



For Mental Health Professionals Interested in Psychoanalytic Perspectives

A local chapter of the Division of Psychoanalysis of the American Psychological Association

www.pspp.org

Fall, 2008

Message from the President

Jeanne Seitler, Psy.D.

I want to begin my first Presidential Address by recognizing and welcoming the newest members of the PSPP Board. Our Membership Chair is Leilani Crane, Psy.D. Directors at large are Jeanine Vivona, Ph.D. and Julie Nemeth, Ph.D. Eric Spiegel, Ph.D. has accepted an appointment to be Division 39 Section IV representative. Dan Livney, M.S. joins us as a Student Representative. Kathleen Ross, Ph.D. is participating on the Board fulfilling a liaison capacity with PCOP. We are grateful to Kathleen for proposing and volunteering for this collaborative position.

I also wish to extend the sincerest of thanks, affection, and appreciation to the outgoing members of the PSPP board, Elizabeth Bogado, Psy.D. and Miriam Franco, Psy.D., for their enthusiastic participation and devoted service as Member-at-Large and Division 39 Section IV Representative, respectively, and Howard Covitz, Ph.D., for his stewardship of the Program Committee, culminating in our cutting-edge 2008 Spring meeting. Howard is tireless in the pursuit of

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Waging Dialogue

Reflections on the Spring Meeting, “Why Can’t We Just Get Along?”

Phillip Bennett, Ph.D.

It is a great irony that psychoanalysis, whose marching orders from its founder were to make the unconscious conscious, to withdraw projections, and put ego where id was, has been so fraught with factions and partisan animosity. Like religious groups that claim a transcendent purpose while lashing out with aggression and judgmental contempt for others, psychoanalysis has been rife with rivalry, competition, and caricature of opposing schools. Beginning with Freud, we who claim to be in the service of greater self-awareness have engaged in some pretty nasty projection and splitting in the psychoanalytic world—justifying it in the service of defending the purity of doctrine and practice. Addressing this sad state, Dr. Alice Maher spoke about her “Waging Dialogue” listserv *WagingDialogue.org*—an online forum on topics related to psychoanalysis and society. Participants discuss

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President's Message (continued from page 1)

psychoanalytic ideals and kept the Board mindful of its mission and the highest of standards.

To Joseph Schaller, Psy.D., now officially Past President, I wish to extend special personal thanks for inviting me to run for the office of President of PSPP and for making it possible by offering me and the board use of his home as a meeting place past his active tenure. Joe Schaller and Phillip Bennett deserve acknowledgement and appreciation from the entire PSPP community concerning how they have generously opened their hearts and home to PSPP over the years. It is not just the amazing Feng Shui of their abode, nor the excellent repast they always provide, but the depth of spirit and warm embrace that characterizes PSPP and makes it stand out from other psychoanalytic associations I have encountered. Joe is to be further acknowledged for his years of service to PSPP in a multitude of capacities, from serving as president and all that entails to representing PSPP as Div. 39, Section IV Representative and C.E. Coordinator.

Before leaving the topic of gratitude, I wish to formally thank the presenters of the 2008 Spring meeting, "Why Can't We Just Get Along?: Love, Hate, and Mutual Destruction in the Psychoanalytic Community," for their profound and moving contribution to the PSPP membership. Howard Covitz, Ph.D., Elio Frattaroli, M.D., Alice Maher, M.D., Burton Seitler, Ph.D., and David Mark, Ph.D. donated their time and expertise to put together a thought-provoking, stimulating, and experience-near day for the psychoanalytic community. I was thrilled to have speakers from five different psychoanalytic institutes collaborate on such a project for our enlightenment. Since I am relatively young in exposure to the complex and often unhealthy dynamics that have historically taken place in analytic communities, I, personally, was educated, challenged, and entertained by the program. My deepest appreciation, panel, for your gifts to PSPP and the larger psychoanalytic community.

Sincerest thanks as well to Elisabeth Young Bruehl for her stunning talk at this year's Fall Meeting. Both her delivery and the content of her paper, to be discussed more fully later in this newsletter, had the guests and members riveted to their seats. Kudos to the following members who did the "leg-work" that made this program possible and of the highest quality: Joe Schaller, Jay Moses, Ellen Balz , Karen Dias, and Erin McKeague.

Our "Spring" meeting will arrive early this year necessitating a renaming to PSPP "Winter" Meeting. We are happy about this shift in scheduling as our membership has reported being inundated with competing activities in the spring. Availability of speakers and venues also increases with winter bookings. We are therefore delighted to announce that on Saturday January 31, 2009, by popular demand, Nancy McWilliams will spend a day with us. Among other topics she may include, the focus of Nancy's presentation will be how to work with clients who present with paranoid features. Didactic and case material will be presented. The event will take place at St. Joseph's University. Details will be forthcoming.

The Brunch program, in the capable hands of Jay Moses, promises to be an excellent series as usual. It seems that much excitement has built up over the past few years about the brunch series. No more "beating the

bushes” to round up presenters and hosts. Members are lining up to be involved and making plans to present a year ahead. I have always loved the brunch series and think it is one of the most important avenues we have of piloting and developing our ideas, supporting our peers’ professionalism, and enriching our sense of community through intellectual cross fertilization, networking, socializing, and breaking of bread. Much gratitude to Jay for several years of devotion to producing a high quality Brunch series and to the generosity and graciousness of the hosts who make the brunch concept viable and especially enjoyable.

We continue to work with the Philadelphia Center of Psychoanalysis to co-sponsor programs and are pleased to have collaborated on the well attended Fall Program featuring Jody Messler Davies speaking on the topic, “Clinical Implications of the Epistemological Shift to a Relational Psychoanalysis.” Our next issue of *Currents* will include an article addressing this excellent program.

