OVERVIEW

This seminar will examine some of the major innovations to psychoanalytic thinking and practice contributed by Melanie Klein and elaborated by several of her followers. Taken as a whole, they constitute some of the most clinically relevant ideas and models of unconscious phantasies, pre-verbal states of mind, primitive anxieties and defenses, and normal and pathological development. Paradoxically her ideas are now widely accepted while continuing to stir up controversy between detractors and adherents. Her work is dense with new observations, discoveries, and bold theorizing. In our readings and discussions, we will strive to achieve optimal tension between empathic identification with and critical reflection upon her ideas. Although the focus will be on theory, we will invite all participants to contribute clinical examples that relate theory to actual practice whenever possible.

READINGS

Session 1 (Jan 31) Introduction to Kleinian Object Relations Theory
Learning Objective: Identify key aspects of the concept of object relations theory in Freud’s work and Klein’s expansion of the concept.


Suggested:
**Session 2 (Feb 14) Unconscious Phantasy**
Learning Objective: Describe unconscious phantasy as the psychic representative of drive that is linked both to internal objects and external reality.


Grosskurth, P. (1986). Warring women. In *Melanie Klein: Her world and her work* (Chapter 2, pp. 310-333). Cambridge: Harvard University Press. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org](mailto:library@bpsi.org)

Suggested:

**Session 3 (Feb 21) The Depressive Position**
Learning Objective: Describe the depressive position as a critically important, yet highly vulnerable developmental achievement.


Suggested:
Segal, H. (1989). The depressive position. In *Introduction to the work of Melanie Klein* (Chapter 6, pp. 67-81). London: Karnac. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org](mailto:library@bpsi.org)

**Session 4 (Feb 28) The Paranoid-Schizoid Position**
Learning Objective: Identify the constellation of primitive anxieties and defenses that constitute the paranoid-schizoid position.


Suggested:
Session 5 (Mar 7) Early Precursors of the Oedipus Complex
Learning Objective: Connect the child’s capacity to experience unconscious phantasy to the early development of Oedipal dynamics.


Suggested:

Session 6 (Mar 14) Projective Identification
Learning Objective: Compare the healthy and pathological uses of the mechanism of projective identification.


Suggested:

Session 7 (Mar 21) Transference Viewed through a Kleinian Lens
Learning Objective: Describe how the concept of the “total situation” enhances our understanding of what is being activated in the transference.


Suggested:
Session 8 (Mar 28) Evolution of Kleinian Technique

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, candidates will be able to describe three key aspects of contemporary Kleinian clinical technique.

