

THE BOSTON PSYCHOANALYTIC SOCIETY AND INSTITUTE, INC.

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November 25, 2013

DREAM THEORY AND PRACTICE, A CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVE

Instructor: Howard Katz, MD

Four Evenings 5:30-7:00 pm

December 19, 2013; January 9, 23, 30, 2014

Introduction and Overview:

In the first years of the twentieth century a conversation about dreams among analysts, their patients and other readers of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* served as the crucible for thinking about the unconscious and about the new field of psychoanalysis. A book by Lydia Marinelli and Andreas Mayer (*Dreaming by the Book*, Other Press, 2003) documents the extent to which the dream book was adopted as a first textbook of psychoanalysis. "With this book, Freud does not develop a methodology in the traditional sense. What he offers instead is a technique of self-observation, derived from dream theory, That is intended to convert both potential patients and critical colleagues to psychoanalysis. In its initial form, therefore, *The Interpretation of Dreams* functioned to a great extent as a precursor and substitute for a first manual of psychoanalysis."

This seminar will inquire into ways in which a current theory of dreaming can analogously reflect broader currents in the evolution of psychoanalytic perspectives and inform our approaches to the clinical situation.

Our current perspective takes off from Erikson's early 1950's landmark paper, that widened the field of view on dreams. We go on to incorporate subsequent empirical studies of REM sleep and dreaming and their neurobiology. We will consider how revised theories can be applied to the clinical encounter with dreams and to patients' and analysts' experience with some cultural products (like movies and poetry) that partake of imaginative activity related to dreaming.

With just 4 sessions, this is only a sample of ways to think about and clinically employ dreams, with a few readings organized around particular interests of the instructor. We will be discuss assigned reading in the first half of each session, and think together about clinical material in the second half. Optional readings, suggested for your interest, may or may not discuss. Further, I will send you a supplementary reading list, for your own exploration as time goes on, if you care to fill in some areas we have touched on.

Our last meeting will be devoted to thinking about the relationship between dreams and other products of the imagination. There will be a special emphasis on the relation between dreaming and cinema, but this is part of a wider inquiry into how psychoanalytic ideas about the

unconscious and dreaming may articulate with understanding of the experience of art forms. We will consider the value of thinking about a patient's (or therapist's) associations to a cultural product as providing material analogous to that developed in relation to a dream.

As this is a second dream course, we will assume familiarity with core conceptions of the dream and its place in analysis, particularly those of Freud. Some assigned papers, as they seek to expand on Freud's model, go back over its core tenets. But if you wish to review prior to our beginning, you may go back to the Interpretation of Dreams in the Standard Edition, or you might enjoy a recent translation by Joyce Crick of the 1900 publication (without all the updates Freud made through the years, it is shorter). Or you may get an overview more succinctly from dipping into these briefer treatments of the theory by Freud:

Freud, S. "On Dreams." S.E. (Standard Edition) 5: 633-86 [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. "Introductory Lectures," pp. 81-240 S.E. 15, 81-240 [PEP Web Link](#)

Session 1, Dec. 19:

We start with Freud's famous specimen dream, reconsidered at mid-century with Erikson's holistic integration of ego psychology and social psychology.

Erikson, E. The Dream Specimen in psychoanalysis, JAPA, 2:5:56, (1954) [PEP Web Link](#)

Optional:

-Another re-thinking of the Dream of Irma's Injection:

Greenberg, R. and Pearlman, C. (1978). If Freud Only Knew: A Reconsideration of Psychoanalytic Dream Theory. *Int. Rev. Psycho-Anal.*, 5:71-75 [PEP Web Link](#)

Deeper reflections on Erikson's contribution, as compared with Freud's, considering matters broader (contrasting core ideas about how the mind gets put together) than only the psychology of dreaming, but the theory of dreaming is central in the paper and considered in pp. (82-87):

Lifton, R.J. (1976). From Analysis to Formation. *J. Am. Acad. Psychoanal. Dyn. Psychiatr.*, 4:63-94 [PEP Web Link](#)

-A consideration, 50 years later, of how analysts guided by different theoretical orientations work with dreams. What differences exist and what is common ground?

Kantrowitz, J.L. (2003). Tell me your Theory. Where is it Bred? A Lesson from Clinical Approaches to Dreams. *J. Clin. Psychoanal.*, 12:151-178 [PEP Web Link](#)

Session 2, Jan. 9:

Taking into account empirical studies of dreaming and the neurobiology of sleep and dreams.

Hartmann, E. Outline for a Theory on the Nature and Functions of Dreaming, *Dreaming*, 6:2: 147-170, 1996. [Available in the Library]

Session 3, Jan. 23:

Dreaming, implicit memory and neurobiology, metaphor and non-discursive modes of thinking.

Mancia, M. (2003). Dream actors in the theatre of memory: Their role in the psychoanalytic process. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.* 84:945-952. [PEP Web Link](#)

Modell, Arnold, *Imagination and the Meaningful Brain*, Bradford/MIT, Cambridge, MA, 2003, Ch. 3. [Available in the Library]

Session 4, Jan. 30:

On the imagery and psychoanalytic view of dreams as they influence and are influenced by the cultural surround. The specific example of dreams and the cinema in the 20th considered. Film clips TBA.

Rycroft, Charles. *The Innocence of Dreams*. Pantheon, New York, 1979. Ch. 9 Dreams and the Literary Imagination, pp. 153-167. [Available in the Library]

Optional: contributions more specific about the relation of dreaming, cinema and poetry.

Sklarew, B., Freud and Film: Encounters in the *Weltgeist*. *JAPA* 47:4 1999, pp.1238-1255. [PEP Web Link](#)

Katz, H. Escaping Gravity: Movie Magic and Dreams of Flying. *Psychoanal. Study of the Child*, 2002, in press. [PEP Web Link](#)

Russo, R. (2003) Dream Poetry as Dream Work. *Dreaming* 13:1: 13-27 [Available in the Library]

cc: Drs. Blatman, Kane, Wasik
Drs. H. Katz; Drs. Friedman, Foehl; Ms. Watts
Drs. Seriff, Boyd, Fader
Ms. Umansky