir, "Clinical Social Work Practice with Muslim Clients: A Relational Approach"; Renee Schlesinger, "Clinical Social Work with Orthodox Jews: A Relational Approach." *Part 4—Diversities of Sexual Identity*: Griffin Hansbury and John L. Bennett, "Working Relationally with LGBT Clients in Clinical Practice." *Part 5—Diversities Founded on Life-Altering Experiences*: Jeni Tyson, "Relational Social Work Practice with Combat Veterans"; Thomas Kenemore, "Social Work Practice with Reentry from Incarceration"; Daniel C. Farrell, "Relational Theoretical Foundations and Clinical Practice Methods with People Experiencing Homelessness."

I am impressed with the depth, sophistication, and detailed information available on each subject. While there are too many chapters to fully cover in this review, I have selected a few comments from some chapters to give the reader a flavor that holds true for all the papers.

Harriet Goodman provides information about science and research, alerting the reader to phenomenology; hermeneutics; heuristic inquiry; constructivist grounded theory; and bricolage, a method from constructivist research for relational therapy; along with other conceptualizations. This information, I assume, would be new to many clinicians outside of research academia.

Neil Altman brings rich information about the problems of "color": "Perhaps the most fundamentally damaging elements in the social construction of race in the United States derive from the ways in which a 'White' perspective dominates in the social construction of racial categories."

David Cecil and Kenneth Stolfus examine Evangelical Christians and explain the morals of the group's beliefs: the process of "witnessing" that the community believes will bring hope to others through conversion; evangelism, seen as sharing their gifts and good opportunities with others; and "being born again" or "saved," one of the values the community cares about. Case examples suggest the complications of determined faith convictions and other goals that an individual will have learned may complicate some therapeutic explorations at another time in the person's life. For me, it is unique to see a citation for "Jesus and Object-Use: A Winnicottian Account of the Resurrection Myth (*International Review of Psychoanalysis*, 1989).

The information in this book is valuable, worthwhile, erudite, and extensive. I would hope that all clinical social workers would have the time and money (it is costly, even on Amazon) to read it. Each chapter could be expanded and developed into a separate book in its own right, and those who specialize in serving the populations covered might use this text as a jumping off point. Others might have other critiques and insights into the special areas that are included.

That being said, I am also concerned that this book so emphasizes the world in psychoanalysis from the work of American Relational Theory (Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983; Aron and Altman); the British School (Fairbairn, Winnicott, Klein); and others considered "relationalists" that new readers in psychoanalysis might close their minds to the extensive world of information brought forth by Freud, Hartman, Arlow, and Brenner, and, not to neglect our analytic social worker mentors, by Gertrude and Rubin Blancks in their great contributions (1968–1991)

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Area Representatives' Corner

New York

Reported by Penny Rosen, LCSW, BCD-P, Area Chair,

On April 5, 2014, the NY chapter of AAPCSW sponsored the four-hour conference “The Complexity of Human Bonds: Its Impact on Treatment.” The success of the program was attributed to the planning committee, the panelists, the moderator, and the more than eighty attendees in the audience.

In his presentation “Personality Disorders: The Treatable and the Untreatable,” Michael Stone focused on the personality disorders that are more accessible to the treatment modalities currently available, on those that are difficult to treat, and on those that go beyond our current abilities, such as the extremely narcissistic, the antisocial, and psychopathic.

The filmmaker/psychoanalyst Stuart Perlman presented “Faces of Trauma: Painting the Unseen among Us.” We first viewed his award-winning riveting documentary *Struggles in Paradise*. He painted portraits in oil of 110 homeless people on Venice Beach, California. The faces on canvas and the interviews in the film force the viewer to bear witness to the long-lasting consequences of trauma. Perlman valiantly took us through the journey of this project.

To add to the poignancy of the day, Louis Pansulla presented “Us, Them, and the ‘Others’: Consideration of ‘Belongingness’ and Where We Feel at Home.” He examined the paradoxical nature of “otherness” through the relational prism of certain marginalized and traumatized groups of LGBTQ people. Case material focused on the implications for our psychoanalytic “connectivity” with these patients and beyond, exploring how the analyst’s subjective life, mind, and psychology inform this analytic space.

