



Psychoanalytic Training, Year IV Fall 2021

Psyche and the Social Surround

Paola M. Contreras, PsyD

The main objective of this course is as a primer and introduction to the topic of the intrapsychic and the social surround. A secondary objective is to review the controversy between the intrapsychic and the social surround in psychoanalysis and view the many ways that U.S. psychoanalysis is addressing the limitations of this divide. The content will show that U.S. psychoanalysts are generating another iteration of psychoanalysis that holds near the old established theories, critically evaluates their application in the present, and invites continued newness in practice, which has always been the case for psychoanalysis. The strict divide between attention to the intrapsychic and the social surround has been prominent in U.S. psychoanalysis. Exclusive attention to the intrapsychic has, for many decades, been privileged as the truest form of psychoanalytic practice. The origin of this divide is multi-pronged and likely overdetermined and will be discussed throughout this course. To situate the class in the present, the first meeting will address the current social surround in the United States and discuss how it is shaping new knowledge about the intrapsychic. The issue of race, anti-racist agendas, and the covid pandemic as a catalyst and push factor for change will be reviewed. The next two classes will visit some of the issues that led to the intrapsychic and social surround divide such as the evolution of Freud's early theoretical proposals, the immigration of European psychoanalysts to the United States during World War II, and the specific way health systems developed and created disparities and issues of access for some groups that were already facing marginalization. A set of subsequent classes will discuss the influence of the social surround on the psychoanalysts' subjectivity, and how that, in turn, coalesces with practice and the continued development of psychoanalysis. The remaining classes will provide examples of ways in which psychoanalysis is moving beyond this divide in its work with marginalized populations, individuals impacted by trauma, and psychoanalytic approaches to work with large group traumas. The concept of psychoanalysis as a liberatory practice (adapted from the Martín-Baró's liberation psychology) and many other novel and exciting theoretical formulations will be discussed in the course's assigned content. Wherever possible, the instructor included a podcast that features the author of the paper assigned for that week with the hope to further enliven the material.

Class One: Introduction to the Course, The Current Social Surround and Psychoanalysis

Reading

Stoute, B. J. (2021). Black rage: The psychic adaptation to the trauma of oppression. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 69(2), 259–290. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Recommended

Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association (2021). Psychoanalysis, Race, and Racism. 69(2). [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Objective

Students will describe Black rage as it is expressed and understood in the social surround and contrast it with the Stoute’s intrapsychic description of Black rage.

Class Two: The Intrapsychic and Social Surround Divide in Psychoanalysis I

Reading

Altman, N. (2009). *Theoretical, social, and historical background*. In N. Altman (Ed). The analyst in the inner city: Race, class, and culture through a psychoanalytic lens (pp. 33-80). [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Listen (1 hr)

New Books in Psychoanalysis Podcast: Neil Altman, “The Analyst in the Inner City: Race, Class, and Culture Through an Analytic Lens”

<https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/neil-altman-analyst-in-inner-city-race-class-culture/id423338807?i=1000364269461>

Recommended

Graybow, S. (2016). *Putting social theory into clinical practice: Incorporating Fromm’s theory of social character into a traditional psychodynamic treatment*. In S. Graybow (Ed.), *Progressive psychoanalysis as a social justice movement* (pp. 83-95). [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Objective

Students will identify at least two historical moments that contributed to the divide between the social surround and the intrapsychic in psychoanalysis.

Class Three: The Intrapsychic and Social Surround Divide in Psychoanalysis II

Reading

Layton, L. (2006). Attacks on linking: The unconscious pull to dissociate individuals from their social context. In L. Layton, N. C. Hollander, & S. Gutwill (Eds.), *Psychoanalysis, class and politics: Encounters in the clinical setting* (pp. 107–117). Routledge. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Listen (75 mins)

Rendering Unconscious Podcast: Dr Lynne Layton Unconscious, Relational & Social Psychoanalysis, Culture, Activism

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/ru77-rendering-lynne-layton-unconscious-relational/id1374898721?i=1000474275701>

Recommended

Layton, L. & Leavey-Sperounis, M. (2020). *Toward a social psychoanalysis: Culture, character, and the normative unconscious processes*. New York, NY: Routledge. [Email library@bpsi.org to request a 2-week book loan – please specify your shipping address. First come, first served].

Objective

Students will describe Layton's attack on linking concept, namely its theoretical underpinnings, as the author applies it to psychoanalytic theory that dissociates the intrapsychic from the social context.