Such developments as this joint program and the conception and birth of IRPP, The Institute for Relational Psychoanalysis, have strengthened a long held desire on the part of the board to review and update its mission, bylaws, policies, and monthly agendas. The board has decided to meet for a full day on November 22, 2008 to begin addressing these topics. The past presidents of PSPP have been invited to join the current board for the breakfast part of the day to lend their perspectives to the questions of mission, collaboration, and how to creatively meet the challenges facing psychoanalysis in today’s economic, political, and cultural climate. Additional areas of focus for the board, which will be addressed in November and going forward include the following:

- To update the PSPP website.
- To create flowchart/timeline of the yearly board responsibilities and events so that our monthly agendas and committee tasks are streamlined and our publications and programming are more efficient, timely, and coordinated with local organizations.
- Approve and implement budgetary guidelines to inform our yearly programming, setting of yearly dues, and any special projects.
- Review and update the bylaws.
- Invigorate and develop board committees.

As I consider the goals the PSPP board has assigned

itself, I am aware of the amount and importance of the work ahead. I am honored and pleased to be elected the new President of a group that has always impressed me as providing a sense of intellectual challenge immersed in warm collegiality with a commitment to cutting-edge programming.

It is a time of daunting economic, political, and social challenges. Looking through the lens of the recent Presidential election, we can appreciate how Barack Obama was elected to lead our country not only because of his gift of oratory (although I must say I do so look forward to the music and elegance of his delivery) but because of the peace-making through mutual dialogue and emphasis on respect reflected in his message. As President Elect Obama strives to build a cabinet and a society of diverse perspectives, we too in PSPP have an inclusive philosophy.

A man such as Barack Obama, half white/half black, American/Kenyan, rural/urban, and schooled in several cultures, symbolizes our wish to address the pain and suffering of extant inequities in the world. Mr. Obama calls us all to join together in the conversation, in the restoration, in the creation of connection. We are all dichotomous. I am a “halfbreed.” My mamma is a Yankee, born in Philadelphia, my daddy is a Rebel born in Virginia. My father’s ancestors were both slaveholders fighting for States Rights and New Jersey Industrialists who fought for an end to slavery and for the solidarity of The Union. I was raised in the Methodist church with windows donated by the Women of the KKK and I chose to sing gospel in the African Methodist Church. I grew up in and value rural America and its “salt-of-the earth” people, yet long for the cultural diversity, multi-flavors, and excitement of the Urban North. Like Obama I have worked to integrate the contradictions inside. I struggled growing up outside Washington D.C., watching the race riots while knowing my father’s people had enslaved another. I hurt when I discovered that my black friends could not swim at the country club pool where I swam and that most black people in my community shied away from water because they did not have access to swimming areas, and, therefore, did not have an opportunity to learn how to swim. I devoted much of my college studies to educating myself to understanding the dynamics which contributed to “my people” dehumanizing another.

Being of German extraction on my Mother’s side, I could not understand how the same people from whom Beethoven, Bach, and Goethe hailed could attempt to obliterate another people from the face of

the earth. I went to Europe to study the Holocaust and attempt to understand what must be understood to heal the soul. Through the context of Quakerism and tolerance for all perspectives, I entered the painful conversation and over time have come to recognize what systematic parochial indoctrination and inequity in resources, overlaying a core of insecure attachment, deprivation, and humiliation can achieve in building an environment of in-groups and out-groups—of “good-guys” and “evil doers,” of “Us” and “Them.”

Barack Obama has offered a bridge between peoples and perspectives. I have attempted the same with my life. I feel PSPP has held that torch as well. We are all endeavoring to heal the splits. Such is the reason for sponsoring our Spring Meeting this past year: “Can’t We All Just Get Along? Love Hate and Mutual Destruction In The Psychoanalytic Community,” and Elisabeth Young Bruel’s 2008 Fall Meeting presentation focusing on “Childism” (our intolerance for the

child inside ourselves and how such self-loathing creates a cycle of child abuse). PCPE’s excellent reading seminar on Prejudice held this Fall with Neil Altman echoed the same concern and mission.

In Barack Obama’s voice I recognize my own heart and what I believe is the heart of our organization and of psychoanalysis itself. I believe we have had “an angle” on the “cure” all along. You have to listen carefully, as Theodore Reik recommended, with the third ear, for the unconscious to emerge. And it is in the listening that we heal both the other and ourselves.

There is no such thing as a problem without a gift for you in its hands. You seek problems because you need their gifts.

(Richard Bach, *Illusions*, p. 71)

Reference

Bach, R. (1977). *Illusions; The adventures of a reluctant messiah*. New York: Dell Publishing Company.

Child Development Study Group Begins 13th Year

Karen Berberian, Ph.D.

The Child Development Study Group began in the fall of 1996, created by several PSPP members who used the Rorschach with children. The original name of the group was the Child Assessment Study Group. Over the years, the scope of the group has expanded to include psychotherapy and other interventions in addition to testing. Analysts, clinical psychologists, social workers, school psychologists, neuropsychologists, and teachers belong to the group. Although members work in different settings, all share an interest in children, adolescents, and families.

During the 2007-2008 year, we discussed psychotherapy with children adopted from overseas orphanages, and we learned about the emotional needs of parents of children with autism. Members presented difficult psychotherapy cases with the goal of discovering their commonalities, and we devoted time to understanding ways of working with couples when one spouse has been unfaithful. Several topics were more closely related to educational issues, such as executive functions in children, reading instruction, special education law, a literacy program for Mexican immigrant children, assessment and educational needs of students with autism, and strategies for resolving disputes between parents and school districts.

