Freudian Intersubjectivity

The rise of intersubjective conceptions within psychoanalysis has brought to the fore issues of interaction between analyst and analysand. The form this interaction takes in the Freudian paradigm is an involvement of two unconscious minds contacting, impacting, interacting and influencing each other. In this course we will survey some classical and contemporary Freudian conceptions of what it means to deeply interact in these ways and take measure of the variety of conceptions of unconscious interplay that today we might call “intersubjective.” What becomes evident is how the notion of the unconscious is currently used in increasingly creative ways as a mysterious, communicative, receptive, process-oriented, decentered, and enactive idea.

WEEK 1: Introduction

In this week we will begin our introduction with two chapters from a recent book by German author Bohleber who is highly critical of the intersubjective turn.


WEEK 2: UNCONSCIOUS COMMUNICATION

Like Freud’s statement that the ego is first and foremost a bodily ego, his conception of unconscious communication is another radical statement that went undeveloped by Freud. Brown extends the idea.


WEEK 3: THE ANALYST'S MIND

Freudian approaches emphasize the functions performed consciously and unconsciously within the mind of the analyst and the effects those processes have regarding the patient.


WEEK 4: INTERSUBJECTIVITY IN THE AMERICAN INDEPENDENT TRADITION

The mind of the analyst is also a focus of those American Freudians who identify themselves as an independent school and use the concept of the analyst’s mind in some different ways.


WEEK 5: BOLLAS

The analytic voice of Christopher Bollas represents the creative edge of Freudian thinking. These two articles take up some of his thinking with regard to the receptivity of the unconscious and the idea of a Freudian intersubjectivity.


WEEK 6: STATES

Bach writes of “sharing” states of consciousness and Libbey illustrates an intersubjective clinical process from the Freudian perspective.


**WEEK 7: INFLUENCE AND INTERACTION**

*Once repudiated topics, contemporary Freudians reexamine the roles of bi-directional influence and interaction.*


**WEEK 8: THE INTRAPSYCHIC AND THE INTERSUBJECTIVE**

*Must it be one or the other?*


Figueiredo, L.C. (unpublished manuscript) Intersubjectivity and the inner world: the place of the superegoic field in theory and clinical practice.

**WEEK 9: DRIVES**

*From French psychoanalysis, a conception of the intersubjective that refers to the analytic idea of the Subject, one that indicates “the existence of an unconscious dimension of intersubjectivity that takes into account the drive-related and sexual dimensions”.*

WEEK 10  THE “INTERPSYCHIC”

Decentering the Subject of the unconscious into realms of interaction both in development and the clinical situation.


WEEK 11:  INTERSUBJECTIVE FIELD THEORY

Conceiving of mind as located in the field created by patient and analyst


WEEK 12:  Unconscious Communication and its Link with Freudian Intersubjectivity


WEEK 13:  ENACTION

Another oft repudiated area, that of action, is taken up as representative of the intersubjective engagement between patient and analyst.


WEEK 14: IDENTIFICATION AND DISIDENTIFICATION

“The shadow of the object fell upon the ego, and the latter could henceforth be judged by a special agency, as if it were an object, the forsaken object”.


WEEK 15: INTERSUBJECTIVITY AND THINGS

Bollas extends the intersubjective conception to the world of actual objects and how they process us: “one way we think ourselves is through our engagement with, and use of, evocative objects”.