Faculty: David Joseph and Pavel Snejnevski

“I believe it is ill-advised, indeed impossible, to treat transference and countertransference as separate issues. They are two faces of the same dynamic rooted in the inextricable intertwining with others in which individual life originates and remains throughout the life of the individual in numberless elaborations, derivatives, and transformations. One of the transformations shows itself in the encounter of the psychoanalytic situation.”

Hans Loewald
Transference and Countertransference

OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE

Although it was first formulated by Freud, transference, as we currently understand it, is integral to all meaningful human relationships. In a treatment relationship characterized by the therapist's professional but friendly interest, relative anonymity, neutrality regarding how patients conduct their lives, non-judgmental attitude, and a shared conviction that associating freely and speaking without censorship will best facilitate the goals of the treatment, patients come to experience the therapist in ways that are powerfully and unconsciously shaped by aspects of earlier important relationships. The patient is often not aware that he is “transferring” these earlier experiences to the therapist but is also often completely unaware of “transferred” reactions to the therapist that only become manifest as the treatment relationship develops.

Laboratory experiments in animals demonstrate neurophysiological processes that cast light on the processes that contribute to transference reactions in humans. If a rat is trained to respond negatively to the sound of a bell that is paired with an electric shock, recordings from a single cell in the structure of the brain that responds to fear will indicate nerve firing. If the paradigm is changed and the sound of the bell is paired with feeding, the rat will learn the new paradigm so well that there is no observable behavioral evidence that the rat has any fear. However, the recording from the single cell in the fear center indicates that the nerve cell continues to fire. This experiment is very relevant to our understanding of how transference develops and the existence of transferences that are obscured from consciousness.

This course will explore the rich, multi-dimensional history of our understanding of transference and countertransference. Using our own clinical experiences as well as theoretical and clinical material from the literature, we will examine the reactions of both patient and therapist as they develop over the course of the therapy, be it psychotherapy or psychoanalysis. We encourage
you to bring your own experiences into our discussion. Transference is a living phenomenon. Over the next 10 weeks, we hope to bring it alive for you.

KEY CONCEPTS

transference
countertransference
resistance
transference resistance
transference neurosis
working alliance
free association
concordant and complementary countertransference

analytic field
projective identification
subjectivity
intersubjectivity
co-creation
empathy

enactment
role responsiveness
containment

One of us will introduce each session with a brief presentation on the broad topic of transference and countertransference that will serve as a prelude for the assigned articles. We will not necessarily work our way through the articles. Rather we will highlight certain aspects of the papers and explore questions and reactions that they have elicited. All articles are available on PEP web.

SESSION 1: 18 December 2018
Introduction to the concept of transference

Readings:
   1. PsychByte September, 2016“What the Body Knows” by Kerry Malawista. You will find this on the WCP website in the PsychByte Archive.
   3. Chekhov, Anton,”The Lady With the Dog.” To get the text of this remarkable short story by Chekhov, just go on line. It was written before copyrights were instituted. As you read the story, listen for aspects of the relationships that Chekhov describes so powerfully that suggest “transference” while remembering that characters in literature are best considered as creations of the author and not as patients.
SESSION 2: 8 January 2019  
Origins of the Concept and Theory of Transference and Countertransference

Readings:
1. Freud, S.F. (1893) Studies in Hysteria, Chapter Four, "The Psychotherapy of Hysteria, especially pp 301-305, Standard Edition (SE), Vol II. This paper contains Freud's first consideration of the concept of transference and the observations that led to it. These were made in the context of his clinical work with hysteria as it was manifest in his patients, especially with respect to sexuality, symbolization, resistance, and transference. Specifically in this paper he notes that resistance is provoked by "personal estrangement from the therapist."
2. Freud, S.F. (1901) SE, Vol VII, pp. 112-112. This is the next instance in which Freud works with the concept of transference. The pages are from the postscript to the “Dora” case which is contained in pp. 3-111.
3. Freud, S.F. (1900) SE, Vol V, pp. 562-564. Here Freud is exploring the concept of the day residue, an experience that the dreamer has had the day before the dream and has unconsciously incorporated it into his dream. While this is not a transference phenomenon, it reflects the unconscious incorporation of the past into the living present.
4. Freud, S.F. (1912) SE XII, pp. 99-108. In “The Dynamics of the Transference” Freud elaborates upon the concept of transference and relates it to resistance. Clearly and evocatively written, this paper continues to provide a meaningful exploration of transference and guidelines for addressing it in the clinical setting.

