

Welcome to the online journal of the [International Forum for Psychoanalytic Education](http://www.ifpe.org). Other/Wise is an innovative, fluid and avant-garde journal that dares to go where other publications do not venture. We welcome contributions of scholarly papers as well as personal experiences of clinical work via stories, drawings, photos and music.

Check out the web version of the journal at <http://ifpe.wordpress.com> to leave comments.

What's in a name?

Encountering ideas in ways other than expected allows us to see things we might otherwise overlook. The word otherwise suggests that experiencing that which is different can make us wise.

With this in mind we created *Other/Wise*, an unconventional online journal that makes room for the familiar and the unfamiliar in understanding psychoanalysis.

Through observation, art, reading, thinking, day dreaming and ideas not yet thought our journal pursues psychoanalysis with a language of passion and desire.

This Issue's Contributors:

- Gene Alexander
- Gary D. Astrachan
- Samoan Barish
- Edie Boxer
- Paul Cooper
- Mike Eigen
- Philip G. Fleisher and band, Sorry
- Larry Green
- Les Von Losberg
- Merle Molofsky
- Karen Morris
- Ruth Neubauer
- Stuart Perlman
- Richard Raubolt
- Lynn Somerstein
- Judith E. Vida

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Other/Wise Volume 2 Fall 2009 | 1 |
| Editors' Introduction | 3 |
| Presentations..... | 4 |
| Dionysos. Mainomenos. Lysios | 4 |
| Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It? | 11 |
| Living Within the Surround of Death: Regulating Trauma/Dissociation/Self and Other in the Analytic Surround | 24 |
| Confessions of a Former Idealizing Psychoanalyst..... | 33 |
| A Meditation on Energy Work and the Chinese Concept of Mind: Psychoanalytic Applications | 38 |
| What's Missing? | 45 |
| A Portion of the Backstory: A Connection Between Judy and Me..... | 53 |
| Another Part of the Backstory | 55 |
| Art and Psychoanalysis..... | 57 |
| One Man's Journey Through Darkness Into Light in Art and Psychoanalysis..... | 57 |
| Mirror..... | 58 |
| Film and Play Reviews | 60 |
| Out of the Spiritual Closet | 60 |
| A Review of "The Visitor" | 61 |
| The Mystery of Wood is Not That it Burns, But That it Floats..... | 62 |
| Poetry | 64 |
| Placeholder | 64 |
| Slowly..... | 65 |
| Pitch..... | 66 |
| New Moon | 67 |
| spring in the quiet that precedes..... | 68 |
| Artwork..... | 69 |
| Bij..... | 69 |

EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

"As co-editors we are pleased to present the IFPE and larger psychoanalytic community with the second issue of our on-line journal Other/Wise.

This first full issue has been under construction for almost a year so we are thankful for the patience extended to us as we selected papers, presentations and performances from last year's exciting conference in Boston. To this central grouping we have added film and play reviews, poetry, author and editorial commentary and dialogue that we believe reflects the IFPE spirit.

Our intent, in keeping with the guiding principles that lead to the formation of Other/Wise, is to be inclusive, diverse and creative. What other journal, for example, includes original art work and musical recordings? Then again what other psychoanalytic organization would welcome and continue to welcome such freedom of expression in form and theory?

We hope you enjoy what Other/Wise reveals about IFPE. We welcome your comments in the "response place" we have included.

See you in Seattle and on-line in future editions of Other/Wise.

Richard Raubolt and Steven Kuchuck

PRESENTATIONS

DIONYSOS. MAINOMENOS. LYSIOS

By Gary D. Astrachan

This is a story about names and naming. What is it to name some thing, some one? What is it to name a god? What is it to name god?

This is a tale about the power of naming and the names of the great Greek god, Dionysos, a god of many names. Out of his multitude of epithets, the ritual and cult names denoting his numerous appearances and disappearances, we will take up in particular just two of his names in greater depth.

The first is *Mainomenos*, *Dionysos Mainomenos*, the 'raving one,' the 'mad god,' the god behind all forms of madness. From mania, meaning simply 'madness' in Greek, his presentation in all of the stories surrounding him is the manifestation of 'otherness,' the uncanny and the un-conscious.

The second of his names we will hear about today is *Lysios*, the 'loosener,' 'liberator,' 'releaser,' the untier of knots and bonds. This name is cognate with the practice which we perform, psycho-ana-lysis. Lysis, lysios. The loosening, dis-solving and dis-solution of the psyche. Psychoanalysis is seen here as the practice and performance of freeing the psyche, the loosening of the soul.

The topos, or place which Dionysos inhabits since the very first appearance of his name on a Linear B clay tablet from about 2000 B.C. as the god of wine, 'Di-oinos,' is the altered space of intoxication, becoming 'other-ed' to one's self. As the god from Nysa, 'Dio-Nysa,' he is always and everywhere, in each of his blazing hierophanies, the god from beyond the regions of the known. He is the god of the wild. He arrives from places of wilderness. He is the stranger. He is called the 'stranger god' in Euripides' play, the *Bacchae*. He is always the foreigner, alien, disturbing, deranging and unsettling.

There were at least a dozen places called Nysa or Nysos in antiquity, all of which serve as one or another of his legendary birthplaces or home-grounds, ranging from the mountainous and thickly-wooded forest regions of Thrace, in the extreme north, contemporary Bulgaria, to a lush and exotic Nysa on Africa's Red Sea, in spice-laden Saba, in today's Ethiopia.

The most famous land of Nysa, however, where it is said he was brought shortly after his birth, to protect him from the persecutory wrath of Hera, is in Asia, in ancient Lydia or Phrygia, western or Anatolian Turkey. It is there that he is raised by an all-female society of nursing nymphs who become his mothers, lovers, devotees and attendants, the Maenads, the mad women followers of Dionysos. These women are also called the Bacchantes, or the *Bacchae*, the 'initiated ones,' and Dionysos himself has, as the other major name by which he was known right through the Roman era and up until today: Bacchus.

Dionysos-Bacchus always appears surrounded by the swirling frenzy of his maddened retinue, blissfully dancing women, ithyphallic satyrs, flowing wine, curling ivy and spotted leopard skins – nature rampant and unleashed. He arrives amidst chaos and comes as a threat to the noble, remote and rational Homeric Greeks, with their heroically established order and calm. To the classical, patriarchal and sober maxim inscribed above Apollo's temple in Delphi, 'know thyself,' Dionysos counters with his own: 'lose thyself.'

Dionysos. Mainomenos. Lysios

By Gary D. Astrachan

There are basically two major stories of the birth, early years and fast times of this god. The first, enshrined in the Bacchae, still the basic testament and bible of Dionysiac religion, is the traditionally-accepted, mainstream tale of his origin. In this version, his mother is called Semele, and she is one of three daughters born to King Cadmus of Thebes. When yet a maiden, Princess Semele catches the eye of the ruler of all the Olympian gods and goddesses, Zeus. He seduces her and they begin a clandestine love affair which transpires at night in her royal bedchamber. The wife of Zeus, Hera, Queen of the Olympians, gets wind of this nocturnal romance, and, disguising herself as an aged servant, insinuates herself into the courtly Theban household. She slowly persuades Semele to find out just who her invisible lover really is. After all, she suggests, he might be a prince, or a great hero, or even a god. So Semele, at Zeus' very next visit, makes him promise to appear to her in his true form. Zeus, heavy-hearted, but bound by his own oath to fulfill her sole wish, reveals himself to her in his natural form as a lightning bolt, incinerating the hapless Princess Semele right there on the spot. Just before she is reduced to a pile of smoldering ash, however, he snatches from her womb the as-yet unborn neonate, the infant god Dionysos. Opening up his own male thigh, Zeus places Dionysos inside, closing him up with clasps of gold. After nine months, he brings the child to full term, and Dionysos, reborn from this masculine womb, earns the epithet Dithyrambos, the god 'of the double door,' he of the second birth.

Hera, however, still infuriated by jealousy and maddened with murderous rage, is unremitting in her attempts to destroy this illegitimately begotten child, and so to protect him, Zeus entrusts the infant to his faithful servant and messenger, the god Hermes, who brings him to the nymphs of far-away Nysa. Throughout the entire mythologem of Dionysos, we find his frequent comings and goings to be often narrow escapes from those his openly sublime divinity arouses with the urge to annihilate and rend apart.

In the second version of his birth, which is the more mystical, underground and countercultural story of the god's origins, his father is once again Zeus, but Zeus now in his underworldly form, Zeus *Cthonios*, the subterranean Zeus, who in this dark semblance is synonymous and identical with his own brother Hades, Lord of the Underworld, realm of the shades. His mother in this tale is Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, also known as Kore, the 'maiden,' and she is the bride of Hades and Mistress of the Underworld. Conceived in that darkness, Dionysos is a child truly born of the depths and of death.

In this version of his story, he is seen shortly after his birth playing in a grassy field with his toys strewn all about him. Just at that moment, when he is laughing at his own reflection in a mirror, the Titans sneak up on him. The Titans are a primordial, barbarous and unruly race of giant-like beings from a much earlier strata of Greek mythology, who, subdued and conquered by Zeus and the other Olympians, and then banished to the nether regions of Tartarus, are summoned, once again by Hera, from their retirement, to do her murderous bidding. The primitive creatures daub and smear their faces with white chalky paint and sneak up on the innocently playing child. Coming upon him, they brutally grab and tear him apart limb from limb, scattering his ragged body. All except for one limb or organ which is picked up by an unnoticed god or goddess lingering around this bloody scene. In one tale, it is the still-throbbing heart which is recovered. In other variations, it is the male member or phallus of Dionysos which is found. In either case, the overlooked piece is brought to Rhea, the grandmother of all the gods. She places it in a small basket upon her head and carries it there for nine full months, and the slain child god is once again reborn, whole.

Returning to the gruesome scene of slaughter, however, the Titans collect the child's remaining body parts and proceed to first boil them in a cauldron, and then roast the limbs on spits. Adding unspeakable horror to monstrous infamy, they then eat the body of the divine infant.

And here we come to the amazing anthropogonic portion of this story which is the central myth of the Dionysiac mystery religions. For when Zeus hears of the awful murder of his beloved son, he arrives at the feasting place of the god-gorged Titans and blasts them with his thunderbolts, reducing them to piles of smoking ash. And as the kernel of this story which strikes to the heart of our own unique histories, out of these smoldering remains, Zeus creates nothing less than the entire human race.

So that from those distant beginnings, we human being are ever since created out of a violent, boundless and destructively Titanic part, which the Dionysiac initiates call the *soma*, the human body. As well as we are also composed out of, and contain, a divine Dionysiac spark or part, our innermost being or god-likeness, which those ancient Greeks and we ourselves call to this day, the *psyche*, *psy-che*, the human soul.

It is furthermore to that very re-remembering, the putting back together again of all the scattered, dis-membered pieces, and to the re-collecting of all the dissociated, dis-articulated parts of the divine child, the god within, that the Dionysiac faithful and we ourselves, bend all of our efforts in the enterprise which we know as psycho-therapy, the *therapeia* of the psyche, the 'caring for' and cultivation of the soul. It is thus the aim of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis to heal and repair that primally split and ruptured body-soul that we as human beings, actually *are*. To hold and contain both *soma and psyche*, both body *and* soul, is the psychological task that this founding myth bestows upon us.

For the first time in Western culture and spirituality, the possibility of a direct, spontaneous and unmediated experience of the god within is ushered into our own proto-European civilization. With the birth story of Dionysos *Demotikos*, the god 'of the people,' he sweeps aside all the hierarchies and divisions of caste, class, creed, race or gender, and announces his two main spiritual gifts to all: ecstasy and enthusiasm. Coming from *ek-stasis*, 'standing outside' one's self, and one's ordinary life, ecstasy is the blessing we can still collectively experience at all of those Dionysiac festivals still held all around the world in the same season, in mid-winter, with Carnival, Mardi Gras, Fasching, or Fasnacht, with their similarly ritualistic performances of sexuality, drugs, spirits, music, costume, and dance.

With the second major numinous experience which follows in his frenzied wake, enthusiasm, from the Greek, *en-theos*, being 'filled by the god,' Dionysos collapses the gulf and chasm formerly separating devotees from the direct presence of the god. Friedrich Nietzsche, one of the most famous prophets of Dionysos, writes in his *Birth of Tragedy*:

Now with the gospel of universal harmony, each one feels himself not only united, reconciled and fused with his neighbor, but as one with him, as if the veil of *māyā* had been torn aside and were now merely fluttering in tatters before the mysterious primordial unity.

(Nietzsche 1967, p. 37)

Let us now turn to that unique, participatory, ritualized form of communal religious celebration, which since its earliest inception, basically tells the story of the birth, passion, suffering and death of just one god. Greek tragedy is the performative enactment of the life of Dionysos. As the central portion of the Dionysiac festivals, held for the collective renewal and rejuvenation of the entire *polis*, tragedy originated from the agricultural rites of the dismemberment, death and rebirth of all plant life in the form of a young, dying, son-lover god figure. Dionysos Zoë is revered as the energetic impulse of infinite life flowing through all things.

Tragedy, from *tragos*, a 'child goat,' began with the 'goat-song chorus,' the *tragoidia*, the song of the goat which was torn apart and eaten raw in memory of the god's fate. Dionysos is the original, sacrificial scape-goat. Besides looking back to our own earliest paleohominian ancestors who ate the still-living flesh of their prey, honoring Dionysos *Zagreus*, the 'great hunter,' also foreshadows the Eucharist of the Christian communion service, the incorporation of the body and the wine-red blood of the god, who is himself hunted down, eaten and reborn anew in the devotee.

Aristotle tells us in the *Poetics* that the overriding function of the tragic performance is what he calls, catharsis, the purification and purgation of the emotions, especially those, he says, of pity and fear. Furthermore, this catharsis of the emotions is ritualistically dramatized for the benefit of the entire congregated *polis*, the whole body politic, the community of believers, spectators or audience.

In a much later and very different context, with the *polis* having undergone vast upheavals and reorganizations, Sigmund Freud, in the theatre of his consulting rooms, began in the 1890's to develop the first theories of psychoanalysis which he also, squarely based on the principle of catharsis, the abreaction, or experiencing-out, of the emotions. The new 'talking cure,' founded upon the singular rule of free association and the performative power of words and language to release unconscious emotion, memories, infantile events and trauma, repressively held in check from early childhood, becomes for Freud, not only the technique and method for the practical application of psychoanalysis, but it also becomes his theoretical and practical platform for understanding both the structure and function of dreams. That is, dreams, like tragedy, indeed like the form and course of the psychoanalytical treatment situation itself, take place through a rational, linear, logically and sequentially unfolding dramatic narrative structure that has a beginning, middle and end, and that involves a plot, character, diction, thought and spectacle, and reaches its conclusion in the expression, and satisfaction of an emotional experience. So that, dreams, like tragedy and the analytical process, take manifestly apparent place under the aegis of the god Apollo, Apollo *Katharsios*, the 'purifier,' the solar god of noble order, distance, purity, beauty, illusion, form and appearance, half brother of Dionysos, and for Nietzsche, his co-creator, especially through tragedy, of all Greek culture and civilization. Dreams, tragedy and analysis are thus seen from the conscious perspective, to be a series of considered Apollonian forms and comprehensibly ordered appearances, but as viewed from the depth perspective of the unconscious, can only manifest when combined with and powered by, an underlying, seething and transfiguring Dionysian energy of unloosening. 'Men,' Aristotle writes, 'have inscribed in their nature at once a tendency to represent...and to find pleasure in representation' (Lacoue-Labarthe and Nancy 1996, p. 283).

Following upon Freud's discovery of dreams as the *via regia* to the unconscious, Carl Jung, in the only papers he devoted exclusively to analyzing the nature and form of dreams, also employs an even more explicitly Aristotelian dramaturgical model for understanding how dream narratives appear and operate within the psyche. He states that dreams have a four-fold dramatic structure (Jung 1969). The first phase, the *exposition*, sets up the initial scene, place and protagonists of the dream. The second part he calls the *development* of the plot. Tension builds. For the third section, he uses Aristotle's own dramatic term, the *peripeteia*, and the dream situation *culminates* in a decisive happening. The fourth and last phase, the *solution* or *result* produced by the dream and sought by the dreamer, is the dream's conclusion, finale, or *dénouement*, the 'untying of the knot.' Jung calls this final situation, the *lysis*. *Lysis*, *lysios*. Dionysos *Lysios*, the loosener and releaser finally appears at the end of our dreams.

For both Freud and Jung, however, there is one major class of exceptions to this orderly flow of representations which seek to reach dramatically satisfying results in dreams. There are, in fact, certain dream narratives which do not reach an end at all. They explode in the face of beliefs and expectations that dreams even have a lysis, or an

Dionysos. Mainomenos. Lysios

By Gary D. Astrachan

end desired by the dreamer. These are traumatic dreams, anxiety dreams, nightmares, dreams where there is no lysis; interrupted, frightening dreams which do not end until they wake us up, or we rouse ourselves, oftentimes sweating, with beating heart and accelerated pulse. These dreams forcefully disrupt and disturb both dreaming and sleeping. They jolt the entire sleep and dream cycle. Dionysos *Lysios* is not allowed to appear.

What we do see irrupting so dramatically in traumatic dreams, and perhaps to some extent in all dreams, is the primary manifestation of Dionysos *Mainomenos*, the 'mad' god, the 'raving one.' Madness itself makes its appearance. The dark side of *Dionysos*, neglected, dishonored and dis-owned, is forcefully revealed. Although somewhat transformed by Apollonian artifice into a series of generally ordered representations, their rough edges relatively smoothed over by successful dreamwork, these visitations of the night may still easily burst apart, leaving us to peer aghast into a deep Dionysiac abyss. That oscillation between Apollonian appearance and Dionysiac terror, between what Freud called the manifest dream and its affectively-powerful latent content, constitutes the twinned dynamic poles of all psychological life, in dreams and in waking. The nocturnal *enantiodromia* between the creation of form and its de-creation into formlessness plays out in dreams in the same way as it does in tragic drama.

It is the work of dream interpretation and analysis that seeks to release the Dionysiac energies bound up and contained by unconscious representations, conflicts and complexes. This loosening is the work of analysis. This is a process and experience that takes place, however, like the presentations of both dream and tragedy, through confrontation, dissonance, dissolution and dis-integration. The analytical situation presents a theatre essentially for staging the performances of Dionysos *Mainomenos*. The mad god needs to appear. The *telos* of dreams, their deepest desire, is not to create the pleasurable satisfaction of wish fulfillment. It is rather that through the appearance of *mainomenos*, the upsurge of unconscious emotion and libidinal energy that the dream presents, that we make space for *lysios*, the loosening of soul and the liberation from the terror and tyranny of the conflicts and complexes that bind us. The appearances of Dionysos, both *Mainomenos* and *Lysios*, in analysis and in dreams, take us beyond the pleasure principle. It is not pleasure that we strive for in dreams, or in art, or in life for that matter, but freedom. The *telos* of the soul is *lysios*, the enhanced capacity and experience of moving closer to the rhythms of nature.

In analysis, the focus substantially shifts with this alternative and de-centered stance, from what dreams mean, their symbols, interpretations, amplifications and conceptualizations, to what dreams *do*. The project of analysis, like dreams, tragedy and sublime art, is not to create new images, symbols or representations, but instead to problematize the very activities of reference and representation themselves.

Analysis and art, tragedy and dreams, seek to first interrupt, and then transform our basic representational subjectivity. Rather than conceptualizing meaning, understanding or insight, these Dionysiac modalities perform, release, and let loose their already overdetermined meanings. As vehicles for the appearances of Dionysos, these forms not only present *mania*, madness, on both the inner and outer stages, they produce and create madness. First *mainomenos*, then *lysios*.

Analysis, tragedy and dreams stage the dis-articulation, de-construction and dis-organization, not only of the spectator, the spectacle, and of the spectacular relationship itself, they also rupture and smash the specular and speculative nature of the whole enterprise. They stage the death of representation as *mimesis*, the death of representation as the imitation of nature and/or of life. This postmodern, sublime, or Dionysiac art and analysis is unwilling to accept imitations.

Dionysos. Mainomenos. Lysios

By Gary D. Astrachan

In his prose *Remarks* on the translation of Sophocles' *Oedipus*, Friedrich Hölderlin, the early nineteenth century German poet, himself entirely mad for nearly the whole second half of his life, from about 1806 until his death in 1842, writes:

For the tragic transport is properly empty and the most unbound. Whereby, in the rhythmic succession of representations, in which the transport presents itself, what in (poetic) meter is called the caesura, the pure word, the counter-rhythmic intrusion, becomes necessary in order to meet the racing alternation of representations at its culmination, such that what appears then is no longer the alternation of representations but representation itself.

(Hölderlin in Lacoue-Labarthe 1989, p. 234)

We have come very far from Aristotle, and perhaps from Freud and Jung as well. There is no *polis*, catharsis, or satisfying representation. Nothing remains. All ways of viewing, experiencing and framing spectacle, whether in the '*disreal*' (Lyotard 1989, p. 156) spaces of temple, church, theatre, sports stadium, television, computer or video screen, cinema, museum, or consulting room, are all destroyed, obliterated.

As subjects of desire and images, in thrall to illusion and to all the multiply mediated and highly simulated versions of constructed reality surrounding us, we forget that we live within a theatre of representations, within images of images. Dionysiac practices, contrary to imitating, repeating, or re-presenting images, illusions, or appearances, seek instead to create 'new presentations, not in order to enjoy them, but in order to impart a stronger sense of the unrepresentable' (Lyotard 1984, p. 81). 'We need,' according to Julia Kristeva,

to come as close as possible to the crisis, to accompany it and produce individual works because that is the predicament we are in, in a kind of pulverization and solitude.