We have planned several meetings for the fall of 2008, some of which will have taken place by the time you read this newsletter. On September 14, Joseph Schaller introduced the group to relational psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. Maxine Field discussed the use of story-telling techniques to assess emotional functioning on October 26. Richard Stern presented on psychotherapy with men on November 16, and on December 7, I will talk about the new WAIS. We anticipate presentations on gender and the brain and on child and adolescent psychopharmacology, but these have not yet been scheduled.

Our meetings are held at members’ homes on Sunday afternoon, once a month, from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. In addition to the presentation, there is always time for a lively discussion and for refreshments. The group provides continuing education credits for psychologists and social workers and Act 48 credits for individuals who hold educational certificates (such as school psychologists and teachers).

If you are interested in joining the Child Development Study Group, please contact Karen Berberian by telephone (610-896-6220) or e-mail (kberberian@verizon.net).

Committee Reports

Membership Report

Leilani Crane, Psy.D.

With the opening of our fall season, 2008, we welcome the following new members:

Sara Bressi Nath, Ph.D., MSW
Marion Rudin Frank, Ed.D.
Sheila Japka, MSW
Emily Sonenshein, M.A.

Since September of 2007 we have gained 25 new members. Special thanks to Barbara Goldsmith and Karen Berberian for developing extensive nomination lists. To date our membership stands at 180, dues paid, with 63 members from the rolls that have not yet completed the Membership Renewal process. With the outreach efforts of our board members, late responders are checking in daily.

Thirty members returned the Needs Assessment Form with suggestions and feedback. Twenty-six different speakers were suggested, with Adrienne Harris, Sue Johnson, and Ricardo Ainslie receiving multiple nominations. Suggested topics included: termination, affect, substance abuse, couples therapy, sex therapy, attachment theory, complexities of postmodern world, working analytically with schizophrenic or severely borderline individuals, and "true dialogues between clinicians with different perspectives." A specific panel

was suggested: regression in psychoanalysis with representation from classical, British Object Relations, and relational analysts. Members also requested more ethics workshop opportunities, an improved web presence, more programs in Center City, and medical education credits. A few members expressed concern with increased dues, and one member expressed particular concern with the ability of students and early career professionals to pay the new dues.

Members overwhelmingly endorsed weekends as preferred time for PSPP events, and many expressed appreciation for holding events in Center City. Comments regarding the spring program drew the greatest response, with four positive responses and three strongly negative responses. Overall the feedback regarding events and the brunch series were positive.

Many thanks to all who responded to the Needs Assessment. We will work to include your ideas and preferences in future PSPP programming. Also, we are making efforts to enable online registrations and membership renewals going forward.

I look forward to serving you as newly-appointed membership chair and hope to see you at our Winter/Spring and brunch events.

Treasurer's Report

Ellen Balzé, Ph.D.

The PSPP treasury balances are as follows, with 2007 balances shown for comparison:

PSPP Account Balances	11/9/2008	11/9/2007
Checking Accounts	\$12,800	\$ 6,950
3-Yr. Rising Rate Certificate of Deposit	\$ 5,600	\$ 5,300
Total Funds	\$18,400	\$12,250

Mindful of rising expenses in recent years, Board members worked especially diligently to keep costs down for our two major programs this year. Those efforts, combined with an increase in dues, have made up for budget deficits in the past few years. We are

likely to end this year with at least a modest surplus. The Board will work to finalize our new budgeting process in November to help the organization stay on solid financial footing.

Mentors 'R' Us

Barbara L. Goldsmith, Psy.D.

Since the PSPP Mentorship program began in 2005, it has reached out to over 50 graduate students from schools such as Widener, Immaculata, Chestnut Hill, Temple, Drexel and Bryn Mawr (both psychology and social work programs), as well as to psychology interns from universities across the US and even abroad. I am happy to report that we are off to a great start this academic year. We already matched 20 graduate students and some freshly graduated post-docs with PSPP mentors. We would like to continue to increase the number of student-mentor pairs, so if you know of a graduate student interested in psychodynamic mentoring, steer them to me. I am proud to report that so many of our members have generously volunteered their time, with some members having volunteered since the beginning of the program in 2005. In all the years, I cannot recall a member who has turned me down when I have asked them to become involved! The feedback from both mentors and mentees has been superlative.

How to get involved in the program:

For those of you who are new to the mentoring program, mentors and mentees are matched based on common interests and geographic locations, and meet for one hour each month during the academic year at the mentor's office. Summer meetings may also be an option depending on mutual interest and availability. Please note that mentoring is not the same as supervision and all students involved in the program should have supervisors responsible for their clinical work. Mentors function as consultants rather than as supervisors.

If you are a graduate student who is interested in finding a mentor:

- Go to the PSPP website, www.pspp.org, click on the Mentorship link and read the "Welcome to the Mentorship Program" and download the "Graduate student questionnaire."
- *Complete the "Graduate Student Questionnaire" (Please remember to prioritize your interests on the questionnaire so a good fit can be made).*
- Email the completed questionnaire to Dr. Barbara Goldsmith at barbgsmith@aol.com.

I would like to thank Dr. Debby Bierschwale, who is helping me coordinate the project this year and is in frequent contact with both mentors and students to solicit feedback and to help make sure that the program is running smoothly. Dr. Bierschwale can be reached at bierdr@aol.com

If you are interested in becoming a mentor:

- Email Dr. Barbara Goldsmith at barbgsmith@aol.com.
- Please include your contact information, locations where you would like to meet, areas of interest /expertise (both scholarly and clinical), as well as any other information that might help us ensure a good match.

