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Supervisory Experiences and Their Context

Introduction:

Yerushalmi, H. (Issue Editor) (2019). **Supervisory Experiences and Their Context**. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 253–264.

Psychoanalytic supervision goes far beyond being a formal and pre-determined procedure designed to develop the supervisees' skills and to award them recognition as accomplished therapists. It is also more than a private and singular relational event occurring between supervisor and supervisee. Supervision is a structured and bounded professional activity, in which intrapsychic, relational, and learning processes can and should be carefully studied, drawing on the accumulating knowledge of analytic reasoning. The study of supervisory processes parallel to therapeutic processes draws on supervisor's and supervisee's introspection and examines their motivations, communications, and reflections, the development of their personal-professional relationships, as well as their supervisory settings. It is anticipated that expanding the knowledge of supervisory processes through methodical introspective reflection will promote patients' well-being and supervisees' development as analytic therapists.

Go to: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s11231-019-09204-3>

Articles:

Kernberg, O. F. (2019). **Reflections on Supervision**. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 265–283(2019)

Abstract: This paper explores basic tasks involved in the supervisory process, and frequent problems in carrying out these tasks. Basic tasks include clarification of mutual expectations of supervisor and supervisee; the establishment of mutual trust as fundamental for countertransference analysis; “parallel process” exploration and clarification of explicit and implicit theoretical assumptions by both supervisor and supervisee. Frequent problems include the extent of initial evaluation of patients; problems of intervening “without memory or desire”; transference and countertransference diagnoses and interpretive consequences; clarification of affective dominance; interventive shifts with severe psychopathology, and realistic goals of patient, supervisee and supervisor. Limitations to supervision include specific psychopathologies, cognitive limitations, and a generally restricted capacity for empathy by the supervisee.

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Lysaker, P. H., Buck, K. D., Pattison, M. L., Beasley, R. E., Hillis, J. D. & Hamm, J. A. (2019). **Supervision in the Psychotherapy of Schizophrenia: Awareness of and Mutual Reflection upon Fragmentation.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 284–303.

Abstract: Historical and newly emerging models of schizophrenia suggest it is a disorder characterized by the fragmentation of the experience of the self and the world, leading to the interruption of how a unique life is unfolding in the world. It has been proposed that psychotherapy might therefore promote recovery by facilitating the development of a greater ability to integrate information about the self and others. In this paper we explore how the supervision of a metacognitively-oriented psychotherapy can assist therapists to experience and conceptualize fragmentation within sessions, join patients in the gradual process of making sense of their psychiatric problems and life challenges, and ultimately envision and achieve recovery. Common challenges and responses within supervision are described and discussed.

Go to: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s11231-019-09198-y>

Sarnat, J. E. (2019). **What's New in Parallel Process? The Evolution of Supervision's Signature Phenomenon.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 304–328.

Abstract: The concept of parallel process has played a central role in psychoanalytic supervision for the last 60 years, generating continuing interest in the power of the unconscious to create unexpected intersections between the analytic and supervisory relationships. I track the evolution of the concept, starting with its invention by an interpersonalist psychoanalyst, adoption by two ego psychologists, enrichment by object relations theory, and, finally, redefinition as a multi-directional dynamic by relational psychoanalysts. I then further elaborate the relational view of parallel process, illustrating its complex, multidirectional nature with an extended vignette. I discuss the relationship of enactment to parallel process and illustrate the usefulness of supervisory consultation when enactments that parallel into the supervisory relationship lead to impasse. Finally, I point to educational and neuropsychological research that suggests that working with parallel process is good pedagogy.

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Soreanu, R. (2019). **Supervision for our times: countertransference and the rich legacy of the Budapest School.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 329–351.

Abstract: In this paper I ask what an investigation of the Budapest model of supervision may add to our psychoanalytic imagination. The Budapest model confronts us with a number of crucial questions for contemporary psychoanalysis, including the question of envisioning ways of working on the countertransference of the analyst. I discuss the lack of memory that surrounds the Budapest model, and I read it in relation to the unsettling issues it stirs up, including those of authority, horizontality, and the ethics of psychoanalysis. In the Budapest model, supervision can be seen as a form of “double dreaming” or of “dreaming up of a dream”. In particular, in drawing on the writings of

Sándor Ferenczi and Michael Balint, I point to some principles behind the Budapest model and to the epistemic, technical, and ethical implications of their ideas. I also work toward a Ferenczian “translation” of the idea of “parallel process”.

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Watkins, C. E., Jr., Hook, J. N., Owen, J., DeBlaere, C., Davis, D. E. & Callahan, J. L. (2019). **Creating and Elaborating the Cultural Third: A Doers-Doing with Perspective on Psychoanalytic Supervision.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 352–374.