(Kristeva 1995, p. 27)

She says further, that:

We need to maintain a state of duality-on one side the most violent fragmentation and abjection, on the other, in the background a (continuous) inquiring into the state of the world.

(Ibid., p. 25)

Attempting to name this catastrophe and cataclysm we are currently living, 'we are drawn,' Maurice Blanchot writes,

by too strong a movement, into a space where truth lacks, where limits have disappeared, where we are delivered to the immeasurable. And yet it is there that we are required to maintain an even step, not to lose a sense of proportion and to seek a true language by going all the way down into the deep of error.

(Blanchot 1982, p. 184)

In allowing ourselves to be solicited by the gaze of the other that resides in exteriority, we submit to our own de-centered, dis-appropriated, dis-membered Dionysiac gaze, the loosened looking of psyche's ana-lysis. Dispersed and disseminated throughout this world, our gaze is reciprocally returned to us from every thing. There is no place, space or detail which does not see us, and to which we are not called upon to respond.

References

Dionysos. Mainomenos. Lysios

By Gary D. Astrachan

- Blanchot, M. (1982). *The space of literature*. A. Smock (Trans.). Lincoln, London: University of Nebraska.
- Jung, C. G. (1969). On the nature of dreams. In *The structure and dynamics of the psyche*, CW: V. 8, Bollingen series XX. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 281-300.
- Kristeva, J. (1995). Of word and flesh. In *Rites of passage: Art for the end of the century*. S. Morgan and F. Morris (Eds.). London: Tate Gallery Publications, 21-27.
- Lacoue –Labarthe, P. (1989). *Typography. mimesis. philosophy. politics*. Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press.
- _____ and Nancy, J.-L. (1996). Scene: an exchange of letters. In *Beyond representation. Philosophy and poetic imagination*, R. Eldridge (Ed.). Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 273-302.
- Lyotard, J.-F. (1984). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. G. Bennington and B. Massumi (Trans.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- _____. (1989). Beyond representation. In *The Lyotard reader*. A. Benjamin (Ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 155-168.
- Nietzsche, F. (1967). *The birth of tragedy*. W. Kauffmann (Trans.). New York: Vintage Books.

Gary D. Astrachan, Ph.D., is a clinical psychologist and Jungian analyst in private practice in Portland , Maine. He is a faculty member and supervising and training analyst at the C.G.Jung Institute in Boston and lectures and teaches widely throughout North America and Europe. He is the author of numerous scholarly articles in professional journals and books and writes particularly on the relationship between analytical psychology and Greek mythology, poetry, painting, film, postmodernism and critical theory.

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

MONEY MAKES THE WORLD GO AROUND OR DOES IT?

By Samoan Barish

In *Man and Superman*, George Bernard Shaw says “There are two tragedies in life. One is not to get your heart’s desire. The other is to get it.”

And Carl Sandburg says “Money is power, freedom, a cushion, the root of all evil, the sum of all blessings.”

Everett Mamor continues in this vein telling us that “Money is a headache. And money is the cure”

Lionel Trilling said, “Money is both real and not real, like a spook”

All these quotes, to my mind, capture the paradoxical nature of money., and necessarily direct our attention to the muddle that swirls about money. So, come along with me as we all try and make our way through this jumble..

During the late summer while I was visiting a dear friend who lives in Costa Rico I had the following dream. I’m with some other people and we are talking about my patient Valerie’s husband . We are all agreement and we are saying that since Valerie’s husband has made, and is still making ,so much money, why doesn’t he finally stop? He has enough; in fact, he has so much more than enough. Now why doesn’t he do something socially worthwhile with his money. The dream goes on to many different scenes. In one scene we’re going with Valerie’s new baby to a restaurant. The baby seems much older than he actually should be and I’m trying to figure this out in the dream. We’re enjoying being with the baby, we’re feeding him and a number of people hold him. In one of the last parts of the dream Ann’s husband comes to join the group and he is accompanied by someone who seems to be his bodyguard. Almost as if her husband is a Mafia type. They’re not happy with us having the baby and want to take the baby home.

This dream I hasten to add, was before the height of the subprime mortgage crises , the other subsequent financial meltdowns, and all the serious economic woes and hardships that have spread across the country.and to differing extents have affected us all.

Of course this manifest, not to mention latent, content is overdetermined as are all dreams, but for my purposes today, I’d like to focus on this matter of when is enough enough; particularly in financial terms. I hope to discuss my values and some of yours around having money, making money,, what one does with ones money , and how one thinks about money both in general and in specific terms. If we amass money does that makes us Mafia types? And does the infant thrive on being surrounded by people who love him or on his parents having great wealth? And does money trump warmth and love? Do the father’s avariciousness preclude affection? Since the baby seems so much .older than he actually is in the dream and in real life, does that suggest we are dealing with Ferenczi’s” wise baby” whose thinking about this whole money business and where it fits into life and a life well lived.?, And ,perhaps most importantly, what about doing something socially worthwhile with ones money, as the dream suggests? And where does looking at our social responsibility in regard to money fit in, or does it?? How do we balance our needs, requirements, desires and appetities with our sense of morality ,justice ,fairness ,etc.? In short, how do we think about money and what does that say both about us and the culture that we are all a part of , whether we like it or not..

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

I presented another version of this paper at an IFPE Conference whose theme was “danger and desire in the Analytic Situation” Upon hearing the theme, I immediately associated to money with its concomitant dangers and desires. This seemed very strange to me, since money is the last topic I ever thought I would write about.

Why is it an unlikely topic for me to write about and why then have I decided to write about it? During late adolescence, I arrived at a conscious personal, political and social decision about money. Namely, that I would try to not be preoccupied with making money and would minimize its importance in my life. This was a departure from the milieu I grew up in with my parent’s anxiety, impulsiveness and disorganization around money.

My husband and I have always worked and he has held a secure tenured academic position throughout most of our marriage. I was never been put into a moral dilemma regarding exploiting others to obtain money. Although, we would never be wealthy, we always had a good enough income stream. In short, I felt I was more or less home free on the money front, even though at times I was aware of being envious of those that had more financial resources than we., and resenting .Abort Camas tells us “It’s a kind of spiritual snobbery that makes people think they can be happy without money”.

Then, about three years ago, a beautiful twice divorced woman in her early 30’s with an adolescent daughter, walked into my office and soon after all my previously held righteous positions about money came into question. Valerie came from a working class family. She recalls with poignancy when as a child she suddenly realized what it meant that her father had to take cheese sandwiches to his construction job every day, because they can’t afford anything else, And how she had to wear boys hand me down clothes, recalling that the kids in school would make fun of her which made her feel even worse. As she grew older she learned how to design her own wardrobe. She recalled the sense of disappointment and deprivation she felt when she didn’t get an Easter basket. The family’s limited resources had the effect of separating them from other people in town, and were accompanied by a sense of shame. She’s said many times during our three years together, “There was always us and them” Valerie recently told me how , as a child, she used to pray to God to give them money. Valerie felt that the anxiety in the family pivoted around the root cause of lack of money.

Valerie was, and is an extraordinarily pretty girl and woman, and boys sought her out, which always meant a lot to her. She married young and had a child before she was 20years old. .At the time she came to see me, she was in an intense new relationship, in the process of falling in love with a multi-millionaire. She became engaged to him after a rocky courtship and they bought a mansion, had a magnificent and extravagant wedding, a grand European honeymoon and she became pregnant with her second child. Certainly, this was a dramatic change in her social class, resulting in privilege and power for her in short order.

Being a witness to the implications of such great wealth turned out to be a real eye opener for me. .I had never before recognized the effects of having such easy access to goods, services and the resulting security it provides. This was beyond anything

I’d ever imagined. I saw how much was possible for someone who has wealth.

So much that had been utterly inconceivable in her earlier life. The plentitude, abundance, and limitlessness were utterly astonishing to me. How was Valerie learning to deal with her new found wealth, and what was I to make of all of this?

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

In short, my encounters and ongoing work with Valerie has catapulted me into an unfamiliar area of dealing with the personal and social implications of having money, and in her case great wealth. I welcome audience participation in this endeavor.

John Bernville (In the Sea p.207) main character, asks, while musing about his life after the death of his wife, "What is money, after all? Almost nothing, when one has a sufficiency of it".

The exposure to Valerie and her sensational rise in status and class, led me to think about money in ways I had never considered before. Being a person who was not fundamentally organized around money, and has always been concerned with the underdog and the have nots in the world, I had to acknowledge to myself the symbolic and actual power and responsibility of having such wealth represents in our capitalistic culture. And I had to face my enormous ambivalence around money in a way I had never had to before. This is an example of something we all talk about. Namely, doing this work opens us up to new challenges, and hopefully ongoing growth... In this case, I have to confront and work with my feelings about money; something clearly I had been avoiding and denying my whole life. For me personally, looking at my attitudes towards money is a manifestation of my becoming, at this late date, more grown up.

Psychoanalysis theory has a lot to say about money; its unconscious meanings and particularly the many dilemmas that arise around charging fees. Sociologists have contributed to our understanding the meaning of money in our culture. In my presentation, I will selectively review some of these relevant ideas. I will also talk about my own attitudes toward money in the interpersonal clinical situation, transferentially and counter-transferentially.

My presentation will explore the multiform meanings of money. I will investigate my evolving attitude towards money and I invite you to think about and share your attitudes. For me, I cannot think about money without understanding the structurally oppressing societal nature of it and its distributive injustices. There are deep moral issues to be considered. Indeed Andre Samuels posits that even for those people who are financially well off, are adversely effected by living in an unfair system.

In a review of an exhibition at The Morgan Library here in NYC, (Sat. 1/31/09 NYTimes) "On the Money; Cartoons for The New Yorker, Edward Rothstein makes the following cogent and relevant argument." This exhibit shows how much desire, need, energy, faith and fantasy are invested in these scraps of paper, how thoroughly the social world (at least our capitalist economy) depends on them, and how precarious their power really is. ..Indeed, the complexities of economic theory dissolve into more pungent currency of social relations, status, snobbery, pretense, pride, distilling finance to its human essence."

Although money has no intrinsic value, it must be seen in its historical, social and political context. To be sure, it is a means of exchange taking us beyond the barter system, it contains aspects of power (interpersonal and otherwise), provides a certain level of freedom to one's life, but also brings with it kind of responsibility

In keeping with my growing understanding of the paradoxical nature of money, the Sociologist Marcia Millman (Warm Hearts and Cold Cash(1991) while investigating the connection between family dynamics, intimacy and money, tells us (p.43) "Money is a double edged sword. It is alienating ;t trivializes what is most personal and unique, but it also liberatesIn relationships, money provides freedom..."

It can also be the basis of personal autonomy" Both because of money's plasticity, (in fact, our credit cards are literally plastic) and its embeddedness in our emotional and early family life, it can change itself into many

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

different things much like a chameleon can change its shape, form and color...;thereby graphically demonstrating the complex symbolic nature of money.

Money in a market economy is about power and values and inevitably permeates our most intimate relationships. Further, it tends to define us and becomes intertwined with our sense of ourselves, our worth and indeed, our very identity.

Most of us are familiar with Marx's and Simmel's ideas about the "cash nexus" and their belief that money corrupts. Money makes capitalism possible because it reduces everything to the status of a commodity- including the most important commodity, labor power. Money sets in motion an alienation from ourselves and our labor... Alienation as distancing is central to capitalist consumer culture because it is the locus and driving force of desire. The capitalist consumer culture depends upon our never being satisfied... Commodification is the name of the game! Ironically Marx thought that only air and water could not be commodified. Sadly he was wrong. I'm reminded of Saul Bellow's novel, *Henderson the Rain King* in which our picaresque hero, ever searching for something finds himself in remote Africa becoming both a captive and a hero to a succession of tribes. All the while "A ceaseless voice in my heart says, I want, I want, I want, Oh I want." Henderson was simply unable to adhere to Walt Whitman's sage advice, "It's enough to just be". No, Henderson talks about a relentless need that takes the form of "I want, I want. It hardly ever lets me alone, but it doesn't declare what it wants that imprisoned want."

Of course there is always resistance to complete domination by the commodity form and thus by money. There are many things we all do that reassert control over our own lives; investigating some of these economic paradigms is certainly one way. I remind you all that Andrew Samuels (*Politics on the Couch-2001 Other Press, chpt. The Economic Psyche*) tells us that "The personal is not only political, but also economic". Further, he goes on to describe any number of different models of market economics, beyond the old familiar ones of free market vs. government planned economies. Alternative economic ideas such as: economies built around sustainable growth, or redistributive wealth or environmental principles, etc,

Viviana Zelizer in *The Social Meaning Of Money* (Princeton U. Press, 1997)

Argues against the notion that, "money is a single, interchangeable, absolutely impersonal instrument— She posits that people have reshaped their commercial transactions, introduced new distinctions, invented their own special forms of currency, earmarked money in ways that baffle economic theorists, thereby incorporating money into personalized webs of friendship, family relations, interactions with authorities, etc." In short, she tells us she doesn't subscribe to Gertrude Stein's adage that "Whether you like it or whether you do not, money is money and that is all there is about it"

Rather, Zelizer elaborates on the phenomena of earmarking money that she believes is a powerful ongoing force countering the tide of devastating commercialism. For ex. She tells us money won from the lottery is different than one's ordinary paycheck or from an inheritance. Even with forms of legal tender having changed such as electronic payments and new internationalized currencies, earmarking continues (eg There are still special club accounts- Christmas money, vacation money, college tuitions plans starting from a child's birth, etc.

Zelizer believes that people create never ending ways to personalize money in order to meet their complex social needs"

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

Although some writers disagree about the degree of fungible of money, still for the most part, all see money as fungible, inheritably changeable, and highly symbolic.

Marcia Millman (*Warm Hearts and Cold Cash*. Free Press, NYC1991) interviewed many people about the role that money has played in their family relationships; looking particularly at the possible connections between love and money. Money and love become so mixed up that people are frequently confused about their own motives and desires.

Millman tells us "It's foolish to pretend that money is irrelevant to love. In a market economy, money is not only power, but also the ultimate measure of value; thusly insinuating itself into even the most intimate settings. Money, which can turn itself into anything, seeps" deeply into the realm of feelings" I'm reminded of the Beatles song "Money Don't buy you Love". And my mind jumps to a recent review of an art show of cartoon about money. In one cartoon(1997) "A jaded couple sit in a lunge. Let's face it, the wife draws, the moneys gone out of our marriage"!

The philosopher Jacob Needleman (*Money and The Meaning Of Life*, Doubleday, 1991,1994) suggests that "the money question becomes a nearly indispensable help in the long work of bringing unity into our selves and our lives," and recommends that we try to understand the" role money plays for us in the search for a meaningful life". He posits that there are two fundamental opposing motivations of human life; quest for transcendence and the need to function well in everyday life." Needleman seeks in this book to inquire about the relationship between the quest for money and the quest for meaning suggesting that "our relation to money can become a potent instrument in the search for self knowledge" Money is intrinsically a principle of reconciliation, of the harmonization of disparate elements... We need to understand money before we allow ourselves any moral stance at all.

Hillman follows suit when exploring the external and internal/spiritual aspects of ourselves in relation to money. He tells us "The soul need to be kept from flying off into only the psychic reality." "Money holds soul in the veil of the world ,in the poetry of the concrete.(Lockheart and Hillman, "Soul and Money", out of print){

Since money appears to be implicated in every aspect of our lives, let's look at a quick run down of what psychoanalysis has had to say about money.

I start with Freud's oft quoted pronouncement (1913) that "money questions will be treated by cultured people in the same manner as sexual matters, with the same inconsistency, prudishness and hypocrisy"

Freud, according to Dimen in her brilliantly argued paper, *Money, Love and Hate; Contradiction and Paradox in Psychoanalysis*" (*Psychoanalytic Dialogues*,4(1);69-100) which I will refer to throughout my presentation, had a distinctly incomplete theoretical formulation about money. Namely, (1913)" While money has a narcissistic dimension, it is in the first instance... a medium of self-preservation and for obtaining power... powerful sexual factors are (also) involved in the value set on it. He goes on to develop his familiar notion of the analyst leasing his time and setting his fee as a practical considerations for a person living in the real world..

Freud's followers went on to think about "money and its relation to development, character and pathology" "Abraham(1921) and Jones(1918) addressed money's place within anality to money represents a socially useful reaction formations to repressed anal eroticism. competitiveness"}

Fenichel (1938) ,(as quoted by Ann Ruth Turkel,in *Money as a Mirror of Marriage*)i went on to elaborate upon Freud's notion of money being linked with feces, by stating that money can symbolize anything once can give or

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

takes; milk, breast, baby ,sperm, penis, protection, gift, power, anger or degradation. He viewed money as a source of narcissitic supply originating in an instinctual need for food and for omnipotence.

Dimen goes on to point out that both Ferenczi(1914 and Fenichel (1938) had a political as well as psychoanalytic views about money. For ex. Fenichel suggested that anal erogeneity is made use of and strengthened , by a social system that's based on the accumulation of wealth and competitiveness .And Ferenczi, for his part, suggested that "the capitalistic instinct contains both an egoistic and an analerotic component, standing at the disposal of the reality principle, "the delight in gold and the possession of money.....also satisfies the pleasure-principle. In translating Ferenczi's wise formulations,, to present day, I think we can safely say that the money marketers have run amok and engaged in vicious capitalism in their quest for gold.! And of course , we're not only talking about the titans of Wall St., but also trying to open up a space to talk about each of ours "delight in gold".

Eissler(1974) is of the opinion that money engenders " irrational attitudes , both in the form of "overrating or underrating its meaning and importance", thereby concluding that money is such a particularly complex matter that it can not be treated sufficiently in even the best of psychoanalytic treatments .Also,in the same article he elaborates on the very thorny matter of fees, and countertransference of such{. In fact, there is a rather extensive body of lit. on the myriad of permutations involved in fee setting, and the overall matter of fees as part and parcel of the analytic, therapeutic arrangement, engendering a plethora of transference and counter transference reactions. } Dimen, in particular, in earlier mentioned article explores the terrain of charging fees and , the inevitable paradoxes it creates and the profound impact it has on the therapeutic relationship especially around tranference and countertransference issues These are dilemmas we all routinely face, and I dare say struggle with everyday of our working lives,as therapists. Although in todays presentation I will not be focusing on this area.

Today , I'm suggesting, we set ourselves the necessary, albeit, difficult task of exploring the manifold unconscious, emotional, familial, social, political, cultural , philosophical components involved in our attitudes towards money. I think we will see that there is a continuous push/pull quality in our attitudes towards money. .We'll be attempting to tune into the pulse of our psychic and communal life and the rhythms of how we think, work, play and struggles over money.

So, just what is our attitude toward money and how does it originate? To a large extent , of course these attitudes originate in quite early childhood., learned within the context of our family, eventually becoming shaped by the broader social world we live in. How did our respective families deal with giving and getting,; providing and withholding? To what extend was affection ,love and material objects freely flowing ,and to what extent were these emotions and physical , material outlays in short supply? How were needs, longings, responded to? What was the family's actual financial situation and how was this conveyed to the child, and what effect did it have? From the child's point of view did everyone more or less get the same, or were there vast differences? Did money and things contribute to the child or parents sense of worth and importance, and value? Was money used to wield unfair or excessive power over others in the family? And so on. You can quickly see, how these early matters of deprivation or abundance and fullness continue to inform our feelings about money throughout our lives. Recall the tremendous impact the familys attitude toward money had on my patient Valerie.

Andrew Samuels suggests we "conduct an emotional audit of ourselves and the effect on us of living in an unfair economic system.; In the workshops that he and his colleagues conducted, the Economic Psyche was investigated in four categories. Economics past –

What was your first ecom memory about \$..How was money dealt with n your family? What class did you family belong to and how did they feel about it?

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

Economics present – Have you done better than your parents? Or Worse? How do you feel about it? How open are you about money? How do you handle money in your personal relationships? Economics Benevolent- How much more tax would you be willing to pay? Economics Shameful- or economics sadistic, Fantasize about the most shameful, horrible thing you would do if you had large sums of money. Provocative food for thought for all of us. Let's all try and think about the answers to these questions for ourselves and for some of our patients. He will be fleshing this out more in his plenary talk on Sunday. Do come..

In what follows I will try and distill and interweave my attitudes towards money with my newly wealthy patients attitudes toward money. In so doing, I think we will all see, the stop and go lurching quality that seems to accompany much of our views about money.

I'll start with a general overlay of my views and family experience around money. My grandmother who was born before the beginning of the last century and came to this country when she was 3 years old, had many aphorisms which she'd rather strongly adhered to and rather freely imposed upon us. One such saying, and one that most of you have probably heard some variation of, I recall from my adolescence on was "It's as easy to fall in love, /or marry a rich man as a poor man". The message was clear

She was ambitious for her children and grandchildren and wanted them all to be successful. Hers, and to a large extent, my parents definition of "success" was to be in some profession and to make money. "Doing well" essentially meant making a lot of money; something that was to elude my family over the generations. My father, a salesman, in an era where they could make a lot of money, did very well financially, but was impulsive and disorganized around money. My father would always complain that my mother spent too much money and was careless around money (ways I am as well); all the while he was impulsive and disorganized around money; never budgeting or planning ahead,. He was a Damon Runyon type who liked to gamble and live the high life. {Something my grandmother disapproved of.} My father frequently complained about the ongoing, indeed, never ending outlay of money the children required. He felt burdened and very likely resented his financial responsibilities.