I would like to thank our members who have volunteered with me in currently mentoring students this academic year:

Susan Adelman, Ph.D.
Marjorie Adis, MSW
Eileen Casaccio, Psy.D.
Dennis Debiak, Psy.D.
Bill Grey, Psy.D.
Linda Guerra, Ph.D.
Audre Jarmas, Ph.D.
Beverly Keefer, Ph.D.
Corinne Masur, Psy.D.
Rachel McKay, Ph.D.
Jay Moses, Ph.D.
Susan Nestler, Psy.D.
Robin Risler, Ph.D.
Diana Rosenstein, Ph.D.
Norman Schaffer, Ph.D.
Sherry Sukol, Ph.D.
H. Panill Taylor, Psy.D.
Jane Widseth, Ph.D.
Jed Yalof, Psy.D.

Life Lesson on the Waterslide

Meredith Barber, Psy.D.

I'd been thinking about the value of vulnerability and its role in our interpersonal relationships when I had an experience that helped elucidate matters for me. The incident took place this past summer at our town pool, where my four-year-old daughter Gabrielle was taking swimming lessons. Graduation from the two-week class was celebrated by allowing and encouraging the children to go down a waterslide—alone—into the deep end. Although she was much more confident in the pool by the end of the class than she had been earlier, Gabrielle wasn't yet able to swim. When children can't swim, the swim instructor, wearing a floatation device around his waist, catches them at the end of the slide. Gabrielle quickly discovered that she loved the slide.

I recalled hearing earlier in the season that if your child could go down the slide by herself, she would be permitted to use it during free swim hours (as distinguished from class instruction hours) even if she could not yet swim. The one proviso: someone had to be there to catch her. So when I saw how much Gabrielle enjoyed going down the slide, I thought, "Great, Gabrielle can use the slide anytime she wants now. All I need to do is catch her." I am not an avid swimmer and have never been one. Still, I have known how to swim since I was small, and I thought, "How hard can this be?"

I asked the swim instructor for permission to try catching Gabrielle myself. But I asked him to wait nearby in the water in case we ran into a problem.

Being in the deep end of the pool, I had to tread water while waiting for her. She came down fast. I put my hands out to catch her, and she flew into my arms. The force knocked me under the water. I held her above the water with both hands and waited for my head to rise to the surface. I can't remember whether I kicked my legs, but I didn't rise. After what was probably a few seconds under the water, I began to think, "Gee, I hope the lifeguard sees that I'm not coming up, and I hope he grabs Gabrielle." He did. I then came up for air and we all swam safely to the side. Gabrielle was blissfully unaware of any drama that had taken place. She was thrilled to have gone down the slide by herself again.

On the other hand, I emerged from the pool filled with embarrassment and shame. I was sure that all the

other parents saw what happened, and I was mortified that I was unable to catch my daughter and stay afloat, a seemingly simple act. It didn't help that she and I needed to be rescued by the swim instructor, who I believe was all of 16 years old.

I ruminated about the experience while we played in the safety of the baby pool, and then I mentioned it to a friend. Hearing the story out loud helped me think about it differently, and a new narrative began to emerge in my mind. What I realized was that if I had successfully caught Gabrielle and swam her to safety, some parents watching me would have thought something benign, such as "I guess I can try that with my child." And some would have felt bad about themselves, thinking, "How come I can't do that the way she can?"

But I didn't catch her. If any parents had been watching (and I think, in reality, that hardly anyone was), they would have witnessed a mom struggling, and they might have thought, "Ah, other people struggle too. I'm not the only one who sometimes needs to be saved."

When we reveal our vulnerabilities, we give one another a gift. We allow others to see our realness and therefore give them permission to embrace their own vulnerability. They get to experience on a deep level that they are not the only ones who sometimes feel vulnerable or incompetent. We also give them the opportunity to help us and to feel that they make a difference.

When we do things well, we often unconsciously believe that we have to shoulder the whole burden alone. But when we struggle, we have an opportunity to look outside ourselves for answers. These moments of rawness and realness are windows into an underlying truth—that we all need one another and need to be needed. Connecting with others in our vulnerability allows us to have the experience of feeling supported and taken care of, in a way that eludes us when we competently do things on our own.

Wouldn't it be great if every time we struggled or failed at something we looked at it as an opportunity to feel supported and connected? We often struggle or feel vulnerable. Wouldn't it be nice to know automatically that this means we are human and can be supported by the universe?

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Dr. Elisabeth Young Bruehl Discusses Sexual Diversity at PSPP 2008 Annual Fall Meeting

Eric B. Spiegel, Ph.D.

On Sunday, October 19, 2008, Dr. Elisabeth Young-Bruehl headlined the PSPP 2008 Annual Fall Meeting at the Rosenbach Museum & Library in Philadelphia, speaking on "Sexual Diversity in Cosmopolitan Perspective." Dr. Young-Bruehl presented a historical perspective on the evolution (and lack thereof) of cultural attitudes towards sexual diversity. She focused on the relationship between sexism and homophobia, arguing that the latter was an extension of the former, based on rigid societal views of gender roles.

According to Dr. Young-Bruehl, one important explanation for the movement towards greater societal acceptance of sexual diversity has been the increased access to data, as a result of greater visibility and new communication techniques, such as the internet. As a result, as human awareness of sexual diversity has increased, so has our awareness of diversity in other species. Said Dr. Young-Bruehl, you can be "amazed what is out there when you take off one lens and put on another."

