

**NYU Postdoctoral Program: Instructor - Kirkland C. Vaughans, Ph.D.**

**Course Syllabus: Clinical Case Seminar.**

**Race, Ethnicity, and Class in Psychoanalytic Treatment. 2020**

**Goals:**

Freud referenced psychoanalysis as an “impossible profession” meaning that we know we are always going to be dissatisfied with the results. Recent efforts to broaden the psychoanalytic perspective across racial, ethnic, gender and class lines can make it feel as if Freud was absolutely correct. This statement makes reference to Frosh {2002} the British analyst who’s observation that “What is most noticeable about contemporary racism is its remarkable sinuousness, its capacity to appear as something else, for instance nationalism or liberationism, and its power to catalyze fantasy and imagination.” Kovel (1995) drew a similar conclusion when he observes that, “The power of this psychosocial organization is so great that it can enter into the evolution of the psyche.” This course will focus primarily on the issues of race and White racism in the analytic session where most of these issues lay buried in the “not me” dissociated domain of countertransference. It will seek to understand both spoken and unspoken dialogue through the lens of what Dianne Adams has referred to “race as the new royal road to the unconscious.” It is important to understand that these issues are beyond the grasp of the individual analyst. In his comprehensive study on psychodynamic treatment Watkins {2012} found that there is “but the smallest fraction of psychodynamic research data available on non-White subjects.” This is parallel to the puny number of analysts of Color.

This course is designed to assist clinicians to examine impediments to treating racial, ethnic, and class “Others” by understanding White racism on an individual, institutional, and structural level. It will require weekly readings, as well as the use of group experiential exercises to explore individual racial identity, as well as social and historical impediments to knowing. The basic intent is to explore these issues beyond just an academic or intellectual grasp but to gain an affective sense as well. White Racism will also be explored from historical, institutional, structural, and from an individual vantage point. Franz Fanon will be a primary theoretical perspective from which the course will be processed. Race, racism, and other forms of oppression often find analyst regardless of orientation in a professional regressive mode of viewing themselves as a blank screen upon which the patient of color casts their paranoid, racialized projections. This invokes a kind of we/they thinking or a level of splitting that is reflective of Klein’s paranoid schizoid mode of perceiving oneself and others, i.e., one has to be good or bad. It is because these topics invoke guilt, shame, anger, and blame reactions that candidates will incur additional responsibilities in this class. The first is the development or creation of a “thinking space” amongst themselves that is so frequently absent in cross racial therapeutic dyads. Candidates will present case material on a weekly basis that pertains to the weekly’s readings. I will especially encourage the presentation of “Failed” cases regardless of the circumstances. Our effort here is to benefit from Bion’s distinction between “knowing” and “knowing about” the second being described as a defense against knowing in a deeper and emotional way.

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The third responsibility will be to participate in an in class evaluation of the course its success and failures for them as individual clinicians, the instructor, as well as for the class as a whole.

**Week 1. Goal.** Candidates will be able to understand how psychoanalytically informed treatment has been perceived as a marker for privileged Whites and avenues for a more inclusive model of treatment. Candidates will also be able to discuss how historically how the racial fluidity of Jewish people has influenced psychoanalytic practice and thought.

Swartz, S. {2019} Decolonizing psychoanalysis In *The Role of Ruthlessness in Psychoanalysis and Political Protest*. 128-147. London: Routledge.

Iitzkovitz, D. {2001} Passing Like Me: Jewish chameleonism and the politics of race, In Maria Carla Sanchez & Linda Schlossberg {Eds.} *Identity and Interpretation in Sexuality, Race, and Religion*. 38-63. New York: New York University Press.

### **Week 2. Goal**

***Candidates will describe the subtle ways that a “white” perspective makes it difficult to see racialized thinking at the base of psychoanalytic theory.***

***Candidates will begin to think about how race is thought about or not thought about in psychoanalytic thinking.***

Suchet, M. {2007}. Unraveling whiteness. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 17, 867-886.

Dalal, F. {2002} Race, Colour and the Process of Racialization. Chapter 2. “psychoanalysis and racism” p.32-62. New York: Brunner-Rutledge.

### **Week 3. Goal**

***Candidates will come to understand Blackness as a theoretical construct.***

Fanon, F. {1967}. The Fact of Blackness. In *Black Skin White Mask*. 109-140. New York: Grove Press.

Dalal, F. {2002} Black and White. In *Race, Colour and the Process of Racialization*. P.135-170.

### **Week 4. Goal**

***Candidates will be able to consider how the collective silence and avoidance of thinking about race in psychoanalysis.***

Stoute, B. (2017) Race and racism in psychoanalytic thought: The Ghosts in our nursery. *The American Psychoanalyst*. 5: 1-26.

Powell, D. {2019} Race, African Americans, and psychoanalysis: collective silence in the therapeutic conversation. *JAPA*. 1021`1049. January 8.

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#### **Week 5. Goal**

***Candidates will think about how cultural and social factors impact our psychoanalytic frame and what psychoanalysis can learn from sociologists in thinking about race.***

Moskowitz, M. {1996}. The Social conscience of psychoanalysis. In Rosemarie Foster, Michael Moskowitz, & Rafael Javier {Eds.} *Reaching Across Boundaries of Culture and Class*. P. 21-46. Northvale: Aronson.

Clarke, S. {2003} Melanie Klein, racism and psychoanalysis, 123-145. In *Social Theory, Psychoanalysis and Racism*. New York: Palgrave.