My mother wanted more money, and was envious and jealous of their friends who did have more money.. She would talk about wanting to feel more financially secure, a position she was never to attain.. Both my parents made constant comparisons of their lot in life as regards money and others who seemed to have more. Besides wanting more money and being envious and resentful and critical of others you had more, they never seemed to evolve in their posture towards money. An atmosphere of dissatisfaction, anxiety and resentment around money permeated the family. Despite all their anxiety about money, I lived a fully middle class life in NYC

We lived in a small, by today's standard, apartment. My mother always had a weekly cleaning lady and my mother had her weekly trips to the beauty parlor. There was money spent on outings, and entertainment for everyone in the family. Dressing well was important to my family and there were many clothes shopping excursions... I, responsibly taken to the doctor, had the full complement of dancing lessons and piano lessons, etc. Went to camp each summer, and so on.

By way

Of comparison my patient Valerie, of course many years younger than I, came from a much poorer family. in a rural area living near a small town. {As I mentioned earlier, as if it were a model scene ripe with symbolic meaning, is her oft repeated moment of awareness when she put it together that her father having to take cheese sandwiches everyday to his construction job meant that they were poor; quite poor}. My patient, the oldest of

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

three and the only girl was expected to do many chores from a very young age; no one came to clean their house. Her parents were very young when she was born; her mother was not yet 17 years old and her father was barely a few years older. They themselves came from large families with very limited financial sources. V's parents were overwhelmed with the requirements of having to make a living and supporting their three children. V's mother was, they now realize seriously bipolar, she was volatile and unpredictable in her moods, placed excessive demands and expectations upon her daughter requiring her to perform household chores and childcare duties far beyond what would be appropriate for her age. V was never able to be a carefree child. The family was seriously strapped for money; little was spent on the children and they were almost never taken to the doctor for check ups or when they were ill, unless it was deemed very serious. It simply wasn't the family's way to look after the children in that manner. V's parents were stretched and stressed and clearly overwhelmed by the demands of being adults and responsible for their children. To make matters even worse, her parents' marriage was in serious difficulty, and there was terrible tension in the family. Her parents finally divorced when V was 15 years old. One of V's few positive memories is being proud of her mother's sewing abilities and the fact that her mother made her several dresses. Before her teens, she got a job, and spent her money on clothes, learning the styles and finding she had a gift for creatively putting clothes together. During Valerie's growing up years, "Money was such an issue. It caused such problems it separated us from other people.. "There were so many elements of shame" When V was about 6 or 7 years old, her mother went to work, and according to V, her mother focused more on herself than ever, taking better care of herself and buying herself pretty new clothes. All the while, V and her brothers continued to wear hand-me-down clothes. V shared an ongoing fantasy then when she grew up and got married and had children, she would give her kids many more things than she ever had. The family felt inferior to the wealthy people in the town, and were treated thusly, knowing their place in the social world.. It's as if they were invisible and of no worth. "I GOT THROUGH LIFE IMAGINING BETTER" She says "There was Us and there was Them" There were stores in this small town that she and her family would never dream of entering; indeed she could sense how uncomfortable her father was even with the prospect of having to go to town. V's father to this day, although an intelligent, hardworking and steadfast man feels of little value and always puts himself down; particularly in relation to more powerful wealthier people. Certainly being from a lower class family in her milieu has had a defining impact on Valerie.

Valerie was a smart, creative and exceptionally pretty girl and developed a sense of wanting to be more and have more, in both financial and emotional terms.. She yearned for pretty things and for attention. From late latency on, she was neither without a boyfriend. She became sexually promiscuous in her early teens (Around 7,8 years of age, she had been sexually grouped by a friend's minister grandfather and had a number of sexual encounters with her cousin where she was caught, punished and horribly ashamed.. In fact "whippings" was the standard form of punishments for any infractions, just as her parents before her had been punished by their parents.. V said they didn't know any different or any better. By her early teens, when her parents were separating, she had been pretty much left on her own. She became promiscuous and had several abortions. Finally, her father took her to live with him and helped reign her in. She has been eternally grateful for his intervention. V realized she had a sense of style, she sewed, learned how to put clothes and herself together in a way that was pleasing to her and to others. She devoted a great deal of energy and time to her looks; her skin, her hair, her body, her figure, her clothes. In that regard I am reminded of sociologist Carolyn Steedman's work. (*Landscape For A Good Woman* .Rutgers U Press, 1991) where she movingly recounts her childhood growing up with her working class mother in England in the 50's. Steedman writes about "people's complexity of relationship to the historical situations they inherit." In her rendering of her and her mother's accounts, I saw striking parallels to Valerie during her growing up and into her adult years. Steedman reviews her mother's life through the prism of her working class status. Her mother aspired for more and she felt the envy and exclusion that accompanied her class status. Both Valerie and

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

Stedman's mother, although a generation and a half apart, and living in different countries and very different locales, both were intent on "making good, developing their style, capitalizing on their beauty. Both were filled with social fairy tales about making good. And Valerie did what Stedman describes her mother as having done. "My mother did what the powerless, particularly powerless women, have done before, and do still: she worked on her body, the only bargaining power she ended up with, given the economic times and the culture in which she grew." (P.141)

Steedman says (p38) My mother knew where we stood in relation to this world of privilege and possession. ..we learned through magazines and anecdotes how the goods of that world of privilege might be appropriated, with the cut and fall of a skirt, a good winter coat, fine leather shoes, a certain voice: but above all with clothes , the best boundary between you and a cold world." Steedmann's mother refrain was "She Was Only a Bird in a Gilded Cage"

{ It's the same the whole world over

Ani't it a bleeding shame

It's the rich what get the pleasure,

It's the poor what gets the blame.}

Never without a boyfriend, V married before she was 19 years old and shortly after had her daughter. She left that marriage because she was not satisfied with her husband, She promptly remarried , but grew bored with her second husband ,wanting more. Shortly after leaving her second husband, she met an actor who made a substantial amount of money. For the first time in her life, V had expensive clothes and jewelry She was exposed to many new experience. One such experience was leaving the rural area where she grew up and where all her friends and family were and moving to LA. She had never been in a plane before, nor had seen an ocean. They lived in a wealthy area of town,. V met some older wealthy women who befriended her and from whom she learned many of the social ways of the wealthy. It's as if she was in training ;her form of education. Truly a whole new world, literally and metaphorically a whole terrain opened up for her. "I faked it til I made it....I figured it out." If she had ever been a bird in a gilded cage, she was now set free. However, the relationship grew more and more problematic. Her boyfriend became addicted to drugs.and was emotionally very abusive to her. She grew extremely anxious, Although she had had some savings, she didn't know how her and her daughter would survive without him. She had initiated some earlier separations from him and was just at the cusp of permanently leaving him, when she met her future husband. . . .

V came into treatment at the urging of her then boyfriend Ted.. He himself had been in therapy for a number of years and he thought it would be helpful to her as well. She had never been in therapy before ,but had tried many self help and alternative routes to deal with her symptoms. At first a bit reluctant, she became increasingly engaged with me and the process. V knew she had much work to do around her feelings toward her mother and her entire growing up. As she gradually became more comfortable with me, she told me about her numerous emotional difficulties, her recently ended relationship to her abusive boyfriend and her growing love for, and whirlwind romance with, her new wealthy boyfriend who had recently ended his marriage. Each of them had a child from a former marriage.} She began to share some of her suffering with me. Despite all the new excitement in her life, she had moments of heaviness, depression, and anxiety. She had suffered from panic attacks when she first came to LA with her last boyfriend, She said she knew she had a temper and could be irritable and moody at times. Slowly V began to share some of her shameful and guilty feelings with me. Shame, guilt and bad feelings

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

about herself are prominent features of her self organization, and we continue to devote much attention to them, as well as her tendency to quickly lose her temper when she feels she's not being well treated.. Further, she has had serious premenstrual tension, with a marked alternation of her mood. Gradually we fashioned a way to work together, increasing our meetings to three times per week. To my delight I discovered that V had much more inner substance than I might have thought. She was neither empty headed nor conniving nor any of the other stereotypes one has about women who strive to be beautiful, are very invested in their appearance and seem only interested in superficial material things., and are clearly interested in marrying "up;"; marrying a man with money. In fact, she is a highly intelligent,, very bright, very curious, thoughtful women with a developing capacity for self reflection and insight and a sense of conscience.. She learns very quickly, is very ambitious to do, be., and have more. She has many natural gifts and talents,e.g. her decorating skills, her style, her cooking abilities, her athleticism, running her household etc. She is a moral person and feels a social responsibility to give back to less advantaged children in the area where she grew up. Although she suffers and struggles, in some fundamental ways I see her as "having a foot on the ground, rather firmly planted in the soil. She has good sense and the capacity to exercise very sound judgment. Regarding her new social position , which she adapted to rather impressively, she has made some comments such as" I feel as if I have gotten all my tokens at Chuckie Cheese, but now where's my prize? She has had to grapple with being an employer of her household help;something so foreign to her. Recently she said having all this help, especially with the baby, is both "a blessing and a curse."

THE RING

Months into her therapy/analysis with me V came in sporting a gorgeous diamond ring ,beaming she said "I hit the jackpot! . It was gigantic It was dazzling and I was dazzled by it! The light reflecting off its many prisms ,if not blinding, was certainly eye catching and strikingly beautiful. I don't know if I've ever been in such close proximity to such a diamond. (Perhaps you can tell that I very much like diamonds and visually and viscerally respond to their brilliance.)

Through our three years together, I've come to see some of the meanings of the ring for her and for me. She wears the ring all the time' doesn't put it aside for special dressy occasions; in fact, wears it with her work out clothes. In the context of talking about "them and us" on day she held out her hand with her diamond ring and diamond wedding band and thrust it in the air, saying "This is my armour, my jewelry, my clothes, my appearance". I realized with a start, that I had never conceived of her diamond ring in such a light. Rather I had been experiencing it as an object of absolute purity, brilliance and beauty; a thing in its own right.

V. She recounted to me, that as she was walking down the aisle , she was saying to herself, "I made it, I made it". V is very dedicated to her husband and very caretaking, at earlier times, quite excessively so.{ Although fully committed to her, he's a rather narcissitic man and easily feels wounded if she voices a desire .or an emotional request.} There have been a lot of struggles with blending their families and considerable tension , although they both have been working on that in addition to each of their conflicts around intimacy.; and they seems to have made remarkable progress..{V has also come to see and has worked a lot on her wishes and fears of intimacy . V had a fairly serious postpartum reaction after the joyous birth of her little boy. She is presently seeing a psychopharmacologist who has diagnosed her as having a mild to moderate bipolar disorder..}

V is one of those handful of patients that we all have who we are particularly involved with. I am very fond of her. I can honestly say I love her and care about her deeply. Even though we are of different generations and come from such different psycho economic, social , political backgrounds(indeed this working classes family all idealized Ronald Reagan; He was their hero)and our families had very different dynamics, I have a real empathic

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

appreciation for what she experienced growing up and who she is now. I respond to her experience of poverty, physical and emotional abuse and neglect, the thwarting of her desires and overall deprivation. To some extent she is like the invulnerable child, who survived despite all odds. In fact, she describes herself as a "survivor" living in a war zone. I think I especially resonate to her invulnerability. And her strivings to make things better (albeit in materialistic terms) I do think that her capacity for "imagining better" helped get her through her life.

Of course she is not unscathed; quite the opposite. She is depressed, she does have a mood disorder (I'm not sure about bipolar). It's hard for her to maintain a good enough image of the other during the times when she feels disappointed in them or by them. It's as if they turn into an all bad depriving other..

The transference, counter transference is complex and far from fully flushed out. V definitely keeps me at a distance, as she does most people. There are disassociative parts to her.. We've begun exploring the "us" and the "them" to see how much is alive in the transference. About a year ago, my husband and I were entering a restaurant and I ran into V and her then fiancée. When we subsequently talked about it, she talked in very positive terms about me going out late in the evening and was pleased and (maybe relieved) to see me having a good time and able to enjoy such a lovely restaurant... It's important for her to see and feel that I'm fine, doing well and able to enjoy my life. At least she doesn't have to worry about me or take care of me or worry about my making demands on her. She has said a number of times. "I like it when things are good for you. It makes me feel happy...." She worries about my censure, my judgment of some of the shameful things she's done. She fears I will find her to be whiner and a complainer or superficial and too preoccupied with her looks. . She worries I will find her ungrateful and not adequately appreciative of all she has., etc. Several months ago she had the following dream (10/9/08) Coming in she said "I had a bizarre dream about you. We were in a session, but the setting was different. You were in casual clothes, and someone else was present. We were having girl talk. You divulged to me you understood what I went through with Johnny (Her previous abusive boyfriend) because you had had something similar. I felt good and happy that you told me something really private and that you trusted me with that. In her associations she said "All the stuff around you felt so real. All that closeness I felt for you- like a breakthrough closeness and even the other person had very nice energy and she was your best friend. She then went on to associate to one of our last sessions where she said "I felt you were looking out for me and that made me feel closer to you"..." I don't have people who do that. Never when I was growing up and T doesn't stand up for me with his ex.." I'm not feeling heard. He's not looking out for me.....It's almost as if you were a mother figure. You were telling me this...I was in bliss "

In many ways, V has taken to analysis. Talking about things, no matter how shameful and uncomfortable, making sense of her life, her behavior, her feelings and putting them in perspective without being so judgmental have felt very beneficial. Despite her depression, she seems to thrive on seeing patterns and putting things together in a meaningful way. She's a fast learner in every sense of the word and has used her analysis in a very impressive way, making great strides quickly.

Since this presentation is focusing on money, I will share some of my transference feelings regarding her new found wealth and altered life style. There's quite a range of feelings I have experienced; most are transitory; some wax and wane, some persist... One set of feelings I've observed in me that arises from time to time is a sense of feeling less than, smaller. These set of feelings may well mirror the kind of feelings V had during her growing up years, and also tap a particular vulnerability within me. .These feelings might manifest themselves in different ways. For ex. I routinely have fresh flowers in my office that I usually purchase at a local Farmer Mkt. One day the thought drifted through that she employs a person a ½ or whole day just to do the flowers throughout her entire home. From time to time I can find myself making little comparisons like that, where the difference between us are quite striking. .My office is in my home and we have been doing some landscaping. Growing up in such a rural

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

area, V likes the outdoors and nature. She has commended about a new dwarf lemon tree we have planted in quite a beautiful large planter. . She noticed it wasn't doing well at first and lately she's talked about its growth. She and her husband have embarked on a huge project to build a large home with a vast amount of acreage near where she grew up. They are in the process of digging a lake, having a farm, growing an orchid. I couldn't help comparing my one dwarf lemon tree with her acres of soon to be orchards. Or some times I think about the relative smallness of my house in relation to her grand home. Sometimes I will notice another piece of important jewelry she has, and again compare a similar piece of jewelry that I might be wearing;, while, it might be lovely, is clearly of a different caliber.

Sometimes I think how much easier life would be for me if I could have some of the options, choices and possibilities that V has. I also jump to thinking about my daughter who is a bit older but close in age to V, who has a husband and two small children. I think how much easier and freer her life would be if she had even some degree of the financial resources V has. She wouldn't have to struggle with money, she could easily send her children to private schools, she could live in a much needed larger house and not have to watch her budget so carefully

Certainly, its not as if I don't have friends and other patients who are far wealthier than I., or who have a life that seems more fortunate and better to me than mine. And I know something about my vulnerability towards feeling envious, jealous, and left out.. But by and large my envious feelings do not tend to be of such a heightened nature that they cause me any major duress, or are beyond what I can reasonably handle for myself. Nor, do I necessarily always feel envious when others have more. Sometimes it's essentially no issue at all for me; just a fact. What is unique for me with V is that I've never seen up close both the extent of wealth that V has and even more, such a dramatic turn around in her life.

Upon closer consideration even though at times I engage in some of the comparisons I shared with you above, it's not primarily envy I feel towards V. What has been tapped in me is far more profound and existential. What I have been forced to acknowledge and work with is my growing awareness that there will be much that I will never have or experience. My work with V and what it has aroused in me forces me to face my finiteness. My stage of life. It's not, as in the past, I could say to myself, I'm not doing it, having it, being it now, but maybe some day, maybe down the road , I will—-. It's about me having to look at possibilities closing off as I get older. Possibilities narrowing as I move through my life cycle.now being in my later mid life. It's sobering, to be sure, but none the less, it's the necessary task at my time in life. I have to face that I will never have that ring, literally and figuratively . Earlier,, I might have felt the option was still open for me,.not likely, but—-. It's a weighty business, but necessary internal work to do for my process of individuation. I am having to look at my limits. In 1998 Judy Vida and I wrote a paper entitled "As Far As Possible": Discovering Our Limits And Finding Ourselves". In that paper we talked about a particular kind of limit. Namely, when we were no longer able or willing to stretch ourselves in our work with some particularly difficult patients. ...(1932 Notes and Fragments).} We concluded in our paper that the "discovery of one's limits is a vital part of one's ongoing development as an analyst." Transposing those idea a bit, I would say that discovering my existential limits is an unavoidable requirement as one ages, and I am grateful to my patient and to our work together with its particular constellation of challenges that have enable me to look at these limits without getting in the state of ego-indebtedness..

As a result of working with V I am having to face my limits of my aroused desire and hungers (Shade of Henderson the Rain King's I want, I want..). I have had to see that some of the opportunities V was having, I would never remotely have. Possibilities are narrowing. Fortunately I am able to enjoy her possibilities and fully engage my capacities for generativity.; further helping me to move into a state of ego integrity. I do not feel devastated at looking at my limits, because overall I feel quite fortunate in my life. I have had, and continue to have a very rich,

Money Makes the World Go Around or Does It?

By Samoan Barish

full,(sometimes too full!) satisfying life. Yet again, I've had to acknowledge that I am an ordinary human being, full of longing and contradiction.

Working with this patient, and preparing for this presentation, fortunately does not end up with my feeling deprived, or less than, or like H C Anderson's Little Match Girl hungry and left out in the cold,. Rather, , I feel more appreciative than ever, for all that I am and have in my life. Further, in exploring my attitude about money through the process of writing this paper, I feel I have made some headway in arriving at what Needleman refers to as a "fresh observation of nearly the whole of one's life". Dare I say that in many ways I feel very wealthy!

I conclude with a Kurdish fable, courtesy of Robin Winslow, a Jungian analyst in L A who some 8 years ago gave a presentation about Money.

A Case of Gold

A man is sitting on a rock . Next to him is a case of gold. The man picks up a coin from the case, studies it, and throws it into the sea. He picks up another coin and does the same thing. . A wise man walking by, stops and asks, what are you doing? I am throwing the coins into the sea. Why ? Because I am practicing non attachment. The wise man next asks , Why then don't you throw the whole case in ? The man answered. This attachment I have needs to be struggled with 1000,000 times.

Samoan Barish MSW U.C. Berkeley; DSW USC; PhD New Center for Psychoanalysis; Sanville I. Former Dean & Current Faculty; SCPI Faculty; AAPCSW President; IFPE Board; Private Practice Santa Monica, CA

LIVING WITHIN THE SURROUND OF DEATH: REGULATING TRAUMA/DISSOCIATION/SELF
AND OTHER IN THE ANALYTIC SURROUND

By Edie Boxer

I often use literature and poetry as a way to inform and expand my thoughts and feelings. In that spirit, and in keeping with the theme of my paper, LIVING WITHIN THE SURROUND OF DEATH: REGULATING TRAUMA/DISSOCIATION/SELF AND OTHER IN THE ANALYTIC SURROUND, I offer an excerpt from a child's book as an introduction to my presentation.

"For a long time I used to go to bed early,
But now I go to bed late.
I am not sleeping at night.
And I wake up in the dark,
And my mind is spinning.
And I start to go into a panic.
And that's when I have to switch on my Ruby flashlight-I keep it by my bed.
It's in the shape of a piece of wood.
It's disguised, like most Ruby things.
I am currently reading THE RUBY REDFORT SURVIVAL HANDBOOK: WHAT TO DO WHEN
YOUR WORST WORRY COMES YOUR WAY....
It is a very handy book and it is crammed with brilliant ideas.
Most of them involved standing still.
For instance, what to do if a tiger comes along-
Stand still.
And the whole book is about escaping or getting out of and dealing with tricky situations.
You wouldn't believe some of the tricky situations Ruby can get into, and although it is unlikely that
I will find myself in a swamp with an alligator,
Who can say that I won't?
And what I always think is, I would rather know
Something than not know something.
Don't you think?" (Pages 6-7)

I find it hard to escape the fact that death includes everyone. I vividly 'live death' whenever I allow myself to think about *actually dying*; I am frightened, and want to get as far away as possible from the incomprehensible notion of no longer living my life. I know that I am not alone with this overwhelming feeling of impermanence. The French Renaissance writer Michel de Montaigne wrote, "There is no place on earth where death cannot find us- even if we constantly twist our heads about in all directions as in a dubious and suspect land... If there were any way of sheltering from death's blows... But it is madness to think that you can succeed..." (Page 15)

'Living death' became my conscious daily companion from the age of nineteen. I was home from college, alone in the living room of my parents' house, watching television when, for no apparent reason with which I can associate, I felt terrified at the idea of 'no longer existing'. I do remember the sensation of being flooded with dread and then almost instantly knew a solution: to live my life as fully as possible (whatever that meant) and the terror

subsided. In my late teens, I had convinced myself that there was no need to worry- I had so many years ahead. But, in my sixties, I realize that time has flown by with the proverbial less ahead than behind me.