Unfortunately, although homosexuality has become more accepted in certain societies (although she cited many where it was not), prejudice has intensified against transgenders in recent years. Dr. Young-Bruehl explained this prejudice as being due to the non-conformism of transgenders in genital appearance. Conformism is valued as a means for group cohesion, leaving transgenders isolated in many societies.

This discussion of prejudice towards homosexuals and transgenders led to Dr. Young-Bruehl's introduction of a key concept in her talk, the idea of "body-hating" or "body-rejecting" societies. According to Dr. Young-Bruehl, prejudice against sexual minorities is most prevalent in these body-hating societies. She defined body-hating societies as those that are fundamentalist in religious belief, value ascetism in sexual behavior, and next-life oriented. She explained their hatred towards sexual minorities as a result of the attention these groups draw to sexuality and the body. Thus, the ascetism of these groups is a "defensive ascetism," against the anxiety prompted by body and sexual awareness. Dr. Young-Bruehl utilized psycho-analytic concepts to further explain this defensive

ascetism. She described defensive ascetism as an extreme form of splitting, in which the masculine and feminine qualities become separated and disembodied. She gave the example of spiritual counseling (e.g. ex-gay movement) as being un-therapeutic because it encourages the split.

Conversely, Dr. Young-Bruehl portrayed societal acceptance of sexual diversity as a manifestation of body-spirit harmony, in which the exact nature of the body-spirit harmony is a manner of personal choice. She provided examples of open, accepting communities including: Native-American communities, in which sexual role or performance is determined by shamanistic dreaming, from which individuals are given a choice to accept or deny; and Taoist communities, where bisexuality is praised as a way of balancing yin and yang.

Dr. Young-Bruehl closed her talk by presenting a new concept of sexual pathology, one where pathological behavior is relationship-denying (e.g. objectification of one's partner). She cited examples of current intra- and inter-state warfare where rape of women is used to destroy the reproductive capacities of opposing tribes, such as in Rwanda and Darfur.

Dr. Young-Bruehl concluded with a vision of a future in which the humanity of individuals is protected against aggression.

Following Dr. Young-Bruehl's presentation, PSPP members participated in a cocktail reception with hors d'oeuvres.

Waterslide (continued from page 7) _____

If I'd caught Gabrielle successfully, the whole five-second occurrence would have passed without notice. It would have been one more item I could add to my list of accomplishments. I would have propped up the illusion that I can do it all alone. Instead, I got to feel connected to my inner realness and to all of humanity, and I got to tell a story.

Who needs to swim well?

“Why Can’t We Just Get Along?” Love, Hate and Mutual Destruction in the Psychoanalytic Community: A Summary

Robin M. Ward, Psy.D.

The morning began with a presentation by Dr. Howard Covitz exploring the traditional conception of the Freudian Oedipal complex, with his proposal that the conventional model’s focus on the acceptance of a sexual relationship between Mom and Dad as the only route to the acceptance of the “otherness of the other” might exclude the possibility of other models. As an alternative, Dr. Covitz described his five-stage “elemental” Oedipal model, which he suggested might provide a “. . . middle position between one and two person psychologies.”

Next, Dr. Burton Seidler presented on an aspect of the history of the education of psychoanalysts and reflected on the potential that the structure of analytic training may lead to an increase in incestuous wishes and aggressive behavior. As a means of decreasing the problems associated with unacknowledged and, in some ways, institutionally propagated Oedipal conflicts, Dr. Seidler suggested schools of psychoanalysis consider requiring a training analysis with an analyst not affiliated with the institute.

Dr. Alice Maher discussed her experiences running an online list serve on psychoanalytic topics, leading to reflections on how an education in psychoanalytic principles might be helpful to weave into the education of society as a whole (not just in the training of analysts). The implications of Dr. Maher’s presentation are considered in greater depth by Dr. Phillip Bennett in his contribution earlier in this issue of *Currents*.

Dr. Elio Frattaroli described Oedipus as a way of speaking to the human tendency to divide the world into inner and outer circles—“us” and “them.” He proposed that a necessary precondition to any conversa-

tion about abstract, theoretical constructions of any issue is for an individual to speak candidly about his or her personal stake in the ostensive focus of a debate. Dr. Frattaroli remarked that the ability to speak of his or her emotions and personal motivations is one of the unique skills possessed by psychoanalytically oriented clinicians.

Following a discussion period, Dr. David Mark reflected on the vagaries of the “love” and “hate” referenced in the title of the day’s talk, in particular the problem of “love” potentially devouring the other, as is the case when a proponent of one theory does violence to another by appropriating its terms into his or her preferred theoretical language, thereby negating the difference. Referencing the work of Lewis Aron, Dr. Mark suggested that the challenge of love, both in general and here in the context of conversations between different schools of thought in psychoanalysis, is to describe the other in a way in which the other can recognize his or her self. Some of these thoughts were developed in the reaction to the Spring Program by Dr. Debby Bierschwale published in the previous issue of *Currents*.

I experienced the day as a stimulating context to consider questions of my own identity as a psychoanalytically oriented clinician and found myself thinking of the challenge of locating PSPP as an entity within the psychoanalytic community. I also appreciated the occasion to reflect on the broader relationships between systems of power and systems of thought, both within the realm of psychoanalytic discourse and our world in general.

Some Thoughts on Supervision

Harold Stern, Ph.D.

Psychoanalytic training rests on a three legged stool: education, analysis, and supervision. The latter, supervision, may be the most important for becoming competent as a therapist. This observation derives from over 35 years of teaching experience.

