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[PDPSA.4585 \(Psa Theory & Technique\)](#)

Ghosts in the Consulting Room: A Seminar on Repetitive (Re)Enactments

Course Description:

Ghosts are internalizations gone awry. They arise unbidden, haunting patient and analyst alike, in the form of repetitive, painful (re)enactments. In this way, ghosts of the past take possession of the present, resisting being “laid to rest as ancestors” (Loewald, 1960).

In this one-credit seminar, we will explore underinternalized ghostly phenomena that manifest as the compulsion to repeat, attachment to pain, unrepresented states, and dissociated self-states. Using Loewald as touchstone, we will consider the emergence of these absent presences in the therapeutic relationship, and trace the nonlinear pathways of “creative repetition” and “new discovery” that can help facilitate “laying ghosts to rest as ancestors.” On the clinical level, transforming “ghosts” into “ancestors” is more difficult than was made explicit in Loewald’s (1960) theoretical framework. Ghosts live a shadow life in the unconscious and preconscious “enacted dimension” of the treatment (Katz, 2011), taking up residence within and between analyst and patient — surprising and unsettling both members of the dyad; inviting disturbing and uncanny (re)enactments; threatening impasse. Integration of these ghosts requires welcoming, or at least tolerating, their deeply unnerving presence - containing and witnessing at intrapsychic, interpersonal, and “interpsychic” levels - and living through the profound and painful mourning process required to enable development of fuller integration and internalization.

Class meetings will be organized around the assigned weekly readings which will be discussed theoretically and then woven in with presentations of clinical material, with an eye toward identifying, tracking, and making use of ghostly phenomena in the therapeutic relationship.

Overall Course Objectives:

At the end of this course, candidates will be able to (i) compare psychoanalytic theories on psychic ghostly phenomena, (ii) define the clinical as well as theoretical meaning and utility of the term ghosts, (iii) recognize and discuss specific ways that psychic ghosts manifest in the clinical setting, and (iv) be aware of ways to intervene clinically when ghosts are prominent in the consulting room.

Readings and Course Outline

Section I: Introduction

WEEK 1: What Are Ghosts? How do we Recognize Them in the Clinical Setting?

Required:

Freud, S. (1914). Remembering, Repeating, and Working-Through (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psychoanalysis III). *SE*, XII, 145-156.

Loewald, H.W. (1960). On the Therapeutic Action of Psycho-Analysis. In *Papers on Psychoanalysis*. Hagerstown, MD: University Publishing Group (2000), 221-256.

Read section IV, pp. 244-255. The earlier sections of the paper are optional recommended reading.

Please watch the following 12-minute video online:

<https://loewaldcenter.org/videos/>

Recommended:

(1976). *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry*. XIV, 1975: Ghosts in the Nursery: A Psychoanalytic Approach to the Problems of Impaired Infant-Mother Relationships. Selma Fraiberg; Edna Edelson; Vivian Shapiro (pp. 387-421).

https://fortunoff.aviaryplatform.com/playlists/149/show/playlist_resource_id/6770/collection_resource_file_id/111046

Learning Objectives: At the end of this class, candidates will be able to describe the historical emergence of psychoanalytic conceptualizations of ghosts, and begin to recognize the presence of ghosts in the clinical setting.

Section II: What Drives Painful, Ghostly Repetitions/Reenactments? Some Comparative Theories & Their Clinical Implications

WEEK 2: Freud's View and Ferenczi's Modification

Freud, S. (1920). Beyond the Pleasure Principle. *SE*, XVIII: 3-23.

**Please note: you need to read only pages 3-23 - not the entire paper.

Ferenczi, S. (1929). The Unwelcome Child and his Death-Instinct. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 10:125-129.

WEEK 3: Kleinian and Relational Views on Pain and Therapeutic Action

Joseph, B. (1982). Addiction to Near-Death. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis.*, 63:449-456.

Gerson, S. (2009). When the Third is Dead: Memory, Mourning, and Witnessing in the Aftermath of the Holocaust. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis.*, 90:1341-1357.

Learning Objectives: At the end of this two-week module, candidates will be able to compare and contrast comparative theories of ghostly phenomena, and their clinical implications, from Freudian, Ferenczian, Kleinian, and Relational/Interpersonal psychoanalytic perspectives.

SECTION III: The Clinical Emergence of Ghostly (Re)Enactments - Intrapsychic, Interpersonal, and Interpsychic Space

WEEK 4: Yours, Mine, & Ours: Patient Ghosts, Analyst Ghosts, & their Interpenetration

Loewald, H. (1979). Reflections on the Psychoanalytic Process and its Therapeutic Potential. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 34: 155-167. (Read pp. 155-160).