I am struck with the realization that I did not talk with anyone about this 'sudden' onset of terror or how I decided to manage it. I just knew that I was supposed to know how to take care of things and to do it perfectly. Feelings and their impact had never been a topic of discussion in my family; there was no avenue of expression – except my mother's rage. Following these rages, there was her silent withdrawal until I figured out some way to break the silence and reconnect with her. At the same time, I dissociated my own thoughts and feelings of sadness, hurt, fear, and anger.

In the years since that significant evening, I have come to know that I was born with a sensitive self already in place. If my self-hypothesis is correct, it is a starting place to understand my preoccupation with reminiscing, connection, separation, and death. I have always felt vulnerable when exposed to the ordinary, yet painful events in life, which leave one with a lingering sense of sadness. Now as I recall dissociated memories, it makes sense to me that I was sad and lonely. I only existed in my mother's mind as her object that she needed to perfect so that she could see herself as having done a perfect job of raising two children. Socarides and Stolorow in their seminal article, "Affects and Self-Objects" wrote, "We believe that what is crucial to the child's (or patient's) growing capacity to integrate [her] sadness and [her] painful disappointments in [herself] and others is the reliable presence of a calming, understanding caregiver, irrespective of the 'amount' or intensity of the affects involved" (p. 75). Thank goodness, to say the least, for the responsive others in my life who have helped me to experience myself as feeling more interconnected and vitalized. Still, as I grew up, I often felt a lingering preoccupation with sadness, loneliness, and death.

The rediscovery of an event that happened over sixty plus years ago allowed me to understand the genesis of my ongoing thoughts about death. What I did not know early in life was that my parents lost their first-born child/son. He died after four or five days of life from a heart condition and was buried. I learned this information when I was ten years old, calling out to my mother, who was in a near-by room, to ask if I could dress my doll in the baby clothes I discovered in a closet. My mother told me that I could not use the baby clothes. She said they belonged to her first child who had died after several days. I remember asking her a few more questions, but there was never another discussion with her, my father, or my older brother. Since I remembered this moment, I realized I have many feelings and thoughts that went unacknowledged and unanswered.

During one of my own analytic hours, as I recounted an experience from a recent seminar, I rediscovered this early memory. Prior to the seminar, one of the facilitators had sent an email saying that the meeting would be held despite the very recent death of her mother and brother-in-law. She wrote, "Life does and will go on, not in denial of loss but in embracing it, using loss to enlarge sensibilities and experience. That is, after all, the message of this year's piece of literature suggested for the seminar [Ted Chang's "Stories of Your Life] how a shift of perspective makes loss part of life and of living and learning" (Vida, 2008, personal communication).

Despite that welcoming beginning, I struggled with hearing about death and loss and really wanted to leave. Instead, with the encouragement of my colleague, I began to talk during a break about my experience and feelings of increasing disconnection and deadness. When we reconvened, one of the facilitators responded to me with a statement about facing into the challenge, to talk about what was on my mind. I immediately felt alive and engaged with his words even if I could not then or now state exactly what he said. I just remember feeling like there was air in the room and in my lungs!

Living Within the Surround of Death: Regulating Trauma/Dissociation/Self and Other in the Analytic Surround
By Edie Boxer

As we continued dialoguing, I heard my inner voice saying 'I want to live as expansively as possible within the context of making my fears, including the inevitability of death, as manageable as possible'. As the facilitator said something about my fears being about loneliness, I could then let myself know that I was often a very lonely child. I 'forget' that because it has not been my experience in the last forty plus years. But, I also 'know' that loneliness and figuring out how to manage loneliness can still be part of my state of mind. In that moment, hearing his words, I did not feel alone.

As I mentioned, it was at my analytic hour that I began the session by telling my analyst about the seminar. He noted that death and the shock of hearing troubling news is often with me. I often start or end my sessions talking about my fear of death and about sudden, frightening traumas. This state of mind is the backdrop of my fears and often predominant in my thinking as I attempt to regulate my anxiety. At that moment, as my analyst wondered what could have happened to make me often think of death, I made the connection in my mind that I had not thought about since I was ten years old. We both stopped as he said something like, "My God". He was as clearly stunned as was I and commented that no wonder I have death on my mind! I was shocked to know that I had never connected this event/set of facts to my worries. I certainly could never figure out why death was predominant even when I was working on exploring other thoughts. He made the observation that there was death in the house- in many ways besides this standout loss- and that the air was filled with heaviness among many other stifling styles of relating.

I am certain that there was never another discussion of my brother's death. It was just part of the dissociated fabric of our family. As an adult and a psychoanalyst, I know the impact of such events on a parent(s), subsequent siblings – the family as a whole. As a child, I only knew it as a fact that I did not know before I opened the closet door and did not know much more after my mother answered me. At least she was able to tell me the truth. Unanswered questions, my curiosity about how they managed to go on will never be answered. I can only imagine.

Interestingly, the rest of that pivotal week brought many important considerations professionally as I noted and seemed to linger over and consider my patients' pain. I found myself feeling very connected to them. Thus, in the balance of this presentation, I hope to demonstrate the usefulness of the analyst's on-going self-reflection and willingness to discover, not only one's own metamorphosis, but also all that that means in the whole of the analytic surround.

One patient, Jay, highlighted the fact that as I was going through my own process of self-discovery, I became more enlivened and curious about him. Each time we meet, we are confronted by his psychological survival and self-imposed feeling of impending death that puts him in jeopardy on an on-going basis. His thoughts and fears are expressed in such a way that mental health professionals who have treated him previously termed his behavior "psychotic".

While we were piecing together more of his narrative history, I began to hypothesize to myself that his unarticulated traumas were active contributors to his elevated level of fear helping me to see his seeming psychosis as a dynamic interplay of these dissociated experiences.

Through this new lens, I have discovered that I am beginning to provide an innovative link to his life, even though he cannot yet consider the luxury of living more expansively or, at times, the possibility of survival in the moment given the inevitability of trauma and mortality. He cannot yet consider many of my thoughts that may give some meaning to his historical trauma and he struggles against allowing his deepest fears to become known to him. While an internal panel of biblical judges assaults him psychologically, mainly at night into the morning, (as he said "Well, I am in crisis."), he is more and more permitting me to have a glimpse into his experience of frightening

persecution: allowing me to bear that which he can not manage by accepting my empathy and support while all the while insisting that there is no link between his terrifying, auditory experiences and any past or current traumas.

I would like to provide, at this point, some general information about Jay and about our work over the past six or so years. He is in his mid 60's and self referred. He is the oldest of three children – his two siblings were born to his parents when Jay was eight and seven years old. He continually reports a seemingly uncomplicated family life with a supportive family. Both of his parents have died during the course of the treatment. He has never specifically talked to his family about his symptoms, but they do know that he has a hard time both with physical symptoms and anxiety. In fact, he has often cancelled trips home at the last moment. When he has been able to go, he is usually sick or, on one occasion, consumed with anxiety, called me, and then decided to return to Los Angeles the next day. Jay attended a well-respected boarding school in high school and a well-considered college. Following his formal education, he left his home state and ultimately became involved with community service work. Jay also began heavy drug use during the 60's and involvement in a spiritual group. He recently reported experiencing severe depression during this time, which ultimately led to his following the orders of one of the internal judges to jump from a building. He sustained a severe back injury, which required lengthy hospitalization and surgery. He has been married twice but with no children. He had some previous therapy and continues to be seen for a medication evaluation about every six months.

Jay has always been compliant with medication including anti psychotic drugs, but has always reported that they do not alter his symptoms. Over the time we have been meeting, I was mostly working in what I self-named, a social work model of support, education, and providing information. All the while, I had a hard time hearing about his internal world – a world that I could not relate to, but felt that I had to respect as Jay had no conflict with the idea that it existed. We wondered how we were going to be with his experiences and I was able to acknowledge that, for him, it was a large portion of his life and, therefore, I was more than prepared to work hard to accept how he thought about this impactful presence in his life.

In fact, over time, I resigned myself to offering only supportive therapy, to help him survive the turbulent times he described, as he was unable to consider or make use of any of my interpretations or most of my comments. I struggled with feelings that I knew were not that compassionate as I listened with undisclosed impatience to his litany of physical complaints, his low pain and anxiety tolerance level. I wanted him to choose the same path I chose many years ago – living as expansively as possible given the inevitability of time ending forever.

Often confronted with feelings of helplessness when he described his emotional and physical pain, I consulted with his various psychiatrists as they rotated through their training. Only one questioned Jay's working diagnosis of manic depression, with depression being the most recent symptom. This young psychiatrist and I wondered together how accurate this diagnosis was and considered others, such as schizophrenia, along with wondering why none of the medications Jay took reliably seemed to give him any relief.

Perusing the DSM provided even fewer answers to the questions I had as to an accurate diagnosis. On the other hand, as I worked on my own fears, I was also reading Philip Bromberg on trauma and dissociation for a class that a colleague and myself were preparing. I felt that there was more to Jay's historical narrative than he had articulated. One day, I was discussing with another colleague who specialized in working with unresolved trauma, my wishes, even need, of helping Jay choose my solution of living expansively, when she suggested that what appeared to be Jay's resolution was his way of striving creatively to survive the unsurvivable. I realized from that discussion that everyone attempts to heal in his or her own unique and innovative manner. I began to think

differently about the elaborate, creative behavior Jay enacts as a method to express his fears, anxiety, and unacceptable, scary feelings. Jay had said once, ***“If you don’t know the reason for your pain, it’s hell. You have to sit with it and it could get worse- and overwhelm you (me).”*** Now, it was time for me to sit with him and learn of his hell. I became far more able to engage with compassion and patience with Jay, and others of my patients, fundamentally shifting in how I listened to their stories. As I did so, I was able to elicit from Jay the unfolding of his historical trauma.

This narrative came out in bits and pieces over months interspersed with my empathic curiosity, occasional comments, and encouragement. I found out that Jay witnessed as a young child a friend being crushed to death while his mother told him everything would be all right. He was bullied by peers all the way through high school/boarding school where Jay was sent because he and his parents agreed that he wasn’t doing well in math and needed to begin succeeding. In fact, Jay was able to acknowledge that he was very different from his family in that getting up in the morning and being productive was not easy for him as it seemed to be for the rest of his family. He told me that his family moved often when he was quite young as his father moved up the corporate ladder; I gathered that he did not like the frequent moves. He had three terrifying dreams at ages five, seven, and nine that he did not tell his parents about as he thought they would not understand and that he was not sure he could explain these nightmares although he was terrified. He remembered his own emotional state as being happy to becoming depressed and having trouble staying focused and attentive after he experienced the dreams. Jay stated that his parents did the best they could particularly during his early twenties when he became a “long hair” and moved west. There, involving himself in drug use and a group that gave him spiritual guidance and support, Jay became extremely depressed, arranging to meet with the group leader. Trying to receive some help, he learned instead that the leader was embroiled in a sex scandal and unavailable. Jay dealt with what I think was his disappointment by literally jumping from a building on a directive from his internal world. I began to think about his dissociating because his feelings were unbearable. I realized that the overwhelming quality of his feelings could only be tolerated by his explaining their causality as the result of the internal judges’ directives. I began to see him as very lonely with no one to help him transform his terrified and unacceptable thoughts and feelings by sharing them. Instead, he became more and more agitated ending in the jump. In fact, Jay is extraordinarily lonely with no one but these judges as his counsel. Now, after a very long time where I was not able to really recognize his experiences, much was opening up for me- but not necessarily for him.

I continue to hypothesize that his internal world is a creative, albeit, painful way for him to understand what he can’t face. That is, no one has been able to comfort him, make him and his world safe in the reality of trauma that has been ever present in his life since early childhood. Since he seems to have been or felt essentially alone, trauma has gone unarticulated and he has, unknowingly, devised an internal world that helps him to understand his life and to contain unbearable, unacceptable feelings. It is a way – his way to feel safe – just as I have my way to keep on going – despite the knowledge that he will die one day. ***“Death is formidable- the ultimate in lack of control,” Jay told me one day to my astonishment.***

A session in mid October illustrates my thoughts about what he deals with and how he dissociates his fears, thoughts and feelings on a regular basis. He came into the session telling me that he felt in crisis: that is, after I asked what he meant by being in crisis: off center, not solid, disconcerting.

Jay focused on the fact that if he could convince these internalized judges to think differently about life’s priorities, purpose- what life is about, living would be better for everyone because it would mean the end of Jay being harassed. Jay explained to me that if he could be successful in getting the judges to stop their harassment, he

could feel safe and not upset which would make him more powerful rather than feel victimized. He wouldn't have to ward off feelings of anger.

At the session I am describing, Jay went on to say that he doesn't get angry very often because it is too scary. He told me that a man at his previous place of employment got angry all the time and that it was scary. He went on to state that anger is a type of poison, that the man at his office used to get angry for no good reason and that he was miserable. Recently Jay got a call from his former employer to say that the angry man committed suicide. It sounded to me that Jay found that perfectly reasonable, as the man was so angry. I tried to continue the topic of anger and he began to share more of his thoughts. He is relieved that he does not often feel angry because it backfires, is uncomfortable, brings you down, is not a good idea, and is negative. He has gotten angry, but he tries not to express the feeling. He also told me that in high school there was a student who made sure he got what he wanted. He was demanding and powerful and would override what Jay wanted to do.

I felt rather stunned to hear his thoughts and let him know that he has endured many challenging and scary experiences. I reminded him that he did not tell his parents about his three terrifying dreams because he did not think that they would understand and he could not explain himself. I told him that he has been alone and misunderstood. He has had to form a plan to feel safe. During this session, he characterized one of the internal judges as a New York judge helping him to remove the rest of the judges to Africa to be placed in a refugee camp where there were many black bodies, a great deal of poverty, and the place where they would be sent would be too far away to come back. I thought to myself that he was finding a new solution – one that would send these internal persecutors so far away they could never come back to harm him- he could experience himself as more powerful. The session was coming to an end, so I shared my warm feelings by letting Jay know about my idea that as we talked about his world, perhaps he would not have to feel so alone anymore.

And then there is Jay and I – our relationship. It is, of course, part of human nature to relate to others. How that “looks” and is experienced is as diverse and potentially complicated as the number of people on earth. In his volume “Loss”, John Bowlby writes, “This... volume... explores the implications for the psychology and psychopathology of personality of the ways in which young children respond to a temporary or permanent loss of mother-figure” (p.1) Philip Bromberg tells us that trauma doesn't have to be massive trauma. It can operate just as much and sometimes more extensively when early “developmental trauma” has created areas of dissociative mental structure with or without subsequent massive trauma. This form of trauma is also called relational trauma and is of such significance because it shapes the attachment patterns that establish what is to become a stable or unstable core self. The part that I am underlining in this presentation is relational trauma and its impact on both Jay and myself as individuals. The purpose of this presentation is not to expand the theoretical underpinnings of dissociation, loss, or attachment. But, the context is apparent, as I have described the early occurrences in both of our lives. Perhaps Barack Obama expresses my point both succinctly and sensitively when he wrote about the time when he was ten years old and his mother sent him back to Hawaii at the age of ten, to live with her parents and attend prep school. He describes “an adolescence shadowed by a sense of alienation. I didn't feel [her absence] as a deprivation, but when I think about the fact that I was separated from her, I suspect it had more of an impact than I know.” (Time magazine)

“I don't like it when you leave.” That short declaration of intense feeling came during a session when Jay and I were confirming our meetings due to my previously announced time out of the office. It is one of the few instances that he ever mentioned a thought or feeling about our separation. As I acknowledged what we as therapists consider pretty standard feelings, I also began to explore more about anger in the family. Jay told me that anger was not part of the family- except when his father was occasionally angry which at the end of his life became

Living Within the Surround of Death: Regulating Trauma/Dissociation/Self and Other in the Analytic Surround
By Edie Boxer

overbearing and controlling. His mother was calm, cool and any anger was short lived; noting that she had a certain way to say no. It made me wonder if indeed all she could say to her little boy when he came running home to tell her that he had seen a child being crushed to death is it will be o.k.

I have been seeing Jay for about six years and this memory is about in the second year of treatment. In some ways, it now feels like a precursor to considering our relationship and the anger and loss that he feels at one point or another. I was away from the office and a colleague who was covering contacted me as I was vacationing. She told me that Jay had called and was not feeling good; he was not doing well emotionally. (I assume that meant he was having rough nights with the internalized judges) and needed to talk to her. She explained to me she suggested to Jay perhaps he was missing me. He definitively let her know that his mental condition had nothing to do with me. At the time, both my colleague and myself felt that her statement held a great deal of truth, but we both knew that was as far as it was going to go. I called him and he seemed to feel better with no further comments on my part regarding him missing me- or being angry with me.

Now, fast forward to our current work and his recent statement "I don't like it when you leave". Now I could ask him to talk about his thoughts. He let me know that they, as usual, were very limited. But, he did add that it felt like a pressure to cope with the situation and he had to tolerate it. I continued to pursue this sensitive area. I made some general statements like "My taking time away from the office affects you and I am the one who gets to choose." We talked about the safety of a regular schedule and that it helps him to feel less lost/lonely. There is a predictable structure to his life. He doesn't get a choice when I go away, but, I reminded him, he can say what he feels. In fact, I have been going away a bit more than I used to and we are in newer territory. He never asks where I go or what I am doing. I always have a colleague on call that he has met with and liked. He doesn't like paying the non-insurance fee, and so he often refrains from calling.

On the other hand, he has always contacted me when he is having a hard time with his internal world. Our phone calls are usually short- he seems to feel better when I respond by asking him how he is doing, what he is experiencing, and then he thanks me and says he will call again if he needs to. I never feel like he is taking advantage of me or my time and now that I feel more comfortable with his internal experiences and with my own, I do not feel so helpless or needing to do more than listen, support his action of reaching out thus helping him to regulate himself.

As I was beginning to work on this final portion of the presentation, I knew that I was going to struggle with describing Jay and my relationship. I know that we rarely talk about us unless I bring it up. I know that he doesn't give me much opportunity to do so. Our work focuses on him and how he is feeling either physically – even to the extent of the state of his bowel movements – or emotionally – or both. But, I am able to more carefully pay attention to those opportunities when we can include us into the relationship. Sometimes, however, when I am trying to suggest that he might feel – something – and I am practically alone stating my thoughts, he will ask if we can talk about something else! I am able to ask about his wanting to switch topics and he is just done with the topic. When I have been able to tell him – when he gives me the opening – what I think about him and his history and how it has affected/impacted his life, he is pretty quiet, but not requesting a change of subject.

Sometimes, I have noticed that following just such a moment or moments, the session goes on, but the next session he will report that he has had less interference at night. He doesn't know why (I usually ask if he has any ideas as to the causality) and I haven't gotten to the point of suggesting that perhaps it has something to do with the previous session where I told him I didn't think he was crazy or the cause might be that we are thinking and feeling together in a different way. I still don't trust that he would even begin to engage in that idea and I have

wondered to myself how careful I need to be so as not to dismantle the world that he has created. It is only with his internal life that he can make sense of his experiences and have a solution that will result in allowing him to contain his feelings and secure a peaceful, trauma free world. I believe that he is involved in this daunting task because he could not feel safe and comforted in his life and cannot tolerate the idea that his caretakers could not consistently provide an environment that would nurture his growth and development.

I often catch a glance of possible connection/affection, or hear Jay thank me for a return phone call, or for talking to him about the topics in which he is interested. He rarely initiates a conversation other than to ask me what movies I have seen or what is going on in the world.

As for me- in a clinical sense, I think that we are doing o.k. – we are continuing to establish and develop our connection, but moving very slowly- and I feel more tolerant of that. In some ways, I feel like I am coming out of a dissociated state that is allowing me to be more recognizant of Jay and his struggles as I am more empathic toward myself and my facing into my fears. We are both trying to make our way and when we are together, we are doing the same with me leading the way.

When I sit back and think about my work with Jay, I become even more aware of the major influences that I have talked about in this presentation that have helped inform my experience with him. I think also of Stephen Mitchell, one of the most well known relational school theoreticians who stated that “the relational analyst’s expertise lies solely in her ability to engage the client in the active creation of new life-meanings, meanings that offer him a wider range for personal engagement, authenticity, and freedom.” I think back also to my social work foundation and the work of Jessie Taft a social work therapist and educator who entered the field before the First World War and became a leading voice in social work at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work. She wrote in her professional biography published in 1962 “ The basic need of the individual, after all, is not pleasure but more life, to make more and more of the underlying energy accessible for integration, to go with the life process instead of fighting it, and to find and use his own capacity for relationship and for creativity, however slight.” (p. 336) I find it helpful to think in this way so that I can sustain myself when I wonder if I am being helpful; if he is developing a more integrated self – a self that is not so bombarded by either physical or emotional turmoil. In a session just before I left for Boston, he reported that he had nothing much to report other than he was reading and watching movies. I thought to myself that the fact he was able to concentrate on something other than his internal world was significant. He also let me know that the flu shot he received had affected him in that he felt like he had the flu. He told me of a series of symptoms and what he was doing to take care of himself and then, in answer to my question, reported that his internal world was quiet right now. I said something like that was probably a relief. But I know that we can only talk about certain facts with no reflection other than mine about the phenomenon of his threatening self-states. My hope is that as I continue to appreciate my own struggles, I can also continue to appreciate his and how he tries to cope with what confronts him daily while he learns to face his fears in a less punitive and sequestered, distinctive approach.

