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Heritage of a Psychoanalytic Mind - Ferenczi International Conference in Toronto

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Garon, J. (2017). Introduction. Second Special Issue: Heritage of a Psychoanalytic Mind. Ferenczi International Conference in Toronto. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 207–212.

Sándor Ferenczi was one of the most innovative thinkers on the early psychoanalytic scene, the *enfant terrible* of psychoanalysis as he called himself in his conference presented to celebrate Freud's 75th anniversary (Ferenczi, 1931, p. 127). Much of his work revolved around the question of trauma and the treatment of those who were its victims. Ferenczi played a major role in the development of psychoanalytic clinical work and its transmission, even if it was a long time before the analytic community would recognize it. The core of Ferenczi's work lies in his concept of trauma. He considered physical, sexual, emotional or psychical trauma as central in the etiology of psychopathology...

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Articles:

Frankel, J. (2017). Ferenczi's Evolving Conception of Narcissistic Pathology and its Basis in Trauma *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 213–222.

Abstract: Ferenczi's landmark contributions to understanding and treating psychological trauma are inseparable from his evolving conception of narcissism, though he grasped their interrelationship only gradually. Ultimately, he saw narcissistic disorders as the result of how children cope with abuse or neglect, and their aftermath—they identify and comply with the needs of the aggressor, and later of people more generally, and dissociate their own needs, feelings, and perceptions; and they compensate for their submission and sacrifice of self by regressing to soothing omnipotent fantasies—which, ironically, may facilitate continued submission. Ferenczi's experiments in technique were designed to help patients overcome their defensive retreat to omnipotent fantasies and regain their lost selves. His earliest experiment, *active technique*, in which he frustrated patients, was a direct attack on their clinging to omnipotent fantasy. But as he came to see such narcissistic personality distortions as a way of coping with the residue of early trauma, his focus shifted to the underlying trauma. His loving and indulgent *relaxation technique* was intended as an antidote to early emotional neglect. His final experiment, *mutual analysis*, characterized by the analyst's openness and honesty in examining his own inevitable insincerities, was an attempt to heal the damage from parents' hypocrisy about their mistreatment, which Ferenczi came to see as most destructive to the child.

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Soreanu, R. (2017). Something Was Lost in Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*: A Ferenczian Reading *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 223–238.

Abstract: Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) brought a lot of new possibilities to psychoanalytic theory, but also a series of losses. While I recognize the importance of the death drive as a metapsychological construct, I argue that the first thing that went missing with the arrival of this groundbreaking Freudian text is the theorization of the ego instincts or the self-preservative drives. Freud never articulated some plausible inheritors of the ego instincts. I follow the Budapest School, and especially the voice of Sándor Ferenczi, for addressing this loss. The second thing that went missing after *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* is our openness in thinking through repetition. With the seductive formulation of the “daemonic” repetition in this 1920 text, our theoretical imagination around repetition seems to have been affected. I draw on the work of Sándor Ferenczi for exploring new forms of repetition. Finally, I offer a Ferenczian re-reading of the Freudian *Nachträglichkeit*, which I see as crucial in the process of pluralizing our thinking on repetition.

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Mucci, C. (2017). Ferenczi's Revolutionary Therapeutic Approach. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 239–254.

Abstract: Many of the revolutionary principles introduced by Ferenczi in his clinical practice have now been widely accepted especially in the field of trauma and trauma therapy. Examples of these innovative views include his emphasis on empathy as opposed to technical neutrality and his stress on the real conditions of child caring and family environmental deficits and on the consequences of interpersonal violence and abuse that lead to “identification with the aggressor” by the victim thereby resulting in the internalization of both aggressiveness and guilt (the split guilt of the abuser). The resulting “fragmentation” of the personality, which is now considered dissociation (instead of Freud's “repression”), is at the root of several severe disorders, characterized by distortion of reality, loss of touch with one's body and loss of trust in the other. Therefore “abreaction is not enough”. A new, positive relational experience must be re-inscribed at the level of implicit memory.

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Kupermann, D. (2017). Searching for a Sensitive Way of Working Through. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 255–264.

Abstract: This work intends to present aspects of clinical work in which the Ferenczian proposition of neo-catharsis, as re-emergence of repressed affective experience in the transference and countertransference presents itself as a challenge to the analyst, since a standard, classical technical approach results in repetition of past trauma with the analyst

as perpetrator. A deviation from standard technique—free association, the principle of abstinence in transference, and interpretation—involving empathic listening, and affective sharing contains the patient’s suffering. The re-emergence of suffering and terror, which represents the repressed affect associated with the traumatic past, but with a sympathetic and sensitive analyst, sharing their experience, is crucial in working through and healing.

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Bandeira, M. L. (2017). Unconscious Perception and Reverie: An Intersubjective Connection. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 265–273.

Abstract: This paper discusses an intriguing topic for psychoanalysis: the concept of unconscious communication. Beginning with the concept of unconscious perception, it moves on to figurability and culminates with reverie. Auxiliary concepts, such as receptive unconscious, intersubjectivity, countertransference and empathy, are discussed in order to articulate the conceptual network on which theoretical arguments are based.

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Lijtmaer, R. (2017). Untold Stories and the Power of Silence in the Intergenerational Transmission of Social Trauma. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 274–284.