Class Four: The Analyst's Social Surround & Subjectivity in Theorizing I**Assignment**

Think or write for yourself a one-page description of why you decided to begin psychoanalytic training. You will not be required to share what you thought or wrote, yet it might be useful for your full participation in this and subsequent classes. You might also want to go back and read your application essay for BPSI candidacy and ask yourself if the reasons you gave to want to become an analyst still feel relevant, or have they changed in some significant way?

Reading

Angeloch, D. (2021). The Experience of the First World War in Wilfred Bion's Autobiographical Writings. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 90(1):7-48. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Objective

Students will identify at least two personal life events that seem to have influenced Wilfred Bion's development of his psychoanalytic theory.

Class Five: The Analyst's Social Surround & Subjectivity in Theorizing II**Reading**

Contreras, P. M. (2020). The Magical and the my-person in psychoanalysis during the covid pandemic. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 68(6), 1113–1126. Link to [Online Publication](#) (in free access): <https://doi.org/10.1177/0003065120981733>

Recommended:

Corpt, E. (2013). Peasant in the Analyst's Chair: Reflections, Personal and Otherwise, on Class and Forming of an Analytic Identity *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology*. 8(1):52-69. [PEP Web Link](#).

Objective

Students will describe the my-person construct as it relates to the intrapsychic and the social surround.

Class Six: Beyond the Intrapsychic & Social Surround Divide I: Psychoanalysis as a Method of Liberation

Reading

Gatzambide, D. (2020). From Freud to Fanon to Freire: Psychoanalysis as a liberation method. In L. Comas-Díaz and E. Torres Rivera (Eds.) *Liberation psychology: theory, method, practice, and social justice* (pp. 71-90). [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Listen (60 mins)

RU74: Rendering Unconscious Podcast Daniel José Gatzambide on Psychoanalysis & Liberation Psychology: <https://youtu.be/ZF1FMgOBBdY>

Recommended

Gatzambide, D. (2019). *A people's history of psychoanalysis*. Lexington Books. [Email library@bpsi.org to request a 2-week book loan – please specify your shipping address. First come, first served].

Objective

Students will discuss how a liberatory conceptualization of psychoanalysis can be helpful to engage populations that have not been engaged using a psychoanalytic perspective.

Class Seven: Beyond the Intrapsychic & Social Surround Divide II: Psychoanalysis and Working with Trauma

Readings

Rush, F. (1996). The Freudian Coverup. *Feminism & Psychology*, 6(2), 260–276 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353596062015>. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Boulanger, G. (2005). From Voyeur to Witness: Recapturing Symbolic Function After Massive Psychic Trauma. *Psychoanal. Psychol.*, 22(1):21-31. [PEP Web Link](#).

Recommended

Herman, J.L. (2018). *Trauma & Recovery*. Basic Books (pages 7-20). [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Objective

Students will identify the origin of the divide in psychoanalysis between trauma in the context and intrapsychic trauma.

Students will discuss contemporary psychoanalytic approaches that can competently address the consequences of trauma by addressing the intrapsychic and the surrounding issues related to trauma survivorship.

Class Eight: Beyond the Intrapsychic & Social Surround Divide III: Psychoanalysis and Working with Large Group Traumas

Readings

Beritzhoff, L.C. (2021). Psychoanalysis in the Meantime, *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 31:1, 81-99. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

Ainslie, R.C. (2017). Immigration, Psychic Dislocation, and the Re-Creation of Community. *Psychoanal. Rev.*, 104(6):695-706. [PEP Web Link](#).

Recommended

Contreras, P.M. (2021) Discussion of “Psychoanalysis in the Meantime”, *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 31:1, 110-116. [Download from the [Reading folder](#) or request from library@bpsi.org].

The Supporting Child Caregivers Podcast: Dr. Paola Contreras Speaks About Her Work with Victims of Trauma

In a recent episode of Alexandra M. Harrison’s podcast series, BPSI Member Paola Contreras, PsyD speaks about her work with victims of trauma in Latin America and in the US.

<https://bpsi.org/dr-paola-contreras-speaks-about-her-work-with-victims-of-trauma-audio/>

Conversations Podcast: Psychotherapy on the Couch with Gillian Straker

Gill Straker has a lifetime of experience as a psychotherapist, in Australia and in her birthplace, South Africa. Her work counselling victims of brutality and trauma during the apartheid regime was fundamental to her ongoing practice. At the heart of every successful therapeutic session, says Gill, is a willingness to be present, open, and to learn from each other. She encourages people to include the health of their minds as well as their bodies, when looking to improve their wellbeing.

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/conversations/gill-straker/11144572>

Objective

Students will discuss two psychoanalytic approaches to work with large group traumas and how these can generate new concepts to work with the intrapsychic and contextual issues of mass plights.