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Articles

Erdman, A. L. (2023). **Fetal Fantasy and the Perfect Child: How Certain Challenges of Adolescence May Inform Aspects of the Abortion Debate.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(3), 293–319.

Abstract: This article explores psychic aspects of abortion, from the fixity of beliefs over its legalization, to conscious and unconscious fantasies related to the fetus, children, parenting, fertility, and so on. Generally speaking, the field has shown less direct interest in abortion *per se* than might be surmised, particularly given the centrality of sexuality and procreation in psychoanalysis. The recent legal changes may initiate more psychoanalytic interest in the topic. The current writing studies a possible strand of fantasy in which conscious and unconscious wishes for an unending, idealized, and blameless child-object are displaced onto a fetus or fetal imago. Speculations and suggestions are drawn from casework with an individual which points to a possible channeling or avoidance of unprocessed grief when the seeming perfection of childhood ends abruptly, almost without transition, with the imposition of adolescent personality development.

Go to: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s11231-023-09408-8>

Smolar, A. I. (2023). **The Role of Groups During Individual Development and Within the Clinical Dyad.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(3), 320–348.

Abstract: The author proposes that group identifications have been under-appreciated by individual psychodynamic psychotherapists in their conceptualization of normative individual development. He identifies the routes by which the child begins to internalize small and large groups during the early years of identity formation. Through individual therapy vignettes, the author suggests modifications to customary technique so that developmental shortcomings in group attachment security can be shored up. He offers some guidelines for the individual therapist so that group experiences are accounted for as the clinical narrative is written. Finally, he distinguishes patients who may require additional group-level interventions to address their avoidance of group participation.

Go to: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s11231-023-09412-y>

Roth, M. (2023). **Raw Object Identification.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(3), 349–370.

Abstract: This paper attempts to deal with a specific kind of pathological identification—“raw object identification”—which tends to appear as concrete physiological phenomena, trying to escape meaning and integration. These somatic manifestations stem from early

traumatic experiences with a meaningful object and entrap—as revealed through analysis—specific significant qualities of that object. A massive splitting ensues between body and mind, self and object, relation and identification. Certain properties of the object are then experienced as a foreign body in the subject and are defensively identified with. Thus, raw object identification is often manifested in stubborn bodily symptoms.

Go to: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s11231-023-09416-8>

Salvatore, G., Staiano, M. & Salvatore, S. (2023). **Focusing the Clinical Supervision on the Therapist's Developmental Trauma: A Single Case Study.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(3), 371–395.

Abstract: The term developmental trauma (DT) refers to the impact of stressful events which occur cumulatively within the child's relevant relationships and contexts, and usually early in life. According to several authors, DT depends on the caregiver's inadequate intersubjective recognition of one or more aspects of the evolving individual's identity. In the clinical and empirical literature, the study of therapists' developmental trauma, and how it might constitute a relevant variable in the clinical exchange, seem to be underrepresented. In this paper, through the analysis of the supervision process of a clinical case, we show how the therapeutic relationship may implicitly take the form of a “dance” between the patient's and therapist's DT, that prevents the therapist from intersubjectively attuning with the patient; and how a supervision process peculiarly focused on the therapist's DT can effectively promote this attunement and a good clinical outcome.

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Sheehy, J. (2023). **Intricacies of Relational Intimacy: Approaching the Invasive Edge with a Schizoid Patient.** *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(3), 396–416.

Abstract: In hopes of contributing to the developing self-critique of relational analysis, I offer a case that illustrates a modified approach, one informed by current dialogue. The patient described had considerable unmet selfobject needs and a schizoid sensitivity to intrusion, engendering the question explored: How do two minds meet if one is largely *relationally dissociated* and acutely vulnerable when integrated? A premature emphasis on intersubjectivity would have obscured the patient's narcissistic needs and reinforced her tendency to retreat. Suspending the goal of intersubjectivity allowed for a regressive process to occur, and for contact to become safe before analyst and patient paved the way for future mutual relatedness.

Go to: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s11231-023-09409-7>

Book Reviews

Cassullo, G. (2023). **Book Review: *Silence and Silencing in Psychoanalysis: Cultural, Clinical, and Research Perspectives***, edited by Aleksandar Dimitrijević and Michael B. Buchholz, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2021, 386 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(3), 417–423.