Abstract: There are intergenerational secrets and unprocessed experiences that very often don’t have a voice or an image associated with them but loom in our minds nonetheless. What haunts are not the dead, but the gaps left within us by the secrets of others. This paper will look at the conflict that occurs when unspoken events and memories of one generation haunt the next one. It is my contention that the second-generation survivors of trauma can be deeply affected by something that did not directly happen to them. Utilizing my own personal narrative I will examine how being the daughter of a woman who escaped the Holocaust, and her silence about those events affected my personal development and later my work with patients. I will also explore the unspoken secret that a patient’s mother kept from her, paralleling the writer’s mother’s secret.

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Granieri, A. (2017). The Drive for Self-Assertion and the Reality Principle in a Patient with Malignant Pleural Mesothelioma: The History of Giulia. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 285–294.

Abstract: Life in a contaminated environment is often marked by a cumulative psychological trauma that exhibits a variety of social-environmental aspects. This is why I suggested a psychotherapeutic group intervention for the population of Casale Monferrato, a municipality in Northern Italy that is sadly renowned for asbestos-related events and the high mortality rate of its inhabitants. Groupality appears to show the point of contact between psyche and soma, while also promoting the birth of a more realistic

approach to the various levels of suffering and their configuration. The multifamily approach seemed to be the most adequate to elaborate the feelings of rage and fear that are concurrent with the aerial contagion. In the “long wave” of group work we have learned to work with participants as well as with empty chairs, the ghosts of the dead: live traces in the mind. Whereas the mind recovers the possibility of entering into a dialogue with the feelings connected to the trauma, without bypassing them towards actions that are apparently more assertive of one’s sense of Ego, the will of conciliation can reactivate a thought that is oriented towards the plane of reality.

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Cohen, E. (2107). The “Method of Game”: Sàndor Ferenczi and his Patient D.M./Clara Thompson. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 295–312.

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to study the Thompson-Ferenczi therapeutic relationship. Ferenczi paid increasing attention to the way in which patient’s early life experiences were reenacted in the transference countertransference matrix. Ferenczi’s (1931) description of how he “entered into a game” with a patient, has come to be known as enactment. Ferenczi exchanged the word “game” with “play” when patients enacted their past traumatic experiences in analysis. These enactments uncovered the unconscious “dialogue of the game” (Ferenczi, 1932, p. 130), and Ferenczi described them in his *Clinical Diary* (1932) in his work with Thompson. Using the language of her analyst in describing enactment, Thompson referred to Ferenczi’s Relaxation Method as his “play technique”. During these moments of “play” Thompson argues that the analyst cooperates with the patient in allowing him to relive “childish attachments” in the context of the treatment.

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Meigs, K. (2017). The Failure of Clara Thompson’s Ferenczian (Proxy) Analysis of Harry Stack Sullivan. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 313–331.

Abstract: After hearing Ferenczi’s talks on theory and practice in New York in 1926, psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan urged his friend and colleague Clara Thompson to get analyzed by Ferenczi so they could learn his technique. After saving for 2 years Thompson was a patient of Ferenczi for three summers and then moved to Budapest full-time for analysis until Ferenczi’s death. Two years after she returned to New York she attempted to analyze Sullivan. Analysis was broken off in anger by Sullivan after 14 months. Before the promised Ferenczian analysis began Thompson discovered Wilhelm Reich’s *Character Analysis* (1933) and she tried an aggressive attack on character with Sullivan rather than Ferenczian trauma-oriented “relaxation” and “neocathartic” therapy. Sullivan could not tolerate this. Because of their own unhealed trauma both individually and in relation to each other, neither Thompson nor Sullivan was able to advance Ferenczi’s views on trauma or its healing in America.

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Book Reviews:

Vida, J. E. (2017). Book Review. *A Different Path: An Emotional Autobiography*, by Neville Symington, Karnac, London, 2016, 323pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 332–335.

During more than 40 years of following contemporary art, I have been drawn to artists whose enigmatic early works turn out to secretly contain all the elements of a basic question at the core of their being. Their further work then reads as a kind of unconsciously generated search either to elaborate or to make sense of what was unknowably there at the very beginning. Over a comparable time-sojourn in the realm of psychoanalytic thinking and practice, my interest has been similarly drawn to a small number of those in the field for whom the same premise may hold true. Neville Symington has been one of them, and this new book confirms it...

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Koritar, E. (2017). Book Review. *Reclaiming Unlived Life: Experiences in Psychoanalysis*, by Thomas Ogden, Routledge, London and New York, 2016, 206pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 336–337.

Thomas Ogden has in this latest book provided us with several profound meditations on the nature of psychoanalysis, its practice, theoretical underpinnings, and goal. His writing style renders the most complex metapsychological concepts accessible to both general and analytic audiences creating an expansive forum for discourse and exchange with readers. Ogden draws the reader into an intersubjective third space created by contributions from both reader and writer where the readers' own reflections can be in dialogue with the writer leading to new insights into one's internal landscape in relation to the analytic situation...

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Castelloe, M. S. (2017). Book Review. *The Power of Names: Uncovering the Mystery of What We are Called*, by Mavis Himes, Rowman and Littlefield, Lanham, 2016, 223pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 77(3), pp. 338–340.

A name “is like an elongated shadow attached at our heels,” Himes writes (p. 127). How does one's name guide the course of one's life? The author's father and siblings legally altered the family name making Heimovitch into Himes and questions surrounding the motivation for this change led to the personal journey of writing this book. The monograph is divided into two parts: the first “Called into Existence,” followed by “Burden or Blessing,” both passionately probing the ground between self and

moniker. The fact that a name is first given by others external to the subject and is, secondly, internalized has profound implications, claims Himes, a psychoanalyst in Toronto, making nomenclature both a gift and a curse...

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