

## March 2016, Volume 76, Issue 1

### Articles:

Hoffer, A., Buie, D. H. (2016). Helplessness and the Analyst's War against Feeling It. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76(1), pp.1–17.

Abstract: In our view helplessness is a primal, often intolerable feeling. It underlies and intensifies other feelings that are also hard to bear. Both analyst and patients face helplessness, and both resort to defenses, often intensely, in order to avoid it. The intensity of this battle can merit calling it a war. The analyst's war is conducted using distancing, anger, blaming and disparaging as well as by intellectualizing the patient's struggles. Patients then find themselves abandoned and helplessly alone. We analysts, of course, want not to fall into the trap of war, and we try to free ourselves from waging it. A major way we accomplish this is through continuously working, often with the help of analysis and self-analysis, to increase our capacity to maintain our emotional stability in the face of these intensities. We learn to find new forms of awareness, beyond words and ideas. It requires a new understanding of what is threatening to us, which fosters a deeper capacity to empathize with the patient. This helps us to find the psychic, physical and emotional space within ourselves in which to hold helplessness and other profound affective experiences. In this way we become an increasingly steady resource for our patients as well as for ourselves.

Go to: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/ajp.2015.56>

Cassullo, G. (2016). The Psychoanalytic Contributions of Melitta Schmideberg Klein. More than Melanie Klein's Rebel Daughter. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76(1), pp.18–34.

Abstract: Compared to the impact of the work of Melanie Klein on the history of psychoanalysis, the contributions of her daughter, Melitta Schmideberg, passed almost unnoticed. At present, Schmideberg is solely remembered for having harshly attacked her mother at the start of the Controversial Discussions of the British Psycho-Analytical Society and for having coined the fitting expression "stable instability" in order to describe borderline and asocial personality disorders. However, the author discusses how the early groundbreaking discoveries of Klein with regards to primitive anxieties were the result of the joint work and thinking of Melanie *and* Melitta. Moreover, he argues that the conflict between the two, along with the subsequent polarization of their views, did not facilitate the development of psychoanalysis, neither did it help the analytic community to recognize the value of Melitta's contributions to psychoanalysis.

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Fuery, K. (2016). On Being Tricked. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76(1), pp.35–53.

Abstract: This paper questions the function and subsequent affect of the trick within everyday life, emphasizing its dependence on visuality and misrecognition. It pays

specific attention to the psychoanalytic implications of trickery and identity of ‘trickster’ in terms of environment, emphasizing the theories of transition and transformation indicative of the methodologies pertaining to the Object Relations School of psychoanalytic theory and the ocular theories of Lacanian psychoanalysis. The event of the trick is considered with regard to viscosity, appetite and satisfaction, leading to a discussion of what the trick represents within the Winnicottian frame of transitional phenomena, of expectation referencing Bollas’s transformative experience, and of Lacanian *méconnaissance*.

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Rubin, J. R. (2016). Meditative Psychoanalysis. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76(1), pp.54–70.

Abstract: Psychoanalysis and meditation not only compensate for the other’s blind spots, but also, when practiced together, can provide a richer experience than either discipline pursued alone. After considering the way meditation cultivates heightened attentiveness, refines sensory clarity, lessens self-criticism, and increases affect tolerance, thereby deepening psychoanalytic listening, I’ll examine how psychoanalytic perspectives on unconscious communication and meaning illuminate and transform the nearsightedness of meditation, aiding therapists and clients in understanding troubling thoughts, feelings, and behavior. This helps therapists deepen their capacity to help those people with whom they work. The paper also attempts to illuminate how the therapeutic relationship, conceived of in a freer and more empathic way—as the vehicle for both validating a person’s experience and providing opportunities for new forms of relatedness and self-transformation—provides a crucible in which old and dysfunctional ways of caring for oneself and relating to other people emerge and new patterns of self-care and intimacy can be established. In the concluding section, I will delineate *meditative psychoanalysis*, my own integration of meditation and psychoanalysis. Clinical material will illustrate my theoretical reflections.

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Friedemann, Y., Tolmacz, R., Doron, Y. (2016). Narcissism and Concern: The Relationship of Self-Object Needs and Narcissistic Symptoms with Healthy and Pathological Concern. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76(1), pp.71–84.