Ellyn Freedman kept our attention with her illuminating presentation “Political Aggression: Effects on Bonding and the Immigration Experience.” She discussed how growing up within the context of chronic and chaotic political aggression and violence has a profound impact on the shaping of self, experience, and response to trauma. Her paper described how sociopolitical surround in the country of origin affects the immigration experience to the US in the struggle as “other” in search of home.

Susan Sherman, our moderator, deftly gave an introduction of the topic, introduced the panelists, and moderated the discussion among the panelists and audience following each presentation.

Conference Participants and Organizers:

Ellyn Freedman, PsyD, LCSW—Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis, Los Angeles. China American Psychoanalytic Alliance. Author, articles on couples treatment and immigration. Private Practice, New York, NY.

Louis W. Pansulla Jr., MSW, LCSW—Institute for Contemporary Psychotherapy, NY. China American Psychoanalytic Alliance. Author, articles on LGBTQ issues and “otherness.” Private practice, New York, NY.

Stuart Perlman, PhD—Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis, Los Angeles. Author, *The Therapist’s Emotional Survival: Dealing with the Pain of Exploring Trauma*. NAAP Gradiva Award winner. Private practice, Los Angeles, CA.

Michael H. Stone, MD—Columbia Psychoanalytic Institute. Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons. Author, *Personality Disorders: Treatable and Untreatable*; *The Anatomy of Evil*; and other works on serial killers and violent offenders. Private practice (psychiatry, neurology, psychoanalysis), New York, NY.

Susan B. Sherman, DSW—Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Study Center. Smith College School of SW. Editorial board, *Psychoanalytic Social Work*. Coeditor, *Understanding Adoption*. Private practice, New York, NY.

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On “Erotic Feelings within the Therapeutic Relationship: Transference Countertransference . . . or Is It Love?”— A Report from North Carolina

Sonia Hsieh, MSW student
Smith College School for Social Work

Submitted by William S. Meyer, MSW, BCD, Area Chair



“Erotic Feelings Within the Therapeutic Relationship: Transference Countertransference . . . or Is It Love?”
April 12, 2014, University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill School for Social Work. Panel Discussants: Emery Gross, LCSW, BCD; Terrie Baker, LCSW; and Heather Craige, LCSW.

On April 12, approximately fifty participants gathered in a simple auditorium to explore one of the trickiest topics in our field—erotic transference and countertransference. Sponsored by the AAPCSW NC Chapter, three social work psychoanalysts explored and offered their reactions and theoretical leanings on a training DVD, which is included in the text *Long-Term Psychodynamic Psychotherapy* (2010) by the prolific and highly regarded Glen Gabbard, MD. Gabbard is known to many of us for his accessible work on psychotherapy and perhaps most especially for his writings on boundary violations.

William S. Meyer, LCSW-BCD described the impetus of this panel as springing from an uneasiness he experienced while viewing one segment of the DVD. In this vignette, titled “Erotic Transference,” Gabbard’s patient, Brenda, played by an actress, confronts him. Brenda arrives to her session in a short black-and-white printed dress and admits her embarrassment after her previous session when she confessed to having “a crush” on Gabbard. She enters the room, turns, and quickly asks him whether or not he finds her attractive. The session continues with Brenda seeking validation of her attractiveness while Gabbard gently persists in side-stepping the issue. The intensity of feeling comes to a head when an exasperated Brenda insists, “I just need to know, do you find me attractive?”

In watching the video, the audience had a clear visceral reaction; participants shifted uncomfortably in their seats and chuckled loudly at the senior clinician’s noncommittal responses.

The video shows Gabbard striving to maintain neutrality by offering a psychoeducational, interpretive response rather than responding more personally. As the

session nears its conclusion, a tearful Brenda acquiesces to Gabbard’s interpretations, yet there is something that makes an observer feel that something essential is missing from this extended interchange.

Members of the panel discussed their opinions on Gabbard’s more classical approach and its clinical implications, citing various examples from their own practices.

Beginning the discussion was Emery Gross, who provided a sophisticated and theoretical response grounded in the writings of self-psychology. He began by asking the audience to consider a quote from the late Heinz Kohut: “Many times when I believed I was right and my patients were wrong. . . . it turned out after a prolonged search, that my rightness was superficial, whereas their rightness was profound.”