REFERENCES

- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and Loss: Vol 3 Loss: Sadness and depression*. New York: Basic Books.
- Bromberg, P. M. (2006). *Awakening the Dreamer Clinical Journeys*. Mahwah: The Analytic Press
- Child, L. (2006). *Clarice Bean, Don't Look Now*. Cambridge, Candlewick Press de Montaigne, M. The Essays of Michel de Montaigne, translated and edited by M.A. Screech (London: Allan Lane, 1991), p.95.

Living Within the Surround of Death: Regulating Trauma/Dissociation/Self and Other in the Analytic Surround
By Edie Boxer

- Mitchell, S.A. (1993). *Hope and Dread in Psychoanalysis*. New York: Basic Books, Socarides, D.S. Stolorow, R.D., Brandchaft, B. & Atwood, G. (1987). Affects and Selfobjects. In R. Stolorow, Brandchaft, B. & Atwood, G. (Eds.) *Psychoanalytic Treatment An Intersubjective Approach*. (pp.66-87). Hillsdale: The Analytic Press
- Taft, J. (1962). *Jessie Taft Therapist and Social Work Educator A Professional Biography* (Ed., Robinson, V.P.) (p.336) London: Oxford University Press

Please note that this is a partial reference list in terms of the absence of citations for the theoretical issue of unresolved trauma on page 6 (personal communication, Gwyn Erwin, 2008) and a quote from Time magazine by Barack Obama on page 10. Should you want a more complete list, please contact me @ edieboxer@earthlink.net.

CONFESSIONS OF A FORMER IDEALIZING PSYCHOANALYST

By Larry Green

The idea for this paper came about after having read a paper by Rachel Newcombe (2008). I would like to begin with the paragraph from her paper that sparked this paper. She writes, "I view this problem [the problem of an analyst sharing her vulnerabilities] as originating from the belief that as analysts we hold ourselves to a higher standard. We vigilantly observe each other, whispers turning to rumbles when colleagues reveal anything less than what we perceive as a well-analyzed life. For example, a well analyzed analyst would never get a divorce, have an affair, file for bankruptcy, be the parent of a teenager who is expelled from school, or gain fifty extra pounds" (p.6)

My idealization of psychoanalysts began with my own analyst who I first met as a freshman in college. I saw him on winter break after having gone to the college counseling center because I was having panic attacks. The college therapist was nice, an attentive listener, and gave practical advice. I felt a bit soothed by her listening but my attacks were still painfully strong. While at home on winter break I went to see a psychoanalyst. The analyst started making interpretations right away and it helped tremendously. I saw him twice a week for six weeks and my attacks diminished by 80%. I went back to school and then started seeing him again during the summer. After my first year of treatment with him my attacks became a thing of the past.

This left me feeling amazed, and curious about these conversations I was having with him. What was this miracle that came from talking? I knew our conversation was different than normal conversation but exactly how I could not explain. I was grateful, fascinated, and idealized my analyst and his method. He was nothing less than a real life magician to me.

Fast forward 2 years and I remember the place, and the emotions I felt, when I picked up my first psychoanalytic journal. I was in the UCLA Bio-Med Library on a study break and I decided to go check out the psychoanalytic section of the journals on display. I read articles in the International Journal of Psychoanalysis and the Psychoanalytic Quarterly. Reading how analysts thought and talked about patients filled me with excitement and a sense of the forbidden. I felt privy to the secrets of my treatment. I felt like I had entered the scorer's private library.

I think that was when I got the bug. I was an undergraduate student at UCLA and decided I wanted to learn about psychoanalysis. After a couple of fruitless classes in the psychology department, I learned that psychoanalytic theory was being taught in other departments on campus. My experience with two professors who were also analysts, only reinforced my belief that the training one had gotten as a psychoanalyst made him or her a special person.

This led me to want to become a psychoanalyst. While in graduate school learning about different therapies, I felt that analysts were not just therapists with a certain sub-specialty. In my mind, their training had made them the cream of the crop, the fighter pilots of the armed services, the brain surgeons of the medical profession.

My idealization was not only from the effectiveness of my treatment and the excellence of my teachers. I also needed to believe that my analyst was all powerful. My dependence on him felt so strong and my unconscious fear of being abandoned by failure so great, that I had to defend against any possibility that he could fall short or be wrong. I had not yet developed the emotional ability to trust and rely on people who were flawed or as Winnicott might say I, did not yet have faith in "good enough."

Confessions of a Former Idealizing Psychoanalyst

By Larry Green

My idealization of psychoanalysts played a crucial role in the development of my identity as a therapist and my professional ego ideal. I wanted to become an excellent, and even impressive as a psychoanalyst. I remember one of the first psychoanalytic conferences I attended while in graduate school. It was a morning with Joseph Sandler. His clinical thoughtfulness, his humble manner, and particularly his encyclopedic knowledge of the literature was impressive. I still remember all the articles he cited off the top of his head during the discussion period. I remember thinking, "That is cool. I want to be able to do that." Unfortunately, I also had the thought that anything less than that was falling short of what I should be. So in my hope to emulate that, I studied my tail off. I aspired to know early Freud, late Freud, ego psychology, object relations, Kleinian theory, and self psychology.

There is a difference between having goals and aspirations and an overly active ego ideal. Appropriate goals belong to the sphere of the ego. They come from a sense of authorship, from a sense of self, and a sense of play. But it was more than that. It was my demanding ego ideal. Freud (1923) said that his development of the concept of the ego ideal was a precursor to his theoretical development of the superego. The ego ideal searches to perfect oneself. The ego ideal looms over the ego with demands to be more to be better. Being more knowledgeable was not just something I wanted, it was something I needed for my self esteem, and that motivation interferes with play.

Many years ago I heard a Kleinian state that idealization always comes along with a complementary devaluation of the self. I had read that one frequently sees devaluation of others. But I had not previously heard that it involves a devaluation of the self, and this struck a chord with me. The metaphor that comes to my mind is that when you view others on such a high perch your own vantage point by definition is low.

Therefore, it was not just meaningful and satisfying for me to reach a certain level of knowledge and skill. I was trying to feel better about myself. Let me give an example. After I was licensed, I wrote an article that was published. I did not enjoy that process at all. It had become a self-inflicted homework project. I was writing to get published. I wrote the paper to prove I could achieve a level of competence. It was about the excitement of external validation, not about the joy of writing or the satisfaction of sharing my ideas.

A few years later, attending a psychoanalytic institute was wrapped up in the same wishes for validation. I was going to belong to a club that had special people in it, and being a part of it would enhance my sense of self. Again, the motivations here are different from wanting the education and access to a professional community. I did want these things as well, but that was not the magic I was chasing, that was a benefit of chasing the magic.

I have many examples that would demonstrate my idealization of analysts. But here are a couple of examples that speak to the intensity of my idealization. When I was in my first year class as a candidate, one day early on, some of other candidates were talking about the plastic surgery of some of the instructors. "Plastic Surgery?" I thought. This more than surprised me, I had trouble processing it. I had learned in my analysis that change was to take place from the inside. So in my idealizing state of mind plastic surgery was antithetical to the ethic of a psychoanalyst. It's as if I had arrived in heaven, looked around and saw angels with bandages on their noses. Since when do angels worry about their looks? Analysts too had freed themselves from such earthly concerns, right?

Here is another example which I find kind of funny looking back on it. While at a conference a supervisor of mine who is friends with Kris Bollas told me he was feeling extremely nervous about the presentation he was about to make. I remember thinking, "What do you mean? How could he be nervous?" He is Kris Bollas? Didn't he finish his analysis?"

Confessions of a Former Idealizing Psychoanalyst

By Larry Green

From my present perspective, it seems kind of silly to me. Of course analysts would be vulnerable to worries about their looks and would use the cultural solution to those worries as opposed to always using reflection and insight. Of course Bollas might still have fears about being accepted. Certainly analysts are vulnerable to the same concerns and worries others feel and sometimes even more so.

Now back when I was with my analyst, he was aware of my idealizing tendency and he interpreted it many times. He said that psychoanalysts stood for my parents. He said that I found it too painful to come to terms with who my parents were and the poor parenting they provided, that my idealization of psychoanalysts was a defense against the abandonment I felt as a child and the loss I would experience in the present if I was to face the emotional truth about them. He may have been right; however, his interpretations of my idealizing ways were not as effective as his interpretations of my anxiety.

Because my first analyst became terminally ill, I started with a second analyst. It was with this analyst that my idealizing nature changed. Over just a couple of years, I felt a dramatic internal shift. Metaphorically and literally, I felt the psychoanalytic stars coming down to earth.

I would like to speculate how this happened. First, my second analyst was much more self-disclosing. She would share her associations that involved her personal life. This gave me a greater sense of her humanness and that she struggled as well. In the space of my first analyst abstaining from sharing anything but an interpretation I would imagine him as having it all worked out, that he had somehow arrived. And when he interpreted this thought toward him as my idealization of him, it did not change my belief. Owen Renik (1993) writes that anonymity has a way of building up idealization at the exact time that the analyst is trying to destroy idealization with interpretations.

So the fact that my second analyst shared her humanness with me felt like it had a palliative effect. Before my therapy with her, I would have had the opinion that her self-disclosures just removed the issue from the transference or therapeutic relationship. Prior to my treatment with her, I would have said that her self-disclosures helped to avoid the problem of my idealization and therefore, would not lead to real change. My personal experience suggests a different story. I was beginning to see humanness all over, the analysts that I idealized were moving from being great to being human. Their strengths and weaknesses had become readily noticeable and quite normal to me.¹

Secondly, my analyst's internal attitude felt consistent with what she was saying. She did not seem like she needed to be perfect. She seemed accepting of her own humanness. I think her perspective on herself and others played an important role in my truly believing that I need not be perfect or even close to it. In retrospect I would suggest that her accepting attitude was detoxifying my perfectionist one.

My first analyst struggled with his own perfectionistic tendencies. This was an analytic blind spot for us because our subjectivities were aligned with regard to perfectionism. Analysis often takes place in space where the analyst appreciates and can empathize with the patient's feelings but can hold a different perspective as well. It's this difference that makes room for fresh perspective to become known.

Thirdly, I think my second analyst confronting me about my own ego ideal was helpful. These confrontations did not involve psychogenetic interpretations. I was already quite adept at trying to explain the historical antecedents to my beliefs. Rather, I was impacted by her consistently pointing out that I had little room for being less than perfect, that my search for eliminating all my conflicts and difficulties left me unaccepting of my own humanness. I think these comments really helped me the demanding nature of my superego and has allowed me to feel more at

Confessions of a Former Idealizing Psychoanalyst

By Larry Green

ease in the world. I think these comments also had an indirect effect on my idealized images of others. I have not only become forgiving of myself for being human, I have become more accepting of the shortcomings of others.

It is such a relief not having those expectations of myself and others. It is such a relief to listen to some famous analyst, some really articulate presentation, or some impressive piece of clinical work with a sense that this person is just as human as I am. To know that they may have written an impressive paper, but that it is possible that earlier that week they may have had a patient leave treatment, or problems at home, leaves me feeling more relaxed.

I want to apply my perspective to the psychoanalytic community's relationship with Freud. I see those that idealize Freud and those that devalue him. There are those that treat his writing like devoutly religious people treat the Bible- as transcendent truth. While others seek to denigrate his achievements by pointing out that he was a narcissist, a misogynist, etc. The view that he was just another human being with strengths and flaws seems less prevalent.

There are many ideas within psychoanalysis as to what gives rise to idealization. self psychologists speak of it as a normal process of development (Kohut, 1977), Klenians see it as a defense against aggression (Klein, 1945) . Others, like my first analyst, see it as a defense against loss and abandonment.

I would like to add to the ideas about the psychogenesis of idealization through some reflections on my own life. I remember that as a child I looked forward to growing up so I could have the knowledge and knowingness that adults had. They knew. My Dad in particular was sure of himself. I remember thinking that getting older meant that I could possess confidence and authority like my Dad appeared to possess. Now I look back and see that my Dad was working from what Fonagy calls a psychic equivalence mode (Fonagy et. al., 2002) My father saw himself as recording and knowing reality as it was, rather than knowing that all he had was a perspective which was subjective and fallible. As a child, I mistook his developmental deficit- his feeling that his thoughts were a perfect reflection of reality, with his having confidence in his thoughts and feelings. I think this played a role in my thinking that there were those that really knew and that with more knowledge I could be one of them. Therefore, when I was six I thought I would know when I was in high school. When I was in college I thought I would know when I was a graduate school, and on and on. I imagined that I would finally graduate from the unknowing child to the knowing adult. And this left me feeling that there was some pinnacle to reach, some level of understanding that would grant me a feeling of authority.

I finally understand it's a fallacy. There is no plateau of knowingness. And what a relief it is stop chasing this illusion. At psychoanalytic conferences it leaves me feeling more relaxed and more at play, rather than feeling I am in some kind of pecking order with the smartest ones on top.

To conclude, I want to ask you consider the role of idealization in psychoanalytic education. In this day and age where most of our practices consist of seeing people once or twice a week, what motivates candidates to commit to such an expensive and time consuming endeavor? Would psychoanalytic institutes exist without idealization? Does idealization hinder psychoanalysis or help it? And what have been your personal experiences with idealization? I look forward to your comments.

[1] I am not making a whole sale endorsement of self-disclosure. I have experienced advantages to anonymity as well. I found that with my first analyst I felt the relationship was more of a virtual reality where I had a lot play space to talk about my fantasies about my analyst. That aspect of the therapy diminished for me with my second analyst because I was more aware of her personal thoughts. But for me her technique was

Confessions of a Former Idealizing Psychoanalyst
By Larry Green

what I needed at the time because of how it helped me with my with my idealization. Meta-comment- I think I am bringing this point up because I want to say, lets not idealize any one particular way of working, neither anonymity nor self-disclosure.

REFERENCES

- Fonagy, P., (2002) Gergely, G., Jurist, E., and Target. M. *Affect Regulation and Mentalization and the Development of the Self*. New York. Other Press.
- Freud, S. (1923) The Ego and the Id. *Standard Edition*. v. X1X, pp. 1-66.
- Kohut, H. (1977) *The Restoration of the Self*. New York: International University Press.
- Klein, M. (1945) The Oedipus Complex in Light of Early Anxieties, *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 36: 11-33.
- Newcomb, R. (2008, April) The Underbelly of Joy. Paper presented at the APA Division 39 Annual Spring Conference New York City, New York.
- Renik, O. (1993) Analytic Interaction: Conceptualizing Technique in Light of the Analyst's Irreducible Subjectivity. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 65: 553-571.
- Winnicott, D.W. (1971) *Playing and Reality*. NewYork:Basic Books.

Laurence Green, PsyD. is a training and supervising psychoanalyst at ICP in Los Angeles who works with adults, adolescents, and families. He is a board member and co-chair of the history committee of IFPE and the co-chair of the 2009 IFPE Conference in Seattle.

A MEDITATION ON ENERGY WORK AND THE CHINESE CONCEPT OF MIND: PSYCHOANALYTIC APPLICATIONS

By Merle Molofsky.

...and you think maybe you'll trust him because he touched your perfect body with his mind.

Leonard Cohen, Selected Poems, 1956-1968

From the earliest days of psychoanalysis, mind and body have been inseparable. Sigmund Freud sought for a neurobiological foundation for the complexities of the mind, inherent in drive theory and exemplified in "A Scientific Project" and boldly stated as "The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego." Joyce McDougall explored mind/body oneness in *Theaters of the Body* (W.W. Norton & Company, New York and London: 1989). And recently, *Bodies in Treatment: The Unspoken Dimension* (ed. Francis Sommer Anderson, The Analytic Press, New York and London: 2008) explored psychoanalytic concepts within the context of various types of body work, such as yoga.

My more than 20 years of participation in a countertransference supervision group with Art Robbins taught me to use my bodily sensations as an integral part of my psychoanalytic work. My curiosity about the dazzling variety of the world led me to the art and religion and literature of many cultures, and to explore these cultures through body/mind practice, such as yoga, goju ryu karate, and Japanese ink painting. My most profound experience of an integrated body/mind came through crisis: after a diagnosis of a life-threatening illness, I began work with an energy healer, Robert Jokel, and the study of Soaring Crane Qi Gong. Qi Gong is 4,000 years old, and there are thousands of qi gong practices. Soaring Crane Qi Gong, developed in the 20th century by Master Zhao, Jin Xiang, is a series of five basic exercises, taking about 25 minutes to perform, and dedicated exclusively to the restoration and maintenance of physical health.

Qi is a form of energy, vital energy that sustains and informs our lives. We can quickly have an experience of energy moving in the body by holding our palms facing each other in front of us, perhaps 10 inches apart, and paying attention to the sensations in our palms.

Energy infuses matter and is inseparable from matter. Qi is an integration of energy and matter. The universe manifests qi, and we are in relation to the qi that surrounds us. We interchange our qi with universal qi in the same way we interchange oxygen and carbon dioxide when we breathe. Soaring Crane Qi Gong guides the interchange and sends the qi through the meridians (or channels) of our body in specific guided ways. We do this with our minds. We put our minds where the qi should be. Mind (yi) directs energy (qi).

When we attain a unity of mind with energy, we create change. Developments in neuropsychology exemplify this. Eric R. Kandel, in *In Search of Memory*, describes his neurological research that proved that synapses change with experience. Our entire system learns because we experience. Allan N. Schore definitively linked human brain development with the infant/mother dyad (*Affect Regulation and the Origin of the Self*, 2003).

Many cultures throughout the world, from antiquity to the present, have a frame of reference that values what we call energy. Energy is recognizable, perceptible, often as a special quality that people have an abundance of, a charismatic vibe. And frequently energy is synonymous with breath. From India, Hinduism offers "prana." From Japan, "ki." From Hebrew, "ch'ai." From Hawaii and the South Pacific, "mana." The ancient Greeks called it

A Meditation on Energy Work and the Chinese Concept of Mind: Psychoanalytic Applications
By Merle Molofsky

“pneuma,” and the ancient Romans, “anima,” which now is an essential part of Jungian thought. The Stoic philosopher Posidonius thought that the vital force in human life was emanated by the sun. In recent Western thought, we have Mesmer’s ‘animal magnetism,’ Schopenhauer’s “will-to-live,” and Bergson’s “élan vital,” or life force. In the 1930’s, Harold Saxon Burr, who edited the Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine, identified what he called the “L-Field,” a life field or energy field, postulating an electrodynamic theory of development, with the expectation of identifying the electromagnetic potential of the human body. And of course, in psychoanalysis, we have Wilhelm Reich and Alexander Lowen, with bioenergetic theory and orgone energy. Jack Lee Rosenberg did extensive work with integrative body therapy. Freud’s building blocks of human personality, as Mitchell and Greenberg so aptly put it, are the drives, initially ego drives, and ultimately, libido and aggression. Psychoanalytic theory begins with economic theory and the theory of the drives.

Literary critic and seminal thinker Harold Bloom speaks, in *The Book of J*, of Jacob’s struggle to obtain the Blessing. The Blessing is obtained from one’s father, and ultimately from God. Speaking of Jacob’s lifelong agon, Bloom says, “We can say that his drive defines the Blessing once and for all: it is for more life.” And again, “The Blessing extends and preserves one’s name.” (210). And further, “The Blessing gives more life, awards a time without boundaries, and makes a name into a pragmatic immortality, by way of communal memory.” (p. 211). Jacob is born a transgressor, a usurper, as his name suggests, born clinging to his brother Esau’s heel. He deceives his blind father and steals his brother Esau’s Blessing from his father. And ultimately, he wrestles throughout the night with an Angel of the Lord to obtain God’s blessing. Wrestling with the Angel is putting focused energy to use. It is a manifestation of qi. Jacob ascends a ladder to heaven. One way to conceptualize this is symbolically. The ascent up the ladder can be the rising and flow of qi, of prana, of the serpent power in Tantric systems. Jacob’s ladder can be seen as the energy centers known as chakras. According to Bloom, God values the manifestation of life force in those He loves, and in acknowledgment of that life force he rewards those he loves with more of the same, more life. In this sense, although Bloom would not use the term nor would the ancient Hebrews, Yahweh’s gift of more life is the gift of qi. In Chinese terms, qi is available to all who follow the Tao, who align their virtuous mind, their righteous mind, with energy. Qi surrounds us. We need to learn how to use it. In Carlos Castaneda’s fourth book, *Tales of Power*, the shaman Don Juan tells Carlos he will tell him the secret of life. And he does. He tells Carlos, and, through Carlos Castaneda’s written account, he tells us all. He tells us, “We are surrounded by eternity. All we need to do is learn to use it.”

Learning to use the energy that surrounds us is a life task. When we work as psychoanalysts and our analysands start to free themselves from their resistances, their defenses, their inhibitions, when they begin to acknowledge their desire, when they believe they can actualize their desire and actualize their potential, they are learning to use the energy that surrounds us. We use our qi and they find theirs.

As I began treatment for stage four lung cancer using cutting edge Western medicine, I also began work with energy healing with Rob Jokel, who taught me Soaring Crane Qi Gong. I practice Soaring Crane Qi Gong an hour or more a day, about 40 to 45 minutes in the morning and 20 to 25 minutes in the evening. I felt immediate and long lasting benefits doing Qi Gong, as a host of small ailments that seemed part of the fabric of my life began to clear up and disappear. Although I underwent a particularly virulent chemotherapy, being told that I would not be able to work, that I would be severely nauseous, and that therefore my diet would have to be bland and limited, I had absolutely no nausea, very little fatigue until the last several weeks of chemo, and although it was winter and I was constantly exposed to people who had severe colds and bronchitis, I never contracted any kind of infection. I became fascinated with how Qi Gong worked, which led me to a deeper study of Qi Gong. This paralleled my experience with psychoanalysis. I became fascinated with how my analyst was able to recognize and understand my unconscious process, which led me to study psychoanalysis.

