

Site Training Autumn 2022

October 8 15 22 29, November 5

Stephen Gee

Countertransference and its Controversies.

From the early 1950s a proliferation of theorisations elaborated ‘the Countertransference’ as a key to the analyst’s sense of the patient’s state of mind in the session. With this came an orientation to the ‘hic et nunc’ of the session over and above a tracing back of the symptom in the patient’s history. Lacan started a rearguard battle against this trend as part of his insistent return to Freud. The current situation is complex. Positions that were once calls to arms defending theoretical and clinical turf are no longer held with such conviction. This can make finding one’s own way as an analyst more challenging and possibly more interesting. As the title of these seminars indicates, clinical advances in psychoanalysis are overdetermined but one element is trauma, particularly with regard to the subjectivity of the analyst in her/his own historical time and place.

Alongside specific clinical developments throughout the 20th century there were expansive critiques of psychoanalysis which inevitably had a bearing on the lives of clinicians and the approaches to their work, particularly with regard to the transference. Not least of these critiques were what might be described as feminist returns to Freud. Particularly illuminating are authors Jane Gallop in ‘Feminism and Psychoanalysis’ and Juliet Mitchell in ‘Psychoanalysis and Feminism’.

Starting with Bion’s attempt to create a basis for the transformations particular to the psychoanalytic situation we will consider what might be implied in a treatment without desire or memory. We will go back to Freud and consider the case of Dora and the subsequent critiques. We will also study a case presented by Meira Likierman and discussed by Jessica Benjamin, Malcolm Slavin and

Stephen Seligman. It vividly describes a creative tension between post Kleinian and relational psychoanalytic practice.

Really good background is Adrienne Harris's video on pep-web in which she makes interesting links between analytic impasses and the melancholia of the analyst.

Marilynne Robinson's chapter 'The Freudian Self' in her book of essays 'Absence of Mind' provokes further questions about psychoanalysis, and what subjective psychosexual theory and hysteria might be trying to do for its author in fin de siècle anti-semitic Vienna.

Reading

Week 1

Attention and Interpretation, Chapter 4 'Opacity of Memory and Desire', Bion W R 1965

On Counter-Transference, Heimann P 1950

Playing and Reality,

Chapter 5 (section: Clinical Data), Winnicott D W 1966

Weeks 2 and 3

Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria, Freud S 1905

Feminism and Psychoanalysis, Chapter 9 'Keys to Dora' Gallop J 1982

Weeks 4 and 5

Psychoanalytic Dialogues 2006 Issue 4

Unconscious Experience: Relational Perspectives Likierman M

Followed by commentaries by Benjamin, Slavin, Seligman and Likierman's reply to commentaries.

Background

Video (pep-web) Adrienne Harris on 'You Must Remember This'

Psychoanalytic Dialogues 2009

'Absence of Mind', Chapter 3 'The Freudian Self',
Marilynne Robinson 2010

'Freud, Dora and Vienna 1900', Hannah S Decker 1991

'Madmen and Medusas', Juliet Mitchell 2000

November 12 19 26, December 3 10
Angela Kreeger

Of The Farm

This novella by John Updike raises some interesting questions for theory and practice. We will use this book as a starting point to think about family, Oedipus, enigmatic transmission, 'the unacceptable', and how we choose to practice. Along the way, other questions may arise. Please come prepared to talk.

Week 1

Of The Farm John Updike

Please note your associations to what you are reading.

Week 2

Family Romances Sigmund Freud

Week 3

Why Oedipus? Christopher Bollas, in 'Being A Character'.

Week 4

Foundations: Towards a General Theory of Seduction

Jean Laplanche in New Foundations for Psychoanalysis

This book is out of print and the text is not available on PEP. I will provide a scanned copy of the relevant chapter.

Week 5

Discussion of themes and issues raised in Weeks 1 - 4

The above is necessary reading. The following is for interest: however, they are both really pleasurable to read and will add to our conversation.

‘A Mother Always Knows’ Sarah Maitland.
I’ll provide a scanned copy of this as it’s not available.

‘Uneasy Listening’.
Anouchka Grose and Robert Brewer Young.
Available from LRB bookshop