It is always fascinating how mundane chatting can suddenly turn to silence in the concert hall before the first note is played, the first chord struck. You need to experience silence in order to shift from one reality to another, from the reality of talking to the reality of music. It works like the frame of a painting, separating and creating two distinct kinds of reality. As many authors in the book *Silence and Silencing in Psychoanalysis* underline, this silence-frame is a feature that characterizes the psychoanalytic setting.

Go to: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s11231-023-09411-z>

Frank, K. A. (2023). **Book Review. *Embracing Therapeutic Complexity: A Guidebook to Integrating the Essentials of Psychodynamic Principles Across Therapeutic Disciplines***, by Patricia Gianotti, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2022, 329 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(3), 424–428.

Patricia Gianotti's book, *Embracing Therapeutic Complexity: A Guidebook to Integrating the Essentials of Psychodynamic Principles Across Therapeutic Disciplines*, is not what I had expected. I was initially attracted to this book by the second part of its subtitle, "Across Therapeutic disciplines." Accordingly, I expected the book to relate directly to a particular interest of mine, psychotherapy integration, or how, using relational psychodynamic theory as a baseline, we can effectively combine therapy approaches (Frank, 2020, for example). My expectation was shaped in part by my "meeting" Dr. Gianotti at an online psychoanalytic seminar I taught on psychotherapy integration.

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Gonella, V. (2023). **Book Review: *Resilience and Survival: Understanding and Healing Intergenerational Trauma***, by Clara Mucci, Confer Books, London, 2022, 212pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(3), 429–433.

I have approached this third book by Clara Mucci with great curiosity: after two rich, curated and interdisciplinary works (Mucci, 2013, 2018) intended to be a fundamental training tool for all therapists who want to understand and treat trauma, I was eager to find out where the author would lead us this time.

Every time I read her writings, I am reminded of expert Alpine Mountain guides leading expeditions between peaks that they know inch by inch but that rarely are well known to the participants, despite their experience and knowledge of the mountains in general.

Clara Mucci is a guide who for years has not only been an expert and passionate about the psychoanalytic clinical work; she is also prepared and up-to-date on the scientific research that bridges psychoanalysis and neurology; and, above all, she is a tireless writer, eager to share her knowledge with the reader. ...

Go to: <https://doi.org/10.1057/s11231-023-09417-7>

Oelsner, R. (2023). **Book Review: *W. R. Bion's Theories of Mind: A Contemporary Introduction*** by Annie Reiner, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2023, 84 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(3), 434–438.

This book belongs to a series of short publications that Routledge is doing, on relevant topics and perspectives of psychoanalysis and on prominent contemporary psychoanalytic authors. Annie Reiner's book fulfills these aims.

A theory of mind is the foundation on which the practice of psychoanalysis and the understanding of what analysands bring to analysis rests. Bion's theories have undoubtedly become groundwork in the psychoanalytic movement. Reiner's book elaborates both on theory that offers a lens through which to observe the revelations of mental phenomena, as well as the technical tools that derive from it. In that regard it will find the interest of theoreticians and of practicing psychoanalysts alike.

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Rozendal, F. (2023). **Book Review: *Projective Identification: A Contemporary Introduction*** by Robert Waska, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, 2022, 121 pp. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83(3), 439–442.

By its title, Dr. Waska's latest book indicates that it is a primer on Kleinian thinking. If one had a professional education in psychotherapy (as many therapists do nowadays) or even in psychoanalytic psychotherapy, a therapist will welcome its refreshing creativity in doing Kleinian work as well as the easy language and brevity used to describe Kleinian theory. But even more experienced therapists will find his case studies intriguing and exciting to read as he describes the use of Kleinian thinking in practice. His work uses case formulations of the larger and often hidden issues that various clients face. And in a more granular way, he introduces unique terms to describe his concepts of the stages that the work progresses through. In contrast to case reports in the literature which go into considerable detail about a couple of specific interventions, he tends to look at his patients in terms of their global issues with his interpretations and again at different moments of their therapy. So we see how the therapy develops over time as the therapy progresses from one issue to the next.

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