Learning Qi Gong led me to a study of the Chinese concept of mind, which is integral to Qi Gong practice and which differs in significant ways from Western concepts. I will try to synthesize what I have learned from my study during the past two years.

Heart and mind are one. The word "Xin" means heart/mind. There is no differentiation between cognition and affective states. What is perceived is both understood and felt. Xin, heart/mind, guides us in our actions, in our behavior toward one another. As Alan Roland has documented, in other Asian cultures, such as India and Japan, the individual experiences oneself as a part of a social whole. Individualistic concerns are less important.

Tao, the Way or the Path, is intuited by heart/mind. Tao guides us, and xin puts Tao into action. De, or Virtue, is our internal Tao, an internalized Path in harmony with Nature. Because Virtue is both inherent and learned, innate and acquired, it eventually feels like our second nature.

Ren, which is understood as the quality of being compassionate, or humane, moves the Tao to action. The Tao is impersonal, but we are in harmony with the natural order of things by being fully human, therefore humane. Our compassion helps us become attuned to the Tao, the natural path.

Although not particularly an aspect of mind, the concept of "Jing", or vital essence, merits attention. Jing is the essential substance underlying all organic life, and therefore, is the force that is the source of all organic change. One way to conceptualize our experience of Jing is to think of it as reproductive energy, related to but identical with libido. It is the basis of reproduction and development, and has a supportive, nutritive function. Life depends on jing. Because jing is the potential energy that develops into feminine and masculine energies, yin and yang, it is the source of life. To be in harmony with Tao, the way of the universe, is to be in harmony with the interplay of these energies.

Virtue encompasses an inner sense of right and wrong, "shi" and "fei." We need to understand whether our course of action is right or wrong, in harmony with the Tao or out of harmony. Our integrated heart/mind, Xin, senses the right and wrong of each decision. Using our integrated heart/mind guides us to be in harmony with the Tao

There are several types of mind energy. De, Virtue, is our sense of right and wrong. Shen is spirit-energy. And yi, most often translated as mind, is a particular aspect of mind, a morally focused or righteous mind. Through moral focus, yi moves qi.

A psychoanalyst might notice in this description that these concepts assume that internal unconscious conflict can be resolved by the focus of heart/mind, the focus of being one with the unfolding and eternal Tao.

In short, the Chinese concept of mind and its relationship to the universe is one of interpenetrating unity. Mind and universe are in a sense inseparable. True freedom then is the experience of harmony, or oneness. Rather than struggling with the demands of nature, the human mind attains its full power when it is in accord with nature.

In performing Qi Gong, we aspire to a state of wu wei. Wu means not having, and wei means acting, doing. Wu wei therefore is doing without doing, an effortless being in harmony. Anyone who has devoted oneself to playing music, or doing athletics, or creating a poem or a work of art, has experienced wu wei. A contemporary translation of wu wei might be "being in the zone."

After practicing Qi Gong for awhile, I wanted to discover a link between energy healing, Qi Gong, the Chinese concept of mind, and psychoanalysis. The links eluded me. I had an intuitive sense that there were connections, and I kept drawing a mental blank.

I gave up thinking and began to observe.

Many psychoanalysts look to research to demonstrate the effectiveness and truth of psychoanalytic treatment and theory. How do we use scientific method, which relies on quantification, to demonstrate inner experience. One of the frustrations of using the scientific model is that so much of claims about psychoanalysis are essentially anecdotal, based on individual instances, essentially experiential. Empiricists in a certain way are romanticists. Empirical evidence is cognate with romanticist emphasis on intensity of experience.

Practitioners of Qi Gong, like practitioners of yoga, also emphasize the experiential nature of the activity. It cannot be taught through words, it can only be known through personal experience. The Tao de Ching, the Book of the Way of Virtue, begins by stating that the Tao that can be said is not the Tao.

According to Wikipedia (I have not found other sources to substantiate this), in the 1970's, the Chinese government began an effort to demonstrate via scientific study the efficacy and truth of Qi Gong practice and theory. They actually had some success in demonstrating a small but significant change in the electromagnetic field around someone who had just completed a Qi Gong practice. They have defined qi as measurable infrared electromagnetic waves, and have claimed that mobilization of qi by mental concentration causes changes in static water.

Whatever is demonstrable or provable here by definition remains on the outside of my experience. Only my own experience communicates anything about energy to me. But as a colleague who is a devoted drive theorist said to me, "Well, Merle, you do experience the drives, don't you? You experience libido and aggression." And sure enough, I do, you betcha.

My observations therefore focused on my own experience of Qi Gong and on watching Rob, the healer, work with me. I began to internalize his technique just as I had my own analyst's way of working.

Rob engages with my energy system, through touch and language and his perception of how I heal myself. As I began to observe and integrate his style and his technique, I found myself in part translating what he does into psychoanalytic terms, in part giving myself over to new concepts and new ways of being. For instance, his way of talking about my experience of my illness, from the cellular level to the physiological to the psychological, engaged me in visualizing bodily processes and personal attitudes. As a psychoanalyst, I can call this observing ego. In spiritual systems I've studied, it is called the Witness. Observing ego helps us to discover the drive for health that is present even in the most toxic and pathological states. We can understand the function of the symptoms, and also what the hidden gift in pathology might be – the pathway toward self-knowledge.

My understanding of the psychoanalytic attitude, the psychoanalytic stance, is that the analysand begins to identify with the analyst's interest, the analyst's curiosity. Analytic attitude creates observing ego. The same holds true with energy work. The energy worker's interest in the wholeness of a person, a person as process, enables that person to extend the same interest to the self. The self does not break down into separate components, but, rather, integrates. Integration is the goal of psychoanalysis, as we reclaim the split-off, repressed, denied parts of the self, of memory. Through energy work we integrate physiological events as an aspect of psychological and spiritual experience. The two styles of integrations are parallel.

A Meditation on Energy Work and the Chinese Concept of Mind: Psychoanalytic Applications

By Merle Molofsky

A potential integration of psychoanalysis, qi gong, and energy work involves the relationship of conscious and unconscious mind. In Soaring Crane Qi Gong, the conscious mind guides the qi, and unconscious processes become evident, though they are noted by the observing ego and allowed to subside. Yoga practitioners are taught to let thoughts arise and subside, to float by, and float out of sight. What if all unconscious process existed simultaneously with conscious mind, if we are mindful? When we achieve wu wei, "being in the zone," body and mind and feeling are integrated. In Qi Gong, as we use our virtue-mind to direct energy, the energy moves. It becomes second nature. As a baseball player swings a bat, or captures a ball in a mitt, as a gymnast tumbles through air until the gymnast suddenly stands upright exactly where she visualized her feet landing, conscious and unconscious mind also are one. When Freud speaks of free-floating or evenly-hovering attention, or Bion speaks of entering into a session without memory or desire, one way to conceptualize how this is achieved is to imagine a harmony of conscious and unconscious process. When we set aside expectation – if we set aside expectation – if expectation can be set aside – we allow unconscious resonances to arise without supplanting focus on the self-knowledge of the analysand. And we allow understanding to develop without imposing either theory or unconscious unfulfilled fantasies on the analysand. If –

Another application is through countertransference engagement and observation: unprocessed countertransference can disrupt our own energy systems and therefore can interfere with our free-floating attention, our analytic stance, our focus, our mindfulness. Processing our unconscious responses – our countertransference – is a form of mindfulness, We connect with the other's unconscious with our own, but through mindfulness. Free-floating attention is parallel to yi guiding qi, mind guiding energy.

And yet another application is in the various aspects of object relations theory, working with projective identifications and forms of internalizations. Projective identification of course is used defensively (though not only defensively). It can be understood as an attempt to transfer energy, and when we help metabolize projective identifications we enable the person to effectively utilize and become mindful of her/his own energy.

How can we visualize this interplay of eastern energy system and psychoanalytic thought in our clinical work? An example: We see the surges and collapses in energy in the other, and we help the other person visualize her/his own energetic movement. I work with a young woman who is beautiful, intellectually gifted and artistically talented, enmeshed with her very traditional Asian family, yet Americanized and longing for individuation. Her maternal introject is rejecting of her individuated sexuality, her career choice, her marrying out of her ethnicity. Please note that I say maternal introject, not mother. She recognizes that her mother is quite accepting of her happy object choice. For many years this young woman could not imagine marrying at all. In one session, when she spoke of her sexual longing, I noticed a change in her energy field. Her chest collapsed, the air around her seemed to fold in pleats into her chest. In psychoanalytic terms, the introject pulled her into internal collapse. She began to forfeit her desire. I said, "Your mother seems to be pulling you into yourself, as if there were a string at your waistline that collapsed you like a marionette whose strings are suddenly dropped." The body image of her collapsing energy and the psychic image of a mother demanding submission spoke to both of us. In another session, she experienced a transference projection, expecting me to tell her how a good and obedient wife should behave, I said, "You seem to be occupying me with your mother, as if I were a puppet and she were the hand inside me."

In another instance, I began work with a woman in her early 40's who was concerned that she could not actualize her creative energies and develop a career path. She enters the room vibrating, a bundle of nervous energy. She resembles the figures in a Keith Haring painting. She hunches forward, all her energy in her pursed lips. She shakes her head to herself, as if forbidding herself the right to speak. She does not speak. She vibrates. I see a red glow around her shoulders. When I have these quasi-hallucinatory experiences that I have learned to identify as

A Meditation on Energy Work and the Chinese Concept of Mind: Psychoanalytic Applications

By Merle Molofsky

seeing energy patterns, I call on my inner scientist, whom I frequently repudiate under other circumstances. My inner scientist checks for tricks of lighting, what time of day it is, am I seeing sunlight reflecting reddish highlights in her hair onto her shoulders? I stare carefully at her hair, and the effect disappears. I stop staring, and the effect returns. I understand that I am seeing the burden of family interdictions weighing her down, so that her shoulders collapse and her middle body is crushed. Although she is athletic and slim, she looks squashed down, almost dumpy.

I have seen her energy and I have intuited what it means, but in this instance I do not speak at all. She has to bring herself out of her crushed center sufficiently to funnel just enough energy through her tight pursed mouth, to begin to speak. If I speak first, I dominate her, as her very anxious mother dominates her with her need. And yes, she begins to speak about the family dynamics that she feels oppress her, weigh her down, burden her. Here I synthesize what I learned from Art Robbins and from Rob Jokel. In his countertransference groups, Art teaches us to observe the person's body style, body energy, asks us to sit and move like that person. He taught us the empathy of identifications, conscious and unconscious, with what is being expressed in the body. He taught us to pay attention. Rob taught me to see energy manifesting, sometimes as light and color, sometimes otherwise.

I offer one last example of perceiving an energy field change. I have worked for three years with a 30 year old woman, a devoted yoga practitioner, from an affluent upper middle class family. She has an air of entitlement, of expectation that she will be provided for in every which way. She presents as lively, vivacious, always on, and her high energy frequently escalates to frantic. She has successfully overcome an eating disorder, and expresses the desperate and clamoring needs that underlay the eating disorder by a strangely addictive relationship with her meditation practice. If she does not attend a yoga class daily, she becomes over-stimulated and anxious. In a recent session, she spoke of her anxiety about the current economic downslide and fear that it would affect her husband's earnings. She spoke of the pleasures and demands of her own work. As she spoke I had a quasi-hallucination of her metamorphosing into a Tibetan person about 55 years old. Her bone structure and skin tone and color and texture changed. She said, "Merle, why are you staring at me like that?" I replied before I knew I was actually speaking, and I said, "I just saw your still silent core." She burst into tears and said, "Nobody ever sees that. I don't let anybody see that. Sometimes I find it in yoga. But no one knows."

My conclusion is that I inform my psychoanalytic practice with what I have gained working with an energy healer and from my practice of Qi Gong and from my interest in Chinese concepts of mind because that is what interests me. A simple, banal conclusion. What is important about it is that all of us bring the richness of who we are and what interests us to our clinical work, and that alone enables us to resonate with the energies of the people we see. Ultimately we conduct the "talking cure" within an energy field that is beyond language, different from language. I am a poet, and I love language. I particularly love the English language, which is so conglomerate and reveals buried history in its structure and vocabulary. I am devoted to the "talking cure." But I am even more devoted to that in which language is embedded, the subtle vibrations and interactions of energy that enable us to reach toward one another.

Because I always will think and feel like the psychoanalyst I am, I find that Qi Gong experience rings all the bells of the whole-field model of psychoanalytic theory that informs my work. In qi I recognize the drives, in focusing the mind I recognize ego function, in experiencing myself in relationship to natural forces and yin and yang energies I recognize object relations, and in being a focused participatory self I recognize self psychology. In both psychoanalysis and Qi Gong I am a bodily self, a witness or observing self, dwelling in relationship. In a spiritual sense, I would say that I stand in relationship to the Source of All Qi. If my understanding tells me that the Source of All Qi, that which underlies the great impersonal Tao, is impersonal in relation to me, my experience is one of an

A Meditation on Energy Work and the Chinese Concept of Mind: Psychoanalytic Applications
By Merle Molofsky

interchange of generosity and gratitude. The existence of qi feels generous to my grateful self. My intellect can grasp the concept of a non-personal Tao, but I still dwell in a post-depressive position Melanie Klein world of reparation and gratitude.

The concepts delineated in this paper were first presented at the IFPE 19th Annual Interdisciplinary Conference. At the close of the presentation, psychoanalyst and Soaring Crane Qi Gong practitioner Susan Harding and I led those who were interested in experiencing Soaring Crane Qi Gong in a two-minute exercise, Double Return of Qi.

REFERENCES

- Francis Sommer Anderson, editor, *Bodies in Treatment*, The Analytic Press, New York & London, 2008.
- Harold Bloom, *The Book of J*, Riverhead Books, New York, 1990.
- Harold Saxon Burr, *Blueprint for Immortality: The Electric Patterns of Life*, C.W. Daniel Company, Ltd., Great Britain, 1972.
- Carlos Castaneda, *Tales of Power*, Pocketbook Books, Simon & Schuster, New York, 1974.
- Leonard Cohen, *Collected Poems, 1956-1968*, The Viking Press, New York, 1968.
- Inge Dugans with Suzanne Ellis, *The Art of Reflexology*, Element Press, Shaftesbury, Dorset; Rockport, Massachusetts; Brisbane, Queensland, 1992.
- Sigmund Freud, "Project for a Scientific Psychology" (1895), The Standard Edition, Volume I.
- Jay R. Greenberg and Stephen A. Mitchell, *Object Relations Theory in Psychoanalytic Theory*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, 1983.
- Lao Tsu, transl. Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English, *The Tao Te Ching*, Vintage Books, Random House, New York, 1972.
- Alexander Lowen, *Bioenergetics: The Revolutionary Theory That Uses the Language of the Body to Heal the Problems of the Mind*, Penguin Compass, New York, 1975.
- Menahem Luz, with Marjorie L. Rand and Diane Asay, *Cosmic Sympathy: The Teachings of Posidonius*, Berkeley Hills Books, 2007.
- Joyce McDougall, *Theaters of the Body*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York and London, 1989.
- Wilhelm Reich, with Vincent R. Cargagno, *The Function of the Orgasm: Discovery of the Orgone*, Farrar, Straus & Girous, New York, 1973.
- Jack Lee Rosenberg, with Marjorie L. Rand and Diane Asay, *Body, Self, and Soul: Sustaining Integration*.
- Alan Roland, *In Search of Self in India and Japan*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1988.
- Allan N. Schore, *Affect Regulation and the Origin of the Self*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Hillsdale, New Jersey, 1999.
- University of Hong Kong website, Department of Philosophy, no attributed author, "The Philosophy of Mind in China."
- Wikipedia (used to research the role of the Chinese government in researching and documenting manifestations of qi in qi gong.)
- Zhao, Jin Xiang, trans. Chen, Hui, Xian, *Chinese Soaring Crane Qi Gong*, Qigong Association of America, Corvallis, Oregon, 1997.

Merle Molofsky, psychoanalyst and poet, serves on the boards of IFPE and NAAP and the editorial board of The Psychoanalytic Review. Articles in The Psychoanalytic Review, Journal of Religion of Health.

What's Missing?

By Judith E. Vida

WHAT'S MISSING?

By Judith E. Vida

For presentation to International Federation for Psychoanalytic Education Nineteenth Annual Interdisciplinary Conference *Encounters and Escapes: Danger and Desire in the Analytic Connection*, November 21-23, 2008, Boston, Massachusetts

Art is:

1. unnecessary
2. nonproductive
3. without function
4. the expenditure of energy
5. the determination and commitment to execute the above in perfect form
6. valuable

Bruce Metro, *The Dig* (1977)

If the most unrelated things share a place, time, or odd similarity, there develop wonderful unities and peculiar relationships...and one thing reminds us of everything.

Attributed to Novalis, quoted by Allen Ruppersberg in *Fifty Helpful Hints on the Art of the Everyday* (1984)

This presentation was originally written as a contribution to an exhibition catalog for *Mel's Hole: Artists Respond to a Paranormal Land Event Occurring in Radiospace*, curated by the artist Doug Harvey. The exhibition could be seen at Grand Central Art Center in Santa Ana, California, from September 6 to October 19 of this year, so it is now over, but the catalog lives on.

I had relished Doug Harvey's art criticism for years, in *LA Weekly* and *Art issues*. but we didn't meet face to face¹ until 2000, when we both wrote essays and appeared in a public program for Laguna Art Museum's exhibition and catalog *Margaret Keane and Keaneabilia*. From then on, our paths have gone on crossing both in real- and in cyber-space, almost always in the territory of the strange and the quirky that makes possible a partial liberation from pedestrian habits of mind and being.

A while ago, I got a letter from Doug, which began,

Dear Judy,

In 1997 radio host Art Bell first introduced his listeners to Mel Waters, a man from Eastern Washington who claimed to have discovered an ancient and apparently bottomless pit on his property. The story of the hole was remarkable enough, but the subsequent events took an almost surreal bent — Mel was threatened into silence by the US military, exiled into cushy Wombat Restoration service in Australia, and tipped off to a second bottomless pit in Nevada. Rather than recount the entire story, I've enclosed a research copy condensing the most complete version of the story thus far onto a single CD.

He went on to describe a future curatorial project addressing this, inquiring if I'd like to write something. Stuart² and I listened to the CD on a long drive at night to the desert. Immediately I caught an uncanny similarity of *Mel's Hole* to *The Hollow Tube*, a passageway from one side of the earth to the other, right through the center, presided

What's Missing?

By Judith E. Vida

over by the terribly just Tititi Hoochoo, the Great JinJin; this is a crucial episode in *TikTok of Oz*, my favorite of all the Oz books by L. Frank Baum. I thought this would be a fine opportunity to re-visit parts of that story in a new context. When I mentioned *TikTok*, Doug was cool about it³ and that's where it seemed to sit until the deadline grew nigh.⁴

I say "seemed to" because out of my conscious awareness, my associations to *Mel's Hole* were already simmering. There would have been a personal dimension to anything I wrote about *Mel's Hole* anyway, as I will shortly explain, but I couldn't have imagined when I entered the project how intensely personal it would become.

In scholarly and critical writing about art, the personal is unacceptable. The writer's personal intersection with the work at hand is irrelevant and even irresponsible. And in scholarly psychoanalytic writing, the personal is equally frowned upon. But over very many years now, and I am speaking as a psychoanalyst who has learned from art and artists, writing that is empty of the personal has no interest for me and, more than that, is impossible to understand.⁵ When I am writing, the trail of my thought, feeling, and memory illuminates the inquiry, allowing a deeper penetration into the work, and a *deeper penetration of the work into me*. Following this trail and privileging it is not easy to do. It requires an abandonment of destination and the foregoing of expectation, of preconception, of self-consciousness, and of critique; and it draws on *everything*. I am always afraid that the trail will be fruitless or silly. But at a moment when, improbably and against expectation, everything at hand suddenly *does* hold together, I have a heightened sense of being in the world.⁶

What stayed with me from first hearing the CD was that things went in to *Mel's Hole* and didn't come out. They didn't hit bottom; they didn't even hit anything else that might have been in there. These things were big things, like cows, or machinery. These things were little: junk, small objects, fishing line. These things were hot, and cold, and liquid, and solid. They all disappeared completely, without a trace. And the hole was described as not just a hole in the earth but something seemingly constructed: nine feet across, with a rim and sides (near the top, at least) of an unidentifiable metallic substance. In radiospace, amazement, disbelief, and curiosity built steadily toward fear and paranoia, intensifying the desire to wrest control. (But from whom? For what?)

* * * * *

Time passes after Doug's letter. The dates of the exhibition change; my thoughts about writing yield to everyday concerns. At a certain point, on another drive toward the desert, this time alone, I am finally ready to refresh my memory and to immerse myself in the details, so I put in the CD to listen again. But ... the audio starts to break up about half an hour in. Abruptly the story is interrupted; I am dangling. I had completely forgotten that this happened the first time, too. I e-mail Doug frantically that the CD is damaged; is there time for him to send me another? Before hitting "send," I add, "Or could this possibly be the whole point?"

He doesn't reply.