After more than six years of psychoanalytic training in New York, I found myself with a large practice in Philadelphia that was composed of patients I felt inadequate to treat. My classical training was excellent for treating neurotic people, but in my opinion lacking to treat the many borderline, schizophrenic, psychotic, depressed and addicted low fee patients that came to me for therapy. The attempt to do so caused me much stress. The many analytic supervisors I sought out to help me, I soon learned, knew little more than I did, so for a few years I functioned, as they say, by the seat of my pants.

Meeting and getting supervision from Hyman Spotnitz, M.D. was my deliverance. He was and still is little known outside of New York City. He was one of the most intelligent, skilled and helpful therapists I have ever known. Gradually I learned to recognize and cope with the special forms of resistance my difficult patients presented to me. For example, one of the more difficult challenges in treating schizophrenic patients is not to have them come for treatment, but rather to enable them to stay in treatment. I found the interpretation of their resistance was mostly futile. Instead I learned to join the resistance. For example, a patient came to his first session and seemed to connect with me, but at the end when it was time to arrange for the next session, he explained he would not return because my office had a terrible odor (not observed by my other patients) that he could not tolerate. I agreed with him and told him I was arranging to have my office fumigated and the problem would be solved before his next session. On this basis, he agreed to come again. Prior to the next visit I sprayed my office with a commercial deodorant and he made no comment when he arrived. He stayed in treatment with me for a number of years.

In 1971 after much urging by my New York colleagues and Dr Spotnitz, I decided to form the Philadelphia School of Psychoanalysis (PSP). This effort challenged every bit of creativity that I possessed. At the beginning I was the chief cook and bot-

tle washer. Classrooms, teachers, analysts and supervisions had to be found. Although already blessed with a very busy practice, I needed to get up earlier and go to bed later in order to do what had to be done. I needed to learn to do what I had never done before, i.e. teach and supervise. Fortunately, I had in Dr Spotnitz an excellent model to identify with and I feel that the process worked. In reflection, I can say the Institute was successful and a few of our graduates are active in PSPP.

After almost 20 years of intensive work on behalf of PSP I withdrew in 1990 to give more attention to my family. In 1991 while visiting St Petersburg, Russia, I met and developed a close relationship with the director of the recently formed East European Psychoanalytic Institute (EEIP). He came to depend heavily on my experience to assist in organizing his institute and his repeated urging that I come often to Russia was a factor in my finally selling my house in Merion and moving there for one year in June of 1997. My twenty years with PSP was a great asset to me in understanding what the needs were for this special Russian situation and to provide some of the skills that were needed. While living in Russia, I maintained telephone contact with many of my patients in the U.S. and then resumed personal work when I returned.

Very early in my work at the institute some of the senior students and faculty requested group supervision with me and I was soon leading four groups. I was also asked by a group of child therapists at a day clinic to supervise them with some of their difficult young patients and I did this once per week too. In addition, many hours each week were devoted to supervising individuals. One such individual was Lena.

Lena, a child analyst in Russia, explained that she was treating a 10-year-old boy who talked incessantly and could not stop. She had four sessions with him and was concerned that the boy came by himself to the sessions with the money for the treatment in his pocket. He had to take a number of buses to get to her office and was extremely frightened by the process. On a recent occasion, he was not able to get on a bus and had to wait an hour and a half until he could get a ride. The mother had one visit with Lena and explained that she was trying to teach the child to become self-sufficient

and independent. I asked Lena what she wanted from me. She said she would like the mother to bring this boy to her sessions so that we could discuss his symptoms. We speculated that the boy was in a constant state of fear of being alone and filled with anxiety which might explain his constant talking. Lena asked me what she should do given this situation in which the treatment was an additional traumatic problem for the boy. I suggested she insist the mother come in to speak with her and tell the mother that the child was too young to handle this responsibility and that she refuse to treat the child unless he was brought accompanied by an adult. Lena seemed satisfied with this approach.

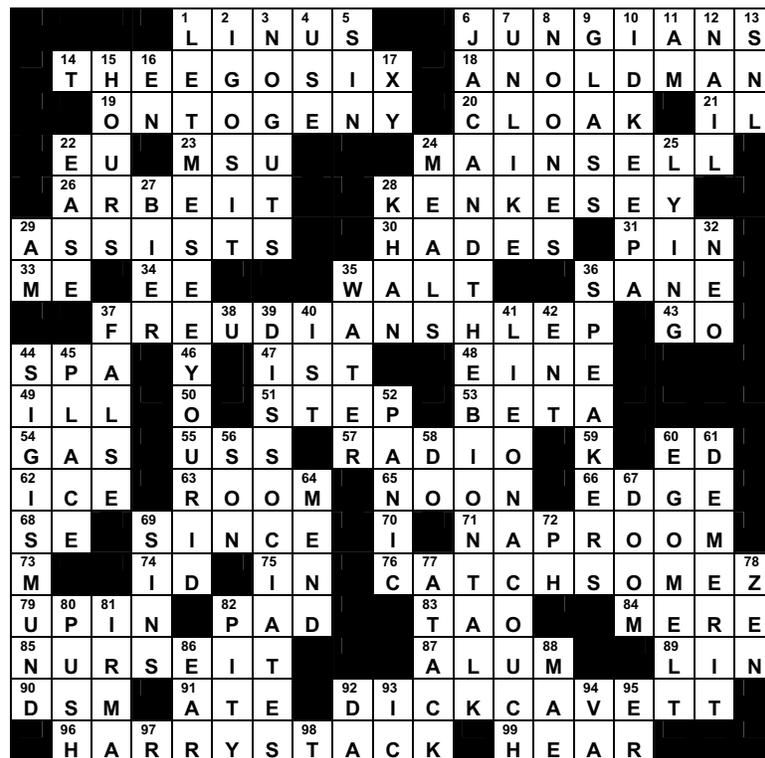
Here are three things that I paid attention to with Lena and which I attend to while supervising any case that is brought to me. First, I ask what is it that the supervisee wants from me because potentially it could be a very large request and I may want to narrow it down. Secondly, I look for what seems to be the transference and counter-transference in the relationship. Third, is the therapist focusing on what it happening in

the session, or for example, is he/she trying to fix something that is happening outside of the therapy session? Also, is the therapist trying to work in a situation that prevents any progress from occurring?

