

## June 2019, Vol. 79, Issue 2

### Articles

Volkan, V. D. (2019). **Large-Group Identity, Who Are We Now? Leader–Follower Relationships and Societal–Political Divisions.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp. 139–155.

Abstract: This paper aims to explore severe societal–political divisions and interferences with democratic processes and human rights issues in many locations around the world, including in the United States, and examines the role of leader–follower relationships related to such developments. The term “large group” describes hundreds, thousands or millions of people— most of whom will never see or even know about each other as individuals, but who share many of the same sentiments. This paper first describes how a child becomes a member of a large-group and how adults sometimes develop a second type of large-group identity. Looking at such phenomena provides the background data needed to examine the spread of the metaphorical question, “Who are we now?” worldwide, as well as to examine the evolution of present-day authoritarian regimes, extreme right-wing politics and rhetoric, wall-building, and societal–political divisions.

Go to: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s11231-019-09186-2>

Frosch, S. (2019). **Postmemory.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp.156–173.

Abstract: The urgency of the problem of how to learn from the relatively recent past in order not to repeat its devastating effects, a problem that revolves around the ethics of memory and history, has combined with an awareness that later generations of victims and perpetrators—the “post” generations—may find themselves inhibited in relation to moving forwards because they are not truly “post” at all. It is as if they are haunted by the experiences of their predecessors, which is passed on in some way through stories and selective silences, as well as through the older generation’s ways of handling themselves and the personal and cultural representations of their situation. This article presents a psychoanalytic reading of the postmemory literature, drawing on second generation Holocaust literature and in particular rendering the distinction between postmemory as a mode of traumatic identification and postmemorial work as a form of *working through*. Active memorial work that allows repetitions to be turned into processes of recovery is essential for the laying of ghosts to rest.

Go to: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s11231-019-09185-3>

Charles, M. (2019). **The Dream and the Image: Creative Transformations in Psychoanalytic Space.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp.174–195.

Abstract: Psychoanalysis is a transformational process through which meanings become visible and foreclosed identity may be further constituted. Winnicott (1971) marks the crucial developmental function of the relationship that is good enough to tolerate the

separateness of the other. The analyst's ability to "take the transference" enables the patient to locate himself in relation to another mind and being in ways that did not happen sufficiently in childhood. This process requires the signification of personal meanings that can become consensual without subverting one's own becoming in the process. The dream provides idiosyncratic images that can demarcate conceptual space in ways that can enable the individual to move from the sign to the symbol; from what Kleinians term the *symbolic equation*, to the symbol proper, the domain of language and consensual meanings. I describe a case in which one young man used his dreams as a way of moving from a universe in which meanings could not be made into one in which he could build meanings in relation to his own experience and ideas.

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Jevremović, P. (2019). **Considering Life and Death in Psychoanalysis**. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp.196–211.

Abstract: Psychoanalytic therapy is not supposed to cure man from death, nor to help him forget about it. It is supposed to deal with the soul, and it is up to the soul to deal with death. Death is actually not an issue for psychoanalytic therapy—its only problem can be the soul. On the other hand, only for the soul is death an authentic problem. Only the soul can authentically bring death into question. Psychoanalysis has indebted humanity by finding the strength and critical prudence in a crucial moment for civilization to remove the veil of prohibition and shame from sexuality, which had been repressed for centuries. Today, sexuality is no longer repressed (it may be even too present in the media for some)—but death became repressed. This paper considers death as an essential topic for psychoanalysis.

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Janowitz, N. (2019). **Freud's Legacy and Modern Theories of Ineffable Trauma**. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp. 212–229.

Abstract: Notions of ineffability, what cannot be put into words, vary depending on the historical and cultural context and, in particular, on shifting linguistic ideologies about the capabilities and limits of language. In recent decades psychoanalysts have embraced a modern notion of ineffability centered around traumatic bodily experiences that are thought to be inexpressible. However, these ideas break with Freudian ideas about language and, most importantly, with his understanding of the processes of interpretation that give meaning to both psychic pain and attempts to heal it. Contra Freud, current theories of ineffable trauma re-inscribe a dominance of the body over the psyche and over-simplify Freud's ideas about the retro-determination of trauma.

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## Book Reviews

Blackman, J.S. (2019). **Book Review: *A Web of Sorrow: Mistrust, Jealousy, Lovelessness, Shamelessness, Regret, and Hopelessness***, by Salman Akhtar, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2018, 180 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp. 230–233.

Hamilton Rating Scale, eat your heart out! Here is a book that defines the miseries people describe when they show up in our offices, how to really understand them, and how to, by the way, treat them. Salman Akhtar, a gifted and prolific psychoanalytic scholar, has lately turned his interests to defining things. Since he published his magnum opus, *A Comprehensive Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* (2009), he has edited many books that aim to clarify definitions of concepts like Shame (2016), Greed (2015), Fear (2018a), and Arrogance (2018b).

Dr. Akhtar skillfully weaves examples from clinical practice, literature, and cultural phenomena. Also, much like Otto Kernberg and Vamik Volkan, he makes lists that illuminate many concepts that everyone, including psychoanalysts, may have taken for granted. People who consult us often complain of being “depressed” because they have not been able to solve their own problems. There is usually a more complex “web of sorrow” from which they cannot extricate themselves. Dr. Akhtar takes us on a journey through that web.

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Miller, I. S. (2019). **Book Review Essay: *The Interpersonal Perspective in Psychoanalysis, 1960’s—1990’s: Rethinking Transference and Countertransference***, edited by Donnel B. Stern and Irwin Hirsch, Routledge, London and New York, 2017a, 310 pp.; and ***Further Developments in Interpersonal Psychoanalysis, 1980’s–2010’s: Evolving Interest in the Analyst’s Subjectivity***, by Donnel B. Stern and Irwin Hirsch, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2017b, 350pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp. 234–239.