* * * * *

As I write, while I am writing, I need to keep reminding myself of how this works, of how I work,⁷ so I decide to revisit my trail in chronological order:

Right after the first listening, I take *TikTok* off the shelf and then I stop thinking about *Mel's Hole*. As I read, I fall in love all over again with the whole Hollow Tube episode, especially that it has been magically sealed to prevent its thoughtless use as a garbage dump. One end of the tube "had a silver rim and around it was a gold railing to which was attached a sign that read:

What's Missing?

By Judith E. Vida

"IF YOU ARE OUT, STAY THERE.

IF YOU ARE IN, DON'T COME OUT." (p. 140)

I think, *I could submit an essay consisting solely of quotations from the book strung artfully together to parallel the saga of Mel's Hole.*

But I don't.

Along the way I meet my daughter-in-law Jenny Spence's enthusiasm about *Wicked (The Untold Story of the Witches of Oz)*, both the novel and the musical play. From its first appearance on the contemporary scene, I have shied away from *Wicked*. I do not like the Judy Garland film *The Wizard of Oz*, and my distaste for it makes me wary of those who tamper with the magic of the Oz to which I had fled as a child, if only in my reading imagination. But the more I trust my daughter-in-law's tutelage, I know I will face *Wicked* eventually.

Before I can do that, I feel obliged to look into Philip José Farmer's book *A Barnstormer in Oz* which I picked up out of curiosity in the early 80s but I couldn't read it then: his restoration of the sex and violence implied in Baum's narrative but elided for both necessity and convention, was too jarring. *Oz* is a *children's* book, after all, despite being remarkably free of the sentimentality and condescension of its day. But reading Farmer now, I recognize that the child I was, in desperate search of a utopian solution, had suspended all inquiry and critical judgment. This preparation by Farmer now allows me to discover that what Gregory Maguire does in *Wicked* and *Son of a Witch* makes Oz more real to me rather than less. Gregory Maguire's writing makes fully visible to me the space between wish-fulfilling fantasy and the irreducible parameters – disappointments, difficulties, and devastations – of a lived life. I'm referring to the space between the idealizations by adults (of children and of themselves) and what else is going on, the very "what else" that makes adults uneasy, and children anxious when they are denied the truth. *A backstory is always there*, I murmur to myself with amazement. *Every person sees something different. Every person inhabits a different story. Sometimes the different stories of the same story are very different.*

Somewhere along the way, Ted Chiang's "Story of Your Life" is brought to me by a dear friend and would seem to have no place in this narrative. Yet this story of the confounding nonlinearity of memory told from the inside, as it is happening, takes me by surprise.⁸ It sheds unexpected light on some professional difficulties I am emerging from, but only later does its relevance for me in writing this essay become visible; it speaks to difference, and it speaks to the way difference is framed by language.

As the time of needing to write closes in, I detect in myself some familiar avoidance-maneuvers: *I don't want to read that (something identified as related to the project); I'd rather read this.* In recent years, I've seen this petulance lead me to something startlingly and improbably central to whatever project I am ostensibly trying to avoid, but this time I worry that it might be just defiance. I pick up Michael Chabon's *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*. Before long, I read:

In the middle of the dirt floor ... a disk of raw plywood lies set in a circular metal frame, flush with the floor.... Landsman fits his fingernails between the plywood and the frame and pries off the crude hatch. The flashlight reveals a threaded tube of aluminum screwed into the earth, laddered with steel cleats. The frame turns out to be the edge of the tube itself. Just wide enough to admit a full-grown psychopath. Or a Jewish policeman with fewer phobias than Landsman.... No way is he going down there. (p. 12) The ones who had been in the ghetto at Warsaw ... dug tunnels. Just in case they had to fight again (p. 22) ... That is part of the policeman's job, to jerk back the pretty carpet that covers over the deep jagged hole in the floor. (p. 96)

What's Missing?

By Judith E. Vida

After that, I try Roberto Bolaño's *The Amulet*, only to find:

...I started looking at the vase that had captured that sad gaze of his, and I thought: Maybe it's because he has no flowers, there are hardly ever any flowers here, and I approached the vase and examined it from various angles, and then (I was coming closer and closer, although in a roundabout way, tracing a more or less spiral path toward the object of my observation) I thought: I'm going to put my hand into the vase's dark mouth. (p. 7)

I have to face it: holes are pursuing me. *Holes*, Louis Suchar's celebrated children's book, comes to mind; I read it and set it aside.⁹ It is getting late in the game. I mention the essay to my writing partner and colleague Gersh Molad of Tel Aviv when he is briefly here in Los Angeles for an annual seminar in The Autobiographical Dialogue that he and I developed in 2002. "A psychoanalytic take on *Mel's Hole*? Courbet's *L'origine du monde*, of course!" he enthuses. The direction of his association is obvious, though it doesn't seem right somehow. But three days after he leaves, I spot in the newspaper an art review: a work called "*L'origine du monde* Wallpaper" by David Brady is being shown at a Chinatown gallery. In the grips of the uncanny, I go to the gallery. David Brady has digitally manipulated into kaleidoscopic patterns color images of Courbet's anatomical paradigm from pornographic Internet sites, and, in Holly Myers' words, "deployed them for purely decorative purposes."

* * * * *

All along, though, going all the way back to *TikTok*, my attention is increasingly consumed by something else:¹⁰ my nearly 94-year-old mother, who collapses just as the deadline of this essay "whooshes" by.¹¹

A few days after his arrival home, on the telephone, Gersh Molad mentions Simone de Beauvoir's memoir *A Very Easy Death*. I order it on a Tuesday and am shocked that it comes so soon, in the mail, on Friday. I started to read it Friday evening. Awaking on Saturday morning, I mention to Stuart that Gersh has seen some similarities of de Beauvoir's mother to mine. "Yes," he says. "I looked at a few pages when it arrived; I was struck by the emotional chasm between her and her mother."

Indeed, there is so much about de Beauvoir's mother that echoes mine:

The sight of her tears grieved me; but I soon realized that she was weeping over her failure, without caring about what was happening inside me. (p. 67)

How could she have tried to understand me since she avoided looking into her own heart? ... [T]he unexpected sent her into a panic, because she had been taught never to think, act, or feel except in a ready-made framework. (p 68)

It doesn't escape my notice that Simone de Beauvoir can bear to be with her mother, can stay by her conscious mother's bedside for long hours in some of those last days. Simone de Beauvoir can stand at the rim of the emotional chasm. (Simone de Beauvoir can stand it.)

I did not particularly want to see Maman again before her death; but I could not bear the idea that she should not see me again. Why attribute such importance to a moment since there would be no memory? There would not be any atonement either. For myself I understood, to the innermost fibre of my being, that the absolute could be enclosed within the last moments of a dying person. (pp 62-3)

Simone de Beauvoir can bear to be with her mother as I cannot with mine. Instead I keep my visits and calls brief, task- and circumstance-oriented, tightly book-ended by where I have just been and where I next need to go. The danger of being swept over the edge is too much for me.

What's Missing?

By Judith E. Vida

Describing their relationship during most of her own adulthood, de Beauvoir writes,

The silence between us became quite impenetrable. (p. 68)

Between my mother and me, there is no silence. There is only her criticism, accusation, blame for depriving her (and my long-dead father) of the life they deserve, that has been my sole responsibility to bestow upon them. If by chance there ever is a quiet moment, I am always palpably in dread of what she will deliver in the next. Quiet is the signal I seize upon to make a quick though temporary getaway. Quick but temporary. Always only temporary. The pull on me to return is relentless.

In an e-mail that he titles "Mel's Black Holes," Stuart writes, "I was looking for something else and came across this; I'm not sure you looked closely before, now the Mel relevance suggests you could."

The attachment is an article from *The New York Times* from May 2, 2006, by Kenneth Chang.

Scientists at NASA have simulated gravitational waves from the violent merger of two black holes [the page reads]. Traveling at the speed of light, gravitational waves never stop, just weaken with distance. Gravitational waves are ripples in space and time, a four-dimensional concept that Einstein called space-time. The waves are caused by violent events in the distant universe.

In the article are breathtaking images of gravitational waves predicted by Einstein's theory of general relativity but never directly detected. In their unfettered sensuality, these images uncannily resemble David Brady's pornographic kaleidoscope.

Two black holes start some distance apart, orbiting around each other. As the black holes spiral inward, weak gravitational waves are released. Stronger waves are released as the black holes get closer. An intense burst of gravitational waves occurs when the cones of the black holes merge ... This power output is more than that of all the stars in the universe combined. When two black holes merge, they flatten into one larger hole that spins 70 times as fast as Earth.

* * * * *

I am not Simone de Beauvoir. I do not soften my mother's last waking hours. But as she slips below the level of consciousness, I can at last draw closer. *I'm here, Ma. It's Judy. You're safe. It's OK.* Perhaps what I also mean is, *You're there, Ma. It's Judy. I'm safe. We're both OK.*

(You see, Stuart, it's not because of *Mel's Hole* that I can read now about Black Holes. It is because my mother is dead.)

(You see, all of you, it's not because of the deadline that I have found a "way in" to *Mel's Hole*. It is because my mother is dead.)

The Hollow Tube has a backstory. Oz itself has a backstory. *Mel's Hole* has a backstory.¹² And here in the underground tunnel of personal connection, it turns out I too have a backstory. A small one, to be sure, but my discovery of it some years ago infuriates my mother because of her desperate need for it not to be true, a desperation I can speculate about but never truly understand. Since earliest memory my mother has told me proudly that I am the only member of the immigrant family on both sides who spoke only American-English, never Hungarian. But when I am 50 and in Budapest (for the first time) for a professional conference, my head explodes

What's Missing?

By Judith E. Vida

with language-memory; I hear my grandparents' voices; I read the billboards. This is a baby-Hungarian language that my mother will insist is false-memory syndrome, even though an elderly cousin confirms later to me that *Yes, this is how it is for all of us, how it comes back, through the clouds and the fog.*

All backstories call out to be told; the more unknowable, the more desperate the cries. *Amazement, disbelief, and curiosity gradually build toward fear and paranoia, intensifying the desire to wrest control.* Deprived of the backstories, we can only stand quaking at the rim, petrified to move in any direction. The instant the backstory is revealed in *Holes*, all the menace drains away: a hole is only a hole.

My mother is dead. Her grave is only a hole, a bounded hole, with measurable dimensions. The sun is shining, a soft breeze blowing. Next to hers is my father's grave. I can hear his voice booming loud: *Shit. It's been twenty seven years, and the trees have grown so tall they've ruined my view.* As the coffin is lowered in place, we toss in two cans of my mother's favorite Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer, a bottle of Columbia Crest Riesling that she also loved, and the copy of the *Los Angeles Times* that, despite a canceled subscription, has been delivered to her house on the day of her death.

* * * * *

On Friday of the weekend during which this essay would be written, as I am driving home, unaware that the de Beauvoir book has arrived, feeling rather desperate and not a little frantic about finding a "way in" to *Mel's Hole*, something pops into my mind: a work by Chris Wilder that was intended to be part of an exhibition of works from our collection at Laguna Art Museum in 1998 but that had collapsed on delivery from storage and to our dismay could not be shown. Titled *Circle of Deceit*, it was a large black-blue blob of "hotmelt" meant to lie on the floor. This is the comment about the piece we had prepared to accompany the exhibition:

Originally this was part of a large gallery installation, titled Project Blue Book, that was about conspiracy theories and the strange bureaucratic confusion of the government's efforts to collect information about UFOs. In a composite piece called "Web of Deception, Circle of Deceit," a web-like vortex hung from the ceiling positioned over this piece. The whole thing looked like it could suck you up and you'd never be seen again.

Chris Wilder himself is an artist whose work and person we have profoundly loved, who disappeared for a time, and who has now, after a long absence, returned. All Chris' works to date have embodied loss and the lost. Our favorite of his pieces, *Missing*, was made after the death of his mother – a different kind of mother, a different kind of death.

It is time for a deep breath here. Do you see how everything is connected? *Mel's Hole* turns out to remind me of everything, everything that matters at this moment in my life. Some things in life have to be collected and held on to until the patterns, only much later, become apparent, though we can never know in advance what they will be, or when. And more than that, I think we have to live long enough, and then look and *feel*, feel even more deeply as we risk entry into a space that may have no dimensions and no bottom, where we will think and reflect for a while and then hoist ourselves back up in the company of some others. Then we may be able to recognize the profound connectedness of all the parts of our lives, including the vitality siphoned and held by the missing.

The connections are the point.

Works referred to:

- Baum, L. Frank (1914). *Tik-Tok of Oz*. Chicago: The Reilly & Lee Co.

What's Missing?

By Judith E. Vida

- de Beauvoir, Simone (1965). *A Very Easy Death*. Translated from the French by Patrick O'Brian. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Bolaño, Roberto (1999/2006). *Amulet*. Translated from the Spanish by Chris Andrews. New York: New Directions.
- Brady, David (2008). *L'origine du monde* Wallpaper. At High Energy Constructs Gallery, 990 N. Hill Street, Suite 180, Los Angeles, CA, February 2-March 8, 2008. Reviewed by Holly Myers, *Los Angeles Times*, February 29, 2008. *High Energy Constructs is the same gallery where Doug Harvey had a solo exhibition in 2007*.
- Chabon, Michael (2007). *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*. New York: Harper Collins/London: Fourth Estate.
- Chang, Kenneth (2006). "Black Holes Collide, and Gravity Quivers." *The New York Times*(electronic edition), May 2.
- Chiang, Ted (2002). "Story of Your Life." In *Stories of Your Life and Others*. New York: An Orb Book/ Tom Doherty Associates LLC.
- Farmer, Philip José (1982). *A Barnstormer in Oz*. New York: Berkley Publishing Corp.
- Maguire, Gregory (1995). *Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West*. New York: Harper Collins.
- _____ (2005). *Son of a Witch*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Metro, Bruce (1977). *The Dig*. Collection of Stuart and Judy Spence, Los Angeles, CA. *With a series of small-format photographs, the artist documents a single February day in which he digs a hole deep enough to stand in and disappear from view, and fills it in again. Of course, the day is February 7 – the day 31 years later that my mother would die.* www.spence.net/collection
- Ruppertsberg, Allen (1984). "Fifty Helpful Hints on the Art of the Everyday." In *The Secret of Life and Death*, Los Angeles and Santa Barbara, CA: The Museum of Contemporary Art and Black Sparrow Press, 1985, p. 114.
- Suchar, Louis (1998). *Holes*. New York: Random House, Inc. (Yearling).
- Wilder, Chris (1994). *Circle of Deceit* (destroyed). Collection of Stuart and Judy Spence, Los Angeles, CA.. www.spence.net/collection

For *Mel's Hole: Artists Respond to a Paranormal Land Event Occurring in Radiospace*

© 2008 Judith Vida-Spence

301 S. Fair Oaks Avenue, Suite 406A

Pasadena, CA 91105

jvida@spence.net

[1]: Doug has since told me that in actual fact we had been fellow-travelers in the corridors of the Museum of Jurassic Technology for many years before that, which is perfectly consistent with the sentence that follows. [\[back to text\]](#)

[2]: Stuart Spence, my husband. [\[back to text\]](#)

[3]: "Cool", that is, in the sense of "in to it," interested, rather than indifferent. [\[back to text\]](#)

What's Missing?

By Judith E. Vida

[4]: The late (lamented) Douglas Adams is reported to have said, "I love deadlines, especially the whooshing sound they make as they go by." [\[back to text\]](#)

[5]: In a notable exception to the convention, Christopher Knight in his *LA Times* review (March 5, 2008) of Kara Walker at the Hammer acknowledges a longstanding personal relationship with the painter Lari Pittman; Knight's citation of Pittman's use of silhouettes in his work, which substantially predates Walker's, restores the important dimension of "company" to a critique that otherwise could be read as just another sniping example of "who did it first." [\[back to text\]](#)

[6]: I'm grateful to Doug Harvey for this one. [\[back to text\]](#)

[7]: When I am lost and confused in the middle of writing something, it helps to remember that it is always like this. And that it takes real time for the essential patterns to emerge. [\[back to text\]](#)

[8]: Following my trail chronologically seems to be a contradiction of Ted Chiang's non-linear premise; but I am persuaded that inside this chronology I am actually quite free of the constrictions of "outcome." (I can't recommend this story strongly enough.) [\[back to text\]](#)

[9]: At the same time I order a DVD of the film adapted from the novel, which disappears shortly after being removed from its package and turns up six months later in a sack of things from my mother's room in the convalescent hospital. [\[back to text\]](#)

[10]: My mother would have welcomed the notion of "consumed." Even before I started to write, Stuart, my husband, alerted me to the hole that would be my mother's grave. [\[back to text\]](#)

[11]: On occasion my writing has been met by a criticism that I don't go deep enough; that I reach a certain suggestive, provocative, or merely interesting point and then feint – flinch or balk as might a skittish or poorly trained horse at a hurdle, refusing. Here, I hope not to hold back. I do not want to flinch any longer. As I write this, I suddenly understand what I am saying in these three sentences. [\[back to text\]](#)

[12]: Though we don't know whose it is, or what. [\[back to text\]](#)

Judith E. Vida is a Past President of IFPE. Her longstanding commingled interests include Sándor Ferenczi, contemporary art (with her husband, Stuart Spence), and The Autobiographical Dialogue as concept and practice, developed with Gershon J. Molad.

A PORTION OF THE BACKSTORY: A CONNECTION BETWEEN JUDY AND ME

By Edie Boxer

Boston, Massachusetts November 21-23, 2008: Encounters and Escapes: Danger and Desire in the Analytic Connection: Judy Vida and I were each presenting at the Conference, but it was later during the weekend when Judy suggested thinking about a venue to give our papers together. I wondered what she had in mind. Then, when the opportunity to have our essays and comments published on the IFPE Online Journal became a possibility, I began to think about how each of us created our personal stories and how or *if* the two papers might influence each other. Judy wrote, "*A backstory is always there.*" (Page 6) Although I was yet to discover and understand the significance of our narratives, her words felt extremely important and exciting.

I wrote in the first part of my paper about exploring my fear of death. Discovering the reason for my vigilance about the finality of life helped me to expand my mastery over what I still, however, consider a fearful aspect of living. It wasn't until I read Judy's paper, "What's Missing," that I began to realize that there may be more to thoughts about dying than, as I wrote in my paper, "the incomprehensible notion of no longer living my life." Judy wrote on the final page of her paper this last sentence, "The connections are the point." I began to think about ***not only fearful endings but also the longing to connect.***

It seemed that the first point of connection between us was in Judy's description of her relationship with her mother that stimulated my own thoughts about my mother and myself. The pain, disappointment and loss of ***us*** long before she died can easily be retrieved from my memory. Reading Judy's words, I knew that we shared similar feelings regarding our mothers' impact on us. Judy's honesty in discussing her relationship with her mother (speaking of Simone de Beauvoir's memoir *A Very Easy Death*: Judy writes, "Simone de Beauvoir can bear to be with her mother as I can not with mine." Page 9) reignited my long held realization that my mother and I had a very dissatisfying relationship. Both of us knew it; but never talked about it. I also know that my mother and I had – or at least I had—a very deep connection that rarely felt self and other affirming, sustaining, and vitalizing. I believe that the connection, in part, had to do with my longing for her to offer herself so that we could resonate with each other. I always hungered for my mother's words that might have helped me tolerate feelings such as my fear of death born out of my parents' tragic loss of their newborn child. But, I have come to know that my mother could not /did not have the capacity to be the kind of mother that I wanted. My wishing for her to be different was not powerful enough to make our relationship work; still over eighteen years after my mother died, the wish can reappear.

Perhaps as a way to develop an alternative to the disappointment I know, I attempt to be available to those who can offer me a new relationship. I am drawn to the personal qualities of the other who has the capacity to listen, understand, and acknowledge me. My experience of being connected to Judy reveals the other side of the pathological self-centeredness resulting in my mother's needs being superimposed over me. Instead, Judy is the other person who brings something of herself to me/us: an offering of herself that I can resonate with and choose to connect with. The connection between Judy and myself that extends back several years before the IFPE Conference in Boston is one that I experience as helping me towards a path to life not death.

Through several readings of Judy's paper, I paused to reflect and identify with more of her thoughts and feelings: "...writing that is empty of the personal has no interest for me and more than that, is impossible to understand. When I am writing, the trail of my thought, feeling, and memory illuminates the inquiry, allowing a deeper penetration into the work, and a *deeper penetration of the work into me.*" (Page 3) "All backstories call out to be

A Portion of the Backstory: A Connection Between Judy and Me

By Edie Boxer

told; the more unknowable, the more desperate the cries.” (Page 11) I have learned that as I read and write, I gather dissociated thoughts and feelings and experiences that ultimately lead me to know and understand more about myself and the other. The discovery of another point of connection makes my “cries” feel a little less desperate.

Judy writes on the final page of her paper: “... I think we have to live long enough, and then look and *feel*, feel even more deeply as we risk entry into a space that may have no dimensions and no bottom, where we will think and reflect for a while and then hoist ourselves back up in the company of some others.” (Page 13) I did not know when I **casually (but just a “bit dissociated”)** suggested to Judy and Steve Kuchuck, that perhaps Judy and I could each write a bridge between our two papers. I thought that my writing would be a discussion about death and mothers and that would be that. I had no thought that my writing would result in a portion of my backstory that I needed to tell. It has been a painfully revealing, but exhilarating and vitalizing experience. Thank you, Judy, for you and for your paper that gave me the opportunity to be more available to myself and to others. I welcome your thoughts as you read this bridge. I welcome the chance to be together again- this time online.

Edith (Edie) G. Boxer, M.S.W., PSY.D. has a background in early childhood intervention and prevention at both on-site and home based agencies.