SESSION 3. 15 January 2019  
Applications of Freud’s formulations

Readings
Session 4. 29 January 2019
Further developments in Conceptualizing Transference

Readings


SESSION 5
12 February 2019
Expanding the understanding and uses of countertransference

Readings


SESSION 6
19 February 2019
Practical applications of understanding countertransference: how therapists can use their private experience

Readings:


SESSION 7
26 February 2019
Two additional perspectives of the therapists’ use of their private experience

SESSION 8
5 March 2019

Enactments: When the therapist’s response to the patient leads to observable action

Readings:


SESSION 9
12 March 2019

Transference in children and a contemporary perspective on countertransference

Readings:


SESSION 10
19 March 2019

Overview

Readings:


There are several books in which different authors explore transference and countertransference. The first two contain articles most of which are available on PEP web, but many of them are older and often not cited in more contemporary articles. The third, published in 2013) contains chapters written especially for the collection and conveys a perspective of South American psychoanalysts.

Biographical information about the authors

We have included some biographical information about each author which allows you to place them in an historical context. A historical perspective is useful in framing the timing of the papers and to understand better how they are a reaction to what preceded them and anticipate future points of view.

BRIAN BIRD, M.D., a Canadian psychiatrist, was recruited to join the faculty of the Western Reserve Department of Psychiatry that was chaired by Douglas Bond, M.D., one of many chairs of major departments of psychiatry at that time. This department became a leader in the integration of psychoanalytic thought in the education of psychiatric residents. Bird became a training analyst and wrote "Talking with Patient," a clearly written concise, thoughtful volume that made psychoanalytic readily accessible to medical students and psychiatric resident. In the late 1960's a bitter conflict resulted in a split between the Cleveland Psychoanalytic Institute and the Department of Psychiatry. Bird cast his lot with the Institute. He died in 1992.

ARNOLD COOPER, M.D. (1923-2011) was a Supervising and Training analyst at the Columbia Center for Psychoanalytic Training and Research and the Director of Psychiatric Residency Training at the Cornell Department of Psychiatry. He was a prolific, clear and challenging writer, a president of the American Psychoanalytic Association, and a winner of the Sigourney Prize of the American Psychoanalytic Association.

JUDITH CHUSED, M.D., is an emeritus training and supervising child and adult analyst in our institute. She has written extensively on the clinical practice of psychoanalysis. She has also been an active teacher and supervisor.

MERTON GILL, PhD. studied and taught in many analytic communities. In his reconceptualization of transference his writings foreshadow the develop of a relational perspective.

PAULA HEIMANN, M.D.,(1999-1982) received her medical training in Germany and emigrated in the 1930's to Britain where she studied with Melanie Klein. Her paper on countertransference contributed to a rift between her and Klein who saw countertransference only as a problem for the analyst and the analysis.

THEODORE JACOBS, M.D. was trained in the New York Psychoanalytic Institute and has written eloquently and powerfully on the analyst's use of his own private experience. In his focus on the analyst's use of the self, he significantly broadened the more "classical" perspective of the institute in which he trained.