There is a witticism told among tourists to Ireland, descriptive of interpersonal engagement. The tourist inquires of a local man, “how do I get from Town A to Town B?” and is met with the response, “I wouldn’t be starting from here.” This, among other richly evocative associations, reflects my feeling state, or perhaps a state of mind, subjectively encountered while reading the two-volume collection, *The Interpersonal Perspective in Psychoanalysis, 1960’s–1990’s and Further Developments in Interpersonal Psychoanalysis, 1980’s–2010’s*, edited brilliantly by Donnel B. Stern and Irwin Hirsch (2017a, b).

My association requires some explanation because while it is recognizably my own in its subjectivity, it is not wholly my own. It strides the boundary originally discerned by John Rickman in the early 1950’s between one-person and two-person psychologies (Rickman, 1951) and revitalized conceptually within the contemporary Interpersonal/Relational turn (Mitchell and Aron, 1999). That is, my subjective association is evoked within an intersubjective process, through mediation by the objective stimulation of the two books before me.

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Stern, J. (2019). **Book Review: *From Soma to Symbol: Psychosomatic Conditions and Transformative Experience***, edited by Phyllis L. Sloate, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, (2018), 288 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp. 240-242.

This multi-authored volume is part of the book series, “The Boundaries of Psychoanalysis,” and brings together a substantial amount of clinical experience and theoretical thinking from seven North American authors, who work with and think deeply about patients presenting with physical (and often psychosomatic) symptoms. As the editor, and contributor of two of the chapters, Phyllis Sloate writes in her initial acknowledgments, “in clinical situations fraught with uncertainty and ambiguity [her fellow authors] have thoughtfully and sensitively sought out the transformative processes by which psychoanalysis may facilitate a patients movement from the concrete and external to the more developed and enlivened capacity for symbolic and metaphorical thinking” (p. vii).

There are many themes that permeate the book—the question of what language to use with the patient, of psychoanalytic technique, of the use of transference and non-transference interpretations and the importance of the analyst’s countertransference. Some of the chapters have detailed verbatim material from sessions, which makes for fascinating reading, others highlight theoretical concerns in working with this patient group,....

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Cooper, P. (2019). **Book Review: *Attacks on Linking Revisited: A New Look at Bion’s Classic Work***, edited by Catalina Bronstein and Edna O’Shaughnessy, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2018, 186 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp. 243-245.

The seminal and ground-breaking 1957 work, “Attacks on Linking,” by the British psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion, is reprinted in this book (pp. 3–24). In his contribution to this collection Antonino Ferro refers to Bion’s important piece: “This work is one of the greatest contributions to the expansion of Klein’s thought” (p. 161). Despite Bion’s detail and precision in his writing, he leaves ample room for the reader’s peregrinations and creative thinking to evolve. This is evidenced by the great diversity in terms of areas of interest, application, theoretical development and clinical work represented in this collection that have emerged out of this highly influential article.

In Chapter One, Ron Britton carefully teases out and offers what this reader finds to be extremely useful and original ideas regarding understanding and working with narcissism, while simultaneously criticizing the “Hermeneutics of Suspicion.” Britton draws from the poet William Blake and.....

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Koritar, E. (2019). **Book Review: *Sublime Subjects: Aesthetic Experience and Intersubjectivity in Psychoanalysis***, by Giovanni Civitarese, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2018, 172 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp 246–249.

It is tempting to say that reading Civitarese's most recent book was a sublime experience, elevating this writer's comprehension of the aesthetic experience in psychoanalysis, but there is truth underlying such facetious humor. Civitarese takes us on an exhilarating tour of various landscapes: psychoanalysis, philosophy, culture, poetry, and literature, in a profound meditation on the foundations of psychoanalytic theory and praxis. The project is no less than a re-examination of the basic tenets of classical theory in the light of contemporary field theory and intersubjectivity, in the process proposing a new foundation of psychoanalytic theory and practice based on the intersubjective and aesthetic experiences of two people interacting in the analytic space. In the process, Civitarese contrasts the basic metapsychological conceptualizations of Freud, Klein, and ego psychology to the more contemporary theoretical elaborations of Sándor Ferenczi, Wilfred Bion, Hans Loewald, Piera Aulagnier, Jean Laplanche, Thomas Ogden, Antonino Ferro, and others. In examining the basic tenets of intersubjectivity and field theory, he embarks on a detailed and sophisticated study of the philosophical underpinnings of intersubjectivity.....

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Cohen, K. (2019). **Book Review: *Understanding and Treating Chronic Shame: A Relational/Neurobiological Approach***, by Patricia A. DeYoung, Routledge, New York, 2015, 190 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(2), pp. 250—252.

Expressions of loathing self-hate, self-injurious urges, intolerant perfectionism and defensive projections are the psychological catacombs harboring deep and chronic shame. Patricia DeYoung has presented an exciting and novel approach to chronic shame as a core component of many clinical presentations, offering innovative insight to engage shame as a gateway to emotional growth. Peering through the lens of relational attunement, DeYoung frames shame as “an experience of one's felt sense of self disintegration in relation to a dysregulating other” (p. 18).

DeYoung constructs a shame paradigm that serves as an adaptive and protective sentry warding off self-annihilation. Clearly though, the protection garners a heavy price exiling the self into a lonely, isolated sanctuary during development then turning into a prison in adulthood. Shame is reformatted as critical survival element protecting yet exploring the possibilities of Real Self expression. DeYoung describes shame as a force field, “of one's felt sense of self disintegration” (p. 19) conceived by repeated emphatic failures of early childhood development...

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