A graduate of The Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis, Los Angeles where she graduated in 2001, she is currently co-chair of the Admissions Committee, a Board member, and a Training and Supervising Analyst. She is also a student in the three year program, New Directions, A psychoanalytic writing and critical thinking program of The Washington Center for Psychoanalysis.

Clinically, Dr. Boxer is very interested in contemporary psychoanalysis as it emphasizes the collaborative healing capacity of the analytic relationship in order for the dyad to incorporate the patient’s unique, subjective experience as well as engage both the analyst/therapist’s and patient’s subjectivity. Building on this context, she credits Phillip Bromberg’s work on trauma and dissociation as well as Judith Vida and Gershon J. Molad’s Autobiographical Seminars as instrumental in her clinical thinking and its application.

ANOTHER PART OF THE BACKSTORY

By Judith Vida

In November of 2008 at the IFPE conference in Boston, I had a sense that Edie Boxer's paper and my own were two parts of a larger conversation, so I suggested to her that we find a way to present them again, side by side. At the time, I was envisioning a series of small private meetings to convene some colleagues who are not only open but eager to explore all the backstories of the work we do, especially the personal ones, and this could be one of those meetings. I had already tentatively scheduled the first in connection with an ongoing collaboration of mine with Gershon J. Molad of Tel Aviv. Edie had participated in Gersh's and my first Autobiographical Dialogue Seminar in Los Angeles in 2002, and she had returned to some of the advanced sessions that he and I have conducted annually. It was the previous year's session that had triggered Edie's dissociated memory of her lost brother.

It was also that previous year's session that took place three days after my mother's funeral and two weeks after my brother-in-law's death ... which was three weeks before I sat down to write *What's Missing? What's Missing?* was due in early March for the catalog of an art exhibition in October; I presented it as a free-standing paper in San Francisco in April, and again at IFPE in November, all in 2008. All through that year, I couldn't *feel* how tightly packed were these losses amidst the events. I could only write in an e-mail, as Edie quotes, "...life does and will go on, not in denial of loss but in embracing it, using loss to enlarge sensibilities and experience ... [to reach] a shift of perspective [to make] loss part of life and of living and learning." I can recognize more than "a bit of" dissociation in this now, but I would have denied it then. As the time grew close earlier this year to the scheduled seminar renewal, I could feel myself recoil. I could feel the too-muchness carried over from the previous year. I could feel it; and I could tell that I needed room and time to do nothing but feel: unbounded room, unstructured time, no predetermined end-point. Gersh and I canceled the seminar.

But when it came to scheduling a separate seminar for Edie and me – even as I contemplated the warmth of presenting our papers along with more of our backstories, and then our stories both written and spoken would mingle with the backstories of those who had come to hear us, and we would all talk and listen and probably weep a little – I realized I couldn't do that either, for it would require a room with a door, a clock that ticked, the need to be a specific somewhere; that would be too hard for me just now. Edie's relating of being with Jay is such a fine clear rendering of how, though they are separate and distinct, his work is her work and hers is his. Edie's story with Jay is the same as mine with writing *What's Missing?* and with the work that I do in my consulting room. It is the same not in the "what" of the details but in how the details reverberate, concentrically in motion and curling inward as everything connects. But we can't experience how everything connects until there is enough room and time. (At least, I can't.) We can't tap into how it feels as everything connects until it is safe enough, and for that there must be company, not only good company, but *the right* company (what we usually call "a good fit").

Edie is the right company. And Steve Kuchuck, such a kind and helpful presence in this new online journal of IFPE, is the right company too, as are the members of the IFPE community who welcome this kind of writing. Edie's and my exploration of these bridges between our papers opens us further into generative company. Most valuable for me has been the extended time for these two papers to sit together, all the while preconsciously churning inside us. When I finally took in Edie's experience of connection with me and with my words of trying to locate the difficulty with my dead mother, I was shaken. Each time I discover afresh that the space around my unmetabolizable and nonnegotiable tie to my mother is no longer airless, I am shaken. Each time that I am able to draw a deep breath, I am a little surprised.

Another Part of the Backstory

By Judith Vida

What I've written so far is only part of my bridge; the warm heart of it turned up in this e-mail I sent to Edie: *I read your words just now. They make me cry. Crying is what I need to do. A lot of crying. Even more important than anything I could write. Perhaps these tears are the words.*

So this has become a demonstration of how sometimes we can reach where we need to be when there is room and time and a mutual openness to one another. Thank you, Edie. Thank you, Steve. Thank you, IFPE.

Judith E. Vida is a Past President of IFPE. Her longstanding commingled interests include Sándor Ferenczi, contemporary art (with her husband, Stuart Spence), and The Autobiographical Dialogue as concept and practice, developed with Gershon J. Molad.

One Man's Journey Through Darkness Into Light in Art and Psychoanalysis
By Stuart Perlman

ART AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

ONE MAN'S JOURNEY THROUGH DARKNESS INTO LIGHT IN ART AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

By Stuart Perlman

This presentation is only available online.

Please visit <http://ifpe.wordpress.com/2009/09/14/one-mans-journey/> to view.

***Stuart D. Perlman, Ph.D.** is a psychologist and psychoanalyst in L.A., and a training analyst at the Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis. Dr. Perlman received Ph.D.'s from UCLA and the Southern California Psychoanalytic Institute, and has been a faculty member at both. He has published many articles and the book, *The Therapist's Emotional Survival*.*

Mirror
By Sorry

MIRROR

By Sorry

To listen to the audio of this song, please visit <http://ifpe.wordpress.com/2009/09/14/mirror>.

Song lyrics are below:

In the mirror
The self becomes as one
Look behind you
There is another one
The "I" is always
Slipping down a stream
When you arrive
You are in another scene

Where Id was Ego shall be
Where It was I shall be

Had a dream
Lying on your couch
Could not pay the mortgage
On my house
Watched my words
Flutter in the air
Alighting like Monarchs
On your chair

Where Id was Ego shall be
Where It was I shall be

Climb the tower (Break)
Unafraid to fall
The thing you call anxiety
Will quilt you to the wall

My Father's name
I want to wear it proud
But my Mother's voice
Is filling me with doubt
I plant the seeds
As one supposed to sow
But the grass seems much more
Green before it grows

Mirror
By Sorry

Where Id was Ego shall be
Where It was I shall be

***Phillip G Fleisher** is a psychoanalytically oriented clinical social worker. He received his analytic training at the Massachusetts Institute of Psychoanalysis as a two year post graduate fellow. He also plays in a musical group consisting of two acoustic guitars and a woman singer who is also a clinical social worker.*

FILM AND PLAY REVIEWS

OUT OF THE SPIRITUAL CLOSET

By Mike Eigen

First printed in the July/August 2009 issue of [Tikkun](#).

Philip Groning, a German filmmaker, asked monks of the Grande Chartreuse for permission to make a documentary of their day-to-day life. Sixteen years later, he received permission to do so. He lived in this reclusive world in the French Alps for half a year. The result, the film *Into Great Silence*, is a moving testament to a life of prayer.

The documentary shows the monks in their daily routines of prayer, work, ritual, discussions, haircuts, and hikes. The vow of silence is a thread that knits life together. Even when monks are interviewed, one can feel how quiet prayer informs their words.

Watching the initiation of new monks and an older man's steps toward death, I did not experience the prurience of the camera so much as the affirmation of the human spirit that it revealed: in this case, the human spirit in contact with divine reality. If not a window on the soul, the camera provided glimpses of soul-states not usually honored in ordinary life, and I felt a sense of relief that I would like to try to share.

I had an immediate sense of recognition, particularly when seeing the men's faces in prolonged, silent prayer. The movie touched something in my spiritual core and had the effect of diminishing shame. When I saw the faces in prayer and meditation, I felt shells of shame begin to fall off my soul and inner body. Their faces were the way I felt, and seeing them gave me a kind of permission to live that part of me more fully, less apologetically, less defensively.

In our society, to be a man often means to be aggressive, achieving, and out for power, sex, or money. Yet these faces, these supplicants, were unashamed of the deep intimacy with God they touched and courted. To court God in deepest intimacy seemed a freeing gift. The term "supplicant" resonates with "supple." Instead of harsh, to be supple. To unabashedly spend time with Intimate Presence—as much time as one wants or can.

Witnessing the priests' supplication helped free me to meditate and pray for longer periods, following the moment, on my knees, standing, sitting, head in hands, hands uplifted, head bowed, head lifted, heartfelt, ordinary, bored, caring. It is a wonderful thing to give oneself this time, this contact with the Deep One. Perhaps at my stage in life, moving toward the end, time is more precious and the need for the Deepest of All is pressing.

I needed the faces of these monks but didn't know it. As soon as I saw them, I felt my own face more, my inner face. What the faces of the monks gave me was permission to come out of closets I didn't know I was in: spiritual closets. To come out in the open, again, in new ways, touching silent depths—freeing depths that one fears and needs but, all too often, rushes past and fails to access.

Michael Eigen is a psychologist in New York City. His books include *Flames from the Unconscious: Trauma, Madness and Faith*, *Feeling Matters*, *The Sensitive Self*, and *The Psychoanalytic Mystic*.

The Mystery of Wood is Not That it Burns, But That it Floats
By Richard Raubolt

A REVIEW OF "THE VISITOR"

Having just moved to Denver, Colorado after living in the Washington, DC area for over 28 years and being very active in the psychoanalytic community as a teacher, supervisor, and psychotherapist, I was superbly impressed with a small production of THE VISITOR, by Eric Emmanuel-Schmitt performed at the Miners Alley Playhouse in Golden, Colorado. So much so that I immediately bought the play.

I urge everyone and anyone interested in psychoanalysis to read and see this play.

Not only was this production wonderfully performed and well directed by John Arp, but it was an experience of a thoughtful, evocative, rendering of the most profound questions psychoanalysis offers. The play takes place in 1938, in Freud's office, just before he leaves Vienna. As the Nazi officer threatens Dr. Freud and his daughter Anna is taken away, someone appears who believes himself to be God and knows a great deal about Freud's own trauma with his own father when he was 5 years old. As a result, a dialogue between Freud and "God" unveils not only an explication of the basic tenets of psychoanalytic beliefs but also Sigmund Freud's genius in writing, thinking, and wrestling with ideas of soul, God, dreams, art, and the human mind.

In "Notes from the Director", John Arp:

"I was drawn to this play...because it has a boldness about how it asks questions....and a balance in the argument....I saw...passion...and respect...and....no true answers offered."

Read it!

See it!

Congratulations to the author for a beautifully crafted, well-researched, thorough exploration of psychoanalytic questions at their best.

Ruth Neubauer, MSW

Psychotherapist

Denver, Colorado

240-432-4080

www.rneubauertherapy.com

Ruth Neubauer, MSW, practices in Denver, Colorado after 28 years in Washington, DC teaching, supervising, and in private practice. She remains on the faculty of The Washington School of Psychiatry in Washington, DC and will be teaching with the Denver Psychoanalytic Society this coming year. rneubauertherapy.com and www.retirementorwhatnext.com. Ruth also runs support groups for Women Over 50 in transition in the Denver area.

The Mystery of Wood is Not That it Burns, But That it Floats
By Richard Raubolt

THE MYSTERY OF WOOD IS NOT THAT IT BURNS, BUT THAT IT FLOATS

By Richard Raubolt

Epigraph

“The mystery of wood is not that it burns, but that it floats”

*are Bella’s last words to Jakob in the film **Fugitive Pieces**. This line metaphorically*

captures the paradox of trauma. Wood can be scorched, scarred, singed, or consumed by fire. The effects of trauma on the human spirit can be similar.

Trauma is about memory, painful and at times unbearable memories intruding and taking up residence in the present. They, whatever they may be, for they are different for each of us, are beyond our control to digest, metabolize, integrate or work through. Traumatic memories leave scars; they never go away entirely. Perhaps this is what Imre Kertesz, the Noble Prize winner and Buchenwald survivor meant when he compared memories to mangy stray dogs. Such dogs encircle you, sniff you, lift their heads toward you barking, you extend your hand to stroke one on the head – and it bites you on the hand.

“Working through”, as we so often hear in our everyday, common discourse, is a term overused and misunderstood by the public and therapists alike. Working through does not mean a brilliant interpretation or snappy technique will lead to resolution and a disappearance of symptoms once and for all. Working through is actually a misnomer as there is no process to complete with trauma. We can’t erase the past but we can work with it/ at it/ around it and against it with the aim of living through it with more emotional freedom as a result. Trauma wounds but it need not cripple.

When we see Jakob as an adult in the film it looks like he has it all but he was still empty: he could not “introject” life or enough of it to provide himself psychic nourishment and growth. Introjection is a process of assimilation, enrichment and appropriation where there is emotional and intellectual modification and expansion. Jakob struggled to take hold and fill himself with the present. He had unfinished business with his past.

Complex trauma creates an internal black hole of shame, terror, regret and a deadening silence. A psychological crypt is formed where memories are entombed: often not forgotten but not remembered clearly either, they are instead veiled, gray images more felt than thought. Jakob could then say, without contradiction, “I long for a loss of memory” and “I did not witness the most important events in my life.”

With trauma memory is not neutral, it is drenched in pain and unrelenting aloneness. Jakob’s journals are written for himself. His “war” is now internalized: with and at himself. He says: “My story is told by a blind man behind the wall from the underground.” His feelings are muted and yet while detached he is kind and thoughtful with Ben, Joseph’s son. Ben was also a “child of the Holocaust” for while his father survived he was “impenetrable.” This shared experience may have helped form a special bond that they both needed. Still Jakob is suspended in “in between times.”

Some might describe Jakob as experiencing “survivors guilt” but this is a pop psych label that offers little of substance and would denigrate his suffering, which while multifaceted, was a homage to his dead parents and

The Mystery of Wood is Not That it Burns, But That it Floats

By Richard Raubolt

missing but in all likelihood dead sister, Bella. But to Jakob she wasn't dead for sure, was she? With trauma of many kinds there is the additional torture of "what ifs."

*Jacob in a testimony to human resiliency and strength does manage to live with others thanks in large part to the loving guidance of Athos. He does teach and he does marry. Jakob's first wife, Alex, is vivacious, daring and passionate. She moves into the moment and takes it over completely with her vitality. She loves Jakob but she does not understand him nor does he understand her. On completion of the book he had begun with Athos, **Bearing False Witness**, Alex was excited, hopeful and wanted to celebrate: "It's good Jakob. It's a new beginning." But it can't be as time keeps repeating itself and not being in the present Jakob experiences the central conflict between "sameness" or safety and desire.*

Alex can't rescue Jakob nor can she pull him into present moment. Her love is not enough and she is wounded, suffering a secondary trauma, in his rejection of her and his inability to acknowledge or recognize what she has been living through with him. Trauma wore the life out of them as a couple.

"The mystery of wood is not that it burns but that it floats. Go, Jakob."

Wood floats even when waterlogged, pushed down it reemerges, it bobs with and is swept along with the currents. There is no resistance. Resistance has been replaced by surrender. Athos, who in Anne Michaels book specialized in studying waterlogged wood, might suggest that what is true for wood is true for people. Jakob's surrender was with his second wife the lovely Michaela. To be clear surrender as I am using the word has nothing to do with defeat or hoisting the white flag. Rather it is letting go of defensive barriers technically defined as a "false self." Surrender has a quality of liberation and expansion in and to life. Jakob says of Michaela that she "slowly undressed my spirit." With her he could mourn and he could love. Michaela had a different presence, pace and history than Alex though I doubt Alex loved him any less. Michaela was more comfortable with quite spaces and she possessed an astute, gentle empathy and responsiveness. Jakob could develop a basic trust and face what was hidden saying of Michaela: "I know her memories."

Michaela was not Athos, sister or his mother nor was she held outside his traumatic history. Reading his words, hearing his stories, feeling his touch and sharing his bed helped bring her through her own losses. Her mourning was quite but deep: her eyes reflected the peaceful stillness she gained in their interconnected and shared histories.

Jakob could then let the dead rest and realize Bella was close enough to push him back into the world so she could leave.

Coda

Poet Jakob Beer, who was also a translator of posthumous writing from the war, was struck and killed by a car in Athens in the spring of 1993, at age sixty. His wife had been standing with him on the sidewalk; she survived her husband by two days. They had no children.

Shortly before his death, Beer had begun to write his memoirs. "A man's experience of war," he once wrote, "never ends with the war. A man's work, like his life, is never completed."

Anne Michaels

Richard R. Raubolt, Ph.D. practices psychoanalytic psychotherapy and has written two books, *Power Games* (which was nominated for the 2007 Gradiva Award and Goethe Prize) and just released, *Theaters of Trauma*. Dr. Raubolt is a board member of IFPE and was 2008's conference co-chair.

Placeholder
By Gene Alexander

POETRY

During an extended exchange of poems and responses among the IFPE members who discovered their poetic affinity with each other, one of the poets addressed the others as “Dear Poetry Posse.” And in future emails, the name seems to have stuck. We are including a few poems from some of the “Posse”. Enjoy!

PLACEHOLDER

By Gene Alexander

i don't know
who it's calling
but
the red tail's hacksaw cry
above the stubbled field
could be for me
so i look up
into
the glaring afternoon sky
just in case
it's true.

what i find
unconvincing
is as unsettling
to me
as faith.
after all
what if there was
absolutely
no one left
who believed
in god?

Eugene Alexander, MFT has been in private practice in San Francisco for over 30 years. He was co-founder of Caselli Street Poets Co-operative and has been reading and writing poetry for the last several years. He has an abiding interest in the use of fiction in psychotherapy.

Slowly
By Paul Cooper

SLOWLY

By Paul Cooper

Slowly,
the dawn begins to rise
shrouded in mist-
perched in an unseen limb;
the songbird.

***Paul Cooper** practices psychoanalytic psychotherapy in New York City and Westchester and is currently Dean of Training at the National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis. He is a faculty member and supervisor for the Institute for Expressive Analysis. Paul is on the IFPE Board of Directors and he is an award-winning author and poet.*

Pitch
By Merle Molofsky

PITCH

By Merle Molofsky

You unpack your briefcase and take out the world,
lay it on the coffee table and set it spinning.
This is the Land of Chaos, you say,
and this the Land of Light.
The Isle of Dreams is here,
in the Sea of Desire.

Which of the four elements matters most,
you ask. Earth, I say. Wrong, you say.
The only element that counts is fire.

Once, you say, you taught a wolf to count.
But that was far away and long ago.
You learn the names of my grandmothers,
the syllables of my gods. No
more than this, and already
I seem to know you.

On the coffee table clouds clash
and lightning breaks into the treetops.
We count again the elements: snow and mist,
a girdle of wind to tear up the foundations.

What do you say, love, is it a deal?
You can't miss out on it, it's a steal.

You nod and grin and sweep the planet
back into its corner, snap shut the lid.
No sale, no handshake, just scuffmarks
on the table, and your card – if you
change your mind, kid.

I could have been the snake oil queen,
with the world at my feet and the devil in my bed,
but my tongue locked on the hard edges of words
that can't be said.

Merle Molofsky, psychoanalyst and poet, serves on the boards of IFPE and NAAP and the editorial board of The Psychoanalytic Review. Articles in The Psychoanalytic Review, Journal of Religion of Health.

New Moon
By Karen Morris

NEW MOON

By Karen Morris

It has no light of its own,
so tell me please, what color am I
in tonight's moonlight?

Set upon the lunar crust
green and blue moon-diamonds
seemingly everywhere,
brought home to Earth in laboratory jars-
stored for twelve long months
in case of infection.
More rare were the orange ones.

A bowl of sunlight in 1969,
the moon caught us, in its own reflection
each shining, unprotected face's worth
of spotless moon-beams.

By 2009 the moon's a junk yard,
a bone-knob, jet-mound of heavenly trash.
Even so there are nights
when beams flare out
in bright blue swatches.
We walk the fields
before our sleep, dreaming.

It has no light of its own,
from here, its crust no diamonds.
Tell me now, what color am I
in tonight's moonless
silence?

***Karen Morris** is a New York state licensed psychoanalyst in private practice in Manhattan and Westchester. She is currently a candidate in NYU's Postdoctoral Special Studies Program on Trauma and Disaster.*

spring in the quiet that precedes
By Les Von Losberg

SPRING IN THE QUIET THAT PRECEDES

By Les Von Losberg

spring in the quiet that precedes
the riot ready to break out just outside
my office window: the red maple
hums with buds, the crab apple
tentative of leaves; birds whistle,
twitter and caw a John Cage symphony;
tree limbs never so sumi-e speak in
ever-smaller tongues their own reaching
language, scrawling it into the warming
air. not just in the eye, but in the heart,
an at-odds greening.

I reach to find the window glass still cold.

Nothing speaks to me here inside but
numbers, dwindling with each breath.

***Les Von Losberg** has been a poet, writer, songwriter and conceptual artist for nearly 40 years, with an abiding interest in psychoanalysis. The central tenet of his artwork is that we see the world through language. Les makes his living as an estate, business insurance and retirement planner.*

Bij
By Lynn Somerstein

ARTWORK

BIJ

By Lynn Somerstein, PhD, LP, RYT



The name of this picture is Bij, which means seed in Sanskrit. The picture brings together a view of New Delhi's Red Fort, an image of the artist's husband Mark in the kitchen at night and other references.

Lynn Somerstein, PhD, LP, RYT, psychoanalyst in private practice, is the Director of the Institute for Expressive Analysis, book review editor of the Psychoanalytic Review, artist and writer. She also teaches yoga for the Integral Yoga Institute.