My sense in providing supervision is that it is mainly a method of providing help or assistance for the therapist. The form of the help may depend on what the supervisee wishes to get from the supervision. Usually, it is connected with what is happening in the therapy in the "here and now." It may be, for example, that the patient refuses to leave at the end of the hour, or the patient shows up intoxicated for their sessions, or they complain that the therapy is not helping them and they wish to stop treatment. In most situations, I have found that it is not necessary for the supervisor to get extensive background information on the case, and a few questions will often be sufficient to get some insight into how to resolve a particular resistance. When supervisees are given this concise understanding of the nature of the resistance and how to resolve it, they are ready to discuss the next case, or, when in a group, to move to the next person.

Crossword Puzzle

The following are the answers to the crossword puzzle "Analytic Play," created by Jay Moses, Ph.D. and published in the previous issue of *Currents*.



**The Child and Adolescence Psychotherapy Studies (ChAPS) Program
of the New Jersey Institute for Training
in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy**

**Co-Directors: Jodi Kosofski, Burton Seidler
121 Cedar Lane, Suite 3-A, Teaneck, New Jersey 07666
co-sponsored by the NJ Society of Clinical Social Work**

presents our 8th Annual ChAPS conference

**Experiencing and Overcoming the Unimaginable:
Psychoanalytic Understandings
of Resilience in Young People**

Featuring

Henri Parens, M.D.

Alexander Levy, Ed.D. and Jack Schwartz, Psy.D.

This conference will focus on some of the most severe circumstances in human existence and will raise questions regarding how certain individuals are able to survive (and overcome) the unimaginable, the unspeakable, yet unforgettable without *going crazy*. The conference will raise the following questions: What do we mean when we say "resiliency?" What are common features that these individuals share? What are some essential threads that make up the resiliency tapestry and how can we, as psychoanalytically informed therapists, foster it?

**The conference will be held
Sunday, March 15th
at the Marriott Glenpointe Hotel
Teaneck, New Jersey
(201) 836-0600**

For further information or a brochure for the conference, please call: (201) 836-1065
The New Jersey Institute for Training in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy

Approved for 5 CEUs: NBCC, NJSCSW, and Professional Development

Member Announcements, Publications, and Honors

Sara Bressi Nath, Ph.D., L.S.W., a new PSPP member, is pleased to announce the opening of a private practice near Bryn Mawr specializing in psychotherapy with adolescents, adults, older adults, and couples. Dr. Bressi can be reached by phone at 215 870-5649 and email at sara.bressi.nath@gmail.com.

PSPP member Susan Levine, M.S.S., L.C.S.W., B.C.D. is pleased to announce the publication of her second book: *Loving Psychoanalysis: Technique and Theory in the Therapeutic Relationship* (Jason Aronson). She has also

been appointed as an Editorial Reader at the *Annals of Internal Medicine* and continues as a member of the Editorial Board of the *Clinical Social Work Journal*.

PSPP newsletter editor Robin Ward, Psy.D. recently had his original research on feedback in personality assessment published as the lead article in the *Journal of Personality Assessment*: Ward, R. M. (2008). Assessee and assessor experiences of significant events in psychological assessment feedback. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 90(4), 307-322.

Spring Meeting (continued from page 1)

highly charged topics such as "Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia," "Masculinity and Femininity," and "Self and Other."

When she first began the listserv, Dr. Maher found that despite the initial restrained tenor of the conversation, people began to regress and become more aggressive as they perceived their own beliefs being attacked. Attacks flew back and forth on the listserv until Dr. Maher had to stop the conversation to lay down clear guidelines of civility and self-monitoring—like pulling kids apart in the playground, she remarked. The questions she poses to her listserv users are good ones as we reach out across psychoanalytic camps: "If I sincerely, powerfully believe something to be true and others around me don't, what if anything should I do? If someone expresses a belief that I have a sincere and powerful objection to, what, if anything, should I do?" These are vital questions at the very crux of all wars—personal and global. "Waging dialogue" requires a commitment to sustain contact, to hang in there with those we may not agree with. It requires becoming conscious of our aggressive drives and our own narcissistic injuries which pull us away from mutual respect into aggrieved, defensive withdrawal. Waging dialogue does *not* mean "making nice" or indulging in superficial platitudes that gloss over real differences. Some of our local conversations across psychoanalytic groups still try to collapse important differences in a simplistic "we're all basically saying the same thing" stance. It is harder to wrestle with our real differences with openness, accuracy, and candor. I like Dr. Maher's use of the word "waging;" it speaks to the place of healthy aggression in real conversation. But aggression easily slips into violence: physical or verbal. We regress easily because the depressive position is hard to maintain, and, frankly, less fun than climbing back into the paranoid, self-righteous castles of the persecutory position. It is

uncomfortable to look at one's own investment in demonizing, caricaturing, and devaluing others. Non-defensive dialogue is hard to maintain, even in a calm climate, but when tempers rise and egos get bruised, it is very hard not to get infected by the splitting and narcissistic injury and attack that spread like wildfire through groups and institutions.