Abstract: While concern and narcissism seem to be contradictory in nature, clinical evidence and theoretical writings on pathological forms of concern—tracing their origin to deficiencies in early relationships with primary caretakers—suggest that the actual relationship between these two characteristics might be much more complicated. We respond to a study aimed to add empirical data to the clinical and theoretical knowledge examined the relationships between self-object functions, types of narcissism and pathological concern. The findings of the study showed that pathological concern was positively associated with self-object needs and that this association was mediated by covert narcissism. Our discussion focuses on the developmental and psychodynamic

sources of pathological concern, as well as its significance in the intrapersonal and interpersonal domains.

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### Book Reviews:

Cohen, M. (2016). Book Review. *Creatures of a Day and Other Tales of Psychotherapy*, by Irvin Yalom, Basic Books, New York, 2015, 224 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76(1), pp.85–87.

Yalom has been a prolific psychiatric writer for more than 30 years, all the while teaching and practicing in Palo Alto, California. His straightforward textbooks—*The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy* (1970), *Existential Psychotherapy* (1980), and *Inpatient Group Psychotherapy* (1984)—are still useful resources. In other works he has taught by example, using clinical narratives to let all of the rest of us into his consulting room example. *Every Day Gets a Little Closer* (1992), was written along with Yalom’s patient Ginny Elkin, demonstrating not only how he worked but also showing, in her own words, how the patient experienced their work together. Other collections of his clinical narratives include *Love’s Executioner* (1989), *Momma and the Meaning of Life* (1999), and *I’m Calling the Police* (2008) (again co-written with his patient, Robert Brent). In all of his work he emphasizes the importance—and the vicissitudes—of the relationship between patient and therapist...

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Parish, M. (2016). Book Review. *Traumatic Ruptures: Abandonment and Betrayal in the Analytic Relationship*, by Robin A. Deutsch, Routledge, New York and London, 2014, 220 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76(1), pp.87–89.

Sudden deceleration, as in a car accident or a fall from a height, can cause “traumatic rupture” of the main artery that supplies the body with oxygen rich blood. It is often fatal. This is an evocative metaphor for this work, a book about psychoanalytic casualties that occur when treatment ends suddenly as a result of death or misconduct. Since, as several of the authors in this excellent collection of essays note, the situation is not rare, careful study of the effects is long overdue...

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Castelloe, M. S. (2016). Book Review. *Becoming Freud: The Making of a Psychoanalyst*, by Adam Phillips, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2014, 169 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76(1), pp.89–92.

In this brief but spirited chronicle of Freud's life Phillips gives a moving portrait recalling the schoolboy who loved Shakespeare, antiquity and languages and who taught himself Castilian so he could read his favorite book, *Don Quixote*, in its original tongue. The author suggests that, in effect, the science of psychoanalysis can be seen as a theoretical elaboration of this treasured book. Imagination flourished in the mind of this eccentric child, the first son of Jacob's second marriage, and the only person in the crowded family quarters to have a room of his own...

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Turtz, J. (2016). Book Review. *The Trickster and The System: Identity and Agency in Contemporary Society*, by Helena Bassil-Morozow, Routledge, New York, 2015, 200pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76(1), pp.92–93.

Helena Bassil-Morozow, a cultural philosopher and film scholar, has written a profound and wonderfully enriching book on the shapeshifting, taboo-breaking and archetypal trickster figure and its complex relation to contemporary society. Her writing is even more poignant given her own upbringing in the Soviet Union, where the spontaneous and nonconformist trickster was shunned...

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Bar-Haim, S. (2016). Book Review. *The Americanization of Narcissism*, by Elizabeth Lunbeck, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2014, 367 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 76(1), pp.95–97.

By the end of the 1970s, several influential social critics suggested that this decade was a major turning point in the history of the modern age, and, thus, proposed different ways for defining it. Jean-François Lyotard famously argued in 1979 that the late 20th century should be considered as a postmodern era, a proposal which was widely adopted far beyond the academic circles. Still in France, Michel Foucault gave in 1978–1979 a series of lectures at the Collège de France, in which he focused on the neoliberal turn, which characterized, he argued, many of the biggest economies of the West. From a very different perspective, in the North American scene, some relatively conservative thinkers claimed that this era should be defined as what the journalist Tom Wolfe, called in 1976, the Me-Decade—a term which was widely used since. Equally influential was the historian Christopher Lasch who thought that in this Me-Decade narcissism became a major—and damaging—ideal in American culture, as well as a guiding principle in people's everyday lives. His book, *The Culture of Narcissism*, first published in 1979, became a main site of a debate over the cultural changes in America, at the very moment when

others described it as postmodern or neoliberal; no wonder Lunbeck refers to it throughout her book...

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