BETTY JOSEPH, M.D. (1917-2013) was born in Britain and was a close associate of Melanie Klein. Along with Bion, Rosenfeld, and Hanna Segal, she developed the Kleinian school of object relationships. Her writings have had a major impact on both theory and technique.
WENDY KATZ, Ph.D., got her degree from the University of Michigan, was on the staff of Chestnut Lodge in Washington DC and graduated from the Columbia Center for Psychoanalysis and Research in 2006.

HANS LOEWALD, M.D. (1906-1993) was born in Alsace, emigrated to the US and was trained at the Baltimore Psychoanalytic Institute. He studied with Martin Heidegger and was influenced by the work of Harry Stack Sullivan. He extended the boundaries of psychoanalytic thought by emphasizing that the analyst is a “new object” and transference is not merely a repetition of past relationships. He was a leader of the Western New England Psychoanalytic Institute.

HERMAN NUNBERG, M.D., (1894-1970) was a neurologist, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who got his M.D. in Zurich where he worked with Jung on developing the word association test. He taught in Switzerland and Poland before joining the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society. Like many analysts, he emigrated to the US in 1932 where he lived in Philadelphia and New York.

THOMAS OGDEN, M.D. trained at the San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute and has brought a creative, challenging perspective to his many psychoanalytic writings. His literary style is both accessible and challenging and, like Warren Poland, has a deep interest in literature. He has emphasized attending to how we read an author’s work.

WARREN POLAND, M.D., was a training and supervising analyst at the Washington Psychoanalytic Institute but left the faculty as part of a dispute between two factions of the Institute in the late 1970’s. He has written widely on many topics and has a deep interest in literature. He is the author of “Melting the Darkness” and has won many prizes, including the Sigourney Prize of the American Psychoanalytic Association.

HEINRICH RACKER, Ph.D. emigrated from Germany to Buenos Aires in 1939 having already achieved a Ph.D. in music and philosophy. His paper on Transference and Countertransference, while dense and difficult to read, had a major impact on our understanding of these phenomena.

JOSEPH SANDLER, M.D., Ph.D. (1927-1998) was born and educated in South Africa In the midst of bitter conflict between three factions of the British Psychoanalytic Society, he was a member of the “Freudian” faction and believe that psychoanalysis did not have a complete theory but rather was organized around a body of thought. He stressed the importance of respect for the ideas of others and decried the destructive attacks that plagued organized psychoanalysis. He was interested in the relationship between psychoanalytic thought and the burgeoning field of neuroscience. His book, “The Analyst and the Patient” is a remarkably concise, clearly written exploration of basic principles. He held professorships at University College, London and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, a rare position for a psychoanalyst.

ROY SCAFNER, Ph.D., was trained at Menninger (like Merton Gill) and for many years was a training and supervising analyst at the Western New England Institute and the chief psychologist of the Yale Department of Psychiatry. He is a prolific writer who clarity and challenging perspective engages the reader demands reconsideration of previously held beliefs. He has moved from his classical early training to his current embrace of a contemporary Kleinian perspective. In his ability to reexamine and modify his own point of view, often in dramatic ways, he is unique among psychoanalytic writers.
ALLAN SCHORE is a psychoanalyst and neuroscientist who was written on affects, the origins of the self, attachment theory, neurobiology, and relational trauma in wild elephants.

CLARA THOMPSON, M.D., (1893-1958) got her M.D. from Johns Hopkins and her analytic training from the Washington Psychoanalytic Institute. She was a major leader among women in the field and believed that gender was the creation of culture. She wrote widely and was influenced by Harry Stack Sullivan, Adolf Meyer and William Alanson White and she founded the WAW institute in New Yori.

DONALD WINNICOTT, M.D., (1896-1971) was a pediatrician and psychoanalyst who helped found the so-called “Middle School” of the British Psychoanalytic Society and made major contributions to our current understanding of object relationships. He was powerfully affected by the impact of WW II in children in Britain. His writing style is very evocative and Thomas Ogden’s article “On Reading Winnicott” is very helpful in understanding this highly influential psychoanalytic thinker.