Among Gross’s many points was the conflict or “inter-subjective disjunction” between what Brenda defined as her need and what Gabbard redefined as her want. This challenge from the therapist created a situation in which the patient had to succumb to the therapist’s interpretation, thus thwarting an opportunity for the patient’s self-object needs to be accepted and explored. Gross wove in works by Freud, Ellman, Kohut, and Tolpin to suggest a process in which patient and therapist work collaboratively and equally to explore a truth as experienced by the patient. Gross went on to argue that Gabbard used the “inherent asymmetry” of treatment as permission to deflect from his own sense of vulnerability and discomfort by maintaining a disproportionate focus on the patient.

Next, Terrie Baker provided a meaningful exploration of the power dynamics of the male-female/female-male therapist-patient dyad. Baker included three main points: a need for empathic recognition on the origins of loving and hating transference/countertransference, the effects of sexual abuse on the expression of erotic transference, and the consideration of social and gender norms between men and women and their varied expressions of sexuality. She indicated that when dealing with clients who have a history of trauma, there is often a collapse in the continuum of affection and sexuality. This collapse may make it difficult for a client with a history of sexual abuse to tolerate the deepening connection with the therapist that can cause the client to respond with disguised or undisguised hostility. During the discussion, Baker also spoke about the challenges she, as a woman, recently faced with a male patient in understanding the transformation of the erotic transference into what appeared to often be hostility. Recognizing and tolerating the aggressive undertones of the erotic transference was central to the analysis of

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(see my review, with Diane Siskind, in *Social Work Journal*, 2009), to mention just a few of the thousands who have made and continue to make contributions but who do not list themselves as relationalists. (The Psychoanalytic Electronic Publishing [PEP] is a wonderful opportunity for all of us to research the contributions and ideas from over time; see www.pep-web.org)

“Pre-relational psychodynamic theory” is linked to focusing on early developmental history to the neglect of the relationship, culture, and life experiences. New students reading this wording, having faith in their teachers, would have to discount earlier findings. Preverbal reconstruction has been profoundly helpful for insight and growth for many patients. Case reports can be found to verify their effectiveness. Those theorists who opened their thinking to Hartmann, the Ego, and the Problem of Adaptation, studied typical and atypical environments (cultures were considered one type of environment). Those who have been known as Ego Psychologists (Spitz, Mahler, Parens, Akhtar, et al.) brought enlightenment about prewired and biological human traits. In turn, this information has entered into methods and parental environmental guidance and practices understood by many as necessary for mental health growth. As you all may know, Dr. Benjamin Spock studied psychoanalysis at Yale Child Study Center; his *Baby and Child Care* is said to have sold more in number than the bible worldwide.

I found little mentioned about the problems of male culture dominating female experiences, catalogued and (re)brought to our attention through Sheryl Sandburgs’ current book, *Lean In*, about women’s early intimidating development and current male power in organizations.

There are unrivaled processes and techniques that Freud, among others, found that free people from inner pain and debilitating symptoms. Free association is an amazing process that enables people to gain a vastly enhanced appreciation and understanding of themselves and others and contributes to new discoveries. And just to name a few other treasures, we have transference-countertransference, the repetition compulsion, negative therapeutic reactions, the id/ego and superego, and brain information on mirror neurons that is currently being linked in the field of neuropsychology. Robert Waelder’s *Principle of Multiple Function: Observations on Over-determination* is another of the remarkable breakthroughs of information about the mind/body/soul.

Because we all learn from many sources and study at different institutes that favor certain theorists, and our lives are, of course, unique, there will always be differences. Fortunately, many paradigms work. How can we

collect all of them, not discard any, and find a readable, succinct form to pass on the knowledge base in psychoanalysis? The Blancks offered the Periodic Table as a metaphor for adding and expanding discoveries; I have often thought of a Wikipedia for psychoanalysis as a forward possibility. Rosenberg’s book belongs in the overarching collection of information available. ■

Patsy Turrini, LCSW, is an author as well as the originator of Motherscenters.org. She is in private practice in Merrick, New York.

Hungry for Ecstasy, continued from page 5

unions almost from scratch. They were not just voting for unions and paying dues but participating actively in organizing locals with large scale picket lines and democratically elected strike leadership and they introduced a measure of workplace democracy through workplace sit-ins and sympathy strikes/general strikes, which Taft-Hartley made illegal.