Bolognini, S. (2011). The Intrapsychic and the Interpsychic. In: *Secret Passages: The Theory and Technique of Interpsychic Relations*. Great Britain: Routledge. (Read Chapter 4, pp. 57-80).

Benjamin, J. (2010). Where's the Gap and What's the Difference?: The Relational view of Intersubjectivity, Multiple Selves, and Enactments. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 46:112-119.

Kalb, M. (Unpublished manuscript). (Read pp. 17-20).

WEEK 5: Ghosts Interacting: Enactment

Katz, G. (2016). Repressed ghosts and dissociated vampires in the enacted dimension of psychoanalytic treatment. In: A. Harris, M. Kalb, and S. Klebanoff (Eds.), *Demons in the Consulting Room: Echoes of Trauma in Psychoanalysis*. (pp. 69-92). London, UK: Routledge.

Kalb, M. (2015). Ghosts in the Consulting Room: Reluctant Ancestors. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 51(1):74-106.

Learning Objectives: At the end of this two-week module, candidates will be able to (i) explain and assess the interpenetration of intrapsychic, interpersonal, intersubjective, and interpsychic processes on ghostly experiences in the clinical encounter, and (ii) describe how the ghosts of the analyst and the ghosts of the patient converge to create the clinical emergence of ghosts in the form of enactment, and (iii) evaluate and select clinical interventions with an eye toward eventually relieving the impact of ghosts in the consulting room and in the patient's life.

SECTION IV: When Ghosts Hold Sway: Impasse

WEEK 6

Kantrowitz, J. (1993). Impasses in Psychoanalysis: Overcoming Resistance in Situations of Stalemate. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 41: 1021-1050.

Fox, A. (2016). Occupation: A ghost story. In: A. Harris, M. Kalb, and S. Klebanoff (Eds.), *Demons in the Consulting Room: Echoes of Trauma in Psychoanalysis*. (pp. 59-68). London, UK: Routledge.

Learning Objectives: the end of this class, candidates will be able to (i) grasp some of the difficulties and challenges involved in taming ghosts, and (ii) understand, explain, and evaluate the specific risks of clinical impasse that result from the dominant presence ghosts in the consulting room.

SECTION V: Turning Ghosts into Ancestors

WEEK 7: Working Through: Toward Witnessing, Mourning, and Internalization

Loewald, H.W. (1962). Internalization, Separation, Mourning, and the Superego. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 31:483-504. [Read parts I & II, pp. 483-495].

Ferguson, H. (2016). Ghostly intrusions: Unformulated trauma and its transformation in the therapeutic dyad. In: A. Harris, M. Kalb, and S. Klebanoff (Eds.), *Ghosts in the Consulting Room: Echoes of Trauma in Psychoanalysis*. (pp. 36-51). London, UK: Routledge.

Holmes, D. E. (2021). "I do not have a racist bone in my body": Psychoanalytic perspectives on what is lost and not mourned in our culture's persistent racism. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 69(2): 237-258.

Learning Objectives: At the end of this class, candidates will be able to (i) theoretically and clinically link the pivotal processes of witnessing, containment, and mourning to the laying of ghosts to rest as ancestors and (ii) clarify how, specifically, a mourning process facilitates laying ghosts to relative rest.

WEEK 8: Beyond Mourning: Repair and Forgiveness – and Their Limits

Freud, S. (1929). Letter from Sigmund Freud to Ludwig Binswanger, 4/11/1929. In: *The Letters of Sigmund Freud*, Ed. E.L. Freud. NY: Basic Books, 1960 (p.386).

Gaines, R. (1997). Detachment and Continuity. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 33:549-571.

Smith, H.F. (2008). Leaps of Faith: Is Forgiveness a Useful Concept? *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 89:919-936.

Bergmann, M.B. (2009). On: Leaps of Faith: Is Forgiveness a Useful Concept? (Letter to the Editor). *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 90:640-640.

Smith, H.F. (2009). On: The Comment of Martin Bergmann. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 90:641-642.

Learning Objectives: At the end of this class, candidates will be able to (i) discuss the implications of mourning for the fate of ghosts, and (ii) describe the potentials and the limits of mourning, repair and forgiveness, in the context of their impact on ghosts.

Additional Suggested Readings

Abraham, N. & Torok, M. (1984). "The Lost Object—Me": Notes On Identification Within the Crypt. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 4:221-242.

Asch, S.S. (1976). Varieties of Negative Therapeutic Reaction and Problems of Technique. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 24: 383-407.