#### **Week 6.Goal:**

**Candidates will come to appreciate the political and economic development of psychoanalysis in the United States in contrast to its forgotten development in Latin America as opposed to the usual comparison with Europe.**

Plotkin, M. {2019} Freud and Latin Americans: A forgotten relationship. In Patricia Gherovici & Christopher Christian {Eds.} *Psychoanalysis in the Barrios*. 21-37, London: Routledge

Gherovici, P. {2019} Psychoanalysis of poverty, poverty of psychoanalysis. In Patricia Gherovici & Christopher Christian {Eds.} *Psychoanalysis in the Barrios*. 221-235, London: Routledge.

#### **Week 7. Goal:**

*Candidates will learn the advantages of Young's challenges to look at what he calls the mental and cultural space" and the notion of racial stamina to facilitate the psychoanalytic process.*

Young, R. {1994} Cultural space. In Robert Young {Ed} 12-32. *Mental Space*. London: Process Press.

Diangelo, R. {2018} *White Fragility*. Chapters 1, 5, 10 Boston: Beacon Press.

#### **Week 8: Goal:**

***Candidates learn how to formulate racist thinking from a Kleinian perspective and how analysts avoid such discussions.***

Brooks, O. [2014] Race and our evasions of invitations to think: how identifications and idealizations may prevent us from thinking. In Frank Lowe {Ed.} *Thinking Space*. 35-55. London: Karnac.

Morgan, H. {2014} Between fear and blindness: The white therapist and the black patient. In Frank Lowe {Ed.} 56-74. *Thinking Space*. London: Karnac.

#### **Week 9. Goal:**

Candidates appreciate the role of gendered geography in the maintenance of racism.

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Frankenberg, R. {1993}. Growing up white: the social geography of race. In Ruth Frankenberg {Ed.} 43-70. White Women, Race Matters. Minneapolis: Routledge.

Fallenbaum, R. {2018} The Color of psychotherapy. In Ruth Fallenbaum. 126-150. African American Patients in Psychotherapy New York: Routledge.

#### **Week 10.**

***Goal: We will think together about what transgenerational trauma as it relates to race in America and how understanding transgenerational factors can sensitize us to working with marginalized populations.***

Apprey, M. {2003}. Repairing history: reworking transgenerational trauma. In Donald Moss {Ed.} Hating in the First Person Plural. 3- 27. New York: Other Press.

Vaughans, K. {2017} Top unchain haunting blood memories: Intergenerational trauma among African Americans. In Jill Salberg & Sue Grand {Eds.} Wounds of History: Repair and Resilience in Trans-Generational Transmission of Trauma. London: Routledge

#### **Week 11.**

***Goal: We will be review the impediments within clinical examples in working with African American patients***

Liggan, D & Kay, J. {2006} Race in the room: issues in the dynamic psychotherapy of African Americans. In Roy Moodley & Stephen Palmer {Eds.}. Race, Culture and Psychotherapy. 100-115. London: Routledge.

Keval, N. {{2006} Understanding unbearable anxieties: the retreat into racism. In Roy Moodley & Stephen Palmer :Eds.} Race, Culture and Psychotherapy. London: Routledge .

#### **Week 12.**

**Goal:** To explore the psychological implications of immigration and the trauma from violence in treatment.

Akhtar, S. {1999. Psychoanalysis and psychodynamic treatment In Salman Akhtar Immigration and Identity. 109-138.

Ainslie, R., McDermott, H. & Guevara, C. {2019} Dying to get out: Challenges in the treatment of Latin American migrants fleeing violent communities. In Psychoanalysis In the Barrios. New York: Routledge.

#### **Week 13.**

**Goal:**

To recognize in what ways our social class backgrounds emerge in the transference/countertransference matrix.

Gutwill, S. & Hollander, N. {2006} Class and splitting in the clinical setting. In Lynne Layton, Nancy Hollander & Susan Gutwill {Eds.} *Psychoanalysis, Class and Politics*. 92-106. London: Routledge

Layton, L. {2006}. Attacks on linking. In Lynne Layton, Nancy Hollander & Susan Gutwill {Eds.} 107-117. London: Routledge.

#### **Week 14.**

To recognize some of the hidden injuries of their own class that psychoanalysts may be intimidated by and how they have shaped your analytic thinking.

Smith, L. {2005} Psychotherapy, classism, and the poor; Conspicuous by their absence. *American Psychologist*: 687-696.

Corpt, E. A. {2013} Peasant in the analyst chair: reflections, personal and otherwise on class and the formation of an analytic identity. *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology*. 8: 52-69.

#### **Week 15.**

Goal: To recognize the influence and enactment of class privilege and not so privileged in the therapeutic encounter.

Ryan, J. {2017} Why class and psychoanalysis? In Joanna Ryan *Class and Psychoanalysis: Landscapes of Inequality*. 1-19]. New York: Routledge.

Corpt, E. {2013}. Peasant in the analyst's chair: Reflections, personal and otherwise, on class and the forming of an analytic identity. *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology*. 8; 52-69.

Whitman-Raymond, L. (2009) The influence of class in the therapeutic dyad. *Contemporary psychoanalysis*. 45: 429-438.

#### **Bibliography:**

Frosh, S. {2002} Racism, racialized identities and the psychoanalytic other. In Valerie Walkerdine {Ed.} *Challenging Subjects: Clinical Psychology for a New Millennium*. New York : Palgrave.

Watkins, E. C. {2012} Race/ethnicity in short-term and long-term psychodynamic psychotherapy treatment research: How "White" are the data? *Psychoanalytic Psychology*. 29: 292-307.