I remember early in the 1960s, as Farber briefly alludes to, the civil rights movement growing bigger and stronger with its own sit-ins and a mass movement against segregation. Segregation helps maintain a reserve army of underemployed, underpaid virtual serfs, which keeps wages down and also helps keep working-class activity, organization, and class consciousness fragmented by fear and hate of the “alien other,” thus hurting all people who work for a living, not just those who are directly and adversely affected by the segregation.

Farber’s associating the 1960s with oddballs and outliers and crossing boundaries is very accurate—her seeing Allen Ginsberg as the iconic spirit of the times fits the immense upsurge of the counter culture into popular consciousness. Ginsberg has indeed inspired countless numbers of people with his visionary poetry and his dramatic persona, exposing the shadow of the culture to the light and grandstanding for peace and for ecstatic cosmic consciousness.

But the 1960s also saw not only rebellions against Victorian sexual mores and for inner peace and civil rights but also rebellions against class and gender socialization (against beauty contests and competitive sports and grades) and for collective solutions for collective problems (record numbers of wildcat strikes and social movement union organizing, including military and prisoner unions).

Martin Luther King was murdered supporting the Memphis sanitation workers strike and organizing a poor

Continued on page 14

Member News

■ **F. Diane Barth's** book, *Integrative Clinical Social Work Practice: A Contemporary Perspective*, was published in March by Springer. She also has a chapter titled "Eating Problems" in Alex Gitterman's new edition of *Handbook of Social Work Practice with Vulnerable and Resilient Populations* and an article titled "Putting It All Together: An Integrative Approach to Psychotherapy with Eating Disorders" in the next issue of *Psychoanalytic Social Work*. www.dianebarth.net

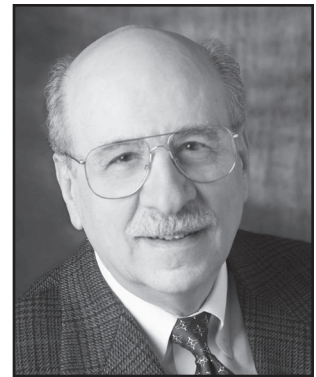
■ **Sharon K. Farber** made a presentation to the Westchester chapter of the NY State Society for Clinical Social Work on April 5 titled "What Makes Someone Resilient? How the Resilient among Us Became Wounded Healer Psychotherapists." She also presented on the use of expressive writing both in and out of treatment at the annual conference of the International Cultic Studies Association, July 3–5, in Washington, DC. "If anyone has ever been involved in a cult or had a family member involved, this is a fascinating conference that can be therapeutic in a number of ways." For further information, go to ICSA.org or contact her at Sharonkfarber@gmail.com." Sharon also asks those who might be interested in buying a copy of her second book, *Hungry for Ecstasy: Trauma, the Brain, and the Influence of the Sixties* (see review on page 5), at a discounted rate, to contact her for a discount form.

■ **Judy Ann Kaplan**, education editor for the *Psychoanalytic Review*, wrote an article, "Martin S. Bergmann's Legacy: A Tribute," which appears in the April 2014 issue (vol. 101, no. 2).



■ **Susan Levine** organized and chaired a major interdisciplinary panel on dignity at the annual meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association on January 18. This is an understudied but important subject that is at the heart of our work as clinicians and is prominent in our Code of Ethics. Susan is in private practice in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, offering psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, clinical supervision, and writing consultations for clinicians. She is faculty at Psychoanalytic Center of Philadelphia.

■ The Institute for Clinical Social Work and the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to establish the Joseph Palombo Center for Neuroscience and Psychoanalytic Social Work, and **Joe Palombo** has been appointed its first director.



As ICSW's dean, Scott Harms Rose, expressed in his announcement, "The idea to create the Center emerged from discussions among the Board, Faculty members, and administration about how to organize the Institute's exploration of how the new field of neuroscience may inform the long traditions of clinical social work and psychodynamic psychotherapy. Because the broad topic of neuroscience has become prominently discussed across all mental health professions, and because clinical social work as a profession has always included the biological aspects of clients' lives through using a bio-psycho-social model of understanding, it made sense to establish a Center focused on this topic. It also made sense to name the Center after our own Joe Palombo, one of ICSW's founders, our first Dean, and a nationally recognized expert on the application of neuroscience principles specifically with children who have nonverbal learning disorders. This, in fact, is the topic of two of his three books: *Learning Disorders and Disorders of the Self in Children and Adolescents* (2001), and *Nonverbal Learning Disabilities: A Clinical Perspective* (2006)." Congratulations to Joe!