Bach, S. (2006). *Getting From Here to There: Analytic Love, Analytic Process*, Mahwah, NJ: The Analytic Press.

Bergmann, M.S. (2009). The Inability to Mourn and the Inability to Love in Shakespeare's Hamlet. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 78:397-423.

Bion, W.R. (1965). *Transformations*. London: Karnac (2002). [Read p. 76 & p. 105].

Bollas, (1994). Aspects of the erotic transference. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 14: 572-590.

Bromberg, P. (1996). *Standing in the Spaces: Essays on Clinical Process, Trauma, and Dissociation*. Hillsdale, N.J.: The Analytic Press.

Bromberg, P. (2003). One Need Not Be a House to be Haunted: On Enactment, Dissociation, and the Dread of "Not-Me"—A Case Study. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 13, 689-709.

Caruth, C. (1995). *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Chodorow, N.J. (2003). The Psychoanalytic Vision of Hans Loewald. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 84:897-913.

Chodorow, N.J. (2007). Reflections on Loewald's "Internalization, Separation, Mourning, and the Superego." *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 76: 1135-1151.

Chodorow, N.J. (2009). A Different Universe: Reading Loewald Through 'On the Therapeutic Action of Psychoanalysis.' *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 78: 983-1011.

Chodorow, N.J. (2019). *The Psychoanalytic Ear and the Sociological Eye: Toward an American Independent Tradition*. London, UK: Routledge.

Clewell, T. (2004). Mourning Beyond Melancholia: Freud's Psychoanalysis of Loss. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 52: 44-67.

Coen, S.J. (2003). The Thrall of the Negative and How to Analyze it. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 51:465-489.

Cooper, S. (2016). *The Analyst's Experience of the Depressive Position. The melancholic errand of psychoanalysis*. NY: Routledge.

Davis, J. & Frawley, M.G. (1994). *Treating the Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse: A Psychoanalytic Perspective*. New York: Basic Books.

Eigen, M. (1993). *The Electrified Tightrope*. Northvale, N.J. Jason Aronson.

Emery, E. (2002). The Ghost in the Mother: Strange Attractors and Impossible Mourning. *Psychoanalytic Review*, 89:169-194.

- Fogel, G.I., Tyson, P., Greenberg, J., McLaughlin, J.T., Peyser, E.R. (1996). A Classic Revisited: Loewald On the Therapeutic Action Of Psychoanalysis. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 44:863-924.
- Frankel, J. (2000). Exploring Ferenczi's concept of identification with the aggressor. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 12: 101-139.
- Frankiel, R. (Ed). (1994). *Essential Papers on Object Loss*. NY: New York University press.
- Friedman, L. (2008) Loewald. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 56:1105-1115.
- Freedman, N. (1997). On Receiving the Patient's Transference: The Symbolizing and Desymbolizing... J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn., 45:79-103.
- Freud, S. (1917) Mourning and melancholia, *SE*, XIII: 243-258.
- Freud, S. (1919). The 'Uncanny'. *SE*, XVII: 217-256.
- Freud, S. (1924). The Economic Problem of Masochism. *SE*, XIX: 155-170.
- Gottlieb, R.M. (1994). The legend of the European vampire: Object loss and corporeal preservation. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 49:465-480.
- Green, A. (1986) The Dead Mother. In: *On Private Madness*. Madison, CT: International Universities Press.
- Green, A. (2000). The Intrapsychic and Intersubjective in Psychoanalysis. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 69:1-39.
- Harris, A. (1996). The conceptual power of multiplicity. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 32:537-552.
- Harris, A. (2009). "You Must Remember This." *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 19: 2-21.
- Harris, A., Kalb, M., Klebanoff, S. (2016). *Ghosts in the consulting room: Echoes of trauma in psychoanalysis*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Harris, A., Kalb, M., Klebanoff, S. (2016). *Demons in the consulting room: Echoes of genocide, slavery and extreme trauma in psychoanalytic practice*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Harris, W.W. Lieberman, A.F. (2014). Preface to Angels in the Nursery: The Intergenerational Transmission of Benevolent Parental Influences. *Attachment: New Directions in Psychotherapy and Relational Psychoanalysis*, 8(2):117-119.
- Holmes, D. (2016). Culturally Imposed Trauma: The Sleeping Dog Has Awakened. Will Psychoanalysis Take Heed? *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*: Vol. 26, (6): 641-654.
- Howell, E.F. (2005). *The Dissociative Mind*. Hillsdale, N.J.: The Analytic Press.
- Jacobs, T. (1997). In Search Of The Mind Of The Analyst: A Progress Report. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 45:1035-1059.
- Jacobs, T.J. (2001). On Misreading and Misleading Patients: Some Reflections on Communications, Miscommunications and Countertransference Enactments. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 82: 653-669.

