Welcome to the Relational Theory class. When Mitchell and Greenberg published “Object Relations in Psychoanalytic Practice” in 1983, they opened a Pandora’s Box through their emphasis on specific authors (Sullivan and the British Middle group) and selective re-reading of object relations theory. The emphasis shifted to how the active ‘here and now’ handling of the transference could be transformative by reshaping internal object relations, rather than change coming primarily by reshaping the ego and defenses through insight provided by a neutral analyst. The American Relational approach would go on to become a major theoretical school and important counterpoint to ego psychological and even self-psychological approaches. It would come to question and push several technical and theoretical ideas to their limits, including how we think about abstinence, neutrality, self-disclosure, countertransference, trauma, the social surround, and the self.

However, despite ‘peaking’ in the nineties, the movement has been criticized for not cohering as a theoretical school, perhaps being more of a loose consortium of reactions or course corrections to more traditional psychoanalytic ways of viewing the mind and therapeutic action.

We’ll expect each of you to make your own determinations as to how deeply you should integrate Relational ideas into your own synthesis of what constitutes the most effective psychoanalytic work. What we can say is that going into depth each week on what the diverse community of Relational theorists has to offer will undoubtedly cause you to rethink and revise bedrock notions of the more ‘one person’ psychology models of psychoanalysis that you have come across.

**Session 1 - November 21, 2019**

**Introduction to the Relational Framework**


**Learning Objective**: At the conclusion of this session, candidates will be able to identify two fundamental differences between the classical and relational models.

**Session 2 - December 5, 2019**  
**Relational Critiques of Classical Psychoanalytic Theory & the Analyst’s Subjectivity**


**Learning Objective**: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to describe the critiques offered by Relational Theory of such concepts as neutrality, abstinence and anonymity.

**Session 3 - December 12, 2019**  
**Dissociation and Self States**


**Learning Objective**: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to explain how dissociation is understood from a relational perspective and to define dissociation and repression.

**Session 4 - December 19, 2019**  
**Intersubjectivity and Analytic Thirdness**


**Learning Objective**: At the conclusion of this seminar candidates will be able to articulate the concept of the analytic third from a Relational perspective.
Session 5 - January 2, 2020
Relational Revisions of Sex, Gender and Race: A View of the Social Surround From the Consulting Room


**Learning Objective:** At the conclusion of this class candidates will be able to describe one aspect of the relational perspective on culture and race.

Session 6 - January 9, 2020
The Developmental Perspective


**Learning Objectives:** At the conclusion of this session, candidates will be able to describe the contribution of recent advances in psychoanalytic views of child development to relational theory

Session 7 - January 23, 2020
Controversy within the Relational School: Critiques of Relational Theory


**Learning Objective:** At the conclusion of this class candidates will be able to explain two critiques of Relational theory from important contributors to the theory’s early development.
Session 8 - January 30, 2020
Relational Theory in Practice


Optional:

**Learning Objective:** At the conclusion of this session, candidates will be able to describe one way in which the patient’s experience of the person of the analyst can be both a spur to change as well as an aspect of the resistance.