What's Your News?

Graduations, presentations, publications, awards, appointments, exhibits, and so on are all items the AAPCSW membership would like to acknowledge in the *Member News* column. Feel free to include a photo.

New to AAPCSW?

We invite you to introduce yourself in our *New Members* section.

Ashley Warner, MSW, BCD, Assistant Newsletter Editor
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people's campaign to unite black and white unemployed and underpaid workers to abolish poverty from the bottom up through full employment. The culmination of the 1960s, it seems to me, was in 1968 when the majority of French workers occupied their workplaces and began to move towards a democratic economy. Reportedly de Gaulle flew to Germany to see if the Army could be used to crush the strike and was told that the working-class conscripts—the majority of the Army—would mutiny if ordered to fire on their brothers and sisters and fathers and mothers.

Some say the peak experiences of your youth mark you for life. For me, it was the 1968 French General Strike—the biggest wildcat, workplace-occupation, general strike in history, when “ordinary” working people with all their prejudices and lack of “education” got together and began to manage the economy together democratically, without unelected bosses or single-party dictatorship bureaucrats.

For me, all the critical potentially catastrophic social problems stem from the lack of democracy in the economy where socially produced wealth is governed by a few—whether private owners or other unelected autocrats—while the majority struggle to get by and are unable to develop their individual talents and interests or to cooperate with others democratically in planning and managing this social wealth for human needs, including sustainable energy and healthy agriculture and technology in general.

Even Farber's counterculture heroes such as Abbie and Anita Hoffman and Allen Ginsberg had political undercurrents; they all had social-change political involvements. Abbie Hoffman, for example, cofounded the Youth International Party and summed up his political views as being left wing—to redistribute wealth and power, abolish homelessness and the CIA, and so on. To those affiliated with or influenced by these counterculture heroes, their anarchistic antic anti-establishment posturing and media hi-jinks seem to reflect at least a general rejection of the “work until you drop dead” and accept-your-position-in-the-hierarchy ethic.

To me, this book is an illuminated manuscript or prose poem—an incursion of the Collective Unconscious with ecstatic shifts and themes, informed by the countercultural currents of the 1960s and inferences from neuroimaging. Despite my reservations about its avoiding or minimizing the political economy of the world, I recommend it highly. ■

Roger Lee is a social worker and member of AAPCSW.

one of her male clients. It is important to understand that in the female analyst/male client constellation, hostility may form the leading edge of a deep need for connection.

Rounding out the panel was a lively and provocative presentation by Heather Craige. She argued that the appearance of loving feeling (erotic or not) in the therapeutic relationship is an opportunity, a “flowering,” a vulnerable moment, not one to be exploited or crushed by the therapist. As experienced therapists know, once love enters the room, a host of fearful ghosts representing painful past love experiences enter the room as well and become the subject of the therapy. In this sense, the love relationship is the royal road to transformation and healing.

Craige then focused on the therapist's difficulty in knowing how to respond to loving feelings in an authentic and useful way. She recommended that therapists learn to work with this material in a symbolic form—“We can say, feel, imagine, dream anything we like in therapy because we are never going to actually do anything with each other”—and that they find a middle way between the harmful extremes of exploiting a patient (as in sexual abuse or boundary violations) or shutting down the loving feeling (as Dr. Gabbard did). The middle way would include a recognition of the patient's feelings and desire, a willingness to explore those feelings in order to understand the patient, and a willingness to experience (and, in some cases, judiciously share) reciprocal feelings for the patient.

Craige ended with a few lines from Galway Kinnell's poem “Saint Francis and the Sow”: “Everything flowers, from within . . . / though sometimes it is necessary / to reteach a thing its loveliness, / to put a hand on its brow / of the flower / and retell it in words and in touch / it is lovely / until it flowers again from within.”

Like with Kohut's realization, as therapists we learn to change. Not only can we reteach a thing its loveliness, and retell it in words and in touch, we begin to believe in its loveliness, thus sowing the seeds of deep healing and transformation.

As a beginning clinician, I have been advised to respond to personal questions from patients with the line, “I'm curious why you're asking.” And to be honest, I don't always follow this advice. To me, by even allowing myself to consider an honest response, this gives rise to a flowering of compassion, which in turn parallels more closely the other line beginning clinicians are given: to “meet them where they are.” ■

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