- Kalb, M. (2018). Listening to Loss: On Primary Preoccupations and Inconsolability. *Psychoanalytic Perspectives*, 15(1), 127-131.
- Klein, M. (1940). Mourning and its Relation to Manic-Depressive States. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 21: 125-153.
- Laub, D., Auerhahn, N.C. (1993). Knowing and not Knowing Massive Psychic Trauma. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 74:287-302.
- Lear, J. (1996). The Introduction of Eros: Reflections on the Work of Hans Loewald. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 44:673-698.
- Levy-Warren, M.H. (2005). To Weep, to Laugh, to Mourn, to Dance: Key Factors for Therapeutic Change in the Clinical Exchange with an Adolescent Girl. *Journal of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychotherapy*, 4:351-372.
- Lieberman, A. (2005). Angels in the Nursery: The Intergenerational Transmission of Benevolent Parental influences. *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 26(6): 504-520.
- Loewald, H. (1971). Some Considerations on Repetition and the Repetition Compulsion. *International Journal of Psycho-analysis*, 52: 59-66.
- Loewald, H. (1973). On Internalization. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 54:9-17.
- Loewald, H. (1979). The Waning of the Oedipus Complex. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 27: 751-775.
- Loewald, H.W. (1986). Transference-Countertransference. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 34:275-287.
- Lyons-Ruth, K. (1998). Attachment disorganization: Unresolved loss, relational violence and lapses in behavior and attentional strategies. In J. Cassidy & P. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of Attachment Theory and Research* (pp. 520-554). New York: Guilford.
- Lyons-Ruth, K. (1999). The Two-person Unconscious: Intersubjective Dialogue, Enactive Relational Representation and the Emergence of New forms of Relational Organization. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 19: 576-617.
- Mayer, E.L. (2001). On "Telepathic Dreams?": An Unpublished Paper by Robert J. Stoller. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 49:629-657.
- Mitchell, S. (1998). From Ghosts to Ancestors: The Psychoanalytic Vision of Hans Loewald. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 8: 825-855.
- Nields, J.A. (2003). From Unity to Atonement: Some Religious Correlates of Hans Loewald's Developmental Theory. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 84(3): 699-716.
- Ogden, T. (2006). Reading Loewald: Oedipus Reconceived. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 87: 651-656.
- Poland, W.S. (2000). The analyst's witnessing and otherness. *JAPA*, 48: 17-34.
- Reis, B. (2009). Performative and Enactive features of psychoanalytic witnessing: the transference as the scene of address. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 90:1359-1372.
- Rosenfeld, H. (2002/1987). *Impasse and Interpretation*, NY: Brunner-Routledge.

- Rudnytsky, P.L. (1988). Redefining the revenant—Guilt and sibling loss in Guntrip and Freud. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 43:423-432.
- Salberg, J. & Grand, S. (Eds). (2017). *Wounds of History. Repair and Resilience in the Trans-Generational Transmission of Trauma*. NY: Routledge.
- Schafer, R. (1968). *Aspects of Internalization*. Madison, CT: International Universities Press, Inc.
- Schafer, R. (2003). *Bad Feelings*. NY: Other Press.
- Schwaber, E.A. (1995). A Particular Perspective on Impasses in the Clinical Situation: Further Reflections on Psychoanalytic Listening. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 76: 711-722.
- Slochower, J. (2011). Out of the analytic Shadow: On the Dynamics of Commemorative Ritual. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 21(6), 676-690.
- Smith, H. (1993). Engagements in the analytic work. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 13: 425-454.
- Smith, H. (2001). Hearing Voices: The Fate of the Analyst's Identifications. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 49: 781-812. (pp. 781-790 & vignette #2).
- Spillius, E.B. (1993). Varieties of Envious Experience. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 74:1199-1212.
- Steiner, J. (1993). *Psychic Retreats*. NY: Routledge, pp 74-87.
- Stern, D. B. (2012). Witnessing across Time: Accessing the Present from the Past and the Past from the Present, *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 81, 53-81.
- Stern, S. (2009). My Experience of Analysis with Loewald. *Psychoanal. Q.*, 78: 1013-1031.
- Stolorow, R.D. (2003). Trauma and Temporality. *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 20: 158-161.
- Valenstein, A. (1973). On Attachment to Painful Feelings and the Negative Therapeutic Reaction. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 28: 365-392.
- Wolf, E.S. (1993). Disruptions of the Therapeutic Relationship in Psychoanalysis: A View from Self Psychology. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 74: 675-687.