Abstract: Although recognized as highly crucial to supervision practice (e.g., Tummala-Narra, 2004), culture has been addressed minimally in the psychoanalytic supervision literature. Calls to remedy that limitation have been made and making culture matter has been identified as a most pressing need for psychoanalytic supervision. But how then do we as supervisors go about doing that? How might we better position culture in, and make culture central to, our psychoanalytic supervisory conceptualization and conduct? We subsequently take up those questions, expanding upon our earlier proposals about cultural humility and the Cultural Third (Watkins and Hook, 2016) by (a) proposing a tripartite multicultural perspective (i.e., cultural humility-cultural comfort-cultural opportunities) as supervision sine qua non; (b) using recognition theory as a way to better understand that very process of Third creation and elaboration; and (c) providing a rupture/repair case example that shows efforts to create and build the Cultural Third in supervision. The Cultural Third is conceptualized as a product of doers-doing with so as to culturally learn together through “not knowing”.

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Zicht, S. R. (2019). **Observations on the Centrality of Security in Psychoanalytic Supervision: A View from the Interpersonal Tradition and Attachment Perspective.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 375–387.

Abstract: Using theoretical concepts from the Interpersonal tradition in psychoanalysis and supported by findings from the attachment literature, the utility of attending to the issue of psychological security in supervision is considered for its potential to enable increased capacities for conducting psychoanalytic treatment.

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De Masi, F. (2019). **Essential Elements of the Work of a Supervisor.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 388–397.

Abstract: The supervisor’s prime task is to consider from the very beginning the analytic ability of the analyst presenting the case; this can be assessed by observing how the colleague transcribes the clinical material and describes what is meaningful in the session. It is extremely important to understand whether the patient’s suffering is

neurotic, or whether he suffers from an initial psychotic disorder. In this latter case, the analyst will know that he cannot employ the same tools that he uses for the neurotic patient. It is fundamental to draw careful attention to the importance of the patient's personal history. In the process of reconstructing the past, the patient's difficulties are gradually understood by the analyst, the patient and the supervisor. Given that a memory may be distorted by present emotions and conflicts, the analyst must form meaningful hypotheses that, through reconstructing interaction with the original objects, help to comprehend the precarious equilibrium of the present. Over the course of supervision, I consistently emphasize the construction of the analytic relationship, which is based on the analyst's mind and of the patient's ability to communicate emotionally, so as to promote the analysand's mental growth.

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Yerushalmi, H. (2019). **On the Presence and Absence of Supervisors.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 398–415.

Abstract: The presence or absence of another person, and the relationship between these two contradictory and complementary relational phenomena, significantly influence people's emotional experiences and developmental processes. These phenomena are often intertwined and in continuous dialectic with each other, thereby creating relational paradoxes in infant-parent, patient-therapist, and supervisee-supervisor relationships. Similar to other relational paradoxes, those created in supervision by supervisors' intermittent presence, cannot and should not be resolved, but have to be comprehended and accepted by both partners, preferably through negotiating their meanings. Negotiations help supervisees to contain contradictory supervisory realities, to internalize integrated aspects of their supervisors, and to include other identification figures, thereby creating durable and resilient "internal supervisors" that mold their clinical analytic selves. Negotiations of these paradoxes also help supervisors to renounce an omnipotent and potentially destructive fantasy of being ever-present for their supervisees.

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Book Reviews:

Covitz, H. (2019). **Book Review: *The Oedipus Complex: Solutions or Resolutions*** by Rhona M. Fear, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2018, 160 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 416–419.

Once upon an Analyst, the acceptance of the oedipus complex was the *shibboleth* for entering Mainstream Psychoanalysis' gate. Without it, one was an *Auslander*. Furthermore, it made a difference how one perceived its structure. Anna and Sigmund? Yes. Melanie? No. Or vice versa, depending on the locus of your encampment in the Psychoanalytic Civil War (Frosch, [1991](#)). True. During the era of ego psychology, the oedipal was barely mentioned and, betimes, not even indexed in major books (Covitz,

Ch. 2, [1998](#)) but my own training in the mid-70s still measured most everything through the lens of oedipality or preoedipality. There were, of course, the Jungians, the Sullivanians, the Horneyans and the other supposedly perfidious therapists who questioned the centrality of the sexual theory of neurosis. The theoretical centrality of sexuality, Freud had argued, was a necessary bulwark against the rising tides from storms that sought to drown his ship that was “knocked about by waves? But never sunk!” (The City of Paris’ motto: *Fluctuat nec mergitur*, cited by Freud, [1914a](#), p. 7).

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Friedman, H. J. (2019). **Book Review Essay: *Meltzer in Paris***, edited by Jacques Touze, Karnac Books, London, 2017, 217 pp.; ***Meltzer in Venice: Seminars with the Racker Group of Venice***, edited by Maria Elena Petrilli, Hugo Marquez, and Mauro Rossetti, Karnac Books, London, 2017, 247 pp.; and ***Meltzer in Sao Paulo: Clinical Seminars with Members of the Brazilian Psychoanalytic Society***, edited by Marisa Pelella Melega, Karnac Books, London, 2017, 170 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 420–425.