As we sat together hearing the various well-crafted papers, it struck me that gathering together to discuss why we can't get along is *the* central question of any group—of the whole human enterprise. Dr. Maher's presentation was particularly helpful to me because it addressed the underlying reasons we don't get along: not that our theories or techniques are different, but that we often don't *want* to get along. It is more fun to fight and polarize; dialogue takes too much tolerance of unresolved viewpoints; it takes too much self-awareness of one's own defenses. For all my appreciation and use of relational psychoanalysis, I think it is important not to throw drive theory out with the bath water. It is hard to explain wars simply as a clash of ideas or values. There is a kill-or-be-killed instinctual reflex in human beings that, once aroused, can wreak havoc, creating ruptures almost impossible to heal. On her web site, Dr. Maher quotes Freud's comment that, "The first human who hurled an insult instead of a stone was the founder of civilization." The next step is learning not to hurl insults, but to engage in the hard work of waging dialogue. I thought the panelists and attendees of the spring meeting did a commendable job of this. This is no easy task, but an essential one if we are to be true to our calling to plumb the depths of the psyche—even the regressive and combative places—those self-righteous and self-blinded places that fuel wars at the kitchen table, the psychoanalytic institute, and in the global arena.

Mind-Body Psychoanalytic Study Group

Alternate Tuesdays, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Contemporary Attachment, Object Relations, and Interpersonal theories offer exciting new ways for thinking about the mind-body connection. This study group will examine an article or a selected chapter each week to explore the body in relationship – the real, the symbolic, and the imaginary – as a site of trauma, dissociation, and connection in everyday life. Participants will be encouraged to hold in mind and share clinical examples of both bodies in the analytic dyad.

Dr. Catherine Baker-Pitts, Faculty at The Women's Therapy Centre Institute in Manhattan, practiced psychoanalytic psychotherapy for ten years in NYC before relocating her practice to Center City, Philadelphia. She is an editorial board member of the Journals of Eating Disorders and Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society. She is a Fahs Beck Research Scholar and a Fellow at PCOP, whose current work focuses on the relational meanings of cosmetic surgery, self-harm, and eating problems. Location: 2100 Walnut Street #4i. Tel. 215-913-7388

The Philadelphia Jungian Professional Club presents:

From Oedipus to Ecclesiastes: A Therapist's Journey from Apprenticeship to Maturity

**A small group seminar on Friday, March 6th 2009, 1-5pm
at the Ethical Society Building on Rittenhouse Square**

Seminar leader

Howard H. Covitz, Ph.D., NCPsyA, ABPP

Supervising psychoanalyst, licensed psychologist in Pennsylvania and Virginia,
Professor of Mathematics at Temple University,
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Corrections, Addendums, and Letters to the Editor

Note from the Editor:

Theresa Brown, M.A., C.P. requested to print the following correction in response to "A Reaction to Our Spring Program," written by Dr. Debby Bierschwale and published in the previous edition of Currents.

Response to "A Reaction to Our Spring Program"

Theresa Brown, M.A., C.P.

I would like to clarify assumptions made in the article, *A Reaction to Our Spring Program*, by Dr. Debby Bierschwale. In the article I was referred to as, "... an eloquently-spoken, older African American woman who teaches in the Philadelphia School District. . . ." Dr. Bierschwale continued, "... I wondered if she felt as disaffiliated as I did at moments during the program, or more so?"

It is important that when making references to a person the information be correct. It is just as important when we are evaluating a client/patient that we listen and gather as much information before we diagnose.

These are the facts:

- I have never taught in the Philadelphia School System.

- I am a graduate of the Institute for Psychoanalytical Psychotherapies.
- I did not feel disaffiliated in any way.
- I have worked in private practice for more than 20 years.
- I have also worked in a school district in Bucks County as a counselor.

I was concerned that I was identified as the African American woman in attendance. One day, hopefully soon, I will be identified as a person.

Note from the Editor

Debby Bierschwale, Psy.D. wished to publish the following in response to Ms. Brown's concerns:

I would like to apologize. My assumptions grew out of misunderstandings. It was never my intention to hurt anyone's feelings. Further, I should have avoided using descriptors that could identify a particular person in attendance. I will be sure to be more careful in the future.

A Bit More on the Affiliated Psychoanalytic Workgroups Annual Conference

Lacan in Philadelphia: "On Love"

Robin M. Ward, Psy.D.

PSPP Currents readers may recall that I wrote a review of the APW Lacan conference I attended in Philadelphia last spring. This was truly an engaging conference and I was very thankful to be able to attend. Since printing my review, it has come to my attention that an important person to thank for organizing the conference happens to be a PSPP member, Dr. Patricia Gherovici. I wish to thank Dr. Gherovici for her efforts in putting together such a fine gathering and to apologize for not recognizing her significant contribution in my original article.

I also want to note that Dr. Gherovici is running a monthly reading group on Lacanian topics. The current group is exploring the meaning of the psychoanalytic symptom through a reading of Lacan's seminar, *Le Sinthome*. The group meets once a month on Wednesday evenings, with the next meeting scheduled for December 3, 6:30 pm to 8 pm at the Kelly Writers House, Room 202 at the University of Pennsylvania. For more information, please contact Dr. Gherovici at patriciagherovici@gmail.com.



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Save the Date

PSPP Winter Meeting

Nancy McWilliams, Ph.D.,

**presenting on working
with individuals
with paranoid dynamics**

Saturday, January 31, 2009

*St. Joseph's University
specific location to follow*