The appearance of these three volumes from different geographical locations presenting the clinical and theoretical thinking of Donald Meltzer, a prominent Kleinian psychoanalyst who died in 2004, reminds me, as a reviewer, of a trend that seems to be dominant in determining how many psychoanalysts think about theory. Namely, that psychoanalysts, by nature and history are inclined to be followers, who shift their loyalty from one prominent psychoanalytic theorist to another starting initially with Freud but moving on to Klein, Bion, Winnicott, and French psychoanalytic theorists like Laplanche and Lacan, always seeking the wisdom of a presumably superior analyst to follow, one who knows the true nature of psychoanalysis, something that has been unseen by Freud and then becomes a new theory of choice. While it is acknowledged that these new theorists are indebted to Freud, this can easily be seen as a superficial endorsement rather than real loyalty or valuing of Freud’s version of psychoanalytic theory. Starting with Melanie Klein, revisionist theorists have criticized and dismissed Freud for not starting early enough in the infant’s life, for, in their view not going deep enough into the primitive infantile mind....

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Miller, I. S. (2019). **Book Review: *An Odyssey: A Father, A Son and An Epic***, by Daniel Mendelsohn, William Collins, London, 2017, 305pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 426–430.

Unspoken within ongoing definitions of psychoanalytic identity (Miller, [2015](#); [2016](#)) is a conceptual dilemma shaped by an aesthetic, literary contrast that has become unrecognizable today—largely because the education of contemporary clinicians varies so radically from the education of psychoanalysis’ 19th century, Continental founders.

It concerns the nature of Freud's foundational Oedipal myth, imported from ancient Greek literature. Every introductory psychology student learns the bullet point: how Oedipus unwittingly murders his father and beds his mother, reducing in this catechism, the vast array of ethical challenges presented by Sophocles in his intergenerational three-play cycle of Orestes' family, including Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus, and Antigone.

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Molofsky, M. (2019). **Book Review: *A Beholder's Share: Essays on Winnicott and the Psychoanalytic Imagination***, by Dodi Goldman, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2017, 205pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. 431–434.

Dr. Goldman has achieved quite a tour de force in this eminently readable, accessible, intriguing book that actually accomplishes what its title suggests, a gathering of essays that have the works of D.W. Winnicott as its foundation, and which explores with creativity, and, yes, imagination, the complex topic of the psychoanalytic imagination.

This is a book worth savoring. It has its calm delights, its unexpected aspects, and its compelling excitement. We discover that the psychoanalytic imagination freely discovers the human.

The Table of Contents offers what the full title of the book offers, a sense of the connection between two aspects of the book, a very personal exploration of psychoanalytic process, the “beholder's share” of the engaged psychoanalyst, and an acknowledging tribute to the power and influence of Winnicott's contribution to psychoanalytic thought.....

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Perlman, K. (2019). **Book Review: *Changing Sexualities and Parental Functions in the Twenty-First Century***, by Cândida Sé Holovko and Frances Thomson-Salo, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2018, 266pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), pp. pages 435–438.

Changing Sexualities and Parental Functions in the Twenty-First Century, edited by Cândida Sé Holovko and Frances Thomson-Salo, undertakes to introduce North American analysts to the work of a diverse group of Latin American thinkers and clinicians, all working in the interrelated arenas of gender, sexuality, and parenthood. From the patriarchal family of Freud's time to the post-modern arrangements we find today—blended families, single-parent families, single-sex couples, families that rely on assisted technology for pregnancy and childbirth—our notions of who is and what comprises a family have changed dramatically, while our theory has not necessarily kept up. Covering a wide range of concepts, including the oedipal complex, parental function, and male and female psychosexuality, the book aims to contribute to an international dialogue among analysts working with a range of clinical issues relating to gender,

sexuality, childbirth and childrearing, and to changed and changing family configurations.

The book is divided into three sections. The first revisits psychoanalytic theory in the context of changes in current thinking within the discipline, as well as societal changes that call for reexamination of established concepts relating to sexuality and gender; paternal and maternal functions within a more traditional mother-father-child configurations are explored from a variety of new angles, as are changing family dynamics and the intergenerational transmission of trauma. The second section explores a range of more contemporary family configurations,....

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Rachmani, V. (2019). **Contemporary Bionian Theory and Technique in Psychoanalysis**, edited by Antonino Ferro, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2018, 258pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 79(3), 439–441.

Donnel Stern (2013a, p. 524) aptly states in his description of Bionian versus Interpersonal/Relational field theories that unless you “live within the belly of the beast” you cannot adequately describe another theory in a dispassionate or unbiased manner. To attempt to do so here, flirts with failure. Neo-Bionian theory is alive with phantasy and dream life, whereas the American turn toward the Relational derives its breath from co-activity and its inevitable enactments. Field theories do however, share experience-near perspectives and a lack of abstraction, says Stern (2013b, p. 631), because the clinical dialogue—rather than the patient’s history—primarily dictates therapeutic outcomes.

And as novel and provocative as Bion’s and his descendants’ ideas are for most analysts who have not been formally schooled in this tradition, the material in each of the chapters in *Contemporary Theory and Technique in Psychoanalysis* requires more than casual curiosity; it can leave the reader with innumerable “thoughts without a thinker” to borrow Mark Epstein’s words.

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